



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
Maryland's Social Services Agency



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PRESS RELEASE

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**LT. GOVERNOR BROWN ANNOUNCES \$250,000 GRANT FOR STATE'S CHILD
ADVOCACY CENTERS**

Brown tours Talbot County Child Advocacy Center, meets with social service providers

EASTON, Md. (August 19, 2010) – Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown kicked off Easton's 'Capital for a Day' this morning touring the Talbot County Child Advocacy Center (TCAC) at Memorial Hospital and announcing a \$250,000 grant from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) to help the state's 20 child advocacy centers improve services for vulnerable children. The grant is part of the O'Malley-Brown administration's efforts to reach the ambitious goal to reduce crimes committed against women and children by 25 percent by 2012.

"We have an obligation to protect our most vulnerable and most valuable resources – our children. We must continue working with partners in every county and every community to end child abuse and provide counseling, support and medical attention for those children who sadly are made victims of abuse," said Lt. Governor Brown. "Governor O'Malley and I are committed to making Maryland a safer state and that includes our determined efforts to protect children from abuse and help them reach their full potential."

The GOCCP grant will support a broad range of services, including overtime compensation for law enforcement, prosecutors and child protective service workers, counseling for children who have been physically, sexually and emotionally abused, forensic and medical evaluations and support for families of children who have been victimized and abused. There are 20 child advocacy centers in communities across Maryland.

"The Talbot County Child Advocacy Center is child-focused and allows representatives from many disciplines to work together and make appropriate decisions concerning investigation, treatment and prosecution of child abuse crimes, while at the same time striving to prevent further victimization of our children," said Talbot County State's Attorney Scott Patterson. "As State's Attorney, I am very pleased that Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown recognize the tremendous benefits which child advocacy centers across the state provide in protecting children and enforcing the laws against child abusers."

- Martin O'Malley, Governor
- Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
- Brian Wilbon, Interim Secretary

TCAC is managed and operated by the Talbot County Department of Social Services, in partnership with Shore Health System, and is housed in the Pediatric Unit at Memorial Hospital in Easton. TCAC employs child abuse investigators who are trained in child interviewing techniques, linguistics and the dynamics of abuse.

“Since the TCAC was established in 2003, we now have specialized child abuse medical services on the Eastern Shore,” said Dr. Fayette Engstrom, TCAC Medical Director. “It is so great for our families not to have to travel a long way to get the medical care that they need.”

Immediately prior to the press conference announcing the quarter-million dollar grant, Brown toured the facility and was led through the child victim evaluation and interview process. This tour afforded Lt. Governor Brown the opportunity to meet the counselors and medical staff.

“We call on the entire community to stand up against child abuse and neglect because as we all know, the government cannot do it alone,” said Brian Wilbon, Interim Secretary of the Maryland Department of Human Resources. “That’s why we ask all members in a community to pay attention to what’s happening around them and report suspected instances of abuse and neglect. This funding for our child advocacy centers will go a long way to help ensure the safety of our children.”

The O’Malley-Brown administration set an ambitious goal to reduce violence against women and children by 25 percent by 2012. To reach this goal, the administration has enhanced supervision protocols for domestic violence offenders, passed legislation taking guns out of the hands of abusers and supported the Place Matters initiative. Yesterday in Baltimore, Governor O’Malley announced that in the last three years, since the *Place Matters* initiative was put in place, 8,760 Maryland children have found permanent homes through adoption, reunification and guardianship.

Even during difficult economic times, the O’Malley-Brown administration has made the tough choices to protect funding for public safety and many social services. Because of increased investments, stronger partnerships with local government and law enforcement and the use of innovative technology and information sharing, Maryland has reduced violent crime across the state to the lowest levels on record.

In August of 2008, Lt. Governor Brown’s cousin, Cathy, was killed by her estranged boyfriend in Montgomery Village. Brown led the administration’s efforts to pass legislation taking guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and has been among the state’s most vocal proponents to strengthen domestic violence laws and provide victims with better services and support.

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The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state’s social service provider. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to: provide foster care, adoption, and protective services to children; collect and distribute child support payments; provide protective services, case- management, supportive housing, in-home aide services, and respite care to vulnerable adults; and provide temporary cash, food stamps, and medical assistance to families. It also funds programs for homeless persons, refugees, and migrant- workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered, or assaulted. Last year, DHR served 760,000 people in need. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is Maryland’s fourth largest state agency

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