



Ohio Family and Children First Transition Manual 2010

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Executive Summary

“A strong and effective Children’s Cabinet can improve coordination and efficiency across state departments and local levels of government; mobilize resources around the governor’s priorities for children; facilitate a holistic approach to serving children; and strengthen partnerships with the non-profit and private sectors”.

-National Governors Association Center for Best Practice

Ohio Family and Children First is the Children’s Cabinet for Ohio. In 1993 under the leadership of then Governor Voinovich, Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) Cabinet Council was created in statute to help families and their children by coordinating and streamlining government services, systems, and resources. Made up of eleven children, youth, and family serving state agencies (departments of Aging, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, Developmental Disabilities, Education, Health, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Rehabilitation and Correction, Youth Services, Office of Budget and Management, and the Rehabilitation Services Commission), the OFCF Cabinet Council oversees the local Family and Children First Councils (FCFC) which coordinates services in each of Ohio’s 88 counties.

The mission of the OFCF Cabinet Council is to build a partnership of state and local government, communities, and families that enhances the well-being of Ohio’s children and families. This partnership brings community leaders out of their day-to-day systems to work together to align systems, services, and resources around a shared vision for Ohio’s families and children (ages 0 to 25).

The OFCF Cabinet and the 88 county FCFCs are the critical structure that is needed for Ohio’s economic future. The OFCF Cabinet is responsible for:

- Serving as the Governor’s clearinghouse for federal and private grants that often requires a collaborative structure for the application and implementation of the grant. By collaborating on grants, departments share resources in preparing for grants; align existing and future efforts; and are more successful in obtaining federal and private monies.
- Aligning services, resources, initiatives, policies/rules, and planning requirements across departments. This reduces the duplication of efforts that often occurs across and within departments and thus, reduce the fiscal impact on the state.
- Advising the Governor, General Assembly, and local government regarding the state’s provision of services and the needed alignment of resources to build a coordinated service delivery system for children and families. This level of accountability ensures the Cabinet is working to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities.
- Strengthening the county FCF councils by providing leadership, outreach, and being responsive to locally identified barriers impacting service delivery to children and families. Services, supports, and resources are provided locally, not at the state level. Therefore, it benefits the Cabinet to strengthen the local service delivery structure so that a strong and seamless service delivery system exists for all children and families.

The county FCF councils are responsible for:

- Mobilizing child and family serving partners to address the needs of children and families through comprehensive planning to identify, prioritize, and implement needed services to fill the gaps. FCF councils must annually monitor, evaluate, and communicate progress to improving the well-being of children and families to the OFCF Cabinet.

**Ohio Family and Children First
Transition Manual, November 2010**

- Aligning services, resources, initiatives, and policies/rules to reduce the duplication of efforts that often occurs from the state level and at the local level.
- Coordinating services and supports for individual families that require family-centered team planning, community involvement, pooled resources, and identification of existing and needed services.
- Recruiting and supporting families to be active contributing members on council and advocate on behalf of children and families.

OFCF is the only state and county level infrastructure focused on the needs and issues of children spanning from birth to adulthood (with some FCFCs focusing on the entire lifespan) and their families. This Children's Cabinet has grown since 1993 by strengthening its primary functions and demonstrating the effectiveness a partnership of government agencies, private agencies, and communities can have when working together to improve child and family well-being outcomes in Ohio. Since 2006, OFCF has significantly reduced administrative costs while still pursuing programmatic efficiencies in the delivery, coordination, and alignment of services for children and families as seen by the recent successes.

The OFCF Cabinet Council has been implementing a strategic plan for SFY 10-11 focused on cross-system alignment, flexible funding, integrated data sharing, and local community capacity building. Several key accomplishments to highlight include:

- Improved access to needed services for children with multi-system needs and significantly reduced costly out of home placements by leveraging about \$8m of federal funds with state funding from numerous state agencies to provide respite care, family support programming, early childhood mental health consultation, and parent advocacy services.
- Established a child well-being indicator portal as part of the Better Lives, Better Ohio website. This provides real-time state and county trend data for over thirty-some child well-being indicators. This helps state and local leaders make better decisions about child and youth policy and planning needs.
- Developed a proposal to increase flexible funding at the local level by authorizing county FCFCs to pool specific state funding streams to meet the multiple needs of children and families. This would become effective with SFY 12-13 budget.
- Executed a strategic plan to coordinate and strengthen the state's efforts to assure that youth are educated and successfully enter the workforce as they become adults.
- Enhanced coordination of family engagement in health, education, and social services programming.
- Nationally recognized by the Forum for Youth Investment and the National Center for Juvenile Justice for being an effective and efficient coordinating body for children and families at the state and local level. An assessment conducted by the Forum for Youth Investment with future gubernatorial recommendations is available at the below link.

The full Transition Report describes the structure of Family and Children First, the core functions, the available support and technical assistance for county FCFCs, the OFCF Cabinet Council's accomplishments, and ongoing initiatives and priorities. The report can also be accessed at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/shared-accountability/cabinet-council.dot>.

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I. History, Mission, Vision, and Goals

History/Statute

Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) Cabinet Council and the 88 county Family and Children First Councils (FCFC) were legislatively codified in 1993 by Section 121.37 of the Ohio Revised Code. Family and Children First Council is a partnership of government agencies, community organizations, and families committed to improving the well-being of children and families through strategic coordination of resources. This partnership is intended to draw people out of their day-to-day systems and align resources, programs, and efforts around a shared vision for Ohio's families and children.

