

2015 Annual Report

# Bringing Dads Into the Picture



Summit County

**CHILDREN SERVICES**

*Building Families . . . Building Futures*



Summit County Children Services provides a wide range of high-quality services to help build families and build futures.

### **Intake/Alternative Response**

Typically the first point of contact at the agency, Intake Services features a 24-hour hotline number for calls of concern involving children and families.

### **Protective**

Ongoing Protective Services provides supportive counseling to children and families to strengthen family supports and maintain children safely in their own homes.

### **Kinship**

Kinship Services provides immediate safety for children who are unable to remain safely in their own homes by placing them with relatives or close family friends.

### **Foster Care & Placement**

Foster Care and Placement Services provides 24-hour substitute care resources and support services to place and maintain children in the least restrictive setting.

### **Adoption**

Adoption Services matches children in permanent custody with adoptive families that can best meet their individual needs.

### **Independent Living**

The Independent Living Program provides support to older children in agency care to help them transition from foster care to the world of work and further education.

### **Transitional Housing**

Transitional Housing Services provides temporary housing and supportive counseling to young adults aged 18-25 years who have previously been in agency foster care and become homeless.

### **Visitation/Family Interaction**

Visitation Services provides a safe, nurturing environment for family visits while children are in agency custody using a modernized, state-of-the-art facility called the 'Blazey Family Interaction Center.'



**Find us on facebook.**

# A Letter from the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees



Anna M. Arvey, CPA  
Chair, Board of Trustees



Julie Barnes, M.Ed., LSW  
Executive Director

The mission of Summit County Children Services is the safety, permanency and well-being of children. In 2010, we began addressing a barrier to achieving our mission. While studies clearly showed measurable benefits to children with involved and loving fathers, more children than ever were growing up without their biological father in the home. We realized the child welfare system had traditionally focused more on working with mothers than with fathers.

About that time, Summit County Children Services began 'The Father Factor' program. This new approach to our casework began in collaboration with many community partners to locate fathers of children in agency care and provide them with resources, support, hope and encouragement to help them play a positive role in their child's life.

In just five short years, the progress made by our agency's fatherhood program has been impressive and has also received recognition across the State of Ohio. This Annual Report is filled with information about our fatherhood initiative and the important role a father plays in the success of children. In this Annual Report, you'll meet:

- A Father Factor participant who received a statewide award for his success in overcoming adversity and becoming an active part of his young son's life;
- An agency staff member who was named to the Ohio Fatherhood Commission for her pioneering work in this area of child welfare;
- Three other counties in Ohio who saw the success of The Father Factor and asked SCCS to help them begin similar programs to engage fathers in their regions.

We hope you enjoy our Annual Report, and learning about how bringing Dads 'into the picture' has enhanced the permanency, safety and well-being of the children we serve.

Anna M. Arvey, CPA  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Julie Barnes, M.Ed., LSW  
Executive Director

## Agency Leadership

(As of 1/1/2016)

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Anne M. Connell-Freund, Vice-Chair, Oriana House, Inc.  
GinaKaye Maddox, Secretary  
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Brittany G. Zaehring, GAR Foundation

Julie Barnes, Executive Director

### CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Crystal Dunivant, Vice Chair, Community Support Services, Inc.  
Mary Bishop, Secretary, Akron-Summit Community Action, Inc.  
Margaret Baughman, Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University  
Tonya Block, Summit County Public Health  
Beth Cardina, The CASA/GAL Program of Summit County  
Bruce Cavalieri, Citizen Representative  
Lt. Rick Edwards, The City of Akron Police Department  
Patricia Divoky, Summit County Dept. of Job & Family Services  
Beverly Foss, Women's Auxiliary Board  
Michele Mizda, Akron Children's Hospital

### WOMEN'S AUXILIARY BOARD

Yvette Lightner, President

### EXECUTIVE TEAM

Julie Barnes, Executive Director  
Sharon Geffken, Deputy Executive Director/Social Services  
Katerina Papas, Deputy Executive Director/General Counsel  
Gary Binns, Deputy Executive Director, Finance  
Valarie Nash, Deputy Executive Director, Human Resources & Support Services  
Chris Vasco, Deputy Executive Director, PR/Community Relations



## Director of Protective Services Named to the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood



Ann Ream

Ann Ream, Director of Protective Services at SCCS was appointed in 2015 by Ohio Governor John Kasich to a two-year term on the Ohio Commission on

Fatherhood. The Commission funds fatherhood programs throughout the state, makes policy recommendations regarding fathers, engages the community and trains professionals – promoting father engagement at all levels.

