



2021

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Mahoning County
Children Services

Protecting Children. Preserving Families.

2021

EXECUTIVE STAFF, BOARD, ADVISORY & 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

Fiscal Department
Denise Barnes-Carper,
Fiscal Officer

*Human Resources
Department*
Susan Babinec, Manager

*Information Technology
Department*
Joshua Cayson, Manager

*Public Information
Department*
Jennifer T. Kollar, Public
Information Officer

*Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Department*
Nancy Walker-McCain,
M.Ed, M.B.A., Diversity, Equity
and Inclusion Officer

2021 Mahoning County Children Services Board

Dr. Joseph Mosca
Dr. Benjamin McGee
Marilyn Montes
Daniel Wakefield
Loisjean Haynes-Paige
Kriss Wolford
Rev. Lewis Macklin
Samuel Moffie

Mahoning County Commissioners

David C. Ditzler
Carol Rimedio Righetti
Anthony Traficanti

2021 Mahoning County Children Services Advisory Committee

DJ Depp
Denise Dick
Megan Ellashek
Katrina Harris
Calvin Jones
Brigid Kennedy
Michele Kuhar
Tracy Lamb
David J. Magura, Jr.
Andrea L. Mahone
Lisa Manente
Pete Milliken
Mary Alice Noble
Officer Shawnacie Ott
Dr. Matthew J. Paylo
Johanna Slivinske
Mary Jo Truman
Philip Volpe-Monrean
Yvonne Wilson

OUR MISSION

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

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.

STAFF COMPOSITION

SUSAN BABINEC,
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

At the conclusion of 2021, Mahoning County Children Services employed 116 employees to serve and support the services of children and families in Mahoning County.

5 Administrative Staff

17 Management/Supervisors

64 Caseworkers

1 Family Peer Mentor

6 Social Service Unit Aides

23 Support Staff

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



Mahoning County
Children Services

Mahoning County Children Services is Accredited by the Council on Accreditation



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

RANDALL B. MUTH, J.D.

Dear Community Members:

Year Twenty-Two-One (2021) has been a year of “Return, Recovery and Renewal.” There has been a rush to return to and attain some semblance of normalcy, recovery and renewing the spirit of our Mission in a post-pandemic world. The pandemic affected virtually every aspect of life. It affected every aspect of our Agency. Its lingering effects remained well into 2021 as the Agency continued to operate amid many unknowns and uncertainties.

In June 2021, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine lifted the “State of Emergency Order” that was put in place in March 2020. By mid-summer 2021, the Agency fully rescinded its own “Community Mitigation Pandemic Plan” and thus marked the beginning of the Agency’s “Return, Recovery and Renewal” period.

Even in early in 2021, in the aftermath of the 2020 pandemic, that semblance of normality and recovery was kept at bay as different COVID-19 variant strains affected communities. However, the Agency never skipped a beat. During the onset of the pandemic, the Agency quickly developed the infrastructure to support a remote/hybrid work abilities which enabled our staff to work from home, utilized technology such as Video Conferencing and Virtual Meetings with staff as well as the many children and families on our caseloads when infection rates were high in 2021. All during this time, the Agency was still able to maintain and comply with state and federal child welfare mandates.

All throughout 2021, Mahoning County Children Services continued to lead the way remaining steadfast in implementing its overarching Mission “to protect children and preserve families. The Agency leadership team, staff and foster families remained resilient, nimble and com-



passionate. These are three traits often inherent within and among public child welfare agencies. Just as the pandemic was unpredictable and ever-changing so too is the child welfare system. These traits greatly enabled our ENTIRE team to navigate and adapt to the unpredictability and unknown conditions we faced in a post-pandemic environment.

In 2021, the Agency received 4,663 reports and of those reports 1,128 led to investigations. Our Family Services Department Casework staff successfully attained an over 95 percentage rating for the completion of mandated face-to face visits and contacts with parents and children on their caseload.

We continued to provide Mandated Reporter Trainings to community groups, hire new caseworkers and fill other positions that were vacated during and after the pandemic, recruit, train and license new foster caregivers, match and provide permanency and ‘forever’ homes for 15 children. We continued expanding our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts which we started in 2020. We also continued are on-going partnerships

with many individuals, organizations and businesses within our community to help us enhance and brighten the lives of the children we serve throughout the year providing Christmas gifts, Easter Baskets, Birthday Bags and Back to School supplies.

No matter what the future holds, this Agency stands ready.

I firmly believe that child protection truly takes a community. So, as we recover and adjust to and renew life after the pandemic, I encourage you to reflect and renew ways on how you can help us 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

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.

INTAKE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

BRADLEY SMITH,
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

4663
REPORTS RECEIVED

1128
CASES INVESTIGATED

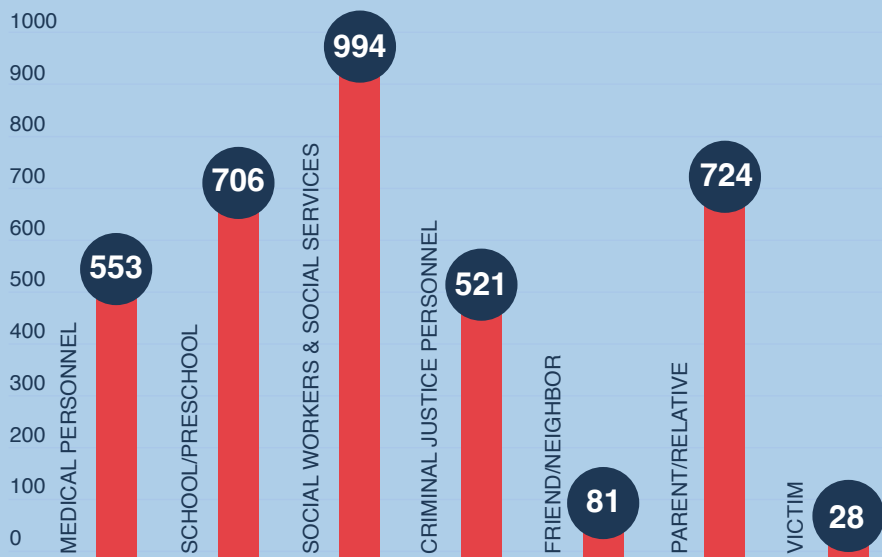
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INFORMATION/REFERRAL

The Intake Services Department consists of: 1 Program Administrator, 3 Casework Supervisors, 1 Screening Supervisor, 3 Screeners, 1 Training Officer/Start Supervisor, 1 Start Caseworker, 14 Caseworkers, 1 Case Aid, 1 Family Peer Mentor

REPORT TYPE / NUMBER OF CASES

Physical Abuse	488
Neglect	487
Sexual Abuse	132
Families in Need of Services	237
Medical Neglect	54
Dependency	59
Emotional Maltreatment	66

2021 REPORTS BY SOURCE



IF YOU SUSPECT
CHILD ABUSE OR
NEGLECT

REPORT IT!
330.941.8888

24 hours
7 days a week



Child Abuse Warning Signs

Do You
KNOW The
Signs??



PLACEMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

ANTHONY PARIS,
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

The Resource Services Department (RSD) includes a Program Administrator, 3 Unit Supervisors, 18 casework staff, and 2 transportation aides. The Department encompasses our Foster Care, Adoption, Kinship, and Independent Living Programs. The four programs are housed within three units. One of the primary responsibilities of the RSD is to ensure there is an adequate number of placement resources available to provide a safe, stable environment for children entering foster care. During calendar year 2021, a total of 149 children entered foster care. Also, a total of 308 placements were made. This includes the initial placement, as well as all placement moves for each child who entered foster care during the year.

