



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY | 2017

Caring for Our Community's Children



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

Franklin County Children Services Guiding Principles

We Are Child Welfare Professionals

- We constantly pursue excellence
- We recognize the importance of providing effective and timely services
- We value, respect and support 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



Franklin County
**Children
Services**

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

Our Mission: 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.



Caring for Our Community's Children

Every child deserves a strong, stable family. And most children in Franklin County have families who love them and protect them from harm. Yet, through our work we know firsthand that isn't the reality for some children. Franklin County Children Services takes its mandate of protecting children by strengthening families very seriously.

And we are fortunate to live in a community that supports our mission and partners with us to help ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of our children. You do that in so many ways including fostering, adopting, kinship care, volunteering, providing needed services and advocating for children in your own spheres of influence.

In addition to our partners, our agency is fortunate to have highly qualified professional and support staff that are committed to helping children who are dealing with challenging and often life-altering family situations. It's a difficult job, but seeing the resiliency and strength expressed by the children offers some of the best inspiration needed to keep moving forward. This annual report will feature some snapshots from our youth, staff, caregivers and community partners which reflect that hope.

While we hold on to the positive, the reality of our work continues. As many of you are aware, FCCS and child-serving agencies throughout the community are dealing with the impact of the opioid crisis and other issues increasing trauma for children and families.

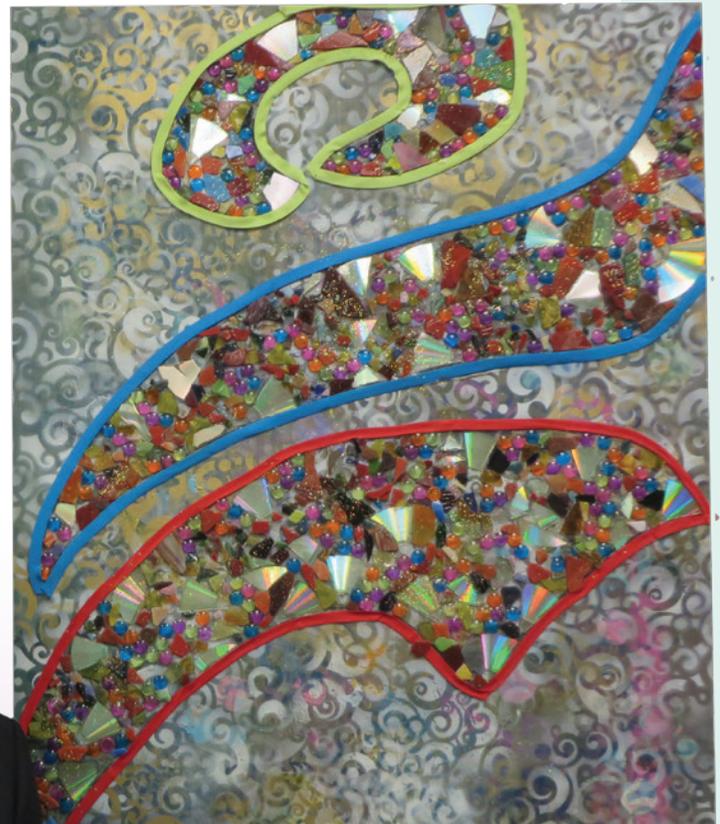
As a result, more families are coming to our front door and many cases are staying open for longer periods of time. This past year we launched some new initiatives and engaged in partnerships that going forward will enhance our work with those we serve. As always, FCCS will continue to explore areas of best practice in child protection which will include ensuring family settings for all children and ongoing, meaningful connections for them in their community.

Thank you,



Chip M. Spinning
Executive Director
Franklin County Children Services

Executive Director Chip Spinning



Mentoring Matters

Former foster youth Carma Lacy knows firsthand how transformative an adult role model can be. Lacy's time with Franklin County Children Services connected her to her lifelong mentor Dr. Iris Cooper, whom she met through the agency's Malaika mentoring program back when she was just 17. A source of confidence and encouragement, Iris has been an unwavering support in Lacy's life for more than 20 years now and is "like a mom, best friend or girlfriend," depending upon the situation, Lacy says.

