

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Non-Profits, DSS Unite to Tackle Foster Care Crisis in Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties

Fostering Hope event to be held at USC Upstate

SPARTANBURG, SC (May 2, 2017) – Six non-profit organizations, several Upstate churches and the USC Upstate Child Protection Training Center have formed a coalition in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Social Services to raise awareness about the critical need for foster homes in Spartanburg and Cherokee counties. The group will host the **Fostering Hope** awareness event on May 22, 2017, 6:30 – 8:00 P.M. at the USC Upstate Readiness Center in Spartanburg. The event will highlight different aspects of fostering and provide opportunities for attendees to meet with agencies that recruit and license foster homes as well as support agencies for foster families.

“The USC Upstate Child Protection Training Center is pleased to partner with DSS and these agencies on this important event,” said Jennifer Parker, Director of USC’s Center for Child Advocacy Studies. “A shocking reality is that every day in Spartanburg children are hungry, neglected, sexually and physically abused and growing up in unsafe environments. We have a responsibility to intervene and provide safer environments for our children to grow up and overcome this adversity.”

Spartanburg County has the highest number of children in foster care in the state, with over 400 foster children, but only 129 licensed foster homes. “I’ve known for some time now that we’re in crisis mode when it comes to foster care,” said Tyler Kirby, foster parent and President of the Spartanburg County Foster Parent Association. “This isn’t only an issue for our government agency (DSS). It is an issue for our churches. If one person or family from each of our churches would follow God’s call to foster, we could end this crisis.”

Cherokee County also has a desperate need for foster homes. Melissa Parker, Cherokee County DSS Director said there are currently 62 children in regular foster care and only 8 homes licensed for regular foster care. “When children enter foster care, they are typically placed far from their homes, making preserving connections for these children a challenge,” she added.

Jonathan D. Hammond, Spartanburg County DSS Director, said, “DSS is committed to minimizing the amount of stress and trauma that these children will endure while they are in foster care, but we desperately need more caring individuals to open their hearts and homes to the children. An increase in the number of homes that are available locally to foster children will serve to maintain more positive connections between the children and the community that they know.”

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Collaborating partners for The Fostering Hope event include [P.S. I Love You Ministries](#), [Spartanburg County DSS](#), [Cherokee County DSS](#), [Spartanburg Foster Parent Association](#), [USC Upstate Child Protection Training Center](#), [A Home for Me](#), [Miracle Hill Ministries](#), [View Church](#), [Eastside Baptist Church](#), [Come Closer Spartanburg](#), [Thornwell Home for Children](#), [South Carolina Youth Advocate Program](#), and [First Baptist Spartanburg](#). Free, secure childcare will be provided by volunteers from DSS and other partners with background checks.

Anyone interested in attending can sign up online by visiting [Fostering Hope Event Registration](#) or by emailing fosteringhopespartanburg@gmail.com

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About Miracle Hill Ministries

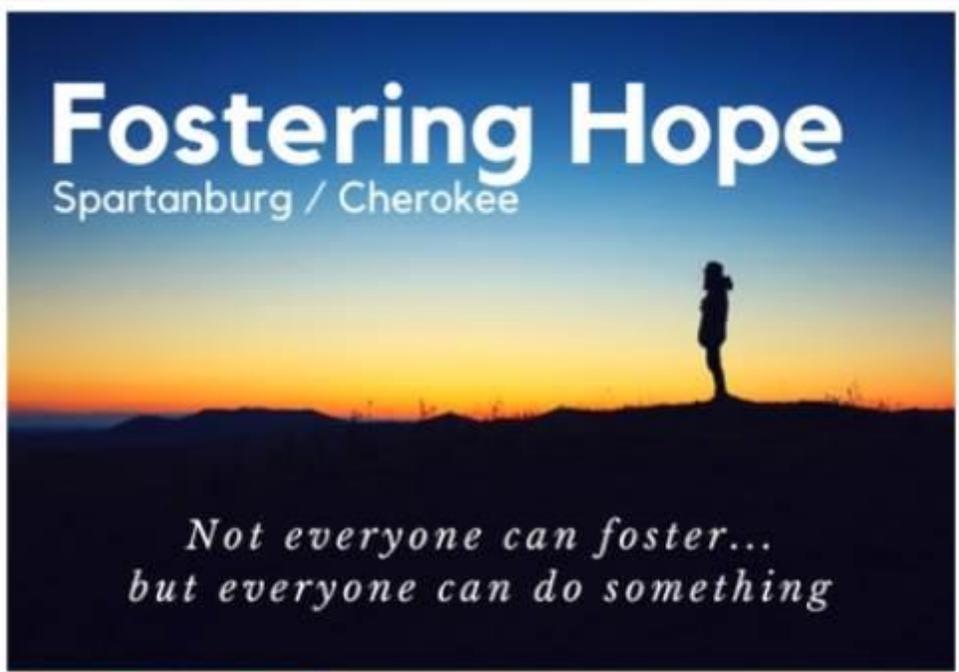
Miracle Hill Ministries helps hurting people become whole and is the Upstate's largest, most comprehensive provider of services to homeless children and adults. Serving the Upstate since 1937, Miracle Hill's programs include rescue shelters for the homeless, residential addiction recovery, transitional housing, shelters for children, and foster care. Miracle Hill's eight thrift stores provide employment opportunities for the community as well as Miracle Hill guests transitioning out of programs. Miracle Hill has been recognized as a Certified Mission and has been awarded the Certificate of Excellence by the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (AGRM), a distinction given to fewer than 30 missions nationwide. For more information about Miracle Hill, please visit www.MiracleHill.org or call 864.268.4357. [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#): @MiracleHill

About P.S. I Love You Ministries

PS I Love You® Ministries is a faith-based, not-for-profit organization that desires to demonstrate God's heart in Psalm 68:5 to be a 'Father to the Fatherless'. We seek to partner the God-given time, talents and resources of the Christian community at large to serve orphans, both legal and social, and children-at-risk in the United States and throughout the world. We will raise awareness of the issues that confront orphans and children-at-risk as well as provide for their needs and for the needs of those that care for them. These needs include but are not limited to physical, emotional, social and spiritual. To learn more, visit www.psiloveyouministries.com

Fostering Hope

Spartanburg / Cherokee



*Not everyone can foster...
but everyone can do something*

There are
**557 Foster
Children**
with only
**139 Foster
Homes**

If one family in
each church
would foster,
the need could
be met.

**Monday May 22
6:30-8pm**

USC Upstate University
Readiness Center
800 University Way
Spartanburg, SC 29303

Register:
PSILOVEYOUMINISTRIES.COM
864.586.1611
fosteringhopespartanburg@gmail.com

Childcare provided