Mahoning County Children Services uses 4 primary resources for placement of children:

1. Kinship Care
2. Public Foster Care
3. Private Foster Care
4. Residential Treatment Centers

FOSTER CARE:

Private Foster Care made up 35% of the total number of placements. By comparison, 23% of total placements were made in MCCA licensed foster homes. In addition, Kinship Care accounted for 22% and Residential Treatment Centers, 21% respectively.

ADOPTION SERVICES:

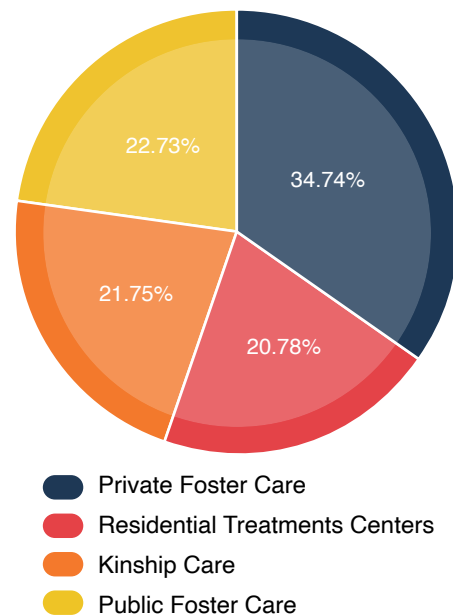
The Adoption Unit was hard at work during the year. Twenty-one children with a permanent custody legal status were in placement on January 1, 2021. The Agency received permanent custody of 41 more children during calendar year 2021. Also, 15 adoptions were finalized during the same period. When permanent custody is court ordered, the Agency is also granted the authority to secure an adoption for that child. The Agency is legally responsible to recruit adoptive families for every child with a permanent custody status with the overall goal of achieving permanency for that child.

When a child or sibling group is matched with an identified adoptive family, an adoptive placement agreement is signed. The adoption assessor/worker assigned, monitors the adoptive

placement until Probate Court approves finalization of a legal adoption. However, adoption is not always secured for children in permanent custody. Sometimes family search & engagement efforts allow for children to be placed with a kinship family who is unable to adopt. The Agency may choose to ask that Juvenile Court approve placement and award legal custody to the kinship caregiver(s). While this is rare, it is another form of permanency for children. MCCA continues to provide adoption services to 46 children as of December 31, 2021.

KINSHIP SERVICES:

The Kinship Program has grown each year since calendar year 2016 when it was launched. Our Kinship Workers' (KWs) diligent efforts, allowed for 67 placements to be made with kinship families. This is just one part of the MCCA Kinship Program. The KWs are required to complete a *Needs Assessment* tool during the *Home Study* process. The *Needs Assessment* provides information about a kinship family's support system, access to services and supports, and their financial status. The *Home Study* and *Needs Assessment* both drive placement decisions and impact permanency for children. MCCA provides various types of supports to kinship families utilizing "Kinship Caregiver Program" (KCP) funding which continued in 2021. The supports provided through the KCP often allow kin to care for a child or sibling group in their home. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed Senate Bill 310 on December 20, 2020. As a result, the Kinship Support Program (KSP) was created. The KSP allows Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) to pay eligible Kinship Caregivers \$10.20 per day for each child they provide care for in their home. This is the first time Kinship Caregivers have EVER received a per diem in the State of Ohio. The first payments were issued in April. The KSP promotes the use of kinship care and reduces dependency on the use of other forms of placement. Without KCP and KSP funding, children who are currently in Kinship Care would likely have been placed in a more restrictive placement setting, such as private foster care. Kinship care allows children to stay connected to their family. It can also allow children to maintain their sense of identity because family traditions, values and norms are often maintained. Kinship caregivers may be blood relatives including grandparents, aunts, uncles, or adult siblings. In addition, a Kinship Caregiver may also be a stepparent or non-relatives known to the parent(s), or child.



INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES:

MCCA has two workers who provide Independent Living Services (ILS) to teens starting at age 14, up to age 17 years in the care and custody of MCCA. The ILS Program provides many supports including life skills training, and various educational, and vocational supports. Youth served by the program receive supports geared to prepare them for successful transition to adulthood.

Public Children Services Agencies like Mahoning County Children Services, are also required to provide IL Services to young adults, age 18 to 21 years who have emancipated and exited foster care. However, youth participation is voluntary after exiting foster care. Young adults participating in the IL Program also receive supports to help them achieve their educational and vocational goals. However, they are also get assistance from the Agency to help them locate appropriate housing and find employment. The Agency can use available IL funding to help with payment of the initial security deposit and rent. In addition, the IL Workers can coordinate the purchase of some furniture and appliance items needed for setup. Youth who exit or emancipate out of Foster care, are referred to the "Bridges Program. The Bridges Program offers ongoing housing assistance and other forms of case management to these youth. Studies indicate that foster care alumni are at a much higher risk of unemployment, homelessness, and incarceration. Enhanced access to IL funding, and the implementation of the Bridges program in recent years, has had a positive impact on these problems. Providing the supports noted, is crucial to meeting the overall goal of successful transition to adulthood.

FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JULIE RUDOLPH,
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

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.

Family Services Department 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 with the family through partnership and protective services provided by the Agency and community. Services provided to families in this Department 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 ensure their children's safety.

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 harm to children, it is the goal of the Agency to return the child to their parents. If reunification is not possible the Agency is committed to identifying a permanent home for the child as quickly as possible.

Points of Interest:

In 2021 the composition of the Family Services Department included:

1 Program Administrator

4 Unit Supervisors

20 Full-Time Caseworker Staff

3 Family Service Aides

8.5 Cases Per Worker

10 Approx. Number of Children in Agency Custody Per Worker

The Family Services Department (FSD) experienced reorganization in 2021 with one new program and one Unit now housed under its umbrella.

The Ohio START (Sobriety Treatment and Reducing Trauma) Project was implemented in 2020, in 2021 it was relocated from the Agency's Intake Department to the Family Services Department. The change was made with the intention to identify and engage appropriate families earlier in their assessment by the Agency. Ohio START emphasizes a wraparound approach for at-risk parents. The program is designed to lead to better outcomes for children and families impacted by opiates and other drugs.

In addition, the Supervised Visitation Unit was incorporated into the Family Services Department.

When a child is placed in foster or kinship care, the child's biological parents retain parental rights to visit with their child(ren). If there are safety concerns with a visiting parent, the visits are supervised by Agency Visitation Staff. In addition to ensuring safety, supervised visits provide an opportunity for child welfare professionals to observe and document parent-child interaction.

FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

In 2021, The Family Services Department focused on the implementation of the *Multi-System Youth Program*

This program allows parents to retain custody while their children receive intensive mental health care. The Agency continued to partner with Mahoning County Juvenile Court and the Crossover Youth Program intended to ensure that children involved in both Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems receive the intensive case management needed to achieve positive outcomes.



Family Services Caseworkers continued to seek and identify appropriate Kinship/Family Caregivers for children removed from their biological homes due to abuse or neglect. Kinship caregivers include a child's relatives (kin) or other individuals who have had an historical relationship and/or connection with the child. The casework staff had to become proficient at effectively assessing identified kin to ensure child safety. Caseworkers have to assess the caregiver's child welfare and criminal history, check the national sex offender database and review criminal history at the time of placement. Also, the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services rolled out OhioKAN a support and referral network for kin and adoptive families which provided caseworkers with another community resource to assist kin. Both foster and kin caregivers were also afforded an increased voice and role in child protection by enhancing the agency's processes regarding a caregiver's right to be heard at Mahoning County Juvenile Court.

The Family Services Department was again in compliance with Federal mandates for Fiscal Year of 2020-2021. The FSD casework staff successfully attained an over 95 percentage rating for the completion of mandated face-to-face visits and contacts with parents and children on their caseload.

