



2023

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Mahoning County
Children Services

Protecting Children. Preserving Families.

EXECUTIVE STAFF, BOARD, ADVISORY & COMMISSIONERS



Administrative Executive Staff

Executive Director
Richard Tvaroch
(Start date: 7/24/2023)
Dr. Joseph Mosca,
Interim Executive Director
(6/8/23-7/24/2023)
Randall B. Muth, J.D.
(Final Day: 6/8/2023)
Assistant Director
Julie Rudolph, MPA, LSW
Intake Services Department
Bradley Smith MSW, LISW-S
Program Administrator

Family Services Department
Angelica Polito MSW
Program Administrator
Resource Services Department
Theresa Pancoe, LISW-S
Program Administrator
Continuous Quality Improvement Department
Lynette Paris, MPA
Program Administrator
Fiscal Department
Denise Barnes-Carper
Fiscal Officer
Human Resources Department
Susan Babinec, Manager

Public Information Department
Jennifer T. Kollar, Public Information Officer
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Department
Nancy Walker-McCain, M.Ed, M.B.A, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer
(Resigned 10/20/23)

Mahoning County Commissioners

David C. Ditzler
Carol Rimedio-Righetti
Anthony Traficanti

OUR MISSION

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

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

SUSAN BABINEC, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

STAFF COMPOSITION

At the conclusion of 2023, Mahoning County Children Services employed 118 employees to serve and support the services of children and families in Mahoning County.

Qualifications: All Child Welfare Caseworker 2 positions possess a bachelor's degree in Social Work, Sociology, Psychology, or a related social services field.

2023 Mahoning County Children Services Board

Daniel Wakefield,
Chairman
Kriss Wolford,
Vice Chairman
Marilyn Montes,
Secretary (ended 10/23)
Maria Pappas,
Secretary (current)
Rev. Lewis Macklin
Dr. Sherri Lovelace-Cameron
Mag. Richard White
Ron Gerberry
Patricia Lyden
Julieann Cheng

2023 Mahoning County Children Services Advisory Committee

DJ Depp
Megan Ellashek
Katrina Harris
Michele Kuhar
Tracy Lamb
LeAnn Lampley-Laster
Tadarrelle Lett
David J. Magura, Jr.
Andrea L. Mahone
Lisa Manente
Pete Milliken
Dr. Joseph Mosca
Mary Alice Noble
Officer Shawnacie Ott
Patricia A. Sciarretta, MSSA, LSW
Mary Jo Truman
Yvonne Wilson

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.



Mahoning County Children Services

Mahoning County Children Services is Accredited by the Council on Accreditation



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

RICHARD TVAROCH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters of Mahoning County Children Services,

As I reflect on the past year's events, I am profoundly moved by the enduring legacy of my predecessor, Randall B. Muth, J.D., and feel honored to lead Mahoning County Children Services (MCCS). Since stepping into the role of Executive Director on July 24, 2023, I have inherited the stewardship of an agency profoundly shaped by Director Muth's decade-long dedication.

Under Director Muth's guidance, MCCS implemented initiatives that strengthened our partnerships with law enforcement, schools, courts, and social service agencies, significantly enhancing our capacity to provide comprehensive support to vulnerable children and families. His strategic vision and steadfast commitment to child advocacy not only heightened awareness of critical child welfare issues within Mahoning County, but also fostered broader statewide efforts to mobilize resources effectively. The milestones MCCS achieved in service delivery and outcomes during his tenure reflect a profound dedication to personal, professional, and fiscal accountability. His legacy endures in an agency that remains resilient and responsive, continuing to make a positive impact on the lives of children and families across our county.

A noteworthy moment this year was the resounding support from Mahoning County voters for our agency's levy. In November 2023, a five-year real estate tax replacement levy was generously approved. This crucial support sustains our efforts to care for over 200 abused, neglected, and dependent children in our custody and the array of services we provide to the community. This endorsement of our levy highlights the community's belief in our mission and their commitment to the well-being of our children.

Throughout the year, MCCS has unwaveringly adhered to the highest standards of care and advocacy for the children and families of Mahoning County. Our agency is deeply committed to developing, implementing, and delivering family-centric, evidence-based services designed to achieve positive and lasting outcomes for those we serve. This commitment manifests in several key areas of our work. We prioritize conducting timely and comprehensive assessments to thoroughly understand the needs of each child and family. These assessments form

the foundation of personalized case plans, tailored to address the unique circumstances and requirements of each individual.

