



For Immediate Release
February 26, 2008

Contact: Joseph Smack
302.633.2605 or 302-981-9274

State Farm Insurance Offers Helping Hand and \$45K to Delaware's Foster Youth

WILMINGTON – Children in Delaware's foster care system received a helping hand yesterday from a *good neighbor*. Members of the Delaware Children's Department Youth Advisory Council (YAC) were presented with a check for \$45,191 from the State Farm Insurance Youth Advisory Board to create and implement financial literacy programs for youth in foster care.

With approximately 60 youth aging out of the Delaware foster care system every year, YAC felt that through improving the financial literacy of youth aging out of foster, they can further develop financial responsibility of current and former foster care youth – thereby increasing their chances of a successful transition into the community.

"It's important for all children in care to learn how to manage money," said YAC president Cristella S. "Any mistakes we make can impact our future. Far too many children leaving care end up homeless, jobless, penniless and we are trying to make sure this doesn't happen [to foster youth] in Delaware."

Financial education is one of four community issues the State Farm Youth Advisory Board has chosen highlight during its recent grant process.

"Each year, the State Farm Youth Advisory Board awards \$5 million to youth organizations across the nation" said Angela Mitchell, State Farm senior public affairs specialist. "State Farm has always held a belief that for communities to thrive, young people must be empowered as leaders and decision-makers to address real issues and problems."

The Youth Advisory Council is an organization of current and former youth from the foster care system that provides a safe environment for youth to share opinions and learn leadership skills by planning and developing activities to enhance the organization, foster care system, independent living program and community. Monthly meetings are held in Dover and an annual teen summit is designed and presented for teens in care.

On any given day, the Delaware Children's Department provides services to approximately 9,000 children who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, dependent, have mental health or substance abuse problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts. Over 22,000 unduplicated children receive services each year through the Children's Department. Thousands more Delaware children received services from the Department through home-, community-, or school-based prevention and early intervention programs, and child care licensing.

Our Mission: The Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families provides leadership and advocacy for all of Delaware's children, while endorsing a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential.

For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov or www.thinkofthechildfirst.com

###