



PATHWAYS for FAMILIES

We Are Child Welfare Professionals

- We constantly pursue excellence.
- We recognize the importance of providing effective and timely services.
- We value, support and respect each other.
- We are proud that we improve the quality of life for families in our community.
- We are fiscally responsible.
- We aspire to be culturally competent.

We Honor Families

- We respect families' strengths.
- We understand families are the experts of their own experience.
- We recognize that children are best served within their family and community.
- We separate what parents do from who they are.

We Value Every Child

- We respect the individuality of each child we serve.
- We advocate for each child's safety, permanency and well-being.
- We honor each child's family and culture.

We Value Partnerships

- Families have the right to be a part of the decision-making team.
- Casework is the most important function of the agency team.
- Families, communities and government share the responsibility to keep children safe.



Dear Community,

As the new executive director of Franklin County Children Services, I'm pleased that my career path has led me to an agency that is dedicated to its core mission of protecting children and strengthening family connections. What I have experienced in just a few months is that this staff and community are committed to seeking the best avenues to ensure that children grow up in a safe and stable family. When children's lives are in jeopardy, our staff maps out the best plan to help parents resolve problems and keep their family together. We could not successfully help families navigate their way to recovery and success without the help of many individuals and community partners who care as much about children as we do.

This year's annual report entitled *Pathways for Families*, gives us the opportunity to share the diverse ways children of all ages are guided to a place of safety and stability. Sometimes that place is with the birth family with added support from a volunteer. Or that place may be with a foster family, adoptive family or a relative in kinship care. We are working to provide more support to kinship caregivers who are in a unique position to keep children connected to family and community.

Another innovative area for our agency is looking at better ways to serve our most vulnerable population – children ages zero to three. We now have new protocols and training in place to enhance the care of our youngest children. We are learning more about the effects of child abuse and neglect on the early brain development of young children and the lasting consequences repeated patterns of trauma have on a growing child.

We also continue to explore avenues for our older youth to achieve permanency and stability as they prepare to leave the child welfare system. We are fortunate to have child welfare caseworkers and other caring adults and mentors in this community who are committed to helping our teens choose pathways to success.

The ultimate goal through all of our programs is better outcomes for all children. We appreciate the dedication of our staff and the support of this community in helping us move forward.

Sincerely,

Chip M. Spinning
Executive Director
Franklin County Children Services



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

Safety, Permanency and Well-Being for Every Child

Through collaboration with families and their communities, we advocate for the safety, permanency and well-being of each child we serve in a manner that honors family and culture.

Kinship: Family Matters

The Townsels are one big, happy family, emphasis on the word *big*.

In addition to raising three birth children, Nolla, Selena and Dominic Jr., Carie Townsel and her husband Dominic are busy caring for their nieces Summer and Selena and nephews Tavaris and Julio. While it's not always easy providing for seven children ranging in age from 7 to 17, nothing matters more than family to this Columbus couple. "We're all we've got," Carie said.

The Townsels are just one of Franklin County Children Services' hundreds of families who have selflessly stepped up to care for their relatives' children. These kinship families are at the heart of Franklin County Children Services' mission to keep children safe while maintaining their family connections.

A devoted aunt and uncle, the Townsels have always been there for these four children, whose mother had a long history of drug abuse. When their mother passed away, and the kids needed a safe place to stay, the Townsells knew what they had to do. They eventually gained legal custody of the children in early 2012, making them a permanent part of the family.

While their three-bedroom house can be a tight squeeze, the newly expanded family enjoys spending time together, watching movies, playing outside and gathering for meals. "Every single night, we eat dinner together no matter what," Carie said.

Providing stability, guidance and unconditional love for their nieces and nephews is what it's all about, Dominic noted. Whether they're cheering 16-year-old Selena on at a softball game or just providing day-to-day support, "we all root each other on," he said.

Kinship care is the most beneficial living arrangement for children who cannot live with their parents, whether on a temporary or permanent basis, according to Megan Stevens, director of community development at Franklin County Children Services. "By minimizing disruptive life changes, kinship care ensures that children have consistency in their daily lives, while preserving their sense of identity and belonging," Stevens said.

For more information about Franklin County Children Services' kinship program, call (614) 341-6161 or visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services.

"Every single night, we eat dinner together no matter what."



Top row left to right: Nolla, Dominic Townsel, Carie Townsel and Tavaris
Bottom row: Selena, Dominic, Summer, Julio and Selena

Mentor Leads the Way

Sometimes the best mentors are born into a caring family.

