



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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### **Richmond women receive Governor's award for their work to protect children**

*Awards presented during Child Abuse Prevention Month*

**Richmond, Va.** — Governor Bob McDonnell, along with the Governor's Advisory Board (GAB) on Child Abuse and Neglect, has announced winners of this year's awards for outstanding advocates for children.

“The Commonwealth recognizes April as [Child Abuse Prevention Month](#), but these devoted defenders of children protect Virginia's youngest and most vulnerable citizens every day,” said Paul McWhinney, director of the division of family services for the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). “Their commitment and the importance of their work cannot be overstated,” McWhinney said.

The Dr. Anthony Shaw Award for Exceptional Child Protective Services was presented to **Rita Katzman of Richmond**, Child Protective Services (CPS) program manager with the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS). The Shaw Award was established in 1992 and recognizes distinguished child protective services professionals for outstanding contributions to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. With nearly 28 years of experience as a CPS supervisor and program manager on the state level, Rita Katzman has strengthened measures to protect children and support families. In addition to her work with law and policy makers, Katzman oversees the operation of Virginia's 24/7 Child Abuse and Neglect State Hotline and serves on the State Child Fatality Review Team.

**Katherine Smith-Bowen, MSW of Richmond** also received a Governor's Award for her advocacy for children. Smith-Bowen is a clinical social worker with Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center, working exclusively with the most critically ill and severely injured children in the Pediatric Intensive Care and Progressive Care Units. Each week, she is directly involved with the care, intervention and treatment of abused and neglected children.

The GAB Awards and the Shaw Award recognize Virginians who have exhibited a strong commitment to advocacy, protection, prevention, treatment and assistance. Awards were presented at this year's Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month Conference in Richmond on April 22.

The conference is 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](#), and the Virginia Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention. April is recognized as [Child Abuse Prevention Month in Virginia](#) and around the country.

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