

Children Services Funding Workgroup

REPORT TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE OHIO DEPARTMENT
OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

September 29, 2014

Background

House Bill 483 of the 130th Ohio General Assembly established the Children Services Funding Workgroup and in Section 751.140 instructed the workgroup to convene and “...make recommendations to the Director of Job and Family Services about a distribution method for the \$6.8 million appropriated to appropriation item 911420, Children Services, for possible submission to the Controlling Board. The distribution method must focus on targeted areas, including adoption, visitation, reoccurrence, and re-entry.” Section 751.140 also instructed the workgroup to “...investigate programmatic or financial gaps in the children services funding system; identify best practices currently employed at the county level as well as those that can be integrated into the system; identify areas of overlap and linkages across all human services programs; [and] coordinate with the Adult Protective Services Funding Workgroup in the Department of Job and Family Services.” Recommendations from the workgroup are due no later than September 30, 2014, and the workgroup will remain intact until June 30, 2015.

Another part of House Bill 483 provided for an addition of up to \$3,200,000 to be “used to match eligible federal Title IV-B ESSA funds and federal Title IV-E Chafee funds allocated to public children services agencies.” These funds have been provided according to controlling allocation methodology to all 88 county public children services agencies. These funds provide the match for approximately \$9.6 million federal funds.

Membership

Cynthia Dungey, Director, ODJFS

Bonnie K. Burman, Director, Ohio Department of Aging (Karla Warren)

Greg Moody, Director, Governor’s Office of Health Transformation

John Martin, Director, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

John McCarthy, Director, Ohio Department of Medication (Icilda Dickerson)

Tim Keen, Director, Ohio Office of Budget and Management (Andrew White)

Tracy Plouck, Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Angie Bergefurd)

Representative Dorothy Pelanda

Representative Denise Driehaus

Senator Chris Widener

Senator Capri Cafaro

Joel Potts, Executive Director, Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association

Jennifer Seidel, Assistant Policy Director, Health and Human Services, Office of the Governor

Laura Abu-Absi, Policy Analyst, County Commissioners' Association of Ohio

Cassandra Holtzmann, Director, Ashland County Department of Job and Family Services

Gayle Channing Tenenbaum, Director of Policy and Government Relations, Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO)

Dan Shook, Bureau Chief, Office of Families and Children, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)

Angela Sausser-Short, Director, PCSAO

Jennifer Justice, Deputy Director, Office of Families and Children, ODJFS

Doug Lumpkin, Deputy Director, Office of Human Services Innovation, ODJFS

Michael McCreight, Assistant Director, Health and Human Services, ODJFS

Schedule

- July 31, 2014
- August 7, 2014
- August 14, 2014
- August 21, 2014
- August 28, 2014
- September 4, 2014
- September 11, 2014
- September 18, 2014
- September 25, 2014

Resources

The Children Services Funding Workgroup utilized existing resources to analyze the current state of child protective services in Ohio. The following resources were used in discussion of programmatic and funding gaps, best and promising practices, and human service program areas of overlap and linkages:

- Engage Project – Research and Outcomes
- Child Welfare Opiate Workgroup Recommendations
- Summary of the Trauma-Informed Care Summit
- Casey Family Programs data, reports and website
- Ohio Infant Mortality Work
- Ready to Learn (Hamilton County)
- Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) and Child Protection Oversight and Evaluation (CPOE) Measures
- ProtectOHIO Reports – Annual for the past five years
- Impact of Differential Response in Ohio and Nationally
- Levels of Research Evidence and Benefit Cost Data for Title IV-E Waiver Interventions
- Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies (OAACA) Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Report
- Shared Services Model
- JFS documents:
 - Current Program Improvement Plans
 - Family/children Demographics
 - Title IV-E Training

Process

1. Investigate programmatic or financial gaps

Ohio has a state-supervised/county-administered child welfare system. All child welfare costs are a blend of federal, state and local funds. ODJFS allocates federal and state funds to county agencies that can be used to support child welfare programs in their communities. Funds allocated are Title IV-B Part I and Part II, Title XX, TANF Title XX Transfer, TANF, Title IV-E Chaffee and State GRF, which can be used as a portion of match for required federal Funds. In addition, Title IV-E foster care and adoption funds are passed through to the county agencies as partial reimbursement for placement costs and administrative costs. Local commissioner appropriation and county-specific levy funds are used to match required federal funds or used to pay for children and/or services not eligible under the aforementioned federal funding streams. In SFY 2013, child welfare costs in Ohio equaled approximately \$1.163 billion, all funds (federal = \$402 million, state = \$94 million, local = \$667 million).

