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**DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**

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## Press Release

**For Immediate Distribution**  
April 10, 2008

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### **Department of Juvenile Justice Holds Open Houses for National Victims' Rights Week**

**Decatur GA** – In honor of National Victims' Rights Week, observed April 13-19, the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice will hold open houses throughout the state to highlight the agency's commitment to serving victims of juvenile crime.

The open houses will give the public the opportunity to meet with DJJ's Regional Balanced and Restorative Justice Coordinators. Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) is an approach to juvenile justice that recognizes the fact that corrections is not only about holding offenders responsible for their actions but also about offering victims and the community a chance to heal and repairing the harm done by juvenile offenders. BARJ coordinators work in conjunction with Joycelyn Evans, DJJ's victim advocate, to make sure victims have a voice in the juvenile justice process.

"The Department of Juvenile Justice is committed to delivering services to victims of crimes committed by juvenile offenders. That's why we now have a full-time advocate for victims on staff," said Commissioner Albert Murray. "Balanced and Restorative Justice makes youthful offenders face up to the consequences of their actions, and it helps them understand the impact their crime has had on their victim."

Victims' Rights Week is an annual event sponsored by the United States Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime. The theme for this year is "Justice for Victims, Justice for All." There will be observances throughout the week on both a national and state level. Governor Sonny Perdue will issue a proclamation affirming the state's commitment to victims' rights.

#### **DJJ OPEN HOUSES:**

##### **Tuesday, April 15**

Lanier County Court Services Office, 1334 B South Mill Street, Lakeland GA from 12-2 PM.

##### **Wednesday, April 16**

Bob Richards Regional Youth Detention Center, 200 Marable Way NW, Rome GA from 12-1 PM.

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**Thursday, April 17**

Richmond County Court Services Office, 971 Broad Street, Augusta GA from 10 AM to 12 PM. (Visitors will have the opportunity to contribute pre-owned cell phones for victims of domestic violence as part of the Hopeline Phone Drive, in partnership with Verizon Wireless.)

Macon Regional Youth Detention Center, 4156 Riggins Mill Road, Macon GA from 12-2 PM.

**Saturday, April 19**

Paulding Regional Youth Detention Center, 538 Industrial Boulevard, North Dallas, GA from 12-2:30 PM.

“I want to encourage victims of juvenile crime to come by these offices and meet our staff and learn of the services being afforded them,” added Commissioner Murray.

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