



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



COUNTY: LORAIN

MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:

To advocate for families by establishing and maintaining systems of services that nurture and enrich Lorain County residents and to encourage collaboration between individuals and organizations to promote the well-being of children and families of Lorain County.

OPERATING STRUCTURE:

Operates as a department of Lorain County Commissioners, the FCFC Administrative and Fiscal Agent.

LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:** strategies and outcomes
Council established a strategic alliance with Communities That Care to assist in identifying gaps in service for youth and families to increase protective factors in the community for the prevention of drug and alcohol use in youth. Council will continue support of this alliance which has proven to be successful in identifying prevention strategies targeting at-risk youth and also successful in building a coalition through the award of Federal funds in 2008.

Council formed active partnerships with three current community collaboratives and will lead the effort to combine these groups under a united force to maximize community resources, promote networking, and reduce duplication of efforts of providers to improve the well-being of children in Lorain County.
- **Service Coordination:** strategies and outcomes
Engage the Core Planning Committee of the Council Board to conduct a gap analysis and community needs assessment for the purpose of recreating the County Service Coordination Plan in order to institute a highly functioning service coordination county-wide system..

Develop a new service delivery plan that includes the eligibility criteria for clients served under the plan, an evaluation tool for outcome measurement, and the expansion of Council's Intake and Referral system.
- **Family Empowerment:** strategies and outcomes
A Family Empowerment Committee was formed with the addition of new parent representatives. A goal of increasing representation of parents to 25% of Council Board. A parent representative served her first term as Council President in 2008, also a historical first for Council.

Use the Family Empowerment Committee to assist in family engagement strategies and promote the state-level initiative of the Family Engagement Center.
- **Early Childhood System of Care:** strategies and outcomes
HMG staff supported new EC committee work by joining P-16 Council and Quest State Support Team committees to assist in the policy and decision making of systems of care at the local level. Continuation of committee work by HMG will assist in keeping all EC issues in the forefront of policy development within the County, improve systems of care as well as meet educational outcomes for children 0 – 21 in Lorain County.

Council developed a two year plan in 2008 to move to performance-based service provider contracts for five HMG providers in FY09. A goal of 100% compliance in all State and local monitored areas for FY10 has been established with quarterly performance audits conducted on all providers. Lorain County has been successful in bringing State and local monitored

performance areas into compliancy within a six-month timeframe. Of 115 HMG families surveyed in an annual County-wide survey, 95% said that their involvement in HMG directly contributed to the successful development and growth of their child with another 95% citing that due to their participation in HMG they increased their understanding and knowledge of parenting and child development.

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

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:** strategies and outcomes
Through support of Trust Fund dollars, Council will reduce child maltreatment rates in Lorain County by 10% in three years by supporting a county-wide community collaborative on child abuse prevention. This 15-member agency collaborative will be responsible for leading an effort to reduce maltreatment rates with the focus on: increased community outreach, increase in strengthening families programs, and a focus on educating professionals, families, and youth of all types of abuse with a focus on sexual abuse. Council will continue to support an annual regional child abuse prevention conference which was attended by almost 150 attendees in 2008.

OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES: strategies and outcomes

Council continues to participate in the Maternal Depression Pilot Project. Lorain County was one of the first seven Ohio Counties to participate in this pilot that began in 2005. Since that time, over 600 mothers have been screened for Maternal Depression with 240 mothers screened in 2008.

In partnership with Lorain County MRDD, Council funded the expansion of the Lending Library. This community resource assists families with special needs children by providing items for families to use such as adaptive play, developmental growth and sensory perception items, and therapeutic items at no cost. Over 50 families directly benefited from the Lending Library in 2008.

FUNDING:

Lorain County FCFC operates on a \$1.9 million dollar budget. It receives 1.8 million for HMG and \$94,000 from the Ohio Children Trust Fund, \$5,681 for Access to Better Care and \$20,000 from Occupational Capacity Building Fund.

STAFFING:

Council maintains a staff of six staff persons.

CHALLENGES:

Alternative and discretionary funding to support special projects and initiatives specific to the needs of the County.

FUTURE PLANS:

Implementation of a HMG Literacy initiative that includes strategies aligned with the P-16 Council. Initiative will support an increase in parental knowledge and skills to promote literacy at home with specially designed literacy tool kits provided to identified families with a total of three literacy home visits conducted by a Literacy Specialist between the ages of 0 – 36 months.

Strengthen alliances between United Way, the Foundation Community, P-16, CTC and Council and support an annual service provider conference and networking symposium in the County.

Contact Information:

Melissa Stefano
Lorain County Children and Families Council
266 Middle Avenue
Elyria OH 44035

Phone (440) 284-4467
Fax (440) 284-4628
email mstefano@loraincounty.us