

Governor DeWine Announces Pediatric Behavioral Health Initiative

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today announced the Pediatric Behavioral Health Initiative, an \$84 million investment, to increase access to care and expand capacity across the state so kids and their families can get services and supports for their behavioral health needs in or near their communities.

“The need to increase access to behavioral health care has been growing nationwide for years. I am pleased that, here in Ohio, we place an emphasis on expanding treatment capacity and increasing accessibility for children and their families,” said Governor DeWine. “When children are mentally, behaviorally, and physically stable and healthy, they are more likely to do better in school, avoid potentially risky behaviors, and make sounder decisions, putting them on paths that will help them reach their full potential.”

This initiative uses dedicated ARPA investments to expand infrastructure and strengthen local partnerships so Ohio kids can get the specialty care they need. The funding was allocated in HB 168, sponsored by Rep. Mark Frazier and Rep Mike Loychick, passed by the General Assembly last year. It will expand inpatient and outpatient behavioral health supports regionally. Recipients include:

\$7 million: Akron Children’s Hospital to help create regional behavioral health centers to provide psychiatric services, partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient programs, and outpatient therapy. This project will increase access to behavioral health services in local communities and provide opportunities to partner with community agencies to fill gaps in services.

\$10 million: Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center to help fund their new inpatient facility at the College Hill Campus that will feature private rooms for all their patients, a new neurobehavioral partial hospitalization program, along with a severe behavioral day treatment program, dedicated areas for



therapy, and additional treatment space.

\$25 million: Dayton Children’s Hospital to help build a new mental health building that would double inpatient treatment capacity, expand the partial hospitalization program, increase access to psychology services, and add a bridge service to ensure smooth transitions for children and their families as they transition from one level of care to another.

\$17 million: ProMedica Russell J. Ebeid Children’s Hospital to renovate existing space in their inpatient pediatric psychiatry unit, establish an ambulatory outpatient building with comprehensive resources to better serve families, and work with local partners to develop services and programs to meet the community’s needs.

\$15 million: University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children’s to renovate and expand their inpatient Children Adolescent Psychi-

atric Unit, creating sensory-friendly spaces, and leveraging technology to better accommodate patients.

\$6.45 million: Appalachian Children’s Coalition: Integrated Services for Behavioral Health to expand the Youth and Family Wellness Center in Chillicothe, strengthening southeast Ohio’s Behavioral Health System of Care and reducing the need for families to travel long distances to receive specialized care. Integrated Services also expects to use the funding to help renovate the Mary Hill Center for Youth building in Nelsonville, Ohio, and fund family-friendly recovery housing.

\$3.55 million: Appalachian Children’s Coalition: Hopewell Health Centers to renovate space in local schools in southeast Ohio to house fully integrated health centers to help meet the primary care, behavioral health, and therapeutic needs for the schools. In addition, funds will be used to renovate buildings for Hopewell Health Centers REACH

Youth Partial Hospitalization Program. Nationally, each year, one in five children experience a mental health condition. According to the Ohio Children’s Hospital Association, there are currently 10 child psychiatrists per 100,000 kids and teens; however, it is estimated that nationally we need 47 child psychiatrists per 100,000. The need is growing. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of children hospitalized for a mental health reason increased 163% nationally.

Governor DeWine speaking at a podium

In Dayton, where Governor DeWine joined Dayton Children’s Hospital President and CEO Debbie Feldman to announce their Pediatric Behavioral Health Initiative Project, Feldman explained that their mental and behavioral health inpatient unit opened in July 2019 with 24 beds.

By 2029, it is expected the hospital will need 45-50 inpatient beds to meet the need. In February, 178 kids stayed in regular medical rooms at Dayton Children’s, waiting for a bed in the behavioral health unit.

The Pediatric Behavioral Health Initiative is part of a larger commitment that Governor DeWine has made to increasing access to mental health services in our state. Last week, Governor DeWine announced a Wellness Worker Initiative intended to cover many of the costs for students in behavioral health-care fields so they can complete their studies more quickly and enter the workforce to meet the growing need. Many efforts are targeted specifically at youth. Governor DeWine launched the Student Wellness and Success Funds to provide schools with wraparound resources to better address the social and emotional needs of students. To date, Student Wellness and Success funding has helped pay for more than 6,600 wellness programs, including more than 1,300 focused solely on mental health.

