

OhioGuidestone Awarded \$350K Grant from Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation to Address Trauma in Young Children and Women in Cleveland's Urban Communities

Collaboration with Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services and University Hospitals Rainbow Center for Women and Children improves access to trauma-informed care

BEREA, Ohio, June 5, 2019 – OhioGuidestone announced it has been awarded a two-year, \$350,000 grant from the Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation to improve the availability and accessibility of trauma services for young children and women in Cleveland's urban communities. The grant supports Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) screenings and a child-parent psychotherapy expansion project with Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services (NEON) and University Hospitals Rainbow Center for Women and Children.

"This additional support from the Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation enables us to continue and expand on work we began with the 2016 grant they awarded us to develop and implement an ACEs screening protocol with NEON," said Richard Frank, President and CEO of OhioGuidestone.

The initial grant funded ACEs screenings for all well-child care visits from birth through age five at two urban NEON locations – Hough and Southeast. OhioGuidestone trained NEON staff on the impact of trauma and toxic stress on young children, as well as the critical role they play in prevention and early detection. OhioGuidestone also provided a therapist onsite at both locations during peak clinic hours for consultation and immediate intervention.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, exposure to ACEs, defined as stressful or traumatic events experienced before age 18, can lead to lifelong mental, physical and social health issues. ACEs include all types of abuse and neglect, parental mental illness, substance abuse, divorce, incarceration and domestic violence. Other indicators are economic hardship, homelessness and stints in foster care. Parental exposure to trauma can also increase risk factors for children and impede parents' ability to be nurturing and effective.

"The pediatricians and staff agree that the ACEs screening is valuable to the identification and treatment of otherwise hidden precursors of diseases and disorders," said Dr. Anita Watson, Medical Director of NEON. "We understand its positive application in the medical, mental and emotional realms where adverse childhood events affect, negatively."

The new grant allows OhioGuidestone to continue providing services at the two preliminary NEON sites, while expanding to three additional NEON locations – Collinwood, East Cleveland and Superior – as well as the new University Hospitals Rainbow Center for Women and Children in Midtown.

"We are grateful for Mt. Sinai's support of University Hospitals' collaboration with OhioGuidestone," said Patti DePompei, President of UH Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital and MacDonald Women's Hospital. "This work at the University Hospitals Rainbow Center for Women and Children furthers our mission to support the well-being of families in our community by understanding how childhood trauma can adversely impact that person's health throughout their life."

Screenings at the University Hospitals Rainbow Center for Women and Children will also occur during well-child care visits from birth through age five, with the added benefit of being extended to mothers' obstetrics visits. An early childhood mental health therapist and maternal depression-trained therapist will co-locate onsite.

"The need for cross-system collaboration to address ACEs is critical right now with the local population seeing increased rates of violent crime and 52 percent of children under the age of 18 living at or below the poverty threshold," said Holli Ritzenthaler, Project Director and Assistant Vice President of Community Counseling at OhioGuidestone. "The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation has made it possible for us to promote awareness to parents and health care providers in the community around the impact of trauma on the developing brain and help prevent the likelihood of additional ACEs exposure."

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About OhioGuidestone

OhioGuidestone, a leader in the field of behavioral healthcare, has been helping individuals throughout Ohio reset their paths, reclaim their autonomy and restore their purpose for 155 years. The Berea-based organization connects individuals with the resources needed to achieve lifelong success, providing community counseling, substance use disorder treatment, early childhood services, psychiatric care, workforce development training and more. Connect with us on www.ohioGuidestone.org, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or by calling 440-260-8303.

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