



SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

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FAMILY NET EARNS DARKNESS TO LIGHT 'PARTNER IN PREVENTION' DESIGNATION

HICKORY -- Family NET has achieved “Partner in Prevention” status, a designation awarded by the nonprofit Darkness to Light to organizations that take extra steps to protect the children they serve by training staff to understand the issue of child sexual abuse, identify unsafe situations and practices, and react responsibly in the best interest of the children they serve.

Family NET is a critical access behavioral health agency, located in Hickory, that is nationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). "Family NET takes an active role in being a community leader in advocating for the safety and protection of children," said Janine Szymanski, Family NET clinical director. "We are extremely proud of our Partner in Prevention distinction."

One in 10 children will be sexually abused before the age of 18. Family NET earned the “Partner in Prevention” designation by providing Stewards of Children training to more than 90 percent of its management, staff, and volunteers. This evidence-informed program is scientifically proven to help participants prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. “Partner in Prevention” was created as a national standard to help parents and caregivers recognize organizations that take child protection seriously by implementing policy and training staff to prevent child sexual abuse.

Darkness to Light is an international organization that leads the movement to end child sexual abuse by educating and empowering adults in education, youth serving organizations, and communities to protect children. Darkness to Light has affiliates in all 50 states and 16 international locations.

In Catawba County, The Children's Advocacy and Protection Center provides Stewards of Children: Darkness to Light training at no cost to participants, thanks to a generous grant from the United Way. To learn more about how your organization or business can become a Partner in Prevention, contact Kate Landry, CAPC outreach coordinator, at klandry@catawbacountync.gov, or call 828-465-9296. Darkness to Light training is also available to individuals.

Darkness to Light (D2L) has championed the movement to end child sexual abuse since its founding in 2000. With affiliates in all 50 U.S. states and 16 additional countries, D2L provides individuals, organizations, and communities with the tools to protect children from sexual abuse. To date, the D2L network of 750,000 authorized facilitators has trained over 900,000 parents, youth serving professionals, and organization volunteers in D2L’s award-winning Stewards of Children® child sexual abuse prevention program.