



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Mahoning County
Children Services

Protecting Children. Preserving Families.

OUR MISSION

Mahoning County Children Services, in partnership with the community, is committed to being the leader in protecting children while helping preserve families.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

RANDALL B. MUTH, J.D.

Dear Community Members:

The mission of the Mahoning County Children Services Board is, of course, to protect children and strengthen families. To accomplish this mission, we must constantly strive to develop and implement the most effective, evidenced-based strategies to provide children with safe, nurturing and permanent families. But, we must also preserve our fiscal resources to ensure that we are never precluded from applying those strategies due to financial constraints. This is even more important given the grave economic situation our state and country has faced over the last decade. For this reason, we are very grateful for the support the community has expressed by the passage of our replacement levy in November of 2017 and first collected in 2018. This investment has allowed the Agency to implement great improvements in the quality of services we provide which will result in better outcomes for the families we serve.

In the area of programmatic improvements, one of our primary priorities for 2018 was to continue to reduce high-end residential care center placements of our children. Children who require a higher level of care because of severe behavioral or mental health issues may be placed in a residential care center. Residential care centers are the highest level and most restrictive type of care in child welfare. Over the last several years, we observed a steady increase in the number children being placed in residential settings and, once placed, those children tended to remain in that placement for longer durations. Most research indicates institutional care for children should be viewed as a placement of last resort and should be

utilized on a short-term basis to quickly stabilize the child or to ensure the safety of the child or the community. In the absence of significant safety risks, children are much better served in their community and in the most family-like setting possible.

Because the child welfare field operates in the complex realm of human relationships, trends in the field are rarely established in months---sometimes, not even in years. However, this dramatic rise in residential placement does seem to be a sustained development. As such, it was incumbent upon the Agency to conduct a thorough examination into the root causes of this increase. Therefore, in addition to our mandate to protect children and strengthen families, over the course of 2017 and continuing into 2018, we made a concerted effort to discover factors driving this trend. I'm happy to report that we did see a reduction in the use of these highly restrictive placements last year. The goal for 2019 will be to remain vigilant to ensure that children are placed in the most appropriate and less restrictive placements as is safely possible.

Calendar year 2018 also represented the first full year of operation for our Kinship Department. Research on the national level and actual data from Ohio shows that outcomes for children who cannot safely remain in the care of their parents are much better for children temporarily placed with relatives compared to those who must be placed in foster care.

Placement with kin caregivers can minimize the trauma of removal, improve children's well-being, and increase permanency for children. Research demonstrates

that children reunified with parents after temporarily residing with kin are less likely to re-enter state care than those who were placed in foster care. And, when reunification isn't possible, relatives are more likely to provide a permanent home through guardianship, custody or adoption.

Therefore, our focus during 2018 was to continue to build the resources of the Kinship Department and to remove the barriers to kinship placements. This has resulted in more children maintaining important family connections while their parents work on the issues needed to make it safe for their children to return to their homes. Over the course of 2018, we saw a steady increase in the number of children in kinship placement and the benefits that come with that. Our hope is to continue the great work we've been doing in this area in 2019.

I am firmly convinced that child protection truly takes a community. So, as you read this, please take a moment to reflect on how you may help build a community where all children can thrive, develop character, and learn to be responsible citizens in an environment of security and love. By honoring our obligation to support and protect our young people, we all have an opportunity to make a positive difference in the life of a child and build a brighter future for our community. I encourage all citizens of Mahoning County to recognize that child abuse prevention starts with each one of us.

Sincerely,


Randall B. Muth, JD
Executive Director



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WE ARE CHILD WELFARE LEADERS.

We take pride in working with families and our community with care and compassion.

We provide quality services that respect each family's culture.

We are fiscally responsible, effectively utilizing resources to benefit the families we serve.

We educate the community on recognizing and preventing child abuse and neglect.

WE RESPECT AND VALUE FAMILIES AND THEIR CHILDREN.

We respect families' strengths and provide individualized services.

We empower parents and partner with families to ensure child safety, permanency and well-being.

We recognize children are best served within their family and community.

WE VALUE OUR PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY.

We recognize the need to work in collaboration with the community to protect children and preserve families.

We support the well-being of children and families; it is a shared agency and community responsibility.

