

June Is Internet Safety Month

Don't Be Quick to Click!

Protect Children Online

Our Mission:

We collaborate with community partners to respond to and prevent child abuse.



Internet Safety Tips for Families – Learn More!



SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

JUNE –INTERNET SAFETY MONTH

BY FAITH BOEHMER, PREVENTION & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The internet is now a daily essential, present in our hands and even on our wrists as smartwatches. However, using the internet comes with responsibilities. To help people stay safe online, Internet Safety Awareness Month was launched by the National Cybersecurity Alliance and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in October 2004. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention also partners in this effort to protect kids online.

During this month, it's important to focus on using the internet safely, especially for children and teens. Online communication is a major part of their lives, but it comes with risks such as inappropriate conduct, contact, and content. Technology evolves, and so do the associated risks. Minimize these risks by talking to your children about online behavior and encouraging them to think before they post. The anonymity of the internet can make children forget they are accountable for their actions. Some online users have bad intentions, including bullies, predators, hackers, and scammers. Online access also increases exposure to pornography, violence, and hate speech. Open communication is key to protecting your children online, and it should start as soon as they use any internet-capable device.

WHAT YOU CAN SAY:

- Only post online what you are comfortable with anyone seeing.
- Once you post it, you can't take it back.
- Keep certain information private: social security number, address, school, phone number, financial information.
- Never post nude or sexually explicit photos.
- Avoid sexual conversations online.
- Use privacy settings.
- Don't disclose your password.
- Only friend people you really know.
- Send group messages with care.
- If something online bothers you or makes you afraid, tell me about it.



WHAT YOU SHOULD ASK:

- Do you know and trust who you are sharing information with or downloading from?
- Were you ever sorry you shared something online?
- Have you seen something online that made you angry or scared?
- What apps are you currently using?
- What online groups do you belong to?

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Know your child's passwords.
- Check your child's social networking pages occasionally.
- Review their friend list with them.
- Communicate your expectations for online behavior.
- Consider parental controls & set limits on online usage

INTRODUCING THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CAC

BY ROBERTA HUMPHRIES



The Child Advocacy Center would like to welcome the new Executive Director to the center, John F. Webster.

After receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Government and Secondary Education from Campbell University John began his career as a Social Worker at Harnett County Department of Social Services, soon becoming a Child Protective Services Investigator. His career path led him to a supervisory position at Wake County Human Services in Child Protective Services. He then took a position at the Administrative Office of the Courts Guardian ad Litem Program where he managed the program for a three county Judicial District. His final position before joining the Child Advocacy Center was as the Child Welfare Program Manager of Permanency Planning

and Adoptions for Johnston County Department of Social Services.

John has training in Interaction Management, Family/Custody Mediation, Facilitation, Recruitment/Marketing, Supervision for Managers and Professionals and Forensic Interviewing.

When not at work John is an Elder, Sunday School Teacher and official Board member at Hickory Grove Advent Christian Church. He is also a referee and umpire for school and community basketball, softball, and baseball. John is married with two adult children and is an accomplished pianist.

When asked about assuming the role of Executive Director of the Center, he stated, "I am truly honored to be named to this position and I feel it is a position that will be a good match for me as my experience has offered me unique vantage points in the child welfare arena, having worked at two DSS agencies as well as for the Guardian ad litem program. I'm looking forward to making lots of solid connections in the Cumberland County area and helping to lead the CAC as it continues to grow in the years to come."

Welcome to the Child Advocacy Center, John.



Save the Date:
The 10th Annual
Pinwheel Masquerade Ball
to Unmask Child Abuse

DATE: Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024

TIME: 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

LOCATION: The Carolina Barn

Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Make a meaningful impact by becoming a sponsor of the event.

FAYETTEVILLE'S ULTIMATE LIP SYNC SHOWDOWN

BY ROBERTA HUMPHRIES

The 2024 Fayetteville Ultimate Lip Sync Showdown was held on Saturday April 20 at the Crown Center Ballroom. Karen Tisdale chaired the Lip Sync committee consisting of Lauren Averitt, Jenny Bell, Faith Boehmer (CAC Staff), Candace Coleman, DeLisa Crosby, Tim Edwards, Anita Flowers, Roberta Humphries (CAC Staff), Chris Lee, Melissa Nelson, and Ashley Owen. Alicia Winstead served as auditor. This was the first year that we had a matinee show that featured youth acts. Six youth acts performed during the matinee show and then 2 of those acts were guest performers at the Evening show which featured 10 adult performing acts. Emcees and judges for the matinee show were Marc de la Concha, Jair McElveen and Laura Draughon, Josh Gray-Heim, Gary Rogers, and Rachel Townsend. In the evening, the Emcees and judges were Michael Thrash, Nicki Hart and Lejuane Bowens, Honorable Caitlin Evans, Hannah Raeford Rinse and Dominique Womack. Five Star Entertainment provided the music, photo booth and lighting for the evening.