Our approach is holistic and inclusive, ensuring that every aspect of a child's and family's situation is considered. We provide a broad spectrum of supportive services aimed at promoting safety, stability, and, whenever possible, reunification. We work diligently to create and maintain an environment where families feel supported and empowered to overcome the challenges they face.

Our focus on family-centric care means that we recognize and respect the unique dynamics of each family, tailoring our interventions to align with their specific needs and strengths. We are committed to ongoing evaluation and adaptation of our services to ensure they remain effective and responsive to the evolving needs of the families we support. By fostering a supportive and collaborative approach, we aim to not only address immediate needs but also build long-term resilience and stability within families.

In our efforts to uphold these standards, we remain vigilant in maintaining transparency and accountability. We regularly assess our practices and outcomes, seeking to continuously improve and ensure that we are meeting the highest benchmarks of service excellence. Our dedication to these principles reinforces our mission to provide the best possible care and support for the children and families in Mahoning County.

Our foster parents exemplify the compassion and resilience that define our community.

It is also essential to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our agency's foster parents. These dedicated individuals open their hearts and homes to provide stability, love, and care to children who have faced abuse, neglect, or dependency. They play a crucial role in our mission by offering safe havens where children can heal and thrive.

Our foster parents exemplify the compassion and resilience that define



our community. They undergo rigorous training, exhibit unwavering commitment, and work closely with MCCS to meet each child's unique needs. Beyond providing basic necessities, they offer emotional support, guidance, and stability during challenging times in a child's life. The partnership between MCCS and our foster parents is fundamental to achieving positive outcomes for children and families in Mahoning County. Together, we strive to create nurturing environments where every child can flourish and reach their full potential.

Looking ahead, I am inspired by the resilience and compassion that characterize our Mahoning County community. By collaborating with the Mahoning County Juvenile Court, the Mental Health Recovery Board, the Prosecutor's Office, law enforcement agencies, community service providers, as well as the many individuals, businesses and civic organizations who help to brighten and enhance the lives of the children we serve throughout the year donating their money, time, talents and labor on service projects.

We are privileged to work alongside dedicated professionals and a community in our shared mission to protect and advocate for our children. Together, we will continue to build strong partnerships, innovate new solutions, and ensure that every child and family receives the support and care they need to thrive.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to our mission. Together, let us continue to innovate, collaborate, and advocate for the well-being of every child in our community.

Sincerely,

Richard Tvaroch, Executive Director
Mahoning County Children Services

INTAKE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

BRADLEY SMITH, LISW-S
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

4920
REPORTS RECEIVED

1147
CASES INVESTIGATED

321
INFORMATION/REFERRAL

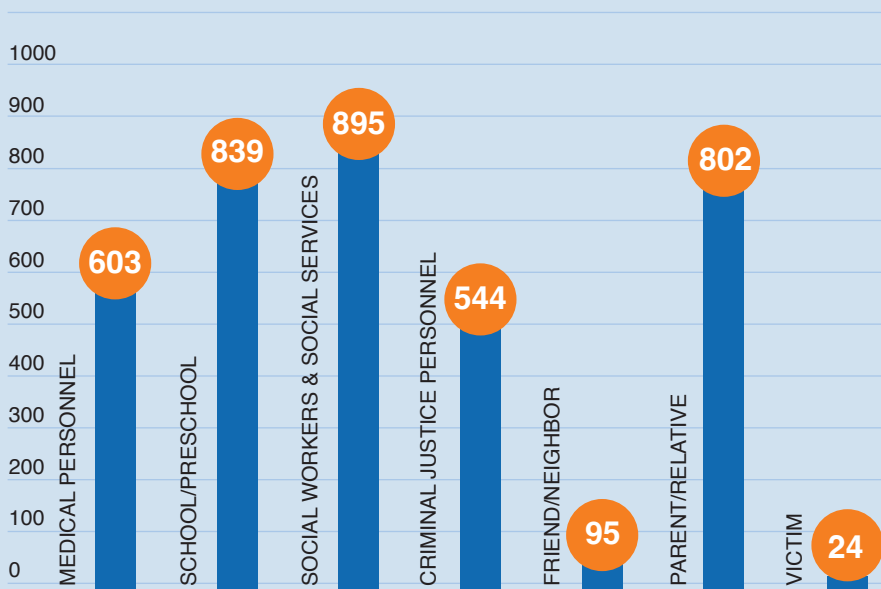
The Intake Services Department consists of:
1 Program Administrator, 3 Casework Supervisors,
1 Screening Supervisor, 3 Screeners, 15 Caseworkers, 1 Case Aid

