



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Mary Maiolo, 585-295-1000, ext. 293; mmaiolo@childrensinstitute.net

ROCHESTER WHOLE CHILD HEALTH INITIATIVE RECEIVES FEDERAL SUPPORT

Rochester, NY - Children's Institute is pleased to announce a grant award from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA's Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health Grant Program (Project LAUNCH) has awarded a grant for \$800,000 this year, renewable for up to five years, totaling \$4 million for the *Rochester Whole Child Health Initiative: A Cross-Sector Collaboration to Help Kids Thrive*. This will fund the integration of organizations that work with children and families to promote the wellness of young children, ages 0-8, by addressing their social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioral development. Ann Marie White, Ed.D., Children's Institute's Executive Director commented, "This grant focuses on improving the lives of children in Rochester. We join with families in ensuring children have the foundation for strong social and emotional growth from the start. Together with partner agencies, we will work to close some service gaps to make comprehensive preventative care for children more possible in our community."

Rochester ranks 1st in child poverty for similar size cities and is the 5th poorest city in the US out of the top 75 cities. The grant will fund programs that work with children (ages 0-8) residing in the city of Rochester. There are significant gaps in children's behavioral health services to address the trauma-related issues that over 70% of Rochester area youth report having experienced. In addition, there is a shortage of providers with adequate training and expertise to work with young children who have mental and behavioral health concerns.

Funding will enable Children's Institute and the Rochester Whole Child Health Initiative partners to work together to: conduct screenings and assessments to identify behavioral and developmental concerns; provide training and consultation services to area health, early care and education professionals, and parents; integrate behavioral and infant and early childhood mental health into primary care settings; provide referrals and support services for families; share expertise among multiple disciplines; and raise public awareness about the importance of a comprehensive approach to working with children. This project builds understanding and support to equip all the people who care for children with effective tools for early intervention.

"Our children deserve every opportunity to succeed - and this grant will play a critical role in helping to put our young people on the path to success," said Congressman Joe Morelle. "Children's Institute is already doing incredible work in supporting children's social and emotional development and I am excited that their leadership has been recognized by SAMHSA through this award. I look forward to continuing our partnership as we work to support children in need and help Monroe County families thrive."

The grant's goal is to integrate education, behavioral, mental health, and medical systems by using innovative approaches that have been vetted and proven effective. This funding allows these systems to combine knowledge and efforts in support of young children and their families: Preventing and addressing behavioral

and social and emotional concerns early in childhood and partnering with families helps children achieve better outcomes throughout their lives.

Rochester Whole Child Health Initiative partners: Children's Institute, Common Ground Health, Mt. Hope Family Center, Society for the Protection and Care of Children, URMG Golisano Children's Hospital Department of Pediatrics, URMG Pediatric Behavioral Health & Wellness, and URMG Women's Health Practice.

For more information, please visit www.childrensinstitute.net.

Children's Institute is a national not-for-profit organization based in Rochester, NY that works to strengthen children's social and emotional health. Through sound research and evaluation, the organization develops and promotes effective prevention and early intervention programs, materials, and best practices for children, families, schools, and communities. Children's Institute is affiliated with the University of Rochester and has served the community for over 60 years.

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