**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ADULTS STEP UP AND SPEAK OUT TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE**

**YMCAs promoting child protection during National Child Abuse Prevention Month**

**CEDAR KNOLLS, NJ** – The Greater Morristown YMCA is marking Child Abuse Prevention Month with Five Days of Action, April 16-20, 2018. Leading up to Healthy Kids Day®--a national 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 step up and speak out to prevent child sexual abuse.

During April and all year long, the Greater Morristown YMCA encourages adults and organizations in the community to play a vital role in making the Greater Morristown area a safer place for children. By encouraging adults to step up and speak out, we can bring awareness to the issue of child sexual abuse in our communities and foster 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 Carol Armour, President and CEO of the Greater Morristown YMCA. “Together, we can stand up to demand that children are protected and speak out to encourage adults to make it happen in our community. It takes all of us.”

The Greater Morristown YMCA and the YMCA Guardians for Child Protection, with support from YMCA of the USA, Darkness to Light, the Redwoods Group Foundation, and Praesidium have made materials available to help adults learn more about preventing child sexual abuse.

For more information about preventing child sexual abuse visit [www.fivedaysofaction.org](http://www.fivedaysofaction.org).

**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 to have questions answered by trained counselors at no charge.

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**About the Greater Morristown YMCA**

Founded in 1874, The Greater Morristown YMCA, Inc. is an organization focused on youth development, social responsibility and healthy living. As part of one of the nation’s leading non-profit organizations, we work to ensure that the Y is accessible to ALL people, regardless of age, income or background. The Y is a safe place for children and families to play and bond; for youths, adults and seniors to stay fit and socialize; and for community members in need to find a bright spot in their day. We play a critical role in enriching the lives of hundreds of underserved residents by offering financial assistance for programs, services, and memberships through our Annual Support Campaign. Visit us at [www.greatermorristownymca.org](http://www.greatermorristownymca.org) for more information.

**About Darkness to Light**

Darkness to Light is a nonprofit organization with the mission to empower adults to prevent child sexual abuse. Through education and awareness, the organization seeks to create a safer world for children to grow and thrive. Darkness to Light’s flagship program, *Stewards of Children*®, is a one-of-a-kind, award-winning training that teaches adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. More than 1.4 million adults have been trained using the program. For more information, visit [www.D2L.org](http://www.D2L.org).

**About Redwoods Group Foundation**

The Redwoods Group Foundation supports programs that can change the world and helps them reach more people than ever before, through funding and backbone support. We currently focus on child sexual abuse prevention, drowning prevention, and growing the field of social entrepreneurship. For more information, visit www.redwoodsgroup.com/about-us/redwoods-group-foundation.

**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.