



2022 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Building Families & Building Futures



Dear Friends,

I am truly honored to be the Executive Director of this amazing and premier child services agency. I began this role in April 2022 and am excited and grateful to serve in this capacity. Coming back to Summit County has been like coming home for me. This is where I began my career over 25 years ago and Summit County is a dynamic community with willing partnerships, innovative programs, and resources to serve children and families.



Cassandra Holtzmann,
JD, LPA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What we do at Summit County Children Services (SCCS) is important, and purposeful work, while making significant differences in the lives of so many. Our staff work tirelessly to keep children safe and strengthen families in Summit County, and we believe all children deserve a safe and permanent family. Through our mission, SCCS is committed to the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children served in partnership with the community.

As we look back upon the past year, I am struck by the perseverance and dedication of our staff, volunteers, donors, foster, adoptive and kinship caregivers as we provided services to 1 out of every 12 children in Summit County. I am in awe of their commitment to fulfill our mission and provide exceptional services to the abused and neglected children in this community.

Our staff choose every day to make a positive difference in the lives of many. The staff at SCCS serve as an important lifeline to families and children who sometimes have nowhere else to turn. This is what SCCS has done for more than 140 years through engagement, empathy, empowerment, and compassion that are demonstrated to the families we serve. Although we have experienced staff turnover like many others, we are grateful to have maintained a strong and competent workforce during the past year. These are the individuals by whom we have achieved so much in 2022. As you read the shared stories from our staff, I encourage you to embrace their resiliency through the many challenges of this work.

On behalf of the entire staff of SCCS, our Board of Trustees and most importantly the children and families served, I am pleased to present our 2022 Report to the Community. We look forward to furthering our mission through a steadfast commitment to best practice and quality service delivery in the year ahead. Thank you for your ongoing support of our vital work to keep children safe, build families and build futures.

Executive Team

Cassandra Holtzmann, JD, LPA
Executive Director

Amy Davidson, LISW-S
Deputy Director, Social Services

Darin Kearns
Deputy Director, Fiscal Services / CFO

Valarie Nash, SHRM-SCP, CLRP
Deputy Director, Human Resources & Support Services

Catherine Pomeroy Van Horne, Esq
Deputy Director, Legal Services

Sushila Tripathy-Moore, LISW-S
Deputy Director, Social Services – Resources

Board Of Trustees

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Ohio Real Title Agency

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Summit County Fiscal/Human Resources

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*Love Akron
effective 1/31*

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Summit County Land Bank

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*County of Summit Alcohol,
Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services
(ADM) Board*

Andrew Schuellerman
VSI Global, LLC

Katie Stoyhoff
The University of Akron

Citizen’s Advisory
Committee Members

Beth Gracey, Chair
County of Summit ADM Board

Allyson James, Vice Chair
Community Action Akron Summit

Terri Burns
*Summit County Department of Job
and Family Services*

Beth Cardina
Summit County Juvenile Court CASA/GAL Program

Beverly Foss
SCCS Women’s Auxiliary Board

Inspector William Holland, Jr.
Summit County Sheriff’s Department

Pastor Herman Matherson
The House of the Lord

Michele Mizda
Akron Children’s Hospital

Cecilia O’Donnell
Fostering Independence, Inc.

Jackie Pollard
Summit County Public Health

Sgt. John Ross
Akron Police Department

Women’s Auxiliary Board

Karen Davis
President

BUILDING CONNECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY

SCCS Staff Make a Difference

Around the State and around the county, our Executive Team is advocating for child protective services locally and on the state level. Here are some of the committees that our Executive Team has participated in.



State Committee - Northeast Ohio Prevention Council

Amy Davidson
Deputy Director, Social Services

Ms. Davidson is a member of the Northeast Ohio Regional Prevention Council, which is inclusive of 11 counties. This is a part of the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund whose mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect through investing in strong communities, healthy families and safe children. There are a total of eight Regional Prevention Councils who use a collaborative approach to address child abuse and neglect.



Summit County Family & Children First Council

Cassandra Holtmann, JD, LPA
Summit County Children Services, Executive Director

Summit County Family & Children First Council 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 families.



