

Maryland Department of Human Resources Partners with Communities across Maryland to Ensure Child Safety

BALTIMORE, MD (June 10, 2015) The Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) routinely evaluates how the Department best serves and meets the needs of local communities throughout Maryland. As part of its standard operating procedures, DHR practices are regularly and consistently reviewed and updated as needed to ensure they continue to fully address the safety and well-being of children, adults and families. DHR has clarified its Child Protective Services' [screening and intake practices](#) to all the local Departments of Social Services to ensure they remain aligned with federal and state laws and regulations.

As Maryland's human services agency, DHR supports parents in raising healthy, well-adjusted children. DHR is mindful that every family applies its members own personal upbringing, life experiences and expectations to parenting, and it is not the Department's role to pick and choose among child-rearing philosophies and practices.

Child Protective Services has a duty to conduct a thorough interview when the community reports that an unattended child is in unsafe circumstances. This review will determine whether the community report meets the criteria for harm or substantial risk of harm to the child in question. When a local Department of Social Services receives such a report, it must assess the community's concern based on a number of factors such as the child's age and level of development, the time of day and the dangers within the nearby vicinity.

DHR thanks members of the community who come forward to report their concerns relating to vulnerable residents. It is the responsibility of each of us as members of our communities to ensure a safe environment for all to thrive.

Over the next few months, DHR will promote overall child safety awareness, including child abuse and child neglect. These efforts will focus on early childhood years (birth through age 8), which lay the foundation for children's success in school and later life.

(Please refer to the attached fact sheet for additional information)