The OFCF Cabinet Council is comprised of eleven state agencies (Ohio Departments of Aging, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, Developmental Disabilities, Education, Health, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Rehabilitation and Correction, Youth Services, Office of Budget and Management, and the Rehabilitation Services Commission). The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission is not a statutorily mandated member, but language has been submitted to add this department in the SFY 12-13 budget bill. Per statute, the Governor is responsible for convening the OFCF Cabinet Council and designating a chair for the Cabinet. Previous chairs of the OFCF Cabinet Council have been the Governor's chief of staff, executive assistants, cabinet directors, and the First Lady.

The OFCF Cabinet Council is responsible for:

- Serving as the Governor's clearinghouse for federal and private grants that often requires a collaborative structure for the application and implementation of the grant. By collaborating on grants, departments can share resources in preparing for grants; align existing and future efforts; and be more successful in obtaining federal and private monies.
- Aligning services, resources, initiatives, policies/rules, and planning requirements across departments. This reduces the duplication of efforts that often occurs across and within departments and thus, reduce the fiscal impact on the state.
- Advising the Governor, General Assembly, and local government regarding the state's provision of services and the needed alignment of resources to build a coordinated service delivery system for children and families. This level of accountability ensures the Cabinet is working to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities.
- Strengthening the county FCF councils by providing leadership, outreach, and being responsive to locally identified barriers impacting service delivery to children and families. Services, supports, and resources are provided locally, not at the state level. Therefore, it befits the Cabinet to strengthen the local service delivery structure so that a strong and seamless service delivery system exists for all children and families.

Locally, the county commissioners are responsible for regulating the 88 county Family and Children First Councils (FCFC). According to statute, the county FCFC's membership must consist of the governmental entities representing alcohol and drug addiction, mental health, health (city and county), job and family services, children protective services, youth services, education (largest school district and another district), developmental disabilities,

and early childhood. In addition, the county FCFC must have a local non-profit organization as a mandated member and at least three parents who have received services from any of the governmental agencies. Most county FCFCs will add additional members as needed and appropriate.

The county FCF councils are responsible for:

- Mobilizing child and family serving partners to address the needs of children and families through comprehensive planning to identify, prioritize, and implement needed services to fill the gaps. FCF councils must annually monitor, evaluate, and communicate progress to improving the well-being of children and families to the OFCF Cabinet.
- Aligning services, resources, initiatives, and policies/rules to reduce the duplication of efforts that often occurs from the state level and at the local level.
- Coordinating services and supports for individual families that require family-centered team planning, community involvement, pooled resources, and identification of existing and needed services.
- Recruiting and supporting families to be active contributing members on council and advocate on behalf of children and families.

Mission Statement

OFCF is a partnership of state and local government, communities and families that enhances the well-being of Ohio's children and families by building community capacity, coordinating systems and services, and engaging and empowering families.

Vision Statement

Ohio's families and children thrive and succeed within healthy communities.

Goals

In 2009, the OFCF Cabinet Council approved its SFY 10-11 strategic plan (below is the plan's logic model). The plan was developed based on challenges and issues raised by the 88 county FCFCs as well as areas the state needs to work on improving coordination and alignment across departments for children and families. The full plan can be accessed at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/initiatives/>. Progress with this plan can be found on page 15.

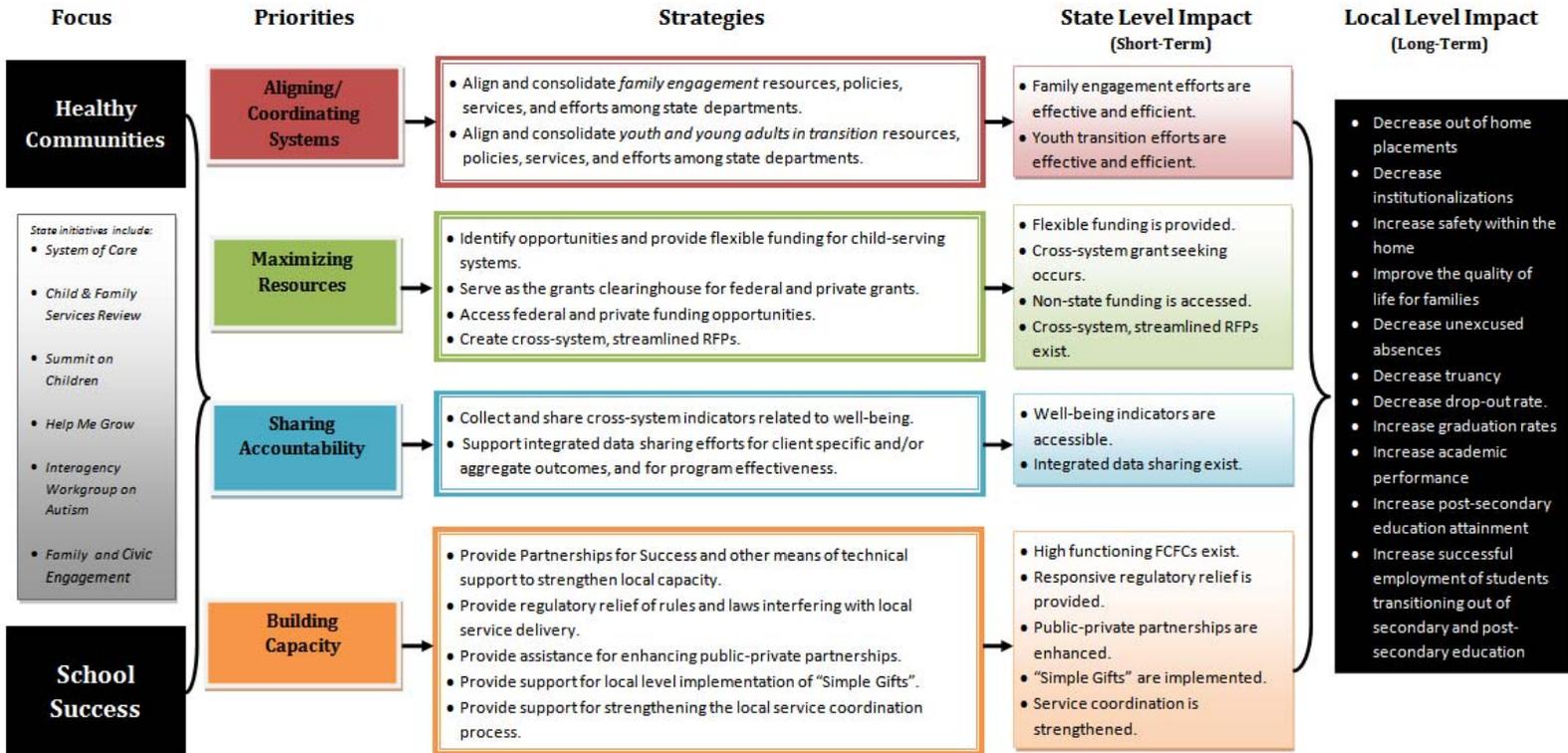
The OFCF Cabinet Council committed itself to accomplishing their priorities with the goal of ultimately impacting the following long term outcomes:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Decrease out of home placements | • Increase graduation rates |
| • Decrease institutionalizations | • Increase academic performance |
| • Increase safety within the home | • Increase post-secondary education attainment |
| • Improve the quality of life for families | • Increase successful employment of students transitioning out of secondary and post-secondary education. |
| • Decrease unexcused absences from school | |
| • Decrease truancy | |
| • Decrease drop-out rate | |



