



Center for **Prevention Services**

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The Center for Prevention Services Throws First Annual Stigma Unmasked Masquerade Ball:

Masquerade Ball will celebrate 45 years of changing cope into hope

Charlotte, N.C. – The Center for Prevention Services (CPS), a private non-profit agency that offers services and programs to prevent alcohol, tobacco and substance use among children and adolescents, announced today that it will hold its first annual *Stigma Unmasked* Masquerade Ball to celebrate the agency's 45 year history of substance use prevention in the Charlotte community. The masquerade ball is set for October 29, 2016 at the Big Chill in Charlotte.

By the late 1960s, the problem of drug use had become widespread among youth and was slowly creeping from college campuses into public and private schools across the nation. In 1969, the Charlotte Medical Society carried out a survey that found a significant amount of drug use within high schools and middle schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area. To address this local epidemic, a group of concerned residents and community organizations banded together to confront this issue.

In September of 1971, with the support of the Junior League of Charlotte, Dr. Jonnie H. McLeod founded the Charlotte Drug Education Center (later renamed the Center for Prevention Services in 2011) to provide drug prevention services to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. Although recovery and treatment centers were set up locally, Dr. McLeod and other concerned residents recognized that not enough attention was paid to services designed to prevent drug abuse before it destroyed an individual's life. From that point, CPS's founding team set out to implement drug education programs that adopted people-centered approaches to prevention and healthy living.

The theme for the masquerade ball is *45 years of turning cope into hope*. Since 1971, CPS has continued its primary mission of employing evidence-based programs that empower individuals, families, and communities to adopt healthy behaviors and lifestyles that reduce the risk of substance abuse. To honor this legacy, CPS aims to raise awareness about the harms of substance use and mental health stigmas in order to build supportive communities that encourage people with these disorders to seek treatment.

The masquerade ball will be an upscale event with dancing and a silent auction that features a mixture of luxury and entertainment items. During the night, an individual or organization that has demonstrated exemplary service in the field of prevention will be awarded the Jonnie H. Mcleod Award of Excellence. Non-profit leaders, business professionals and community members will be in attendance from various counties surrounding Charlotte such as Davidson, Rowan, Cabarrus, Stanly, Mecklenburg and Union.

Proceeds from the event will fund prevention education services to school children, community organizations and other prevention-related programs.

For more information on the Stigma Unmasked Masquerade Ball or CPS, please visit our website at www.preventionservices.org/events or contact Angela Allena at allen@preventionservices.org. Follow our hashtags #StigmaUnmaskCLT and #45YearsofPrevention on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and LinkedIn for key updates about the event.

About the Center for Prevention Services (CPS)

The Center for Prevention Services is a private, non-profit agency that offers programs and services to help prevent alcohol, tobacco and substance use among children and adolescents. Established in 1971, CPS promotes health and prevents addictions by providing classroom instruction and community education for youth, families, schools, organizations, workplaces and neighborhoods. To accomplish this, the agency partners with parents, educators and community leaders to implement research-based prevention programs that meet the specific needs of the community. In addition, CPS offers a confidential phone service that provides prevention information and referrals. Lines are open Monday-Friday, 8am–5pm, at (704)375-3784. To learn more about the Center for Prevention Services, visit our website at www.preventionservices.org.



/Stigmaunmasked



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/Stigmaunmaskedmasqueradeball



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Unmasking The Stigma of Addiction

The Burden of Stigma

What is something that everyone can hold, but no one can touch? Answer – a belief. Though intangible, beliefs have a very profound effect on the world we live in; they can either inspire us to do great things or lead us into life’s darkest alleys.

In much the same way, substance use and mental health stigmas weigh heavily upon those who struggle to overcome addiction and other behavioral challenges.

Not only are these individuals fighting an uphill battle against their disorder, but against public perception, too. Often, words like “addict” or “alcoholic” are used indifferently in public discourse, implying that addiction is the product of moral flaw or an inability to control oneself. For children and adolescents, exposure to these labels can be particularly injurious to their long-term development and confidence. This results in feelings of shame and guilt that can lead to the foregoing of treatment completely, pushing them further down the path of addiction. But there is something we can do.



public awareness of addiction, we deliver educational presentations and professional trainings to parents, teachers, clergymen, employers, and healthcare providers. By sharing evidence-based prevention strategies, we can inspire people at the community-level to take action and build supportive networks that inspire honest conversations about ways to help those at-risk for addiction. Furthermore, we can empower youth to overcome the stigma of addiction through building self-confidence and providing platforms that allow them to share their stories without judgement or experiencing social isolation.