Ms. Ream was instrumental in the creation of SCCS's innovative 'Father Factor' program which has become a statewide model for enhancing the engagement of fathers in the child welfare system. She also chairs the agency's Father Factor committee which has promoted the engagement of fathers, has increased staff awareness and improved practice related to fathers in child welfare.

Ms. Ream has been employed at SCCS for more than 23 years. She attended The University of Akron where she earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Social Work. Her responsibilities at the agency have included Protective Services social worker, Family Meeting Coordinator/Facilitator, Supervisor of the Family Meeting Unit, Supervisor of the Paid Placement Unit and her current position as the Protective Services Department Director.

A special thank you goes to former agency staff member Jeanne Bennett, co-founder of 'the Father Factor' Program, who retired from SCCS during 2015. Her efforts were instrumental to the program's present success.

## SCCS Fatherhood Program Graduate Receives Statewide Award

Michael Mills of Akron – a graduate of Summit County Children Services' successful 'Father Factor' fatherhood program – was one of four recipients of last year's Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) Family of the Year award. Mr. Mills, selected from numerous nominations from public agencies across the state, was recognized with a custom framed award, a prize of \$400, and a gubernatorial proclamation at the 2015 PCSAO Statewide Conference in Columbus.

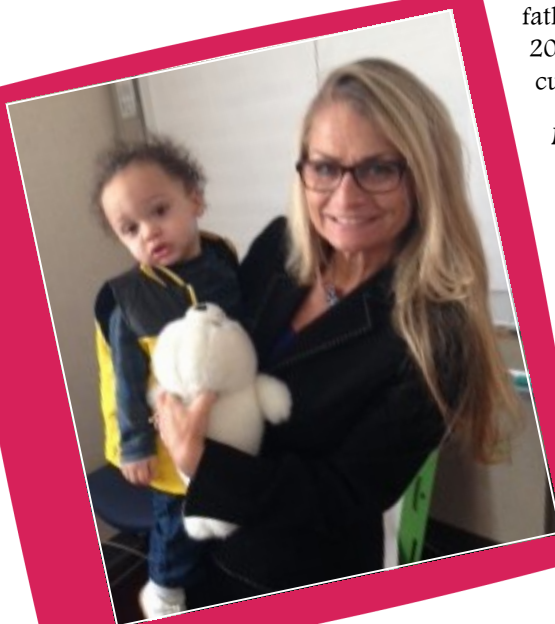
Mr. Mills has spent almost half of his life in and out of prison. To his older children, he was an absent parent. Another child he was raising as his own was placed for adoption due to the mother's substance abuse and Mr. Mills' criminal history. Losing that child was a wakeup call for Mr. Mills. He spent his final term in prison making changes in his life, earning a barbershop license and successfully completing parenting classes through SCCS. Upon his release, he fathered another child, Anthony, who was born in 2014.

Born addicted to drugs, Anthony was removed from his mother's care. Mr. Mills saw this as a chance to do the right thing for his child. He attended every scheduled visit, bringing toys and clothes for Anthony. He prepared his home in anticipation of Anthony coming to live with him. He called the caseworker regularly to check on Anthony and get updates. He developed a positive relationship with the foster parents and worked with them to meet Anthony's needs. He completed SCCS' Father Factor fatherhood program in the spring of 2015 and was granted temporary custody.

Mr. Mills is an attentive and nurturing father. He ensures that Anthony receives the medical and therapeutic attention he needs and takes him along to the barbershop and on speaking engagements for the fatherhood program. In June of 2015 Mr. Mills received legal custody of Anthony, and he is providing his child with the loving home he deserves.



Michael Mills with his son, Anthony.

