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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CHNK Earns Certification in Trauma-Responsive Care

Covington, KY: Nearly four years ago, CHNK Behavioral Health began pursuing certification in The Sanctuary Model, an internationally recognized approach to providing trauma-responsive care. This week, the behavioral health services organization learned it has successfully achieved its certification, becoming Kentucky's first agency certified in The Sanctuary Model.

This recognition represents an investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars in employee and board training and fidelity site visits, as well as hundreds of hours of planning, research, and implementation. More importantly, the recognition marks CHNK Behavioral Health as a top-tier provider of trauma responsive treatment services to those who come to its doors daily for care.

"We often compare Sanctuary to the operating system on a computer or smartphone," explained Kelly Rigger, CHNK Chief Programming Officer. "In other words, Sanctuary isn't just a program. It's the behind-the-scenes force that controls our actions – guiding how treatment plans are developed, how we speak not just to clients but to one another as colleagues, and how conflict is addressed."

Development of The Sanctuary Model began in Philadelphia in the 1980s, when a team of mental health professionals began to realize that the majority of adults they were treating had survived overwhelmingly stressful and often traumatic experiences, many of which began during childhood.

"The Sanctuary Model – which is now being used in multiple countries around the world – empowers CHNK to better respond to the effects of adverse childhood experiences and trauma," shared Rick Wurth, CHNK Chief Executive Officer. "Knowing that these experiences can have profound, long-term psychological and physical health effects for the youth and families who come into our care, we now have the tools to more effectively interrupt the impact of toxic stress."

The certification also positions and calls for CHNK to be a change agent and a social innovator, bringing awareness to the wider community of the signs of trauma and how to appropriately respond to the effects that trauma can have on an individual.

"I'm proud of CHNK's embrace of this trauma-responsive care model," said Doug Chambers, CHNK Board of Trustees President. "Adoption of Sanctuary has involved every facet of this organization, including substantial training and participation by trustees. It's been eye-opening to realize that each part of CHNK's organizational life can either be helpful or an unwitting barrier in addressing trauma."

This latest accomplishment is not the first time CHNK has led Kentucky in innovative approaches to care and positioning itself for greater social impact. In 2016, CHNK became the first agency in the Commonwealth to earn the national HRC Foundation's All Children—All Families (ACAF) seal of recognition for its cultural competencies regarding youth and families who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ). And this past September, CHNK was announced as one of the inaugural organizations in Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky – and one of only two Kentucky organizations – to earn a Queen City Certified Leader in Gender Equity designation.



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About Children's Home of Northern Kentucky

Established in 1882, Children's Home of Northern Kentucky (CHNK) is a premier provider of behavioral health and substance use treatment services. Outpatient and residential services are designed specifically for youth who have experienced mental health disorders, addiction, abuse, neglect, or other serious trauma. Operating out of three locations in Northern Kentucky, the CHNK team of 90 healthcare professionals takes a trauma-informed and family-focused approach to treatment, annually impacting more than 2,800 individuals. For more information, visit www.chnk.org.

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