



Summit County

CHILDREN SERVICES

Building Families . . . Building Futures

Safety, Permanency, Well-Being.

That's what we do ... every day.



2017 Annual Report

Agency Leadership

(As of 3/1/2018)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Barnes, M.Ed., LSW

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Amy Davidson, Deputy Executive Director/Social Services

Katerina Papas, Esq., Deputy Executive Director/General Counsel

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Valarie Nash, Deputy Executive Director, Human Resources & Support Services

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Mary Bishop, Secretary, Akron-Summit Community Action, Inc.

Terri Burns, Summit County Department of Job & Family Services

Beth Cardina, CASA/GAL Program of Summit County

Lt. Rick Edwards, City of Akron Police Department

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Inspector William B. Holland, Jr., Summit County Sheriff's Office

Michele L. Mizda, Akron Children's Hospital

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY BOARD

Jen Thames, President

Agency Mission

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

summitkids.org



A Letter from the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees

In 2017, Summit County Children Services (SCCS) continued to see the impact of substance abuse and the opioid epidemic on the children and families we served. We have maintained our focus on our mission for safety, permanency and well-being of children served in partnership with families and the community. In doing so, we continued to evaluate and change our service delivery, programs and initiatives outlined in this Annual Report.

SCCS accomplishments were made possible because of our dedicated staff, leadership of our administrators and Board of Trustees, as well as numerous community partners working tirelessly together to keep children safe and support children and families of Summit County. Working to keep kids safe ... that's what we do ... every day.

With **safety** as our primary focus, we made adjustments to our workflow process and provided additional training to casework staff to make sure we are able to identify and address the safety needs of children and families. SCCS took advantage of several opportunities for new grants and initiatives that will provide resources and innovative practices to assist us in keeping children safe.

Our efforts to ensure **permanency** for all children are more important now than ever due to a substantial increase of children entering permanent custody because they are unable to be reunified with family. We have experienced a 59% increase of children in permanent custody from 2015 to 2017 largely due to parental addiction. Children in permanent custody need a place to call home... and more importantly, they need a "forever" family.

As always, the Summit County community supported our efforts to improve **child well-being**. Generous donors and volunteers supported fatherhood programs, school supplies for children, holiday events, and many other programs.

For many years now, the number of children needing intervention has continued to grow. Trauma experienced by children has left them with complex needs requiring extensive services. Resources have been stretched to provide needed services. At the same time, Ohio continued to rank 50th in the nation for financial support to child protection services, and Ohio relies heavily on local support to keep children safe. As we look ahead into 2018, we are in the planning stages for our levy request to Summit County voters during the November general election. The loss of revenue over many years, combined with the increased needs of children and families in Summit County, will necessitate the request for additional funds for the first time in 30 years. Fortunately, the increase of one mill will cost the homeowner of a \$100,000 home less than ten (10) cents per day or \$35 per year. We will provide information and education throughout 2018 as we ask the Summit County community to partner with SCCS to provide safety, permanency and child well-being for all children of Summit County.

On behalf of SCCS' Board of Trustees, administrators, management team and our committed staff, we thank you for your continued support in serving the most vulnerable children and families in Summit County.

Anna M. Arvay
Chair, Board of Trustees

Julie Barnes, M.Ed., LSW
Executive Director



Anna M. Arvay, CPA
Chair, Board of Trustees



Julie Barnes, M.Ed., LSW
Executive Director

9,719 children
received agency services
in 2017. That's ...

**1 out of every
12 children**
in Summit County.

Focus on Safety

Keeping children safe is what SCCS does every day. It starts with assessing the safety and well-being of children. Caseworkers in Intake Services serve as the 'first responders' to calls of concern made to the agency's 24-Hour Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline. During 2017, efforts were focused on training and equipping casework staff with the knowledge, skills and tools to provide the best services to families.

Mixed Caseloads

There are two pathways for SCCS to respond to reports of maltreatment – a Traditional Response (TR) and an Alternative Response (AR). Regardless of the approach, child safety comes first. All Intake caseworkers were trained on both approaches of completing family assessments and investigations for accepted reports of child abuse and neglect. Both AR and TR cases allow staff to address the unique safety concerns, risk and situations of each family with child safety being the primary goal, emphasizing family engagement and child-centered practice. The AR response, which uses the strengths-based perspective, is the preferred pathway and labels such as “alleged perpetrator” and “alleged child victim” are not used. In January 2017, approximately 37% of accepted reports were assigned to AR. By year-end, it had increased to 60%.

"Safety is paramount in all our decisions. Whether or not a child is safe always drives our next steps and interventions with a family." states Amy Davidson, Deputy Executive Director, Social Services.

Practice Profiles

SCCS continued to expand its usage of the Practice Profiles for casework staff. The Practice Profiles, issued by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS), defines 11 key skills every caseworker should master in order to work more effectively with families: engaging, assessing, partnering, planning, implementing, evaluating, advocating, culturally competent, communicating, collaborating, and documenting.

