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2282 Reeves Road, NE | Warren, OH 44483

Contact: Allesha Ciminero, Community Liaison &
Recruitment Specialist

Ph: 330-372-2010, ext. 1343 | Fax: 330 -372-9890

Allesha.Ciminero@jfs.ohio.gov



Trumbull County Earns Certification in Ohio START Program, Strengthening Support for Families Impacted by Substance Use

Warren, Ohio – Trumbull County Children Services has officially achieved Ohio START (Sobriety, Treatment, and Redefining Trauma) certification, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to family-centered recovery. With this achievement, Trumbull County becomes the 7th county in Ohio and only the 11th in the nation to earn this certification. The Ohio START program supports families struggling with substance use by integrating child welfare services with behavioral health treatment and peer mentorship, reinforcing Trumbull County's dedication to healing and reunification.

In addition to this accomplishment, several Trumbull County team members have been recognized for their exceptional service. Kim Ruble, Supervisor of Recovery Services, was named the 2025 Ohio START Supervisor of the Year, highlighting her leadership and dedication to the program's success. In 2024, Angela Cochran was honored as the Ohio START Caseworker of the Year, celebrating her commitment to empowering families and fostering lasting change. Jennifer Barbera received the Family of the Year award in 2023. Jennifer's journey involved escaping an abusive relationship, battling addiction, and navigating foster care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jennifer's determination and support from the children services team ultimately led to her successful reunification with her daughter, and she now empowers others as a START Family Peer Mentor.

Trumbull County began implementing Ohio START in March 2019 as part of Cohort II of the program's expansion across Ohio. Since that time, the county has developed a dedicated team of child welfare professionals, behavioral health providers, family peer mentors, and court partners to deliver comprehensive services aimed at promoting recovery and family stability.

Certification indicates that Trumbull County has implemented the START model with fidelity and has established sustainable practices in alignment with state standards. Participation in Cohort II allowed the county to receive training, technical assistance, and peer support from other counties working toward the same goals.

Through this certification, Trumbull County joins a growing number of counties across the state committed to improving outcomes for children and families affected by substance use disorders. Outcomes from the program include increased family engagement, reduced time in foster care, and improved access to treatment and support services.

For more information about Trumbull County's Ohio START program, contact: Kim Ruble, Supervisor of Recovery Services at (330) 372-2010 or Kimberly.Ruble@jfs.ohio.gov.

Trumbull County Children Services, in partnership with families and the community, protects and advocates for children in crisis or at risk of abuse and neglect. The Agency assesses risk and builds on family strengths in seeking to maintain or reunite children with safe families. We perform this mandate with compassion, respect, and professionalism to families in Trumbull County.