



# BCHD PRESS RELEASE

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Baltimore City Health Department

1001 E. Fayette Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21202

*Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Mayor – Oxiris Barbot, M.D., Commissioner of Health*

Media Contact: *Brian Schleiter*  
443-984-2623  
[mediahealth@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:mediahealth@baltimorecity.gov)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Health Department Receives 2011 Maryland Initiative Grant From The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy Award will support planning for new family literacy program**

**BALTIMORE, MD (May 18, 2011)** – The Baltimore City Health Department is one of 13 local organizations serving low-income, low-literacy Maryland residents to receive a grant from the 2011 Maryland Family Literacy Initiative, part of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.

Family Literacy programs work to improve the language and literacy skills of both parents and children and encourage a love of reading and education within families. The 2011 Maryland Family Literacy Initiative grants totaling \$504,450 were awarded to nonprofit organizations and public agencies for the purpose of implementing family literacy programs in their communities. Winners were selected in a competitive process following the submission of proposals from a variety of organizations.

The Health Department is one of three recipients of a \$5,000 planning grant to help assess the literacy needs and resources in Baltimore City, to build coalitions, and then to design a family program. If successful, the Health Department will apply for a full implementation grant.

“This \$5,000 grant will provide funding for the Baltimore City Health Department to plan *Reading For Health*, a program that will integrate and coordinate family literacy services into an existing continuum of care for at-risk women in Baltimore,” said Commissioner of Health Dr. Oxiris Barbot. “I am thankful to the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy for their longstanding interest in helping foster a love for reading and education in families with needs.”

The 2011 Maryland Family Literacy Initiative grantees will be announced at the Foundation's eighth annual *Maryland Celebration of Reading*, which will take place at The Music Center at Strathmore in North Bethesda, MD, on May 17. Special guests for the evening include former President George H.W. Bush and Mrs. Barbara Bush.

According to Maryland Family Literacy Initiative co-founders, Doro Bush Koch and Tricia Reilly Koch, “The state of Maryland has a surprisingly high rate of adults with

poor literacy skills as well as children who lack the skills needed to start school ready to learn. With these grants, the Maryland Initiative is tackling the problem by providing opportunities for families to read and learn together, strengthening not just reading skills, but the family unit as well.”

For more information about the Health Department’s existing literacy programs, visit our Website at <http://www.baltimorehealth.org/ror.html>.

Founded by Barbara Bush in 1989, the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy supports the development and expansion of family literacy programs across the United States. Over the past 22 years, the Foundation has awarded more than \$40 million to 876 family literacy programs. Founded by Doro Bush Koch and Tricia Reilly Koch in 2003, the foundation’s Maryland Family Literacy Initiative has awarded nearly \$3.5 million to 74 programs designed to improve literacy rates across the state of Maryland. To learn more, visit [www.barbarabushfoundation.com](http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com).

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