OFCF Cabinet Council's SFY 10-11 Plan

Shared Vision: Children and families thrive and succeed within healthy communities.



II. Organizational Structure

OFCF Cabinet Council

The OFCF Cabinet Council is statutorily defined as a Governor’s Children Cabinet. As stated above, the OFCF Cabinet Council is comprised of the superintendent of public instruction; the directors of aging; alcohol and drug addiction; budget and management; developmental disabilities; health; job and family services; mental health; rehabilitation and correction; and youth services. The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission serves as a non-statutory member. Per statute, the Governor is responsible for convening the OFCF Cabinet Council and designating a chair for the Cabinet. Previous chairs of the OFCF Cabinet Council have been the Governor’s chief of staff, executive assistants, cabinet directors, and the First Lady. The OFCF Cabinet Council meets monthly.

OFCF Office

The OFCF Cabinet Council has historically had an office to provide support, assistance, and leadership for its work. The OFCF office is administratively managed by the Ohio Department of Mental Health. Previous administrative agents have included the Ohio Departments of Job and Family Services, Education, and Developmental Disabilities.

There has been significant reduction in costs associated with the OFCF Office. Since 2003, 8 office positions and 5 contract staff have been eliminated. Two of those eight office positions were eliminated in SFY 09 and 10. In addition, state-level operations were moved within state departments, thereby eliminating the need to rent separate office space.

While administrative costs have been scaled back significantly, OFCF staff continues to pursue programmatic efficiencies in the delivery of services. The OFCF office has five staff (one Director, three Regional Coordinators, and an Executive Secretary).

The Director is responsible for supervising the OFCF staff; operationalizing cross-system state initiatives and priorities; facilitating communication, partnership, and planning between the Governor's Office and state OFCF Cabinet agencies; engaging in budget and policy matters impacting children, youth, and families; providing communication, support, and technical assistance to the 88 county FCFCs; actively participating on key state committees to create linkages and reduce duplication of efforts; promoting the Children's Cabinet throughout the state and nationally; and maintaining the office budget and daily expenditures.

The Executive Secretary provides support and assistance to the OFCF staff and the county FCFCs; processes fiscal related items; coordinates meetings and other activities; manages OFCF's website and main phone line.

The three Regional Coordinators are responsible for providing technical assistance, training, facilitation, and communication to the 88 county FCFCs; participating on state committees and activities related to OFCF priorities; connecting with state partners to identify and develop technical assistance for FCFCs; reviewing local FCFCs' administrative grants and other state required documents; and providing information about counties' needs and issues to Cabinet Council. The regional coordinators are located at three OSU Extension offices throughout the state with a significantly reduced rent rate.