The Department received 102 case transfers in 2021 from the Intake Department. Cases that are investigated and not closed and may need additional case management and time are then transferred to the Family Services Department. FSD caseworkers work to help families who need more intensive case management support to help them stabilize. Upon case transfer the assigned caseworker is required to hold a Family Team Meeting, the purpose of which is to develop the case plan for the family to follow.

Caseworkers continued to learn from the lessons of the pandemic and still reported an increase in participation in Team Meetings of all types, thanks to the expanded familiarity with technology among families and the professionals working with them.

The Family Services Department began a partnership with the Educational Service Center of Eastern Ohio to implement the provisions of the *Every Child Succeeds Act* relevant to children in agency custody-the intent of this initiative is to ensure that the education of children is not disrupted due to homelessness or placement in Agency custody.

FINANCIAL REPORT

DENISE BARNES-CARPER,
FISCAL OFFICER

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2021

2021 Receipts

Levy	
52%	\$10,004,625.34
Federal	
27%	\$5,170,553.15
State	
21%	\$4,152,100.44
All Other	
0%	\$69,376.29
Total \$19,396,655.22	

2021 RECEIPTS

Real Estate Taxes	\$9,685,208.62
Manufactured Home Taxes	\$9,715.44
Personal Property Taxes	\$163.95
Rollback Credit	\$308,130.47
Homestead Credit	\$1,406.86
Title IV-B - Child Welfare Subsidy	\$138,757.71
Title IV-B - ESAA	\$123,596.04
Federal Chaffee	\$195,235.59
Title IV-E	\$2,343,177.43
U.S. Treasury	\$33,673.00
Foster Care Maintenance	\$2,336,113.38
State Child Protective Allocation	\$2,309,345.08
State Reimbursements	\$223,435.15
Foster Parent Recruitment	\$100,676.56
Multi-System Youth	\$387,486.96
ODNR - State	\$678.70
Children Services Best Practice	\$74,942.30
Ohio Start	\$154,919.38
Reimbursements	\$900,616.31
Bureau of Support	\$40,853.59
BWC True Up Charges	\$28,522.70
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$19,396,655.22

2021 EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$5,851,310.10
PERS	\$1,340,883.14
Medicare	\$86,021.28
BWC Premium Expense	\$58,603.92
Unemployment	\$862.53
Hospitalization	\$1,880,378.82
Hospitalization Opt-Out	\$9,185.84
Life Insurance	\$10,462.74
Tuition Reimbursement	\$56,034.76
BWC Claims Expense	(\$38.79)
Food Supplies	\$7,584.96
Medical Supplies	\$492.50
Postage	\$13,682.43
Materials and Supplies	\$5,795.73
Office Supplies	\$23,022.74
Gasoline	\$821.73
Vehicle Parts	\$1,198.67
Seminars/Conferences/Training	\$7,869.13
Travel	\$173,812.82
Organization Dues	\$11,985.51
Contractual Agreement	\$745,738.48
Professional Services	\$31,400.77
Telephone	\$13,764.46
Medical Assistance	\$12,038.61
Advertising	\$10,908.34
Printing	\$2,378.00
Subscriptions	\$743.00
Rent	\$24,714.00
Maintenance Agreement	\$192,721.30
Audit Fees	\$4,920.00
Printer/Copier Maint Agrmt	\$5,899.31
Board Care & Clothing	\$47,509.86
Public Assistance	\$5,293.69
Daycare	\$168,241.10
Public Foster Care	\$490,335.32
ESAA Preservation	\$94,093.09
ESAA Reunification	\$37,674.07
Residential Placements	\$2,278,625.74
Subsidized Adoption	\$234,246.49
PASSS	\$87,740.31
Independent Living	\$193,080.84
Youth Advisory Board	\$3,309.42
Therapeutic Foster Care	\$3,206,469.26
Nonrecurring Adoption	\$5,150.00
Kinship	\$165,131.32
Repairs and Maintenance	\$2,451.15
Recruitment	\$84,657.40
Start Funds	\$28,135.30
Equipment	\$10,348.60
Data Equipment	\$38,741.92
Software	\$3,698.25
Furniture and Fixtures	\$72,751.23
Taxes Aud/Treas Collection Fees	\$160,186.46
Reimbursement Expense	\$35,578.25
County Cost Allocation	\$38,670.28
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$18,077,316.18

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DEPARTMENT

RONA CURTIS,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



The Quality Assurance Department is comprised of the Agency's Assistant Director (Quality Assurance Supervisor) and 2 Continuous Quality Improvement Specialists.