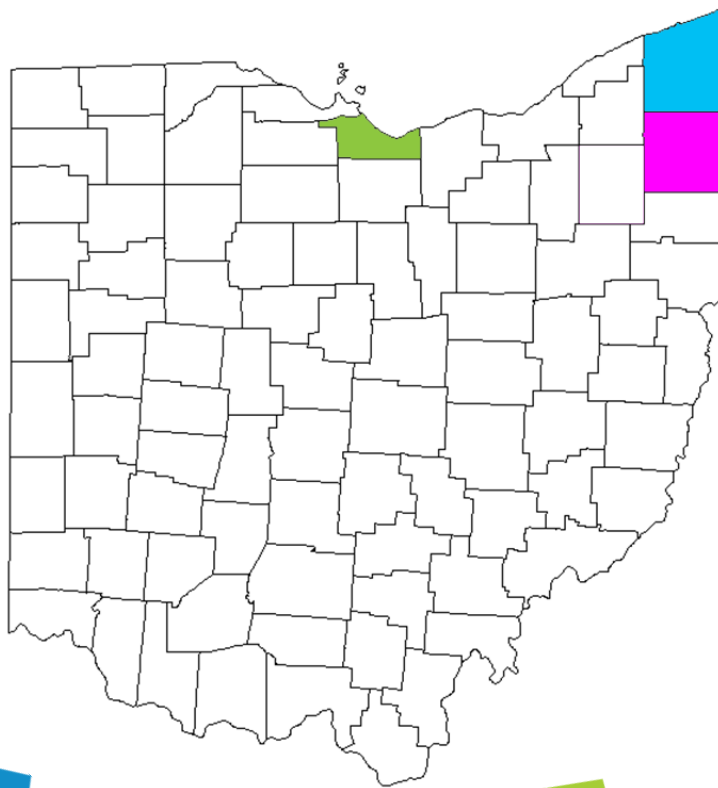


Pictured above is Ann Ream, coordinator of the agency's Father Factor Program, with Mr. Mills' son, Anthony.

# The Father Factor Spreads Statewide

In April 2014, an agreement was formed between Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and Summit County Children Services (SCCS) on a pilot project to test the model used for the SCCS Father Factor Program in three other counties.

The successes of the program were to be taught to the involved counties to increase overall performance in identified outcomes and best practice, and highlight the great importance of fathers in building successful families. The pilot program recognized the importance of identifying and engaging fathers, emphasized the assets of fathers rather than their deficits, and helped link fathers to the many community resources available to help them play a more positive role in the lives of their children.



## Ashtabula County

Ashtabula County has created the '**Devoted Dads**' program which creates awareness and educates children services staff, fathers, and the community about the importance of identifying and engaging fathers. The program slogan is 'Dads are an Important Piece' and the 'logo' is two puzzle pieces coming together. In addition to extensive targeted training of staff, community outreach is also underway, with events like a Devoted Dads breakfast being held at a local church to celebrate the responsible fathers in Ashtabula County.

## Erie County

'**Dads are Dynamic**' is the name of Erie County Children Services' new Fatherhood Program. The agency has been able to engage fathers who were not previously identified, create permanency for children through fathers becoming custodians, and include fathers as an additional support to the existing household. In addition, the agency, in partnership with many churches and other groups, has started an annual 'Day with Dad' event in June for fathers and their children to come together for fun activities, prizes and food.

## Trumbull County

Trumbull County has successfully started the '**Father Focus**' program, featuring the logo of a magnifying glass to 'focus on fathers.' In addition to numerous informational and educational activities within Trumbull County Children Services and throughout the community, the agency has secured the services of a 'fatherhood practitioner' to work regularly with dads involved with the agency.

