



CONTACT: Stacy Deel
WVCAN
304-414-4455 x 8
sdeel@wvcn.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2016

3rd Annual wvCANclimb Hike and Fun Run Set in Kanawha County

Registration is now open

Charleston, WV – On September 17, 2016, hikers across the Kanawha Valley are taking the climb to support children who have experienced abuse through the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN) and CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital Children’s Advocacy Center.

Registration is open for individuals and teams to join us for the 3rd Annual **wvCANclimb** at Kanawha State Forest, Shelter 8. This event celebrates the spirit of Wild, Wonderful West Virginia and honors the healing journey child survivors of abuse make with help from caring professionals.

Established in 2006, WVCAN is the network that coordinates and provides a comprehensive response to child abuse in West Virginia. WVCAN’s membership roster includes 20 developing and established child advocacy centers (CACs) in West Virginia’s major cities, as well as in small rural communities. CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital Children’s Advocacy Center is the Charleston-based CAC.

“This year, we are teaming up with our local CAC to rally the community together for this important cause,” says WVCAN Executive Director Emily Chittenden-Laird. “Because child abuse can be an isolating crime of secrecy, an event like this changes the conversation – it makes it clear to children that their community supports them in their road to recovery.”

In the Kanawha Valley, 519 children were seen at the CAC at CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital. They have seen a 73% increase in the number of forensic interviews conducted in the last 5 years and a 40% increase in the last 2 years. Statewide, CACs served 3,294 children. The CAC is a child-friendly facility with staff that works to provide children and families professional, compassionate care in order to reduce the trauma often experienced by children that are victims of abuse. Families are never charged for services at the center.

wvCANclimb is open to the public and is a fun way to enjoy the outdoors and spend quality time with family and friends – all for a good cause. In addition to “mild” and “wild” guided hikes, there is a 5k-ish Fun Run added this year. Event registration will begin at 8:30 am, and the Hike and Fun Run will start at 9:30 am.

wvCANclimb raises funds through pledges and sponsorships. If you would like more information about wvCANclimb, contact WVCAN at 304-414-4455 or visit wvcn.org/events. Event hashtag is #WVCANCLIMB.

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CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital Children’s Advocacy Center

The CAC at CAMC Women and Children’s Hospital is a child friendly facility with staff that works to provide children and families professional, compassionate care in order to reduce the trauma often experienced by children that are victims of abuse. Rather than having a child taken from agency to agency to endure multiple interviews, the CAC model brings the system to the child for an effective, child-centered, healing process. The CAC works within a multidisciplinary model that includes child protection, law enforcement and other treatment professionals with the goal of holding offenders accountable and facilitating healing for the child. Families are never charged for services at the CAC.

West Virginia Child Advocacy Network (WVCAN)

WVCAN is a statewide coalition of Child Advocacy Centers and is dedicated to helping local communities respond to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient and put the needs of child abuse victims first. As the state membership body for 20 Child Advocacy Centers, WVCAN provides training, technical assistance, leadership, legislative and policy advocacy, and overall coordination to Child Advocacy Centers and multidisciplinary teams around the state as well as developing centers, multidisciplinary teams and child abuse professionals. As a statewide leader on multidisciplinary approaches to supporting child victims of abuse, WVCAN’s purpose is to empower local communities to provide comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse.