Mission Statement

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

- **Vision**
  Safety, permanency and well-being for every child

- **Mission**
  Through collaboration with families and their communities, we advocate for the safety, permanency, and well-being of each child we serve in a manner that honors family and culture.
Quick Facts
(2015)

- 31,728 referrals received
- 15,345 referrals Screened Out
- 13,692 referrals Screened In
  - 11,916 referrals CA/N
  - 1,777 referrals FINS
- 2,338 families transferred for ongoing services (18%)
- 58% of youth served were VPS, 15% protective supervision, and 27%
Operation

- Governed by Board of Directors appointed by Franklin County Commissioners
- 735 Staff
- Locations: 4071 E. Main St; 855 W. Mound St; 1919 Frank Rd
- Managed Care Providers: National Youth Advocate Program
  Permanent Family Solutions Network
- Operating Budget: $170 Million
Overseers of FCCS

• Highly regulated by mandates of State and Federal Law
  o ORC: State law that regulates child welfare practice.
    • Defines: abuse, neglect, dependency
  o OAC: Regulates investigations, case planning, visitations.
    • State of Ohio Screening Guidelines
    • Guidelines for Abuse, Neglect, Dependency, Family in Need of Services

• Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)

• Fully accredited by Council on Accreditation for Families and Children

• A member of the Child Welfare League of America
Making A Referral

- Franklin County Children Services is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Mandated reporters include licensed Social workers, counselors, therapists, etc.
- Referrals should include as much information as possible
- State of Ohio – SACWIS
- Information must be collected in order and the screener will guide you through the process.
- What happens after the referral is made?
Screening

Referral made to CPS

Referral classified as Child Abuse/Neglect (CA/N) OR Family in Need of Services (FINS) / Dependency → Screened In (Report accepted by CPS)

All CA/N reports are assigned to the Alternative Response Pathway, unless the report alleges serious or imminent harm. Reports alleging serious harm are assigned to the Traditional Pathway, and will result in an intake disposition.

Screened Out
Screening - Differential Response

• Traditional Response
  o Always required for reports of sexual abuse, abuse resulting in serious injury, and whenever children are determined to be in serious and immediate risk of harm
  o May involve court intervention
  o Will result in a determination/finding about the allegation

• Alternative Response
  o Used when reports of abuse or neglect do not allege serious or imminent harm
  o Does not result in a determination/finding about the allegations
  o An AR case may be “pathway switched” to TR if needed to ensure child safety (i.e. court intervention, serious harm occurs)
Screening - Case Categories

**Abuse**
- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Injury
- Emotional Maltreatment
- Domestic Violence
- Dangerous Acts

**Neglect**
- Failure to Provide Basic Needs (food, shelter, utilities, supervision, etc.)
- Homelessness as a result of the faults / habits of caregiver
- Environmental Neglect / Dirty Home
- Medical Neglect
- Educational Neglect

**Dependency (no fault)**
- Parent unable to provide basic needs by no fault of their own
- Mental health of child or parent
- Physical health of parent impeding their caretaking abilities

**FINS (Family in Need of Services)**
- *Family Request for preventative services
- Financial Hardship
- Unruly / Delinquent
- Extreme needs of child
Screening - Families in Need of Services (FINS)

• The agency may accept a referral solely to provide services:
  o To prevent homelessness or further penetration into the system
  o To support family stability, including assistance with locating housing or accessing community resources.

• Must be requested by the parent or guardian

• No allegations of abuse or neglect (and thus, no disposition or finding)
Screening Guidelines for Neglect

Neglected Child

ORC 2151.03

- A child abandoned by his parents
- A child who lacks parental care because of faults, or habits of the child’s parent or guardian.
- Because of omission of the child’s parents, guardian, or custodian, the child suffers physical or mental injury or threatens to harm the child’s physical or mental needs.
Screening & Assessment Guidelines for Neglect

- What does a neglectful, unsafe home environment look like based on FCCS standards?

- There are several factors that go into this assessment, which are heavily guided by the State’s guidelines. These include, but are not limited to:
  - The child’s age and developmental status that may contribute to risk
  - Whether or not home content presents a health or safety hazard (e.g. clutter or debris are present to the point that it prevents entrance to or exit from dwelling; exposed wiring within reach of child; unstable physical structure; fire hazard; excessive or rotten food that threatens health; human/animal waste accessible in living quarters; bugs or rodents that inhabit an infant’s body / bedding or are in or near food supply, etc).
  - Whether the family has the resources to meet the basic needs of the family to include shelter, utilities (especially during winter months), food, etc.
Homelessness (Assessment)

- Where is family currently living?
- Where did the family live prior?
- What is housing plan and what is available to family?
- Does the family have friends or family that can assist temporarily/permanently?
- How are basic needs being met?
- How are children impacted by the living environment?
- What services has the family utilized?
How does FCCS determine whether or not to remove children when a family is experiencing homelessness?
• **Diversion efforts where families can remain together**
  - Extended Family (short-term or long-term)
  - Friends (short-term or long-term)
  - Emergency Shelter (short-term)
  - Hotels (short-term, 1-2 weeks, used sparingly, with a goal to secure housing by the end of the hotel stay)

• **Availability of resources**
  - Does have the family have *income* to support housing stability?

• **Other options**
  - Respite Care (short-term foster care / voluntary / no court involvement)
  - 30-Day Voluntary Agreement for Custody (no court involvement)
  - Out-of-Home Safety plan (voluntary)
  - Legally Authorized Out of Home Placement
    - 24-hour emergency / Officer Acceptance
    - Court Order
CAPMIS

• Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model- Interim Solution

• The model involves structured decision making by using tools to assess a child’s safety, develop safety plans for children, and conduct family and reunification assessments.

• The model provides for consistent decision making from the time a child enters the system until closure.
Safety Response

• Child is assessed to be safe
• Safety threat needs to be controlled for child to be safe:
  o In Home Safety Plan
  o Out of Home Safety Plan
  o Voluntary Agreement for Custody (short term)
  o Court Action
Family Assessment

• The Family Assessment is a holistic assessment of the family and all household members.
• The assessment is completed within 45 days after the receipt of the referral.
• Completed once the intake caseworker has completed their assessment/investigation.
Continuing Services

- Following Intake Process, should a family need services the case will transfer to ongoing region.
- Caseworker will be expected:
  - to involve the family throughout all the agency processes
  - develop case plan with the family
  - visitations with family
  - formally review the case every 90 days
  - provide case management services
  - provide feedback to the court
FCCS can petition the court to authorize agency involvement in a family’s life.

- The court may order custody to the agency.
- The court may order protective services be provided to the family.
Thank You!

For the opportunity to share the role of Franklin County Children Services in the difficult task of protecting children.

Additional information can be found on our public website @ http://childrenservices.franklincountyohio.gov/

Emily Green
Associate Director
Intake & Investigations
614-229-7180
elgreen@fccs.us