OCF Committees

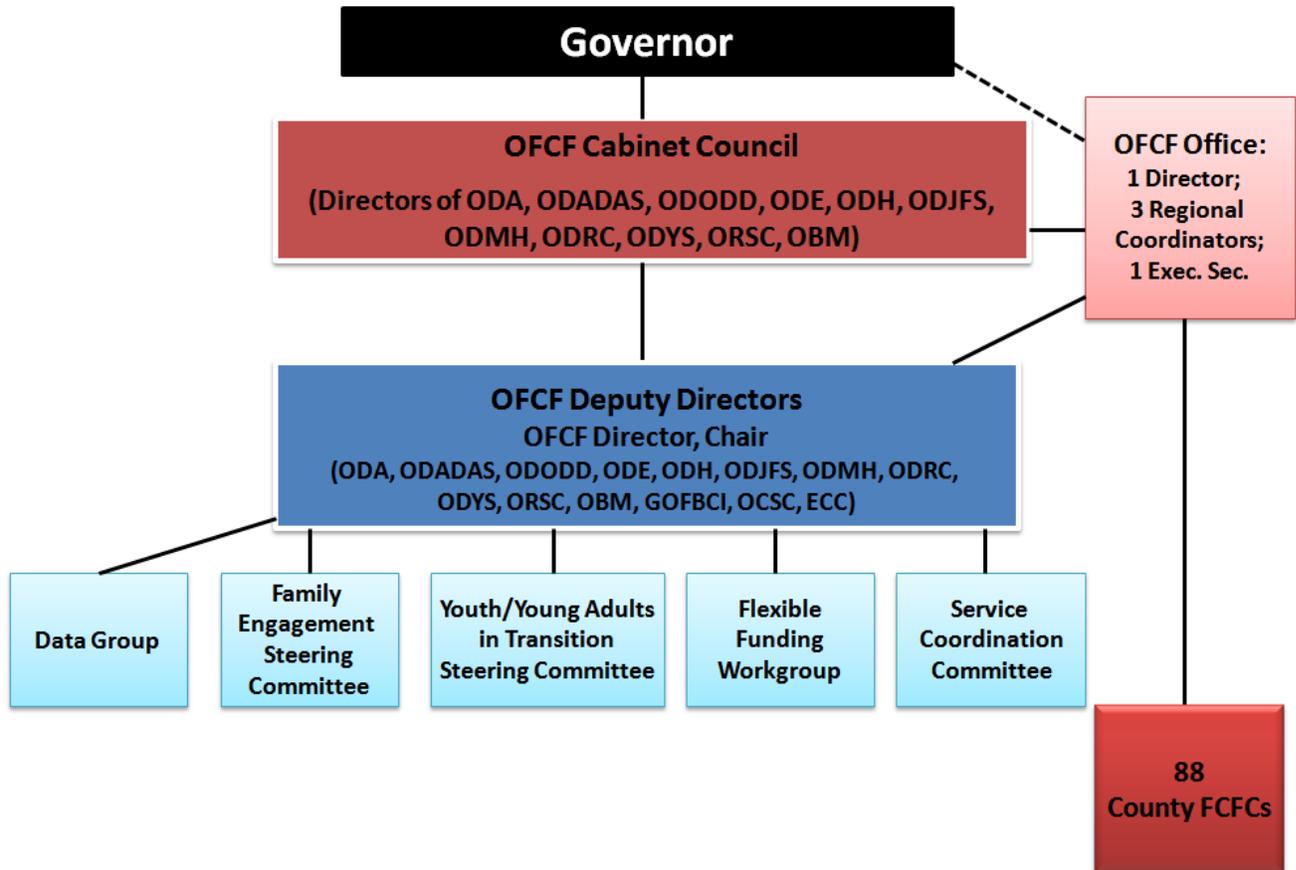
In order to ensure the responsibilities of the OFCF Cabinet as defined on page 5 and other identified cross-system work are being carried out, the OFCF Office chairs a committee consisting of the Deputy Directors from the eleven state agencies along with representation from the Ohio Supreme Court, Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, Early Childhood Cabinet, Ohio Community Services Commission, and the Fatherhood Commission. This committee is referred to as the OFCF Deputy Directors. The OFCF Deputy Directors meets monthly.

Two other standing committees include the OFCF Child Well-Being Data Group, responsible for ensuring cross-system data collection and analysis of child well-being data; and the OFCF Service Coordination Committee, responsible for responding to service coordination referrals from county FCFCs. These two committees meet when needed. Other committees are established based on current OFCF Cabinet Council's priorities, initiatives, and needs.

Table of Organization

Below is a current table of organization for the OFCF Cabinet and its Office.

OFCF Table of Organization



III. Funding OFCF and the 88 FCFCs

Ohio Family and Children First is supported by non-GRF pooled funds (DMH Fund 232: 333-621) from the participating state cabinet agencies. The contribution level for each state agency is based on a sound funding formula that contains 3 variables and each is weighted accordingly. The funding formula is available on the OFCF’s website at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/shared-accountability/funding-information.dot>.

Staffing is the primary driver of the budget. In addition to employee salaries and benefits for five individuals, the funding level supports limited travel, office supplies, and rent for the regional coordinators at the three OSU extension offices. The OFCF Office budget has been reduced by almost 40% since FY 08. Therefore, OFCF reduced the number of regional coordinators from five to three in September 2009. The total OFCF Office budget for SFY 11 is \$469,603.00. The proposed SFY 12 budget for the OFCF office budget is \$578,300. This includes the office operations at \$465,000 plus funding for a public-private

partnership to expand a family engagement website (\$38,000), Parent Advocacy Connection's regional coordinators to support and staff the website (\$72,800), and stipends for youth and parents to participate on committees (\$2,500).

The eighty-eight (88) county Family and Children First Councils (FCFC) are currently supported by the state GRF through ODMH line item 335-405 (\$1.50m/year or \$17,069 per FCFC for SFY 11). This appropriation is almost a 20% reduction from SFY 08-09. The County FCFCs have maintained an annual appropriation at or below \$20,000 per county since the inception of the initiative in 1993. FCFCs continue to evolve to meet both new and existing state initiatives; greater accountability demands required; and the resulting increase of children and families in need of identified services locally. The state GRF administrative allocation for county FCFCs defrays costs associated with the maintenance of the county FCFC which usually includes a FCFC coordinator, training, parent stipends, providing public awareness and education, financing audit costs (ranging from \$3,000-\$15,000, see below for a possible solution), and coordinating services for children, youth and families. The average FCFC coordinator's salary is \$40,000 with benefits.

The cost of the audit that county FCFCs have had to endure has been a long-standing issue and one that creates financial burden locally and as well as duplication. This issue could be resolved by amending section 117.13 of the Ohio Revised Code and adding the following language to section (C): the cost of audits of local public offices, *excluding County FCFCs, in which costs will be absorbed by the administrative agent of the county FCFC per ORC 121.37(B)(5)(a) as part of the agency's county audit.* In addition, section 117.01 would have to be amended to exclude county FCFCs from an audit and the cost of the audit which would be absorbed as a part of its respective agency's county audit. This recommended statutory change has been submitted for SFY 12-13 budget consideration.