What You Can Do

In the meantime, let’s consider another, equally powerful idea - people can change. Not only can someone with a substance use and mental health disorder begin to embrace a more positive self-image and behavior, but we can help them create that image through shifting our own attitudes. Though we can’t choose who we are and the struggles we inherit, we can change the way we think. Through more inclusive language and thoughtful action, stigmas can become a thing of the past. In addition, CPS welcomes sponsors for this event who will help us to continue prevention education services for school children, community organizations and other prevention-related programs.

To learn more about our sponsorships, please visit our website at preventionservices.org.

Unmasking the Stigma

CPS invites you to its first annual *Stigma Unmasked* Masquerade Ball to uncover the truth about stigmas surrounding substance use and mental health disorders. Countless studies have demonstrated that addiction-related behaviors spring from multiple sources – everything from traumatic childhood experiences to our own genetics. Either way, pinpointing the root of addiction can be complicated. Taking this into consideration, CPS believes that education is the first step toward changing public perceptions of mental health and substance use. To strengthen





What is the Stigma Unmasked Masquerade Ball?

The Stigma Unmasked Masquerade Ball is an annual fundraiser aimed at shedding light on the harms of mental health and substance use stigmas in order to raise money for prevention programs.

Where will the event take place?

The masquerade ball will take place at the Big Chill which is located at 911 E. Morehead St., Suite #100, Charlotte, N.C. 28204.

Who will be in attendance?

Non-profit leaders, business professionals and community members who share an interest in prevention or simply like to get dressed up to support a cause.

What should I wear to the ball?

This is a black tie event so fellas should show up in tuxedos (Bond style) and dames in their finest cocktail dresses. And of course, bring a sexy mask to wear for the night.

How can I become a sponsor for this event?

To become a sponsor for this event, e-mail Angela Allen, the agency's executive director, at allen@preventionservices.org.

What will my sponsorship support?

Money from sponsorships will support prevention education services for school children, community organizations and other prevention-related programs.

Are sponsorships industry-exclusive?

No. We invite businesses and organizations from all industries to become sponsors.

Where do I purchase tickets?

To purchase tickets, visit our events page at www.preventionservices.org/events.

What are others to get involved with this cause?

Have you or someone you know struggled with substance use? Take to social media and share stories about the obstacles you have faced in life and what you did to overcome them using the hashtag #StigmaUnmaskedCLT.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a white dress and a white mask with intricate black patterns. She has dramatic eye makeup and is looking directly at the camera.

*Stigma Unmasked
Masquerade Ball*

October 29th, 2016

7 pm ~ 10:30 pm

Big Chill

911 E. Morehead St., Suite 100

Charlotte, NC 28204

Live Entertainment Silent Auction

This is a formal event

Celebrating 45 years of changing cope into hope!

Where It All Began

45 years ago something special

happened that forever changed the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. While the nation's colleges, schools and neighborhoods were being quietly infiltrated by drugs, a group of concerned citizens stood up and said "no more". Led by visionary Dr. Jonnie McLeod, these community members banded together to build the city's first drug prevention center.

Conceived in 1971, the Charlotte Drug Prevention Center became ground zero for addressing the growing epidemic of substance use in Charlotte-Mecklenburg public schools. Current practices at the time were reactive; they focused on treating someone *after* they had fallen deep into the cycle of addiction. However, the DEC decided to move in a different direction. Instead, time and energy was spent on proactive approaches that involved multiple components rooted in science-based research, education and community outreach. That same year, the Junior League of Charlotte pledged \$25,000 for the next three years to help the center grow and accomplish its mission. Shortly after, the Junior League Research Committee appointed a Board of Directors, hired its first director in Dr. Jonnie McLeod, and set up a small office on Morehead Street.

In the years following, DEC would continue to be a trailblazer in the prevention services field. In 1975, the center would be recognized as one of twenty drug education programs selected to participate in the National Substance Abuse Prevention Forum held in Omaha, Nebraska. Later, the *Ombudsman*, a substance abuse prevention curriculum designed for middle school students, was approved to be included in the U.S. Office of Education's National Diffusion Network. Over the years, many more honors were received and milestones met that lended further credibility to the center's efforts.

Today, wearing the new name Center for Prevention Services, the agency continues to show remarkable growth. What started as two employees in a small office, has now grown to 11 full-time and 2 part-time staff. In 2015, CPS's annual budget surpassed \$800k for the first time in its history.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CENTER FOR PREVENTION SERVICES



1969

Dr. Jonnie H. McLeod founds the Open House Counseling Service, later renamed the McLeod

1970

Drug Abuse Steering Committee is organized. First Youth Drug Survey is implemented in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools.