State Committee
Ohio Job and Family Services Human Resources Association

Valarie Nash
Deputy Director, HR & Training

Valarie is a member of the ODJFS Human Resources Association, dedicated to advancing the human resources management profession and providing opportunities for professional development and networking. During her tenure as President of JFSHRA, the association won the Ohio PELRA Pace Setter Award for excellent leadership during the pandemic.



State Committee - Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO)

Catherine Pomeroy Van Horne, JD
Deputy Director, Administrative & Legal Services / General Counsel

Catherine is a member of the PCSAO Rules Review Committee. PCSAO’s Rules Review Committee meets regularly to discuss the effect of proposed rules on agencies and practice. Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) reviews and comments on children services-related rules during the clearance processes and, when needed, when rules progress to the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR).

Agency staff participates in a number of state and local committees. They include, but are not limited to the following: Akron Children’s Hospital Safe Sleep Workgroup, Child Advocacy Center Multi-Disciplinary Team, Dually Involved Youth Committee, Infant Mortality Initiative, Juvenile Court Advisory Committee, Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services Mandated Reporter Portal Workgroup, Public Children Services Association of Ohio Community Education Committee, Summit Coalition for Community Health Improvement, Summit County Domestic Violence Coalition, and Summit County Reentry Coalition.

Building Families & Building Futures

Building Families and Building Futures is what we strive for at Summit County Children Services (SCCS). SCCS staff have a strong passion to make a difference and have chosen a career that matters to children and families in Summit County. A profession in child welfare means positively impacting the lives of families and children in this community, and there is nothing more important!

Last year, 1 out of every 12 children in this county received services from our agency. Caseworkers are an important lifeline and safety net to families and children who sometimes have nowhere else to turn, as our caseworkers assess and investigate reports of child abuse, neglect, and dependency.



You Can't Pour From an Empty Cup

Through a workforce grant, we have implemented on-site counseling support to assist our staff who feel impacted by the vicarious trauma of child welfare work. Weekly in-person counseling sessions help individuals gain advice and explanations for why certain feelings arise, receive validation and clarity, have an opportunity to speak their minds freely, and feel accepted and cared for.

At SCCS, we value our staff and have implemented recruitment and retention activities for child protection caseworkers. With input and feedback from staff, creative solutions and strategies have been put into place to assist with this challenging but empowering work.

Candy

Family Preservation Caseworker

I have been interested in child welfare for as long as I can remember. It stemmed from my upbringing and learning at a young age how important it is to have a healthy functioning family and the negative ramifications that can occur when that is not present.

My motivation comes from being able to see the positive changes that a family makes and helping children that cannot help themselves be put into safe situations while working towards reunification.

I have seen complete life transformations firsthand, relationships being healed and rebuilt, and generational concerns and cycles ending. I enjoy being able to connect with families and breaking down barriers and stereotypes that are present to gain trust and overcome their past preconceptions about what child welfare is.



Sharon

Protective Services (Ongoing) Caseworker

I love my job because I truly make a difference in children's lives. I still have parents, foster parents, and adoptive parents reach out to me years later to thank me for helping them. I have one adoptive mom who still updates me on her daughter over 10 years later!



Lawanna

Protective Services (Ongoing) Caseworker

My motivation comes when I can partner with families and help them identify their strengths and develop their passion and desires for success leading to reunification within the family. These are priceless moments.



You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending.
— C. S. Lewis

Jillian

Protective Services (Ongoing) Caseworker

What motivates me is being able to come into a case where a person may not want the help, but sticking it out with them, encouraging and supporting them to make the positive and necessary changes in their lives to be better parents.



Gabby

Intake Caseworker

What brought me to Child Welfare was my childhood. I wanted to step in for a family in a time of crisis and be a positive light to help with guidance and support. I love when I'm able to help change the narrative and negative perceptions of the agency with clients. That is a very rewarding experience when a client tells me that they had a bad view of the agency and that I helped change that.

It is important to me to help relations between the community and the agency.

A positive experience that I have had with a client was motivating a mother to seek in-patient treatment and come to terms with her drug use after having her children removed from the home. I felt instrumental in helping her recognize the impact that her decisions were having on her family, and she was then able to have the desire to make a positive change.



Steve

Intake Caseworker

Growing up, children hope and aspire to become famous athletes or wealthy entrepreneurs. Others consider going into ministry or politics.

I wanted to help children and families.

I grew up with foster children and watched as caseworkers would come and go from our home. The child welfare caseworkers provided services that would greatly impact the children in our home. I knew at a young age I wanted to have this type of positive impact.

I have never regretted my decision to go into child welfare. I love my job and don't think about retiring like people in other professions. I love being able to work with children and families and feel like I'm making a difference just like those social workers I watched as a child.



Beth

OhioSTART Caseworker

My motivation is watching families once ravaged by the effects of addictions, begin to heal, and once again become whole. Recovery is BEAUTIFUL!



Marcie

Paralegal

I enjoy finding parents and relatives so that children can achieve permanency in the least restrictive manner and are more likely to be with family.



Sandy

Social Work Assistant

I really like helping families achieve their goals.



Christen

Intake Caseworker

I love that I can give a voice to someone who cannot speak up for themselves. I love that someone will open up to me and tell me that I'm the first person that has ever believed them or treated them like a human being. I love that I can look at someone's past and present and connect the dots to tell the story. Child welfare is amazing work if you want to understand how everything impacts someone; prenatally to older adulthood.

There is so much to love about child welfare, even on your worst days.



Michael

Caseworker

I have enjoyed being an African -American male employee, in a field of employment that is predominantly female, because I get the opportunity to serve as a role model to fathers who may either want custody, or have been inactive in their child's life. I also get the opportunity to show women an alternative and healthier way to interact, who may have only been exposed to a certain maladaptive and unhealthy way of interacting with men.

This line of work is rewarding, yet challenging. The purpose is to "restore, redeem and reconcile" parents when possible to their children and assist them with making "necessary lifestyle changes, so that they can be the best parent that they can be to their children.



Melissa

Caseworker

I love to make a difference and a positive impact in the lives of people.



Bea

Family Search Caseworker

Having a family doesn't come with a guidebook or directions.

Families cannot do what they do not know. Part of being a child welfare caseworker is being a model, a teacher, an advocate, and a mentor. Watching families become successful and knowing you were part of that change is priceless.



Andrea

Caseworker

SCCS is a place to take care of yourself, while you are taking care of other people.



BUILDING FUTURES THROUGH EDUCATION

Spreading Awareness of the Need for Foster Homes



WE HAVE STARS AMONG US!

Making a Difference in Child Services



Support Staff of the Year Theresa DeJournett

Theresa always goes above and beyond and is very knowledgeable of all things records. As a Records Management Specialist, she will do everything she can to find any record and to provide everything needed to fulfill a request. Theresa is a wealth of knowledge and a huge asset to the agency. She is all-around awesome at her job!



Casework Supervisor of the Year Tanya Vanderveen

Tanya brings tremendous value to the protective department and is consistently dedicated and team-oriented. She provides excellent clinical direction and takes an active approach to supervision. Tanya remains steadily solution-focused and promotes a can-do spirit. She also maintains an additional role of providing hands-on training to new caseworkers on case plans and case reviews and has expert knowledge of our state's automated child welfare information system.



Support Supervisor of the Year Kelly Aloisi

Kelly is well respected and highly regarded across the agency and throughout the community. Her willingness to assist anyone who needs help is an identified strength by her colleagues. She is an extremely knowledgeable supervisor and shares that knowledge with her staff. Kelly is also an amazing support to those outside of her department and is often sought out to lead initiatives, coordinate events and represent the agency in the community. Her smile and personality are so contagious and welcoming. Her professionalism is top notch as well as her motivation to always do her best every day!!



Caseworker of the Year Hope Fondriest

Hope is the definition of a team player. She always goes the extra mile when it comes to her clients. Hope advocates for her families and really takes the time to build a rapport with them. She has been a dedicated caseworker at Summit County Children Services for years and is passionate about serving children and families. Hope is an amazing asset to SCCS and is deserving of this award.

LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Buck, SCCS Youth Received Award For His Positive and Caring Attitude

The Leaders of Tomorrow award recognizes youth who had contact with the child services system and who, despite their circumstances, demonstrate growth, resiliency, and leadership.

Buck is known for his glowing personality, often lighting up the room with his positive attitude. He's been described as a comedian and as someone who is compassionate and caring. Despite past and current challenges, he is full of energy and positivity, striving to lead by example.

Buck plays football for his high school as an offensive lineman and continues to work hard on his grades. He also has an array of hobbies including creative writing, drawing, chess, cornhole, yo-yo tricks, fishing, and working with modeling clay.

Due to his positive personality and positive impact on the people he interacts with, Buck was also the recipient of the Youth Achievement Award at the Summit County Children Services Annual Appreciation Breakfast. Buck leads through example and is a role model to others, especially his sister, letting her know that she can do anything she puts her mind to. Buck was presented the Public Children Services Association of Ohio 2022 Leaders of Tomorrow award.



Buck alongside SCCS staff



Buck with Renita, SCCS Caseworker

AKRON CORPORATE CHALLENGE 2022

SCCS brings home 1st place!

Akron Corporate Challenge is a premier Corporate Wellness Program in NE Ohio that combines Team-Building Activities, Networking Opportunities, Charity Giving, and fun all into one program.

SCCS won 1st place for the 1st time ever! SCCS was presented a \$300 check for the Beds for Kids program. Through the Beds for Kids program, families may receive a crib, bed or bunk beds for their children who are at risk so they can sleep safely.



SCCS crowned Corporate Cup Champion

THE NUMBERS OF NEED

Service that Counts

During 2022, we provided services to the children and families of Summit County to bring stability and safety to their lives. Our goal is to place children as close as possible to their family home.

