

NEWS RELEASE

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For
Children's Cove
The Cape & Islands Child Advocacy Center



Children's Cove Celebrates D-Y Teen TASK Force Success *Cape Teens Raise Awareness of Child Sexual Abuse*

Hyannis, MA – Children's Cove: The Child Advocacy Center for the Cape and Islands, held its sixth and final session with the Dennis-Yarmouth High School Teen TASK (Taking a Stand for Kids) Force. The group of 14 volunteers, sophomores at D-Y, worked together to learn about and raise awareness of child sexual abuse issues on Cape Cod as well as the programs and services Children's Cove provides to victims. The mission of the Teen TASK Force is to engage teens by empowering them to advocate for teens to step forward about abuse and to educate their peers on child abuse issues.

The Teen TASK Force started its six-monthly sessions in December and met with Children's Cove staff as well as partner agencies such as the Barnstable County's District Attorney's office, Barnstable Counties Sheriff's Office, the Yarmouth Police Department, Barnstable Superior Court and more.

In addition to education, throughout the sessions the TASK Force was divided into three teams to develop their own social media awareness campaign, using a variety of platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat. Each team had a separate week to implement their public awareness project in April, Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month.

“We recognized the fact that the best way from teens to hear the message about child sexual abuse would be from their peers” stated Stacy Gallagher, Director of Children's Cove, “They taught us a lot about how their peers interact online, and the best way to present information in a meaningful way.”

By the end of May, with their combined effort through use of social media and in person communication, the Teen TASK Force had directly reached over 500 students, teachers, parents and friends with the message of child sexual abuse awareness and their messages of support were viewed more than 9,000 times as identified by online view metrics and interaction.

“We were blown away” said Gallagher “it was incredible to see their success, creativity and passion to not only the idea of raising awareness, but supporting victims who have not come forward yet and encouraging them to get the support they need.”

The Teen TASK Force celebrated their participation and achievement with a ceremony and gathering at Children's Cove along with their parents and staff from D-Y Regional High School. Children's Cove has shared their success with some other school districts on the Cape, and are hoping to launch a new Teen TASK Force next school year.

Children's Cove, a department of Barnstable County, has been the Cape and the Island's Childrens Advocacy Center since 1997. Children's Cove provides coordinated and comprehensive multidisciplinary services to child victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, witness to domestic violence and child sexual exploitation and trafficking. To learn more visit www.ChildrensCove.org

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