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Inaugural Home Visiting Summit Attracts More Than 400 Professionals From Across Ohio to Highlight Home Visiting Services

Home Visiting serves women, children at risk for poor birth, child development outcomes

COLUMBUS – The inaugural Ohio Home Visiting Summit titled “Advancing Our Story” hosted a sold-out crowd of home visiting professionals from across the state on Monday April 16 in Columbus. The summit was sponsored by the Bureau of Maternal, Child and Family Health at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH).

The summit highlighted the progress being made in home visiting across Ohio, and shared the latest research on evidence-based, innovative and promising home visiting and community health worker models. The summit included a roundtable discussion with national leaders from four different home visiting models, Healthy Families America, Moms and Babies First, Parents as Teachers, and Nurse-Family Partnership.

Ohio’s home visiting program, called “Help Me Grow,” is administered by ODH, and services are provided through a statewide network of local implementing agencies that provide expectant and new parents with information and support in the comfort of their homes. Social workers, nurses, or other early childhood professionals meet regularly with at-risk pregnant women and their families to provide the support, education and resources needed to raise children who are physically, socially and emotionally healthy and ready to learn.

“Research shows that home visiting services improve birth outcomes and can help reduce infant mortality,” said ODH Director Lance Himes. “These home visits also improve maternal and child health, prevent child abuse and neglect, and connect families with needed supports and resources in their communities.

There were two main presentations during the summit. In the morning, attendees learned about toxic stress and empathy from Dr. Benjamin Kearney, the executive vice president and chief clinical officer of Ohio GuideStone in Cleveland. In the afternoon, keynote speaker Diedra Henry-Spires, CEO of Dalton Daley Group, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group which is home to the Home Visiting Policy Network, highlighted how home visiting workers can make a difference in their communities.

At the end of the summit, 12 individuals and six agencies were surprised with peer-nominated awards for outstanding service and innovations in the field of home visiting. Photos of them with their agency’s supervisor, ODH Bureau of Maternal, Child and Family Health leaders, and national leaders of home visiting models are available.

For more information about the inaugural Ohio Home Visiting Summit and a complete list of award winners, please visit <http://www.helpmegrow.ohio.gov/2018-Summit/2018-Ohio-Home-Visiting-Summit.aspx>

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