



FOOTHILLS CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
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**Southern Regional Children's Advocacy Center awards Foothills
a grant to purchase new recording equipment**

(CHARLOTTESVILLE) – The Southern Regional Children's Advocacy Center has awarded Foothills Child Advocacy Center a grant for \$15,076,85 to purchase and install new forensic interview recording equipment.

The new equipment will be purchased from and installed by Heinz Pro AV of Charlottesville and replace equipment that is seven to nine years old. "The child forensic interview is essential to gathering accurate information in child abuse investigations," said Cathee Johnson Phillips, Foothills' executive director. "And it is important that the interview is recorded so that the child does not have to be interviewed over and over again. Every time a child is interviewed, it increases trauma for the child. By recording the interview, re-traumatization is limited."

When child abuse is alleged, the child and the child's non-offending caregivers are referred to Foothills, which offers a child-friendly facility for the forensic interview. During the interview, the child is given the opportunity to make a statement about what happened in a safe, supportive environment. The child is questioned in a legally-sound, developmentally appropriate manner by a trained professional. Members of the Charlottesville and Albemarle Multidisciplinary Team who have jurisdiction over the case observe the interview as it is taking place. The interview is digitally recorded, reducing the number of times children need to be interviewed and therefore reducing trauma to the child.

The forensic interview is part of the MDT/Forensic Assessment Program. As part of this program, Foothills coordinates a team of 14 local agencies to increase communication and mutual accountability, reduce duplication of services, and help ensure that children are safe and that their needs are met. Additionally, Foothills provides the non-offending caregivers ongoing support to help them provide safe, healing environments for the children.

For more information on this process or Foothills, please contact Johnson Phillips at 434-971-7233, ext. 4, or visit foothillscac.org. To learn more about how to stop or prevent child abuse, visit beaherforkids.org.

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