



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Behavior Clinic Awarded \$2 Million SAMHSA Grant to Provide Trauma-focused Treatment for Very Young Children in Milwaukee County**

**MILWAUKEE (September 15, 2016)** – The Behavior Clinic, a partnership between Marquette University and Penfield Children’s Center, received a five-year grant totaling \$1,930,732 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide trauma-focused treatment for children from birth to age 6 in Milwaukee County.

“The Behavior Clinic speaks to the value that a strong partnership between a community-based organization and an academic institution can have on the community,” said Christine Holmes, president/CEO at Penfield Children’s Center. “SAMHSA’s incredible investment in the Behavior Clinic will support the critical work our staff is doing with children and families exposed to significant trauma.”

As part of the SAMHSA grant, the Behavior Clinic will deliver an evidence-based practice and support:

- 400 young children who have experienced significant trauma each year.
- Trainings that allow community providers to learn more about trauma in very young children, and available intervention and support resources for children in need of mental health services.
- Collaboration with other agencies that serve a similar population and coordinate the agencies’ respective services while preventing duplication to benefit younger children who have experienced trauma.
- 4-6 week intensive trainings and access to Early Pathways, the Behavior Clinic’s nationally accredited training program for mental health professionals that provides a comprehensive and integrated assessment and treatment protocol for addressing significant behavior problems in children.

“Research increasingly links significant emotional and behavioral difficulties in childhood to trauma,” said Dr. Bill Henk, dean of the College of Education at Marquette University. “The SAMHSA grant will allow the Behavior Clinic to continue to serve as a leader in this field contributing to the growing body of

research on the impact of trauma in early childhood and share this research on best practices from the clinic's proven home intervention model with practitioners throughout the country."

The Behavior Clinic serves more than 400 children annually by providing in-home counseling and services that address issues very early in a child's development to help prevent serious mental health issues from developing in the future. Recognized by SAMHSA as a nationally-replicable model, the Behavior Clinic is a training facility for aspiring mental health professionals and has made 41 presentations at local, state, regional and national conferences and published 23 refereed journal articles and two book chapters since 2003, while concurrently delivering trauma-informed care to children and providing parents with skills to foster a positive, stable environment for their child's overall development.

"This is a tremendous endorsement of the Behavior Clinic's work to provide trauma-informed care to children living in Milwaukee County," said Dr. Robert Fox, Professor in the College of Education's Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology at Marquette University and the consulting psychologist at the Behavior Clinic. "The SAMHSA grant will support our work to provide critical care to young children exposed to trauma and train mental health practitioners on the best practices we've acquired doing this work since 2003."

#### **About Penfield Children's Center**

Penfield Children's Center creates a positive start in life for infants and children, many of whom have developmental delays or disabilities, by providing early education, health services and family programming. Each year, Penfield serves more than 1,600 children by providing research-based programs at the critical time of early brain development when physical, cognitive, language, social, and self-help skills are formed.

#### **About Marquette University's College of Education**

The College of Education is one of 11 colleges at Marquette University, Wisconsin's largest independent educational institution which enjoys a national reputation for excellence. With a mission of teaching, research and service benefitting both education and mental health in the community, the College of Education carries a deep commitment to justice and a rigorous intellectual grounding. Graduate students enrolled in the Counseling Education and Counseling Psychology program in the College gain valuable experience working with children and parents, learning new ways to care for early child behavioral and emotional problems, and helping parents interact positively with their children in the Behavior Clinic. The clinic also has an ongoing applied research program that regularly contributes findings to the field of pediatric mental health.

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