Youth involved in the child welfare system have a critical need for committed mentors, says Lacy, who currently serves as program administrator at the Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio. According to Lacy, both her mom and dad were in foster care as children and eventually became teen parents without any guidance or support. A mentor might have altered their trajectory and broken the child welfare cycle in her family, Lacy says. For a kid in foster care who has faced serious adversity, having a devoted mentor to count on can make all the difference in creating a better outcome. "If you change the life of this kid, you change the life of future generations," Lacy says.

In her role at the Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio, one of FCCS's community partners, Lacy finds tremendous purpose in nurturing youth who have "all kinds of barriers." Whether the youth are homeless, in foster care, or have dropped out of school, "I get to be part of the solution," Lacy says.

Lacy's firsthand experience in foster care helps her connect to children who have lived through extreme poverty, difficult family circumstances and other challenges. "The kids trust me," she says. "I know exactly who these children are and their stories."

A mentor to many, Lacy frequently gives her contact information to youth she meets in case they find themselves needing support. "I tell them to 'call me and we'll figure it out,'" Lacy says. She was recently there for a 17-year-old girl for whom she provided a little tough love and positive direction. "I need her to know why she matters," Lacy says.

Want to help a kid in need realize that they matter, too? Franklin County Children Services has many children waiting to be matched to committed mentors like Lacy. For more information, go to childrenservices.franklincountyohio.gov



Former foster youth
Carma Lacy with mentor
Dr. Iris Cooper



Kinship Families: Helping Children Thrive

Newlyweds Anna and Sam McDonald were busy planning a peaceful, sunny retirement down in Georgia when life took an unexpected turn. One day they received notification that Anna's three grandchildren were in the emergency care of Franklin County Children Services and needed a safe place to stay as soon as possible. In spite of their plans to relocate out of state, the couple didn't hesitate to step up and welcome the three siblings into their home.



Anna and Sam McDonald

While they didn't intend to be raising three kids at this stage in their lives, the McDonalds are now a happy family of five, two grandparents busy providing their grandkids with a nurturing, stable home.

Franklin County Children Services counts on kinship caregivers like the McDonalds—aunts, uncles, grandparents or even close family friends—to be there for children who, for one reason or another, cannot safely stay with their parents or other immediate family. In some circumstances, it's a temporary placement in a time of crisis, while at other times it's a permanent arrangement. In 2017, Franklin County Children Services relied on hundreds of kinship caregivers, placing 1,811 children with their relatives.

Don'Tess has come out of his shell and is doing well in school, and the rambunctious Rashon is bright and talkative with a huge vocabulary for a preschooler. "We're so proud of how far they've come and how well they're doing," Anna says.

For the McDonalds, raising Rashon, Don'Tess and Anjel isn't always easy and finances can be tight, but it somehow all works out. "We love and enjoy them," Sam says. "They really are a blessing." The three children are now flourishing under the loving care of Anna and Sam, whom they call "mom" and "dad." Anjel is on the honor roll, the once-shy



Anna and Sam with Anjel, Don'Tess and Rashon.

Advocates for Children and Families

There are hundreds of caseworkers at Franklin County Children Services who are busy looking out for our community's children and families. These individuals work tirelessly, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to ensure that kids are safe and families are stable. Here's a look at three FCCS caseworkers who are busy creating positive outcomes for those experiencing difficult circumstances.



Emily Brentlinger

As part of Franklin County Children Services' intake, assessment and investigations department, **Emily Brentlinger** collaborates with families who are in crisis and develops a plan to ensure their children's safety. As a child welfare caseworker, Brentlinger is an advocate for the voiceless and most vulnerable.

"Caseworkers help children to have a voice when they are sometimes fearful or too young to express negative things happening to them," she says. In addition to protecting children from abuse and neglect, Brentlinger supports families facing challenges such as mental health concerns, housing emergencies or unemployment. Brentlinger is always grateful when she can make a difference, such as when she recently helped an abused child reunite with her biological father and move into a safer, more stable home.

