

July 22, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Awards 2015 “Strong Families, Safe Communities” Grants
Communities Collaborate to Create Coordinated Care Plans to Help At-Risk Youth

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Departments of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) today announced more than \$1.4 million in Strong Families, Safe Communities funding to provide care coordination and crisis intervention services for youth at risk due to a mental illness or developmental disability. The grant awards are part of a two-year, \$5 million statewide initiative launched last summer.

This latest round of funding will support seven new projects around the state and brings to 46, the total number of counties served by the Strong Families, Safe Communities initiative.

“Children at risk – those struggling and teetering on the edge of self-harm or aggression– often aren’t in treatment programs and therefore are not yet known as someone in need of care and support,” said Tracy Plouck, director of OhioMHAS. “The programs receiving the Strong Families, Safe Communities grants combine knowledge and leadership across agencies. The counties that are currently participating have been able to help hundreds of families through the use of planning and innovative treatment models.”

DODD and OhioMHAS solicited proposals from across the state, emphasizing collaboration among mental health and developmental disabilities service providers and multi-county partnerships. The selected projects include intensive care coordination, rapid response team efforts, family mentoring and support, screening for high-risk children, and therapeutic services.

An oversight committee that includes top leadership from both state departments will gather and analyze outcomes to identify best practices and recommended strategies. This information will then be disseminated broadly so that all Ohio communities can benefit from lessons-learned.

“The programs that started last year already are showing positive results,” said John Martin, director of DODD. “We’re excited to be able to broadly share information about the different programs so success can be duplicated to benefit all counties and all Ohioans.”

Directors Plouck and Martin will visit each of the community partnerships this summer to officially announce the grants and share more details about each project with local communities.

Strong Families, Safe Communities is funded by Governor Kasich’s initiative to commit money from Ohio’s Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) awards to develop targeted strategies to stabilize youth ages 8-24 in crisis, and develop long-term treatment plans that help children and families live happy and healthy lives.

- more -

Strong Families, page 2

About OhioMHAS: Formed by the consolidation of the Ohio Departments of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services and Mental Health, OhioMHAS oversees six regional psychiatric hospitals and a statewide network of more than 400 community-based mental health service providers and 460 alcohol, drug and problem gambling addiction prevention, treatment and recovery service providers.

About DODD: DODD provides leadership, oversight and funding for a statewide system serving approximately 90,000 people with developmental disabilities. The system's services ensure individuals' health and safety, provide residential services and supports, increase opportunities for meaningful employment and foster full community inclusion. Services are implemented by Ohio's County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, who partner with thousands of independent service providers.

###

NOTE: See attached grantee map and project overviews for a description of each project.

Media Contacts:

DODD: Kerry Francis, 614- 644-0263 or kerry.francis@dodd.ohio.gov

OhioMHAS: Eric Wandersleben, 614-728-5090 or eric.wandersleben@mha.ohio.gov