



Summit County

CHILDREN SERVICES

Building Families . . . Building Futures

A Guide to Working with Summit County Children Services (SCCS)

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Caseworker

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Supervisor

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Summit County Children Services
264 S. Arlington St., Akron, Ohio 44306
(330) 379-9094 | www.summitkids.org



Please let your caseworker know if you or a member of your family needs assistance to communicate effectively with SCCS. SCCS provides an interpreter or other reasonable accommodations for individuals who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP), visual impairment or hearing loss, when such services are necessary for the individual to interact effectively with SCCS.

SPANISH:

Por favor, informe a su trabajador social si usted o un miembro de su familia necesita ayuda para comunicarse eficazmente con SCCS. SCCS proporciona un intérprete u otras adaptaciones razonables para personas que tienen dominio limitado del inglés (LEP, por sus siglas en inglés), discapacidad visual o pérdida auditiva, cuando dichos servicios son necesarios para que la persona interactúe eficazmente con SCCS.

SWAHILI:

Tafadhali mjulishe mfanyakazi wako wa kesi ikiwa wewe au mwanafamilia wako anahitaji usaidizi ili kuwasiliana vyema na SCCS. SCCS huwapa mkalimani, au mapendekezo kadri inavyofaa kwa watu ambao wana Ustadi mdogo wa Kiingereza (LEP), ulemavu wa kuona, au kupoteza uwezo wa kusikia, wakati huduma kama hizo ni muhimu kwa mtu huyo ili aweze kuwasiliana kwa ufanisi na SCCS.

NEPALI:

एससिसिएसमा सम्पर्क गर्नको लागि तपाईं वा तपाईंको परिवारका कसैलाई सहयोगको आवश्यकता छ भने कृपया आफ्नो केस वर्करलाई जानकारी गराउनुहोला। अंग्रेजी भाषाको सिमित ज्ञान भएका वा दृश्य शक्ति कम भएका वा श्रवण शक्ति कम भएका व्यक्तिहरूको एससिसिएससंग प्रभावकारी कुराकानी होस् भन्ने उद्देश्यले एससिसिएसले आवश्यकता अनुसार दोभाषे (इन्टरप्रेटर) वा अन्य उपयुक्त सहयोगीको व्यवस्था गर्दछ।

PASHTO:

مهرباني وکړئ خپل د قضيې کارکونکي (کيس ورکړ) ته خبر ورکړئ که تاسو يا ستاسو د کورنۍ کوم غړی د SCCS سره په مؤثره توگه د خبرو اترو لپاره کملک ته اړتيا لري د هغو اشخاصو لپاره چې انگليسي ژبه يې لومړۍ ژبه نه وي، د ليدلو يا د اوريدلو کمزورتيا لري، يو ترجمان يا نور مناسب خدمات چمتو کوي، هغه وخت چې دا ډول خدمتونه د فرد لپاره اړين وي چې د SCCS سره په اغيزمنه توگه اړيکه ونيسي

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Agency Mission

Summit County Children Services (SCCS) is committed to the safety, permanency and well-being of all children served, in partnership with families and the community.

VISION STATEMENT

Because we believe in family preservation and that all children deserve a safe, stable and permanent home, Summit County Children Services will:

- Intervene only where necessary and only to the proper degree;
- Assess the community's concerns of child abuse and neglect, focusing on safety, risk and family strengths;
- Serve as partners with families and in teamwork with partner agencies in the community;
- Utilize team decision-making meetings to engage families;
- 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 and ethics;
- Be fiscally responsible.

VALUES

At SCCS, we believe:

- All children have a right to a safe and stable home.
- All children should be in permanent homes.
- The well-being of all children is vital to us, their families, the child 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 children 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 child protection work with families.
- We have a responsibility to be able stewards of taxpayer resources.
- 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.

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What We Do

SCCS was founded in the 1880's to help families provide a safe and secure home for their children. SCCS is **the only** community organization mandated by law to protect abused, neglected and dependent children.

SCCS provides the services listed below to carry out its mandate, investigating and assessing reports and connecting parents, caregivers and children to services in the community when a need is identified and enabling them to solve problems that impact child safety and strength the family.

24-Hour Hotline - (330) 434-KIDS (5437)

SCCS provides a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week, child abuse/neglect hotline. To report known or suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or dependency, call the number above anytime, day or night. SCCS does not share the identity of the reporter with the family.

Intake Services

The Intake Department responds to reports of children who are suspected of being abused, neglected or dependent. Through assessment and investigation of reports, case workers evaluate safety concerns and risks to children in collaboration with the family.