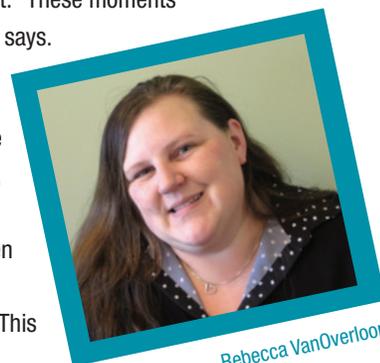
Kinship caseworker **Tammy Grant** helps families thrive. For her kinship caregivers, which are often grandparents, aunts or uncles caring for their relatives' children, Grant figures out what they need and



Tammy Grant

makes it happen. One of Grant's most memorable experiences was working with Johnny, a single father who was struggling to provide for himself and his son. Grant linked him to community resources and he was able to find proper child care and safe housing. Grant says that Johnny still calls her occasionally to say, "I wanted to let you know we're doing okay. Thank you." For Grant, this is what it is all about: "These moments are why I keep doing this job," she says.

Rebecca VanOverloop is known for going above and beyond for the kids on her caseload. VanOverloop, who has worked in the agency's East and West regions, is often seen by parents and youth as more of a caring friend than a social worker. This is certainly the case with a young woman whom VanOverloop has worked with for more than seven years. While this youth has significant developmental delays, debilitating mental health issues, and related behavioral challenges, VanOverloop has always been an unwavering support for this youth. As a child welfare professional, VanOverloop never forgets how vital her role in a child's life can be, as is the case with this youth. "I'm the most stability that she's had," VanOverloop says. "She knows I'm doing whatever I can to keep her safe."



Rebecca VanOverloop

Permanency: A Priority for Every Child

No one is ever too old to find a forever family. Just ask 17-year-old Sariah, who was recently adopted by her foster mother Corena Brady. Sariah is now part of a bustling household that includes nine children, among whom are Brady's grandchildren, adopted children and foster children. Sariah has been part of the Brady household since 2015, finally finding permanency—a safe, stable place to always call home—after living with relatives and in residential facilities.

“This is the family that I was always looking for,” says Sariah. This teen is happy to be part of a large family and she and her new mom have become close. “Sariah must like organized chaos... We're thick as thieves,” says Brady. However, things weren't always so easy for this teen who had a traumatic childhood and has dealt with tremendous adversity. Sariah had to learn to trust her new foster mom and not be defensive when interacting with her. “If there is a problem or I do something wrong, we talk about it,” she says. “I wasn't used to that when I came here.”

Both Brady and Sariah strongly encourage others to become foster or adoptive parents, especially when it comes to helping teenagers. There are hundreds of older youth just

like Sariah currently in the child welfare system, in need of a temporary or permanent home. “I'm hooked on teens,” says Brady. “If people will give them a chance, they'll see the positives. A lot of times their trust in people has been broken and once you build a sense of trust with them, they turn around quickly.”

To become a foster parent for a teen or other child in need visit fostercare.fccs.us to learn more about fostering in Franklin County. For more about FCCS's adoptions program, visit childrenservices.franklincountyohio.gov.

