



Illinois Children's
Healthcare Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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**ILLINOIS CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION LAUNCHES
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE
*Building Systems of Care, Community by Community***

Oak Brook, IL (Tuesday, May 18, 2010) - The Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation announced today a major investment in five communities across the State of Illinois to launch the first round of the Children's Mental Health Initiative, *Building Systems of Care, Community by Community* (CMHI). The CMHI is a multi-year, multi-million dollar initiative that will support a diverse range of creative, community-specific models to transform and improve the way that mental health services are provided to children and youth in their community.

"The major challenge in Illinois' children's mental health arena is the growing volume of children in need of services. The system is unprepared to meet that need," said Tammy Lemke, President of Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation. "The systems serving children and their families are not integrated. The mental health provider, the child care provider, the school counselor or teacher, the health care provider or even members in the community's usual networks don't always know what services others are providing, or even how to find and then link children to them. Families waste time floundering between providers. Multiple and sometimes conflicting assessments are conducted. Children often fall through the cracks."

It is estimated that, by 2020, neuropsychiatric disorders will become one of the top five causes of disability, morbidity and mortality among children in the US and worldwide. 7.5% of Illinois children ages 3-17 are reported to have moderate or severe social or emotional difficulties. 42% of Illinois childcare programs that reported indicated that they had to ask a family to withdraw a child from the program because staff was unable to manage the child's behavior.

"The number of children who experience mental health problems is large and growing." said Dr. Peter E. Doris, Board Chair, Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation. "At the same time, the mental health services available for Illinois' children are fragmented and under-funded. In the CMHI, we are investing in collaborative community-based efforts and partnerships. We are asking them to strategically coordinate and integrate their existing services into a more comprehensive children's mental health system. More children need to receive support for these issues as early as possible."

"Our current service system for children's social and emotional development places most of its emphasis on treatment. Our CMHI is supporting integrated, collaborative community planning to assure that all Illinois children receive needed prevention, intervention and treatment services," noted Ms. Lemke. "We want children and youth to receive the right types of supports, in the right amount that they need, at the right time, and in the right place."

ILCHF is partnering with the following communities to implement the initial round of the CMHI. The Foundation will provide financial resources, technical assistance and consultation to assist each of them in planning and building their mental health system of care for children from birth through the age of 18.

Adams County. Lead Agency: SIU Quincy Family Medicine Residency Program. Contact: Shirley Kay Longlett, Assistant Professor, (217) 224-7895. This is a county-wide model positioned in a primarily rural section of Western Illinois.

Carroll, Lee, Ogle and Whiteside Counties. Lead Agency: Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. Contact: Clyde Lipp, Director of Family Services Division, (815) 284-6611, ext. 250. This is a multi-county model located throughout a number of rural communities in Northern Illinois.

Cities of Berwyn and Cicero. Lead Agency: Pillars. Contact: John W. Shustitzky, Ph.D., President and CEO, (708) 995-3500. This is an urban model serving two adjacent municipalities, both with significant Hispanic populations, in the Metropolitan Chicago area.

City of Springfield. Lead Agency: Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois. Contact: Jan Gambach, Executive Director, (217) 525-1064. This is an urban model that is targeting multiple, high-need neighborhoods in a municipality of Central Illinois.

Livingston County. Lead Agency: Illinois State University/Psychological Services Center. Contact: Dr. Brenda Huber, Ph.D., Director, (309) 438-7407. This is a county-wide model located in a rural section of North Central Illinois.

The CMHI communities will be working to implement evidence-based practices that are sustainable, and that promote the full potential of every child and youth by addressing their physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural and social needs. All five of the communities will also work together as a learning community to share how, in developing their systems of care, they are improving collaboration among community stakeholders, and integrating primary care and mental health services and support for children and their families.

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About Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation

Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation (ILCHF) is the only statewide private foundation focused on improving the health of all children in the State of Illinois. ILCHF was created in December 2002 through an action of the State of Illinois Attorney General's Office and a group of Illinois insurance carriers. This action established the Foundation, which was funded with an investment of approximately \$125 million.

In 2007, ILCHF announced its first major initiative in the area of oral health. More than \$20 million was committed over five years on efforts related to building the capacity of the safety net system, workforce development and public education and awareness. During this same period, ILCHF committed more than \$5 million to 25 programs that worked to integrate mental health and primary care services in a medical home model. In September 2009, ILCHF launched the Children's Mental Health Initiative, *Building Systems of Care, Community by Community*.

From the Foundation's inception through 2009, a total of more than \$36 million in grants has been invested in over 225 programs. For additional information about ILCHF, please see www.ilchf.org.

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