



Statewide Sexual Abuse Awareness Campaign

New Hampshire Child Advocacy Centers (CAC's) are essential organizations in the eyes of child victims of crime and their families. This is because we provide a neutral, child friendly environment for joint investigations and interviews of child victims of sexual assault, felony level physical abuse and child

witnesses of serious crime such as homicide. 95% of the cases that come through the CAC are sexual assaults.

National statistics report **that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually assaulted before their 18th birthday.** Unfortunately, statistics also prove that **only 1 in 10 child victims will come forward to disclose the abuse during childhood, if ever.** Across the state the CACs see approximately 135 child victims every month. Although this number seems high, we are keenly aware of the hundreds of other children and families who are out there in our communities, struggling and suffering alone.

The CACs not only provide this essential service to child victims coming forward to disclose abuse; we feel that the true measure of success would be to **prevent child abuse.** We know that educating the community on this issue is the only way to stop the cycle of violence.

The challenge we face today is that without the citizens of New Hampshire knowing about the CACs we will not have the opportunity to educate each community or worse, we will never find those children who are too afraid to come forward. The only way to reach out to the extent that is needed is through an **Awareness Campaign.**

Every Child Advocacy Center in the state of New Hampshire is offering **free** outreach and education sessions geared toward the following population:

Parents

Teachers

Child Care Providers

Nurses

Coaches

Clubs/Organizations/General Public

The sessions will teach you:

What is Child Sexual Abuse?

How do I best protect the children in my life?

What are the red flags indicating child sex offender behavior?
How do I talk to my children about body safety?
What do I do if my child has been the victim of sexual abuse?

The following statistics demonstrate why there is such an incredible need to bring awareness to our community around the issue of sexual abuse.

- Victims of child sexual abuse report more substance abuse problems. 70-80% of sexual abuse survivors report excessive drug and alcohol use.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are 3 times more likely to develop psychiatric disorders or alcohol and drug abuse in adulthood, than girls who are not sexually abused.
- Among male survivors, more than 70% seek psychological treatment for issues such as substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and attempted suicide. Males who have been sexually abused are more likely to violently victimize others.
- Adolescents who suffer violent victimization are at risk for being victims or perpetrators of felony assault, domestic violence, and property offense as adults.
- Nearly 50% of women in prison state that they were abused as children.
- Over 75% of serial rapists report they were sexually abused as youngsters.
- Sexually abused children who keep it a secret or who "tell" and are not believed are at greater risk than the general population for psychological, emotional, social, and physical problems often lasting into adulthood.
- Children who have been victims of sexual abuse are more likely to experience physical health problems.
- Victims of child sexual abuse are more likely to experience major depressive disorder as adults.
- Young girls who are sexually abused are more likely to develop eating disorders as adolescents.
- Adolescent victims of violent crime have difficulty in the transition to adulthood, are more likely to suffer financial failure and physical injury, and are at risk to fail in other areas due to problem behaviors and outcomes of the victimization.

Site: Darkness 2 Light

Not only will this Awareness Campaign break down the barriers of sexual abuse and the silence and shame that go along with it; our communities will be healthier and safer in the future as our children grow.

Please contact your local CAC to find out when and where these sessions will be held or to request your own free session. <http://www.cacnh.org/directory.php>