



OHIO LEGISLATIVE CHILDREN'S CAUCUS

JUNE 2020 COVID-19 WEBINAR SERIES

PROMOTING AND PROTECTING CHILD WELFARE DURING COVID-19
AND BEYOND

Welcome to the Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus webinar on child welfare

Opening comments from our co-chairs:

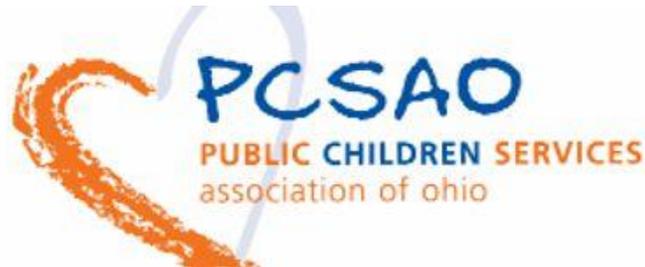
Representative Allison Russo and Senator Peggy Lehner

Stefanie Sprow

*Director of Child Welfare Policy,
Children's Defense Fund*



Angela Sausser, MA, MSW, LSW
Executive Director,
Public Children's Services Association of Ohio





COVID-19 Impact on Children Services

Children's Caucus Child Welfare Webinar
Friday, June 5, 2020





Angela Sausser, MA, MSW, LSW

Executive Director

**Public Children Services Association of
Ohio (PCSAO)**

angela@pcsao.org

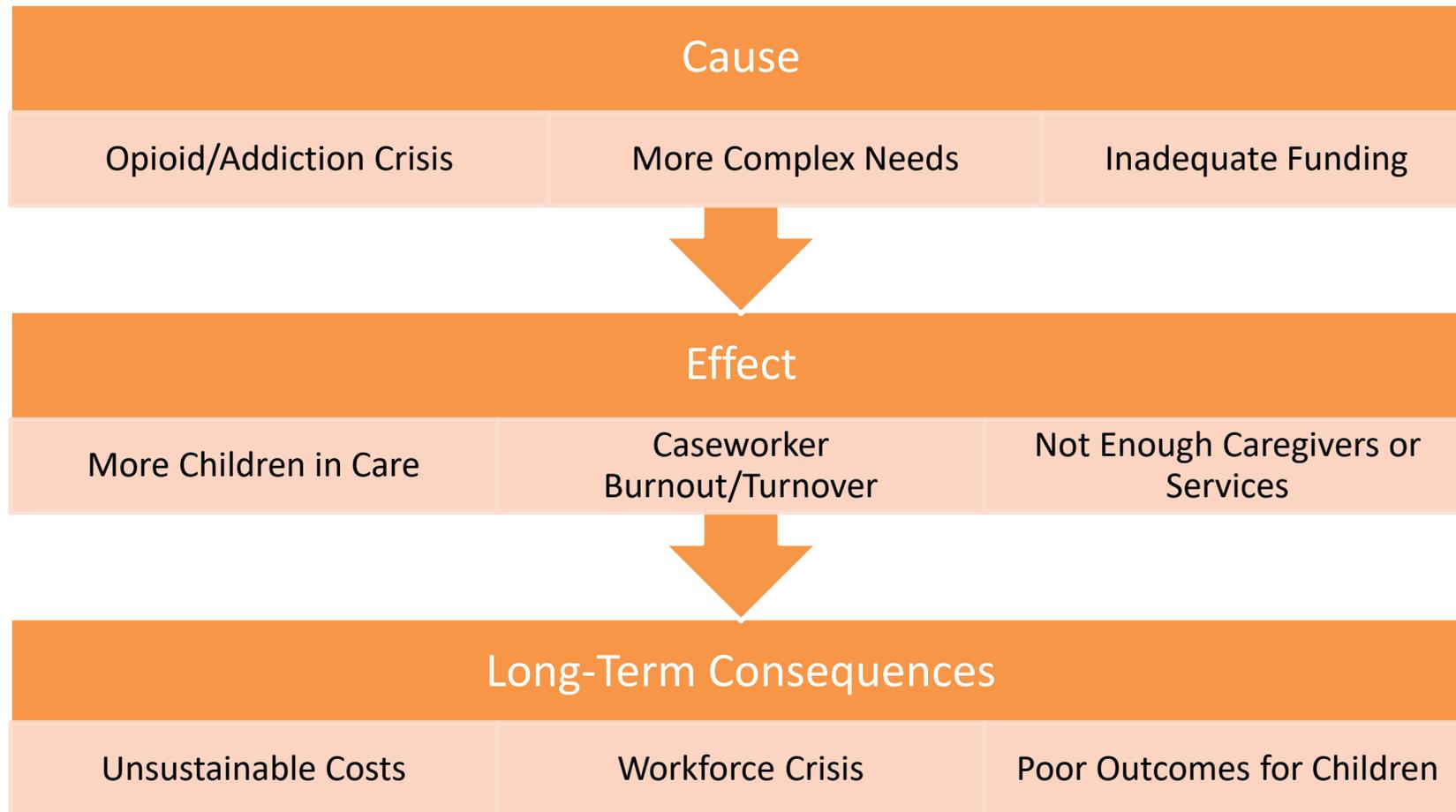
614-507-3113 (cell)



PCSAO is a membership-driven association of Ohio's county Public Children Services Agencies (PCSAs) that advocates for and promotes child protection program excellence and sound public policy for safe children, stable families, and supportive communities.



