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**KIDSPeACE NATIONAL CENTERS OF GEORGIA NAMES  
LOUIS SHAGAWAT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Former KidsPeace clinical manager returns to leadership role for residential  
treatment operations in Bowdon, GA**

**BOWDON, GA (March 29, 2016)** - KidsPeace announced that **Louis Shagawat**, LCSW, has been named Executive Director of KidsPeace National Centers of Georgia, effective April 1.

Shagawat brings more than 25 years experience in the behavioral health field to his new role – including serving as clinical manager at the KidsPeace Bowdon, GA campus and as a clinical consultant for KidsPeace’s Pennsylvania-based residential treatment programs. Most recently, Shagawat served as director and executive director at behavioral health facilities in North Carolina and Tennessee, where he successfully led efforts to develop and enhance services.

Shagawat holds a master’s degree in social work from Rutgers University and a bachelor’s degree from Mansfield University. In addition to being a licensed clinical social worker, Shagawat is an NASW Qualified Social Worker, and is certified in hypnotherapy and critical incident stress debriefing; in the latter role he earned praise from the U.S. Secret Service for counseling and crisis debriefing of agents following the 9/11 attacks.

"It is truly an honor to be returning to KidsPeace and to lead a team of dedicated professionals providing hope, help and healing to the children of Georgia and their families," Shagawat said. "I look forward to partnering with staff and the community to ensure for the kids in our facility a quality of care and treatment that we would expect for members of our own families."

"We're delighted to welcome Lou back to KidsPeace," said William Isemann, president and CEO of KidsPeace. "His work in our organization in the past means he understands our commitment to serve the children in our care, and his leadership experience will help us move forward with our plans to expand our operations at the Bowdon campus."

As executive director, Shagawat succeeds M. Scott Merritt, who left the organization in February.

**(more)**

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At the Bowdon, GA campus KidsPeace operates a 60-bed residential treatment facility that features assessment services, individual, group and family therapy, substance abuse treatment, and community support services – along with a specialized unit for male clients with sexual disorders. The organization is in the planning stages for a 20-bed expansion of the Bowdon operations. The on-campus school for clients was honored in 2015 as one of the best high schools in the country by U.S. News and World Report.

*For 134 years, KidsPeace has been building on its expertise to give hope, help and healing to children, families and communities throughout the United States. Through its comprehensive range of residential treatment programs; accredited educational services; unique psychiatric hospital and foster care and community-based programs, KidsPeace is dedicated to helping people connect, transform and overcome their challenges to ensure a stable future, transition to adulthood and gain independence. Since its doors opened in 1882, more than 200,000 children have participated in one of the multitude of programs KidsPeace offers. For additional resources or more information on how to get involved, become a foster parent or make a donation, please visit [www.kidspeace.org](http://www.kidspeace.org). Follow us at [www.facebook.com/kidspeace.org](http://www.facebook.com/kidspeace.org) or on Twitter @KidsPeace.*

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