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For Immediate Release

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Children's Home Society Receives Social Innovation Fund Investment to Strengthen Children and Families Across North Carolina

CHS selected in a national competition to identify programs with the potential to solve problems for children in need

April 1, 2011 - Children's Home Society of North Carolina (CHS) has been awarded a three year investment of up to \$6 million - with a first year award of \$2 million - from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (EMCF) and the Social Innovation Fund. Over the life of this investment, CHS will expand and implement its **Family Finding** program statewide, connecting more children in foster care with birth family relatives and other resources. In addition, CHS will use the award to expand its evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention program, **Wise Guys®**, which targets adolescent males.

The Family Finding program is designed to reconnect children in foster care with biological family members who have the potential to form a support system for the child in the future. CHS has been successful in identifying and connecting with more than 40 relatives for children served.

The idea behind Family Finding is simple – reunite children in foster care with their extended families. Family Finding uses web-based technology and other means to identify and locate biological family members for children in foster care. Once family members are identified, CHS works to rebuild relationships and explore potential permanent family placements for the child. Though a suitable relative home is not always found, Family Finding does provide children with much needed connections to their relatives. It is creating a support system and a sense of “home” for many children living in foster care.

Launched in 1990 by the Family Life Council division of CHS, Wise Guys is a teen pregnancy and dating violence prevention education program for adolescent males. The curriculum covers values, communication, goal setting, anatomy, abstinence, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, dating violence, and fatherhood.



CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY, FAMILY LIFE COUNCIL, AND YOUTH HOMES have merged into a unified agency to improve outcomes for children and families across North Carolina. For more information, visit www.chsnc.org.



PROMOTING THE RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD TO A PERMANENT, SAFE, AND LOVING HOME



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Wise Guys is designed to educate teen males (ages 13-18) from a variety of ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. Boys in schools who participate are required to have parental permission, but are generally first chosen by teachers and counselors. Many are from single parent homes and have no male role models, putting them at greater risk for juvenile delinquency, drug/alcohol use, and school failure.

CHS will also be an inaugural member of a new fund established by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation called the True North Fund. This fund is the launch vehicle for an innovative public/private partnership of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, the Social Innovation Fund, and institutional and individual philanthropic co-investors. The fund brings together the capital that nonprofits – that have strong evidence of their programs' effectiveness and poised to expand significantly – require to make an impact on the lives of more young people and build a stronger body of evidence about “what works” to help youth succeed in life. The name of the fund reflects the inspiration EMCF believes CHS and this funding model can provide for helping our nation's most economically disadvantaged young people overcome the obstacles that confront them, discover a sense of direction and purpose in their lives, and steer a course to productive, independent, successful adulthood.

CHS was chosen in an open, national competition that drew 225 applications from leading nonprofits across the country. In selecting nine organizations for awards totaling up to \$42 million over three years, EMCF relied on a rigorous, in-depth due diligence process to identify a mix of programs with great potential to help larger numbers of economically disadvantaged youth, ages 9-24.

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF), established by Congress in 2010 through the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, is a public-private partnership that uses private intermediaries to support the expansion of innovative, transformative social programs proven to promote economic opportunity, healthy lives and youth development. In establishing the True North Fund, EMCF is leveraging its role as a SIF intermediary by combining federal funding with the private resources of the Foundation and other philanthropic co-investors. Through the fund, EMCF and its co-investors seek to draw greater philanthropic support for CHS and demonstrate how public and private dollars can be aggregated to help effective organizations attain greater impact and scale.

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About the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation seeks to advance opportunities for low-income youth by supporting organizations that help young people, ages 9–24, become independent, productive adults. EMCF concentrates on the most vulnerable and disconnected youth living in impoverished communities. EMCF believes large, long-term investments in nonprofits whose programs have been proven to produce positive outcomes and that have the potential for growth are an effective and efficient way to overcome the obstacles confronting low-income young Americans today. Its goal is to help develop a growing pool of organizations that serve thousands more youth each year with proven programs. Visit www.emcf.org for more information.

About the Social Innovation Fund

The Social Innovation Fund, administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), is a new federal program that addresses major challenges confronting communities by expanding high-impact nonprofit organizations delivering proven solutions. It brings together millions in public-private funds to expand effective community solutions across three issue areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development and school support. This work will directly impact thousands of low-income families and create a catalog of proven approaches that can be replicated in communities across the country. For more information on the Social Innovation Fund, visit www.NationalService.gov/Innovation.

About Children's Home Society of North Carolina

Since 1902, Children's Home Society has been one of North Carolina's leading resources ensuring that every child has a permanent, safe, and loving family. CHS works with public social service agencies and many community partners to help parents create a safe, positive setting for children to grow and thrive, to preserve families, and when necessary, to provide children with a healthy family setting through foster care or adoption. CHS is committed to our vision of being a leader in transforming families and communities so children can thrive. CHS staff and programs serve children and families in 60+ North Carolina counties each year. For more information, please visit www.chsnc.org.



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