Carrie Hudson had six siblings and learned at a young age to support her family, neighbors and friends.

"Family, in all of its many forms, has always been very important to me. My mother and father set the example early in life that caring for the people around you, especially children, is the best way to live out your life," said Hudson, 36. She is now married with two sons, but it was before the birth of her first child nine years ago when she became involved in mentoring with the Franklin County Children Services Malaika Program.

"I was attending a seminar (hosted by Malaika) when I realized that this was something I wanted to do. I was already teaching children at my church, but I understood the importance of mentoring and how a little care and concern could change the life of a child," Hudson said.

Hudson is a typical FCCS mentor. She volunteers to visit with youth at least twice a month and listen to their issues. Volunteers are 18 or older with a valid driver's license. College-bound mentors must be 21 and have some university experience or a trade that can help someone younger understand the application process.

Franklin County Children Services has more than 500 volunteers and mentors and trains more every month. It's as easy as completing an application and attending a two-hour training class. FCCS asks for a six-month commitment, but many stay on longer.

During her tenure as a volunteer with FCCS, Hudson has mentored three young ladies. In 2008, Hudson was matched with Sarah, now age 9. The two still remain close. "We have a relationship that goes beyond skating or going to Chuck E. Cheese," she said.

A typical visit might involve a long talk, baking cookies or shopping. There are phone calls, "at least once a week, letters and reading to each other over the phone," Hudson said.

"Both of our lives have changed considerably since we were matched. It is not always easy to create time (especially during the school year) to do a lot of things, but Sarah knows that she is a part of me and my family's life, and she knows that she has my attention and my support," Hudson said.

Sarah also has two sisters who sometimes come along.

"Throughout our 4 ½ year journey it has not been uncommon for me to have all three, or at least the two youngest, girls at the same time," Hudson said. "My hope is that all three of them become their absolute best. I let them all know that I care about them, what is going on in their lives, the decisions they make and I care about their futures. I do my best to be there when it matters the most."

Some of the best mentors are still out there.

To find out more information about becoming an FCCS mentor, call (614) 275-2690 or visit the Children Services website www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services.



Mentor Carrie Hudson (right) and her match, Sarah

"I let them all know that I care about them ... I do my best to be there when it matters most."

Going to college is part of the American dream, a dream that foster youth deserve to have.

Children in foster care often say that few people in their lives ever expected them to attend college, nor did they receive any support in pursuing their goals in higher education. Many foster youth see higher education as a pathway to a better life than the difficult one they have experienced.

Eighteen-year-old Rayshawn Parnell has overcome many obstacles in his life. Because of his mother's addictions, he and his 8 siblings were placed in separate foster homes. He became angry and closed-off as he went from numerous foster homes to an unsuccessful adoptive home; then to group homes and finally to residential care.

Rayshawn's unwillingness to deal with the source of his resentment was leading him on a path of self destruction. Shortly before his 17th birthday, Rayshawn was linked with two no-nonsense FCCS caseworkers that would help him turn his life around – Adoption Caseworker Deric Cobb and Emancipation Caseworker Neshawn Coleman. These caseworkers saw great potential in Rayshawn and told him they would always be there to support him, as long as he chose a positive path. Finally, he had the support system that he so desperately needed.

As a high school senior, Rayshawn undertook a large class load and in a short period of time he made up his missing credits and was able to graduate from high school in May of 2011. Now that Rayshawn had found his confidence, he couldn't stop there. He started college classes at Central State University and has really excelled. He is on his way to a 4.0 grade average, is on the Dean's list, received the college's Presidential Service Award Scholarship, and was recognized by FCCS with the Rising Up & Moving On Award.

While the staff in FCCS's Emancipation Department focus on helping agency youth between the ages of 16-18 learn to live independently and be self-sufficient, they also offer post emancipation services. For these youth between the ages of 18-21, their emancipation caseworkers support them in their higher education endeavors and link them to services for books, tuition, housing, utilities and food. Post emancipated youth are offered these services – it's their choice if they accept the support.

Emancipation Director Ed Mills says some youth choose to go it alone once they turn 18, but can call back for help anytime before they are 21. "Life is the real teacher when they are out on their own. That's why our post-emancipation services are available for youth to utilize when they are ready," said Mills.