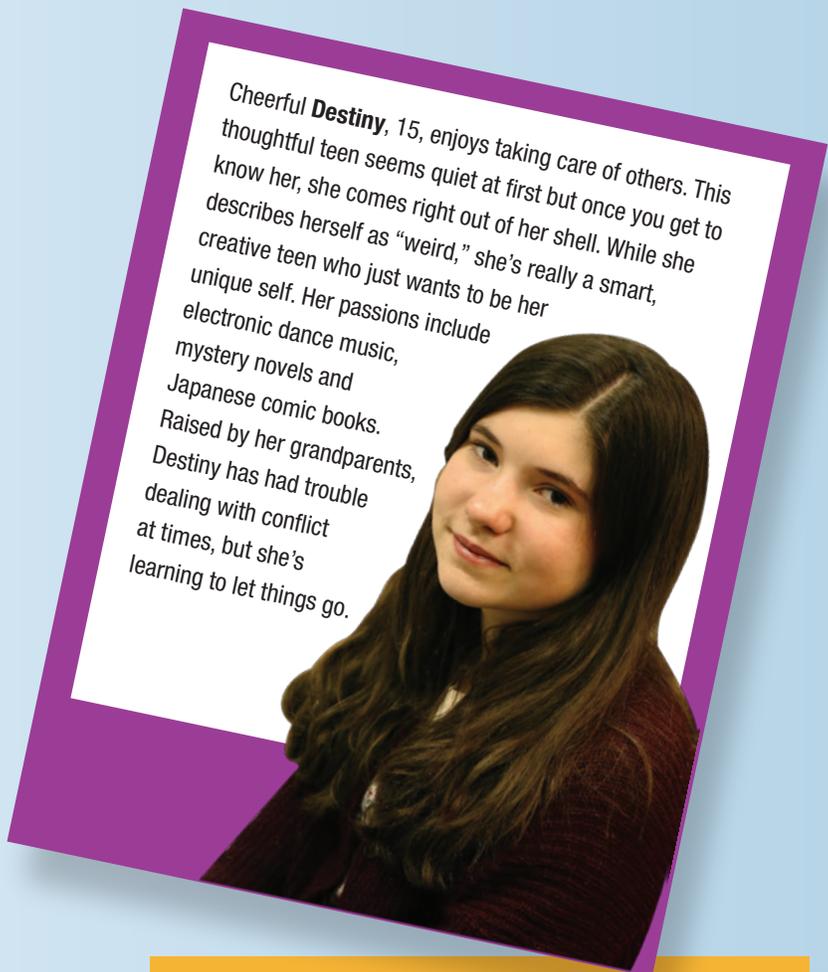
Corena Brady and daughter Sariah



Honoring Every Child

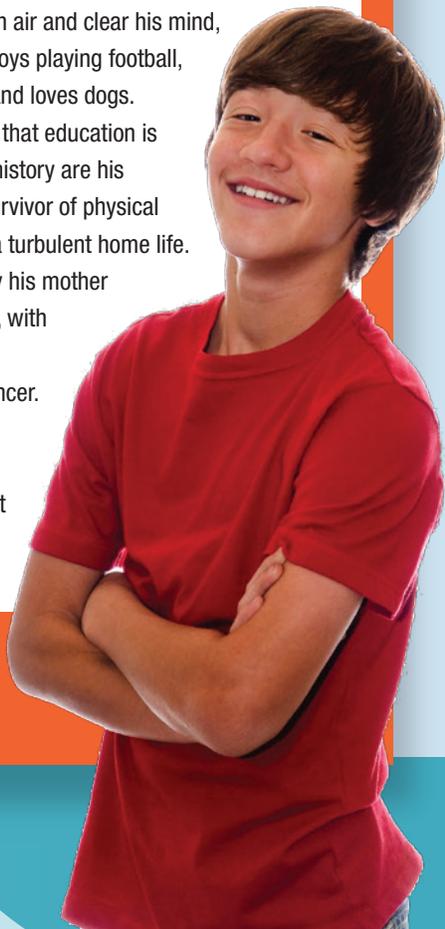
In 2017, Franklin County Children Services served 32,160 children. Whether ensuring their safety, helping them stay healthy or finding them a nurturing foster home, FCCS was there in 2017 for thousands of kids of every age, economic background, ethnicity and culture. Here are a few of their stories.*

(*Names and other details have been altered to ensure confidentiality.)



Cheerful Destiny, 15, enjoys taking care of others. This thoughtful teen seems quiet at first but once you get to know her, she comes right out of her shell. While she describes herself as “weird,” she’s really a smart, creative teen who just wants to be her unique self. Her passions include electronic dance music, mystery novels and Japanese comic books. Raised by her grandparents, Destiny has had trouble dealing with conflict at times, but she’s learning to let things go.

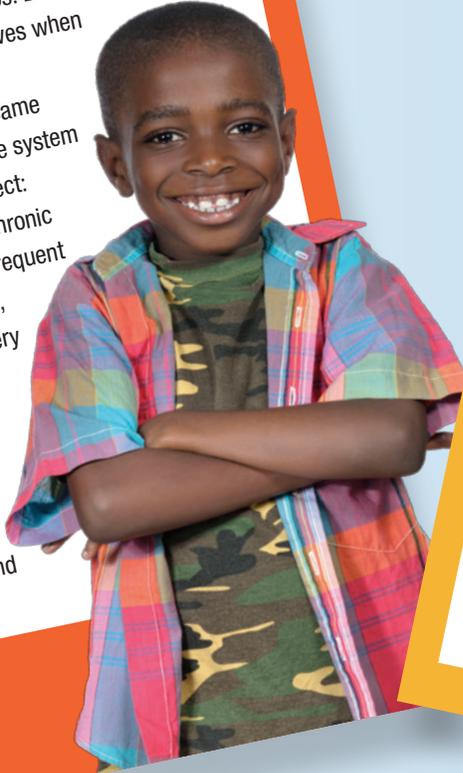
Nick, 12, loves being outside. Fishing or hiking is his time to get some fresh air and clear his mind, he says. Nick also enjoys playing football, is a big NASCAR fan and loves dogs. This smart kid knows that education is important: math and history are his favorite subjects. A survivor of physical abuse, Nick has had a turbulent home life. He was abandoned by his mother and his favorite uncle, with whom he was close, recently died from cancer. This resilient young man is working through the significant trauma he’s experienced.