Governor DeWine Awards \$3.6 Million to Help Law Enforcement Combat Illegal Drug Activity

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) -- Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today announced over \$3.6 million in funding for 41 local law enforcement agencies to help their drug task forces enforce the state’s drug laws and combat illegal drug activity.

OCJS Grant List

Grants from the 2022 Ohio Drug Law Enforcement Fund will support drug task forces that impact 67 counties on issues of drug trafficking, pharmaceutical diversion, and other organized criminal activity associated with the drug trade. The program, which is administered through the Office of Criminal Justice Services, is also intended to help local entities enhance the safety of Ohioans through multi-jurisdictional task forces.

“Ohio’s drug task forces play an absolutely critical role in removing drugs from the streets and holding drug traffickers accountable,” said Governor DeWine. “These grants are flexible so drug task force commanders can tailor their plans to the greatest benefit for their local communities.”

Funds can be used by agencies to investigate drug trafficking organizations and disrupt the drug supply through intelligence gathering, information sharing, and multi-agency coordination. Grants can also be used to support local work to help drug overdose victims and their

Ohio Drug Law Enforcement Fund FUNDING AWARDS		
Implementing Agency	County	Award Amount
Allen County Sheriff's Office	Allen	\$102,941.71
Ashland County Sheriff's Office	Ashland	\$11,488.21
Auglaize County Sheriff's Office	Auglaize	\$83,852.39
Brown County Prosecutor's Office	Brown	\$8,272.72
Butler County Sheriff's Office	Butler	\$28,671.76
Clermont County Sheriff's Office	Clermont	\$115,739.43
Columbiana County Sheriff's Office	Columbiana	\$97,328.67
Cleveland Division of Police	Cuyahoga	\$166,481.26
Westshore Enforcement Bureau	Cuyahoga	\$150,126.40
City of Bedford	Cuyahoga	\$82,389.20
Defiance County Sheriff's Office	Defiance	\$116,637.52
Delaware County Sheriff's Office	Delaware	\$118,209.17
Fairfield County Sheriff	Fairfield	\$130,557.84
Franklin County Sheriff's Office	Franklin	\$166,481.26
Greene County Sheriff's Office	Greene	\$108,330.23
Springfield Township Police Department	Hamilton	\$136,497.31
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office	Hamilton	\$60,494.44
Hamilton County Prosecuting Attorney	Hamilton	\$33,444.42
Cincinnati Police Department	Hamilton	\$82,542.40
Hardin County Sheriff's Office	Hardin	\$7,546.87
Jefferson County Prosecutor's Office	Jefferson	\$9,683.93
Lake County Narcotics Agency	Lake	\$75,000.00
Lawrence County Prosecutor's Office	Lawrence	\$87,901.00
Licking County Sheriff	Licking	\$161,317.27
Logan County Sheriff's Office	Logan	\$8,330.16
Lorain County Sheriff's Office	Lorain	\$137,518.00
Toledo Police Department	Lucas	\$30,804.56
Mahoning County Sheriff's Office	Mahoning	\$126,965.50

OHIO DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT FUND FUNDING AWARDS		
Implementing Agency	County	Award Amount
Medina County Drug Task Force	Medina	\$110,575.44
Montgomery County Sheriff's Office	Montgomery	\$36,102.40
Ottawa County Prosecutors Office	Ottawa	\$83,186.05
Portage County Sheriff's Office	Portage	\$14,889.38
Mansfield Police Department	Richland	\$166,481.26
Ross County Sheriff's Office	Ross	\$103,839.80
Sandusky County Drug Task Force	Sandusky	\$9,186.43
Stark County Sheriff's Office	Stark	\$152,795.45
Summit County Sheriff's Office	Summit	\$166,481.26
Trumbull County Sheriff's Office	Trumbull	\$116,413.00
Tuscarawas County Sheriff's Office	Tuscarawas	\$15,023.60
Greater Warren County Drug Task Force	Warren	\$121,801.51
MEDWAY Drug Enforcement Agency	Wayne	\$88,675.81

families through education, support, and treatment options.

