



DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES
Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities



John G. Rowland
Governor

March 16, 2003

Statement of Commissioner Darlene Dunbar

Since the Safe Havens law became effective less than 30 months ago, four babies have been brought to a hospital under its provisions. Three of those babies have been or will be adopted, and the fourth was placed with relatives of the mother.

Those are four babies that may not have been given a chance without Safe Havens. Now we know those babies are loved and well cared for.

It is for that reason that we must recognize the value of this important legislation and continue work to make young women aware of its protections. No one needs to discard a precious baby. We must do all we can to ensure that all mothers know that.

While I regret that I could not attend the Children First Foundation's benefit for the Children of Hope's Safe Haven Program in Connecticut, I appreciate this opportunity to add to the chorus of voices imploring any parent who is in such turmoil to bring her baby to a safe place.

The Department arranged to broadcast television messages in English and Spanish more than 2,000 times to advertise the new law. In addition, radio ads have run in English and Spanish. The Department also printed and distributed 65,000 fliers in English and Spanish with information about the law to communities across Connecticut. To date, the Department has pieced together funding of more than \$50,000 for the broadcast ads and an added \$7,000 for the brochures.

The television ads continue to run as public service announcements on Connecticut broadcast and cable stations.

While the Department is pleased to conduct this effort, we also know that protecting children and such especially vulnerable infants is not the job of the State alone. We have many partners in this effort. Starting with family members and neighbors, and extending to all the people who have contact with a young woman in the schools, communities and elsewhere, we all must do our part.

I congratulate the Children First Foundation and the Children of Hope for doing theirs.