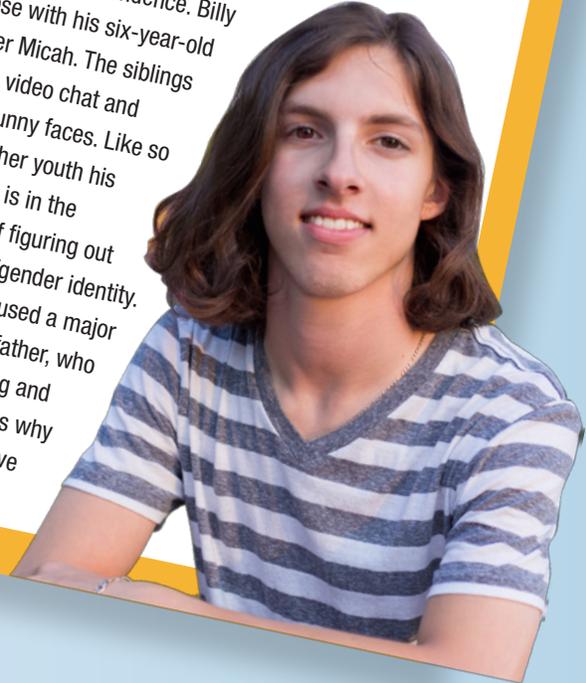
Outgoing **Jewel**, 16, is athletic and always on the move. An ideal day for Jewel includes playing basketball, going shopping, or heading to the movies. Her favorite foods include orange chicken and strawberry cheesecake. Jewel enjoys science and would like to be a doctor someday. One of Jewel’s biggest challenges is her strained relationship with her mother. The two struggle with controlling their anger at times and don’t always seem to understand each other. Jewel values her own space, especially if she’s having a difficult time and needs to work through a problem.



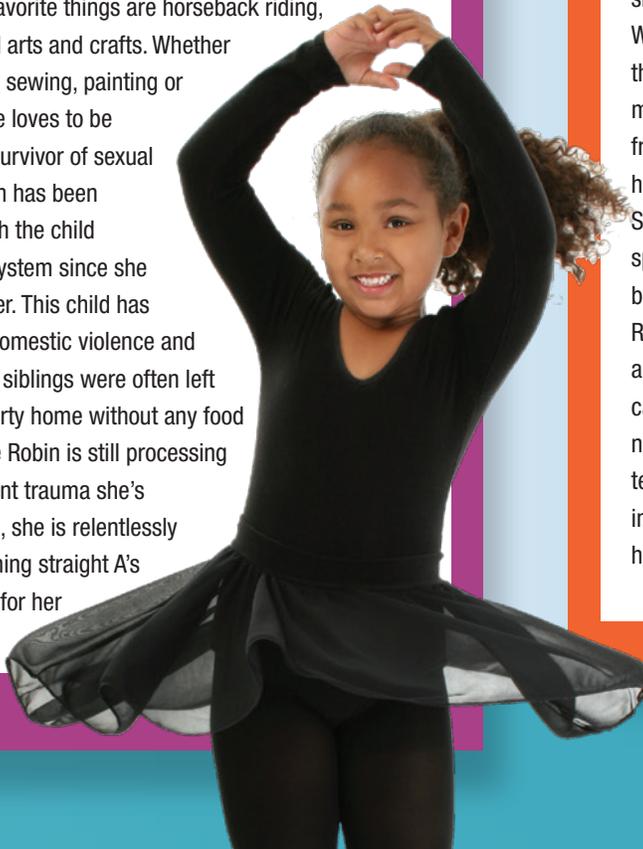
Tyshawn, 9, is all about his Legos. Empathetic and a loyal friend, this young man thrives when he feels like he's needed and appreciated. Tyshawn first became involved with the child welfare system because of educational neglect: his family has a history of chronic school truancy as well as frequent homelessness. His mother, with whom Tyshawn is very bonded, is in and out of his life sporadically. His mother's inconsistent presence is a significant source of depression, anger and frustration for him.