Mahoning County Children Services provides **Satisfaction Surveys** to families, who have received services from the Agency. The Agency's Quality Assurance 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 Quality Assurance 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. Quality Assurance also reviews compliance with State and Federal rules and regulations as it relates primary permanency planning.

IN 2021:

4 formal complaints were filed

5 formal disposition appeals were filed and processed

The Quality Assurance Department provides "Mandated Reporter Trainings" for daycare providers, in Mahoning County. Three full day virtual trainings were held in addition to an onsite training presentation. Note: Current training schedules can be accessed via the Agency website (www.mahoningkids.com)

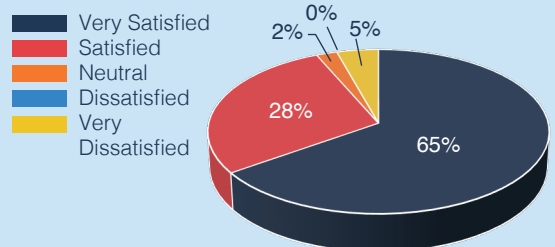
Mahoning County Children Services continues its national accreditation status, through the Council on Accreditation (COA). The COA's mission is to partner with human service organizations worldwide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting accreditation standards.



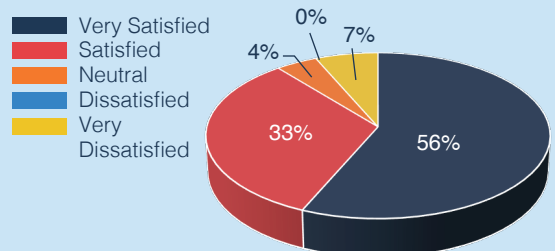
The Agency's accreditation is valid through August 31, 2023.

The 2021 Satisfaction survey results:

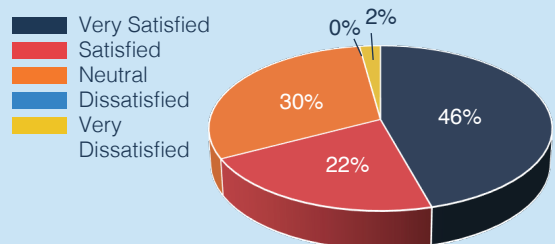
How satisfied are you with the casework services received from our agency?



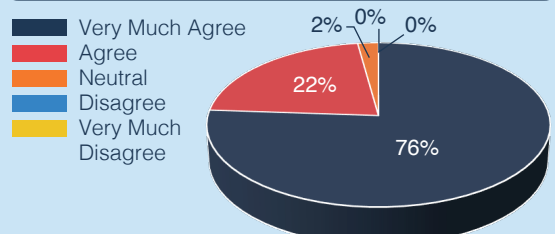
How satisfied are you that your situation improved because of CSB being involved?



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?



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION DEPARTMENT

NANCY WALKER-MCCAIN
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
OFFICER

It has been a pleasure to serve as Mahoning County Children Services (MCCS) FIRST Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer. One of the first priorities during this tenure was to take the “pulse of the agency.” It was important to garner the opinions and needs of the staff thorough an Agency-wide survey.

The outcome of the survey revealed that MCCS will:

Commit and ensure the successful implementation of the Agency's Diversity Plan is firmly rooted in the ability to document, inventory, and assess current diversity initiatives, policies, and procedures.