IV. Core Functions of Family and Children First

There are four core functions of Family and Children First that are mandated by law, drive the work of FCFC, and demonstrate the uniqueness of such a collaborative: (1) Building Community Capacity; (2) Coordinating Systems and Services; (3) Engaging and Empowering Families; and (4) Sharing Accountability for a Shared Vision.



The Office of OFCF has worked with county FCFC to develop a model of effective practice for each of these four core FCFC functions. The models can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/resources/effective-practice-model.dot>.

I. Building Community Capacity

One of the unique functions and a required mandate of Family and Children First Councils is to mobilize community child and family serving partners to improve the well-being of children and families. The mandate for county FCFCs to build community capacity derives from the passage of H.B. 289 (effective August 2006). H.B. 289 requires each county FCFC to do annual planning and reporting related to improving child well being. Each county FCFC developed and submitted a H.B. 289 comprehensive four year plan to the OFCF Cabinet Council that included a needs assessment, resource assessment, a gap analysis, along with a plan to address its highest priorities in 2007. Since then each county FCFC has annually submitted a report on its progress with achieving its plan. The most current county FCFC H.B. 289 reports can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/shared-accountability/child-well-being-data.dot>.

The 88 county FCFCs are required to undergo another comprehensive planning process in SFY 11 with the plan due in July 2011. Instead of requiring the county FCFCs to do a separate planning process from their members as this is often duplicating efforts locally, the H.B. 289 process will transition into a shared planning model developed by OFCF in partnership with The OSU Center for Learning Excellence. The shared planning model is about aligning local plans for addressing priorities related to children and families. The shared planning model is a simplified process that builds on data informed plans that already exist in the community. The FCFCs may need to do some additional research to support their shared planning and/or fill any data gaps, but will not be required to conduct comprehensive planning. The new shared planning model can be found at <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/building-community-capacity/hb-289-plan-and-report.dot>.

In addition to statute requirements for FCFC planning, the OFCF Cabinet Council has provided support and technical assistance to county FCFCs to effectively build community capacity and strengthen county FCFCs. The approach the OFCF Cabinet Council sponsored from SFY 2003-2009 is called Partnerships for Success (PFS). PFS exists to:

1. mobilize and strengthen the cross-system planning and implementation capacities of county FCFCs.
2. reduce duplication of effort between and among state and local agencies.
3. make better local decisions that lead to better investments of public dollars.
4. evaluate the impact of county investments with an eye toward accountability.
5. provide for long-term sustainability of effective state and locally sponsored programs and services.

Fifty-five (55) county FCFCs have successfully completed at least the first of two years of the Partnerships for Success (PFS) initiative. The county FCFCs that have received the PFS approach tend to be more collaborative with greater community support, more focused on its highest priorities, and leverage additional non-state resources to support its efforts and

further its work. The return on investment for PfS is for every \$1 spent on PfS, counties were able to leverage \$3 in return.

PfS is provided in partnership with The OSU Center for Learning Excellence. Ohio Department of Youth Services had the line item appropriation for PfS as the lead for this initiative, but the SFY 10-11 budget did not support funding for PfS.

However, the Ohio Department of Education provided funding to The OSU Center for Learning Excellence in SFY 10-11 to assist county FCFC, Educational Services Centers, and school districts with its new initiative, Family and Civic Engagement. While county FCFCs will not be able to receive the traditional PfS process, the intention under this new initiative will be to continue to strengthen county FCFCs as well as school districts' Family and Civic Engagement teams.

Other efforts to assist with building community capacity includes supporting county FCFCs with strengthening their public-private partnerships, providing regulatory relief of rules and laws that interfere with local service delivery, and promoting Dr. Dennis Embry's evidence-based "kernels" or "Simple Gifts" statewide.

In addition, the OFCF Cabinet Council and its OFCF Data Group worked in partnership with the Secretary of State's office to establish a child well-being indicator portal as part of the Secretary of State's Better Lives, Better Ohio site. The county FCFCs have asked since the passage of H.B. 289 for real-time access to county child well-being data. This request has been accomplished by establishing this site which contains state and county trend data for over thirty-some child well-being indicators. The site can be viewed at: <http://www2.sos.state.oh.us/pls/blbo/f?p=111:18:803674120375482>.

II. Coordinating Systems and Services

Another unique function and required mandate of Family and Children First Councils is to provide a formalized venue to facilitate the alignment of systems, policies, resources, and services with and for children and families. There are two levels of coordinating systems and services.

The first level is the macro level which requires the OFCF Cabinet and the county FCFCs to effectively align systems and resources to meet the needs of children and families in the communities. The OFCF Cabinet Council is addressing this requirement by focusing on coordinating and aligning systems and resources related to youth and young adults in transition (see page 15) and family engagement (see page 15). FCFCs address this level through the service coordination process described below as well as through the H.B. 289 shared planning process defined under I. Building Community Capacity.

The second level is the micro level which requires county FCFCs to develop a county service coordination mechanism to serve as the guiding document for coordination of services in the county for families with children with multi-systemic needs. FCFCs must offer and have available a service coordination process for families and agencies to access.

The service coordination process is intended to be child-centered and family-focused, with the strengths and needs of the child and family guiding the types and mix of services to be provided. It is critical that services and supports are responsive to the cultural, racial and ethnic differences of the family. Each system has areas of responsibility, and the collaborative approach is not intended to replace or usurp the primary role of any one of these systems.

The 88 county FCFCs were required by the OFCF Cabinet Council to update their service coordination mechanism in SFY 10 and ensure all statutorily mandated components were clearly described and identified in their mechanism. In addition, the county FCFCs were required to extend service coordination from children 0-18 to now children and youth ages 0 through 21. This update also focused on increasing consistency on how families can access and what they can expect from the FCFC service coordination process. OFCF Cabinet Council provided guidance on what should be in the county service coordination mechanism. The guidance along with a local toolkit to show excellent examples developed by county FCFCs can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/coordinating-systems-and-services/service-coordination-toolkit/>. In addition, the county FCFC Service Coordination Mechanisms can be found on the website by clicking on a county from the state map located on the website's home page: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/>.