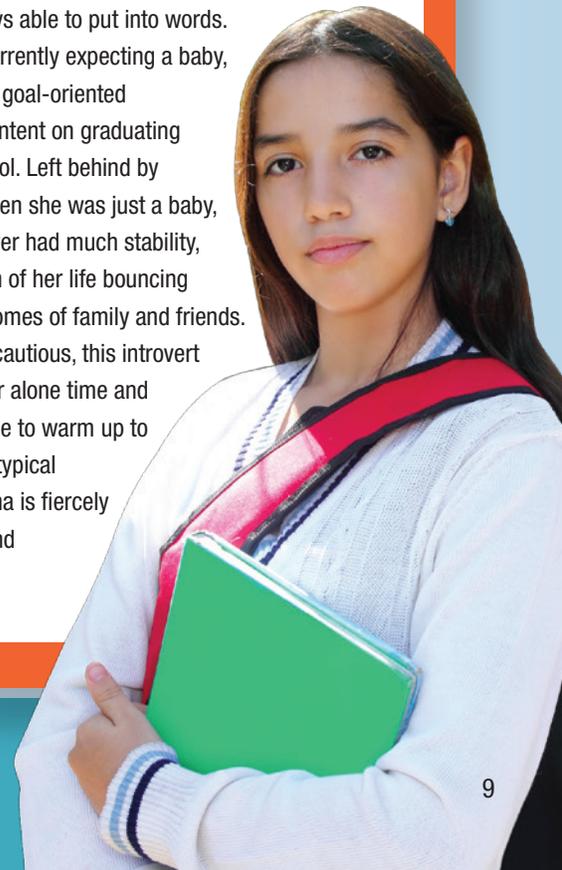
Billy, 16, is a confident teen who loves to dance. His favorite things include going to the mall with friends, vanilla milkshakes and hip hop. While he does well in school, Billy doesn't always attend when he should. Polite and soft spoken, Billy greatly values his independence. Billy is close with his six-year-old brother Micah. The siblings love to video chat and make funny faces. Like so many other youth his age, Billy is in the process of figuring out his sexual/gender identity. This has caused a major rift with his father, who is unaccepting and abusive. This is why Billy had to leave home.



A bright, bubbly kid, **Robin**, 10, is curious and loves to laugh. Her favorite things are horseback riding, dancing and arts and crafts. Whether it's drawing, sewing, painting or coloring, she loves to be creative. A survivor of sexual abuse, Robin has been involved with the child protection system since she was a toddler. This child has witnessed domestic violence and she and her siblings were often left alone in a dirty home without any food to eat. While Robin is still processing the significant trauma she's experienced, she is relentlessly upbeat, earning straight A's and excited for her future.



Selena, 18, is a shy, bilingual young woman who loves candy and getting her nails done. A talented artist, this teen enjoys drawing, which helps her express what she's not always able to put into words. While she is currently expecting a baby, this motivated, goal-oriented mom-to-be is intent on graduating from high school. Left behind by her parents when she was just a baby, Selena has never had much stability, spending much of her life bouncing between the homes of family and friends. Reserved and cautious, this introvert appreciates her alone time and can take a while to warm up to new people. A typical teenager, Selena is fiercely independent and headstrong.



Franklin County Children Services 2017 Report of Services

Franklin County Children Services provided help for **32,160** children and their families via direct services from the agency's professional staff and through purchased 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 out-of-home 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 three areas: permanency, well-being and safety.

Permanency

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

In 2017:

- **176** adoptions were legalized
- For older youth under Children Services' care, **481** youth transition services cases were referred to resources focused on achieving independence and self-sufficiency

Well-being

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

In 2017:

- **496** children were mentored by more than **502** volunteers through the agency's Friendship, Malaika, Simba and College-Bound mentoring programs. Youth were also helped by **44** FCCS crisis center volunteers at the agency's intake & investigations office
- **6,676** children received gifts through the Holiday Wish program provided by **1,514** individuals and **304** groups, with the assistance of more than **241** Holiday Wish volunteers donating more than **1,300** hours of their time
- **35** youth received services through the Therapeutic Arts Program, in partnership with the Ohio Arts Council and Dick Blick Art Materials

24-hour Child Abuse Hotline:

614-229-7000

General Information:

614-229-7100

Adoption:

614-341-6060

Kinship:

614-341-6161

Volunteers & Mentors:

614-275-2690

Communications:

614-275-2523



Franklin County

**Children
Services**

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

Safety

Children Services intake and investigations staff provides protective services by investigating referrals of children who are alleged to be abused, neglected or dependent. These services are provided 24 hours a day. FCCS 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 two regions or two managed care partner agencies. Children Services provides case management, protective and supportive services, as well as purchased services from community agencies within a case plan agreed to by the family and Children Services casework staff.