1971

With the support of the Junior League of Charlotte, Dr. McLeod starts the Charlotte Drug Education Center.



1975

CPS is among 20 agencies in the nation selected to represent its drug education programs at the National Substance Abuse Prevention Forum in Omaha, Nebraska.

1979

The U.S. Office of Education (USOE) approves ombudsman curriculum for inclusion in USOE's National Diffusion Network.

1980S-90S

1 of 3 drug prevention programs with school-based component invited to testify in Washington before the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control

1989

Dr. McLeod receives Governor's Award of Excellence.

1998

Agency's name is changed to Substance Abuse Prevention Services to better represent varied programs.



2004

Dr. McLeod is recognized with Lifetime Achievement Award by the North Carolina Foundation for Alcohol and Drug studies.



Center for Prevention Services

2011

Name changed to Center of Prevention Services to celebrate the agency's 40th anniversary. Later, the *I'm Special* curriculum is accepted into the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices.

2015

I'm Special curriculum is rebranded and



2016

named *Unique You*.

Today, CPS provides services in five surrounding counties - Rowan, Union, Stanly, Davidson, Cabarrus. In that time, the agency has impacted the community, delivering presentations and trainings locally, nationally and internationally.

Programs & Services

“Prevention is a proactive process. It empowers individuals and systems to meet the challenges of life events and transitions by creating and reinforcing conditions that promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles.”

Our Mission

The Center for Prevention Services (CPS) is a non-profit, 501(c) (3) organization whose mission is to promote healthy living and prevent use and related behavioral challenges through integrated approaches to health.

Who We Serve

CPS provides educational programs and community outreach across six Charlotte-Mecklenburg counties that include Cabarrus, Davidson, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union. In short, we reach elementary to college-aged youth in the Charlotte community.

Programs/Services

We offer several evidence-based prevention programs and services that empower individuals to meet life’s challenges by creating and reinforcing healthy behaviors and lifestyles which reduce risk that contribute to alcohol, tobacco and other drug misuse. We also have programs offered in Spanish.

Some of our signature programs include:



CPS designed this evidence-based program to build self-esteem in 3rd and 4th graders. Children in the program learn coping, cooperation and decision-making skills.



Alianza provides environmental prevention, education and alternative activities in a family oriented, inclusive manner that addresses mind, body and spirit in order to inspire change for Latino youth, families and communities.

Partnership for Success

Partnership for Success (PFS) is designed to educate and unite communities to prevent prescription medication misuse and abuse. The goal is to raise awareness and address environmental factors for prevention and sustainability in Cabarrus, Rowan and Davidson Counties.

Programs & Services

School-Based Programs

Health Alternatives for Little Ones (HALO) – An evidence-based, developmentally appropriate health education and prevention program for 3-6 year-old children.

Learn to Lead- A program aimed at establishing leadership among youth. Program focuses on developing youth's skills in the area of self-understanding, leadership, and substance use prevention.

Safe Dates- An evidence-based dating violence prevention program for middle and high school students.

Reconnecting Youth- A program that helps high-risk youth achieve in school and decrease drug use, anger, depression, and suicidal behavior. Designed for students aged 14-18, RY is a high school-based curriculum that uses small group skills training to enhance personal competencies and social support resources.



Community-Based Programs

Drug Line – A confidential service, available 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday for information and referral. To reach our drug line, call (704)375-3784.

Safe Homes- A parenting and educational program aimed at improving parent-child relationships by emphasizing the importance of effective communication, family quality time, clear rules and consequences about substance use, consistency in enforcing rules and consequences.



Youth Drug Survey

The Youth Drug Survey is a longitudinal self-report survey conducted every 2 to 4 years to determine incidence and prevalence of substance use and misuse among youth in Mecklenburg County.



Professional Development Series

CPS provides bi-monthly professional training sessions that offer North Carolina Substance Abuse Professional Practice Board (NCSAPPB) credits. We have partnered with 3rd Millennium Classrooms to offer online prevention trainings in alcohol, marijuana and parent education.