The OFCF Cabinet is responsible for assisting with the coordination of services for children and families and must be responsive to referrals and appeals from county FCFCs and families. In SFY 09, the OFCF Cabinet formalized the process including establishing a state service coordination committee for which counties can seek and receive assistance with specific service coordination cases. The formalized process is described on the website at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/coordinating-systems-and-services/service-coordination-state-committee.dot>.

Prior to the SFY 2006-2007 biennium budget, service coordination financial support was targeted for the most difficult-to-serve children and youth. Counties could access funding through a state budget line called "Cluster Funding". These funds have since been incorporated into the Access to Better Care Initiative under ODMH, which is now referred to as System of Care (DMH 335-4040). However in SFY 10-11, a portion of the System of Care funds, known as Family-Centered Services and Supports funding, were allocated to the county FCFCs to support service coordination and the families' non-clinical needs.

Beyond specific initiatives such as System of Care being linked directly with FCFC service coordination, funding for this key function is not being supported at the state level, but may be locally supported with community pooled dollars if resources exist. If such resources do not exist, the lack of funding creates a challenge for counties to provide a high quality service coordination process and support the services needed for children and families as identified through the service coordination planning process.

In addition to the lack of resources to properly finance service coordination and the services and/or supports identified through service coordination, there is a great gap in the quality of service coordination across the state. To address this gap and provide counties

with the proper training, technical assistance, support, and resources, a proposal was developed through a Governor sponsored service coordination team that if funded, would have raised the level of quality for service coordination as well as the quantity of families being served. The proposal which has not been implemented due to the lack of resources but can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/coordinating-systems-and-services/high-fidelity-wraparound.dot>.

III. Engaging and Empowering Families

The OFCF Cabinet Council and county FCFCs have a unique role to recruit and support parents to be active contributing members on county FCF councils; be involved in key decision-making efforts; and serve as an advocate for children, families, and communities.

The mandate for county FCFCs to engage and empower families is referenced in statute. It requires county FCFCs to have at least three family representatives, and where possible, 20% of membership as mandated members on FCF council and to obtain input from a broad representation of families. Families utilizing the council's service coordination process must be informed and invited to all family team service coordination meetings. Families have the right to initiate a family team service coordination meeting, and can invite any advocate or support person.

Over the years, OFCF has placed emphasis on engaging and empowering families to be a participating member of FCFCs and advocate on behalf of child and family issues. At one time, OFCF had regional family engagement coordinators that supported and trained families for such a role. These positions were eliminated due to budget constraints several years ago, and as a result, actions to support family engagement and empowerment have diminished.

To support families in becoming more engaged and empowered with FCFCs, OFCF has held regional family network meetings. The purpose of these network meetings was to provide updates regarding state's actions and work; to elicit feedback from them; and to begin developing regional networks of families that can support, educate and connect with one another. The regional network meetings have been put on hold due to travel restrictions and the lack of funding to provide parents with stipends and/or mileage to attend.

OFCF researched the needs of families throughout the state as it relates to engagement and empowerment. The research led to the creation of the Family Engagement Steering Committee which is charged with aligning resources, programs, policies, and efforts across state departments. The committee consists of parents, parent organizations, parent advocates, key external stakeholders, and state agency representatives. The Family Engagement Steering Committee has developed a strategic plan which it is in the process of implementing. This plan can be viewed at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/initiatives/family-engagement.dot>.

V. Key Accomplishments

I. Family Engagement:

The Family Engagement Steering Committee was established by the OFCF Cabinet Council in July 2009 with the charge to increase coordination and alignment of family engagement in health, education, and social service programming. The steering committee developed and executed a strategic plan in May 2010 which can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/initiatives/family-engagement.dot>. Since that time, the committee focused on accomplishing the plan's priority of establishing a website for parents and professionals. Through research, the committee discovered a website already existed in northeast Ohio and is operated by the Ronald McDonald House of Cleveland. The OFCF Cabinet Council agreed to partner with the Ronald McDonald House and efforts are underway to expand its current website statewide.

II. Youth and Young Adults in Transition:

The OFCF Cabinet Council established the Youth and Young Adults in Transition Steering Committee in September 2009. The steering committee developed and is executing a strategic plan to coordinate, align, and strengthen the state departments' efforts to assure that youth are educated and successfully enter the workforce as they become adults. The target population is youth and young adults ages 14 to 25, with a particular emphasis on those most vulnerable. Draft statutory language has been submitted to establish the Steering Committee as a permanent committee to the OFCF Cabinet Council. The current strategic planning report can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/initiatives/youth-and-young-adults-transition.dot>.

III. Flexible Funding:

The OFCF Cabinet Council established the Flexible Funding Workgroup in January 2010 as a result of the 66 counties citing in a survey as well as at the Summit on Children and during the 88 county First Lady visits to the county FCFCs that the most pressing barrier to serving their community was the need for increased flexibility in funding. The counties specifically requested that there be a reduction in restrictions, strings, and earmarks as funds are in "silos" which only allows for a narrow provision of services; not focused on local needs. When agencies are working across systems they still struggle as it is often challenging and impossible to identify possible funding streams and pool funding. Counties requested flexible funding that can be used based upon each county's determination of the most urgent needs of children, their families and adults in their community.