## Pilot Project Success

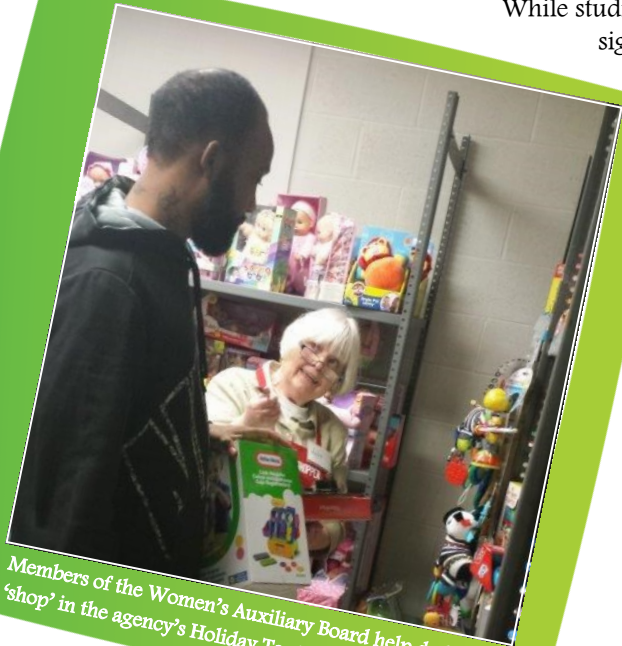
While each county pilot program is still in its early stages, the report issued in June 2015 indicated some very positive progress had already been made – particularly in the areas of successfully identifying fathers at the point of intake; and in the number of children in custody who have fathers who have received case services. This demonstrated that the dads were not only identified and located . . . but were engaged, and more importantly, provided with needed services.



# About 'The SCCS Father Factor'

While studies clearly showed that children with involved, loving fathers are significantly more likely to do well in school, have healthy self-esteem, exhibit empathy and pro-social behavior and avoid high-risk behaviors than children with uninvolved fathers . . . more American children were growing up without their biological father in the home than at any point in history.

Largely because of that fact, the child welfare system had traditionally focused on the mother rather than the father . . . until 2010 when SCCS staff began to think out of the box regarding the role of dads and the Father Factor was born.



Members of the Women's Auxiliary Board help dads 'shop' in the agency's Holiday Toy Room.



Women's Auxiliary Board members help fathers wrap gifts to give to their children for the holidays.



Pastor Eugene Norris, CEO of the Fame Fathers Initiative was one of the special guest speakers at Father Factor graduation ceremonies during 2015.



Lorenzo Lewis

## Community Resources/Partners

The Father Factor initiative at Summit County Children Services works in partnership with other community fatherhood programs including: Fame Fathers, a program of Charisma Community Connections; Man2Man, a Fatherhood Building Program; and the Summit County Fatherhood Initiative. Through a contract with Fame Fathers, father practitioner Mr. Lorenzo Lewis (left) conducts fatherhood training classes for Summit County Children Services and has regular office hours at the agency to assist social workers on engaging fathers, providing mediation and working with fathers involved with the agency.

# Year in Review



**Sherri Bevan Walsh**  
Summit County Prosecuting Attorney

**More than 3,000 cases of child abuse and neglect are reported in Summit County every year.**

**Be a Child's Voice**

**Report Child Abuse to  
Children Services  
(330) 434-KIDS  
(330) 434-5437**

## Prosecutor's Office Launches Child Abuse Awareness Billboard Campaign

Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh demonstrated her office's strong support of the work being done at SCCS through a month-long billboard campaign launched in mid-April. The billboards – located at N. Main St. and Tallmadge Ave., E. Market St. and N. Arlington St., Copley Rd. and White Pond Dr. and Rt. 224 and Hilbish Ave. – urged anyone suspecting child abuse and neglect to call the SCCS hotline number at (330) 434-KIDS.

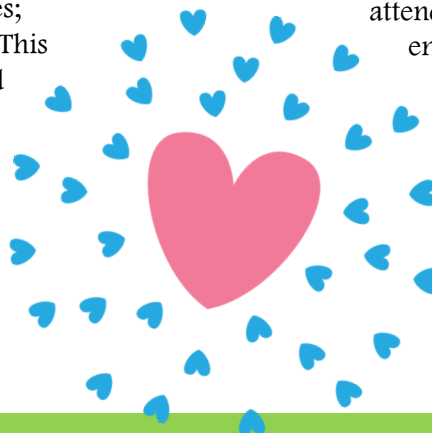


## Agency Participates in Fox 8 'Operation Giving Tree' Program

On Wednesday, November 25, Fox 8 invited Summit County Children Services to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Operation Giving Tree. Operation Giving Tree helps children from five different counties; Cuyahoga, Lorain, Lake, Medina and Summit. This wonderful program collects “new” unwrapped toys for children and teens from 1 to 18 years old. The toys collected were made available through the agency’s Holiday Toy Room for children in our care. Thank you to the many generous donors for dropping off toys to brighten a child's Christmas. We are very thankful to Fox 8 for including our children!