Like with Rayshawn, FCCS workers prepare and support college-bound foster youth throughout their high school years and beyond. Rayshawn is very open about his struggles and how his FCCS caseworkers helped him become a successful young man.

"My Children Services caseworkers have become my family," said Rayshawn. "Deric and Neshawn are like my father and my uncle. They keep me on track. They let me know when I mess up and are happy when I do well. I know they'll always be there for me."



Rayshawn Parnell (center) with his Emancipation Caseworker Neshawn Coleman (left) and Adoption Caseworker Deric Cobb.

“Life is the real teacher when they are out on their own ... our post emancipation services are available to utilize when they are ready.”

Who doesn't love babies?

They're cute, cuddly and totally dependent on their caregiver. Sometimes their cries for attention can be heard from a block away. However, babies can also show non-verbal signs, especially when it comes to child abuse and neglect. Babies can't communicate if someone has hurt them, so this makes them very vulnerable. Franklin County Children Services understands all too well the steps necessary to serve this at-risk population.

Jeana Chandler, 28, is the proud, single mother of a 16-month-old son named Bradley. According to Chandler, Children Services came into her life at a very critical moment, protected her infant son and put her on the right path. "I was still using drugs when my son was born and I had completely given up on myself," said Chandler. "My son was experiencing withdrawals and had to be placed in foster care."

In protecting these young children, FCCS has three specialized infant/toddler units. "These children are considered high-risk because of their size, inability to protect themselves; and they can't tell you what's going on," said FCCS Intake Associate Director Katherine Schiraldi. "This can be very challenging and this is when our caseworkers rely on their professional training regarding babies and infants." According to Schiraldi, when caseworkers are interacting with parents, they are trained to pay attention to various clues, including the following:

- The behavior of both parent and baby
- Parental reactions to the baby
- The baby's development and delays

Often the parents are young and inexperienced in caring for a baby. They may also be victims of domestic violence, be homeless or have mental health issues. Like Jeana Chandler, drug abuse is another major problem. For Chandler, the turning point came when her baby went into foster care and she met, who she calls, "my wonderful FCCS caseworker Jessica Andres."

"She saw something in me that I didn't see in myself. Children Services helped me to see that I had to take care of myself so that my son would be ok," said Chandler. "I took parenting classes and took my journey one day at a time. Children Services provided for me the support and resources that I needed to become substance free. I'm now sober and Bradley has returned home to me. Families should embrace the help given when Children Services is involved," said Chandler.



FCCS resources have helped Jeana Chandler find the support she needs to care for herself and her son.

“Children Services helped me to see that I had to take care of myself so that my son would be okay.”

PATHWAYS for FAMILIES

KINSHIP FAMILY



“We want our grandkids to know that they can achieve any goals they wish and that life isn't full of violence and drugs. We tell them everyday how special they are. They know they are safe and loved.”
– Martha Renda, Kinship Parent

COLLEGE-BOUND YOUTH

“To me, family is motivation, strength and love. These factors are what make family so important to me. Family is everything and means the world to me. My family is anyone who has helped me get to where I am now. My family is people who stuck with me through the hard times and cared for me unconditionally.”
– Shaquille, an emancipated teen enrolled at Bowling Green State University



ADOPTED YOUTH



“Being a part of a family has shown me that I can learn to trust and learn to love people.”
– Brianna, a recent high school graduate



ADOPTIVE FAMILY

“Family means love, commitment and patience. My family has that with me.”
– Ta-Zara, Adopted Child

“Family means loving, caring and belonging. We have an extended family - my parents, my church family, my children and grandchildren.”
– Jackie, Ta-Zara's Adoptive Mother

“Family means unity and togetherness. Becoming a family has brought a sense of pride to all three of us. Ta-Zara enhances our lives and we're glad to bring stability into her life.”
– Darryl, Ta-Zara's Adoptive Father



MENTOR

“Family means being there for each other through good and bad times. Tamara and the kids are my family. We cry together, laugh together and pray together. When Dennis and I walked Tamara down the aisle at her wedding it was like nothing I have ever experienced. I cried all the way down the aisle. I was not able to have children of my own so walking her down the aisle was a very humbling feeling. I believe God had a purpose and blessed us with Tamara and the kids.”
– Judy Garrett, Friendship Volunteer

Pictured above: Friendship volunteers, Judy (center) and Dennis Garrett, mentor Tamara's (left) children and have become close to Tamara.



