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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COLUMBUS – Ohio START announced today that 6 new counties have been selected to join the program, bringing to 52 the number of counties participating. Ohio START is an evidence-based intervention program that helps families struggling with both substance abuse and child maltreatment by creating teams of caseworkers, family peer mentors and behavioral health providers to support them.

“We are pleased to announce the fourth cohort of Ohio START counties, bringing the Ohio START model to even more families around Ohio,” said Ohio START Director Fawn Gadel. “Ohio START shows that recovery is possible, and it heals families. With intensive services and support, parents can overcome addiction and children can remain safely in the home or be reunified as part of their recovery.”

Counties selected to join Ohio START are Columbiana, Coshocton, Greene, Guernsey, Huron and Miami.

“Coshocton County Job & Family Services/Child Welfare is very pleased to be accepted to Cohort 4 of the Ohio START program. Even though we are a remote and rural community, we are anything but immune to the ills of illegal drug use and addiction,” said Coshocton County Job & Family Services Director Danny Brenneman. “In a recent study, nearly 80% of new intake cases for child abuse and neglect contained an element of illegal drug use or addiction, which also inevitably involve child trauma. The Ohio START model will help our county by identifying the risks of child abuse and neglect and develop sound structures and practices to best combat the effects.”

Ohio START began in 2017 as a pilot project created by then Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine. It operated in 17 counties in the first year, adding 15 additional counties in 2018 and another 14 counties in 2019. The Ohio START program is housed at and led by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO).