



NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Number 1

A Publication of Mahoning County Children Services

August 2009

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From the Director's Desk:

By Denise Stewart, Executive Director

We are excited to introduce the first edition of our agency's newsletter. During our strategic planning process, we began to discuss "who we are" and "what our mission is" in the community. I was thinking about the hard work, effective programs, and innovative projects that we see at the agency everyday and the need to share (brag about?) these activities. There is much to tell about our agency and the work we do—and this newsletter is designed to get that good news out!

After collaborating with Theresa Pancoe and Glenna Ress (the creative energy), and later with Floree Stubbs and Shawn King (the technical energy), we set a timeframe to launch the first edition.

You may have noticed that the creativity slowed down a bit when we got to the name of the newsletter. Therefore, we will be having a "name the newsletter" contest. The person who submits the winning title will receive a \$20 gift certificate for Overtures Restaurant with my compliments. Entries may be placed in a box in the staff lounge from August 12, 2009 to August 26, 2009 for anyone who wants to submit an entry.

We will publish the newsletter every other month and will be looking for news and information from everyone. For any aspiring reporters, a feature column might be in your future!

So, relax—take time to read the newsletter and give us your feedback.

Here's the news!

Denise

Mission Statement

Mahoning County Children Service in partnership with the community is committed to being the leader in protecting children and helping to preserve families.

Vision Statement

Mahoning County Children Services will be the best, most caring and respected child protective agency working cooperatively with the community to preserve quality family life.

(As Proposed by the Strategic Planning Committee)

Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee met for the first time on July 16, 2009. The facilitators for our Strategic Plan are Dr. Joseph Mosca, Dean of the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services at Youngstown State University and David Arnold, LISW-S, CEO of the Family Service Agency.



Dr. Joseph Mosca & David Arnold

What is a Strategic Plan?

A Strategic Plan is designed to provide a sense of direction that positively impacts the work of the agency.

What are the Benefits?

The benefits include the agency's ability to:

- Improve performance
- Maintain focus
- Problem solve

The Committee has been systematically processing the information compiled from the survey that was completed by Board members, Administration, Management, Direct Line Workers and Support Staff. The committee is working towards establishing goals and objectives to address the strengths and limitations of our agency and secure a plan for the agency's future.

Strategic Planning Committee:

Denise Stewart, Brad Price, Cathy Gagliardi, Louis Wainwright, Amy Chismar, Dan Thomas, Dave Macek, Floree Stubbs, Gretchen Bowman, Carolyn Taylor, Anna Marie Jones, Gloria Sanchez, Becky Haddle, Julie Rudolph, Katrina Simms, Brad Smith, Theresa Pancoe, Patrick Carlini, Nancy Sefchik and MCCA Board Members – *for more information please contact your department representatives.*

Recruitment Events:

By Theresa Pancoe, MSSA, LSW
Community Education Specialist



Canfield Fair

"Something to Crow About"

September 2 – September 7, 2009

2009 marks the 163rd year for the Canfield Fair. It also marks the 59th consecutive combined medical-health exhibit.

Mahoning County Children Services will have a booth in the Medical Health Exhibit again this year.

Our theme is "Get Aboard the Adoption Train". This year we will be promoting Child Abuse/Neglect Prevention, Foster/Adoptive Parent Recruitment, Internet Safety and the One Church, One Child Program.

We would like to extend a VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to **Crouse Mills True Value Store** for providing us with the model train for our Booth (for the 12th year!) & donating a model train for us to raffle off to the Community! Come and sign up for a chance to win!

Thank you to all the staff that volunteered to work the booth! It is greatly appreciated!



Mahoning Valley Scrappers Community Day Partnership

We also had a unique opportunity to treat our foster parents to an exciting day of Scrappers baseball at Eastwood Field on Saturday, July 25, 2009.

Not only did we have the opportunity to show our foster parents how much we appreciate everything they do for us and our community's children, but we also had the opportunity to display materials about the ongoing need for foster and adoptive parents for our children (especially sibling groups and teens) at the game. A special thanks to GLENNA for attending and representing the agency!

Over 100 of our foster/adoptive families attended the event to promote the need for temporary and permanent homes for children in Mahoning County.

RESULTS: The Scrappers defeated the Williamsport Crosscutters 4-0! Hometown Win!

“BOARD”

Bulletin

A Message from the President
By Luis Arroyo

From my first term as a board member I knew the appointment would be both important and challenging. I continue to be marveled at the expertise and compassion staff has when interacting in the community with children and families. This lends to the generally positive community knowledge about who we are and the work we do. Our dedication to protecting children and preserving families is second to none. My hope is that this newsletter serves as a positive, informative vehicle contributing further to the body of knowledge about ourselves.

Bienvenidos
Luis Arroyo, Chair



Seated, Left to Right: Attorney Mariam M. Ocasio, Mrs. Loretta J. Neill, Ms. Brigid Kennedy, Ms. Margaret Wellington, Victoria S.M. Wiery Standing, Left to Right: Attorney Alfred J. Fleming, Dr. Thomas M. Gemma D.O., Mr. Luis Arroyo (Chair), Mr. Calvin L. Jones, Rev. Lewis Macklin (Vice-Chair) Missing from Photo: Attorney Mary Ann Fabrizi, Mr. Sam Matheny, Mr. Charles J. Ramsey, Jr., Mrs. Beverly J. Reyes

Mahoning County Children Services

Smoking Policy for Agency Staff While on Duty and Conducting Agency Business

In line with a new rule [OAC 5101:2-7-12 (V)] which mandates a smoke free environment for foster children, the following guidelines will also apply to agency staff whenever they come into contact with children:

- (1) All smoking shall be conducted out of the sight of children.
- (2) Smoking shall not occur in agency facilities or in agency/county vehicles.

Staff may not smoke while transporting children, whether in their own cars or agency vans.
- (3) Any area where staff smoke must be so far removed that children cannot inhale smoke.

Rul es... Rul es... Rul es...

New Foster Care Rule: Effective 8/1/09

New No Smoking Rules ORC 5101:2-7-12 (V) (1) (2)

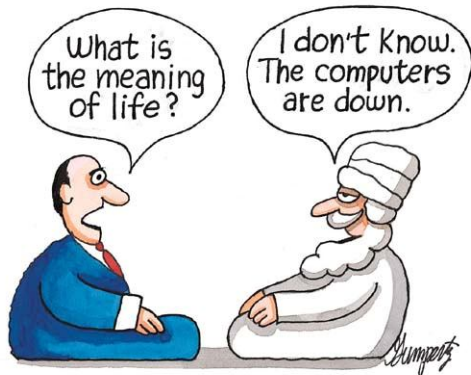
A foster home shall provide a smoke free environment for foster children

- (1) Smoking on the grounds of a foster home shall be permitted only if all the following requirements are met:
 - (a) Smoking shall not occur in the home or attached building areas
 - (b) All smoking shall be conducted out of the sight of foster children
 - (c) The area where smoking is occurring is so far removed from the foster children that the children cannot inhale any smoke
- (2) Smoking may be permitted in the home or vehicles used for transporting foster children only when no foster child is present



Department News — *This month we are featuring the Fiscal Department.*

By Danny Thomas, Fiscal Officer



Mahoning County is in the process of converting their accounting system from PeopleSoft to a more user friendly system called Munis. Marilyn, Robin and I have attended several trainings at the County Administration building. The conversion to the new software will go "live" on September 1, 2009. At that time, all accounting applications will be done in Munis. The nice feature about this application is that our department has the capability to familiarize ourselves in what we have learned through a training component set up on our computers (SACWIS users, does this sound familiar?). As we go through the process we will

be uploading our specific information into the new system and by September 1, 2009, will be using the new system completely. As part of the conversion for this year, the agency budget must be done in both PeopleSoft and Munis. The payroll component of Munis will be implemented in January 2010. We have not seen that component of the system to date.

Marilyn and Robin have done an excellent job in adapting to the new applications and I am sure will have this mastered by September 2nd!!

We have been in the process of placing the 1 mill levy on the November 2009 general election ballot. The Children Services Board adopted the resolution to go forward with the renewal and the Board of County Commissioners approved our request to place the levy on the ballot at their meeting on Thursday, August 6, 2009. Our three levies generate over ½ of the agency's revenue and the 1 mill levy makes up over 50% of levy collections; therefore this is one of our largest sources of revenue.

Passage of this renewal will help stabilize our finances as state and federal allocations have seen reductions in the current state budget.

DID YOU KNOW?

THAT... www.mahoningkids.com is a valuable source of information about Mahoning County Children Services and provides information on *Mandated Reporting* and *How to Report Child Abuse & Neglect!*

THAT...*Volume 1 Number 1* refers to the Year (Volume) and publications within that year (Number).

THAT...When you run in the rain you get wetter than if you walk in the rain. *Philip Murphy*

THAT...OAPL (Ohio Adoption Photo Listing) Website may be discontinued due to budget constraints.

THAT...Cats have over 100 vocal sounds while dogs only have four. *Theresa Pancoe*

THAT...The PASSS (Post Adoption Special Service Subsidy) Program – due to statewide advocacy – is still available to any Family in Ohio that has adopted! *Amy Chismar*

One Church, One Child Program

By John Jemison

“For every child’s hope is to have a forever family of their own.”

One Church, One Child (OCOC) is a program created by Father George Clement of Chicago, IL., in 1980 which encourages the religious community to help recruit adoptive parents for children who need permanent homes.

It is a concept that incorporates the leadership of the religious community with the experience and resources of an adoptive agency into a partnership to secure homes for waiting children.

Mahoning County Children Services established our OCOC Program on May 17, 2008 and became a national program for the state of Ohio on September 8, 2008.

OCOC traveling information board continues to travel throughout the community to area churches and

organizations, to promote an array of information regarding foster care and adoption services, including but not limited to recruiting individuals and families interested parenting.

The National One Church, One Child Conference will be held in Baltimore, Md. on October 26 – 28, 2009. This year’s keynote speaker will be First Lady, Michelle Obama. For more information contact John Jemison at 330-941-8854.

One Church, One Child will be presented at Mass at St. Charles Catholic Church, in Boardman on September 13, 2009.



For more information, contact:

John Jemison
Gail Waters
Anita Wainwright
Valerie McGuire

Or visit our website
www.mahoningkids.com



We would like to thank all of the Churches in our community that have made a commitment to partner with us in the One Church, One Child Program.

**Tabernacle Baptist Church
Victory Christian Center
Heart Reach Ministries
Jerusalem Baptist Church
Mt. Zion Baptist Church
St. Charles Borromeo RC Church
New Springfield Church of God
Rising Star Baptist Church
Holy Trinity Baptist Church
Alpha and Omega First Baptist Church
Elizabeth Baptist Church
Metro Assembly of God Church
Mt Gilead Baptist Church
Philips Memorial Baptist Church
Price Memorial AME Zion Church
St. Michael’s Church
Antioch Baptist Church
New Hope Baptist Church**

OCOC Traveling Display Board ITINARY

Tabernacle Baptist	7/26 to 8/02
Alpha & Omega Baptist	8/09 to 8/16
Mt. Gilead Baptist	8/23 to 8/30
New Hope Baptist	9/06 to 9/13
Rising Baptist	9/20 to 9/27
Mt. Zion Baptist	10/04 to 10/11
Antioch Baptist	10/18 to 10/25
Holy Trinity Baptist	11/01 to 11/18
Victory Center	11/05 to 11/22

For more information on how your church can schedule to be a sponsor of the OCOC Display Board or become part of the OCOC Partnership contact: **John Jemison at 330-941-8854**

From the Training Unit

By Glenna Ress
Training Officer

All training, foster parent and staff training, through the NEORTC (Northeastern Ohio Regional Training Center), has been re-instated as of Monday, August 10, 2009.