2018 Board, Advisory Executive Staff & Commissioners

Administrative Executive Staff

Executive Director
Randall B. Muth, J.D.

Assistant Director
Rona Curtis, BA, MS-ED

Intake Services Department
Bradley Smith MSW, LISW-S, Program Administrator

Family Services Department
Julie Rudolph, MPA, LSW, Program Administrator

Placement Services Department
Anthony Paris, Program Administrator

Business Operations Department
Melinda Posterli, Program Administrator

Human Resources Department
Susan Babinec, Manager

Information Technology Department
Joshua Cayson, Manager

Public Information Department
Jennifer T. Kollar, Public Information Officer

2018 Mahoning County Children Services Board

Delphine Baldwin-Casey
Lois Jean Haynes-Paige
Brigid Kennedy
Dr. Benjamin McGee
Marilyn Montes
Dr. Joseph Mosca
Pastor Joann Pangio
Anthony Spano
Daniel Wakefield

2018 Mahoning County Children Services Advisory Committee

DJ Depp
Denise Dick
Megan Ellashek
Katrina Harris
Calvin Jones
Rev. Lewis Macklin
Andrea L. Mahone
Pete Milliken
Mary Alice Noble
Officer Shawnacie Ott
Dr. Matthew J. Paylo
Mary Jo Truman
Yvonne Wilson

Mahoning County Commissioners

David C. Ditzler
Carol Rimedio Righetti
Anthony Traficanti

STAFF COMPOSITION

At the conclusion of 2018, Mahoning County Children Services employed 110 employees to serve and support the services of children and families in Mahoning County.

6 Administrative Staff

14 Management/Supervisors

61 Caseworkers

6 Social Service Aides

23 Support Staff

Qualifications: All caseworkers possess bachelor's degrees in Social Work, Sociology, Psychology or a related social services field. All Supervisors possess a master's degree.



Mahoning County
Children Services

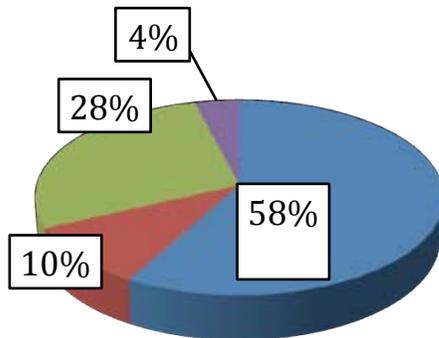


FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2018

MELINDA POSTERLI,
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
BUSINESS OPERATIONS

2018 RECEIPTS



- Levy
- State
- Federal Receipts
- All Other Receipts

2018 RECEIPTS

Real Estate Taxes	\$8,445,495.29
Manufactured Home Taxes	\$9,042.52
Personal Property Tax	\$4.97
Homestead Credit	\$1,484.79
Rollback Credit	\$445,983.06
Child Welfare Subsidy IV-B	\$148,011.00
Title IV-B (ESAA)	\$112,368.00
Independent Living Skills Allocation	\$68,529.00
State Reimbursements	\$66,854.45
PASSS	\$67,184.83
Title IV-E	\$2,225,666.44
U.S. Treasury	\$30,219.00
Foster Care Maintenance	\$1,894,308.21
Bureau of Support	\$25,462.92
BWC True Up Charges	\$21,550.01
State Child Protective Allocation	\$1,474,056.00
ODNR Reimbursement	\$730.75
Reimbursement	\$679,317.12
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$15,716,268.36