## Faith-Based Recruitment Program Underway

The August Minister's Breakfast held in partnership with the Love Akron organization, was very successful with representatives from 10 local churches in attendance. This was the first step in an enhanced program to engage the Faith-Based community in support of SCCS recruitment efforts. Other recruitment activities included development of the 2016 Adoption Calendar, and the re-launching of the agency's Heart Gallery display which will be shown throughout the community.





# Year in Review continued ...

## Donors Treat Agency Children, Families to Baseball Game/Golf Tournament

A special 'thank you' goes to two local companies for generously 'giving back' to children and families with special donations during 2015.

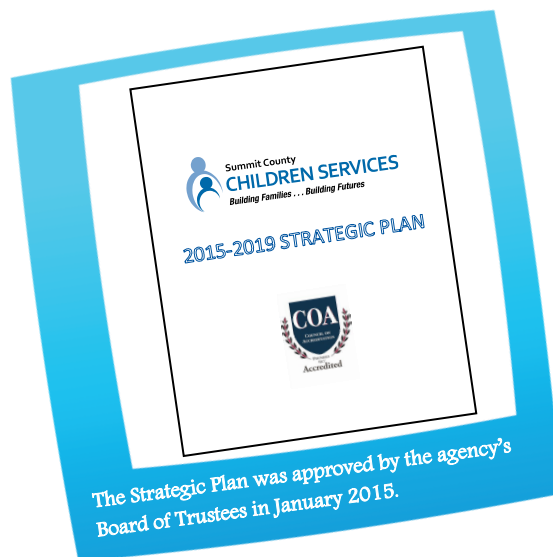


Gary Rosen and the Akron law firm Goldman & Rosen sponsored some 20 agency foster families to an Akron RubberDucks game in recognition of the firm's 25th Anniversary. The special event included a pre-game picnic – plus the opportunity for two of the children in attendance to experience the thrill of throwing out ceremonial first pitches before the game.



James Kehres and the Akron engineering firm Chemstress Consultant Company once again invited a number of

agency foster families to the practice round and first tournament round of last year's Bridgestone Invitational at Firestone Country Club. Not only did the families get to experience world championship golf, but they were treated to lunch in the Championship Pavilion along the famous 16th hole at Firestone.



## SCCS Receives Innovation Grant Funding

As part of the State of Ohio's Mid-Biennium Budget process, the agency was awarded the maximum allocation of \$250,000 through the Child Welfare Innovation Fund. This one-time funding was secured through a statewide competitive application process among counties. The grant funding was used to purchase tablets for our social service staff for use in the field – and a small portion of the total grant was used for a variety of foster and adoptive recruitment activities, including a re-launch of the popular Heart Gallery traveling photo exhibit and various faith-based recruitment initiatives.

## Agency Develops New Five-Year Strategic Plan

Following a variety of meetings to gather input from staff, community partners and the general public, SCCS approved a new Five-Year Strategic Plan for the years 2015–2019. The document, which is tied into annual goals developed by each agency department, focuses on six key 'Core Values' which will guide the agency throughout the coming years: Diversity, Fiscal Responsibility, Leadership, Partnership, Professionalism and Quality. To obtain a copy of the Strategic Plan, please contact Community Relations at (330) 379-2070 or [cvasco@summitkids.org](mailto:cvasco@summitkids.org).



