



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



COUNTY: GREENE

MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:

The vision of the Greene County Family & Children First Council is that Greene County will be a place where residents work together, play together, support one another and take responsibility for the healthy development of their families and their communities. The Council's mission is to create and sustain an efficient, effective, and responsive countywide system to provide human, social, health and educational services to families and children.

OPERATING STRUCTURE:

The Council has over 30 members, including four Family Representatives. The Council includes all of the organizations mandated by the Ohio Revised Code and numerous non-mandated members. The full Council meets five times a year. There are four Council Committees (Steering, Audit/Finance, Parent Involvement, and the Early Childhood). The Greene County Board of Commissioners serves as the Council's Administrative Agent.

LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:** strategies and outcomes
In SFY2007, the Council submitted its first HB289 Plan. Two priorities were identified: increasing school readiness and decreasing youth substance abuse. The Council has selected measurable indicators for each of these priorities and is implementing a number of strategies to address them. One of the strategies being used to increase school readiness is to encourage organizations providing home visiting services to adopt the Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting curriculum. One of the strategies being used to decrease middle school substance abuse is to expand the Strengthening Families (SF) Program. Both of these programs are well researched and evidence-based. Data collected during SFY2009 indicates that both programs are having the desired impact in strengthening parenting practices and improving family functioning.
- **Service Coordination:** strategies and outcomes
Service Coordination occurs on two-levels. On the individual family level, youth and family serving organizations work together to ensure there is good coordination when a family is receiving services from multiple systems. Cluster/Diversion meetings occur on a regular basis with the goal of stabilizing the family's situation so that the risk of an out-of-home youth placement is reduced. If placement is necessary, for the youth's safety and/or the safety of the community, the Team explores the possibility of a shared-funded placement. On a system level, Council members work to minimize fragmentation and unnecessary duplication of services. This is done on an on-going basis through committee and taskforce work. A good example is the Parenting Taskforce which is comprised of organizations providing parent education and support services. The taskforce reviews current programming, identifies gaps, and tries to ensure that resources are being used in the most efficient way. Each year, the taskforce hosts a countywide training for providers and parents. In SFY2009, over 100 people participate.
- **Family Empowerment:** strategies and outcomes
The Council encourages parents to participate fully in planning services for their children. For example, Cluster/Diversion Team meetings include parents whenever possible. Parents are also offered a Parent Advocate when involved in multiple systems. Others ways of empowering parents include sponsoring special events and activities, encouraging participation on the Council and its committees, and promoting parent education and support services.

- **Early Childhood System of Care:** strategies and outcomes
The Council administers Greene County's Help Me Grow Program, a system of care for children three and under. The majority of HMG funds is allocated for direct services such as home visiting and service coordination. The County's Early Childhood Coordinating Committee is a committee of the Council. The committee works to coordinate birth through five services. The committee also sponsors an annual Daddy & Me Carnival and distributes a Resource Card of services with contact information.

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

- **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:** strategies and outcomes
The Council serves as the County's "Local Advisory Board" for the planning, use, and monitoring of OCTF funds for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. For SFY2010, the Council's plan for these dollars is to strengthen parenting skills among parents with children birth through five. The Council's selected strategy is to expand the current Parents as Teachers home visiting model. This is an evidence-based program currently being used by several organizations in Greene County. The Council on Rural Services will be providing the program and will be using the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory to measure the impact.

OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES: strategies and outcomes

The Council operates two Family Resource Centers, one in Bellbrook/Sugarcreek and one in Jamestown. The FRCs help residents identify and address local youth and family issues, encourage volunteerism and community service, and help to connect residents to existing resources.

FUNDING:

In calendar year 2008, the Council's budget was approximately \$1.5 million. About two thirds of the expenses were for contract services associated with Council grants and Shared Youth Placements. Funding comes from a number of local, state and federal grants, the Greene County Board of Commissioners, and Council members.

STAFFING:

The Council's Administrative staff includes a Director, a Fiscal Technician, and an Administrative Support Specialist. Each of these positions is full-time with about half of the time spent on Council activities. The rest of the time is spent on non-Council activities that support programs provided on behalf of the Commissioners. Council staff also includes two part-time Family Resource Center Specialists, a full-time Intersystem Coordinator, and two full-time Help Me Grow Staff (i.e., the HMG Project Director and the HMG Intake and Referral Specialist).

CHALLENGES:

Unstable and uncertain revenue levels, including potential decreases in tax revenues and TANF funding. State and federal funding restrictions and requirements that make it difficult to collaborate across systems.

FUTURE PLANS:

The Council will continue to monitor and refine the strategies associated with our HB289 and OCTF Plans (i.e., increasing school readiness, decreasing middle school substance abuse, and strengthening parenting skills and competencies). In addition, in SFY2010, we will be focusing attention on how to effectively serve children and families in these challenging economic times.

Contact Information:

Susan E. Giga
Greene County Family & Children First
158 E. Main Street
Xenia, Ohio 45385

Phone 937-562-5600
Fax 937-562-5601
email sgiga@co.greene.oh.us