



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Making a Difference Together



Agency 2021 Synopsis

Services in 2021

Provided services to 1,725 alleged child victims. On average, 151 cases were worked every month by 36 caseworkers.

Screening/Assessment Investigations

Calls into the Agency Screening department: 6,693.
Screened-in and investigated a total of 1,158 allegations. Of those, there were:

- 398 Neglect
- 325 Physical abuse
- 146 Sexual abuse
- 62 Emotional maltreatment
- 62 Dependency
- 165 FINS (Family In Need of Assistance)

Protective Ongoing Services

Average ongoing cases per quarter: 279
Number of children receiving ongoing services per quarter: 581

Agency Visitation Center

Supervised visits at the agency: 3,443
Supervised visits at outside facilities: 0

Kinship Care

Children in kinship care per quarter: 202
Average kinship cases per quarter: 112

Foster Care/Institutional Care

Children in Agency custody: 126 average
Total days in care: 45,182
Total placement costs: \$2,551,608
At the end of 2021, the Agency had 69 licensed foster homes.

Adoption Services

Number of children placed in adoptive homes: 20
Number of adoptions finalized: 18

FTM's/TDM's

Held 249 Team Decision-Making meetings and 1,228 Family Team meetings in 2021.

Independent Living

Children aging out of care in 2021: 5

A Partner in the Community

Richland County Children Services actively participates in a myriad of community events that support children each year. We believe it's a great way to give back to the residents of Richland County. But we couldn't do this work all by ourselves. We have so many community partners (JFS, Youth & Family Council, the City of Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department, United Way of Richland County, NECIC, Mansfield Art Center, Kingwood Center Gardens, the court system, various mental health agencies, and numerous private companies and religious organizations) who all help us in assisting others in various ways. We are honored and humbled to serve alongside of these entities for the betterment of our community. We are making a difference together, one family at a time.

Our Vision

In our ideal community, we envision:

- ♦ The community invests in the future of its children by providing opportunities to develop their social, emotional, physical, cognitive and cultural skills;
- ♦ Every child has a permanent, emotionally and economically stable family;
- ♦ The community values and supports the work of RCCS through its funding, provision of board leadership, and excellence in county governance;
- ♦ A committed staff that is supported by the Board and the community.

From the Director's Desk

Nikki Harless



Nikki Harless, MSW LISW-S
RCCS Executive Director

Making A Difference Together

Making a difference together is more than just a saying. It is what RCCS strives to do each and every day while working throughout the Richland County community. We work together with numerous other local organizations in order to make a difference in the lives of the children and families we all serve. We work together with families to help them find ways to engage with one another in a healthy and safe manner. And we work together as an Agency toward our common mission...to lead our community in assuring the safety, well-being and permanency of children at risk of abuse and neglect.

Like the rest of the world, Richland County Children Services encountered many highs and lows throughout 2021. We were able to hire 19 new employees in spite of the worker shortage experienced by other industries. Even under normal circumstances this can be a very difficult profession, so we truly appreciate our employees and the good work they have continued to do.

The same can also be said for our kinship caregivers and foster parents. 2021 proved to be a tough year for many local children, and we experienced an increase in the number of those coming into Agency care. Throughout 2021 we had an average of 202 children living in kinship homes and 126 children living in foster care settings. We were able to license 18 new foster homes during 2021, but unfortunately, we still need more local families willing to open their homes to these vulnerable youth.

If anyone is interested in joining RCCS so that we can 'make a difference together,' either as a caseworker or a foster parent, please give us a call at (419) 774-4100.



**FOSTER
PARENTS
NEEDED**

419-774-4100



www.richlandcountychildrenservices.org

~ OUR MISSION ~

**To lead our community in assuring the safety, well-being and permanency of
children at risk of abuse and neglect.**

Making a Difference Together

2021 Highlights



RCCS brought corn hole boards to the Lil' Carvers Carnival at Kingwood Center Gardens.



