

The Ohio Intimate Partner Violence Collaborative (OIPVC) is pleased to announce that **Medina and Summit Counties** have been chosen as the next Ohio Differential Response counties to receive training in the *Safe and Together* model of response to reports of child maltreatment that have a domestic violence component.

Over the course of Ohio's Alternative Response Pilot, several counties requested technical assistance or training to enhance their response in cases involving domestic violence. They identified the *Safe and Together* model, created by David Mandel & Associates, LLC (DMA), as a model of interest. *Safe and Together* is named for one of its own key principles: The safety and wellbeing of children exposed to batterer behavior is ideally achieved through keeping them safely together with the non-offending parent/domestic violence survivor.

Responsive to this request, the OIPVC was created to coordinate a demonstration *Safe and Together* training project. The OIPVC is supported by a number of partners, including the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services; the Supreme Court of Ohio Subcommittee on Responding to Abuse, Neglect and Dependency; DMA; HealthPath Foundation of Ohio; the Ohio Domestic Violence Network; the National Center for Adoption Law & Policy; and numerous state and local domestic violence stakeholders and children's services agencies. Ross, Clark, Franklin, and Fairfield Counties were the first Ohio counties to receive *Safe and Together* training as part of OIPVC's demonstration phase in 2010. Spurred by very positive feedback from these four counties, a number of additional Differential Response counties sought *Safe and Together* training.

Acting on this strong interest, the OIPVC developed a plan for expansion of *Safe and Together* training statewide, which will provide all Ohio counties the opportunity to receive *Safe and Together* training by 2016. The Expansion Plan allowed DMA to train county cohorts this past year and also incorporated a "train-the-trainer" certification model that draws on expertise here in Ohio to conduct *Safe and Together* trainings in years two to five. County cohorts will continue to be trained by Ohio professionals who have been certified by DMA.

Several factors went into the selection of Medina and Summit as the next county cohort to be trained. First, the Expansion Plan called for the next cohort to be from a region outside of Central Ohio. Another factor considered in the selection process is county experience with the Differential Response approach to child welfare services. The *Safe and Together* model is consistent with the fundamental goals and approach of Differential Response. Because of this inherent compatibility, Ohio has focused on offering *Safe and Together* training as an opportunity to enhance Differential Response practice. Medina and Summit Counties began implementation of Differential Response in the fall of 2010 and are experienced with the approach. A combination of geographic proximity, expressed interest, and county logistics solidified the selection.

The OIPVC is excited for upcoming *Safe and Together* trainings with Medina and Summit Counties, and we look forward to subsequent partnerships with additional counties in 2013!