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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COLUMBUS – Ohio START announced today that 4 new counties have been selected to join the program, bringing to 54 the number of counties participating. Ohio START is an evidence-based intervention that helps families struggling with both substance abuse and children services involvement by creating teams of caseworkers, family peer mentors and behavioral health providers to support them.

“We are pleased to bring the Ohio START model to more families around Ohio with the addition of Cohort 5. At a time when agencies are adapting to many changes in the area of child protection, I am glad that these agencies have made joining Ohio START a priority,” said Ohio START Director Fawn Gadel. “Ohio START shows that 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 Clark, Hancock, Knox and Sandusky.

“Ohio START provides a successful and proven model dedicated toward the multiple competing priorities of our workforce and the families that they serve each and every day. Knox County Job and Family Services is privileged to participate in this growing body of critical practice along with the other 53 involved counties,” said Scott Boone, Director of Knox County Job and Family Services.

“On a daily basis, our staff participate in many other practice enhancement initiatives in order to overcome the multiple challenges and barriers to their work. Despite this fact, our decision to apply for inclusion within the Ohio START Cohort 5 will be one of the easiest and best decisions that we will make given the positive permanency outcomes that it will offer to Knox County families.”

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, 14 counties in 2019 and six counties in 2020. Ohio START is housed at and led by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO).