



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



COUNTY: COLUMBIANA

MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:

The Columbiana County FCFC vision is to promote a community which helps all children fulfill their potential.

OPERATING STRUCTURE:

The Columbiana County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board is the Administrative Agent for the FCFC, which is comprised of 15 Mandated Members, in accordance with ORC 121.37; two additional members were added to the Mandated Member Council through local consensus. In addition, 19 General Council Members provide additional collaboration and support for projects affecting at-risk children and families in our community. Council Committees include FCFC Executive, HB 289, Ohio Children Trust Fund, Early Childhood, Parent Representatives, and Service Coordination.

LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:

Community Capacity Building/Planning:

The focus area selected for the Columbiana County HB 289 Plan is to Reduce Violence. Strategies to achieve this include WrapAround, Family Support Team meetings, Case Reviews, Respite Services, and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Outcomes are monitored and assessed annually, and included in the HB 289 report. FCFC partnered with AmeriCorps in FY 09 to provide Wellness Mentors in all county school districts. The project identified at-risk students and families and provided support, information and referrals to needed services. Outcomes included helping children to feel safe at home and in school, identifying and addressing health needs, and achieving academic success. During FY 09, twelve Wellness Mentors worked with 237 students on health related activities; 1,900 students participated in health screenings, wellness activities, and lessons. In addition, all eleven school districts had some form of behavioral health services available onsite to serve at-risk students.

Service Coordination:

Columbiana County's service coordination goal is to identify and provide multi-need children and families with support by accessing resources including WrapAround, Family Support Team meetings, Case Reviews, FAST, ABC, NonBehavioral Health funds, and other services available in the community. FY 09 outcomes for WrapAround included a reduction in out of home placements and achievement of family-selected goals. Measurable outcomes attained included a reduction in behaviors assessed on the Severity scale and an increase on the Functioning scale of the Ohio Scales. Improvement on one or both Ohio Scales was noted for 31 of the 38 children for whom comparative data was collected.

Family Empowerment:

FY 09 brought some progress in engaging families to fully participate in activities and services that develop and strengthen healthy behaviors and relationships within the family and larger community in which they live. Parent Advocates were provided to help inform and support parents who faced challenges in raising their children and navigating system resources. FCFC Parent Representatives formed a committee to increase feedback from and participation by parents in the community.

Early Childhood System of Care:

Help Me Grow provided the following services: 3,848 ongoing visits to 491 children ages birth through 3 years, 269 newborn home visits, 159 family support activities (playgroups and educational trainings), and 123 developmental evaluations and assessments. Outcome Goals include family empowerment, strengthening parenting skills, identification and provision of resources for special needs children, preschool placement, and school readiness.

LOCAL CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:

FY 09 funds were targeted to provide and expand Respite services and parenting support to families at risk for occurrence of child abuse and/or neglect. The program began FY 09 with two trained Respite Providers and increased to 12 Respite Providers and three facilities that provided Respite for older children. 100 children from 63 families were served, and parents reported a measurable decrease (Likert scale) in their stress level and an increased ability to cope with the challenges of parenting.

OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES:

Tuancy Mediation was provided to students in six school districts. Outcomes for participating students were increased attendance, decreased tardiness and a decreased number of student referrals to Juvenile Court. Funding for the project has been provided through TANF/DJFS and FCFC funds.

FUNDING:

In addition to the \$20,000 supplied through the Ohio Building Capacity funds, in FY 09 \$27,867 in local support was received from FCFC membership contributions, \$132,666 from DJFS contracts, and \$34,399 in OCTF funds. In addition, \$45,870 in FAST funds, \$13,000 in ABC funds, and \$5,681 in Non Behavioral Health funds were provided by the Columbiana County MHR SB to cover costs associated with Service Coordination projects and discretionary needs related to Service Coordination family goals. HMG funds totaling \$643,114 were provided by Part C, GRF and TANF.

STAFFING:

FCFC employs four full-time staff members, including the FCFC Coordinator, HMG Project Director, Family Support Specialist, and FCFC Administrative Secretary/Family Support Specialist. Contract services with local agencies and independent professionals provide many of the strategies defined in the Service Coordination and HB 289 Plans.

CHALLENGES:

The development of Parent Advocacy programming was an area of focus for FY 09. This involved accessing regional support to recruit and train local volunteers to fill the role of Parent Advocates for families who request this support. We now have one regional and one local Parent Advocate who are actively working through PAC with families in Columbiana County.

Another challenge has been adapting to the transitions occurring in the Help Me Grow program. Our goal is to accommodate the needs of young children and families whenever possible, and to make referrals to other community services, if necessary, to prevent gaps in services.

FUTURE PLANS:

We are experiencing an urgent need for additional funding to sustain the successful strategies put into place for maintaining children at home or in the least restrictive setting which is safe for them. HB 289 has prompted a local awareness of listening to needs identified by children, families and the systems that serve them; reviewing and mobilizing existing resources to address family needs, and prioritizing those highlighted in the local HB 289 Plan. Resources available to provide Service Coordination in FY 10 are reduced and careful consideration will be required of FCFC Mandated members to select where reductions will be made while attempting to secure new sources of revenue.

Contact Information:

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