**Mecklenburg County Sexual Assault Awareness Walk**

**Charlotte** – Safe Alliance announces the 2015 Sexual Assault Awareness Walk for Mecklenburg County takes place Saturday April 25, in uptown Charlotte.

The walk begins at 10:00 AM (registration at 9:30 AM) and walkers will gather at the Children and Family Services Center lobby, 601 East 5th Street in Charlotte. This is a walk to raise awareness about the reality of sexual assaults in our community.

Here are some thoughts about the importance of this walk from Sexual Assault survivors:

* “When survivors speak out, their courage causes a change of vision and direction in the community. We walk to support survivors so that their stories may be revealed.”
* “So many causes, so many events, so many advocates. Where is the voice for sexual assault and rape survivors? Maybe this awareness walk will open the doors to communication and education about this issue.”
* “Sexual assault has far too long been a taboo subject.  It’s a crime. Some victims no longer have a voice to speak up about this crime.  Survivors can and must speak for them.”

The walk – entitled “UnCaged” -- is open to the public.

Speakers include:

* Jessica Hager, Survivor
* Cori Goldstein, Director of Victim Advocacy, Safe Alliance
* Karon Hammett, Rape Crisis Companion
* ADA Leslie Stephens, Mecklenburg Assistant District Attorney

According to RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network):

* Every 2 minutes someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted.
* 1 out of every 6 American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime.
* 1 in 33 American men has experienced an attempted or completed rape in his lifetime.
* About 2/3 of assaults are committed by someone known to the victim.

For questions, more information or to register please call or email Heather Chavis heather.chavis@safealliance.org

(704) 367 2758.

**Media Contact: Bill Coy**

**Bill.Coy@safealliance.org**

**(704) 367 2707**

Safe Alliance supports victims of domestic and sexual violence, and child abuse and helps people build safe, healthy relationships. We do this through a continuum of shelter, counseling, legal and advocacy services serving over 20,000 people a year in Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Union and south Iredell counties while reaching 20,000 more through advocacy and education.