



Summit Family &
Children First Council

OFCFCA

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



COUNTY: SUMMITT

MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:

To improve access to and delivery of education, health and social services for children and families in Summit County with emphasis on the safety of children, prevention and early intervention and to integrate these services so that families have the understanding and knowledge to access the help they need.

OPERATING STRUCTURE:

Summit County FCFC has an open membership policy and is comprised of forty-three community agencies. The Council has six standing committees: Cluster, Family, Help Me Grow, Finance, Children's Trust, and the Evaluation/Planning Committee.

LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:** strategies and outcomes
FCFC is actively involved with Summit 2010: Quality of Life Project which is a community comprehensive health and social planning initiative. The overall intent is to strengthen collaboration between the major public systems and the effectiveness of services they finance or deliver. There were ten major goals with priority indicators and strategies selected by community teams to measure outcomes. This project is part of the County's Executive Office. .
- **Service Coordination:** strategies and outcomes
Summit County Cluster works collaboratively with the major child serving agencies to meet the complex needs of multi-need youth. This committee has set three goals for FY10: 1) Reduce the length of stay of youth placed in residential care; 2) Reduce the number of days youth are placed in out-of-county residential care; and 3) Increase access to behavioral/mental health services for youth and families. Service coordination is crucial to this process.
- **Family Empowerment:** strategies and outcomes
The Council works hard to maintain family representation at all levels of FCFC. Parents sit on all standing committees. Parents and youth attend the Cluster parent professional meetings. FCFC is also working with Mental Health America to increase the number of trained parent advocates.
- **Early Childhood System of Care:** strategies and outcomes
Early childhood is a major priority for FCFC and is part of Summit 2010. The goal is kindergarten readiness. This initiative has many community partners who are developing goals, objectives and strategies to have "ready" schools, "ready" children and "ready" communities.

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

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:** strategies and outcomes
Summit FCFC assumed oversight of the Children Trust Fund in 2007. Based on a needs and resource assessment contracts and activities for FY10 will focus on meeting three needs: parent training, in school and after school programming, and community-wide training of front-line workers related to identifying and referring suspected child abuse or neglect.

OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES: strategies and outcomes

This year FCFC is working closely with the County Executive's office to conduct a county-wide community assessment and inventory of all early childhood programs and services in the county. The assessment/planning process is organized to align with the **State of Ohio's Early Childhood**

Development Model, which includes Health, Mental Health and Nutrition; Special Needs/Early Intervention; Family Support; and Early Care & Education.

FUNDING:

FCFC is the administrative agent for the following grant programs: Help Me Grow, Children Trust Fund and FAST. It also manages local dollars for Cluster youth. The Council contracts with a variety of agencies to meet the individual program goals.

STAFFING:

The Council has a full time FCFC Director who supervises two Help Me Grow Workers, two Cluster Coordinators, one a secretary.

CHALLENGES:

FCFC continues to take on more administrative responsibilities and community planning activities. The challenge to do these activities is the lack of administrative dollars to increase staff.

FUTURE PLANS:

Upon completion of the of the assessment, Summit County will develop a long-term strategic plan for early childhood that identifies and prioritizes funding gaps based on community needs; guides local funding decisions; and insures cross-system & cross-sector collaboration. The Council is very committed to assure that programs are high-quality and/or evidence based and produce good outcomes. The Council partners with the University of Akron fro program evaluation and offers technical assistance on other projects.

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