

## Department of Youth Services Trauma Screening

- The Ohio Interagency Task Force on Mental Health and Juvenile Justice was established to address the widely shared concern that approximately half of the youth under the supervision of the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) have a mental health diagnosis.
- The Task Force identified untreated psychological trauma – resulting from a threat to life, bodily integrity, or sanity – as a significant underlying issue.
- A majority of youth involved in DYS have had three or more traumatic experiences. Children who have experienced trauma are at greater risk of addiction and mental illness.
- Children who have experienced trauma also have significant cognitive delays. For example, up to 35 percent of foster children receive special education compared to 11 percent of the general population. The longer childhood trauma goes untreated, the more likely it is to develop into severe illness.
- The Task Force recommended a mental health/trauma screen be provided to youth held in detention facilities. The Governor’s Office of Health Transformation will convene the relevant state agencies and stakeholders to develop a screening tool that will have broad applicability. The reliability of the tool will be tested first in detention facilities, as a state pilot.
- The state DYS pilot will be coordinated with other activities related to trauma screening. For example, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is participating with Franklin County Children’s Services in a 5-year federally funded grant initiative to create a universal screening system for the early identification of children and youth with behavioral and mental health needs.
- The development and use of one screening/assessment instrument across all child serving systems will offer greater consistency in terms of behavioral health care, and deliver program efficiencies.