Seek ways to retain underrepresented staff where appropriate and increase inclusion strategies for All MCCS Employees.

Examine workforce demographics and seek ways to ensure that staff composition is reflective of the FAMILIES and Population serviced by MCCS.

Implement Surveys and Evaluations that will engage Stakeholders to share successes and opportunities for improvement as it relates to diversity.



Continued DEI efforts are being made, but the following have this year:

- Developed a Diversity Plan with initiatives, policies, and procedures.
- The Diversity Officer earned DEI Certification from University of South Florida, MUMA Business College, as well as State of Ohio Certified as Pre-Disciplinary Hearing Officer, and Administrative Investigator
- Created an Agency Hospitality Committee that focuses on the Inclusion of all Staff Persons (past and current) and their immediate families. Staff donations were collected and “treasures of love” sent to staff persons for various occasions such as: bereavement, illness, marriage, and/or maternity leave.
- The DEI Officer actively participates in employment interviews and provides input upon the selection of candidates to be interviewed and their selection.
- Created two Diversity Curriculums: “Introduction to Diversity, Equity” and “Inclusion and LGBTQIA+”. Both were presented for Agency-wide staff training
- Created the City/Countywide *Initiative for Cultural Competency* which includes the Mayor of Youngstown, State Representative Carano, Mahoning County Departmental Heads; Job & Family Services (JFS), Board of Development Disabilities, Mental Health, and Mahoning County Juvenile Court.
- Represented the Agency within the community with the following organizations: Women of League Voters, The Mahoning County Health Department on Minority Infant Mortality, Mahoning County Juvenile Court Beyond the Numbers, and Environmental Collaborative of Mahoning County, Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCASO) facilitator on Race, Equity & Inclusion Learning Series.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Mahoning County Children Services is represented in Mahoning County Juvenile Court by 4 Assistant Mahoning County Prosecutors: Attorneys Lori Shells Simmons, Kristie Weibling, Tia Jackson and Ebenezer Appiagyei.



2021 LEGAL STATISTICS

996	Number of Court Hearings Attended
51	Children Placed in Care Under Juvenile Rule 6
36	Agreements for Voluntary Care
83	Ex Parte Orders
54	Commitments to Custody of a Relative
5	Commitments to Custody of a Non-Relative
149	Temporary Commitments to CSB
4	Permanent Surrenders
35	Permanent Commitments to CSB
5	Orders for Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
71	Court-Ordered Protective Supervision Granted
0	Cases in the Court of Appeals
49	Initial Voluntary Agreement of Care (VAC)
36	All VAC Extensions

PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

JENNIFER T. KOLLAR,
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

2021 AGENCY HEADLINES

The Public Information Department is comprised of one staff person who serves as the Public Information Officer. The Department is responsible for promoting the Agency's Mission and work to enhance public understanding of Agency programs and services. This is accomplished in part via community and media outreach, comprehensive multi-media marketing and advertising campaigns. The Department also manages special events, recruitment of volunteers for Agency Committees as well as managing philanthropic/fundraising and donation development.

Children Services Birthday Bag Program Founder and Donor Wanda Marland Named 2021 Community Spotlight Award Recipient



Wanda's Birthday Bag Program ensures that every child in foster and kinship care receives a birthday bag that includes age appropriate toys, clothing and other items.

PRIDE IN THE VALLEY



Mahoning County Children Services participated at the 2021 Pride Event held on Court House Square in Warren.

NATIONAL ADOPTION CELEBRATION EVENT

November marks **National Adoption Awareness Month**. Each year courts, child welfare agencies and community partners join together on one day to do something AMAZING—create forever families! In support of the month, together, Mahoning County Probate Court and Mahoning County Children Services are co-host an Annual Adoption Day Celebration Event. At this year's Celebration Event, a Sibling Group of 4 sisters found their "Forever Home!"