2018 EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$4,858,274.05
PERS	\$1,116,275.07
Medicare	\$71,187.67
Workmen's Compensation	\$48,711.55
Unemployment	\$10,657.87
Hospitalization	\$1,627,580.59
Hospitalization Opt-Out	\$12,970.96
Life Insurance	\$9,072.12
Tuition Reimbursement	\$41,370.93
BWC Claims Expense	\$5,085.15
BWC True Up Expense	\$36,790.33
Food	\$28,336.66
Medical Supplies	\$4,153.00
Postage	\$16,152.95
Materials and Supplies	\$9,509.60
Office Supplies	\$41,609.68
Automobile Gasoline and Service	683.65
Equipment	\$191.00
Seminars/Conferences	\$20,378.24
Travel	\$219,478.82
Organization Dues	\$12,347.03
Contractual Agreement	\$893,990.91
Professional Services	\$54,611.46
Telephone	\$16,326.74
Medical Assistance	\$390.00
Advertising	\$65,343.24
Printing	\$13,645.93
Maintenance Agreements	240,488.54
Audit Fees	\$4,210.70
Data Board Service Agreements	\$3,330.00
Insurance Liability Casualty	\$48,965.79
Equipment Lease	\$13,363.44
Board and Care Clothing	\$86,036.94
Public Assistance	\$18,289.14
Daycare	\$126,500.41
Public Foster Care	\$524,117.40
Residential Placement Costs	\$2,058,499.83
Therapeutic Foster Home Placements	\$1,417,959.11
ESAA Preservation	\$256,467.40
ESAA Reunification	\$65,839.69
Subsidized Adoption	\$282,188.23
PASSS	\$89,809.80
Independent Living	\$37,190.64
Non-Recurring Adoption	\$3,284.00
CSB - Kinship	\$41,441.77
Repairs and Maintenance	\$1,446.25
Data Equipment	\$54,359.73
Software	\$22,687.30
Furniture and Fixtures	\$20,445.16
Taxes Aud/Treas Collection	\$211,884.95
Non-Reimbursement Exp	\$83,984.24
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$14,947,915.66

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Mahoning County Children Services is represented in Mahoning County Juvenile Court by three Assistant Mahoning County Prosecutors: Attorneys Lori Shells Simmons, Kerry Limbian and Kristy Weibling.



2018 LEGAL STATISTICS	
1022	Number of Court Hearings Attended
101	Children Placed in Care Under Juvenile Rule 6
78	Agreements for Voluntary Care
142	Ex Parte Orders
71	Commitments to Custody of a Relative
0	Commitments to Custody of a Non-Relative
244	Temporary Commitments to CSB
2	Permanent Surrenders
18	Permanent Commitments to CSB
3	Orders for Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
303	Court-Ordered Protective Supervision Granted
0	Cases in the Court of Appeals
40	Initial Voluntary Agreement of Care (VAC)
42	All VAC Extensions

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DEPARTMENT

RONA CURTIS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Mahoning County Children Services Continuous Quality Improvement Department is comprised of the Agency's Assistant Director, and a Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist.

The Continuous Quality Improvement Department conducts reviews to analyze the practices and outcomes, ensures rule compliance with Federal, State and Agency requirements. Ongoing reviews and assessments are completed to provide the community with quality services, and to make procedural changes to benefit those served when necessary.

In 2018, the Assistant Director reviewed 6 disposition appeals and addressed 7 formal complaints. The 4 dispositions remained unchanged, but in one case the perpetrators identified were modified to perpetrators unknown.

The Quality Improvement Department provides "Mandated Reporter Trainings" for daycare providers, in Mahoning County. In 2018, there were 8 classes offered to the community. The classes are held at the Mahoning County Children Services. Current schedules can be located on the Agency website.

Mahoning County Children Services is working on our national accreditation renewal, through the Council on Accreditation (COA).



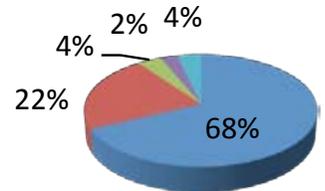
The COA's mission is to partner with human service organizations worldwide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting accreditation standards. The reaccreditation process requires agencies to complete an extensive self-study. This process includes submitting information to COA about the Agency policies and procedures. In August 2019, COA sent three peer review volunteers, with specialized training, to Mahoning County Children Services. The peer reviewers spent several days at the Agency, conducting in-depth interviews with employees, community members, and providers. In addition, the COA volunteers conducted an onsite review of the Agency policies and procedures.

Mahoning County Children Services sends out satisfaction surveys to families, who have received services from the Agency. The CQI Department compiles and reviews the client satisfaction survey responses. It is important that the families served are satisfied with the quality of services provided.

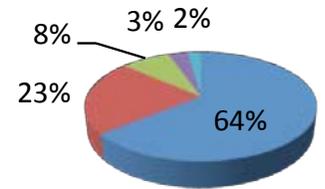
The 2018 Satisfaction survey results:

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

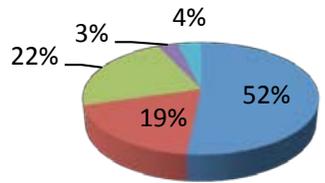
How satisfied are you with the casework services received from our agency?



