

## KIDS Center and Darkness to Light Partners Train More Than 800 to Protect Children

*by Bend Weekly News Sources*

The KIDS Center and Darkness to Light community partners have trained over 800 professionals and community members to assist in the effort to prevent child abuse.

The three-hour Darkness to Light training is based on a national program that shows adults how to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. The training is for all adults: parents, people who work with children, anyone that has children in their life.

A child's safety is an adult's job. The Darkness to Light program challenges the thinking that children should be responsible for protecting themselves from abuse. We make sure that our children wear seat belts and we walk them across busy streets. Why do we leave the job of preventing child sexual abuse to children? Experts estimate that one-in-four girls and one-in-six boys are sexually abused before their 18th birthday. 93 percent of all victims know their abuser. The greatest risk doesn't come from strangers but from friends and family.

Darkness to Light focuses on the issues surrounding child sexual abuse and how it affects the community. Training participants learn how to spot the signs of abuse, how to respond if they have a suspicion that a child is being abused, and how to act as a community guardian to ensure that agencies have appropriate policies and procedures in place to protect children in their care.

The KIDS Center is coordinating the Darkness to Light program in partnership with a strong group of county and non-profit agencies throughout Central Oregon. For every one adult trained, organizers estimate that 10 children are potentially protected.

To learn more about or to schedule a Darkness to Light training for your organization, business, community group, youth leaders, parent group or for yourself as a concerned adult, please visit the KIDS Center website at [www.kidscenter.info](http://www.kidscenter.info) or call 541-383-5958.

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