



Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard Open House Showcased A Unique Community Resource Serving Severely Abused Children

Brevard County—The Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard was established in 1996 to intervene in the worst cases of child abuse in Brevard County. Oftentimes considered a well-kept secret, on October 28, 2009, more than 100 guests had a glimpse of what this one-of-a-kind organization does for severely abused children in Brevard County when the Friends of the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard hosted an Open House at the Center's new facility in Rockledge.

"Keeping what we do on a daily basis at the Advocacy Center a secret is not our intent," explained Charles Biehl, Director of both the Children's Advocacy Center and onsite partner, the Child Protection Team. "It just happens that most people don't really want to know about child abuse, much less talk about it."

The Open House was part celebration because the Advocacy Center moved to a larger facility this past spring but also an opportunity to tell why they exist in Brevard in the first place. "We're here because children are being abused in our community," said Biehl. "Unfortunately, the numbers of cases are not going down. We assessed 1,178 of the worst cases of child abuse in Brevard County last fiscal year. Our Clinical Intervention Program counselors provided more than 1,000 hours of free crisis and short-term counseling to child victims and their non-offending family members. The Child Protection Team provided more than 600 medical exams, and conducted almost 500 forensic and specialized interviews to aid in the prosecution of offenders and in dependency cases. It's an oversimplification of a complicated process but basically through a collaborative effort of multiple agencies we focus on keeping the victim safe, holding offenders accountable and helping the child recover from what is probably the worst experience of his or her young life."

The Open House was sponsored by the Friends of the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard, Community Credit Union of Florida, Jessie and Bob Kirk, Delores and Guy Spearman, and Kenneth and Elizabeth Whittaker. Solo acoustic guitarist Arturo Echarte provided musical entertainment for the evening.

The Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard (CACB) is affiliated with Wuesthoff Health Services, Inc. and is a multi-agency collaboration of the Child Protection Team, the Florida Department of Children and Families, both of which are onsite at the Advocacy Center; Brevard County Sheriff's Office and municipal law enforcement agencies, the Office of the State Attorney and community mental health professionals.

The Friends of the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization comprised of volunteers who increase awareness of the issues of child abuse and neglect in our community, and raise funding to support the mission of the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard.

Visit the Children's Advocacy Center website for more information: www.cacbrevard.org.

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Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard Open House, October 28, 2009



At the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard Open House on October 28 are Angela and David Brock with Helene Sanford. Mr. Brock is Secretary and Ms. Sanford is President of the Friends of the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard, the event's hosts for the evening.



At the Children's Advocacy Center of Brevard Open House on October 28 Judy Wood and Meryl Allawas were recognized for their leadership and dedication in the establishment of the Children's Advocacy Center in 1996. Michel Serrano Penley was also recognized but was not present at the event.