



## OFCFCA

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



**COUNTY:** UNION

### **MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:**

Council for Union County Families exists to maintain an efficient, effective and responsive county-wide system to provide services to families and children. CUCF continues to seek to improve family and child well-being, using Ohio's six commitments as a guide.

### **OPERATING STRUCTURE:**

Council for Union County Families is made up of 19 voting members, including parents, and also includes 23 professionals representing 18 service organizations that are not mandated by law, but are regular and active attendees of the meetings. Active subcommittees of the Council include:

- **Executive Committee:** Officers of Council, Directors of the 5 major county child and family serving systems, a County Commissioner and a parent.
- **Early Childhood Collaborative:** Professionals and parents interested in issues relative to children birth –5 years.
- **Systems That Care Committee:** Professionals and parents interested in issues relative to the health and well-being of school age children.

These three committees are involved in ongoing discussion and planning related to existing services, gaps in services and plans for managing the growth in Union County.

### **LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:** strategies and outcomes  
The Council for Union County Families membership has a strong desire to work together to improve child and family well-being in Union County. While we collectively agree that Union County has many strengths as indicated at the Community Forum in June (2006) our Council membership is committed to improving the work we do to strengthen families. An example of that commitment is evidenced in the No Wrong Door initiative as outlined in our Annual Plan (2007). The guiding philosophy of No Wrong Door is to assist families when they come into any social service system “door” to identify needs, clarify expectations and reduce barriers to service.
- **Service Coordination:** strategies and outcomes  
Council for Union County Families has taken the lead in promoting and facilitating Wraparound to multi-need families in the community who either 1.) Refer themselves for this teaming approach or 2.) are referred from another agency. Through an Access to Better Care Blueprint grant, Council for Union County Families arranged and hosted Wraparound facilitation training for 16 agency staff in Children Services, Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Juvenile Court and Mental Health.
- **Family Empowerment:** strategies and outcomes  
Council for Union County Families works to empower families through the Wraparound process and through continued recruitment of family involvement in Council activities.
- **Early Childhood System of Care:** strategies and outcomes  
Council for Union County Families oversees the Help Me Grow Program in Union County. Services are provided by the Union County Health Department, Union County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and the Memorial Hospital of Union County. The Early Childhood Collaborative assists with Child Find, Transition, and Parent Involvement activities.

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

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:** strategies and outcomes  
In SFY 2009, Council for Union County Families plans to increase community awareness of:  
1) How parental substance use/abuse can impact the growth and development of children and 2)  
How to engage at-risk parents in strategies that prevent child abuse and neglect.

Selected Strategy (ies):

- 1) Increase Awareness: Develop local materials that would include information on substance use/abuse and it's affect on child growth and development, a brief self-screen for substance use and contact information for local resources should a parent seek help.
- 2) Increase Education: Professional Development Topics, for those who work with at risk parents, would include information on the correlation between child abuse/neglect and substance abuse, protective factors that prevent abuse and neglect and strategies that help to engage parents in activities, programs or treatments that prevent child abuse and neglect.
- 3) Build Infrastructure: Develop better system linkages that promote protective factors among this population. Further the No Wrong Door efforts of the County and ensure that all service providers know what services are available to young families and understand the referral process.

**OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES:** strategies and outcomes

In January 2007, the "Early Learning for School Success" began. The Campaign is designed to strengthen families by: 1) better preparing their child to enter kindergarten ready to learn, 2) reducing barriers to early learning by improving preschool quality and 3) bridging the transition from preschool to kindergarten.

**FUNDING:**

The Council for Union County Families recieves funding from the County Commissioners, DJFS, Health Dept. and Union County Board of Developmental Disabilites. These local dollars, combined with the Operational Capacity Building Grant from the State of Ohio and administrative fees for Help Me Grow and the Children's Trust fund make up the total CUCF revenue.

**STAFFING:**

The Council for Union County Families is staffed by a fulltime Director and a part-time Early Childhood Mental Health specialist funded by an Early Childhood Mental Health Grant through the Mental Health and Recovery Board.

**CHALLENGES:**

Council membership includes several agencies that are struggling with reduced financial resources due to reduced state and local funding. As resources dwindle, agencies struggle with having to do more internally and are less able to contribute financial resources to collaborative initiatives.

Another challenge toward achieving our vision is our ability to collect the kind of data that helps us to see if we are improving upon child and family well-being. Agencies are mandated to collect and report data that is not always helpful to us locally in terms of measuring our own success.

**FUTURE PLANS:**

Our Council is very interested in sharing basic demographic data of families in order to reduce the amount of paperwork that families need to complete as well as reducing staff time in collecting the data and managing the data. CUCF is on target to pilot a project in 2008-9 toward achieving this goal. This effort will further our No Wrong Door efforts by providing seamless services to families and reducing barriers to getting families connected to the services they need.

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