Meet our Team

Angela Allen, Executive Director



Angela received her bachelor's degree in 1997 from Belmont Abbey College in psychology. In 2005, she received her master's degree in Industrial Organizational Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Prior to becoming the executive director at CPS, Angela was deeply involved in the prevention community. She served on the United Way Mental Health and Substance Abuse Council ('02-'05), the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition ('07-'12), as BASICS Substance Abuse Coordinator at UNCC, Associate Director of Administrative Services at UNC Charlotte Union Health Center ('12), and on the Board of Directors for CPS as a member and chair. As the executive director, she provides the overall vision and leadership for the agency through strategic planning, grant writing, plan implementation, and program evaluation to maintain organizational sustainability.

LaKeisha McCormick, Operations Director



LaKeisha is a native of Charlotte, NC. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and a Master of Arts in Health Administration from Pfeiffer University. Currently LaKeisha serves as the Operations Director and *I'm Special* Curriculum Master Trainer for the Center for Prevention Services, where she manages and coordinates community programs. With over ten years of experience in public health, LaKeisha has worked to promote wellness through prevention of teenage pregnancy and substance abuse. As a Certified Health Educator Specialist (CHES) and Certified Substance Abuse Prevention Consultant (CSAPC), LaKeisha uses her talents to help individuals improve physically, mentally and spiritually.

Nancina Pope-Hammie, Fiscal Director



Nancina is a graduate Morgan State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration; later, she obtained her Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix and became a graduate of BB&T Farr leadership Institute. Nancina joined CPS in June of 2015 as Fiscal Director. Prior to coming to CPS she served as the Executive Director of the Charlotte Children's Choir for 13 years and has over 25 years of non-profit leadership experience. Nancina is married and the mother of two children and two grandchildren. She is a member of the University City Church where she actively serves as a Deaconess and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Yelena Yeremuk, Project Coordinator



Yelena holds a B.S.B.A. degree in Management and International Business and a Master's degree in Health Administration from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Yelena started out as an administrative intern with the Center for Prevention Services (CPS) and developed a passion for the work the agency was doing in the community. Currently, she is the Project Coordinator at CPS, a role that allows her to work in both administration and community outreach. Yelena is originally from Ukraine and has been residing in the U.S. for seventeen years. In addition to English, she is also fluent in Russian and Ukrainian languages. Yelena is highly interested in reaching out to the Slavic community of Charlotte and intends to develop a wellness coalition that will serve the immigrant community.

Meet Our Team

Nancy Litton, Program Manager of Partnership for Success

Nancy is a graduate of East Tennessee State University with a degree in Community Health Education. She joined the Center for Prevention services in February 2015. Prior to joining CPS, she worked in the public health and non-profit fields for over 30 years. Nancy has been very active in community building in both North Carolina and Tennessee. Her community service experiences in North Carolina include: Cabarrus Community Planning Council, Cabarrus/Rowan FEMA Board, Concord Rotary Club, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts of America and Junior Charity League. Nancy is a graduate of Leadership Cabarrus, 2000 and Leadership Rowan County, 2014.

Thomas Asbury, Youth Leadership Program Coordinator

Thomas has a BA in Sociology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and is currently working on a Master's in Educational Administration from Strayer University. He is a Certified Application Counselor for the ACA Insurance Marketplace and is near completion of requirements for certification as a Substance Abuse Prevention Consultant (CSAPC) through the NC Substance Abuse Professional Practice Board. At CPD, Thomas is in charge of leading and the implementation of the Reconnecting Youth, an evidence-based substance abuse prevention curriculum. Thomas has worked with the Center for Prevention Services since 2007.

Alba Sanchez, Latino Program Manager

Alba studied Rural Education at Universidad Nacional de la CR (UNA) and holds an Accounting Certificate from Community College. Alba has been involved with many different non-profit agencies in Charlotte for the past seven years. Currently, she serves as the Latino Programs Manager at the Center for Prevention Services. She has held this position since 2008 and has received several professional trainings in substance abuse and mental health, and is a Certified Substance Abuse Prevention Consultant (CSAPC) through the North Carolina Substance Professional Practice Board. Originally from Costa Rica, Alba has lived in the U.S. for thirteen years.

Sabrina Adair, Regional Program Manager

Sabrina holds a Bachelor's Degree in English; a Master's in Business Administration and Adult Education and Training; an Advanced Certificate in Human Resources in Management; and is certified in the ACA Insurance Marketplace as an Application Counselor. Sabrina has been working in the field of substance abuse prevention since 2008 at the Center for Prevention Services. She has worked with all populations, such as students from elementary school through college, inmates, senior citizens, and parents. In addition, she provides drug education, parenting, relationships, life skills and a variety of evidence-based curriculum and preventative classes and talks.

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Center for Prevention Services

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