

KNOX COUNTY FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST COUNCIL

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"To promote and facilitate collaboration among community agencies serving children and their families."

Fact Sheet

The Council

Mission Statement: To promote and facilitate collaboration among community agencies serving children and their families.

History: Knox County officially formed a local Council in February, 1995 in response to state legislation mandating all 88 Ohio counties to organize a local Council. The authority and responsibility of local Councils is defined in Section 121.37 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Purpose: The purpose of the Ohio Family and Children First Initiative is to streamline and coordinate existing publicly funded services to help families seeking assistance for their children. This initiative is a partnership of government agencies and community organizations committed to improving the well-being of children and families. The focus is on the following shared commitments to child well-being:

- Expectant parents and newborns thrive
- Infants and toddlers thrive
- Children are ready for school
- Children and youth succeed in school
- Youth choose healthy behaviors
- Youth successfully transition to adulthood

These commitments are used to organize Ohio's budget and mobilize community partnerships.

Funding: The major source of funding for the Council is through the numerous state and federal grants available to develop and administer specific programs. Several local Council agencies also contribute local dollars to purchase services for multi-need children.

Membership: State statute mandates representation from the following:

At least 3 Family Representatives	Mental Health and Recovery Board	County Health Department
Department of Job & Family Services	County Board of Developmental Disabilities	Largest School District
Other School District Representing the County Schools	Largest City	Department of Youth Services
Local Non-Profit Organization	County Early Childhood Coordinating Committee	County Commissioner
County Head Start Program	Children’s Services, if not part of DJFS	

Local membership has been expanded to include the following agencies:

Alcohol and Drug FREEDOM Center	Community Health Access Project (CHAP)	Metropolitan Housing Authority
OSU Extension	Interchurch Social Services of Knox County, Inc.	The Salvation Army of Mount Vernon
The Children’s Connection	United Way of Knox County	New Directions Domestic Abuse Shelter
Mid-Ohio Transit Authority (MOTA)	Pathways of Central Ohio	Mental Health America of Knox Co.
Behavioral Healthcare Partners of Central Ohio, Inc.	American Red Cross of Knox County	

The Executive Directors from these agencies sit on the Family and Children First Council.

Meetings: The Council convenes meetings on the third Wednesday of the following months from 1:15 to 3:00 p.m.: February, April, June, August, October, and December. Currently, the meetings are held at the Department of Job and Family Services, Third Floor Conference Room -- East A, 117 East High Street. The meetings are open to the public.

Officers/Executive Committee for FY11:

Jen Odenweller, Council Chair – United Way of Knox County
Patrick Evans, Vice Chair – Behavioral Healthcare Partners of Central Ohio, Inc.
Peg Tazewell, Past Chair – Knox County Head Start, Inc.

Members of the Executive Committee include the Chair, Vice Chair and Past Chair as well as the following: Dave Hatley, Parent Representative; Mary Hendrickson, New Directions Domestic Abuse Shelter; Steve Short, Mount Vernon City Schools; Steve Oster, Knox County Board of Developmental Disabilities; and Nancy Kadunc Omahan, Council Coordinator (Ex-Officio).

Sub-Groups of the Council

Early Childhood Coordinating Committee (EC3)

Mission: The Early Childhood Coordinating Committee (EC3) is a group of area service providers and parent representatives who meet bi-monthly to monitor local services for families with children from birth thru kindergarten completion. Focus is placed on planning related to early learning, access to services, and identification of gaps for families.

Typically, the middle management of Council agencies sit on this committee.

Sub-committees of EC3 are: Child Advocacy, Child Health and Well-being, and Transitions. Each sub-committee plays an important role in addressing needs of families with young children.

Anyone interested in learning more about the work of this committee should contact the Council Coordinator at 397-5721, ext.106.

Knox County Community Team

Community

Team Vision: To provide comprehensive services to multi-needs families and youth who reside in Knox County.

Mission

Statement: The Community Team is committed to developing and facilitating comprehensive, coordinated, family-centered and creative solutions to empower Knox County families with children facing multiple life stressors.

This will be accomplished through multi-agency collaboration (Family Teams) to ensure the most effective use of existing services to further the development of social resources.

A Family Team can be formed for various reasons: 1) family request, 2) provider request, 3) treatment needs/multiple needs and/or services, 4) to reduce duplication of services and increase communication between providers, and 5) child(ren) at risk of placement outside the home or already placed outside the home.

A Family Team will meet with the family and develop a comprehensive plan unique to each family addressing identified needs. Family Teams can be very creative with each plan to address these needs using various resources in the community. If the Family Team identifies a need for additional funding or if the Team needs clinical direction, they can bring their request to Community Team meetings which are held twice a month. Community Team will monitor the progress of Family Teams and reports back to the Family and Children First Council.

Typically, middle management and/or case managers of direct Service Providers sit on Community Team with input from family team coordinators who provide service coordination and direct services to specific children and families. These individuals provide constant review and revision of Community Team policies and procedures at regular Administrative Community Team meetings.

A Community Team representative reports the actions and fiscal decisions of the Community Team to the Full Council at its regular meetings. All policy changes are brought to the Family and Children First Council for final approval.

Ad Hoc Committees

Purpose: Ad Hoc Committees are formed as needed by the Council and report back to the Council at its regular meetings.

Other Initiatives Administered by the Family and Children First Council

Help Me Grow: A free program for expectant parents, newborns, infants and toddlers that provides health and developmental services so that children start school healthy and ready to learn. Help Me Grow recognizes both the strengths of families and the need for support in raising children. Help Me Grow reports bi-monthly to Council and seeks the support of Council in Child Find activities. The Help Me Grow program is a cooperative effort between the Knox County Health Department and the Knox County Department of Jobs and Family Services. For more information, call 392-2200, ext. 2259.

**Ohio Children's
Trust Fund:**

The mission of the Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF) is to take a leadership role and be a catalyst in preventing child abuse and neglect in Ohio. Local plans for use of OCTF dollars address the goals of our local HB289 plan. Plans are reviewed annually.

Other Grants:

The Council can apply for and accept outside grants that meet the mission of the Council.

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