A System in Severe Crisis





Ohio Responds to System in Crisis

Gov. DeWine and General Assembly made a historic investment, doubling children services funding in SFY20-21 biennium

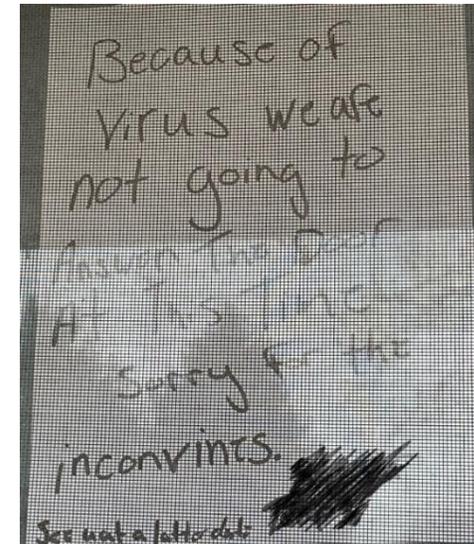
- Beginning to stabilize from the severe crisis
- Planning for transformation:
 - Federal level: Family First Act
 - State level:
 - Family First Act
 - Governor's Children Services Transformation Advisory Council
 - PCSAO's Continuum of Care Reform plan





And then... COVID-19

- Decrease in reports of abuse and neglect
- Challenges with gaining access
- Children "sheltered in place"
- Delayed permanency
- Number of children in custody holding steady = 17,100





Innovations Gained from COVID-19

- Remained open for business – essential service
- Remote work efficiencies
- Supplement face to face visits with virtual visits
- More involvement in court virtual hearings and team based meetings
- Became more creative in how we engage families





Profiles of Hope and Courage

Children Services in the Era of COVID-19



Marcus, Caseworker
Mahoning County Children Services

*"I love helping people. This is my passion...
I'm definitely going back to home visits as soon as
possible so I can give that extra hand if needed."*

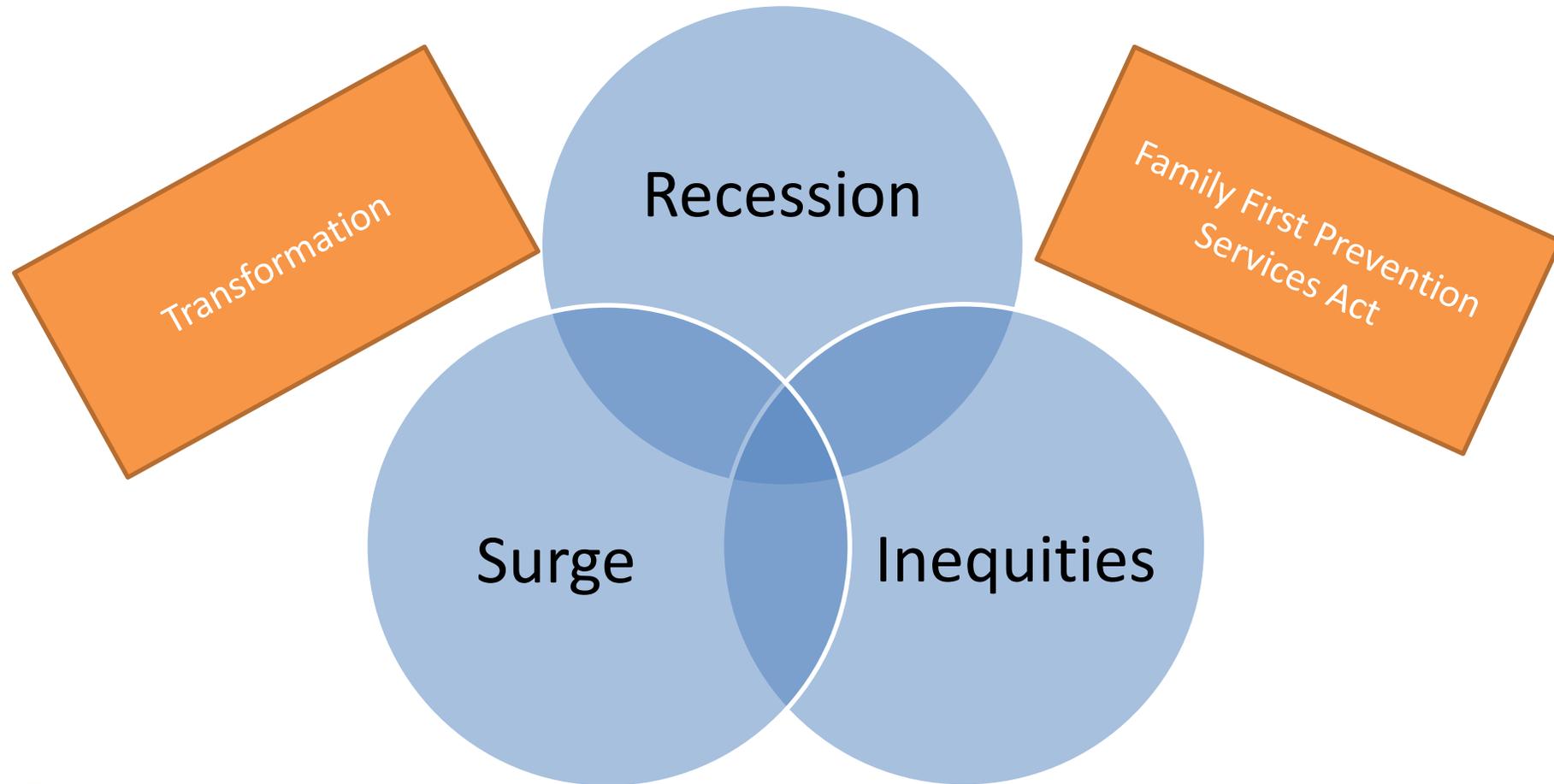
Sarah, Ohio START Family Peer Mentor
Warren County Children Services

