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CHILD ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF INAUGURAL "MAKING KIDS COUNT" AWARD

*Voices for Virginia's Children to honor United Methodist Family Services
and Johanna Schuchert of Prevent Child Abuse Virginia (PCAV)
with inaugural Carol S. Fox MAKING KIDS COUNT Award*

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Voices for Virginia's Children

is a statewide, independent, non-partisan policy research and advocacy organization that champions public policies to improve the lives of Virginia's children. Voices is home to the Virginia KIDS COUNT Data Center, which makes extensive data on child well-being available to Virginia leaders, policymakers and concerned citizens. Learn more at www.vakids.org.

VOICES FOR VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN announces the first-ever winners of the Carol S. Fox **MAKING KIDS COUNT** award, to be presented annually to an individual and an organization in recognition of exemplary efforts to better the lives of Virginia's children. The award is named after Carol Fox, a Voices founder, long-time board member and tireless advocate for children.

The individual award winner is **Johanna Schuchert, Executive Director at Prevent Child Abuse Virginia (PCAV)** and a dedicated champion of the needs of children and families. Her long-time leadership of PCAV has fostered the growth and improvement of much-needed child abuse and neglect prevention efforts throughout Virginia. One of its sponsored programs, Healthy Families Virginia, is a model program providing research-based early childhood home visiting and parent education services to vulnerable first-time parents. By building and sustaining community-based prevention programs, advocating with elected officials and policymakers, training and mentoring prevention professionals, leading community prevention campaigns, and speaking out vigorously to protect children and strengthen families, Johanna has dedicated an entire career to keeping Virginia's children safe and healthy.

The award-winning organization is **United Methodist Family Services**, a statewide non-profit serving Virginia children and families in need for more than a century. UMFS has transformed itself from a traditional institution for children in need of care to a multi-faceted provider that now supports a wide variety of foster care and adoption services, treatment and education programs for troubled youth, and family support and preservation services. The organization has pioneered a number of best-practice programs that preserve or restore family unity, help youth in foster care establish and maintain permanent family connections, and prepare older youth for transition to productive adulthood. This successful re-invention has been accomplished while staying true to its highly respected values-driven mission.

"The quality of the nominees for our inaugural award was extremely impressive," according to Voices Executive Director John Morgan. "The winners rose to the top based on their sustained efforts to help children, their broad impact over time, and especially their tremendous success in inspiring others to care more deeply about children. We are privileged to honor such worthy representatives of all those dedicated to helping children."

The winners will be honored at an evening reception on October 23 at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are still available at www.carolfoxaward.vakids.org or by contacting Cathy McCallister at cathy@vakids.org.

Carol S. Fox is a founding board member of Voices for Virginia's Children who has worked selflessly and tirelessly to improve the lives of Virginia's children. Throughout nearly 20 years of Voices involvement, Carol helped inspire the organization and its many followers and influence Virginia leaders and policymakers to address the needs of children, especially those who are disadvantaged or otherwise vulnerable.