RCCS showed their support at the annual PRIDE Festival in downtown Mansfield.



A huge 'thank you' to Berean Baptist Church for sponsoring the Annual Foster Christmas party once again in 2021 for Agency-involved youth and their families.



RCCS staff handed out information at the Bellville Street Fair regarding child abuse/neglect prevention, foster parent recruitment, and kinship/parenting tips.

Making a Difference Together

2021 Highlights



Numerous RCCS staff members worked the agency booth at the Richland County Fair, distributing blankets, gift bags, RCCS-branded giveaway items, and child abuse/neglect prevention brochures.



Coca-Cola Consolidated Inc. 'adopted' 20 Agency-involved youth in 2021 in order to ensure that each child had a Christmas to remember. The organization collected toy donations from staff, packaged them up, and delivered them to the Agency just in time for Christmas. RCCS cannot thank Coca-Cola enough for their continued generosity.

Commitment to Teenaged Youth



"We are Greg and Veda Morris. We started working with teen boys about five years ago. We kind of came upon fostering by accident. The boys in the neighborhood always seemed to want to be at our house, and we would just love on them. Sometimes one of them would end up in court and have to be temporarily placed in a foster home, then we would ask if we could care for them. That led to us getting licensed as foster parents for teen boys.

To date, we have had 21 boys placed with us, of which several we became quite attached to. Some people tell us they could have a stroke just listening to our adventure stories of caring for them. Clearly it's not easy and there are a lot of sacrifices caring for boys with trauma histories. For us, the motivation is having the possibility of changing that boy's future and, therefore, stopping the cycle of abuse & neglect for their future family. We want them to see that something different is possible, and totally achievable, given different choices.

I've heard some say they would love to foster kids because it must be so rewarding. My response is that they should probably consider getting a pet instead. The rewards in fostering are seriously few and far between. The stresses are many, and the freedom to vacation, or even go out to dinner, can be severely limited. Fostering truly is not about "you." Rather, it's totally and completely about the child. It is a big commitment, and requires substantial sacrifice, underlying the importance of buy-in from both parents.

This year, at a very low point, we were almost convinced our sacrifice was for nothing. At just this moment, we had an incredible reward. A young man, who had been our first foster child, walked into our house and showed us how completely he had turned his life around since being in our care. After seeming to not like us at all for three years, he realized we were the only people that really cared about him. Today we are so very proud of the young man he has become, and the demons he has battled, to give his wife and son the life they now have. This is exactly the "WHY" we sacrifice for." - Greg & Veda

2021 Adoptive Families



RCCS celebrated the adoptions of 18 youth in 2021. RCCS adoption workers Athena Crider and Jennifer Hissom worked tirelessly all year to ensure that children seeking homes were matched with families who would love and care for them the way they deserve. Judge Kelly Badnell has also been instrumental in helping these children officially become members of safe, supportive and loving forever families.



RCCS Adoption Caseworker Athena Crider



RCCS Adoption Caseworker Jennifer Hissom

Excellence in Programs

Kinship Navigator Program



RCCS Kinship Navigator Rhonda Marsh

The Agency's kinship navigators work with families to locate and obtain community services for which they are eligible. The resources may include Medicaid coverage, food stamps, child care subsidies, Ohio Works First, and utilities assistance. The kinship program may also be able to assist with Power of Attorney, legal custody, legal guardianship, Caregivers Authorization Affidavit and other general legal questions. In 2021, the kinship team assisted 446 families and 808 children.



RCCS Kinship Navigator Philip Farley

Ohio Accelerated Safety Analysis Protocol (ASAP)

Richland County Children Services has seen success with a program designed to reduce the number of child abuse deaths: the Ohio Accelerated Safety Analysis Protocol (ASAP). ASAP identifies high risk cases and implements a protocol for staff to follow. The model uses predictive analytics to determine child welfare risk scores. The program identifies the population of children who are at the highest risk of suffering a fatality or near fatality (serious injury) and implementing a case review process that will improve outcomes for these youth. It then tracks the entire case to ensure best practices are followed.

