



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



**COUNTY: BUTLER**

**MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:**

The mission of the Family & Children First Council is to serve as a catalyst for public and private partners to achieve the vision of improved well-being for families and children in Butler County. Beyond the mandated responsibilities of the FCFC, the local focus is to increase protective factors, decrease risk factors, prevent and/or intervene in problem behaviors with a coordinated continuum of care, and to promote developmental assets among all youth. Butler County embraces data-informed decision-making, incorporates evidence-based practices when needed and appropriate, and uses collaboration as the primary strategy for conducting the core business of the public agencies/systems.

**OPERATING STRUCTURE:**

Butler County FCFC operates within the design of its strategic plan. The goals of the strategic plan are to: (1) Mobilize and coordinate public and private partners to identify and address needs of all children and families; (2) Collect, analyze, and share data in order to inform decision-making and improve outcomes for families and children; and (3) Influence community practice through training, planning, and evaluation. Each of these goals has an associated workgroup. Butler County FCFC has 32 voting members and approximately 40 other community members that serve on these workgroups. The Early Childhood Coordinating Committee engages another 25 community members/families, and multiple community partners are organized to support kinship caregivers, to meet basic needs, and to promote developmental assets countywide. The FCFC Committee Structure: Administrative Council/ Executive Committee/ Audit Committee/ Resource Management Committee/ Early Childhood Coordinating Committee/ Strategic Goal Workgroups. The FCFC Executive Director serves as an ex-officio member of all committees.

**LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:** strategies and outcomes  
The Strategic Goal One Workgroup addresses ongoing planning on behalf of the FCFC. In FY09 the focus of their efforts has been to improve communication with elected officials in order for families to move from surviving to thriving in tough economic times. The Council published a "Call to Action" and held a special meeting with elected officials in January 2009. As the budget progressed through the legislature, FCFC members were informed of developments and took advantage of multiple opportunities to advocate on behalf of families and children.
  - **Service Coordination:** strategies and outcomes  
Wraparound is the service coordination mechanism for Butler County. Wraparound staff are employees of the Butler County Educational Service Center under the administration of FCFC. Referrals are triaged for urgency and severity of needs with one of three possible scenarios occurring: (1) consultation with the family and referral to community based services; (2) assignment to a Wraparound facilitator for service coordination; or (3) review by a multi-system clinical committee for development of a 30 day service plan to stabilize child and family prior to assignment to Wraparound. Increased capacity for parents to care for youth with significant behavioral health issues has been a consistent outcome of Wraparound, with a documented savings in out of home placement costs.
- Family Empowerment:** strategies and outcomes  
Butler County FCFC seeks to build and sustain the competency and capability of communities to nurture the development of the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual assets of their families and children. The core value of this work is family empowerment. Parent mentors in Help Me Grow, parent advocates as part of Wraparound, and family nights as part of community forums are all examples of family empowerment efforts. In FY09 a Parent Network was created and provides an infrastructure for families of children with behavioral health needs and disabilities

to organize and advocate, to seek socialization opportunities for their children, to provide support to one another, and to develop strategies to influence the political landscape.

- **Early Childhood System of Care:** strategies and outcomes  
Butler County FCFC provides program oversight for the implementation of Help Me Grow through the Educational Service Center. In FY09, Help Me Grow met the Part C compliance measures (target numbers, timely receipt of services, 45 day timelines, and transition). Within the organizational structure of the Butler County Educational Service Center, Help Me Grow was integrated into the “front of the continuum of care” in an effort to build a seamless, united system of early childhood care and education, beginning with Help Me Grow and moving through Head Start, the Early Learning Initiative, the Therapeutic Interagency Preschool program, and the public school special education and regular preschool programs implemented by the ESC.

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

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:** strategies and outcomes  
FCFC assumed administrative responsibility for local OCTF planning, implementation, and funding in FY09. To reduce child abuse and neglect, Butler County is implementing Incredible Years in Head Start classrooms, private day cares, and public preschools and kindergarten, is hosting community based family nights in partnerships with schools, community agencies, and churches to develop the assets of youth, and is promoting social marketing campaigns with messages to “Never Shake a Baby” and “Not a Single Drop.”

**OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES:** strategies and outcomes

1. Behavioral Health-Juvenile Justice Grant: Trauma-Focused CBT for serious delinquent youth was implemented in the community and in the Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. A total of 26 youth received TF-CBT with 62% successfully completing treatment. Commitments to ODYS decreased in FY09, one of the goals of the initiative, and no new offenses were committed by project youth following treatment.
2. Butler County continued integrating local databases on a GIS platform to monitor out of home placements, analyze data within the environmental context, determine allocation of critical resources, and guide program and policy development. Key indicators were selected for monthly monitoring and reporting.

**FUNDING:**

The projected FY10 FCFC budget is \$3,431,701. Local pooled funds provides for the administrative costs of the Butler County FCFC. Other pooled funds supports MST and Wraparound services.

**STAFFING:**

Butler County FCFC has two administrative staff and 10 Wraparound program staff.

**CHALLENGES:**

Decreasing financial resources corresponding with increasing family needs for services and supports are presenting tremendous challenges. Flexible state and federal funding stimulates local partnerships and maximized resources.

**FUTURE PLANS:**

Continue to build collaborative relationships, measure and report the impact of efforts on child well-being, and increase the diversity of community participation in FCFC work with particular focus on parents, schools, and faith organizations.

**Contact Information:**

**Jolynn Hurwitz, Executive Director**  
**Family & Children First Council**  
**1910 Fairgrove Ave. Suite B**  
**Hamilton, OH 45011**

**Phone 513-887-5506**  
**Fax 513-887-3709**  
**email [hurwitzj@bcesc.org](mailto:hurwitzj@bcesc.org)**