



LEARN TO PREVENT CHILD SEX ABUSE AT DARKNESS TO LIGHT TRAINING

HICKORY – There will be two opportunities in June to take the free Stewards of Children: Darkness to Light training that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize and respond appropriately to child sexual abuse.

This training is offered by the Children's Advocacy and Protection Center of Catawba County. The training takes two hours and is free to participants, thanks to a grant from the Catawba County United Way. "I wish I'd had this training sooner" is the most common statement made by Darkness to Light participants.

The first training will be held Sunday, June 5 from 1 to 3 p.m. at The Episcopal Church of the Ascension, located at 726 First Ave. NW, Hickory, NC 28601. Those planning to attend this training should pre-register by emailing the facilitator, Deacon Pat Jones, at pwjllc@charter.net.

The second training opportunity will be Tuesday, June 21 from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. at Mt. Pisgah AME Church, located at 624 First Street SW, Hickory. Those who plan to attend this training should pre-register by emailing Virginia Wright at wright.virginia.f@gmail.com.

One in ten children is sexually abused before their 18th birthday. Forty percent of these children are abused by older or more powerful children. In most cases, the abuser is not a stranger but is known to the child.

"As parents, you make choices every day to protect your kids," said Adrienne Opdyke, director of the Children's Advocacy and Protection Center of Catawba County. "You cover them with sun block in the summer to protect them from burns. You bundle them up in the winter to protect them from the cold. But how do you protect them from sexual abuse? You might think it can't happen in your family, town or youth-serving organization. And that's what everyone likely thinks – until it happens."

This training is suitable for any adult, including parents, grandparents, teachers, pastors, coaches, law enforcement officers, or anyone who comes into contact with children.

To schedule this training at your church, civic club or work place, contact Kate Landry, CAPC community education and outreach coordinator, at klandry@catawbacountync.gov.

For more information about the CAPC, visit the website at catawbacountyncapc.org or call 828-465-9296 during business hours.