

Strong Families, Safe Communities

A grant given by the Ohio Departments of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health & Addiction Services

The BHN Alliance arranges the things people with disabilities need and want in their daily lives. On any given day, we can be found meeting with a young person to identify his skills so he can find a job, helping a middle-aged woman find a place to live, and arranging the transportation both will need to get to work, home, and everywhere else.

There are times, however, when people need more because they are in crisis. That's when our partnership with others provides the net into which a person can safely fall until things get better again.

In recent years, uncertain and often difficult situations involving youth with mental illness and/or a developmental disability have occurred. In most, if not all cases, the situation had gone from bad to worse and the child had to leave home to seek help. We were then tasked with finding a residential setting for the child to live for a time while in treatment.

Unfortunately, appropriate residential treatment is located far from the three-county region, placing the youth many miles away from home. This puts additional stress on the child and his or her family.

This is changing for the better in 2014, thanks to a *Strong Families, Safe Communities* grant the BHN Alliance received along with its partners, the Belmont-Harrison-Monroe Mental Health and Recovery Board and the Monroe County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

The grant, given by the Ohio Departments of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health &



Reviewing the *Strong Families, Safe Communities* grant details are BHN Alliance Superintendent Stephen Williams and Mental Health and Recovery Board Executive Director Linda Pickenpaugh (seated) and BHN Alliance Team Leader Darlene Pempek (standing left) and Maura Mappin-Dubus of the Mental Health and Recovery Board.

Addiction Services, is providing the funding needed to offer care and treatment close to home. The grant is putting resources in place locally that will stabilize the crises, reduce the risk of harm, and keep the family together.

"With this grant, we will now be able to deliver a person-centered model of care, the likes of which has never been seen in southeastern Ohio," said Stephen L. Williams, BHN Alliance Superintendent.

A team of professionals who understand these issues, headed by a mental health clinician, is now in place and a home in a rural setting has been renovated into a safe, comforting environment. Staff who will work with the children are being specially trained to understand the issues they face.

This partnership between the BHN Alliance and the Belmont-Harrison-Monroe Mental Health and Recovery Board was one of only seven collaborations across Ohio to receive a *Strong Families, Safe Communities* grant. All seven grant recipients meet regularly to share ideas and will identify best practices and models of care that can be duplicated to benefit all counties and all Ohioans.

For more information about *Strong Families, Safe Communities*, contact Darlene Pempek at 740-695-7433.