For Immediate Release  
Paths to Healing Conference  
Goodman Community Center, Madison  
8a-5p, June 11, 2015  
Contact: Peter Fiala @ (608) 257-1516 or Callen Harty @ (608) 469-6686

For the third consecutive year several Wisconsin organizations have partnered to put together Paths to Healing, a one-day conference on surviving childhood sex abuse that will be held this year from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at the Goodman Community Center in Madison on Thursday, June 11.

Sponsored by Solidarity with Child Sex Abuse Victims/Survivors, Rape Crisis Center, Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA), OutReach Inc., Canopy Center, Proud Theater, and UNIDOS the day-long conference will focus on healing and survival, particularly among male survivors, an often underserved population in the sexual assault advocacy community.

Conference organizers are very pleased to present Matt Sandusky as the keynote speaker this year. Sandusky is a motivational speaker, child sex abuse survivor, co-founder of Peaceful Hearts Foundation, and an advocate and activist for the issue of child sex abuse. He is the son of convicted child sex offender Jerry Sandusky, a former assistant coach at Penn State University.

The Jerry Sandusky sex abuse scandal was one of the most highly publicized sex abuse cases in history. During the trial Matthew Sandusky disclosed that his adopted father, Jerry Sandusky, had sexually abused him between the ages of ten and 16. His disclosure interview to police was leaked by the media and he and his family were placed in the center of the media firestorm. After that traumatic experience he decided to take on the role of advocate for sex abuse survivors.

Matthew Sandusky works to give survivors a voice to raise awareness of an epidemic that is still mostly silent. He also shows survivors there is hope and that healing does happen. By speaking publicly he hopes to bring more awareness to the fact that males are sexually abused and that help is needed. As the co-founder of Peaceful Hearts Foundation, along with his wife, Kim, he works to promote stronger statute of limitation laws, education for children and adults, stronger mandated reporting laws and other legislation, and has created a survivor fund to help alleviate the costs of treatment for child sex abuse survivors.

The conference will open with socializing and networking from 8:00-8:45 a.m. That will be followed by an introduction to the day’s events by Dane County Supervisor Kyle Richmond at 8:45 a.m. Matt Sandusky’s keynote speech will follow and officially kick off the day’s presentations. Throughout the day there will be breakout sessions geared to both professionals and survivors, with a lunch midway through the day. The afternoon
will close with a community panel discussion, which Sandusky will also join, on engaging and empowering survivors.

Breakout sessions are split into a community track and a survivor track. Attendees are welcome to choose between tracks.

COMMUNITY TRACK:
Latino Survivors, by Veronica Lazos/UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence
Transgender Survivors, by Michael Munson/Forge
Human Trafficking, by Tyler Schueffner/Briarpatch

SURVIVOR TRACK:
Coping Skills, by Lucy McLellan and Owen Karcher/Canopy Center
Mindfulness Meditation, by Amanda Hellenbrand/Red Tail Hypnosis
Healthy Boundaries, by Shelby Mitchell/Safe Haven

The conference started in 2013 when survivor Callen Harty decided he wanted to bring the film, *Boys and Men Healing*, to Madison. He approached Kelly Anderson at the Rape Crisis Center and together they decided to expand that idea into a one-day conference on survival. He then contacted other organizations for sponsorship and support and several decided to partner to put on this important event. Harty, Anderson, Angie Rehling of OutReach, and Peter Fiala and Naomi Takahashi of WCASA comprised the planning group this year.

The sponsoring organizations are non-profit so funding is always needed to ensure expenses are covered. Donations may be mailed to OutReach, Inc., 600 Williamson Street, Suite P-1, Madison, WI 53703. Checks should be made out to OutReach but must be marked for Paths to Healing to ensure the funds go to the right account.

The cost of the conference is $40 in advance or $50 at the door and covers the entire day, including lunch. For more information on the conference please visit the WCASA website (www.wcasa.org) and click on the events link or visit the Facebook event page, Paths to Healing. Advance registration is through the website or contact WCASA directly. Some scholarships are available.

For additional information or questions contact Peter Fiala at WCASA at (608) 257-1516 or Callen Harty at (608) 469-6686.

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