Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed
National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day
May 9, 2012

Today is National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day, as recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). With 55% of the youth in our facilities on the mental health caseload, addressing the mental health needs of our population is at the forefront of not only our reform at DYS, but also our daily conversations on how to better serve our youth population.

As you may know, Governor Kasich appointed me the chairperson of the Ohio Interagency Task Force on Mental Health and Juvenile Justice. The diverse group is working on a comprehensive plan to treat justice-involved youth who are also mentally ill. The work is addressing statewide information and sharing, ensuring access to mental health services, responding to the needs of youth committed to DYS, protective and risk factors, and the role of prevention. The group plans to complete its recommendations in the coming months.

We know that treating the mental health needs of youthful offenders is both complex and crucial. By providing quality interventions at every level of service delivery, we are supporting lasting change in the lives of youth.

Harvey J. Reed, Director
Department of Youth Services