The RCCS Clinical Director follows the action plans and case reviews as well as looks at Richland County's statistics to report to the Ohio ASAP program participants quarterly. In 2021 alone, 136 cases have been identified for Ohio ASAP and the subsequent case review process, which involved 261 local children ages birth to five.



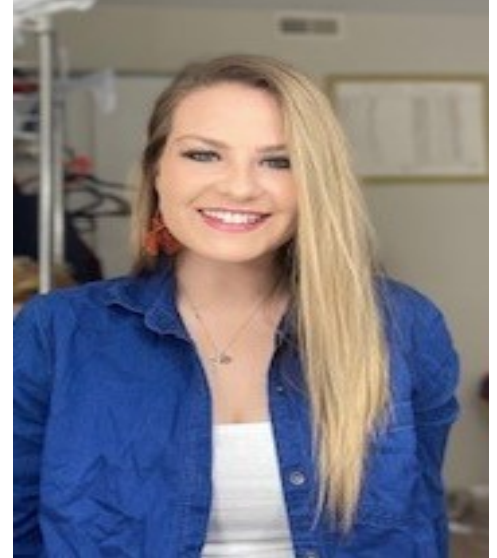
RCCS Clinical Director Marsha Coleman

Excellence in Programs

Family Finding

RCCS is committed to finding appropriate family members to care for children who cannot safely remain in their own homes. Research has shown that children who are placed with family experience fewer placement changes, are less likely to run away, have fewer behavioral problems, and are less likely to re-enter the foster care system. (Testa, National Study of Child and Adolescent Well-Being, NSCAW, Courtney and Needell)

The RCCS Family Finding Specialist utilizes GenoPro software in order to analyze genograms (family trees) for the purpose of identifying appropriate family members after a child has been removed from his/her home so that efforts can be made to place that child with a relative with whom they may be more comfortable and familiar. In 2021, there were 31 referrals made for Family Finding services.



RCCS Family Finding Specialist Autumn Scodova

Ohio START



RCCS START Caseworkers Alexandra Long (left) and Anthony Spencer (right)



Family Life Counseling Peer Mentors Diana Campbell (left) and Amanda Redfern (right)

Ohio START (Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma) is an evidence-informed children services-led intervention model that helps public children services agencies (PCSAs) bring together caseworkers, behavioral health providers, and family peer mentors into teams dedicated to helping families struggling with co-occurring child maltreatment and substance use disorder. This model contains procedures for identifying families with potential substance use disorders during the Child Protective Services (CPS) intake/referral triage and during the investigation or assessment phase of the CPS response to allegations of child abuse/neglect. This strategy also includes improving the knowledge base and expertise of child welfare staff in understanding, identifying, and responding to parental substance use. Ohio START counties added screening for trauma and training in trauma assessment as important for identifying the service needs of families.

RCCS has partnered with Family Life Counseling to provide peer mentoring for parents struggling with addiction. In 2021, the team assisted a total of 15 families with the Ohio START program.

Financial Highlights

2021 Revenues and Expenses

2021 REVENUE

Revenue Sources (unaudited)