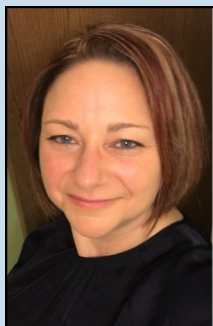
"These successful skills are best practice in the field of child welfare," comments Sushila Moore, Department Director, Intake Services. "All our caseworkers should master these skills to better work with families, the community and agency partners."



In 2017, SCCS received two grants that will help focus efforts on keeping children safe and finding permanency.

30 Days to Family® Grant

30 Days to Family® is a grant from the Ohio Attorney General's office, and SCCS has been selected as a subgrantee for this



Beatrice Flett

exciting Family Search and Engagement Program. The 30 Days to Family® grant is an intense, short-term intervention developed by the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition (in St. Louis, MO) that will help to: 1) increase the number of children placed with relatives/kin at the time they enter the foster care system; and 2) ensure natural and community supports are in place to promote stability for the child. The program model features two major elements: family finding and family support interventions.

The grant will fund a staff position for two years, and its primary job function is to search for relatives and kin to accept placement of children when they enter agency custody. SCCS caseworker Beatrice Flett accepted the grant-funded position. Ms. Flett has 14 years of experience in child welfare at Tuscarawas County Department of Job & Family Services and SCCS and a great deal of experience working with community providers and with family centered neighborhood-based casework practice.

Ms. Flett has a firm belief that every child has a right to be with and/or have connections with their own family.



Succeed Primary Parent Support Group Project

SCCS was selected as a Succeed agency for the Succeed Primary Parent Support Group Project. The project establishes a new support group for SCCS where primary parents who are working a case plan can receive resources, encouragement, and assistance through shared experiences. Topics discussed include visitation, foster care, working with caseworkers, access to community resources, and emotional stability for families and parents. Funding for the program originated from ODJFS and the Casey Family Fund to assist agencies in becoming Succeed counties and sustaining the project through the Ohio Family Care Association (OFCa).

Tracy Mayfield, Department Director, Social Service Programs, said she believes the program will have a profound impact on children and families by increasing the number of successful reunifications. *"We are hopeful that participation in the Succeed program will empower our clients and provide them the hope and skills they need to successfully reunify with their children," Mayfield said.*



Statewide System Report Project (SSRP)

SCCS served as one of 10 pilot counties for the Statewide System Report Project (SSRP). The SSRP works to increase capacity of state child welfare, treatment and court systems to effectively interview families and parents impacted by substance abuse disorders and to involve them in the child welfare system. This universal screening tool helps with the identification of reports of suspected abuse and neglect that may involve drugs and/or alcohol. The tool is a series of questions caseworkers ask family members during the Intake assessment process about their drug or alcohol usage. This tool, along with others now used in all 88 counties in Ohio, has helped casework staff to strengthen their interviewing skills. As part of the system change, SCCS selected to utilize the UNCOPE screening instrument for substance abuse.

"We've been stressing to our caseworkers to use a '4-Prong Screen' approach ... taking into account this assessment tool, signs and symptoms a caseworker observes, corroborating reports and previous drug screens," stated Dawn Boudrie, Department Director, Intake Screening & Support. "If any resulted in a 'yes,' a referral for a full drug and alcohol assessment would be made."

81%
of children
reunified with
family in 2017

Focus on Permanency

All children need to be part of a permanent family. SCCS works tirelessly every day to find permanency and make family connections for children. During 2017, efforts were focused on expanding Youth-Centered Permanency Roundtables (YCPRTs) that involved youth in the decision-making process, engaging the faith community in a refined outreach initiative called 'Recruiting Hope,' and devoting more staff and resources to family search and engagement efforts.

Youth-Centered Permanency Roundtables

The primary purpose of YCPRTs is to expedite permanency for children who are age 12 and older and have been in the agency's custody for 12+ months. This is done by hosting a series of 'roundtables' or meetings that include a facilitator and scribe, the assigned caseworker and supervisor, a department director, as well as the child and supportive persons in the child's life. An action plan is developed and next steps are identified to work towards permanency. Roundtables are held every 90 days in order to review the plan and give progress updates.

"Permanency looks different for each child. These roundtables provide an opportunity to develop a unique plan that is tailored for each child in order to achieve permanency," commented Nikaeda Griffie, Supervisor, Placement and Permanency Planning.

Recruiting Hope

SCCS' need for foster and adoptive families has never been greater. One way to help meet this need is through an outreach initiative called Recruiting Hope, a collaborative ministry that targets clergy leaders and members of the faith community. Recruiting Hope was an idea originally created by SCCS and Love Akron in 2016 and launched at the agency's Annual Ministers Breakfast in 2017. Representatives from various places of worship now serve on a steering committee and together with agency staff work to identify ways to engage area churches and educate their members about the urgent need for families to open their homes and hearts to children in need. A special tool kit containing literature and other informational materials was designed and continues to be distributed to area churches.

"Faith-based outreach is critical to our overall targeted recruitment efforts," stated Trina Danzy, Department Director, Placement and Permanency Planning. "The Recruiting Hope ministry helps SCCS to directly engage with local clergy leaders to help develop goals and a plan of action to effectively reach congregations to ultimately find families for children."

