



FOOTHILLS CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
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Foothills received \$30,000 grant from the George and Ann Bellows Family Foundation

(CHARLOTTESVILLE) January 9, 2014 – The George and Ann Bellows Family Foundation has awarded a \$30,000 grant to Foothills Child Advocacy Center. The grant will support Foothills operating expenses and help Foothills to launch its new **Child Victim’s Health Access Program**.

The program will provide forensic medical evaluations on site at Foothills’ child-friendly facility to child victims of sexual or physical abuse. Currently, evaluations are conducted only for acute cases at the University of Virginia Medical Center’s emergency room, which can be very traumatizing to the child. The Child Victim’s Health Access Program will allow Foothills to offer a medical evaluation to every child in a friendly, private, and safe setting.

Forensic medical evaluations can help to 1) support legal decision-making, 2) screen for injuries/medical conditions and initiate medical treatment, 3) diagnose abuse and neglect, and 4) reassure victims and parents about the child’s physical well-being.

Foothills’ Executive Director Cathee Johnson Phillips said, “The benefits of providing access to appropriate medical care to these children extend beyond the child and family to the community. Such care helps the child to heal and increases her or his chances of becoming a contributing member of the community. The Bellows Family Foundation’s generosity provides significant support that will help us to make this important program a reality. We so appreciate their support!”

Johnson Phillips anticipates that the program will be launched in the fall of 2014 but no later than the spring of 2015. For more information about the services that Foothills offers, please visit <http://www.foothillscac.org>. To help support the new program, contact Johnson Phillips at 434-971-7233, ext. 4.

About Foothills

Foothills was established in 2006 as a not-for-profit, accredited agency designed to provide a coordinated system of effective response and intervention to children who have been victimized. Foothills’ goals are to minimize trauma, promote healing, ensure child safety, and hold perpetrators accountable.

Foothills provides a safe, child-friendly place for child victims of abuse and their non-offending caregivers to meet with Child Protective Services and Law Enforcement staff for forensic interviews and crisis intervention. The child is interviewed at Foothills by a neutral professional who is trained in child forensic interviewing, and the non-offending caregivers receive crisis intervention and referrals for ongoing services that support the child or family.

Foothills works with a team of professionals in Charlottesville and Albemarle dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators and to the support and treatment of child victims and their non-offending caretakers. The multidisciplinary team (MDT) meets monthly to communicate and collaborate on child maltreatment cases. Cases are reviewed beginning with the victim's initial outcry through investigation, treatment, and prosecution. Communication within the team reduces duplication and keeps victims from falling through the cracks. MDT partners include: Foothills; Charlottesville and Albemarle Child Protective Services; Charlottesville and Albemarle Police Departments; Charlottesville and Albemarle Victim/Witness Services; Charlottesville and Albemarle Commonwealth's Attorney's Offices; Piedmont Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA); Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA); Children, Youth and Family Services (CYFS); Region 10 Community Services Board; and UVA Forensic Nurse Examiners.

For more information, please visit the center's Web site at <http://www.foothillscac.org/> or call 434-971-7233.

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