*"I am constantly an advocate for recovery. Recovery is
possible. The importance of our role is that it allows other
people to navigate their own recoveries."*





COVID-19 Recovery





Family First Prevention Services Act

- **Federal modernization of child welfare system that expands support services so families can remain together**
- **ODJFS has continued planning for Family First implementation during COVID**
- **Ohio's implementation date remains Oct. 1, 2021, for prevention services and new congregate care (QRTP) requirements**
 - **Prevention services require a 50% match;**
 - **Facilities that don't meet the new QRTP will not be eligible for federal IV-E reimbursement**





Federal Policy Needs

- Support the need for increased federal funding streams for children services in any future COVID-19 bills
- Need federal Title IV-E considerations so not to lose federal funds and maintain the increased IV-E match rate to maximize state funding
- Administration for Children and Families has been responsive, granting flexibility to the extent it can
 - Desire to keep some of the flexibility as the “new” normal





State Policy Needs

- Maintain children services budget investments, including multi-system youth in SFY 2021 and into 2022-2023 biennium
- Maintain option for emancipating youth to remain in care during pandemic
- Maintain the waivers and flexibilities (virtual visits, emergency shelter care, online trainings) granted during COVID
- Passage of HB 8 – Foster Caregivers
- FFPSA Prevention Services – 50% match for 2022-2023





How Elected Officials Can Help

Stay informed

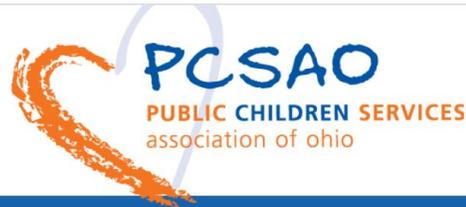
- Reach out to your local children services agency and community providers
- Learn about PCSAO's Continuum of Care Reform plan (<https://www.pcsao.org/public-policy/continuum-reform>) and
- Family First Act (<https://familyfirstact.org/>)
- Follow the work of Gov. DeWine's Children Services Transformation Advisory Council





PCSAO Resources

PCSAO.ORG



Advocating for safe children, stable families,
and supportive communities

37 West Broad Street, Suite 1100
Columbus, OH 43215 — 614-224-5802



PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMS & EVENTS PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES WHO WE ARE EMPLOYMENT MEMBERSHIP  

Weekly newsletter and Factbook

Publications & Resources

Want the latest updates, data, trends and policy analysis on public child protection and children services in Ohio? PCSAO publishes several helpful resources to keep you apprised of changes in the field.

[Subscribe](#) to our **Weekly Update** for a quick rundown of news and events. Also, our biennial [PCSAO Factbook](#) offers county-by-county as well as statewide trend data on all facets of child protection.



SAFE CHILDREN, STABLE FAMILIES, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

Dr. Jonathan Thackeray, MD

*Chief Medical Community Health Officer,
Dayton Children's Hospital*



Mark Mecum, MA

Chief Executive Officer,
Ohio Children's Alliance



Questions & Answers

For legislators and legislative staff, please feel free to unmute yourselves to ask questions or share feedback.

For all other participants, please use the chat feature.

Thank you for joining today's webinar!



For more information on upcoming Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus webinars and meetings, please contact Alison Paxson at apaxson@childrensdefense.org