

Chester County District Attorney's Office

DEBORAH RYAN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY



201 W. Market St., Suite 4450
Post Office Box 2746
West Chester, PA 19380-0991
Phone: 610-344-6801
Fax: 610-344-5905

PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact Michelle Bjork, Director of Communications, at mbjork@chesco.org or 610-344-6820.

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DA's Office Offers Free Child Abuse Prevention Training

The Chester County District Attorney's Office (DAO) announces free child abuse prevention classes under the guidance of Charlotte Fabian, the new County Coordinator in charge of the *Stewards of Children* programs. *Stewards of Children* is a child sexual abuse prevention training program that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. The training will be delivered by the Crime Victims' Center of Chester County, Inc. (CVC).

Chester County District Attorney Deb Ryan said, "This is a subject close to my heart. I spent years overseeing the child abuse unit, prosecuting some of the most horrific cases, and serving as a previous county coordinator dedicated to eradicating child abuse. *Stewards of Children* puts the responsibility for protecting our children into the hands of the adults. During the pandemic, we have to remain extra vigilant in keeping eyes on our children. Charlotte Fabian has an outstanding reputation working with children, and she is the perfect person to push *Stewards of Children* out into our community."

Fabian will bring more awareness to the training by encouraging community participation to reduce child sexual abuse prevalence. A native of Canada, Fabian worked as a child advocate at the CVC and in the DAO's victim-witness unit. She is currently pursuing her Masters in Social Work.

“I’m very excited for this opportunity to help the children in our county. The need for child sexual abuse awareness is more critical during the COVID-19 pandemic because with many children learning from home, there is less opportunity for teachers to see something suspicious,” said Fabian. “Sixty percent of the people who call Childline are teachers, all of whom are mandated reporters.”

Stewards of Children is a two-hour virtual workshop that includes real-life stories from child sexual abuse survivors and strategies from experts on preventing sexual abuse from happening. It is designed for parents, mandated reporters, organizations that serve youth, and anyone concerned about child safety. Nearly 200 *Stewards of Children* workshops have been held over the past three years across Chester County, training over 5,000 adults.

The program is funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency and is part of the Safe and Healthy Communities Initiative created by Penn State University.

A *Stewards of Children* virtual workshop, which is open to the public, will be held Friday, Feb. 19, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. Sign up [here](#).

One in ten children in the United States will be sexually abused before they turn 18. Child sexual abuse survivors are more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol, drop out of school, have a teenage pregnancy, and/or suffer from depression. Reports of child abuse and child pornography are on the rise in Chester County. Between 2015 and 2019, there was a 45% increase in Childline calls, while child pornography and Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) saw a 300% increase between 2015 and 2020.

The DAO will be offering free training for the rest of the year. For more information about [Stewards of Children](#), or to sign up for a training, please contact Charlotte Fabian at cfabian@chesco.org or 610-344-6115.

If you suspect child abuse, call Childline at 1-800-932-0313.

Approved for release by Deborah Ryan, District Attorney