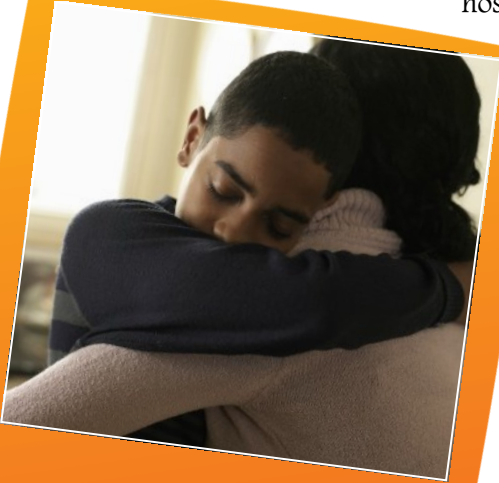
# Year in Review continued ...

## Researcher from Japan Visits SCCS to Learn About 'Alternative Response' Program

At the recommendation of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), SCCS hosted a research Professor from Japan, Yukako Hatakeyama, who was visiting the United States to learn about an emerging practice in child welfare called Alternative Response (AR).

Alternative Response provides families brought to the agency's attention for alleged abuse and neglect an 'alternative' service track which eliminates the traditional labels of 'victim,' and 'perpetrator,' and in which there is no disposition requirement. Through AR, the focus is on the needs of the family and rapid implementation of tangible and intangible services and supports to keep children safe and in their own homes.

This innovation in service delivery for families and children enables agency caseworkers to engage with the families they serve in even more supportive ways than ever before and has been a huge success – so much so that a third dedicated AR unit was started at SCCS in 2013.



## Community Appreciation Breakfast

The 2015 Child & Family Awareness Month concluded with the 6th Annual Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) Community Appreciation Breakfast. In addition to presenting 'Family Achievement Awards' to six local families, several individuals were named 'Champions for Children.'

- **Public Service** – Summit County Probate Court Judge Elinore Marsh Stormer
- **Community Leadership** – Lee Gill, Associate V.P. for Inclusion and Equity/Chief Diversity Officer, University of Akron
- **Community Partner** – Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Wendy's Wonderful Kids and Caring for Kids, Inc.
- **Community Volunteer** – Gillian Solem, R.N., Summit County Public Health; Fab Five Make a Difference (five children from two Stow families who collect and donate blankets, pajamas and hat/scarf sets for agency children in need)
- **Corporate Support** – Meggitt Aircraft Braking Systems
- **Community Support** – Holy Family School/Holy Family Church; Living Water Ministries

In addition, the Lt. John 'Ed' Duvall 'Detective of the Year' and 'Outstanding Service' Awards were presented as a part of the CAC Community Appreciation Breakfast.

- **Detective of the Year** – Det. Jeff Swanson, Stow Police Department
- **Outstanding Service** – Dr. Daryl Steiner, Medical Director of the Akron Children's Hospital CARE Center

First presented in 2008, the Duvall Awards honor the extraordinary dedication and commitment to investigating child abuse that was demonstrated by the Akron Police Department's Lt. John "Ed" Duvall, Jr. during his service in Summit County.



Dr. Daryl Steiner, CARE Center at Akron Children's Hospital and Detective Jeff Swanson, Stow Police Department.



The 'Fab Five Make a Difference' ... a group of children from the Lattime and Smith families from Stow.



# Year in Photos



A family legalized their adoptions on Adoption Day at Probate Court in November.



Staff from Meggitt Aircraft Braking Systems deliver Easter baskets in March.



Ward 5 Councilwoman Tara Mosley-Samples poses with Minion look-alikes at the SCCS booth at Ward 5 Fest.



The second place winner of the Collage Contest for the 28th Annual Child & Family Awareness Month.



Officers of the Summit County Children's Services Foster Parent Association during Foster Care Month in May.



Children loved posing for pictures with their favorite princesses (and superheroes) at Family Expo in April.



Steve Hailer from the Summit Athletic Running Club presents a donation check to Executive Director Julie Barnes.

