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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pilot funds awarded to prevent child sexual abuse

MILWAUKEE (7/2/2009) - Awareness to Action, a statewide initiative focused on the prevention of child sexual abuse, awarded The Sexual Assault Crisis Center, Appleton, Wis., and The Parenting Network, Milwaukee, funding to implement a community-wide pilot program that raises awareness about child sexual abuse. The pilot programs also will:

- Raise awareness about a community's responsibility for child sexual abuse prevention.
- Educate parents and professionals about warning signs of abuse.
- Educate adults and communities about high-risk situations and the warning signs exhibited by potential abusers.
- Build skills and resources in adults to respond appropriately when abuse is suspected.
- Effect policy change.
- Empower youth-and child-serving agencies to improve their internal policies, procedures and trainings related to keeping kids safe from sexual harm.

The Sexual Assault Center and The Parenting Network will work in their respective communities to:

- Form local steering committees and invite partners from throughout the community to participate.
- Schedule Stewards of Children trainings for adults that provide critical information about the signs of abuse, as well as the tools to deal with abuse.
- Work with child serving organizations to train staff and ensure policies protect children from sexual violence.

The mission of The Parenting Network is to strengthen parenting and to prevent child abuse. Since 1977, The Parenting Network has strived to ensure that anyone in a

parenting role – mothers, fathers, grandparents or other relatives raising children, stepparents, foster parents, adoptive parents – can receive information, educational and supportive services to strengthen their capacity to provide a safe and healthy home for their children. Services are free, voluntary and easily accessible.

The Sexual Assault Crisis Center was created to help survivors of all forms of sexual assault or abuse – including recent sexual assaults, past sexual assault, incest, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation, along with their family members are affected friends. The goal of the center is to end sexual violence through prevention and education; and until that end is achieved, to insure that every victim of sexual assault or sexual abuse received support and care to help them find hope and healing, and empower them to survive as a strong person. All of the services offered are free of charge to insure that inability to pay for services will not be an obstacle to getting help.

Awareness to Action helps communities take action to protect children through awareness, education, prevention, advocacy and action. Awareness to Action is a program of Children's Service Society of Wisconsin with funding provided by Children's Hospital and Health System's Child Abuse Prevention Fund and the Wisconsin Children's Trust Fund.

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