Continued on page 6 ...



Focus on Permanency

Continued

Family Search & Engagement

"Leave no stone unturned" is a fitting quote for the work done through Family Search & Engagement (FSE). When children enter custody and/or referrals are made for FSE work, staff members devote their time mining the child's record, searching for and contacting extended family members, conducting Internet searches, researching family trees ... all to find and establish family connections for children.

"FSE work takes a great deal of time, but in the end, family members are identified and connections are established which are very important for children," states Darlene Baad, Department Director, Protective Services.



Focus on Well-Being



Leadership Academy was developed to provide staff with a formalized program to obtain and practice valuable leadership skills. **Pictured above:** A panel of community leaders who spoke about 'Leaders and Leadership.'

Pictured at right: The inaugural Leadership Academy class of 15 agency staff members.



Throughout 2017, SCCS **staff proudly supported community-wide observances and celebrations.** **Pictured at left:** Staff members wore various colors of the rainbow in support of the LGBTQ community. Staff also supported Child & Family Awareness Month in April and National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October.

Focus on Well-Being



Members of SCCS' Women's Auxiliary Board volunteered in the Holiday Toy Room in December.



Staff participated in the Father Friendly Community Event in June.



Staff participated in the Reading Festival in February.



Volunteers helped deliver Easter baskets in April from KC's 3rd Base.



Dads were recognized at a Father Factor Graduation event in May.

"For nearly 20 years, we have donated Easter baskets, school supplies and toys for the holidays. It never gets old for us because we know it's all for the kids."

Teresa VanLieu, KC's 3rd Base



Elevate Akron supported children in foster care at the annual yoga event in July.



SCCS recognized the Eastgate family at the Community Appreciation Breakfast in April.



Donation of filled duffel bags for children in agency custody.



Nearly 50 volunteers helped pack school supplies in August.



Staff, families, and community partners participated in the Recovery Walk in September.



Summit County
CHILDREN SERVICES
Building Families . . . Building Futures

Make a difference. Make a call.

**24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline:
(330) 434-KIDS (5437)**

(330) 379-9094 | Hearing Impaired: Ohio Relay Service 7-1-1 | summitkids.org

Intake Services

- Assessment/Investigations of Child Abuse & Neglect
- STAT (Serious Trauma Assessment Team) Unit

Intake Screening and Supports

- 24-Hour Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: (330) 434-KIDS (5437)
- Intake Transitional Unit
- Evening Caseworker Unit

Protective Services

- Ongoing Case Management Services
- Medically Fragile Unit

Social Service Programs

- Thomas W. Blazey Family Interaction Center
- Substance Intervention Unit
- The Family Meeting Unit
- Father Factor Program
- Family Preservation Unit

Placement & Permanency Planning Services

- Kinship Care & Navigator Services
- Independent Living Program
- Transitional Housing Program
- Foster Care & Adoption Services, Recruitment & Licensing
- 24-Hour Foster Care & Adoption Inquiry: (330) 379-1990

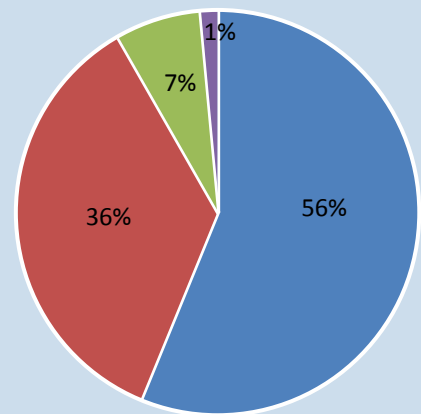
Community Outreach & Supportive Services

- Speakers Bureau: (330) 379-1984
- Volunteer & Donor Opportunities: (330) 379-1994

*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.

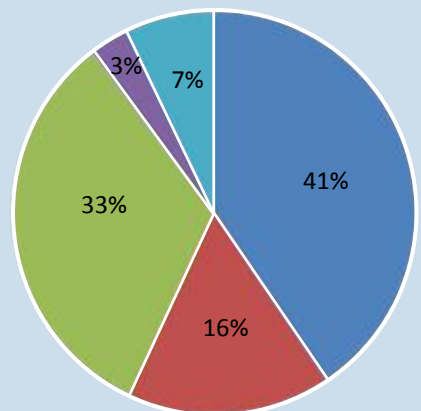
2017 Summary of Financial Statements

REVENUES



Operating Levy (Net)	\$25,511,040
Federal Funds	\$16,266,770
State Funds	\$ 3,118,518
Local & Grant Funds	\$ 605,960
Total Revenues	\$45,502,288

EXPENDITURES



Wages	\$19,470,627
Benefits	\$ 7,813,921
Placement	\$15,735,913
Other Child Related	\$ 1,498,192
Other Operational	\$ 3,441,496

Total Expenditures \$47,960,149

***Ending Fund Balance** \$21,820,012
(as of December 31, 2017)