



Cuyahoga County
Together We Thrive

Cuyahoga Job and Family Services

Division of Children and Family Services Community Newsletter

October 2018, Issue 3

News and Updates

County Executive, Council, DCFS and Community Working Together to Improve Child Safety

DCFS is hard at work improving our efforts to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. In September Cuyahoga County Council approved measures that will help us move forward with recommendations made by the County Executive and an independent panel of child welfare experts.

Following are some, but not all of the improvements we are making to our processes.

1. Council approved the formation of a DCFS Advisory Board that will provide independent perspective and feedback to County and DCFS leadership. The Board will also be a link between DCFS and the community. The Board will be comprised of up to ten members from various backgrounds including a medical professional with knowledge of child abuse/neglect, birth parent, a foster parent, and a former youth in foster care. Members will be appointed to four-year terms by the County Executive, and appointments must be confirmed by Council. Details on how professionals and community members can apply to become a board member will be shared as soon as a formal application process is in place.
2. Council also approved \$1.6 million that will be used to hire retired law enforcement officers to assist with investigations of child abuse and neglect.
3. DCFS will hire 12 additional Child Protection Specialist (CPS) workers.

Beyond the measures approved by council DCFS is implementing efforts to strengthen investigations, increase engagement with fathers, increase community and neighborhood relationships, and increase mandated reporter training for child care providers.

DCFS Partners with Schools for Educational Stability of Children in Foster Care

Leaving home and family and being placed in foster care is a traumatic experience for children. Often, the connection a child has with a familiar and caring teacher, a principal, a counselor, an extracurricular program, or other familiar supports can make a significant difference in academic achievement. These supports provide some normalcy for children who are coping with the trauma of

family disruption, abuse, or neglect. Under a new federal law, the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA), children placed in foster care have the opportunity to continue attending their original school when it is in their best interest. When necessary, transportation may be provided by the school in collaboration with DCFS.

When remaining in her original school is not possible or recommended, a child can enroll in a new school without barriers such as providing a copy of a birth certificate, medical records and other required school records.

DCFS has appointed an education liaison to work internally with agency staff and externally with school systems to help facilitate registration, transportation, education plans, and communication between schools, agency staff, and families. Our goal is to work collaboratively to address educational needs and promote stability for youth in foster care.

Featured Neighborhood Collaborative

University Settlement

4800 Broadway Ave

Cleveland, Ohio 44127

Phone: 216.641.8948

<https://www.universitysettlement.net/>

Founded in 1926, University Settlement offers various programs for families, youth, and seniors in Cleveland's Broadway/Slavic Village neighborhood and Newburg Heights. [University Settlement's Family to Family Program](#) assists families who are involved with Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services who need resources, advocacy, and support.

Staff provide a family-friendly environment to all participants and encourage independence and personal growth. The program offers support groups for relatives, foster and adoptive caregivers, hosts reunification visits for relative or biological family members, and offers services for youth aging out of foster care. Additionally, the Family to Family Program manages University Settlement's Baby Box distribution. Baby Boxes are new baby starter kits that double as safe sleep spaces for infants. Parents with young children need only complete a short online class in order to receive a voucher that can be redeemed at University Settlement.

University Settlement is the lead agency of the Broadway Community Based Programs Collaborative. The Collaborative is comprised of local partner agencies who meet monthly to share information and resources in order to best serve our community. The mission of the Collaborative is to meet the needs of our residents, by enhancing their accessibility to community resources that improve the quality of life for individuals and families of the Broadway neighborhood.

For more information visit <https://www.universitysettlement.net/family-to-family/>

For a list of similar programs at other neighborhood partners, click on the Neighborhood Collaboratives link below.

Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative 11th Annual Fathers Walk

More than 158 schools across Cuyahoga County participated in this year's Fathers Walk. The mission of the Annual Fathers Walk is for fathers to walk their children to school, meet the school's administration and teachers, and pledge to stay involved in the academic lives of their children throughout the entire school year. The event is sponsored by the Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative, Passages and the Healthy Fathering Collaborative. The goals of the Fatherhood Initiative are to promote public awareness of the role of fathers, to provide linkages to other public systems and improve our current service delivery to fathers, and to fund fatherhood related programs on the county level.

<http://www.cleveland19.com/2018/09/20/annual-fathers-walk-chance-dads-father-figures-schools-step-up/>

CuyahogaKids.org Online Resource for Parents

CuyahogaKids.org is a free interactive resource for families with young children to find high-quality child care and preschool, fun things to do, interesting places to go, and get connected to important county resources.

The events, activities and fun places that parents see are entered by various content partners who post their events and locations. By ensuring that only well-established and trusted organizations can contribute content, The Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood can make sure the events are appropriate for young children and developmentally rich.

When searching for high-quality child care or preschool, CuyahogaKids.org only displays options that are rated high quality (three stars or higher) in Ohio's Step Up to Quality rating system, and directs parents first to sites participating in Invest In Children's Universal Pre-Kindergarten program. The search results provide additional information on how to reach the provider, and indicates where scholarship and other assistance may be available.

To get a clickable hyperlink to the site, parents can simply text the word "Kids" to 898-211.

DCFS Facts and Figures

Custody Data as of October 1, 2018

Court Ordered Protective Supervision (COPS) Children	723
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Children	2,775
Custody Type	
Emergency Custody/Ex-parte/Officer Acceptance/Agency Authority	751
Initial Voluntary Agreement for Custody	1
Permanent Custody/Surrender	524

Planned Perm. Living Arrangement (PPLA)	49
Temp. Custody 1st Extension	92
Temp. Custody 2nd Extension	41
Temporary Custody/Court Order	987
Total	2,445

[More details here.](#) *This report is updated weekly every Monday.

[Read the DCFS Yearly Statistical Report here](#)

Resources

[Online Resource Guide](#)

[Neighborhood Collaboratives](#)

[Mandated Reporting](#)

[Quality Parenting Initiative](#)

[Online Caregiver/Parenting Videos](#)

[Foster Parent Training Schedule](#)

[Adoptable Kids](#)