“To me, family means the people that are there for you no matter what. My family is me, my kids and Judy and Dennis. My family has not been there for me, but Judy and Dennis have been there for me since the day they came into my life.”
– Tamara

CLIENT FAMILY



“Family is being together. Family is happiness.”
– Tabitha (pictured with her 9 children)

FAMILY-TO-FAMILY



“Family means love, being together as a whole and supporting each other. My family includes my mother and father, my children Kevin, Kai-saan and Kevon, my aunts and uncles, my significant other, my cousins and my church family.”
– Bridgett (Left)

YOUTH

“Family is love. Family is the people who you love unconditionally and will be there for you through the storms. They have your back no matter what and care for your future. They guide you through a path of choices and decisions regarding the hardship between them. Family is loyal to your heart, dedicated to your mind and put trust into your soul. My family is the craziest, but with the biggest hearts. Family doesn't have to be a blood relative. It can be someone who's a longtime friend.”
– Erika, a Franklin County Children Services teen



FRANKLIN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES 2011 Report of Services

Franklin County Children Services provided help for 29,287 children and their families through direct services by the agency's professional staff and by purchasing services from provider agencies.

Prevention

Children Services believes that its mission to protect children by strengthening families can best be carried out by offering a variety of support services to families at every stage of a case. Prevention services are designed to provide help to families and children to prevent case openings, to prevent placement of children, to prevent further maltreatment of children, and to prevent the recidivism of children who have returned home following placement.

Services are aligned with the Children Services mission and with meeting federal goals in four areas, including safety, placement, permanency and well-being.

Safety

Children Services Intake and Investigations staff provide protective services by investigating referrals of children who are alleged to be abused, neglected or dependent. These services are provided 24 hours a day. The agency also accepts referrals from the Franklin County Juvenile Court on youth who are unruly or delinquent.

When investigations indicate a need for ongoing services, a case is opened and sent to one of the agency's three regions or two managed care partner agencies. Children Services provides case management, protective and supportive services, and purchases services from community agencies within a case plan agreed to by the family and Children Services casework staff.

- 28,334 intake referrals received
- 12,729 family investigations completed
- ongoing services for 5,207 cases
- protective services for 14,580 individual family members
- family services to 2,645 children through managed care partnerships
- 11,115 children served on the active ongoing caseload

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline: (614) 229-7000

Adoption: (614) 341-6060

Volunteers and Mentors: (614) 275-2690

Communications: (614) 275-2523

Placement

Every effort is made by Children Services to keep children with their families whenever safely possible. When out-of-home placement is necessary, the agency's goal is to place children in the least restrictive environment, to provide opportunities for and to facilitate regular visitation, and to reunite families as soon as can be safely accomplished.

The numbers below represent the various categories of placements which the agency uses.

- 4,350 children in agency custody
- 3,264 children in paid care
- 616 children served in agency foster homes
- 1,960 children served in purchased foster care
- 1,203 children served in group or institutional care
- 920 children placed with relatives

Permanency

Children Services is committed to assuring a safe, permanent home for each child who cannot remain with or return to family.

- 201 adoptions were finalized
- 418 older youth received emancipation or independent living services to enable them to make a transition from being cared for to being on their own
- 65 emancipated youth graduated from high school and went on to college

Well-being

Children Services provides special opportunities and services to children and youth to enhance their well-being.

- 372 children and youth received volunteer or mentoring services from 506 volunteers or mentors
- 5,107 children received gifts through the Holiday Wish program provided by 1,562 individuals and 526 groups
- 203 children and youth received services through the Therapeutic Arts Program



www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services



Operating Fund Balance as of January 1, 2011 \$106,798,025

Income (Cash Basis):

Local & Miscellaneous Funds \$138,920,834

Property Taxes	\$137,378,659
Interfund Revenue	918,610
Board & Care from Parents	450,522
Miscellaneous	173,043

Federal Funds \$43,868,243

Title IV-E Placement (Administration)	\$3,906,673
Title IV-E ProtectOHIO Waiver	20,176,160
Title IV-E Administration	14,796,452
Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, VA Benefits	1,063,929
Title IV-B - ESSA (Emergency Services Supplemental Assistance)	878,701
Independent Living Program	794,854
Miscellaneous	2,251,474

State Revenue \$5,809,392

Regional Training	\$864,736
Child Protective & Feisel Allocation	4,572,251
Miscellaneous	372,405