REPORT TYPE / NUMBER OF CASES

Physical Abuse	471
Neglect	427
Sexual Abuse	113
Families in Need of Services	246
Medical Neglect	50
Dependency	67
Emotional Maltreatment	37



2023 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



RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

THERESA PANCOE, LISW-S
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

The Resource Department includes a Program Administrator, 4 Unit Supervisors, 17 Casework staff, 6 Case Aides and 2 Visitation Monitors. The Department encompasses the following services: Foster Care, Kinship, Adoption, Independent Living, Interstate Compact Placement of Children, Transportation and Visitation. These six programs are housed within four units. The Resource Department's Mission is "to always work in the best interest of children to provide them with safety, permanency, and well-being. The Resource Department is committed to providing strength-based, family-focused, and compassionate service the families and children of Mahoning County."

One of the responsibilities of the Resource Department is to ensure there are safe, stable placement resources for the children coming into the custody of the agency. During the calendar year of 2023, a total of 296 children were in placement with Mahoning County Children Services. Ohio continues to experience a placement crisis throughout the state due to the escalated challenge of placing children with significant behavior health needs, developmental/intellectual disabilities, and juvenile delinquency and/or involvement with the Juvenile Justice System.

FOSTER CARE:

Private foster care made up 29.7% of the total number of placements. By comparison, 25.4% of total placements were made in Mahoning County Children Services (MCCS) licensed foster homes. In addition, Kinship Care accounted for 34%, Residential Treatment Centers for 8%, and Adoptive Placements for 2.9% respectively.

KINSHIP SERVICES:

The Kinship Unit's diligent efforts, allowed for 204 children to be placed with 130 Kinship families. Kinship care allows children to stay connected to their family. It can also allow children to maintain a sense of identity because of 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-relative with a relationship to the family and/or child.

The Resource Department has also been very successful implementing the Kinship Guardian Assistance Program (KGAP). The primary objectives of the KGAP program are to:

1. Facilitate another permanency planning option for children when it has been determined reunification and adoption are not appropriate options for the child.
2. Assist Kinship caregiver(s) who have a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child.

Kinship caregivers are first certified and receive monthly financial payments through the Kinship Support Program of \$12.10 per day for each child placed. The financial payments continue for up to 6 months until the caregiver becomes a foster parent, or the child leaves the home. Once the Kinship caregiver is certified as a foster caregiver, they receive a monthly per diem and ongoing support from the foster care unit. The child must live in the home for the licensed KGAP Foster home for 6 months and then can apply for the KGAP subsidy and will be provided financial assistance and a medical card until the child is 18 years of age.

Mahoning County has licensed thirty-eight (38) kinship homes to KGAP Licensed foster homes since the implementation of the program on January 1, 2023.

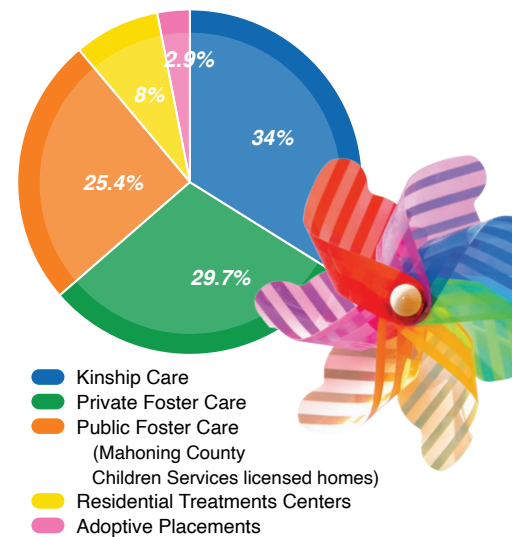
ADOPTION SERVICES:

The Adoption Unit provided services to 79 children with a permanent custody legal status who were in placement on January 1, 2023. The Agency received permanent custody of 24 more children during the calendar year 2023. Also, 26 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. The Adoption Caseworkers provide Adoption Preparation and Case Management to the children on their caseloads. The Adoption Unit continues to collaborate with the Wendy's Wonderful Kids Child Centered Recruiters to identify and recruit permanent families for these children. 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. However, adoption is not always secured for youth in permanent custody and in these cases the Adoption Workers collaborate with the Agency's Independent Living Program Caseworkers to ensure the youth is provided services upon emancipation from the Child Welfare System.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES:

The Agency 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 Mahoning County Children Services. The ILS Program provides many supports including life skills training, and various educational, and vocational resources. The ILS Program aims to gear programs and have supports in place to help prepare youth for successful transition to adulthood.



Mahoning County Children Services is also required to provide Independent Living 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 ILS Program also receive supports to help them achieve their educational and vocational goals. However, they also receive 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 Caseworkers 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 through Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) 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

ANGELICA POLITO, MSW
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.

In 2023, the Family Services Department was further reconfigured to consist of three Ongoing Units, and one START (Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma) unit. A Support Staff Unit comprised of transportation and visitation monitors was relocated from the Family Services Department and into the Resource Department.

START Program:

The Agency hired Emily Martz as the START Supervisor after the resignation of Elizabeth Schmid. The START unit worked together and achieved four successful case closures. Three families maintained children in the home of origin and another youth was reunified with his bio family.

The Agency hired Glenna Ress after the retirement of Ongoing Supervisor Paula Libbey. The Family Services Department hired 14 NEW caseworkers in 2023 and continued to partner with Youngstown State University's University Partnership Program (UPP) which incentivizes and encourages students enrolled in the University's Social Work Department to explore child welfare as a career choice.

FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



The Family Services Department staff continues to partner with local organization Cadence Care as Ohio's Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence (OhioRISE) Program.

OhioRISE is a specialized managed care program that focuses on children and youth who have complex behavioral health and multisystem needs. Child welfare caseworkers make referrals to the program for youth, both living with family and also youth who live in an out-of-home care setting, to ensure that children who needed additional support and care coordination receive those services.

In Compliance: The Family Services Department was again in compliance with the Federal mandates for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022-2023 with over 95% of required contacts with parents and children receiving services from the Agency being completed by the casework staff. The Family Services Department prioritized ensuring placement stability of children in custody and achieving permanency in 12 months and were successful in meeting goals set in those areas.



Points of Interest:

In 2023 the composition of the Family Services Department included:

1 Program Administrator

4 Unit Supervisors

17 Full-Time Caseworker Staff

11.5 Cases Per Worker

17.4 Approx. Number of Children in Agency Custody Per Worker



FINANCIAL REPORT

DENISE BARNES-CARPER,
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023

2023 Receipts

Levy 50%	\$10,260,381.99
Federal 28%	\$5,665,304.20
State 21%	\$4,319,345.85
All Other 0%	\$80,028.92

Total \$20,325,060.96

2023 Expenditures

Salaries and Related Expenses 47%	\$10,027,042.31
Operating Expenses 10%	\$2,074,123.06
Public Foster Care 4%	\$827,525.43
Residential Placements 15%	\$3,166,145.38
Therapeutic Foster Care 15%	\$3,306,139.25
Services 6%	\$1,328,257.20
Other Expenses 3%	\$723,571.03

Total \$21,452,803.66

2023 RECEIPTS

Real Estate Taxes	\$9,961,497.63
Manufactured Home Taxes	\$11,728.62
Rollback Credit	\$285,856.76
Homestead Credit	\$1,298.98
Kinship Program	\$57,500.00
Medicaid Child Welfare	\$57,531.41
Title IV-B - Child Welfare Subsidy	\$153,094.85
Title IV-B - ESAA	\$184,506.06
Federal Chaffee	\$62,116.66
Title IV-E	\$2,635,055.40
U.S. Treasury	\$49,404.00
Foster Care Maintenance	\$2,466,095.82
State Child Protective Allocation	\$2,659,478.88
State Reimbursements	\$537,650.45
Foster Parent Training	\$9,130.50
Multi-System Youth	\$660,448.61
ODNR - State	\$553.49
Children Services Best Practice	\$69,226.00
Ohio Start	\$307,364.49
Reimbursements	\$75,493.43
Bureau of Support	\$38,030.97
BWC True Up Charges	\$41,997.95
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$20,325,060.96

