



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friday, December 9, 2011

# State House Rally Announces New Jersey Partnership to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ – Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey and the NJ Partnership to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse formally announced the selection of three local coalitions to replicate the “Enough Abuse” campaign throughout the State on Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> on the steps of the State House in Trenton:

- Project Self-Sufficiency (Warren and Sussex Counties)
- PEI Kids (Mercer County)
- Wynona’s House (Newark)

“We’re here today to shift the conversation, to ask the question: what can be done to prevent a single child from ever being abused in the first place?” said Rush Russell, Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey. “And we’re proud to announce that New Jersey is now leading the way in the effort to prevent child sexual abuse before it ever happens.”

Representatives from each site discussed their roles in taking on the task of educating all adults in their local communities – leaders, faith-based organizations, public officials, parents, educators, etc. – about how important prevention is, and how exactly it can and will be done through local training and outreach.

Reverend Darrell Armstrong, recently voted to the board of directors for Prevent Child Abuse America, led a prayer for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. Dr. Allison Blake, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, spoke of the Department’s support for the initiative, which will provide all parents with “the valuable skills needed to prevent abuse overall”. Dr. Martin Finkel and Dr. Esther Deblinger of the CARES Institute spoke of the ease with which parents speak to their children about seatbelt and water safety, but have a difficult time discussing our rights to personal space, a discussion that needs to change. Keith Smith, a survivor of childhood sexual violence, spoke of his support for the initiative, which he described as “a revolutionary transformation in the way we protect our children from sexual abuse.”

Also showing their support for the new initiative were state legislators representing the three sites’ communities and members of the NJ Partnership to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse.

The Enough Abuse Campaign is a grassroots movement that provides adults and communities with the knowledge and skills they need to put an end to the silence surrounding child sexual abuse. The Enough Abuse Campaign was pioneered by the Massachusetts Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Partnership and has been endorsed by the Ms. Foundation for Women and the Center for Disease Control as a “groundbreaking effort”, and one that “breaks the mold” in prevention efforts and strategies.





### **ABOUT PREVENT CHILD ABUSE-NEW JERSEY**

Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey, incorporated in 1979 as the state chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America, works in all twenty-one counties of the state to eliminate child abuse and neglect in all of its forms for all of New Jersey's children. All of the organization's work is research-based and built around nationally-recognized models. The nonprofit coordinates a full spectrum of family support programs including home visitation services, parent education groups, initiatives that promote parental involvement in a child's education, and programs for highly vulnerable families. To learn more or to make a donation toward eliminating child abuse, visit us online at [www.preventchildabusenj.org](http://www.preventchildabusenj.org) or call 1-800-CHILDREN.

(Additional images and video from the event are available upon request.)

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