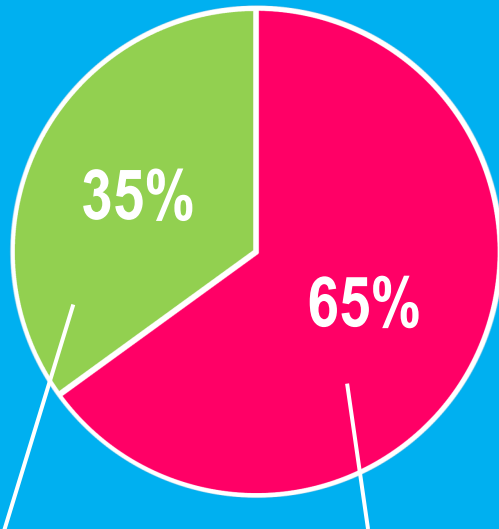


Former foster parent Karen Bryant (left) and Joanne Ray donated Taco Bell gift cards from their masonic organization for the Holidays.



# 2015 by the Numbers

Intake Service Calls: 5,502



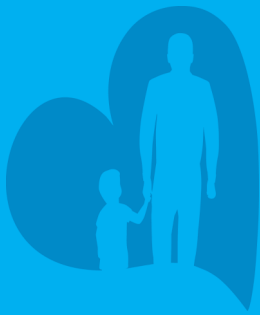
Information &  
Referral Calls:  
1,939

Assigned for Service:  
3,563

This total includes:  
Traditional Investigations:  
2,299

Serious Trauma  
Assessment Team  
(STAT Unit).  
505

Alternative  
Response (AR).  
759



40

Total number  
of adoptions  
finalized

601

Monthly average  
number of children  
in custody

76.8%

Percentage of  
children reunified  
with family

8

years old  
Average age  
of children  
served

638

Monthly average  
number of families  
receiving ongoing  
services

# 2015 Summary of Financial Statements

Beginning Fund Balance, January 1, 2015	\$30,970,440
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## REVENUES

Operating Levy (Net)	\$25,454,393
Federal Funds	\$15,350,063
State Funds	\$ 3,706,014
Local & Other Funds	\$ 69,189
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$44,579,659</b>

## EXPENDITURES

Employee Salaries	\$19,518,911
Employee Fringe Benefits	\$ 7,637,543
Placement Care	\$14,527,668
Clothing, Food Services & Transportation	\$ 708,165
Health-Related Expenses for Children	\$ 341,250
Building, Supplies & Contracted Services	\$ 2,343,267
Community Education & Staff Training	\$ 258,295
Grant-Specific Expenses	\$ 1,399,647
Other Expenses	\$ 342,507
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$47,077,253</b>
Excess of Expenditures over Revenues	\$(2,497,594)
<b>Ending Fund Balance, December 31, 2015</b>	<b>\$28,472,846</b>

The primary funding source for Summit County Children Services is a 2.25 mill six-year property tax levy approved by voters in 2007 and renewed in 2012. The levy generated \$25 million in 2015, representing over half (57%) of the Total Revenues. The remaining 43% of revenues came primarily from Federal and State funding sources in support of the Agency's social services programs and operations.

## Our Mission

SCCS is committed to the safety, permanency and well-being of all children served, in partnership with families and the community.

## Our Vision

Because we believe in family preservation and that all children deserve a safe, stable and permanent home, we will.

- Intervene only where necessary and only to the proper degree;
- Assess the community's concerns of abuse and neglect focusing on safety, risk and family strengths;
- Serve as partners with families and in teamwork with partner agencies in the community;
- Actively engage families, and their extended families and supports, in the decision-making process;
- Diligently work towards reunification when a child must be removed from home;
- Seek permanent homes for all children who cannot safely return to their parent or guardian;
- Remain mission-focused in our everyday work;
- Recruit and maintain diverse staff committed to serving all children and families;
- Approach our work with integrity, ethics and compassion;
- Be fiscally responsible.

## Our Values

We Believe:

- All children have a right to a safe and stable home.
- All children should be in permanent homes, i.e., their own home, a relative's home or an adoptive home.
- The well-being of all children is vital to us, the child, the family and our community.
- All families deserve our best efforts to partner with them and to treat them with respect and honesty.
- We have an ongoing responsibility to increase our knowledge and improve our services by learning all we can about the diversity of our families and community.
- We have a duty to remain objective and consistent in all of our interactions with families and children.
- We must be creative and innovative in the delivery of services so as to heighten the efficiency and effectiveness of our work with families.
- We have a responsibility to be able stewards of taxpayer resources.