Although federal funding helps support child welfare programing at the local level, these funds generally require passage of eligibility criteria and can be used only for specific activities and services. These inflexible funding silos are often seen as a barrier to improving outcomes for families and children. As an example, in SFY 2013 Ohio spent a total of \$266 million in foster care placement costs but only \$7.5 million on preventing removal and maintaining children safely in their homes and reunifying children with their families. This was due in part to the

current federal funding structure, which incentivizes having children in custody, as Title IV-E is an uncapped federal funding stream. In addition, there are gaps in equity amongst counties in regard to local support.

Further complicating the disparity in child welfare funding in Ohio is the ProtectOHIO waiver. Seventeen counties in Ohio have a waiver that permits flexible funding opportunities to provide preventive services to families with children who may be at risk of being removed from their homes. The ProtectOHIO counties receive Federal Title IV-E dollars upfront to prevent the removal of children. In Ohio, two service delivery models have been piloted and have been found effective at reducing out-of-home placement: family team meetings and kinship support.

The Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) released a report on child welfare funding in Ohio and how Ohio fares compares to other states. PCSAO reports that Ohio ranks 50th (lowest) in the nation in its proportion of state-level investment for child welfare. A larger investment is made at the county level. Ohio is one of only 12 states with state-supervised, county-administered child welfare systems. The large county investment places Ohio highest in the nation for local child welfare investment. But funding is inequitable among the counties. One highly cited cause for this disparity is counties without dedicated service levies. Forty-five counties have local levies, and 43 do not. Less available local revenue appears correlated to the ability to match additional federal revenue, as shown in the chart below.

Child Welfare Funding / Child Population	Number of Counties	Federal Revenue	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
All Counties	88	\$145	\$31	\$138	\$314
Counties Without Levies	43	\$48	\$25	\$35	\$108
All Counties With Levies	45	\$171	\$33	\$165	\$368

During the initial Children Services Funding Workgroup meetings, the group identified numerous county-employed strategies and barriers to delivering programmatic services. Both are identified in the chart below. The counties that participated, as well as the associations, felt the disparate funding among counties directly impacts the programming available at the local level.

Programmatic Strategies/ Barriers/ Gaps

Strategies	Barriers
Prevention	Funding Structure e.g. Title IV-E is not available for prevention services
Home Visiting- Help Me Grow	Personnel / turnover / rate of pay
Case Worker Visits	Caseload size / case intensity
ProtectOHIO - Metrics: Family Team Meetings and Kinship Placement and Services	
Title IV-E & Medicaid Services e.g. Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Federally required, but package is determined by the states e.g. Sick kids in care (Opiate afflicted) OHT data on this for ages 0-21 - H.V.T.	Funding (Caseworkers/services/ visits)
Workforce Development Strategies - Model of delivery	Level of Community Services/ Resources
Point of Access e.g. Community Learning Center (Hamilton County) Employee Evaluations tied to CPOE/performance outcomes	Local coordination of services and funding
Court Outcomes (Accountability)	Lack of rapid response to CRISIS
Technology e.g. iPads for workers to enter case data (Functional job analysis due out this fall- PCSAO); estimates suggest that a worker has five hours of "work" for every one hour of "contact" with a family	SACWIS (reports) e.g. drug-addicted parents, tracking of homeless families, removal cause (drugs), and functionality of drop-down boxes
Pool of money at the state level to cover high dollar placements (after locals have exhausted all resources) This happened in the 1980s e.g. Cluster at the state level: multi-agency funding for multi-need kids; Temp law in effect that permits agencies to move money to FCFC to help cover the costs for these children; e.g. Wayne County has a best practice model	FCFC: Local System of Care e.g. Limits on the funding amount and services that can be provided (respite, etc.)
Differential Response	Intensity / complexity for opiate-affected children and families
Funding	Silos
Share Best Practices- great things are happening in Ohio	Losing Child Welfare Caseworkers to Managed Care agencies

2. Identify best practices currently employed at the county level

Workgroup members were asked to identify best practices currently employed at the county level. PCSAO and Ashland County Department of Job and Family Services Director Cassandra Holtzmann submitted the following selection of practices that were categorized in three areas: assessing safety and family stability; using available data reports from the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS); and employing innovative evidence-based practices.

