



MEDIA ADVISORY

June 16, 2025

Contact: Dr. John Stanford, State Director

Children's Defense Fund-Ohio

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Ohio Children's Caucus to Discuss the Ohio's Family Connects Program

The program is recognized for strengthening families and building healthier communities.

COLUMBUS, OH — This afternoon at 2:30pm, June 16, the Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus will meet to focus on how the Family Connects model—an evidence-based approach to supporting families with newborns—is helping to build stronger families and healthier communities across Ohio. The panelists will discuss the importance of Family Connects and home visiting programs as a strategy to help parents and their babies thrive.

Dr. Guillermo Bervejillo will start the meeting with a short presentation on the recently released national KIDS COUNT report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

What: Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus Meeting: **Ohio's Family Connects – Strengthening Families and Building Healthier Communities**

When: 2:30 p.m., Monday, June 16, 2025

Who: **Dr. Guillermo Bervejillo**, Research Manager, Children's Defense Fund-Ohio
Jim Spurlino, CEO, Spurlino Materials, representing Ready Nation OH
Allison Payten, Chief of the Bureau of Material and Early Childhood Supports and **Joel Potts**, Chief Government and External Affairs Officer, Department of Children and Youth
Jade Woodard, CEO, Family Connects International
Beth Smith, Clinical Manager, Every Child Succeeds

Where: This meeting will be via Zoom. Please click here to [register](#). If you have any questions or troubles with the link, contact Dr. Stanford.

"Implementing Family Connects is a key strategy to promote the comprehensive health and development of children in Ohio," said Dr. Jennifer Frey, Every Child Succeeds' (ECS) President and CEO. "Newborn home visiting is something ECS has been doing daily for 25 years. We know that providing new parents and their children with individualized, in-person support in their homes has been shown to improve child development, enhance maternal mental health and self-sufficiency, and reduce child maltreatment while also creating greater community connections for parents. We were excited and honored to be selected by Ohio to implement Family Connects in Hamilton County and are actively working to increase our impact during the critical newborn care period."



ReadyNation OH is a network of over 400 business executives committed to building a skilled workforce by promoting solutions that prepare children to succeed in education, work, and life. Ohio's Help Me Grow home visiting programs such as Family Connects is the very foundation of achieving this goal.

Family Connects Ohio is a statewide voluntary, rigorously researched nurse home visiting program designed to help parents navigate the critical early weeks after birth. This program, supported by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth, connects families with a registered nurse who offers an in-person or virtual visit shortly after birth to assess the health of the newborn and mother and to provide guidance on newborn care and maternal health, and to connect families to community and medical services that fit family's needs and preferences, promoting healthier outcomes for babies and parents alike.

Family Connects Ohio is also part of a national network supported by Family Connects International with programs in 20 states and 53 communities across the country. Family Connects Ohio launched with the first Ohio program starting to serve families in January of 2025. Services are now available to families in 11 Ohio counties including Darke, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Huron, Mahoning, Noble, Shelby and Trumbull.

For more than 25 years, ECS has worked hand-in-hand with families to ensure children have the strongest possible start in life. As a comprehensive prenatal-to-early-childhood prevention program, ECS is dedicated to strengthening family well-being, fostering nurturing home environments, and promoting optimal early development. Each year, ECS supports more than 2,000 families across Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky through personalized, evidence-based, in-home services—empowering parents with guidance on child development, maternal health, and connections to vital community resources. ECS delivers the Family Connects model to families in Hamilton County.

To learn more about ECS and its programs or how to support the organization's efforts visit www.everychildsucceeds.org.

Video recording will be made available for media upon request.

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