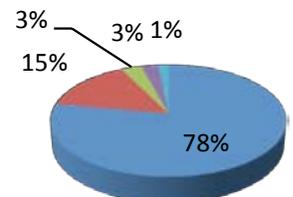
How satisfied are you that your situation improved because of CSB being involved?



How satisfied are you of the caseworker or supervisor's availability to you when needed?



Were you treated with courtesy and respect by your caseworker or other agency staff?



INTAKE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

BRADLEY SMITH, PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

5129
REPORTS RECEIVED

2400
CASES INVESTIGATED

554
INFORMATION/REFERRAL

The Intake Services Department consists of: 1 Program Administrator, 3 Casework Supervisors, 3 Screeners, 17 Caseworkers, 1 Case Aid

2017
TO
2018

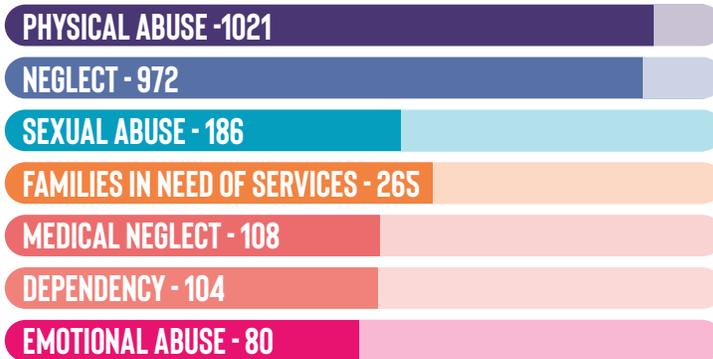
25%
INCREASE

in removals of children from their home

18%
INCREASE

in removals of children from their home with opiates identified as a risk contributor

REPORT TYPE / NUMBER OF CASES



2018 REPORTS BY SOURCE



PLACEMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

ANTHONY PARIS,
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Placement of children occurs along a continuum of care. When a child or sibling group requires out of home placement, our staff utilize the most appropriate, least restrictive, placement settings which is driven by an approved level of care assessment tool which helps us determine a child's needs. Ohio Rule requires that we give serious consideration to barriers to visitation with family and proximity to the child's current school district. The placement of children encompasses several programs: Kinship Care, Public Foster Care, Adoption and Independent Living Services to prepare teens ages 14-18 for emancipation out of foster care.

2018

- 199** total children in placement
- 48** children placed in Agency licensed foster care homes (public foster care)
- 9** adoptions finalized
- 86** teens prepared for emancipation out of foster care and provided support and education
- 109** kinship families were identified for placement of child relatives

2018 FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JULIE RUDOLPH, PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR



Ongoing Services Program Statement

The primary role of Ongoing Services is to assist at-risk families to keep their children safe from abuse and neglect in their own homes. This is best accomplished in partnership with the family through family engagement and protective services provided by the Agency and community. Ongoing services include: engaging the family in the decision-making process, shared case plan development, ongoing assessment of child safety and risk, as well as casework and case management activities which allow professional staff to effectively respond to the changing conditions or needs of the family. Continual contact, assessment, and evaluation of family progress are pivotal to child safety and to family stability.

Family Services casework staff must possess a unique combination of knowledge and skills to assess risk and safety to intervene in situations that place children at risk of abuse and neglect, and to assist families in becoming healthy, nurturing and safe.

Family Services staff are in the challenging position of maintaining children's safety while working to preserve families and to provide permanency. At times, it may be necessary to separate children from their family until the family is able to meet the needs of the children in a safe environment.

It is the belief of the Agency that parents are the most appropriate caretakers for children unless the parents are unable or unwilling to protect their children from danger. We further believe that when children cannot safely remain with their parents, relatives/kin are the best alternative. In cases where placement is needed to prevent further abuse or neglect, it is the goal of the agency to return the child to his/her family, and if reunification is not possible to develop another permanent home for the child as quickly as possible.

POINTS OF INTEREST

In 2018 the composition of the Family Services Department included:

- 1 Program Administrator**
- 4 Unit Supervisors**
- 21 full-time Casework Staff**
- 4 Family Services Aides**

Mahoning County Children Services held custody of 205 children in December of 2018: a 22% increase from five years ago and now serving 1171 individual case plan participants-- a 27% increase from five years ago.

