

Pat's Place Announces Everyday Heroes Campaign to Stop Child Abuse in Charlotte Community

Mecklenburg County's only child abuse advocacy center kicks off first-ever public awareness campaign

March 30, 2021 (CHARLOTTE) – [Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center](#) is launching a three-month public awareness campaign to coincide with [National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#) in April. The inspiring and hope-filled campaign themed around “Everyday Heroes” highlights how every individual, from family and friends to professionals and community members, has the power and ability to keep children safe and help them heal from trauma.

“For 15 years, we’ve been making an incredible impact on the lives of children in our community, but there’s still so much work to be done to prevent and ultimately end child abuse,” says Pat’s Place Chief Executive Officer Andrew Oliver. “Due to COVID-19, many children don’t have access to safe adults outside of the home that they can turn to for help, making it more important than ever to raise awareness of child abuse and protect children in our community.”

Child abuse is a community-wide issue that impacts everyone, regardless of race or socioeconomic status. [Research](#) shows that 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before they reach their 18th birthday. According to the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services, 17,323 children (6.8%) were reported abused or neglected in 2019. DSS substantiated maltreatment or determined that additional services were needed in 13.2% of those cases. In more than [90%](#) of child abuse cases, the child knows and trusts the abuser.

The goal of the [“Everyday Heroes” campaign](#) is to raise awareness of the services that Pat’s Place offers and to educate and inform the community about how they can help prevent child abuse. The campaign will include visual storytelling through various mediums including digital, print and broadcast media, social media, email marketing, direct mail and outdoor digital billboards. Pat’s Place will also host public webinars featuring topics such as “Discover Pat’s Place: How Everyday Heroes (Like YOU) Can Help Stop Child Abuse,” “Taken? Dispelling Myths About Human Trafficking,” and “Starting the Conversation: Talking to Children About Body Safety and Sexual Abuse” as well as multiple opportunities for the community to engage and participate in raising awareness.

Pat’s Place’s mission is to protect and heal children, unite key partners and engage the Charlotte community to end child abuse. According to data tracked by Pat’s Place, children in the county are four times more likely to receive all the services they need after experiencing abuse since the Center opened in 2005. Prosecution rates for child sexual abuse cases that are charged in the county have increased from 5% in 2005 to more than 90% in 2020. Additionally, more than 90% of children who complete therapy at Pat’s Place experience clinically significant reductions in symptoms of traumatic stress.

Everyone can be a part of the solution to stop child abuse. Individuals and businesses are encouraged to get involved by speaking up and talking about child abuse. Community members can also help by making a donation to Pat’s Place, participating in or volunteering for a special event or program,

requesting training, and supporting Pat's Place on social media by sharing statistics and stories. If someone suspects child abuse, they are required to report it according to NC state law by calling 911 or the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services at 980.31.HELPS.

Learn more about how to support Pat's Place and get involved in the "Everyday Heroes" campaign at www.patsplacecac.org/event/everyday-heroes-campaign and by engaging with the hashtag #PatsPlaceHeroes on social media.

About Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center

Pat's Place, Charlotte's only child advocacy center, was established in 2005 to improve the system of protection for child victims of abuse. The Pat's Place team coordinates the investigation and treatment of referred cases in a comfortable and child-friendly environment through forensic interviews, medical exams, counseling and advocacy support at no cost to a child's family. The mission of Pat's Place is to protect and heal children, unite key partners and engage the community to end child abuse. The center on East Boulevard is named for Patricia "Pat" Wolfe, an inspiring child advocate in the Charlotte community who passed away in May 2000. For more information on Pat's Place, visit patsplacecac.org and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).