



April's Champions for Children tournament & dinner **raised over \$130,000** for the SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center.

Thank you sponsors, event attendees, auction donors, and volunteers!

Director's Message

The conversation is always uncomfortable and the topic is jolting. No one wishes to discuss sexual abuse over coffee or cocktails. Yet the issue is as common place as are the 660,000 known adult survivors of abuse in Virginia. And no thanks to community members, like Rolly Hammond, a daycare worker in nearby elementary schools who was recently arrested by Fairfax County Detectives for multiple counts of aggravated sexual battery, forcible sodomy, and indecent liberties by a custodian, there will be many more adult survivors in our near future. Rolly single handedly increased the need to speak up.

Whether you are a survivor or not, the conversations are a must. Without discussion, preventing child sexual abuse is all but, impossible. Without discussion, children experiencing abuse feel isolated and without options. Alone, each child feels like a single star in the darkness. Little do they know, there is an entire Milky Way, full of life-saving resources and survivors! In fact, there are over 25,000,000 known adult survivors living in the United States. If each of these 25 million single stars brought attention to this crime and epidemic, the feelings of isolation and desperation will become fewer, and stigmas linked to the need for help will dissipate. Children will seek help sooner!

Together, we can form constellations, galaxies and a universe of support for one another!

We can only hope that more and more survivors will thrive within this embrace of community and mutual support! The advancement of mental health science will continue and its availability will broaden under this new sense of popularity. Safe havens, like our nation's children's advocacy centers, will be able to help ALL those who walk through their doors. And survivors will become the most courageous and dedicated child advocates of all!

So speak about sexual abuse over coffee and cocktails! Converse openly on sidelines, in schools, at places of worship, and within your homes - all of the locations where sexual abuse needs to be replaced by wonderful childhood memories. Speak about the horrors and havens, myths and truths, turmoil and calm. No doubt, these conversations can be uncomfortable. But, talking creates a force more powerful than pain -- a societal wave of truth, accountability, and healing.

Best,

2019 Champions For Children Huge Success!



This year's event raised over \$130,000! Many appreciation-packed thank yous to the dozens of volunteers, 37 sponsors, 235 attendees, and auction item donors, who all played integral roles in fostering this marvelous result. Our auctioneer, Phil Simonides, was a fantastic addition to the evening's festivities. And the room was incredibly moved by the lifelong efforts of Mary Hale, Director of the Inova Forensic Assessment and Consultation Team, and by the very personal story of key note speaker, Caitlin Knittig, co-founder of We Support The Girls.

The sponsorships alone, reaped a sell-out slew of foursomes and generated \$106K. Auction items were also a tremendous hit this year, earning \$45K. The SafeSpot Children's Center of Fairfax could not be more grateful for these figures, people, and dollars alike! Annually, SafeSpot relies on this event to provide critical funding for programs and staff growth.

Our organization would be remiss if many thanks were not given to Angelique Bennett and Andy Klaff, for co-chairing this multi-faceted, extremely time consuming event. Your time and efforts were greatly valued and appreciated!

Please see a smattering of Tournament photos below.

And for a listing of this year's Champions for Children Sponsors, please [click here](#).

Child Abuse Prevention Month Proclamation Recap

SafeSpot Launched a New Website!

SafeSpot Has a New Website!



Check out our new look!
www.safespotfairfax.org

Here We Grow Again!



SafeSpot recently hired three new staff members. Please find below, more information about these newly filled positions and the bios of our new team members.

Family Advocate:

Tyler Lunsford comes to SafeSpot after years of work with child and adult victims of abuse in Florida's Child Protective Services, Doorways for Women and Families in Arlington, and within the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Tyler is also currently working on her Master's in Forensic and Legal Psychology.