In 2017, there were:

- **32,214** intake referrals received
- **11,771** family investigations completed
- Ongoing services for **5,976** cases
- Protective services for **16,733** individual family members
- Family services to **4,052** children through managed care partnerships
- **14,378** children served on the agency's active ongoing caseload

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 this can be safely accomplished.

In 2017, Franklin County Children Services had:

- **4,789** children in agency custody
- **3,238** children in paid care
- **2,440** children placed in purchased foster care
- **1,153** children placed in group or institutional care
- **1,811** children placed with relatives



Franklin County Children Services 2017 Income Statistics

Local &
Miscellaneous
Funds
68%

Federal Funds
30%

State Revenue **2%**

Operating Fund Balance as of January 1, 2017 **\$132,025,481**

Income **(Cash Basis):**

Local & Miscellaneous Funds **\$132,891,032**

Property Taxes	\$131,570,137
Interfund Revenue	570,336
Board & Care from Parents	239,182
Miscellaneous	511,377

Federal Funds **\$58,962,228**

Title IV-E Placement (Administration)	\$6,244,857
Title IV-E ProtectOHIO Waiver	26,924,444
Title IV-E Administration	15,727,861
Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, VA Benefits	613,499
Title IV-B - ESSA (Emergency Services Supplemental Assistance)	550,557
CHAFFEE Independent Living Program	937,081
Gateway CALL	295,252
Miscellaneous	7,668,677

State Revenue **\$4,871,244**

Regional Training	\$455,525
Child Protective & Feisel Allocation	3,665,424
Miscellaneous	750,295

Total 2017 Income **\$196,724,504**

Beginning Balance plus 2017 Income **\$328,749,985**



Franklin County Children Services 2017 Expense Statistics

Operating Expenditures

(Cash Basis):

Protection Program	\$95,567,468
Intake & Investigations	\$31,823,933
Casework Protective Services	31,058,074
Care Partnerships	30,607,272
Family Support Services	2,078,189
Placement Program	\$78,992,824
Family Care Services	\$10,353,411
Foster Home Care	29,095,808
Group Home Care	10,914,869
Kinship Care	2,501,427
Institutional Care	26,127,308
Permanency Program	\$18,629,160
Adoption Services	\$10,701,889
Child Enrichment Services	5,513,779
Emancipation Services	2,413,492
Total 2017 Operating Expenditures	\$193,189,452
Operating Fund Balance as of December 31, 2017	\$135,560,533
Ending Balance plus 2017 Expenses	\$328,749,985



