

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Unique Dragon Boat Festival to Benefit Children Affected by Sexual Abuse**

Maumelle, AR – Children's Protection Center (CPC) is thrilled to announce the upcoming Dragon Boat Festival, a distinctive event designed to raise funds for children affected by sexual abuse. This year's festival will take place on June 7 & 8 at Maumelle's Lake Willastein Park, promising a day filled with vibrant costumes, exhilarating dragon boat races, and a strong community spirit. Teams began practicing on Wednesday afternoon and will continue practices through Friday evening's kick-off event – culminating with fireworks.

The Dragon Boat Festival stands out as a unique and engaging event, offering participants and spectators a chance to immerse themselves in a centuries-old tradition while supporting a crucial cause. The festival will feature beautifully painted 44-ft. long dragon boats, each manned by dedicated teams competing for glory on the water. In addition to the thrilling races, attendees can enjoy music, entertainment, food trucks, a kids area, and much more.

Proceeds from the event will go directly to supporting children affected by sexual abuse, providing them with essential services such as forensic interviews, medical exams, and mental health support. With CPC seeing a record number of children, the funds raised at this year's festival are more critical than ever.

"Our goal is to raise more money than we ever have before," said Jennifer Long, Executive Director at Children's Protection Center. "The Dragon Boat Festival is not just a fun and unique event; it's a vital opportunity to bring the community together and make a tangible difference in the lives of vulnerable children. We are calling on everyone in the community to join us in supporting this important cause. It takes a team to paddle one of these amazing dragon boats, just like it takes a team of people to prevent child abuse in our community." Ms. Long went on to share, "Last year, this event raised almost \$200,000 and we MUST increase that so that no child has to wait for services to heal from the trauma of sexual abuse."

The festival encourages corporate donations, team pledges, and volunteer involvement, ensuring that everyone can play a part in this meaningful event. The event is free to spectators and guests.

Every effort and all support dedicated to this event goes directly back into the free services for CPC's two centers. The continued support from the community made the completion of CPC's home center expansion project possible, as well as the completion of phase 1 of the new north Pulaski County center (a \$1.5 million project), which opened on April 1, 2024.

To learn more about the River Cities Dragon Boat Festival and how it brings the community together to support CPC's mission, visit [rivercitiesdragonboatfestival.com](http://rivercitiesdragonboatfestival.com).

### **About Children's Protection Center**

Children's Protection Center (CPC) is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to providing compassionate care to children and their families to overcome the trauma of abuse. CPC works in collaboration with all the agencies that help children in abuse cases, from local law enforcement to community and mental health professionals. This coordinated approach to investigations is at all times child-centered in order to prevent re-traumatizing a child. CPC also works directly with families to navigate the unique investigation process and give loved ones the tools to help their children recover. Learn more at [childrensprotectioncenter.org](http://childrensprotectioncenter.org).

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