The Flexible Funding Workgroup developed a proposal that would increase the flexibility in funding and submitted it to the OFCF Cabinet Council in August 2010. The proposal was accepted by the OFCF Cabinet Council. Through temporary statute language, local public agencies would now have the flexibility to transfer specific allocated State General Revenue Funds (GRF) to a flexible funding pool. Although State GRF allocated to various local public agencies has requirements on what the funds can be spent on, the State GRF transferred to the flexible funding pool sheds those requirements. Funds transferred to the flexible funding pool can be used to meet the specific needs of children, families and adults in the

community by providing any needed services. The funds may also be carried over to the next fiscal year to allow flexibility at the local level with spending. The proposal, draft guiding principles, and submitted temporary language can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/initiatives/flexible-funding.dot>.

IV. Data Sharing:

The OFCF Cabinet Council charged its Data Group to work in partnership with the Secretary of State's office and establish a child well-being indicator portal as part of the Better Lives, Better Ohio site. The county FCFCs have asked since the passage of H.B. 289 for real-time access to county child well-being data. This request has been accomplished by establishing this site which contains state and county trend data for over thirty-some child well-being indicators. This helps state and local leaders make better decisions about child and youth policy and planning needs. The site can be accessed at: <http://www2.sos.state.oh.us/pls/blbo/f?p=111:18:803674120375482>.

V. Cross-System Efforts to Leverage Resources:

The OFCF Cabinet Council has improved access to needed services for children with multi-system needs by leveraging almost \$8m of federal funds with state funding from numerous state agencies to provide respite care, family support programming, early childhood mental health consultation, and parent advocacy services. The effort is part of the System of Care Initiative (see below).

VI. Consolidation of State Committees:

At the request of the Governor's office, the OFCF Deputy Directors reviewed all the existing health, human services, juvenile justice, aging, and education committees (including task forces, advisory councils, boards) that are statutorily mandated and non-mandated. From the review, the OFCF Deputy Directors recommended what committees should be eliminated, consolidated with other committees, aligned with other committees, or kept standing. These recommendations were approved by the OFCF Cabinet Council and sent to the Governor's Office for consideration. A copy of these recommendations can be accessed from the OFCF office.

VII. Highlighted in the National Center for Juvenile Justice Ohio Courts Bulletin

In August 2010, the National Center for Juvenile Justice highlighted the successes and strengths of the OFCF Cabinet Council and the county FCFCs. The special bulletin was shared nationally as well as with Ohio's juvenile courts, the Ohio Supreme Court, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and county partners. The bulletin can be accessed at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/dotAsset/11673.pdf>.

VIII. Recognition from the Forum for Youth Investment

The Forum for Youth Investment which is a non-profit, nonpartisan action tank dedicated to helping states and communities make sure all young people are Ready by 21® and manages the Children's Cabinet Network. Various publications from the Forum for Youth Investment highlights the OFCF Cabinet Council's achievements related to data sharing, child well-being indicator development, the local FCFC structure, and shared accountability. Publications can be accessed at: <http://forumfyi.org/>.

VI. Ongoing OFCF Initiatives & Priorities

The OFCF Cabinet Council either creates or is connected to key cross-system state initiatives and priorities. Below are the current initiatives and priorities which are also reflected in the OFCF Cabinet Council SFY 10-11 plan (see page 7).

I. System of Care

The OFCF Cabinet Council working in conjunction with advocates, family members, and local officials developed an intensive major children's initiative called Access to Better Care (ABC). ABC was enacted as part of the FY 06-07 biennial budget. This initiative was created based on growing concerns documented in media reports and supported by data that children and youth with alcohol, drug and/or mental health issues were not having their needs addressed and at times, could only access services to meet their needs by relinquishing custody or obtaining an out-of-home placement.

The ABC Initiative has been transformed to the System of Care Initiative. It has streamlined the various ABC pilots and provided more flexible funding at the local level. The framework for the System of Care (SOC) initiative describes the OFCF Cabinet's commitment to implement a coordinated continuum of services and supports for all children and families, with an emphasis on behavioral health care. SOC is a broad, flexible array of effective services and supports that focus on family-centered practice, community-based services, strengthening the capacity of families, and providing individualized services.

The System of Care Initiative is comprised of cross-system funding that supports child and youth behavioral health prevention, early identification and treatment. It focuses on outcomes associated with early intervention and intensive home and community based treatment. It also focuses on preventing costly out-of-home care by providing non-clinical services and supports to families with children with multi-systemic needs. The intending outcomes for System of Care are:

- Coordinate available services and supports across the developmental spectrum and age continuum
- Increase family engagement in diverse communities
- Reduce costly out of home placements, including institutionalizations
- Increase flexible funding for local child-serving systems
- Prevent custody relinquishment

The foundational SOC components for SFY 10-11 are Children's Community Behavioral Health (CCBH); Family-Centered Services and Supports (FCSS); Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC); and Behavioral Health-Juvenile Justice (BH/JJ) projects.

System of Care is funded by the ODMH, ODJFS, ODODD, ODYS, and ODADAS for a total of \$15.7m in SFY 10-11. All departments have confirmed to contribute at the same level for SFY 12-13 (depending on the budget).

The System for Care will continue as an OFCF Cabinet initiative, but will also be associated for SFY 12-13 with Best Evidence for Advancing Childhealth in Ohio Now (BEACON). BEACON will assist in identifying certain measurable outcomes and best practices for SOC.

II. Family and Civic Engagement

Family and Civic Engagement is an Ohio Family and Children First Initiative led by the Ohio Department of Education. The goal of the initiative is for schools, families and communities to work together to ensure that all children have supports needed to graduate from high school prepared for additional educational experiences, the workforce and a healthy life style.

Amended Substitute House Bill 1 (HB1), enacted in July 2009, requires the board of education of each school district to appoint a family and civic engagement team, develop a family and civic engagement plan, and provide annual progress reports on the development and implementation of the plan to the county family and children first councils. This effort requires school districts to work closely with their county family and children first council and other community partners.