2023 EXPENDITURES

Salaries	\$7,077,057.64
PERS	\$925,664.43
Medicare	\$97,826.04
BWC Premium Expense	\$70,965.53
Hospitalization	\$1,806,281.38
Hospitalization Opt-Out	\$19,433.36
Life Insurance	\$10,437.55
Tuition Reimbursement	\$12,934.99
BWC Claims Expense	\$6,441.39
Food Supplies	\$19,258.52
Postage	\$14,091.00
Materials and Supplies	\$5,957.97
Office Supplies	\$38,427.92
Gasoline	\$312.46
Vehicle Parts	\$345.52
Seminars/Conferences/Training	\$18,567.81
Travel	\$266,212.04
Organization Dues	\$1,525.17
Contractual Agreement	\$964,766.88
Professional Services	\$71,153.90
Telephone	\$12,271.63
Medical Assistance	\$19.14
Advertising	\$22,076.04
Printing	\$12,306.00
Subscriptions	\$1,057.94
Rent	\$49,428.00
Maintenance Agreement	\$264,295.02
Printer/Copier Maint Agrmt	\$8,875.13
Insurance Liability Casualty	\$38,472.12
Repairs and Maintenance	\$3,793.65
Recruitment	\$74,279.18
Equipment	\$59,245.76
Data Equipment	\$34,282.32
Software	\$5,635.00
Furniture and Fixtures	\$35,694.64
Reimbursement Expense	\$51,772.30
Public Foster Care	\$827,525.43
Residential Placements	\$3,166,145.38
Therapeutic Foster Care	\$3,306,139.25
Board Care & Clothing	\$62,385.99
Public Assistance	\$10,914.50
Daycare	\$234,268.68
ESAA Preservation	\$99,854.87
ESAA Reunification	\$184,173.75
Subsidized Adoption	\$264,578.63
PASSS	\$268.34
Independent Living	\$88,684.40
Nonrecurring Adoption	\$6,370.00
Kinship	\$338,988.00
Start Funds	\$37,770.04
Taxes Aud/Treas Collection Fees	\$174,792.23
Operating Transfer Out	\$548,778.80
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$21,452,803.66

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DEPARTMENT

LYNETTE PARIS, MPA
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR



Mahoning County Children Services (MCCS) is taking significant steps to enhance the quality of its services. The Quality Improvement Department, which includes a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Administrator and three Quality Improvement Specialists, is planning to establish a Training Unit within the Department in early 2024. This new unit aims to further support staff and ensure the best outcomes for children and families in Mahoning County. The CQI Department is dedicated to maintaining high standards of service through continuous evaluation and improvement.

MCCS is one of only nine counties in Ohio to be accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) out of the state's 88 counties. First accredited in 2015, MCCS has successfully maintained its status ever since. In June 2023, the Agency underwent a rigorous reaccreditation process, hosting two COA peer reviewers for a comprehensive two-day evaluation. This process involved an in-depth analysis of the Agency's policies and procedures, as well as interviews with staff, community members, partner agencies, and board members. By August 2023, MCCS received approval for reaccreditation, reaffirming its commitment to best practices and quality services.

The CQI Department is integral to the Agency's operations, providing oversight and ensuring service quality. In 2023, the Department reviewed over 160 case transfers,

assessed more than 3,100 screen-outs, investigated nine complaints, and reviewed eight dispositional appeals. It also addressed concerns from MCCS foster parents through a dedicated hotline, facilitated over 100 family team meetings, and participated as a neutral third party in all semi-annual case reviews to ensure proper permanency plans were in place and best practices were followed. Additionally, the Department is tasked with investigating critical incidents, conducting random case reviews, and ensuring each child placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Facility (QRTP) has a Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment completed.

In 2023, the CQI Department introduced 9-month permanency meetings, for children who have been in Agency custody for nine months. These meetings are

designed to discuss and develop permanency plans with all team members involved, ensuring collaborative efforts to secure stable and permanent plans for the children.



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 world-wide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting accreditation standards.