A. Assess safety and family stability and connect families and youth to services.

- Economic insecurity and isolation: Differential/Alternative Response to safely maintain children with their families. Over the course of several years, ODJFS has assisted all 88 counties with implementation. It exists for all reports in some agencies and is still at a pilot level for others.
- Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Module-Interim Solution (CAPMIS) for Safety and Risk Assessment, Safety Planning, Permanency Planning: Ohio's case planning model, evaluated, with tools, training materials, and more.
- County-to-County Tips for Successfully Meeting Visitation Requirements.
- Staff training: prioritize visitation requirements and SACWIS documentation. Workers are encouraged to schedule monthly visits during the first two weeks of the month, allowing for families to reschedule and still meet the mandate.
- Technology: Utilization of SACWIS visitation reports is key for the management team to track documented visitation. SACWIS also permits the caseworkers remote access to cases and enables workers to enter data from the field or at home.
- Flexible caseworker schedules (agency operating hours) enables caseworkers to schedule visits with families when families are available, resulting in family compliance with scheduled visits.
- Quality Assurance and Caseworker Accountability: Visitation scores are tied to worker performance and evaluation; quality assurance allows training to emphasize qualitative documentation to meet the visitation requirements.
- Addressing Domestic Violence: Safe and Together practice model to address intimate partner violence. ODJFS has worked to train volunteer counties as they implement Differential Response, based on available state and local resources.
- Dealing with Opiates and Other Addictions: PCSAO and ODJFS are working with ODMHAS, local treatment providers, and the Ohio Supreme Court (especially the evidence-based Family/Dependency Drug Treatment Courts).
- Deploying At-Risk Youth Strategies: PCSAO is working with the Ohio Department of Medicaid, ODMHAS, ODJFS and others to develop accessible home- and family based practices.

B. Home- and community-based treatment services must be included in Ohio’s Medicaid plan: “Medicaid authorities provide states with opportunities to further meet individuals’ behavioral health needs. Section 1915(i) of the Act, State Plan Home and Community-Based Services, permits states to provide a full array of home- and community-based services to individuals whether or not they qualify for an institutional level of care, as long as they have significant need.” Examples of Medicaid-allowable services include:

- High Fidelity Wraparound: Addresses family engagement.
- Intensive Home-Based Treatment Services: Multisystemic Therapy, Homebuilders, others for time-limited intensive in-home family work; especially effective with youth and family dysfunction.

C. Use data to target scarce resources and promote best child welfare practices. ODJFS has made Results Oriented Management (ROM) available to leaders and supervisors for timely and accessible use of performance-based management reports. More than 6,000 reports were accessed in the first quarter of 2014. ODJFS also has created additional reports for more sophisticated data experts to review.

- Child and family visits: These reports are critical to ensure safety and well-being for children maintained in their home and those in out-of-home care.
- National CFSR indicators on safety and permanency: These reports help monitor all areas of concern, including recurrence of maltreatment, foster care re-entry, and length of time to permanency (reunification, legal custody/guardianship to a relative, or adoption).
- Reasonable caseload standards: Must be maintained to meet mandates, ensure safety, pursue permanency, and measure child well-being.

D. Employ innovative evidence-based or evidence-informed child welfare practices. Most practices have been tested through rigorous research and evaluation, or are based on related research. A few have not yet been tested but show promise.

- Family Team Meetings, Team Decision Making, Family Group Conferencing: These methods empower families to help solve and make progress on safety and permanency concerns (ProtectOHIO Title IV-E Waiver strategy).
- Primary Parent Partners (Casey Family Programs): This emerging practice engages parents who have open cases with partner parents (those who have been through the system and have successfully closed their cases) for safety and for sustaining reunification; a state advisory board is in place with up to five new pilot sites.
- Family Search and Engagement: This practice involves identifying fathers, developing genograms, case mining, using technology/search engines, and then engaging these connections; both maternal and paternal kin must be sought up-front, throughout and for long staying cases.
- Kinship Supports and Permanency: This practice identifies and supports kin for temporary placements while pursuing reunification and, concurrently, planning for kin to serve as a permanent family home (ProtectOHIO Title IV-E waiver strategy). Related strategies include Kinship Navigators and Ohio’s Kinship Permanency Incentive Payment Program.

- Permanency Roundtables (Casey Family Programs): This emerging practice is designed to help move long-staying youth into permanent homes with birth or adoptive families. Ohio is engaged in a five-county pilot program with evaluation.
- Wendy's Wonderful Kids: ODJFS supports this evidence-based program that places child-centered adoption recruiters regionally across the state. Connecting the Dots engages transitioning youth in care and out of care to prepare them for the workforce with education, training and job placement.
- Ohio Reach: With a five-year, \$1 million grant from the Ohio Attorney General, PCSAO is connecting youth in care to vocational training and higher education, and supporting foster alums for higher education success.