Easter Baskets Donations Bring Joy to Many Children

BOARDMAN HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE 2 NAMED "2021 GROUP COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT AWARD RECIPIENT"

Boardman High School Jazz Ensemble 2 has entertained audiences at the "Annual Pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention Community Event" nine out of the 14 years consecutive years. Mr. Tom Ruggieri, Band Director, works hours before the event to set up the equipment and prepare for the students' arrival. The student-musicians play 3 to 4 times thought-out the event entertaining all those in attendance.

CANFIELD FAIR

The 2020 Fair was cancelled but 2021 was back in full swing for Fair Goers. Mahoning County Children Services' Booth featured **Captain America** who made a special guest appearance for Youth Day at the Fair.



PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

JENNIFER T. KOLLAR,
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

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GIFTS FOR KIDS HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN

Mahoning County Children Services Annual **Gifts for Kids Holiday Campaign** ensures that all children the Agency serves receive gifts for the Christmas Holiday. The Agency has been able to make the holidays brighter and joyous for hundreds of Mahoning County Children thanks to the generous spirit of individual community donors, organizations, and businesses. The Christmas Store is stocked with NEW toys, bikes, coats, clothing, and an amazing variety of other items for children ages infant to teens 18 years of age and EVERY age in between. Gifts collected are given to children who have an open case or Agency involvement. Often, the gifts the Agency provides for children on are the **ONLY** gifts the children receive for the Holidays.



PINWHEELS FOR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION



The Pinwheel Community Garden is planted in communities across the nation. In Mahoning County, Mahoning County Children Services and The Child Advocacy Center at Akron Children's Hospital, Boardman, plant the Pinwheel Garden. The Pinwheel is a national symbol for child abuse and neglect. Each pinwheel

planted represents an individual who advocated on behalf of an abused or neglected child in their community. After a year-long hiatus due to COVID -19 Stay at Home Order in April 2020, the Pinwheel Garden was planted again in 2021.

VIRTUAL EVENTS STILL IN PLACE

Even with COVID-19 pandemic slowly releasing its grip, the Agency continued to celebrate and support important National Events: including the launch of a month-long Television Child Abuse Prevention Campaign during Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. While National Adoption Month in November returned to a smaller in-person celebration.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE:

The Agency's Public Information Department implemented comprehensive multi-media campaigns utilizing television spots, public service announcements, print ads, articles, and billboards to help increase awareness on how the community can help prevent child abuse and neglect by recognizing what it is, how to report child abuse and other ways of support the community can help keep children and families safe.

IN MEMORY OF LINDSEY VILLANUEVA:

A GREAT FRIEND AND CHAMPION OF MAHONING COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES



Mahoning County Children Services has lost a GREAT Friend and Champion for Children with the untimely passing of Lindsey Villanueva. Many may not know but Lindsey was a GREAT Friend and Donor to our Agency. Lindsey spearheaded ---every year for the last 4 years--- the purchase of hundreds and hundreds of NEW Winter Coats for kids of all ages/genders/sizes (Toddlers to Teens and every age in between!) All coats were donated to our Agency's Annual Gifts for Kids Holiday Campaign. Because of Lindsey's TREMENDOUS Donation, many, many children on our caseloads were kept warm all Winter Long!! Quietly and behind the scenes, the project started out slowly... however, Lindsey quickly gathered quite a following of friends and other community donors who contributed new coats and money for Lindsey to purchase coats and donated them to us every year. In fact, her donation is the BIGGEST NEW coat donation we have EVER received! Lindsey was a Blessing and a TRUE Champion for Children! ❤️❤️

Also, up until Lindsey's untimely passing, she was in the process of fundraising and purchasing coats. The family's home was filled with boxes of coats shipped to the family home awaiting delivery to Children Services.

A special public Tribute and Acknowledgement in Memory of Lindsey Villanueva's service and accomplishments as a cherished Donor and Friend to the Agency was made at the Mahoning County Children Services Board Meeting in January 2022.



Mahoning County
Children Services



Mahoning County Children Services is Accredited by the Council on Accreditation

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