The Agency's accreditation is valid through August 31, 2027.

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT DEPARTMENT

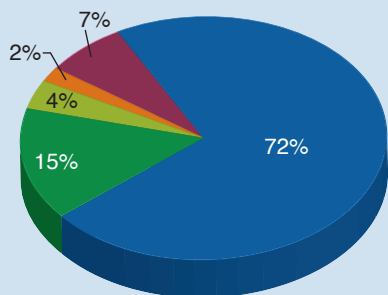
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The Department also provides essential training. Each year, the CQI Department conducts mandated reporter training for Mahoning County daycare providers and Choffin High School students. This training is crucial for preparing community members with the knowledge to identify and report potential cases of child abuse or neglect.

Client satisfaction is a top priority for the CQI Department. Regular reviews of client satisfaction surveys help measure the community's perception of MCCS services. This feedback ensures the Agency remains responsive to the needs and concerns of the families it serves.

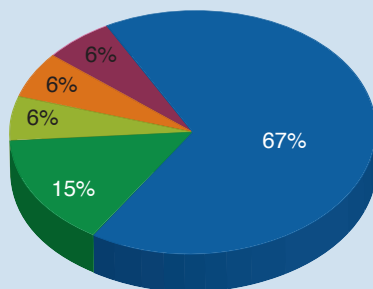
The graphs below show how MCCS is rated by the community:

How satisfied are you with the services received from CSB?



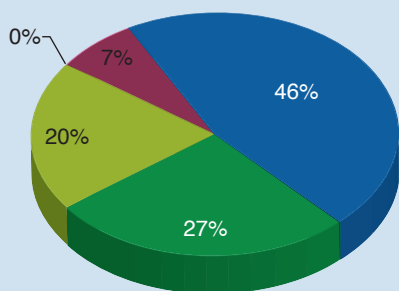
Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

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



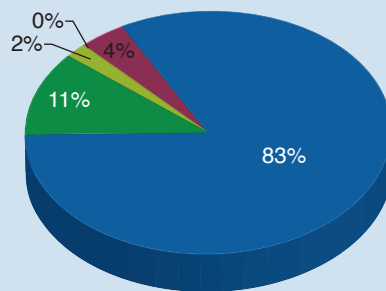
Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

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



Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

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



Very Much Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Very Much Disagree

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Prosecutors:

Atty. Kristie Weibling
Atty. Elioussa Baier
Atty. Tia Jackson
(resigned 7/14/23)
Atty. Ebenezer Appiagyei
(resigned 8/25/23)
Atty Lori Shells-Simmons
(resigned 12/15/23)

CSB Legal Staff:

Theresa Cramer
Joni Derenzo
Brittney Schofer



2023 LEGAL STATISTICS

98	Ex Parte Orders
31	Commitments to Custody of a Relative
6	Commitments to Custody of a Non-Relative
192	Temporary Commitments to CSB
0	Permanent Surrenders
24	Permanent Custody Commitments
6	Orders for Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
59	Court-Ordered Protective Supervision Granted
1	Cases in the Court of Appeals
65	Initial Voluntary Agreement of Care (VAC)

PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

JENNIFER T. KOLLAR,
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

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 to work to enhance the public's understanding of Agency programs and services.

The Agency's Public Information Department plans various events, activities and campaigns and participates in community engagement and outreach events. In addition, the Department is responsible for managing all of the Agency's marketing and communications to increase awareness of child abuse and neglect, how to report it as well as the great need for foster and adoptive caregivers, and how the community can work in partnership with the Agency to help keep children and families safe.

Workforce Recruitment

The State provided workforce recruitment/retention grant funding to Ohio's Public Child Welfare agencies to help combat significant workforce shortages. The funding enabled the Agency to provide incentives to assist with recruitment and retention of new and current Agency casework and support staff. In addition, community events and job fairs along with a billboard campaign helped raise awareness of child welfare careers and to recruit new caseworkers.



Mahoning County Families & Children First Council (MCFFCFC)

The Agency became the Fiscal Agent for MCFFCFC. The MCFFCFC office and staff of two relocated to the Agency from the Mahoning County Juvenile Justice offices where they had been located for over 10 years.

Ohio Wear Blue Campaign

Ohioans are encouraged to wear Blue to work, school or community event in support of Ohio WEAR BLUE DAY. Ohio Wears Blue Day is held on the second Wednesday of April. Blue is the national color symbolizing Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention.

