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ADULTS COMING TOGETHER TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE YMCAs promoting child protection during National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Chambersburg, PA – The Chambersburg Memorial YMCA is marking Child Abuse Prevention Month with Five Days of Action, April 22-26, 2019, leading up to our local Healthy Kids Day® event on April 28, 2019 from 1:00-4:00 PM at the Chambersburg Y. Healthy Kids Day is a national YMCA initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids. Five Days of Action focuses on preventing child sexual abuse by sharing tips on how adults can prevent child sexual abuse.

During April and all year long, the Chambersburg Y encourages adults and organizations in the community to play a vital role in making the Greater Chambersburg Area a safer place for children. This year's Five Days of Action theme is "Know. See. Respond." When adults know how abuse happens, see the warning signs and respond quickly to prevent abuse, they foster a culture of child abuse prevention. Together, we can bring awareness to the issue of child sexual abuse in our communities and have important conversations around how we can all work together to prevent it from happening.

"Protecting children from sexual abuse must be the number one goal of every person who cares about the health and well-being of kids," said Jen Gossert, Chambersburg Memorial YMCA Certified Praesidium Guardian and Authorized Facilitator for Stewards of Children. "Together, we can stand up to demand that children are protected and encourage adults to make it happen in our community. It takes all of us."

On Monday, April 22, 2019 a Pledge to Protect Ceremony will begin at 10:00 AM at the Chambersburg Memorial YMCA, 570 East McKinley Street. Additionally, on Wednesday, April 24, a Prayer Walk will begin at the David W Matthews Pavilion behind the YMCA William K Nitterhouse Family Program Center, 756 South Coldbrook Avenue at 11:30 AM. All are welcome to participate. At the Pledge to Protect Ceremony, the Prayer Walk and culminating at the Healthy Kids Day event, adult members of our community can receive information about KNOW, SEE, RESPOND and sign a pledge to protect children from sexual abuse.

"With support from YMCA of the USA, Darkness to Light, Praesidium, and the Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCAs, we are committed to be the front runner in our community to helping adults learn more about preventing child sexual abuse" stated Carla Christian, Executive Director. "We are fortunate to have leadership and a community of strong collaborators with a shared vision to protect our children. We invite the community to join us to make a pledge to protect."

For more information about preventing child sexual abuse contact Jen Gossert at the Y or email jgossert@chbgq.org. We also encourage you to visit www.fivedaysofaction.org for additional materials derived from YMCA of the USA's "Know. See. Respond." copyrighted in 2019.

CHAMBERSBURG YMCA

570 East McKinley Street, Chambersburg PA 17201
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CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE STATISTICS – PROVIDED BY DARKNESS TO LIGHT

- One in ten children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday.
- 90% of child sexual abuse victims know their abuser.
- Approximately 30% of children who are sexually abused are abused by family members.
- 60% of child sexual abuse victims never tell anyone.
- False reports are rare. Research shows that only 4 to 8% of child sexual abuse reports are fabricated.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED – PROVIDED BY DARKNESS TO LIGHT

- You do not need to have proof that abuse is occurring to make a report, only reasonable suspicion. Reasonable suspicion means that you have witnessed maltreatment or boundary violations, either in the child or adult, or both. Or, you have received a disclosure from a child about abuse, neglect, or boundary violations towards them.
- Child sexual abuse reports should be made to the police and/or state child protective services.
- Contact the Darkness to Light Helpline at 866-FOR-LIGHT or text LIGHT to 741741 to have questions answered by trained counselors at no charge.

About Darkness to Light

Darkness to Light is a nonprofit organization with the mission to empower adults to prevent child sexual abuse through awareness, education, and stigma reduction. Darkness to Light's flagship program, *Stewards of Children®*, is an evidence-informed, award-winning training that teaches adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. More than 1.7 million adults have been trained using Darkness to Light trainings. For more information, visit www.D2L.org.

About Praesidium

Praesidium specializes in preventing sexual abuse in organizations that serve youth and vulnerable adults. Over a period in excess of 25 years, the company has reviewed over 4,000 cases of abuse within organizations to determine the root causes of sexual abuse within organizational settings. Praesidium employs more than 40 staff, including licensed social workers, lawyers, psychologists, health care researchers and other experts. The company has served over 5,000 clients with a broad range of products and services to aid organizations in preventing abuse, including online and instructor-led trainings; organizational risk assessments; model policies and incident investigations. Having trained more than one million people online and hundreds of thousands in person, Praesidium is the largest and most comprehensive sexual abuse risk management firm globally.

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