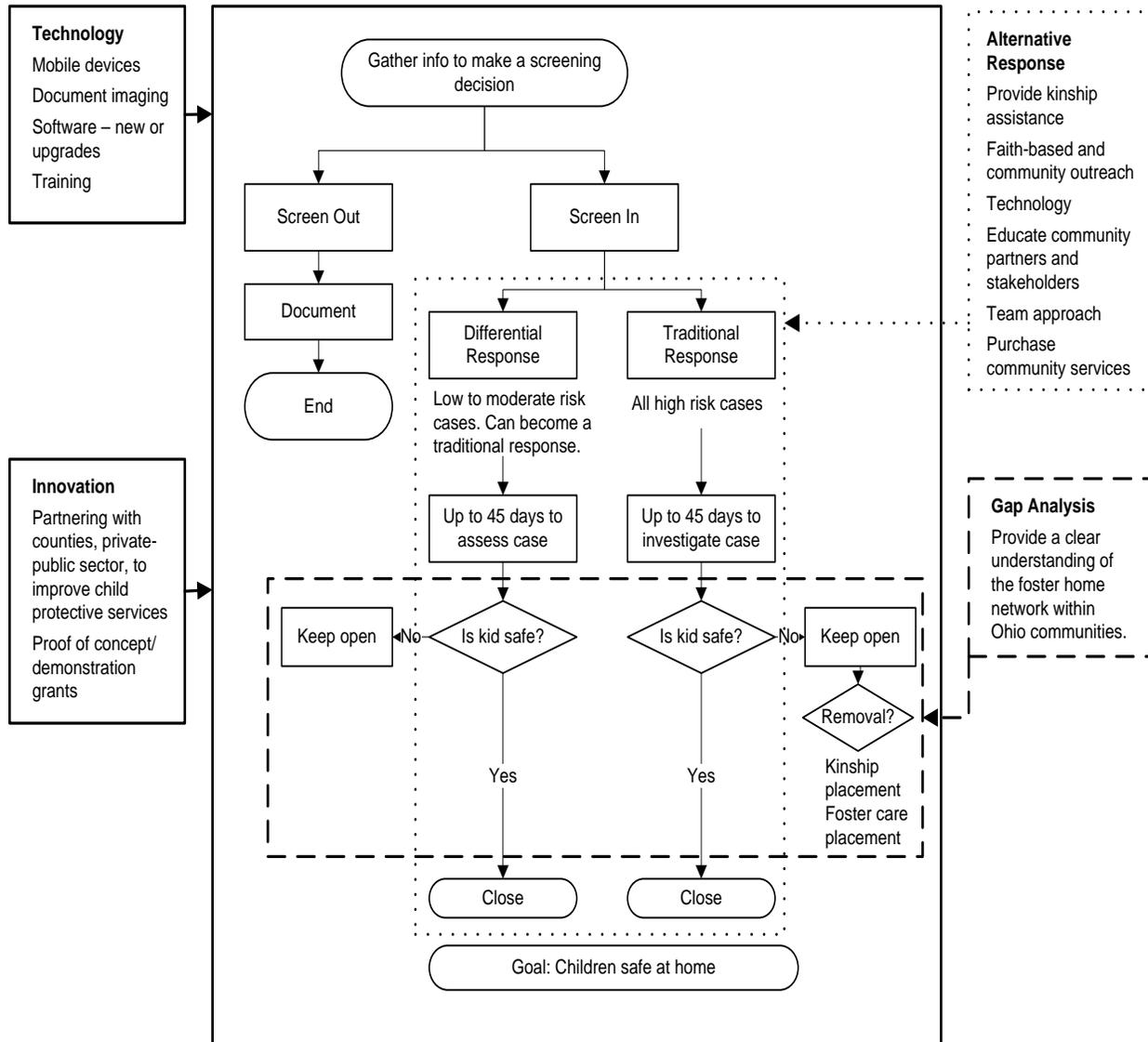
3. Coordinate with the Adult Protective Services Funding Workgroup

The Children Services Funding Workgroup and the Adult Protective Services Funding Workgroup have held joint meetings throughout this process. The Children Services Funding Workgroup fully understands that changes in the child and adult protective services delivery and funding models mutually impact each other, as the programs are often delivered by the same local agencies and both compete for state and local general revenue funds, as well as federal Title XX funding.

4. Provide proposed recommendations with methods for distribution based on targeted areas, including adoption, visitation, reoccurrence, and re-entry

The Children Services Funding Workgroup worked diligently to identify more than 30 recommendations that could positively impact Ohio's child welfare system. The group merged, aligned and divided the recommendations into themes and categories (short- and long-term, one-time investments, etc.). The top four short-term, one-time investments have been selected as the group's recommendations to the director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The following chart depicts how each recommendation could impact the child welfare system.

