



News Release

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CONTACT: [Robin K. Santangelo](#)
Public Information Officer, 301-600-2590

County Executive Gardner Announces “Handle with Care” Partnership To Assist Children with Traumatic Childhood Experiences

FREDERICK, MD – County Executive Jan Gardner today announced Frederick County’s launch of a program called “Handle with Care Maryland.” The program creates a quick and efficient way for law enforcement and emergency medical services to alert school personnel that a student was present at a traumatic incident.

“Our community’s future prosperity lies with our children, but traumatic events impact a child’s life in a negative way,” commented Executive Gardner. “I’m proud to say that Frederick County is on the leading edge in taking an innovative approach to helping these children who face toxic stress. It takes a village, and this is a village coming together to take care of our children.”

Emergency responders trigger the Handle with Care program when someone under 18 years old is affected by a violent or traumatic incident. Law enforcement or EMS alert Frederick County Public Schools or the county’s Child Advocacy Center, depending on the child’s age. Details of an incident are not provided to the school, to preserve the child’s privacy, but teachers and administrators know that a specific child may need additional support. That support could take many forms, such as a nap for an elementary school student, extra time to complete homework or an exam for a middle or high school student, or other ways to help deal with trauma or stress. Some children may need more intensive assistance, so mental health care can be made available at a school.

The Child Advocacy Center, which is part of the county’s Division of Citizens Services, received a grant from the Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention to coordinate Handle with Care Maryland in Frederick County. In addition to the CAC, community collaboration includes emergency responders, both with the County’s Division of Fire and Rescue Services and with every law enforcement agency in Frederick County, along with partners at FCPS.

For more information about Handle with Care Maryland, call the Child Advocacy Center at 301-600-1758.

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