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**SAFENOWPROJECT'S NATIONAL ROLE IN THE SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY OF
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING DIRECT SERVICES IN THE
IDENTIFICATION AND PREVENTION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

TRENTON, MO... As a society we spend more to protect our material investments than the protection of our children from the threat and harm of sexual violence. Child sexual abuse is one of the biggest social problems today, shattering the innocence of thousands of children each year and leaving in its wake devastating long-term personal and societal consequences.

Reaching epidemic proportions, the statistics are staggering. By age 18, one in three girls and one in six boys will have had to face the emotional and physical trauma associated with various forms of sexual victimization including rape, molestation, exploitation or child pornography. For most, this victimization will have devastating long term personal impact that has been evidenced to result in various forms of emotional, medical and family dysfunction in following generations.

The societal costs of this shattered innocence are huge and long-lasting, including

- \$4.1 billion each year spent on healthcare and mental health services for victims; and
- Nearly \$6 billion each year in incarceration of convicted perpetrators.

SAFENOWPROJECT seeks to create a paradigm shift that bridges the gap between the criminal justice professionals: responsible for community protection and the management of known sexual perpetrators, and the first responders: child advocates, medical professionals and prevention specialists who work separately to provide child victims and their families with the necessary services they need and deserve. These distinct groups must forge new partnerships to actively collaborate to make prevention a priority. This will require public policy leadership to support necessary continued education opportunities, cross training and funding for advances in technology designed to improve the access and efficiency of communications among victim and offender service providers and the community at large.

As a national 501c3 nonprofit organization that creates, promotes and advocates strategies and resources that eliminate child sexual abuse, SAFENOWPROJECT is distinguished by its unique, positive, nonthreatening approach to practical prevention education and their ability to develop and sustain important collaborations at regional, state and national levels. SAFENOWPROJECT is committed to education, advocacy and public policy leadership and supports improved access for citizens and professionals to new and innovative evidence-based prevention practices and resources.

As part of SAFENOWPROJECT's mission to promote empirically based resources to communities across the country, SAFENOWPROJECT has negotiated a special discount on publications providing community-based medical, legal, social service, and law enforcement communities with the resources they need to combat child abuse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, child trafficking, and other maltreatment. As the leading publisher on clinical and forensic publications, G.W. Medical Publishing has made a commitment to donate a percentage of the proceeds of all sales to support SAFENOWPROJECT's community education and awareness initiatives.

According to Margaret Bullens, Founder of SAFENOWPROJECT, "Primary prevention can be best achieved by developing programs that reduce a child's vulnerability for harm, including sexual abuse, while increasing self protections and self worth. Overall prevention and community protection will require citizen, organization, and public policy commitment to a collective, comprehensive set of actions that value and promote safety."