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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Council for Children's Rights joins Mecklenburg County agencies to launch 2015 Child Abuse Prevention Month**

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, N.C. – Council for Children's Rights will join other local non-profit agencies and public officials to help launch Mecklenburg County's third annual Child Abuse Prevention Month campaign on Thursday, April 2, at a press conference at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center.

Speakers include the Council's Executive Director Bob Simmons, Mecklenburg County Manager Dena Diorio and Peggy Eagan, director of Mecklenburg County's Department of Social Services. Trevor Fuller, chairman of the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners, and Michael Barnes, Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Charlotte, will read a proclamation declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Joined by schoolchildren, participants will "plant" a pinwheel garden in front of the Government Center following the press conference. The pinwheel has become a symbol of child abuse awareness in North Carolina and across the United States. Shining in the sun, pinwheels are reflective of the bright future all children deserve.

The third annual campaign is organized by the Mecklenburg Child Abuse Prevention Team, which is made up of representatives from government, education, nonprofit and health organizations that work to protect children. These agencies join forces in April because their leaders recognize the need to raise awareness about the critical issue of child abuse. Throughout the month, the team will work to educate Mecklenburg County residents about their legal and moral responsibility to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

The month's awareness and prevention activities begin with the April 2 press conference, which will be held at 10 a.m. The event will take place outside the Government Center, located at 600 E. Fourth St., Charlotte, in the plaza area facing Fourth Street. In the event of rain, the press conference will be held in the lobby of the Government Center.

Pinwheel gardens will be visible across Mecklenburg County this month as volunteers plant the pinwheels at a variety of locations, including local schools, nonprofits and businesses.

For details about upcoming events, ways to help and more information about the Mecklenburg Child Abuse Prevention Team, visit [www.cfcrights.org/issues/pinwheels](http://www.cfcrights.org/issues/pinwheels) or find the team on Facebook and Twitter.

**About Child Abuse Awareness & Prevention Month:** *Since 1983, April has been designated as Child Abuse Awareness & Prevention Month. For the third year, a team of local agencies charged with helping children are combining forces on a public awareness campaign to get the message out about this critical issue and the importance of mandatory reporting of suspected abuse. The Mecklenburg Child Abuse Prevention Team is made up of representatives from various local agencies, including the Council for Children's Rights, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office, the Guardian ad Litem's Office and the GAL Foundation, Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center, YMCA of Greater Charlotte, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, the Mecklenburg County Health Department, the Arts Empowerment Project, the Junior League of Charlotte, Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions, Children's Home Society of North Carolina, A Child's Place and Youth and Family Services.*

**About Council for Children's Rights:** *The Council for Children's Rights (CFCR) is one of the largest and most comprehensive advocacy and legal service programs for children in the Southeast. In our pursuit of solutions to the complex issues affecting children, we are committed to the premise that every child has the fundamental right to be safe, healthy and educated. We do that through individual advocacy, legal representation and addressing broad, community-wide issues through research and policy work. To learn more, please visit [www.cfcrights.org](http://www.cfcrights.org).*

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