



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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## **Protecting the innocent is Alexandria woman's mission**

*Governor's Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect presents awards to outstanding child advocates*

**Richmond, Va.** — The Commonwealth recognizes April as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, but for **Ann Caulkins of Alexandria**, protecting children is a year-round mission.

Governor Timothy M. Kaine, along with the Governor's Advisory Board (GAB) on Child Abuse and Neglect, has announced winners of this year's awards for outstanding champions for children. Caulkins is among this year's honorees. The GAB Awards recognize Virginians who have exhibited a strong commitment to advocacy, protection, prevention, treatment and assistance. Caulkins is one of seven Virginians to receive a GAB award this year.

"It is a privilege to recognize the men and women who dedicate their lives to the safety and security of our children," said Governor Kaine. "Their focus on prevention is especially critical." Awards were presented at this year's Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month Conference in Richmond on April 7.

Caulkins was described in her nomination as "the ultimate child advocate." Working with Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) in Alexandria, she volunteers with the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, the Family Drug Treatment Court and Volunteer Emergency Families for Children (VEFC). She has volunteered more than 500 hours with CASA and contributed to the health and safety of hundreds of children and families through her other volunteer work.

"These advocates do not dedicate their time and effort to win awards. They do it to improve the lives of Virginia's children, which makes it especially satisfying to recognize them in this way," said Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Commissioner Anthony Conyers Jr.

The awards and conference were sponsored by the Virginia Department of Social Services and Prevent Child Abuse Virginia and co-sponsored by the Governor's Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, the Family and Children's Trust Fund, the Child Abuse Prevention Committee and the Virginia Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention.

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*Interviews and photos available upon request. For additional story ideas and for information on how your media outlet can help raise awareness of child abuse, neglect and prevention, please contact Carla Harris, VDSS, (804) 726-7107 or [carla.harris@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:carla.harris@dss.virginia.gov).*