Total 2011 Income \$188,598,469

Beginning Balance Plus 2011 Income \$295,396,494

Operating Expenditures (Cash Basis):

Protection Program \$83,107,868

Intake & Investigations	\$22,370,652
Casework Protective Services	32,659,721
Care Partnerships	20,674,896
Family Support Services	7,402,599

Placement Program \$68,105,527

Family Care Services	\$9,747,810
Foster Home Care	24,069,580
Group Home Care	11,797,203
Institutional Care	22,490,934

Permanency Program \$16,462,189

Adoption Services	\$11,582,481
Child Enrichment Services	1,964,284
Emancipation Services	2,915,424

Total 2011 Operating Expenditures \$167,675,584

Operating Fund Balance (as of December 31, 2011) \$127,720,910

Ending Balance Plus 2011 Expenses \$295,396,494

(Slight variances possible due to rounding.)

Local & Miscellaneous Funds (75%)

Federal Funds (23%)

State Revenue (2%)

Protection (50%)

Placement (41%)

Permanency (9%)

2011 Purchased Services

2011 Commissioners, Boards & Committees

A New Leaf Inc.	\$ 1,103,050	George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania	\$ 252,920
Adriel School Inc.	945,111	Greater Hilltop Area Shalom Zone CDC	40,000
Advantage Adoption and Foster Care	467,927	Gregory C. Keck PHD	49,427
Agape for Youth Inc.	43,234	House of New Hope	636,394
Alliance Human Services, Inc.	490,818	Huckleberry House Inc.	66,730
Alps Ohio Treatment Alliance	79,016	Jireh Services, Inc.	1,586,385
Applewood Centers Inc.	181,980	Keystone Richland Center LLC	1,109,350
Bair Foundation	1,851,683	Licking County Job & Family Services	63,564
Beech Brook	158,402	Life Start Inc.	428,203
Bellefaire JCB	575,397	Maryhaven, Inc.	2,032,978
Berea Children's Home	706,300	Mid-Ohio Psychological Services Inc.	40,078
BHC Belmont Pines Hospital	199,069	National Youth Advocate Program	3,722,289
BHC Fox Run Hospital	993,032	National Youth Advocate Program (Care Management)	10,846,896
Big Brothers Big Sisters Association	118,727	Nationwide Children's Hospital	65,758
Buckeye Ranch Inc.	7,179,214	Neighborhood House Inc.	26,000
Buckeye Ranch (Care Management)	9,828,000	NetCare Corporation	150,814
Caregivers Helper, Inc.	218,649	New Horizon Youth Center LLC	154,197
Center for Child and Family Development	101,817	New Life Group Homes LLC	348,800
Center of Vocational Alternatives	429,175	N M Sansait MD LLC	47,235
Children's Hospital Ctr Child & Family Advocacy	56,925	Oasis Therapeutic Foster Care Inc.	424,783
Children's Hospital Medical Center	881,963	Oconomowoc Residential Programs Inc.	792,800
Columbus City Treasurer	158,539	Oesterlen Home for Children	674,300
Community Refugee & Immigration Services	155,069	Parenthesis Family Advocate	451,671
Compdrug Inc.	184,308	Pomegranate Health Systems of Central Ohio	5,534,425
Consumer Support Services Inc.	5,078,393	Rosemont Center Inc.	811,691
Cornell Companies Group Inc.	511,243	Specialized Alternatives for Youth	1,407,475
Devereux Foundation	170,880	St. Stephen's Community Services Inc.	814,219
Devereux Texas Treatment Network	31,899	St. Vincent Family Centers	1,115,405
DOY Services Inc.	1,240,230	Starr Commonwealth	2,373,256
Dungarvin Ohio LLC	247,186	Syntaxis Youth Homes Inc.	899,912
Eastway Corporation	868,400	United Methodist Children's Home	1,519,310
Educational Service Center of Ohio	1,848,810	Viaquest Behavioral Health Ohio	4,752,823
Fairfield Academy LTD	223,425	Village Network	4,564,793
Franklin County ADAMH Board	463,941	White Deer Run Inc.	43,450
Franklin County CSEA	400,000	Youth Advocate Services	1,086,510
Subtotal		\$87,126,651	
Payment to Children Services Foster & Adoptive Homes		\$7,945,617	
Other Purchased Social Services		\$362,424	
Total Purchased Social Services		\$95,434,691	

Franklin County Commissioners

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Protecting Children by Strengthening Families