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1 in 10 Children Will Be Sexually Abused Before Age 18

The Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Coalition Is Bringing Awareness to this Epidemic at
“Mission: Possible” Event

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA: January 16, 2016 – The Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Coalition (CSAPC) of Northeast Florida is hosting a kick-off event for its “Mission: Possible” awareness campaign on Thursday, February 4, 2016 from 4:30 p.m. until 6:15 p.m. **Media and interested individuals and organizations are invited to attend the program at the DuPont Center, located at 40 East Adams Street in downtown Jacksonville.** The “Mission: Possible” campaign is designed to bring awareness to the CSAPC’s mission to prevent child sexual abuse through the delivery of the Darkness to Light, *Stewards of Children*® program to adults in Northeast Florida, which educates adults about the steps they can take to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to the reality of child sexual abuse. Through the delivery of this training, the CSAPC hopes to make their mission possible: to empower an unprecedented preventative movement by training 50,000 adults over the course of the next ten years.

Local organizations, businesses and individuals are invited to learn how to help protect children from the *epidemic of child sexual abuse that affects 1 in 10 children in our community*. There will be light appetizers, beverages, and a brief program with guest speaker, Dena Thompson, founder of the Somer Sunshine Foundation. In addition, all attendees will be included in a drawing for a free Darkness to Light *Stewards of Children* training for their organization or group of their choice (program fees are typically \$10/person).

The Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Coalition (CSAPC) of Northeast Florida was formed in 2013 through the collaborative efforts of Children's Safe Passage, YMCA of Florida's First Coast, and Monique Burr Foundation for Children. More recent additions to the Coalition's membership include Jacksonville Children's Coalition, Baptist Health, Greater Jacksonville USO, The Somer Sunshine Foundation, Communities in Schools of Jacksonville, WJCT Public Broadcasting, Wolfson Children's Hospital, THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health, Women's Center of Jacksonville, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida.

The collaborative efforts of these organizations, including funding through Children's Safe Passage, have enabled the tremendous growth of the Coalition. Children's Safe Passage began in 2010 after the murder of 6-year-old Somer Thompson of Orange Park, Florida and hosts an annual golf tournament that, as of 2015, has raised more than \$130,000 for the prevention of sexual abuse and violence against children.

In 2015, the coalition hired a Program Manager, Mercedes New, to oversee and expand the coalition's efforts and effectiveness. Mrs. New has worked in the non-profit field for over ten years, and most recently was the director of a local non-profit organization whose mission was to help young people recognize their full potential. According to New, "Helping youth grow in a positive environment, not one filled with hurt or pain, is a mission I take very seriously."

About The Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Coalition of Northeast Florida

The mission of the CSAPC is to prevent child sexual abuse through the delivery of the Darkness to Light, Stewards of Children® training program to adults in Northeast Florida and empowering an unprecedented preventative action movement with the awareness and knowledge to protect children.

The goal of the Coalition is to provide the Darkness to Light, Stewards of Children prevention training to 50,000 adults over the next ten years. To learn more about the Coalition or how you can be involved, visit www.csapc.org and like us on Facebook.

About Darkness to Light, Stewards of Children

Stewards of Children® is the only evidence-informed, third-party evaluated child sexual abuse prevention training of its kind. The program offers both online and facilitator-led group training sessions. It is widely applicable and can be administered to community members, schools, sports leagues, faith centers, youth serving organizations, and state agencies, and otherwise to any adult or organization concerned about the health and safety of children.

The Stewards of Children® program focuses on adult education because it is the responsibility of all adults to keep all children safe.

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