Franklin County Children Services

2017 Purchased Services

A New Leaf, Inc.	\$1,460,905.98	Hittle House	\$116,660.04
Action for Children	\$11,212.33	House of New Hope	\$1,130,966.68
ADAMH	\$231,253.00	Huckleberry House	\$247,828.70
Adelphoi Village	\$129,578.44	Indiana Developmental Training Center	\$700,637.67
Adriel School	\$975,333.39	Julia Paige Family Center	\$128,209.00
Agape for Youth	\$12,764.58	Kids Count Too	\$92,386.00
Alliance Human Services	\$517,438.09	LHS Family & Youth Services	\$832,664.00
Applewood Centers	\$157,082.10	LifeStart	\$767,247.50
Bair Foundation	\$2,011,239.94	Maryhaven, Inc.	\$1,379,662.85
Beech Brook Spaulding	\$24,336.00	MBH of Elgin	\$50,621.28
Bellefaire JCB	\$299,391.77	Mustard Seed Foundation	\$68,070.00
Belmont Pines Hospital	\$1,012,426.50	National Youth Advocate Program	\$8,195,734.55
Big Brothers, Big Sisters	\$90,191.00	National Youth Advocate Program (Pass & Healthy Ways)	\$5,160.43
Buckeye Ranch	\$5,864,259.18	Nationwide Children's Hospital (ECMH)	\$101,329.39
Caregivers Helper, Inc.	\$443,129.02	Netcare Access (Psychological Assessments)	\$174,598.00
Caring for Kids, Inc.	\$411,846.98	New Beginnings Residential Treatment Center	\$174,598.00
Carrington Youth Academy	\$334,528.25	New Life Group Homes	\$1,099,128.94
Center for Family Safety & Healing (Fostering Connections)	\$118,758.75	New Story of Ohio	\$3,407,471.45
Children Have Options Inc.	\$27,200.94	Oasis Therapeutic Foster Care Network	\$461,997.27
Children's Hospital Medical Center	\$363,418.17	Oesterlen Services for Youth	\$954,499.75
Children's Hunger Alliance	\$66,750.00	OhioGuidestone	\$16,991.48
Christian Children's Home	\$41,400.00	Ohio Mentor	\$224,167.63
Cincinnati Children's Hospital	\$358,543.47	Options Treatment Center	\$155,125.00
Columbus Public Health (Family Ties)	\$259,170.73	Parents Anonymous (Support Group)	\$50,621.28
Community Refugee & Immigration Services (Parenting)	\$150,344.91	Pine Grove Inc.	\$50,621.28
Consumer Support Services	\$1,638,134.19	Piney Ridge Center Inc. (Woodridge of Missouri)	\$1,366,459.00
Cornell Abraxas Group	\$422,222.06	Pressley Ridge	\$73,650.88
D.O.Y Services, Inc.	\$764,881.53	Rite of Passage-Hillcrest Academy	\$257,882.76
Detroit Behavioral Health	\$782,960.00	RTC Resource Acquisition Corp	\$68,425.00
Devereux Foundation	\$74,981.84	Safehouse Ministries	\$320,096.70
Directions for Youth	\$60,330.00	Sequel Pomegranate Health Systems	\$4,964,778.29
Dungarvin Ohio, Inc.	\$714,377.57	Southeast Inc.	\$2,085,595.11
Eastway Corporation	\$1,861,769.46	Specialized Alternatives for Youth	\$2,085,595.11
Educational Service Center of Central Ohio	\$1,148,363.92	St. Stephen's Community Services	\$1,110,417.95
ENA/NECCO	\$612,256.15	St. Vincent Family Center	\$1,606,614.10
Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services	\$33,333.58	Step By Step Academy	\$15,600.00
Fairfield Information Services (Drug Screens)	\$389,643.70	Transitions for Youth	\$3,233.00
Family Wellness Solutions	\$9,760.00	Tri-State Youth Academy	\$8,602.00
Foundations for Living (Keystone Richland Center)	\$915,649.72	UMCH Family Services	\$1,509,020.30
Fox Run Center for Children & Adolescents	\$1,781,626.24	Village Network	\$6,048,060.58
George Junior Republic	\$1,035,012.00	White Deer Run	\$243,698.00
Gravehaven Inc.	\$159,885.00	Youth Advocate Services	\$2,272,721.90
Greater Hilltop Shalom Zone (After-school Activities)	\$40,412.50	Youth And Family Centered Services	\$177,650.00

Subtotal	\$72,623,201.83
Payment to Children Services Foster & Adoptive Homes	\$4,627,362.00
Other Purchased Social Services	\$435,430.00
Total Purchased Social Services	\$77,685,994.83



2017 Commissioners, Board & Committees

Franklin County Commissioners

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Kevin Boyce
Marilyn Brown

Franklin County Children Services Board

Necol Russell-Washington, Chair
Joy Soll, Vice Chair
Maggie Lewis, Secretary
Rev. Dr. Michael Bean
Jessica Goldman
Tiffany Hunt
Elizabeth Martinez
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Mary Bynum
Chanel Edwards
Tobi Furman
Gayle Lee
Mahdi Warsama
Christina Wilson

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Dale Gresson, Vice Chair
Debbie Sartori, Secretary
Elizabeth Cary, Malaika Representative
John Henson, Simba Representative
Cheryl Harger
Beth Heyer
Nancy Page
Heather Popio
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Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

Franklin County Children Services 2017 Report to the Community



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Columbus, Ohio 43223
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www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services