



**OFCFCA**  
**Promoting healthy children, strong families,  
and thriving communities county by county.**



**COUNTY: CLERMONT**

**MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:**

The mission of the Clermont County Family & Children First Council (FCFC) is to promote and facilitate communication and collaboration among Clermont County child and family serving agencies to ensure that Clermont County infants, children, adolescents and their families receive the most appropriate services to enable youth to develop adequate skills in preparation for a successful adulthood.

**OPERATING STRUCTURE:**

Clermont County FCFC has 25 members and four staff. Clermont County FCFC has four standing committees: Executive Committee, Cluster, Dispute Resolution Committee and the Early Childhood Coordinating Committee. Additional committees are formed as deemed appropriate.

**LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:** strategies and outcomes  
Clermont County FCFC is an active participant in many community initiatives, including the development of FAST TRACK (described below). Clermont County FCFC is working with Clermont County Children's Protective Services (CPS) and 5 other CPS agencies in the development of regional level of care criteria, modification of the Cuyahoga Scale for assessing level of care, uniform monthly reports and discharge summaries, and contracts which include the same components. These initiatives were the result of systems collaboration and in response to community need.
- **Service Coordination:** strategies and outcomes  
Clermont County FCFC collaborates with Job & Family Services, Children's Protective Services, Juvenile Court, Mental Health & Recovery Board, MRDD, Help Me Grow, school systems, families, and mental health and substance abuse agencies in the facilitation of Cluster, the county's service coordination mechanism. Cluster is a team decision making process with the goal of developing a coordinated and collaborative plan of care for multi-need, multi-system children and their families. Strengths and needs are identified. The team works to remove barriers, develop creative solutions to complex issues, and maintain children in the community.
- **Family Empowerment:** strategies and outcomes  
Family members are active members of Clermont County FCFC. Parent representatives participate on all committees and bring community issues that come to their attention to Council meetings. Families and children, when appropriate, are active participants in the Cluster process. FAST TRACK, a collaborative effort of Job & Family Services, Children's Protective Services, Juvenile Court, Mental Health & Recovery Board, FCF, a mental health provider and a substance abuse provider was initiated in May 2007. FAST TRACK is a collaborative process to expedite the reunification of children who were removed from their parents' care with their parents or to maintain children in their home. FAST TRACK agencies and the families work together to build upon family strengths and remove barriers to success.
- **Early Childhood System of Care:** strategies and outcomes  
Clermont County FCFC governs the Clermont Help Me Grow program. Clermont County FCFC contracts with MRDD to provide the day-to-day oversight of the program and to contract with providers to provide home visitation services to children prenatal through age 3. Clermont Help Me Grow served a record number of children in Help Me Grow in SFY 2009.

**LOCAL CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND RESPONSIBILITIES (As Applicable):**

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:** strategies and outcomes  
Clermont County FCFC oversees the provision of Ohio Children's Trust Fund child abuse and neglect prevention activities in the community. In SFY 2009, a voluntary home visitation program

was provided to families with children determined to be at risk of abuse or neglect. In the first half of SFY 2009, 17 families participated in the home visitation program, with 71% completing the 10 week program and having no substantiated child abuse complaints during the service period. As evidenced by pre and post testing using the Adolescent-Adult Parenting Inventory, 100% of participating families improved their parenting skills. As evidenced by a post program satisfaction survey, 100% of parents indicated satisfaction with the program.

**OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES:** strategies and outcomes

*Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP):* Clermont County FCFC has made youth suicide prevention a priority. As several local youth suicides in the last few years have been related to bullying, FCFC chose to focus on bullying reduction and prevention in schools as the means to reduce youth suicide. OBPP is a multi-level, multi-component school-based program designed to prevent or reduce bullying in elementary, middle and junior high schools (students 6 to 15 years old). The program attempts to restructure the existing school environment to reduce opportunities and rewards for bullying. School staff is largely responsible for introducing and implementing the program. Efforts are directed toward improving peer relations and making the school a safe and positive place for students to learn and develop. As measured by an initial questionnaire and an end of the year questionnaire, the program has been shown to reduce student reports of being bullied and bullying others by 30%-70%. FCFC has funded 16 schools for Olweus training/implementation, with 6 additional schools to be trained in the 2009-2010 school year.

*Site Visits:* In an effort to reduce the number of children in residential treatment and effectively monitor children in residential placement, FCFC conducts site visits at residential facilities. During each visit, Clermont County client records are reviewed to ensure children are receiving appropriate services congruent with their case plan, children are interviewed to provide feedback regarding their treatment and the facility, staff are interviewed regarding the Clermont County children in placement, and a tour of the facility is taken. The number of children in residential treatment has been reduced to approximately 30 (from a high of 52), but more importantly, children are receiving appropriate services and being stepped down to less restrictive environments in a timely manner.

**FUNDING:**

The SFY 2009 Clermont County FCFC budget, including Help Me Grow funds, was \$1,238,665. Of these funds, \$346,508 was from Local Contributions (Juvenile Court, Job & Family Services, Mental Health & Recovery Board, MRDD, County Commissioners, General Health District).

**STAFFING:**

Clermont County FCFC has 4 staff members: Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, Assistant Clinical Coordinator, and Secretary.

**CHALLENGES:**

Clermont County FCFC would like to see more flexibility and fewer silos in funding. FCFC would also like to see more input from counties and county agencies being solicited and considered prior to decisions being made at the state level.

**FUTURE PLANS:**

Clermont County FCFC will continue to identify service gaps and work to creatively meet the needs of the community. As school personnel, students and parents have responded favorably to FCFC's effort to reduce youth suicide through the reduction of bullying, 6 schools will receive funding to implement the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in the 2009-2010 school year. FCFC hopes to train all public elementary and middle schools in the County in upcoming years, along with private schools.

**Contact Information:**

**Gretchen Behimer, Program Director**  
**Clermont County Family & Children First**  
**1088 Wasserman Way, Suite B**  
**Batavia, OH 45103**

**Phone: 513-732-5411**  
**Fax: 513-732-5414**  
**email [gbehimer.fcf@ccmhrb.org](mailto:gbehimer.fcf@ccmhrb.org)**  
**[www.clermontfcf.org](http://www.clermontfcf.org)**