Forensic Interviewer:

Anissa Tanksley worked as a Forensic Interviewer at two child advocacy centers in Maine, where she has conducted over 200 forensic interviews. Prior to working within these CAC's, she was the



On April 9th, SafeSpot co-hosted a reception at the Fairfax County Government Center, directly preceding the Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month Proclamation. Several Board of Supervisors spoke about the horrors of child abuse and the need for our communities to act, while all Supervisors were present to make this Proclamation. As displayed in the photo below, dozens of SafeSpot multidisciplinary team members, staff, and volunteers were in attendance to show support for this cause.

For more about the proclamation and reception: [Click here](#)



SafeSpot Raises Nearly \$5,000 in the "Do More 24" Initiative

As a newly designated member of United Way, SafeSpot was invited to participate in their "Do More 24" fundraising campaign. This campaign has become the DMV area's largest, 24-hour, online fundraiser. It was also a tremendous opportunity for SafeSpot Ambassadors to rally support from friends, neighbors, and family during this short, but intense challenge.

A special thank you to a few of our dedicated ambassadors, Michelle Kingsley Becca Bickel, Sammy von Blommestein, Bootsie Humenansky, and Michele Thames! Wonderful results were achieved via their outreach and sharing of SafeSpot's story. Their efforts are greatly appreciated as are the many people who generously donated!

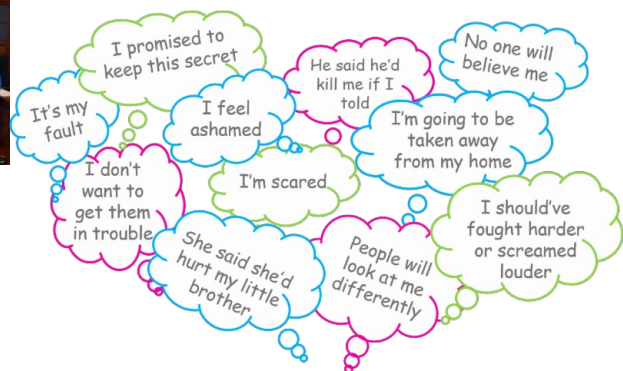
Community Outreach Educator for Sexual Assault Support Services of Mid-coast Maine for six years. Anissa's experience also includes coordinating multidisciplinary teams and national accreditation processes.

Therapist:

Lindsay Bullock has extensive experience as a counselor and therapist in both individual and group settings. Most recently, Lindsay was the sole Program Therapist for all mental health services needed in the transitional housing program within the Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington organization. She also facilitated individual and family therapy to children, and delivered individual and group counseling and crisis intervention to individuals in an inpatient psychiatric hospital. Lastly, Bullock worked at a Juvenile Development Program, where she facilitated group art therapy, and led creative interventions for children in after school programs, who were deemed as "at-risk" individuals.

Welcome to the team, Tyler, Anissa and Lindsay!

Why Kids Don't Tell



Thames Speaks at Ceremony Honoring Victims of Crimes



SafeSpot's Executive Director, Michele

Having almost reached a first-time goal of \$5,000, this fundraiser is just the beginning of a very fruitful, annual tradition!

Thames, was invited to speak at the Office for Victims of Crime, during the National Crime Victim Rights Week ceremony. This year's theme was "Honoring Our Past and Creating Hope for The Future," which celebrated the progress made by those before us as we look to a future with additional inclusive, accessible, and trauma-informed services.

Keep Your Eyes Peeled!



Date to be released soon for this sell-out event!



The Issue, Plain and Simple

Every 8 minutes a child is sexually assaulted



- 1 in 10 children are sexually assaulted by age 18
- Fairfax County reports an average of 2,200 valid cases of child abuse & neglect each year
- The average child molester victimizes between 30 and 60 children before they are ever arrested
- The most common age at which sexual abuse begins is 3
- The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that on average, there is 1 child molester per square mile

Sources: RAINN, FCP, SCAN



2019 Champions For Children Event Photos





[Visit our website](#)

OUR MISSION:

The mission of SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center of Fairfax County is to provide a child-friendly, culturally sensitive environment that promotes the safety and well-being of child victims of abuse while facilitating a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary team approach to the intervention, investigation, prosecution and treatment of sexual abuse and severe physical abuse.

STAY CONNECTED