The Ohio Department of Education and the OFCF Cabinet Council created the Family and Civic Engagement in Schools Initiative grant as an opportunity to work with educational service centers in partnership with county FCFCs, school districts and community organizations to create community of learners.

Twenty-five (25) county teams were selected to focus on building the capacity of local educational services centers, family and children first councils and districts to implement HB1 Family and Civic Engagement requirements. County teams received professional development, technical assistance and coaching from the Ohio State University, Center for Learning Excellence. The pilots tested innovative tools, processes and practices designed to student support and increase student achievement through implementing Family and Civic Engagement requirements.

Lessons learned from the pilots will be used to refine professional development, tools and resources; capture effective practices; and inform state policy and funding decisions on capacities needing to be built within the district, educational services centers and FCFCs to effectively implement the family and civic engagement requirements.

III. Help Me Grow

Scientific evidence strongly suggests that a child's success is significantly determined by the quality of nurturing in the first three years of life. Recognizing this research, during the FY 2002-2003 biennium, several birth-three programs and funding streams were integrated into one consolidated initiative, Help Me Grow, to ensure that newborns, infants and toddlers receive the best possible start in life.

Help Me Grow provides state and federal funds to county FCFCs to be used in conjunction with state, local and other federal funds to implement and maintain a coordinated, community-based infrastructure that promotes trans-disciplinary, family-centered services

for expectant parents, newborns, infants, toddlers, and their families. The Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Early Intervention Services is the lead state agency for Help Me Grow. Help Me Grow is currently administered through the 88 FCFCs throughout the state. Funding for Help Me Grow comes from the state GRF and federal Part C for a total of \$57.8m.

IV. Child and Family Services Review

The OFCF Cabinet Council serves as the Advisory Council to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services for its federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). More information about the CFSR can be found at: <http://www.fcf.ohio.gov/initiatives/child-and-family-services-review.dot>.

V. Interagency Workgroup on Autism

The OFCF Cabinet Council advises the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities' Interagency Workgroup on Autism. While nothing formal has been established, policy recommendations from the workgroup go to the OFCF Cabinet Council for approval.

VI. Family Engagement

While key accomplishments have been achieved, the work of the Family Engagement Steering Committee continues under its strategic plan. Refer to page 15 for more information and a link to the plan.

VII. Youth and Young Adults in Transition

While key accomplishments have been achieved, the work of the Youth and Young Adults in Transition Steering Committee continues under its strategic plan. Refer to page 15 for more information and a link to the plan.

VII. Key Internal and External Partners

The OFCF Cabinet Council and its office works with a variety of internal and external partners to effectively meet its mission and be as efficient as possible. Below are the key internal and external partners that over the years have partnered with and/or assisted the OFCF Cabinet Council with its initiatives and priorities:

Key Internal Partners:

Governor's Office
Office of the First Lady
Dept of Aging
Dept of Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services
Dept of Developmental Disabilities
Dept of Education
Dept of Health
Dept of Job and Family Services
Dept of Mental Health
Dept of Rehabilitation & Correction
Dept of Youth Services
Rehabilitation Services Commission
Ohio Supreme Court

Governor's Office of Faith-Based &
Community Initiatives
Ohio Benefit Bank
Early Childhood Cabinet
Executive Medicaid Management
Administration
Community Services Commission
Secretary of State
Board of Regents
Dept of Development
Dept of Public Safety
Auditor of the State
Attorney General's Office
Ohio House of Representatives & Senate

Key External Partners:

Autism Society of Ohio	Ohio Association of School-Based Health Care
Brain Injury Association of Ohio	Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies
Center for Innovative Practice	Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidences
Children's Defense Fund – Ohio	Ohio Children's Hunger Alliance
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio	Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers
County Family & Children First Councils	Ohio Family Care Association
County Commissioners Association of Ohio	Ohio FCF Coordinator Association
Cuyahoga Community College	Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health
Developmental Disabilities Council	Ohio Grantmakers Forum
Family Information Network	Ohio PTA
Family Support Council	Ohio Youth Advisory Board
Family Voices Ohio	OSU Center for Learning Excellence
Foster Care Alumni of America – Ohio Chapter	Parent Advocacy Connection
Forum for Youth Investment	Public Children Services Association of Ohio
Heckels and McCoy	Ready to Launch
National Alliance on Mental Illness – Ohio	Ronald McDonald House of Cleveland
National Center for Adoption Law & Policy	State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children
Nisonger Center, OSU	United Way of Greater Cincinnati
Ohio Association of Behavioral Health Authorities	Voices for Ohio's Children
	Youth Empowerment Program

VIII. Conclusion

OFCF is the only state and county level infrastructure focused on the needs and issues of children spanning from birth to adulthood (with some FCFCs focusing on the entire lifespan) and their families. This Children's Cabinet has grown since 1993 by strengthening its primary functions and demonstrating the effectiveness a partnership of government agencies can have when working together to improve child and family well-being outcomes in Ohio. OFCF has significantly reduced administrative costs while still pursuing programmatic efficiencies in the delivery, coordination, and alignment of services and resources for children and families as seen by the recent successes. Since the purpose of FCFC is to coordinate and streamline services and resources for children and families at the state and local level, much work remains.

Consideration should be given to exploring the possibility of expanding the OFCF Cabinet Council to include private organizations and become a private-public Cabinet that would advise the Governor on how to be more effective and efficient with meeting the outcomes of children and families. Another recommendation would be to expand the focus of the Cabinet to include adults and especially, older adults. Often times, solutions and/or approaches for one target population (such as children) can be applied to another population (such as older adults).

Finally, while Family and Children First has not been greatly invested in fiscally for quite a few years now, the state and local structure has been dramatically strengthened, more consistency has been achieved, and accountability has increased.