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Subject:

[NEWS-RELEASES] Department of Public Welfare Earns Federal Recognition for Programs and Services for Children

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Department of Public Welfare Earns Federal Recognition for Programs and Services for Children

October 15, 2009 – Pennsylvania's commitment to children was recognized today as the federal government awarded grants for adoption excellence and mental health systems of care to the Department of Public Welfare.

"We are pleased to be recognized for the positive work we are doing on behalf of children all across Pennsylvania," said Secretary Estelle B. Richman. "Through the programs and services supported by these grants, we are able to focus on the needs of children and their families, giving them the opportunity for a better, brighter future."

The department was awarded approximately \$1.3 million from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or HHS, for increasing the number of children adopted from foster care and nearly \$1 million from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA, to serve youth living with a serious mental health need.

The adoption excellence grant funds will be used to enhance programs and services to prevent child abuse and neglect. According to HHS, these adoption awards aim to provide stronger incentives to states to redouble their efforts to find loving, adoptive homes for children, and particularly for older children and children with special needs.

"Focusing on the needs of children and their families can result in better outcomes for them, as well as for the communities in which they live," said Richman.

Through the SAMHSA grant, Pennsylvania becomes part of the national movement to more effectively serve youth with serious behavioral health challenges, and their families. The grant will be used to build systems that work together with the youth and their family, integrate professional services and utilize the natural supports that exist in the families and communities throughout Pennsylvania.

For more information on programs and services available for Pennsylvania children, visit

www.dpw.state.pa.us.

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