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For Immediate Release

Children's Mental Health Awareness Day scheduled

To kick off "May is Mental Health Month" and "Children's Mental Health Week," the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities, Division of Children's Mental Health will participate in the West Virginia Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. The celebration will be on Monday, May 14, at the Capitol Complex, Governor's Reception Area, at 10:30 a.m.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports that in 2004, 22.5 percent of youth aged 12 to 17 received treatment or counseling for emotional or behavioral problems in the previous year. A similar percentage of children in West Virginia also have serious mental health needs.

Through innovative approaches, the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities helps meet the mental health needs of hundreds of children, youth and families. West Virginia Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is an opportunity for the community to better understand the value of its investment in innovative approaches to meeting the mental health needs of children, youth, and families.

Being a parent or guardian is one of life's most demanding roles. Those who are caring for children or youth with mental health needs face a variety of challenges many people cannot even imagine—not the least of which is figuring out where to turn for the services these children need. Fortunately, services and supports are available to children and youth with mental health needs—and their families—in West Virginia. The Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities, Division of Children's Mental Health Services has

provided services all over West Virginia. In addition, we plan and ensure implementation of a statewide system of appropriate, accessible mental health services for children and their families.