Passage of the Agency's Levy Mahoning County voters overwhelmingly approved the Agency's levy. The levy appeared on the 2023 November ballot as Issue 4, a five-year real estate tax replacement levy. The replacement levy will collect approximately \$8.8 million annually. The Agency uses property tax levies primarily for the care and support of the county's most vulnerable: abused, neglected and dependent children who are in the custody of the Agency. The Agency cares for over 300 children.

Local and State Legislators "Ride-Along Campaign"

In October, all Ohio Public Children Services Agencies are encouraged to invite local Representatives, Legislators, and Senators to participate in the "In Their Shoes Ride-along Campaign." Ohio State Representative Lauren McNally, Youngstown, (District 59) visited the Agency and accompanied a frontline Agency Child Welfare Caseworker on the 'ride along.'



New Executive Director Hired

The Mahoning County Children Services Board selected Richard Tvaroch as the Agency's new Executive Director. Tvaroch assumed the Directorship on July 24, 2023. Tvaroch replaced Randall B. Muth, J.D., who served as the Agency's Director for 10 years.



Canfield Fair

Staffing a booth in the Medical building at the Fair is the Agency's biggest community outreach of the year! In 2023 the Agency Booth underwent a complete overhaul including new paint, the addition of murals and signage along with a new theme to tie in and align with the Agency's Mission, Programs and Services.



One Church One Child Program

Mahoning County Children Services launched a local version of a national program called "One Church, One Child" (OCOC). The Mission: to partner with local faith-based community to help the Agency recruit more foster families within church congregations.

PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

JENNIFER T. KOLLAR,
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Conference

In February, the Agency's Diversity Committee held its first state-wide community conference at Stambaugh Auditorium, Youngstown. The conference featured keynote speaker: Vanessa L. Dorantes, Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Department of Children and Families. Commissioner Dorantes spoke about "Reducing the Disparity of Indigent and Minority Families within the Child Welfare System."



National Adoption Celebration Event

November marks **National Adoption Awareness Month**. Together, Mahoning County Probate Court and Mahoning County Children Services co-host an Annual Adoption Day Celebration Event. Two children were adopted during the event by their "Forever Families".

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Each year in honor and support of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Agency, in partnership with Akron Children's Child Advocacy Center, holds its *Annual Pinwheels for Prevention Community Event*. 2023 marks the Event's 18th year.

Community Pinwheel Garden Display

is 'planted' during the month of April in Boardman Park. Pinwheel Garden Displays are planted in communities across the nation. The pinwheel is the national symbol for child abuse prevention. Over 1,000 colorful pinwheels planted represent community members who advocated on behalf of an abused or neglected child in Mahoning County.



Annual Community Spotlight Award

recognizes community organizations/individuals who demonstrate generosity, commitment, and distinguished on-going community service to Children of Mahoning County. **The 2023 Spotlight Awardees: Rona Curtis**, Mahoning County Children Services and **Janet Gorsuch**, Akron Children's Hospital, Mahoning Valley. Both women recently retired in 2023



after many, many years of distinguished service and advocacy to and for Mahoning County children and families.

Community Cup

The Agency had about 50 participants comprised of both staff and their spouses.



- 6th place overall out of 12 teams
- 3rd Banner (1st in Community Choice!)
- 1st Pep Rally
- 2nd Bocce
- 2nd Time Predicted Walk
- 1st Obstacle Course
- 2nd Volunteers and awarded "Most Spirited Team!"

New Digital Sign

A full-color, high resolution digital sign was purchased for placement above the Agency's front entrance located on the corner of Hazel and Federal Streets. The sign which operates 24/7, aims to further increase awareness of Agency programs, services, events and job opportunities to the downtown workforce, visitors, residents as well as vehicle and foot traffic.

High School Graduation is a Milestone

Four Agency-involved youth graduated from area high schools. For youth in foster care, graduation is an especially significant milestone. Many of these youth have experienced difficult childhoods and significant trauma. Remaining in school and graduating despite these circumstances is a huge accomplishment and the hope for a bright future.

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. 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.



Mahoning County
Children Services

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Mahoning County Children
Services is Accredited by the
Council on Accreditation

