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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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21 Reasons wins National Award, secures Federal Funding

Portland, ME—21 Reasons, a project of Medical Care Development (MCD), is proud to announce it is one of only three coalitions in the nation to receive the 2011 National Exemplary Award for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices, and Policies. In addition, 21 Reasons has secured federal funding from the Drug Free Communities (DFC) program of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for the seventh year. This is \$125,000 per year grant allows 21 Reasons to continue its efforts to prevent underage drinking and other drug use in the city of Portland. 21 Reasons is one of 15 coalitions in Maine, and one of 607 in the country, funded by Drug Free Communities Support Program.

21 Reasons also received a Mentoring grant for the second year of a two-year, \$75,000 per year award. The Mentoring Grant funds are used to provide technical assistance to the Gray/New Gloucester Supporting Healthy Influences For our Towns Coalition (**SHIFT GNG**). 21 Reasons is one of two DFC coalitions in Maine, and only one of 22 in the country, to receive a DFC Mentoring grant. The other Maine based coalition to receive a second year Mentoring Grant this year is the Five Town Community School District in Rockport to provide assistance to Old Town Communities That Care coalition. **Casco Bay C.A.N. Coalition** was mentored by 21 Reason from 2008 to 2010, resulting in their successful application for their own DFC grant. Casco Bay C.A.N. received \$125,000 in funding for a second year.

21 Reasons is a community coalition whose mission is to create an environment that supports the drug-free development of youth in the City of Portland. 21 Reasons' current overarching goal is to reduce alcohol and marijuana use by Portland students in grades 7-12 by 5 percentage points, as reported in the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) by 2015. 21 Reasons has focused its work in four key areas which influence youth's environment: **Parents, Law Enforcement, Access, and Community Norms**. Previously, 21 Reasons' goal was to reduce alcohol and marijuana use by Portland students in grades 6-12 by 5 percentage points by 2010 as reported in the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey (MYDAUS). By 2008, the program met or exceeded those targets. Past 30-day alcohol use for grades 6-12 moved from 36% to 29%, a 7 point decrease. Past 30-day marijuana use moved from 20% to 15%, a 5 point decrease.

The Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC) is a Federal grant program that provides funding to community-based youth substance use prevention coalitions. Since the passage of the [DFC Act in 1997](#), the DFC program has funded nearly 2,000 coalitions and currently mobilizes nearly 9,000 community volunteers across the country. The philosophy behind the DFC program is that local drug problems require local solutions. With a small Federal investment, the DFC program doubles the amount of funding through the DFC program's match requirement, to address youth substance use. Recent evaluation data demonstrates that where DFC dollars are invested, youth substance use is lower. Over the life of the DFC program, youth living in DFC communities have experienced reductions in alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use.

FMI:

21 Reasons <http://www.21reasons.org/>

National Drug Control Policy and Drug Free Communities: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp>

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