

## PRESS RELEASE

**Media Contact:**     **carla@carlaacarlisle.com**  
                              **(980) 330-1762**

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Local Child Advocate Joins Service Providers, Court Officials to Discuss Protecting Children from Generational Trauma**

*Conversation seeks to influence a call to action to support children's rights and safety*

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** – In recognition of May as National Trauma and Mental Health Awareness and Foster Care Month, Carla A. Carlisle, a child and mental health advocate, will host a public meeting, “A Community Conversation: Children First, Ending Generational Trauma,” on Thursday, May 16, 2019.

This inaugural event is designed to initiate dialogue among private and public stakeholders to address the devastating impact generational trauma has on children. The discussion will consider [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#) (ACEs) and how to minimize them through actual solutions, using existing resources to uphold the welfare and safety of children as a top priority in the Charlotte community.

“Generational trauma is a critical factor that is rarely, if at all, considered when trying to understand and correct the psychosomatic symptoms or violent behavior many abused and at-risk children often exhibit,” said Carlisle, an adoptive parent and technology professional.

“Too often these children are negatively labeled and ostracized by society when, in fact, many are suffering from undiagnosed trauma that’s deeply rooted and perpetuated in their families.”

Carlisle knows all too well of its impact. She and her nine-year-old son have been dealing with trauma since Carlisle became his foster parent at 10 days old. Six months later he was returned to his mentally ill, drug-addicted birth mother, who suffers from ongoing trauma that began in childhood. Carlisle knew that decision would threaten his life and fought for eight years to protect him.

In 2016, Carlisle fought for and gained emergency custody of her once-foster son. Two years later she adopted him. Thereafter, she published her memoir [“Journey to the Son,”](#) which is based on their story. She also completed Court College, a seven-week program sponsored by [Justice Initiatives, Inc.](#) that educates the community about the inner-workings of the court system.

Most recently, Carlisle started a movement to bring awareness about trauma and its impact on children. She is working with private and public sector organizations including [Mental Health America of Central Carolinas](#), [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) and [Living Waters, Inc.](#) to educate and empower decision-makers and parents to provide safe and healthy environments to keep at-risk children alive, safe, stable and resilient.

Carlisle served as the featured speaker and panelist at “Breaking Through the Stigma of Mental Health and Starting the Conversation,” a symposium hosted and sponsored by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. Delta Zeta chapter. She was also a panelist and role-playing actor at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department’s Crisis Intervention Team training. This program educates law enforcement officers on the key differences between common emergency responses and those involving mentally unwell people in crises.

Additionally, Carlisle was a guest speaker at “Building Bridges and Opening Minds,” a faith-based leadership event hosted by Greenville Memorial AME Zion Church in Charlotte and sponsored by Living Waters, Inc., [Cardinal Innovations Healthcare](#) and North Carolina Representative Carla D. Cunningham.

“A Community Conversation: Children First, Ending Generational Trauma” will take place at Sage Restaurant and Lounge located at 505 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Charlotte from 6-8 p.m. The event is sponsored by Trial Court Administrators North Carolina Judicial Branch - District 26, Justice Initiatives, Inc. and [Alexander Youth Network](#).

Featured panelists include Mecklenburg County Sherriff Garry L. McFadden, Lakisha Harris, a mental health therapist, Rekita McDuffie, an adoptions social work supervisor at Youth & Family Services, Joe Heritage, a Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics fellow and trainer at Alexander Youth Network and Mecklenburg County District Court Judges Aretha Blake and Tyyawdi “Ty” Hands.

### **About Carla A. Carlisle**

Carla A. Carlisle is the author of “Journey to the Son,” an emotionally riveting memoir about a woman’s eight-year battle with the system for the child of her heart, who suffers from prolonged trauma caused by his birth mother, a victim herself of perpetual physical, emotional and mental abuse. Carlisle is a child and mental health advocate who is leading a movement to educate community and faith-based leaders, public officials and child and family services providers about trauma and its impact on abused children to provide safe and healthy environments to keep them alive, safe, stable and resilient.

For more information, visit <https://carlaacarlisle.com>. You may also follow Carlisle on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn at @CarlaACarlisle.

###