

# SpeakingOut & LaunchPoint (Knoxville, TN)

## LaunchPoint

(A Program of Knox Area Rescue Ministries)

“LaunchPoint is a four-week program designed to help homeless men and women begin a new life journey. Ultimately, LaunchPoint is about restoring hope - reconnecting the individual to the dreams that he or she once had but were lost when the individual's life path went off track. During the four-week period, a class of 20 participants begin discovering God's plan and purpose for their lives, develop their own life plan with realistic goals, and learn to implement their life plan in manageable steps.” *(Source of Information: <http://www.karm.org/index.php/Join-Us/launchpoint.html>)*

In June, SpeakingOut was contacted by Clark Stevens, Ph.D., the LaunchPoint Director at KARM. He informed me of this new program. We set up a meeting to discuss how SpeakingOut may be of assistance to the participants of the LaunchPoint program. Mr. Stevens also informed me that of the men and women who had come through the program to date, more than half had reported histories of trauma with childhood sexual abuse as the primary trauma. Mr. Stevens and I both agreed that it may be helpful for participants to know that there are people out there fighting against this crime; on their behalf. Because many of these now adults were probably never helped or even believed if they disclosed, we decided it might help to share with them what SpeakingOut is out there encouraging every day...that it is the adult's responsibility to be aware of this crime against innocent children, that it is the adult's responsibility to do all we can to help prevent this from happening to children, that it is the adult's responsibility to know the signs & symptoms to look for, etc... Mr. Stevens & I then discussed the message we wanted SpeakingOut to try to convey... What a “protective parent” would do in caring for a child, and what a “protective parent” would do in caring for the child within themselves. Basically, the thought process was that by learning a new way to protect children from sexual predators, maybe these individuals would learn how to better care for themselves in situations that are potentially dangerous.

**On August 9th**, SpeakingOut presented to the LaunchPoint group. The participants were very interactive, as well as open about their feelings toward the crime of child sexual abuse. We discussed why children don't tell; some of the contributing factors in what may cause someone to violate a child; the importance of parents opening up the communication line between them & their child/children; how crucial it is for any adult, especially a Parent, to believe their child if/when they disclose what someone may be doing to them; etc... The time spent with this wonderful group of kind and caring individuals went by very quickly.

**SpeakingOut  
on behalf of all  
children who  
have ever been  
(child & adult  
survivors), are  
being or will  
be sexually  
abused.**

“Thank you, Susan, for your kind and compassionate approach to addressing childhood trauma. Your honest, straight forward approach allowed many participants in our program to break their bondage to secrecy as they revealed painful life experiences with each other. At the end of our four week program, many individuals stated your conversation with them made a lasting impact on their lives. I look forward to your continued participation with our program.” ~*Clark Stevens, Ph.D., LaunchPoint Director, Knox Area Rescue Ministries*

On behalf of all of us at SpeakingOut, thank you Mr. Stevens for inviting SpeakingOut to get involved in the recovery & restoration process for those in need. We appreciate not only what the LaunchPoint program is all about, but what KARM (Knox Area Rescue Ministries) does every day to serve the homeless in the community. We too look forward to future involvement in the LaunchPoint Program. ~*Susan Suafoa-Dinino, President/Founder, SpeakingOut against Child Sexual Abuse, Inc.*