



Department of
Youth Services

Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed
Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice Initiative Expands

January 22, 2014

Dear Staff and Stakeholders:

The Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice (BH/JJ) Initiative provides for the identification and treatment of youth with serious behavioral health needs who have become involved in the juvenile justice system. BH/JJ diverts youth from out-of-home placements, including the Department of Youth Services (DYS), through the implementation of evidence-based treatment models. This is important because this type of in-home treatment prevents youth from going further into the juvenile justice system and helps these youth maintain their ties with family and community supports. As a result, these youth with behavioral health challenges get what they need to live successful lives.

The initiative has been a success! The original 6 Counties include Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery and Summit Counties. For those youth participating in BH/JJ:

- Less than 4% were sent to a DYS facility during or following their enrollment in BH/JJ
- The youth reported a significant decrease in trauma symptoms
- Caregivers, workers, and youth all reported increased youth functioning and decreased problem severity while in BH/JJ treatment
- Youth reported decreased substance use, especially use of alcohol and marijuana
- For the youth who successfully completed BH/JJ treatment, 93% were no longer at risk of out-of-home placement when treatment concluded

I couldn't be more pleased to announce that we received an additional \$500,000 in our annual budget to expand BH/JJ to an additional 6 Counties. Along with our partner, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the initiative will support the following projects:

- **Holmes and Wayne Counties:** The project includes the juvenile courts of Holmes and Wayne Counties, the Wayne-Holmes Mental Health & Recovery Board, the Holmes and Wayne County Family and Children First Councils, and The Crisis Intervention and Recovery Center (CIRC) in Canton, Ohio.

- **Mahoning and Trumbull Counties:** The project includes the juvenile courts of Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, the Mahoning County Mental Health Board, the Trumbull County Mental Health & Recovery Board, the Family and Children First Councils of Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, and Homes For Kids of Ohio in Niles and Boardman, Ohio.
- **Lorain County:** The project includes Lorain County Juvenile Court, Lorain County Children Services, the Lorain County Board of Mental Health, the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board of Lorain County.
- **Wood County:** The project includes the Wood County Juvenile Court, Wood County Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Board, Bowling Green State University, the Children's Resource Center, and the Wood County Family and Children First Council.

If you have any questions about this initiative, please contact Jeff Spears, External Grants Administrator, at Jeff.Spears@dys.ohio.gov or (614) 466-8660.