MORE: List of Ohio Drug Law Enforcement Awards

The Ohio Drug Law Enforcement Fund is part of the Drug Interdiction, Disruption, and Reduction Plan that is funded through Ohio's operating budget.

Today's grants are in addition to several other initiatives developed under Governor DeWine to address the issues of drug trafficking and substance use disorder. Immediately after taking office in 2019, Governor DeWine signed an executive order creating the Recovery-

Ohio initiative to support aggressive measures to combat the opiate epidemic by investing in the health and well-being of Ohio citizens. Through the RecoveryOhio Law Enforcement Fund, local drug task forces have received millions to intercept illegal drugs and enhance their role in substance use awareness, prevention, and recovery. RecoveryOhio has also worked to expand access to specialized court dockets to give judges flexibility to place defendants with mental health or substance use disorders into treatment rather than sentencing them to jail.

Governor DeWine also created the Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center in 2019 to support local law enforcement agencies in intelligence-focused drug trafficking investigations and secured funding for the development of several Major Drug Interdiction Task Forces that target trans-national drug trafficking cartels. The new Ohio Crime Lab Efficiency Program that Governor DeWine launched last month will also support local crime laboratories to help them efficiently analyze drugs associated with criminal investigations.



First Lady Fran DeWine pictured with community and library partners at the Deer Park Branch Library for Hamilton County’s One Millionth Imagination Library Book Celebration.

(CINCINNATI, Ohio)— This morning, Ohio First Lady Fran DeWine attended Hamilton County’s One Millionth Imagination Library Book Celebration at Deer Park Branch Library in Cincinnati.

First Lady DeWine also presented a proclamation from Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted, which recognizes the milestone of one million Imagination Library books being given out in Hamilton County.

“Hamilton County serves as a role model for how to build strong community partnerships and expand enrollment in the Ohio Governor’s Imagination Library,” said First Lady DeWine. “I am so grateful for the effort to get so many free books into the hands of our littlest Ohioans and their families, because we know this program has so many benefits – from better bonding time to better kindergarten readiness scores!”

First Lady DeWine joined several community partners who have supported the Ohio Governor’s

First Lady Fran DeWine Attends Hamilton County’s One Millionth Imagination Library Book Celebration

nor’s Imagination Library program in Hamilton County, including Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Cincinnati Public Library, and members of the Ohio General Assembly. Afterwards, First Lady DeWine visited Cincinnati Public School District’s John P. Parker Elementary School and read “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” by Eric Carle to a group of preschoolers. She was also

joined by Loren Long, Ohio author and illustrator, who has four books in the Imagination Library collection. First Lady DeWine and Loren read two additional books.



Ohio Author and Illustrator Loren Long joins First Lady DeWine at John P. Parker Elementary School for a book reading.

“Programs like the Imagination Library are incredibly important to Cincinnati Children’s because they are investments into the health of our community,” said Bill Brinkman, MD, Director of

General and Community Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital. “Partnering with parents to promote a love for reading at a young age, which we know is a critical time for brain development, is vitally important for children and for the continued growth and health of our region. We are proud to be a part of this program and celebrate reaching this milestone alongside our funders and community partners.”

Hamilton County’s Imagination Library program began in 2015 with a pilot partnership between Cincinnati Children’s Hospital and Cincinnati Public School District. Following the three-year pilot, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital published a study showing that the percentage of entering kindergarteners who were “on-track” on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment’s literacy section increased by 15% among those with greater exposure to the Imagination Library program. This increase was significantly greater than similar children who weren’t enrolled in the program. “Regular reading is a critical part of a child’s development. Just 20 minutes per day is enough to strengthen brain development, build caregiver-child relationships, and build literacy and social skills,” said Paula Brehm-Heeger, the Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director of the Library. “That’s why it is important to get books into kids’ hands in order to build a foundation of success for starting their education journey.”



First Lady Fran DeWine pictured with the preschool class at John P. Parker Elementary School in Cincinnati.