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Moore, Kane Secure Funding for Local Youth and Family Programs *State budget dollars allocated to support Shrewsbury nonprofit*

BOSTON – Senator Michael O. Moore (D-Millbury) and Representative Hannah E. Kane (R-Shrewsbury) announced that funding was secured in the Fiscal Year 2020 state budget that would support programs and services at Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services (SYFS).

In particular, \$50,000 was included in the state budget to support the Youth Mental Health First Aid program coordinated by SYFS. The program teaches parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, and other members of the community how to help adolescents experiencing mental health or addiction challenges, or other types of crises. In the past year alone, SYFS trained 442 adults with hundreds more scheduled for training over the next several months.

“Adolescence is the peak age of onset for mental illness,” said Christine Mowry, Executive Director of SYFS. “Twenty percent of youth ages thirteen to eighteen live with a mental health condition.”

“SYFS is truly making a difference in the local community and across the region,” said Senator Moore. “This funding will go a long way to providing the training opportunities needed to help our youth get the services and support they need to lead healthy lives. The work undertaken by SYFS compliments ongoing efforts to provide increased youth mental health services.”

“In our community, region and across the Commonwealth, it can often be difficult for youth to identify and vocalize mental health challenges,” stated Representative Kane. “I am proud to have secured funding for SYFS to continue offering Youth Mental Health First Aid training to adults that interact with our youth so that these trusted adults can more easily detect youth who are

struggling and connect them to appropriate mental health resources and services. I am grateful to SYFS for the organization's steadfast partnership in providing our youth with the tools and resources to lead healthy, happy lives."

Since the program's inception, SYFS has trained nearly 900 adults and the results of the program have been a tremendous success. Program participants have identified and referred nearly 800 youth to services needed to stop the onset or progression of mental health and substance use problems.

"Just one trusted adult could quite literally change the trajectory of a young person's life," said Mowry. "SYFS is dedicated to ensuring that every teacher across our state has the tools and confidence to be that one adult."

The mission of SYFS is to "provide counseling and other supportive services to members of our community." Founded in 1983, the organization is Shrewsbury's only private, non-profit human service agency and primary provider of social services for low-income families. Education officials interested in scheduling training for their schools should contact Christine Mowry at cmowry@syfs-ma.org.

The \$43.3 billion state budget was signed into law by Governor Charlie Baker at the end of July. To view the budget, visit the Legislature's website, www.malegislature.gov.

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