

**Ohio Department of Youth Services
NEWS RELEASE**

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‘Call to Action’ for Cuyahoga County

Community forum to encourage participation in juvenile offender re-entry

Columbus, Ohio – As the highest committing county of juvenile offenders to the Department of Youth Services (DYS), Cuyahoga County is the first stop on a statewide tour to encourage community involvement in juvenile re-entry. DYS will be conducting various Community Leadership Forums throughout the state to bring community partners together to share services, ideas, and information that will benefit youthful offenders as they prepare for their transition home. The forums are being held in partnership with State Representative John White, who is the sponsor of two bills specific to offender re-entry (House Bills 113 and 130), along with joint-sponsors Representatives Tyrone Yates and Clayton Luckie.

“Since there are no life sentences in DYS, all of our kids will be returning back to the community at some point,” said Thomas Stickrath, Director of DYS. “We need community volunteers to fill in some of the missing gaps in the youths’ lives; we see this as a crucial part of a youth’s successful reentry back home.”

“Formerly-incarcerated individuals often lack the resources and opportunities they need to live crime-free lives,” said State Representative John White. “These kids need motivation and inspiration. We need a paradigm shift not only in institutions and policies, but in communities and individuals. This change is not going to happen without help from a caring community.”

DYS has already begun to recruit hundreds of volunteers from the community who desire to make a difference in the lives of the youth. Since August 2006, community volunteers have spent over 30 thousand hours working with DYS youth in the institutions. The focus now will expand to recruit volunteers to work with youth once released.

Community Leadership Forum Details:

When: November 15, 2007
10:00 a.m. to 12:00p.m.

Location: Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility
4321 Green Road Highland Hills, OH 44128

The Ohio Department of Youth Services is the juvenile corrections system for the state of Ohio. DYS is statutorily mandated to confine felony offenders, ages 10 to 21, who have been adjudicated and committed by one of Ohio’s 88 county juvenile courts. DYS operates eight correctional and rehabilitation facilities and provides parole services from six regional sites.

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