7

Average age of children on open cases

85

Total # of finalized adoptions

9,844

Total # of children who received agency services

80%

Percentage of children reunified with family

832

Monthly average # of children in custody

344

Monthly average # of children in kinship homes

698

Monthly average # of families served

9,485

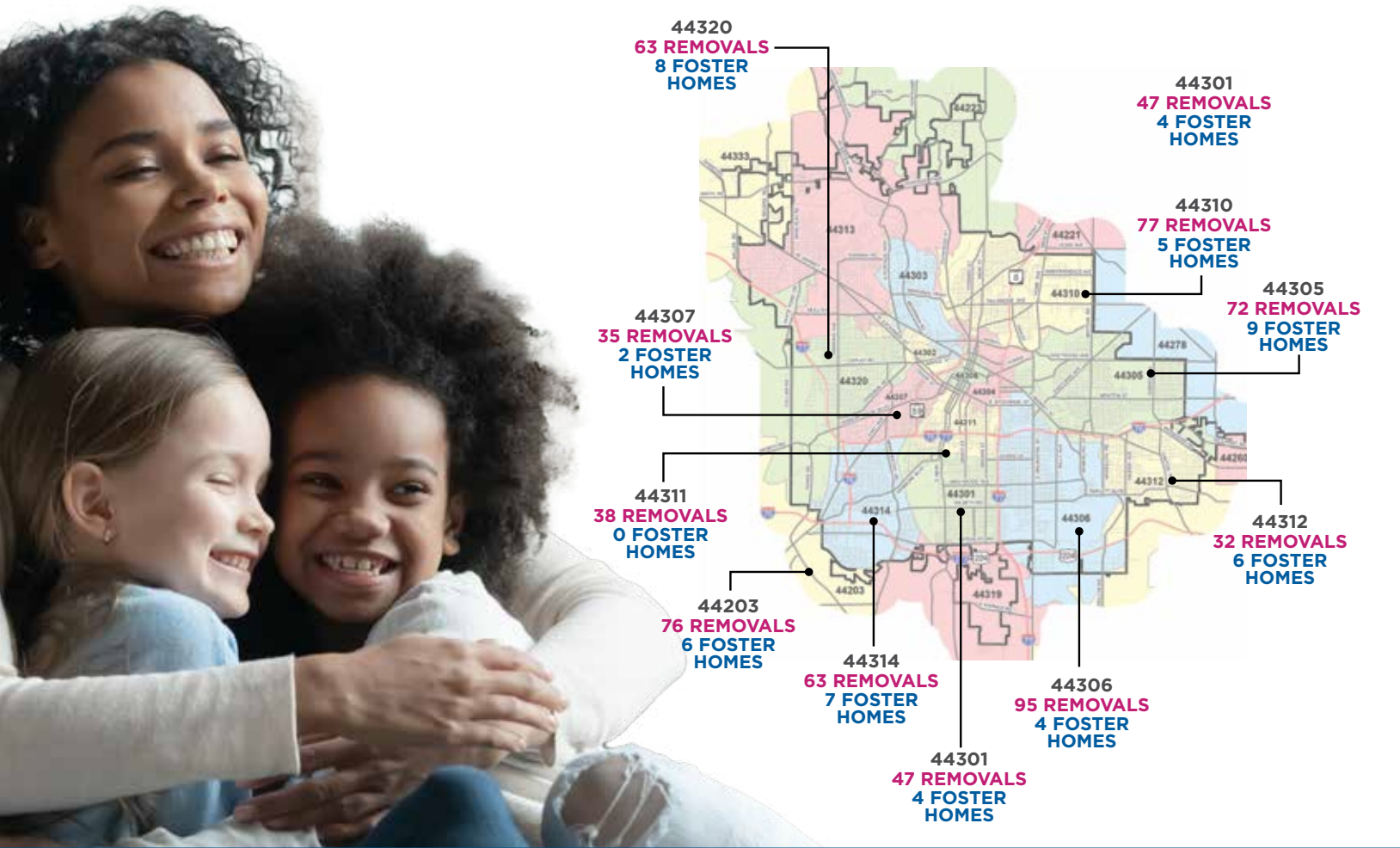
Total # of Intake calls

3,680

of reports assigned for assessment/investigation

NUMBER OF REMOVALS PER TOP 10 TARGET ZIP CODES AND FOSTER HOMES IN EACH AREA.

This illustration demonstrates the need for more foster homes.



2022 Summary of Financial Statements



| REVENUES | | EXPENDITURES | |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Operating Levy | \$ 40,046,758 | Wages | \$ 22,659,149 |
| Federal Funds | \$ 20,478,237 | Benefits | \$ 9,051,606 |
| State Funds | \$ 5,196,428 | Placement | \$ 20,887,826 |
| Local & Grant Funds | \$ 985,671 | Other Child Related | \$ 1,061,795 |
| Total Revenues | \$66,707,094 | Other Operational | \$ 5,583,476 |
| | | Total Expenditures | \$59,243,852 |

Intake Services

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

Intake Specialized Services

- 24-Hour Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: (330) 434-KIDS (5437)
- Evening Caseworker Unit
- Training and Transition Units

Protective Services

- Ongoing Case Management Services

Protective Specialized Services

- Medically Fragile Unit
- Substance Intervention Unit
- Permanency Planning and Adoption Units
- Family Preservation Units and Ohio Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma (START) staff

Placement Services

- Kinship Assessment Unit
- Independent Living Program
- Placement Unit
- Foster Home Support Unit
- Family Search
- Family Meeting Unit

Family Services

- Family Interaction Center
- Family Enrichment
- Community and In-Home Visitation
- Beds for Kids Program
- Succeed Program

Make a difference. Make a call.
24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline: 330-434-KIDS (5437)



Are you considering a career in child protective services?

Summit County Children Services is a progressive child services agency that offers a wide variety of career opportunities in child services and support positions. Our professional work environment includes an on-site training facility and excellent employee benefits. We also offer:

- Liberal vacation
- Health plan with prescription drug, optical, and dental coverage
- 15 days sick leave per year
- Paid personal days
- 14 paid holidays (including birthday)
- Tuition assistance plans
- Paid career development opportunities
- Paid parental leave
- Hybrid work schedules
- Mileage reimbursement
- Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS)
- Licensure Reimbursement (qualifying licenses/certifications)

Visit our website to learn more at summitkids.org/careers or scan the QR code below.



Scan here to learn more.

Become a foster parent.

There are over 800* children in the agency's custody and only around 180* foster homes.

Together we can provide Summit County families with the support they need to create stronger, safer and happier homes.

*As of April 2023

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

DEI Values Statement:

At SCCS, we believe in creating a culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We will cultivate an environment that respects, celebrates and supports the differences of our employees and the people we serve.

For more on SCCS's Mission, Vision and Values, visit www.summitkids.org/About/Mission-Vision-Values



330.379.1990 | summitkids.org | [f](#) [y](#) [i](#) [t](#) [i](#)



Scan here to view current career opportunities.