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MACOMB, OAKLAND AND WAYNE FAMILY SERVICE AGENCIES ESTABLISH GROUNDBREAKING REGIONAL ALLIANCE

Family Service Alliance for Southeastern Michigan created to address urgent need for behavioral health assistance in metro Detroit

Detroit, Mich. – February, 13, 2008 – Three Southeastern Michigan family service agencies announced today that they have created a formal alliance, designed to provide greater capacity and services for families in need - from behavioral health to child development - throughout the region.

Family Service Alliance for Southeastern Michigan is a collaboration between Family Service Inc. of Wayne County, Macomb Family Services and Oakland Family Services. The timing of the alliance is critical. According to Michael Earl, Oakland Family Services CEO and spokesperson for Family Service Alliance, calls for assistance are up nearly 30 percent from 2006 to 2007. “An environment of shrinking resources requires a new approach to doing business. Through our proactive collaboration, we can increase the capacity of clients served, benefit from shared administrative costs, and improve the overall quality of services across the region,” said Earl.

“The alliance is unique because it’s the first time within Michigan that three family service organizations have joined forces and developed such a comprehensive business operations model,” said Earl. “We realized that we needed to think and act differently than we had in the past – in order to serve the growing number of families in need.”

Each agency provides support for various types of behavioral health needs including: substance abuse, domestic violence, depression, adoption, child placement, senior services, family preservation, divorce and early childhood services.

The alliance will comprise a shared board of directors, made up of board members from each agency to guide the decision-making process. Key to the operations of the alliance are Earl, as well as Owen Pfaendtner, CEO, Macomb Family Services and Arnaldo Solis, CEO, Family Service Inc.

Calls for regional unity, such as the model laid out by One D and the United Way for Southeast Michigan affirm the strategy behind the Family Service Alliance collaboration.

“Efforts by organizations like the Family Service Alliance to think regionally as they create a new partnership is at the heart of One D. Their work supports our **Actions for Regional Unity** by taking ownership of the region's future, encouraging regional thinking in the non-profit sector, and reducing duplication to better utilize resources. On behalf of One D, I applaud their leadership in forging a new Alliance of Family Service organizations --which will make a solid contribution to two of One D's priorities -- educational preparedness and quality of life, said Edsel B. Ford II, One D Lead Champion.”

The alliance is coordinating its collaborative efforts in phases. Earl says they have begun the process of standardizing program practices across the region.

Family Service Alliance for Southeastern Michigan is a collaboration of family service agencies designed to improve the quality of behavioral health and child development services throughout the region. Family Service Inc. of Wayne County, Macomb Family Services, and Oakland Family Services serve as charter members of the alliance. For more information on Family Service Alliance of Southeastern Michigan, visit their website at www.fsasm.org.

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