Child Protective Services Case Flow with Recommendations



Below are the four recommendations developed by the workgroup. They are in no particular order.

Technology Upgrades

While ODJFS continues to update the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) for ease of entry, county agencies report the mandated data entry requirements are time-consuming. Furthermore, the core work of child welfare workers is performed in the field with the children and families more than in the office, making it difficult for workers to balance the requirements of visiting with their families and documenting case requirements.

As of September 16, 2014, nearly half of Ohio's child welfare agencies are using some form of mobile technology to improve efficient data entry. Others are investigating the purchase and impact of implementing mobile technology.

The federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) requires state compliance with mandates concerning child well-being, safety and permanency. Among the requirements for compliance are case visits; visiting the children, their families, caretakers and foster parents; as well as visits between children and their parents and siblings. Agencies are required to document all visitation and efforts made for visits. While regular required visitation is occurring with children in substitute care, Ohio did not meet the national standard of 90.0 percent for visitation of families receiving in-home services. In federal fiscal year 2013, Ohio met the requirement for only 67.58 percent of the cases. This required Ohio to submit a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to meet the CFSR measurement for case visits and subjects the state to a potential financial penalty.

The use of mobile technology creates efficiencies in meeting Ohio's Child Protection Oversight and Evaluation (CPOE) and the CFSR measures by providing access to SACWIS remotely, providing caseworkers the ability to record visits for documentation and enter data while in the field, and increase communication between staff and office through email and text.

One county reported that the use of mobile technology increased a worker's ability to visit families by adding one visit per day. It was also shared that both intake/investigators and ongoing workers were utilizing the technology.

Increased visitation compliance by the local public children services agencies will help ensure Ohio meets federal CFSR and state CPOE visitation standards. County agencies will demonstrate increased compliance in their CPOE and internal quality assurance score as related to visitation and the timeliness of their documentation.

Alternative Response

Alternative Response has been implemented statewide in all 88 counties. There are barriers with the specificity of current funding sources supporting child protective services work. This often makes it extremely difficult to provide the support for intact families.

The ability to provide tailored and identified services to children and families helps ensure that children remain safely in their homes or with kin whenever possible. Providing children and families with identified and necessary services helps ensure children's safety, stability and permanency.

In federal fiscal year 2013, Ohio's performance improvement goal for "Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence" was 93.3 percent; Ohio's performance was 93.1 percent. Strengthening Ohio's implementation of Alternative Response and Ohio's practice profiles may result in improving Ohio's performance on maltreatment recurrence. Considering safety, permanency and child well-being, there are a variety of locally identified approaches to meeting the immediate needs of children and families to ensure the children can remain in their own homes or with appropriate kin rather than enter foster care.

Statewide Foster Home Gap Analysis and Technical Assistance

Federal regulations and the Ohio Revised Code require that children are placed in the least restrictive environment and in close proximity to their families and school district. Children placed out of their neighborhoods experience increased trauma as they try to acclimate to a new environment. County caseworkers often spend more time traveling to visit children placed further away from their families, thereby creating barriers to providing effective visits and family visitation. Additionally, higher level-of-care placements are more costly.

County agencies report placing their children outside their communities due to a lack of local foster homes or appropriate level-of-care placements in their communities or nearby. This can result in paying higher foster care per diems for children, additional staff time to visit and manage the case, and barriers to reunifying the child and family. A clearer understanding of the foster home network in Ohio (type, availability and location) would assist the state in understanding barriers to foster home recruitment, certification and retention.

Efficiency and Innovation Fund

County public children services agencies are each unique in how they fund, manage and affect outcomes for the children and families that come to their attention. Some face challenges with resources that include staffing, availability of services, appropriate placements, etc. Others may not have explicit resource issues but lack flexible resources to advance practice ideas. Innovation conceived at the local level is directly targeted to the locally determined most-pressing need or innovative opportunity.

The action will be dependent upon the county request. Identified actions shall be clearly defined with anticipated tasks, leveraging current funding and must be measurable. Each local funding request must address at least one of the targeted areas required by the legislation. This must be articulated within the request for funds. Counties will submit progress reports at six months following funding availability and a final report.

It was proposed that all \$6.8 million be allocated to this Efficiency and Innovation Fund proposal. Funding will be released to public children services agencies on a grant basis following a brief application submission. Proposals will be scored and evaluated based on the extent to which the proposal reflects an efficiency or innovation to address a clearly stated concern, contains a thoughtful implementation plan, outlines a method to benchmark the project and demonstrate value.