The SIX Merry Murderesses



The CFRT Court (Cape Fear Regional Theater)



Fayetteville's KISS Army



Queen B's (Rainbow Pediatrics)



Golden Stars Performance Troupe
(E.E. Smith High School)



Team Blaze (THE FIREHOUSE
Eastover's Studio of Performing Arts)



The Miracles
(Cape Fear Regional Theatre)



Net proceeds from the event were \$34,586.
Pictured L-R: Lauren Averitt, Anita Flowers,
Faith Boehmer, Karen Tisdale, Roberta
Humphries, and Chris Lee



EVENING SHOW-

PRE-SHOW FUNDRAISING 1ST PLACE:
THE SIX MERRY MURDERESSES
PRE-SHOW FUNDRAISING 2ND PLACE:
QUEEN B'S (RAINBOW PEDIATRICS)
PRE-SHOW FUNDRAISING 3RD PLACE:
CARTER BUSTERS (CARTER BANK & TRUST)
PEOPLE'S CHOICE 1ST PLACE:
THE SIX MERRY MURDERESSES
PEOPLE'S CHOICE 2ND PLACE:
QUEEN B'S (RAINBOW PEDIATRICS)
PEOPLE'S CHOICE 3RD PLACE:
FLAMING HOT LIPS
NON-FINALIST BEST COSTUMES:
FAYETTEVILLE'S KISS ARMY
NON-FINALIST BEST CHOREOGRAPHY:
QUEEN B'S (RAINBOW PEDIATRICS)
ULTIMATE LIP SYNC STAR 1ST PLACE:
THE SIX MERRY MURDERESSES
ULTIMATE LIP SYNC STAR 2ND PLACE:
THE CFRT COURT (CAPE FEAR
REGIONAL THEATRE)
ULTIMATE LIP SYNC STAR 3RD PLACE:
FLAMING HOT LIPS

A special Thank You to our 2024 Fayetteville Ultimate Lip Sync Showdown Sponsors

MATINEE SHOW-

PRE-SHOW FUNDRAISING 1ST PLACE:
THE MIRACLES (CAPE FEAR REGIONAL THEATRE)
PRE-SHOW FUNDRAISING 2ND PLACE:
TEAM BLAZE (THE FIREHOUSE EASTOVER'S
STUDIO OF PERFORMING ARTS)
PRE-SHOW FUNDRAISING 3RD PLACE:
DOUBLE TROUBLE
PEOPLE'S CHOICE 1ST PLACE:
THE MIRACLES (CAPE FEAR REGIONAL THEATRE)
PEOPLE'S CHOICE 2ND PLACE:
GOLDEN STARS PERFORMANCE TROUPE
(E.E. SMITH HIGH SCHOOL)
PEOPLE'S CHOICE 3RD PLACE:
FAYETTEVILLE ACADEMY
NON-FINALIST BEST COSTUMES:
FAYETTEVILLE ACADEMY
NON-FINALIST BEST CHOREOGRAPHY:
DOUBLE TROUBLE
ULTIMATE LIP SYNC STAR 1ST PLACE:
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ULTIMATE LIP SYNC STAR 2ND PLACE:
TEAM BLAZE (THE FIREHOUSE EASTOVER'S
STUDIO OF PERFORMING ARTS)
ULTIMATE LIP SYNC STAR 3RD PLACE:
GOLDEN STARS PERFORMANCE TROUPE
(E.E. SMITH HIGH SCHOOL)



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SPECIAL THANKS: District Attorney Billy West, US Logoworks, Williams Printing

HONORING CUMBERLAND COUNTY'S CHAMPIONS

BY ROBERTA HUMPHRIES

The Annual Child Abuse Summit 2024 “Be Their Voice: Help Them Soar!” was held on Tuesday April 16 at Lafayette Baptist Church with 339 people in attendance. This is a collaborative effort with the Child Advocacy Center, Southern Regional AHEC, and Army Community Services to provide a regional educational opportunity for professionals in our community to hear from national and local experts in their field and to highlight April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. This year’s national guest speaker was Erin Meryn who shared her experiences as a child who experienced sexual abuse. She also shared with participants what kept her silent, the warning signs missed in school and at home and information about Erin’s Law and why sexual abuse curriculum is important in schools. Discussion topics also included the following: the family dynamics of addiction, DBT skills group for adolescents, neurobiology of trauma, trends in child abuse and exposure to trauma, addressing the impact of child abuse on health, and the Introduction to the Interdiction for the Protection of Children Program (IPC). Each year Champions for Children are recognized at the summit for demonstrating exceptional commitment to the prevention of child abuse and neglect or the promotion of protection of the children in our county. This year we had four judges who reviewed nominations and selected the winners: Johnny Wilson, Fayetteville Urban Ministry, Kimmie Nettles, Cumberland Community Foundation, Lauren Falls, Cool Spring Downtown Association and Julie Lee Jacobs, Behavioral Child & Family Health at Womack Army Medical Center.

