



**OFCFCA**  
**Promoting healthy children, strong families,  
and thriving communities county by county.**



**COUNTY: BUTLER**

**MISSION STATEMENT / LOCAL FOCUS:**

The mission of the Family & Children First Council is to serve as a catalyst for public and private partners to achieve the vision of improved well-being for families and children in Butler County. Beyond the mandated responsibilities of the Council, the local focus is to increase protective factors, decrease risk factors, prevent and/or intervene in problem behaviors with a coordinated continuum of care, and to promote developmental assets among all youth. Butler County embraces data-informed decision-making, incorporates evidence-based practices when needed and appropriate, and uses collaboration as the primary strategy for conducting the core business of the public agencies/systems.

**OPERATING STRUCTURE:**

Butler County FCFC's operating structure supports the mobilization/coordination of public and private partners, the collection, analysis, and sharing of data to inform decision-making and improve outcomes for families and children, and influencing community practice through training, planning, and evaluation. Butler County FCFC has 32 voting members and approximately 40 other community members that serve on various workgroups. Multiple community partners are organized to meet basic needs, to prevent drug and alcohol use/abuse, to prevent child abuse, and to promote developmental assets countywide. The FCFC Committee Structure: Administrative Council/ Executive Committee/ Audit Committee/ Resource Management Committee/ Early Childhood Coordinating Committee/ Strategic Workgroups. The FCFC Executive Director serves as an ex-officio member of all committees.

**LOCAL FCFC CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- **Community Capacity Building/Planning:**  
In FY10 FCFC, in partnership with the Butler County Educational Service Center, community partners, and representatives from all ten local school districts formed a county family-civic engagement team as part of a pilot project funded by ODE and OFCF. A facilitated planning process from February through June resulted in all ten districts developing local (district) family-civic engagement teams, job descriptions for Family-Civic Engagement Coordinators, and family-civic engagement plans aligned with district improvement initiatives. Building diverse relationships across the county has positively increased capacity to mobilize, organize, plan for, and align efforts to engage families and communities in the care and education of children.
- **Service Coordination:**  
Wraparound is the service coordination mechanism for Butler County. Wraparound staff are employees of the Butler County Educational Service Center under the administration of FCFC. Increased capacity for parents to care for youth with significant behavioral health issues has been a consistent outcome of Wraparound, with a documented savings in out of home placement costs. The Service Coordination Mechanism was updated in 2010 to reflect current practice and assure compliance with state statute.
- **Family Empowerment:**  
Butler County FCFC seeks to build and sustain the competency and capability of communities to nurture the development of the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual assets of their families and children. The core value of this work is family empowerment. Parent advocates working with families in Wraparound and involvement of family representatives in local, state, and regional initiatives, including the Family-Civic Engagement Initiative, are examples of family empowerment efforts. The Parent Network, created in FY09 with support of FCFC, adopted the name "Ohio Families Organizing for Change" and became a local chapter of the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health in FY10. OFCOFC also expanded to include the KICK Program: Kids in Care of Kin (grandparents raising grandchildren) as a part of their organization. FCFC acquired grant funding for socialization opportunities, OFCOFC has developed a website ([www.ofcofc.org](http://www.ofcofc.org)) and begun fundraising to support and sustain their efforts.

**Early Childhood System of Care:**

Butler County FCFC provides program oversight for the implementation of Help Me Grow through the Educational Service Center. Changes in Help Me Grow in FY10 gave opportunity to increase capacity to serve birth to three at-risk populations through implementation of Early Head Start. The FCFC led the planning, development, and submission of a grant to secure Early Head Start funds. As a result, Early Head Start began serving Butler County families and children in April 2010. The design of the early childhood continuum integrates Help Me Grow, Early Head Start, Head Start, and other early childhood programs provided by the Educational Service Center. This design expands capacity, maximizes resources, streamlines services, and eases access for families with children ages 0—5.

**LOCAL CHILDREN’S TRUST FUND RESPONSIBILITIES (As Applicable):**

• **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention:**

Expansion of Incredible Years implementation in FY10 resulted in the evidence-based child abuse/neglect prevention programming being provided in 21 classrooms, 14 Dina Small Groups, and 3 Parent Groups county-wide. This expansion involved Head Start, 3 public school districts, and area childcare centers. Data indicate the percentage of children exhibiting social competence increased, the percentage of children exhibiting age appropriate behaviors increased, and parent reactions to child behavior shifted from dysfunctional discipline to functional discipline. Additionally, social marketing campaigns with messages to “Never Shake a Baby” and “Not a Single Drop” were implemented in FY10. Overall, unduplicated new reports of abuse/neglect in Butler County have decreased 18% over the past 4 years and the number of children in the custody of child welfare has decreased by 28%.

**OTHER LOCAL INITIATIVES:**

1. **Developmental Assets:** Butler County has long considered asset development as the foundation for prevention. In FY10 the Asset Builders Network presented at the Search Institute’s Annual Conference, targeted employers of youth for asset messaging, and increased the capacity for training and technical assistance to organizations and community partners.
2. **Cross Systems Training:** The Cross-System Training Workgroup developed and implemented a 2 day orientation for new employees in Butler County. This training, conducted 3 times in FY10, offered an overview of the health and human services system in the county and helped new workers begin developing collegial, intra- and inter-agency relationships. An online forum for sharing professional development opportunities, including a training calendar and organizational information-sharing, was implemented in FY10.
3. **Youth Leadership Development:** Local J. Kyle Braid Leadership Foundation alumni (teens from 5 high schools) provided leadership training for 9<sup>th</sup> graders in all 10 school districts through “Teens Leading Teens.” They also assumed leadership within the county Coalition for Healthy, Safe, and Drug Free Communities developing social marketing and public awareness strategies.

**FUNDING:**

The projected FY11 FCFC budget is \$2,482,963. Local pooled funds from DJFS/CSB, MHB, ADAS, BDD, Juvenile Justice, and County Commissioners provide for the administrative costs of the FCFC. Other pooled funds from BCDJFS/CSB and the Mental Health Board support Community Wraparound.

**STAFFING:**

Butler County FCFC has two administrative staff and 9 Wraparound program staff.

**CHALLENGES:**

Maintaining a safety net for families and children in the uncertainty of the current economic climate.

**FUTURE PLANS:**

Continue to build collaborative relationships, measure and report the impact of efforts on child well-being, and increase the diversity of community partners, especially parents, schools, and faith organizations.

**Contact Information:**

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**Butler County Educational Service Center: Fiscal/Administrative Agent for the Butler County Family & Children First Council**