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Web site launches to engage youth with serious emotional challenges and provide support to families

Columbus, Ohio - "Resiliency is knowing when you're falling and knowing how to catch yourself," an Ohio youth comments in a new Web site to help children and youth with serious emotional challenges, and their families. The Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) -- in collaboration with Resiliency Leadership Ohio, the Center of Innovative Practices (CIP) at the Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence at Kent State University, and the Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health -- is pleased to announce www.ResiliencyOhio.org.

Youth and families brought together through Resiliency Leadership Ohio share life stories and personal journeys through a video on the site to demonstrate the fundamental role of resiliency in supporting mental wellness. "We all share the responsibility to ensure the success of our children, regardless of their ability or disability," states one parent.

"The work found on this website would not have been possible without the wisdom and years of dedication from all the youth and family members, past and present, of Resiliency Leadership Ohio," said ODMH Director Sandra Stephenson. "Our departmental policies must incorporate resiliency concepts and the dollars that flow through the department out to the community must support this focus on family health and wellness."

Resiliency Leadership Ohio is comprised of youth with serious emotional challenges and their family members, and is co-facilitated by Kent State's CIP and the Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health, with the support of ODMH. The group seeks to educate others on mental health issues to alleviate stigma and connect families and youth to resources that can help. "Resiliency is the antidote to stigma," said Dr. Steven Jewell, a member of the group and a representative of NAMI Ohio.

ResiliencyOhio.org and related products are funded in part by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and in part through a federal Transformation State Incentive Grant (TSIG) awarded to Ohio from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. TSIG is part of the federal response to the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. Ongoing technical support and management of the Web site is provided by Kent State University.

As another Ohio family puts it, "Our victories and successes, both large and small, give us the energy to strive for more. We see other families in good times and in bad times and we know that we can make it."

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Ted Strickland, Governor • **Sandra Stephenson**, Director

Establishing mental health as a cornerstone of overall health

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