THE WINNERS OF THE 2023 CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN AWARDS FOR THEIR WORK DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2023 WERE:

GROUP/AGENCY AWARD – Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office Special Victims and Youth Services Units

This is a team that works to fight against child abuse each and every day. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Larry Sheets, Senior Sergeant Daniel Frankart and Senior Sergeant Steve Marble this team goes above and beyond to keep Cumberland County’s children and families safe. They continue to advocate for all the children and families in Cumberland County and this past year worked just under 1000 cases.

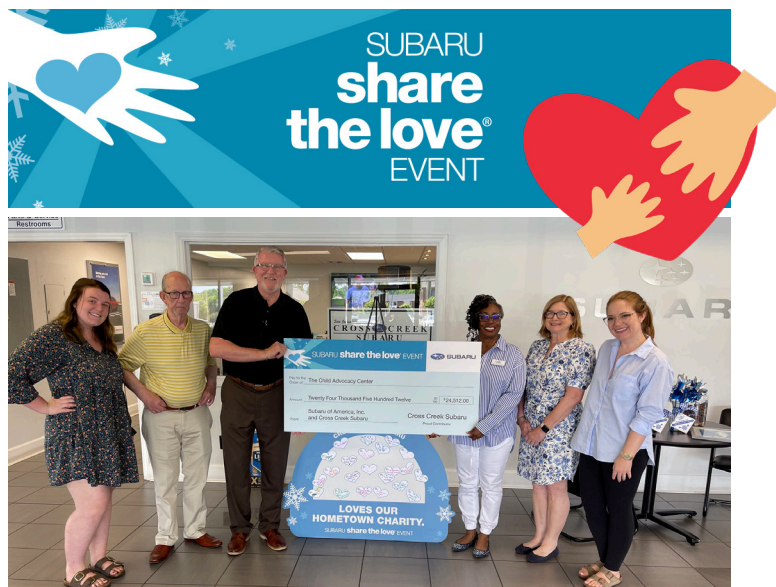
FRANK PIERCE VOLUNTEER AWARD – David Runkle and Quinn

David began volunteering at the CAC with his dog Quinn and uses the advantage of having a therapy dog to bestow the gift of help to the children that come to the Center. David shows true interest in the children and families he interacts with at the Center, helping them find ease in a difficult situation.

ROBERTA J. HUMPHRIES PROFESSIONAL AWARD –

Dr. Natasha Scott

Dr. Scott is the Executive Director of Student Services for Cumberland County Schools. Through her exemplary vision and leadership, she has impacted thousands of students, parents, and staff. She has labored for many years working quietly alongside many multidisciplinary partners working to improve the safety and well-being of children in our community. A true visionary Dr. Scott always has a plan to make things better for the students served in Cumberland County Schools. She leads a team of over 200 professionals but despite those responsibilities she keeps a hand in direct services to students as time allows. She has had a direct positive impact on thousands of young people, helping ensure a bright and happy future they all deserve.



CROSS CREEK SUBARU PRESENTS THE CAC WITH PROCEEDS FROM THEIR 2023 SHARE THE LOVE EVENT

Cross Creek Subaru presented a check to the Child Advocacy Center in the amount of \$24,512 from proceeds collected during the Subaru of America’s 2023 Share the Love event. Cross Creek Subaru selected the Child Advocacy Center as their local charity of choice. Pictured L to R: Hailey, Myc and Grant with Subaru, Nadine and Roberta with Child Advocacy Center and Emily with Subaru. The CAC also presented a framed thank you plaque to Grant McMullen, General Sales Manager, for their support of the CAC and our work with children in the community.

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

THE CAC IS VERY GRATEFUL TO OUR CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL BENEFACTORS WHO HAVE AGREED TO BE YEAR-LONG SPONSORS FOR CAC EVENTS.

CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN:



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Snyder Memorial Baptist Church
Lafayette Baptist Church

AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS AND SUPPORTERS WHO HELP US PROVIDE THE VERY BEST SERVICES TO THE CHILD VICTIMS OF ABUSE IN OUR COMMUNITY. WE COULD NOT DO THIS WORK WITHOUT YOUR GENEROSITY.



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WHAT WE DO

A Place of Healing and Hope: Joining hands with community agencies, the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) offers a safe and child-friendly place to interview and provide support for child victims of abuse. The CAC also provides prevention education for parents, professionals, and agencies in our community. We look to a future where all children live in a safe and nurturing environment free from abuse.

During FY 2023, the Child Advocacy Center received 811 cases of reported child abuse. 491 forensic interviews were conducted at the Center. 638 families received Victim Family Advocacy Services, providing direct aid as well as assisting them in accessing needed resources. 127 children attended individual counseling and 21 children participated in group counseling. 1130 people received child abuse prevention and awareness education. Volunteers contributed 1968 hours of service to the CAC. For additional information, please visit CACFAYNC.org.

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(contracted)