Family Services Department participated in the following specialized programs to preserve families and protect children:

Mahoning County Family Dependency Treatment Court (FDTC):

The goal of the FDTC collaboration is to provide immediate and comprehensive treatment to the substance-abusing parent so the family can remain intact or achieve reunification.

Succeed Parent Program: Succeed is a program designed for primary parents who have been successful in working with their Children Services agency to lead support groups for other primary parents who are currently going through a case plan.

Mahoning County Crossover Youth:

Mahoning County Children Services and Mahoning County Juvenile Court have collaborated since 2012 to implement the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM). The program is designed to address the unique issues presented by children and youth who are known to both the Child Welfare System and Juvenile Justice System. With goals of reducing the number of youth placed in out-of-home care, a reduction in the use of congregate care, a reduction in the disproportionate representation of children of color, and a reduction in the number of youth becoming dually-adjudicated.

**IF YOU SUSPECT
CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

**REPORT IT!
330.941.8888**

**24 HOURS
7 DAYS A WEEK**

OUR COMMUNITY

JENNIFER T. KOLLAR,
PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

PARTNERED with Mahoning County Juvenile Court and Mahoning County Mental Health & Recovery Board for a joint Press Conference focusing on state-wide Ohio Issue 1, and local Issue 2 in October.

LAUNCHED a new state-of-the art website with focus on Child Protective Programs and Services in August

FORMED "SUCCEED" A NEW SUPPORT GROUP FOR parents who have a current or past case involvement with Mahoning County Children Services. The support group aims to provide members with hope, support, and empowerment.

PROVIDED special presentations focusing on the great need to recruit new foster homes to various civic, social organizations and clubs

INVITED Columbus area law enforcement officers with special expertise in Human Trafficking presented a series of "Human Trafficking" Trainings for Child Welfare Professionals in April.

HEIGHTENED AWARENESS with a multi-media advertising campaign "Open Your Heart & Home," via outdoor billboard, TV, radio, cinema, social media to recruit new foster and adoptive homes.

REINFORCED PUBLIC AWARENESS of National Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention month in April via the 13th Annual Pinwheels for Prevention community luncheon and a "Pinwheel Garden Exhibit" on display in Boardman Park. Pinwheels represent individuals who advocated on behalf of a child.



HOSTED a Foster/Adoptive *Informational Community Open House* event to recruit new foster/adoptive parents in February to help address the critical shortage of Agency licensed foster homes needed in Mahoning County.

CELEBRATED the high school graduations at a special Graduation Party Event held for Agency-involved youth.

RECOGNIZED National Adoption Month with two adoption finalizations. This year's theme, "The Many Faces of Adoption," raised awareness of foster care adoption and Agency Waiting Children seeking an adoptive families at our annual *Adoption Celebration* event, co-hosted with Judge Robert Rusu, Jr., Mahoning County Probate Court.

SPONSORED a "Family Night Out" Event for all Mahoning County Children Services foster, adoptive and kinship families at the Skate Zone.

AWARDED the "2018 Community Spotlight Award" to Master Sgt. Douglas Moon and the East High School Junior Army ROTC students for their 10 years of continued support of demonstrating service/commitment to Mahoning County children.

IMPLEMENTED A NEW BIRTHDAY GIFT BAG PROGRAM Spearheaded by Wanda Marland, a community child advocate, the program aims to brighten birthdays for children in foster and kinship care.

DELIVERED over 200 Easter Baskets donated by individuals, organizations and service clubs.

FULFILLED over 500 Mahoning County children's Christmas wishes via the Agency's Annual Christmas Gifts for Kids Campaign.

PARTICIPATED in over 10 community events providing information on Agency programs and services.

RAN, SWAM AND WALKED, 61 staff participants; 6th Place Overall Finish; Winner of the Tug-o-War Event; named "Most Spirited Team"

RAISED FUNDS AND FUN at the Agency's *Signature* event—Fifth Annual *Above the Rim Basketball*. The Youngstown Fire Department clinched the 2018 win against the Mahoning County Sheriff's Department.



Mahoning County
Children Services



222 West Federal Street, 4th Floor
Youngstown, Ohio 44503

330.941.8888 • MAHONINGKIDS.COM