Federal Funds - \$6,129,038

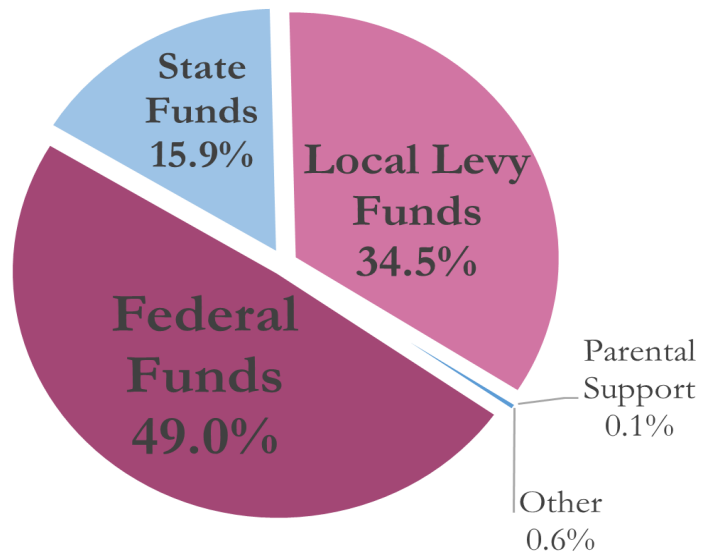
State Funds - \$1,992,796

Local Levy Funds - \$4,318,875

Parental Support - \$6,393

Other – \$68,871

Total - \$12,515,972



2021 EXPENSES

Expense Categories (unaudited)

Personnel - \$7,119,947

Placement Services - \$3,316,716

Adoption Services - \$202,485

Purchased Services - \$402,596

Operations / Overhead - \$302,146

Maintenance & Equipment - \$37,383

Total – \$11,381,273

Our Impact

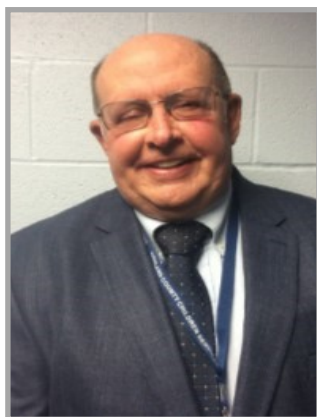
Richland County Children Services facilitated the disbursement of over \$1.7 million in 2021 for various programs to help support our clients, foster parents, adoptive parents, and kinship families in caring for the children in their homes. Two of these programs (PRC, and Kinship Childcare) were funded through contracts with the local Job & Family Services agency (for a total amount of \$226,022). An outline of our local community support programs and their associated expenditures is below:

- **KPI (Kinship Permanency Incentive) - \$263,100 - Paid directly from the State to kin families to help with the costs associated with the child (ren) living with them**
- **PRC (Prevention, Retention & Contingency) - \$149,615 - Paid to kin families to help with the costs associated with the child(ren) living with them**
- **ESAA (Emergency Services Assistance Allocation) - \$64,755 - Paid to families for things such as rent, utilities and furniture in an effort to keep children in their own homes or return them to their homes**
- **Kinship Care - \$8,439 - Paid to kin families for things such as rent, utilities and furniture in an effort to help them care for the child(ren) in their home**
- **Foster Parent Training - \$24,545 - Stipends paid to foster/adoptive parents and prospective foster/adoptive parents for attending training**
- **Adoption Subsidies - \$1,003,375 - Paid to parents who adopted children in Agency custody**
- **In addition, the Agency paid \$76,407 in childcare payments for children placed with kin and \$112,268 in childcare payments for children placed with foster parents who work outside the home.**

2021 RCCS Board Members



Jim Kulig
Chair



Patrick A. Heydinger
Vice Chair



Deanna West-Torrence
Secretary



Jason Murray, Esq.
Treasurer



Renee Bessick



Bill Hope



Nicole Blakley



Jim Nicholson



Scott Gatchall

Agency 2021 Leadership Team

Nikki Harless, MSW LISW-S, Executive Director

Nicole Foulks, MSW LSW, Assistant Director

Marsha Coleman, MSW LISW-S, Clinical Director

Kevin Goshe, MBA, Finance/Building & Grounds Director

Tara Lautzenhiser, MSCJ, Program Manager

Chris Zuercher, JD, Legal Services Manager

Sarah Soliday, MBA, Human Resource Manager

Angie Poth, MBA, Records/Program Support Manager

Pam Hinton-Groves, MIS, MIS Manager

Amy Hackedorn, MBA, Sup. of Administrative Services

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