

**LANCASTER COUNTY**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

150 North Queen Street • Suite 715 • Lancaster, PA 17603 • Phone: 717-299-8300 • Fax: 717-293-7208 • [www.co.lancaster.pa.us](http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us)  
Andrea McCue, Chief Clerk • Crystal Clark, Esquire, County Solicitor

**Dennis P. Stuckey • Scott F. Martin • Craig E. Lehman**  
**Board of Commissioners**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Angie Eichelberger, Executive Assistant  
(717) 735-1589, [aeichelberger@co.lancaster.pa.us](mailto:aeichelberger@co.lancaster.pa.us)

**Lancaster County C.A.S.E.**  
**Unveils 2015 Theme, Brochure and Window Display**

*“Don’t just hear, listen to what a child says.”*

**LANCASTER COUNTY (December 10, 2014)** –Today the Lancaster County CASE task force held a press conference to announce its new focus for 2015 including a new brochure and window display. "For our first four years, we focused primarily on teaching children, guardians and the community on ways to keep our children safe and working to empower our children," stated Commissioner Martin, Co-Chairman of Lancaster County CASE. "Although we will continue with those efforts, we intend, through our messaging, to place a greater focus on raising awareness of the harsh reality that children are being sexually abused here in Lancaster County and equipping the community with the right tools to identify and report such incidents."

As a part of their 2015 focus, Lancaster County CASE designed a new bolder brochure stressing important truths about the sexual abuse of children that the public may not know or chooses to dismiss because of the complexity and horror of the matter. The brochure was designed in partnership with students at the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center.

“The brochure, titled *The silence is deafening* based off of CASE’s 2014 theme, aims to educate readers that: 1) many child victims do not disclose their abuse right away; 2) that this horrific crime happens right here in Lancaster County; and 3) that a child who has been sexually abused cannot be easily manipulated into lying about sexual abuse,\*” stated Commissioner Stuckey. “These are truths that members of the task force see consistently in their professions, and have been shown in studies done in other areas of the United States.”

Building off of their 2014 theme, “The Silence is Deafening. Speak Up! Speak Out!” which encourages the public to stay vigilant and report suspected abuse, Lancaster County CASE announced that their 2015 theme will be “Don’t just hear, listen to what a child says.” which encourages people to carefully listen to the children in their lives beyond just the words they say.

A study reported by the organization Darkness2Light, found that 73% of child victims do not tell anyone about being sexually abused for at least a year.\*\* “Understanding that a child may not be willing or able to talk about the abuse they are or did endure is a haunting reality and a very important point for us all to remember,” stated Commissioner Martin. “It is imperative that we all take time to truly listen to the children in our lives, watch for signs or abnormal behavior and to build trusting relationships with them.” More information on signs and prevention of sexual abuse can be found at [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com).

In addition, the Lancaster County CASE task force unveiled a new window display at the Lancaster County Government Center, Chestnut Street side. The window display highlights the new brochure and also provides a visual display of what 1 out of 10 children looks, in order to show of the findings reported by Darkness2Light that about 1 out of every 10 children will be sexually abused before they reach the age of 18.\*\*\*

"This window display attempts to bring a realism to these harsh statistics," stated Commissioner Lehman. "The children shown are running, jumping and playing to remind us all of their innocence and that those who are sexually abused are truly robbed of their childhood."

"Lancaster County CASE is run in partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and we cannot thank them enough for their support of our efforts to eliminate child sexual abuse in Lancaster County," stated Commissioner Martin. "As a part of our 2015 campaign, we will also be distributing a document put out by NCMEC and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention with the U.S. Department of Justice titled *Preventing the Sexual Exploitation of Children*. This document reinforces much of what we are trying to share with the great people of Lancaster County. We encourage all parents, guardians and those who have children in their lives that they care for to take a moment to read through this document." This document can be found on our website at [www.LancasterCountyCASE.org](http://www.LancasterCountyCASE.org) or on NCMEC's website at [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com).

Bethany Woodcock, Co-Chair of Lancaster County CASE, announced that the theme for the Lancaster County CASE Annual Poster Contest will also be "Don't just hear, listen to what a child says." More details will be provided on their website at [www.LancasterCountyCASE.org](http://www.LancasterCountyCASE.org) in the New Year.

All individuals are encouraged to report suspected sexual abuse to CHILDLINE at 1-800-932-0313. To learn more about Lancaster County C.A.S.E initiatives please visit [www.LancasterCountyCASE.org](http://www.LancasterCountyCASE.org). To learn more about the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children please visit [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org). For additional information about CHILDLINE, please visit [www.dpw.state.pa.us](http://www.dpw.state.pa.us).

\* Cossins, A., Goodman-Delahunty, J., & O'Brien, K. (Nov 2009). *Uncertainty and misconceptions about child sexual abuse: Implications for the criminal justice system. Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 16, 435-452. doi: 10.1080/13218710902930234.

\*\*Statistic compiled by, and reported at Darkness2Light, "Child Sexual Abuse Statistics," at [www.d2l.org](http://www.d2l.org) (July 19, 2011)

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