



December 9, 2004

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For Immediate Release

**\$500,000 TO HELP COUNSEL CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has implemented a \$500,000 legislative appropriation to provide trauma counseling for children being served through domestic violence programs.

The appropriation is being used to fund child trauma counseling through 10 programs statewide, said Jackie Shipp, ODMHSAS director of children's services.

The programs are:

**Ardmore** – Family Shelter of Southern Oklahoma

**Clinton** – ACTION Associates

**Duncan** – Women's Haven

**Enid** – YWCA

**Guymon** – Northwest Domestic Crisis Services, Inc.

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Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services  
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**Hugo and Idabel** – Carl Albert Community Mental Health Center, partnering with Southeastern Oklahoma Services for Family Violence Intervention, Inc.

**Muskogee** – Women in Safe Home (WISH), Inc., which is partnering with Green Country Behavioral Health Services, also based in Muskogee

**Oklahoma City** – Latino Community Development Agency

**Ponca City** – Domestic Violence Program of North Central Oklahoma

**Tulsa** – Domestic Violence Intervention Services, Inc.

“This is a huge step forward in our domestic violence program offerings,” said Julie Young, ODMHSAS deputy commissioner for domestic violence/sexual assault services. “Children exposed to domestic violence have trauma issues specific to witnessing violence in the home and, in some cases, being victims of violence themselves. By contracting with programs in various parts of the state, we will be able to address an issue that previously has not been addressed. As additional funding becomes available, we want to expand these services to even more programs statewide.”

Shipp said counseling services will extend to family counseling, focusing on the needs of children, with an emphasis on parenting skills. All services will be provided by licensed professionals trained in trauma work with children.

“Domestic violence programs also will work with local child abuse programs to provide trauma counseling for abused children,” she added.

For more information, contact Shipp at (405) 522-4142.

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Editor’s Note: If you would like to make arrangements to interview a Department representative concerning this or other issues related to mental health, substance abuse, or domestic violence and sexual assault, please contact Pam McKeown at 405-522-3907.

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