New case work staff:

Welcome back Jennifer Stockton! Jennifer has transferred from the group home, back to a case work position, where she had previously been employed. Jennifer will replace Jonai Cooks, who recently resigned from the agency.

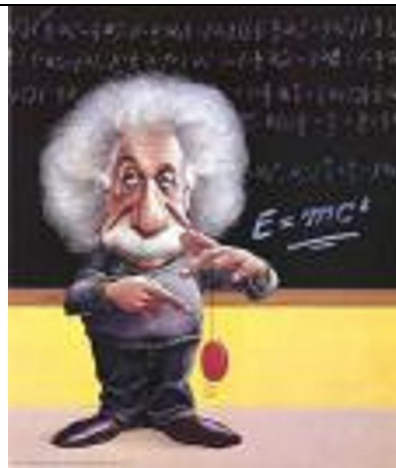
Trainees:

Christine Powell remains in the training unit and is currently working in Mercia's unit in the Family Services Department. Christine will manage Rachel Schiele's cases when Rachel goes on maternity leave.

Samantha Rotz has also been re-hired. Her first day is scheduled for August 31, 2009 and she will start in the training unit. Welcome back, Samantha.

YSU Intern:

I would like to welcome and introduce Jennifer Edwards. Jennifer is a UPP student from YSU's Bachelors in Social Work Program and will be interning with us until the end of December, 2009. She is very eager to learn about child welfare and is more than happy to assist case workers. Welcome Jennifer.



“If people are good only because they fear punishment, and hope for reward, then we are a sorry lot indeed.”

Albert Einstein

“People seem not to see that their opinion of the world is also a confessor of character.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Today's children are required to learn what most people in former times were forbidden to know.”

Ashleigh Brilliant

Name the Newsletter Contest

By Denise Stewart

Who said “**There is no free lunch**”?

Come up with a creative name for our Newsletter and win a \$20 gift certificate for Overtures Restaurant!

Entries may be placed in the box located in the Staff Lounge from August 12 – 26, 2009!

Community Resources

HELP HOTLINE

crisis center

Providing Information and Referral Services including

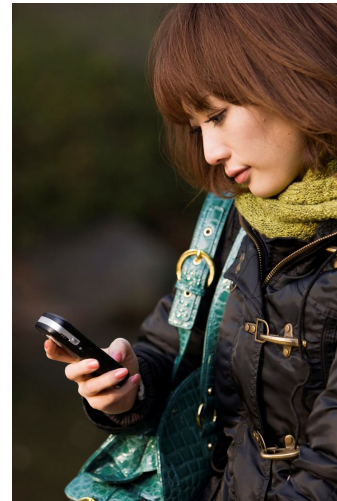
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Get connected. Get answers

Family Helpline

1-800-TheKids

If you are feeling stressed out, call to speak anonymously with a trained volunteer who can listen and help.



HELP HOTLINE COMMUNITY CENTER

1344 Fifth Avenue

**Drop-In Center
Clothing Give-Away**

SEPTEMBER 24, 2009

Free clothing and other items given away to mental health consumers in Mahoning County. Donations of gently worn clothing, household items are needed by **September 17, 2009** at the Drop-In Center on Fifth Avenue.



We are looking for staff to be an active part in the Newsletter. Would YOU consider contributing to the Newsletter? If the answer is Yes, please contact a member of the Newsletter Committee.

Newsletter Committee:

Theresa Pancoe, Editor

Glenna Ress, Supervisor

Floree Stubbs, Supervisor

Shawn King, Technical Support (Thanks for all your expertise Shawn!) – who knew what a table could do?