

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Amy Hampton

Phone: 808-283-9862 or 808-579-8414 ext. 8118

Email: ahampton@aloha-house.org

MAUI YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES RECEIVES \$80,000 OHA GRANT

MAKAWAO, MAUI, HAWAII – (May 20, 2011) – OHA recently awarded a grant of \$80,000 to Maui Youth & Family Services (MYFS), for the Cultural and Family Strengthening Project. This project focuses on Family Centered, Cultural-based treatment and seeks to address the unique issues that impact adolescents, specifically Native Hawaiian youth, who are abusing drugs. The OHA grant will support MYFS's expansion of the Cultural aspects of its substance abuse treatment programs, and will include family counseling, traditional Hawaiian healing techniques and lessons in Native Hawaiian culture and values.

"We at Maui Youth and Family Services are thrilled to be chosen by OHA to receive a grant of \$80,000 in support of our Cultural and Family Strengthening Project," said Jud Cunningham, MYFS Chief Executive Officer. "This is such an important project for the Maui community, and OHA's support will provide the resources needed to enhance our services with the goal of greater relevance for the Native Hawaiian community."

Substance abuse in youth is often a symptom of other deep-rooted issues, and is frequently accompanied by behavioral problems that impact success in school and in the community. It can harm a teenager's social and physical well-being and can lead to abusive situations for the teenager (particularly for girls), and often leads to continued substance abuse, mental health, and physical health issues as an adult.

"When we are able to intervene at a pivotal moment in a young person's life, it often makes all the difference in the world with shaping their future," says Christina Andersson, Clinical Director of Youth Services at MYFS and Aloha House "We want to create an impact on these kids lives and instill lasting, culturally appropriate values that each participant can take with them. The OHA funding will help us improve treatment outcomes for Native Hawaiian youth as well as other participants. In the end, this benefits our entire community and has a very strong ripple-effect."

Maui Youth & Family Services, Inc. has been carrying out its mission to build better lives with Hawaii's families for over three decades. An accredited, licensed, private, non-profit, community-based, family service agency, MYFS has been accomplishing its mission through a comprehensive continuum of wellness, prevention and treatment programs carried out with professionalism, integrity and excellence. The agency began as an emergency youth shelter created by the County of Maui in 1978.

For more information, please visit www.myfs.org or call 808-249-8691