



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 24, 2009

**Contact: SooAnn Roberts Pisano**

(202) 638-2575 ext. 115

srobertspisano@safeshores.org

**A SAFE PLACE FOR THE DISTRICT'S CHILDREN GETS A NEW HOME**

**WHO:** Board of directors, staff, public officials and invited supporters of Safe Shores – The D.C. Children's Advocacy Center

**WHAT:** Hard hat tour of Safe Shores' new home in NW Washington, DC; interviews with staff, public officials, and supporters of Safe Shores

**WHERE:** Bundy School, 400 block O Street, NW, Washington, DC

**WHEN:** Thursday, April 30, 2009, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

**WHY:** To highlight a successful public-private partnership that works to protect children in the District, and show the investment in the future of D.C.'s children includes a new, inviting space

**WASHINGTON, DC,** April 24, 2009 –Safe Shores – The D.C. Children's Advocacy Center and its Board of Directors will host a special hard hat tour of Safe Shores' new home on Thursday, April 30, 2009. After five years of planning, the former Bundy School will become the new home of Safe Shores and D.C.'s Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) on Child Abuse Investigations and Prosecutions.

“We are thrilled to watch our dream come true. Our dedicated supporters are invited to join with us as we appreciate the notable progress made towards creating a child-friendly space that does justice to our compassionate service, and physically allows for the volume of work given daily by Safe Shores and the MDT to the most deserving and vulnerable victims in our city,” said Sandra L. Merin, President of Safe Shores' Board of Directors. In 2008, Safe Shores served almost 850 child victims of abuse and witnesses to violence; the new facility will enable it to expand its caseload and services.

- MORE -

Representatives of D.C. government, D.C. Council and long-time supporters of Safe Shores will be on hand to tour the facility, which is undergoing a complete renovation. The building will be child-friendly, and designed to allow police, prosecutors, health care providers, counselors and staff to work with child clients in a confidential and therapeutic setting. MDT staff representatives who will use the new center include members of the Metropolitan Police Department, D.C. Child and Family Services Agency, the D.C. Office of the Attorney General, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, and the Safe Shores staff. New to this facility will be a training center for mandated reporters (teachers, counselors, medical professionals, etc.), volunteers and other concerned adults, and a medical evaluation suite.

“In addition to increasing the length, depth and breadth of services that Safe Shores can provide to its child clients, their families and the D.C. community, this much-needed, expanded facility will provide for full realization of the children's advocacy center model through co-location of the D.C. Multidisciplinary Team,” said Executive Director Michele Booth Cole.

Safe Shores is conducting this tour in April – Child Abuse Prevention Month – for two reasons: to highlight the success of the public-private partnership in fighting child abuse, and to encourage the general public to do more to protect children from physical and sexual abuse.

### **About Safe Shores – The D.C. Children's Advocacy Center**

Safe Shores – The D.C. Children's Advocacy Center is a 501(c)(3), direct service organization dedicated to supporting and working directly with child victims of sexual and physical abuse and witnesses to violence in the District of Columbia. Through its child-friendly facility and multidisciplinary team approach, Safe Shores coordinates the work of law enforcement, social workers, prosecutors, and medical and mental health professionals to reduce trauma and promote healing for child victims of abuse and witnesses to violence. For additional information, please visit [www.safeshores.org](http://www.safeshores.org).

###