Protective Services

Caseworkers in the Protective Services Department partner with families to develop plans to address concerns related to child safety and well-being, while building upon the family's strengths.

Safe Haven for Newborns

Ohio law allows a parent to anonymously leave their newborn (30 days or younger) with a medical worker in any hospital; with a medical worker at a fire department or other emergency service organization; or a peace officer at a law enforcement agency. When a parent chooses to utilize the Safe Haven law, SCCS is notified and takes action to assume custody of the infant while maintaining the parent's anonymity.

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Assessment and Investigation of Reports

Ohio has a Differential Response child protection system. This means children services agencies have two options for responding to accepted reports of child abuse and neglect to help ensure child safety:

A Traditional Response pathway and an Alternative Response pathway. Both pathways allow children services staff to address the unique safety concerns, risks and situations of each family, in a way that is collaborative and respectful. In both cases, the primary goal is child safety.

Traditional Response

- ⇒ Always required for reports of sexual abuse, abuse resulting in a serious injury and whenever children are determined to be in serious and immediate risk of harm;
- ⇒ May involve court intervention;
- ⇒ Will result in a determination/finding about the allegation.

Alternative Response

- ⇒ Used when reports of abuse or neglect do not allege serious or imminent harm;
- ⇒ Involves safety-focused partnerships with families;
- ⇒ Does not result in a determination/finding about the allegation.

Both pathways require caseworkers to complete Safety, Risk and Comprehensive Assessments and to gather information about the family's strengths and needs.

A case may be assigned to an Alternative Response pathway but later changed to a Traditional Response pathway if needed to ensure child safety.

Our primary job is to partner with you and help you keep your children safe and secure.

We know that all families are not the same, and that the concerns you face are different from those of your neighbors, friends and other families across Ohio. One size does not fit all when it comes to keeping children safe. We are committed to working with you to understand your unique circumstances.

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Many times, the best way to help you and your children is to listen to you, discuss your family's situation, partner with you to identify solutions and connect your family to resources to meet your needs.

Getting involved with a children services agency can be intimidating and confusing for families. You have become involved with your local agency because somebody made a report of concern about your child or children. The agency will assign a caseworker to meet with you.

You and your caseworker will discuss the situation, as well as the events and actions that may have caused this situation. Your caseworker will ask you about your family's strengths and concerns and ask how you can work together to address those concerns.

Together, you and your caseworker will create a plan with child-centered, family-focused, strength-based solutions to keep your children safe. If an assessment indicates that your child may be in serious and immediate risk of harm, he or she may need to formally investigate the matter and/or seek court intervention to ensure your child's safety. If no safety concerns are identified, you can accept or refuse the services offered.

(Source: Ohio Differential Response brochure JFS 01421)

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Client Rights and Grievances

SCCS provides programs and services on a nondiscriminatory basis as required by federal, state and local civil rights laws. SCCS provides an interpreter or other reasonable accommodations for individuals with impaired vision and/or hearing and individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) when such services are necessary for the individual to interact effectively with SCCS. Client Rights services are available to the community, including persons served, relatives and kin, foster caregivers, adoptive parents and community professionals to express their concerns regarding agency services. The Office of Client Rights is housed within SCCS and can be reached at (330) 379-2087.

What if I have Questions or Concerns About Services?

If you have concerns related to services provided by SCCS or false reporting of abuse or neglect, please contact the assigned caseworker and their supervisor to discuss your concerns. If these steps do not resolve your concerns, the next step is to contact the caseworker's Department Director for discussion and review. If you are not sure who to contact, the Client Rights Officer is available to assist you with navigating the process.

When concerns cannot be resolved through the caseworker and their direct chain of command, SCCS has a formal grievance process. A copy of the formal grievance procedure and form for submission is available at SCCS and is also provided by the Client Rights Officer upon request.

What does the Report Disposition mean?

For purposes of investigations into child abuse and neglect, a report disposition (finding on the report) is issued at the conclusion of a traditional intake investigation.

A report may be **Substantiated** when there is an admission of child abuse or neglect by the persons(s) responsible; an adjudication of child abuse or neglect; or other forms of confirmation deemed valid by the public children services agency.

A report may be **Indicated** when circumstantial or other isolated indicators of child abuse or neglect lacking confirmation are present, or when the caseworker determines that the child may have been abused or neglected based upon completion of the investigation.

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A report may be **Unsubstantiated** when the investigation determines no occurrence of child abuse or neglect.

What if I disagree with the Report Disposition?

An appeal of the disposition is a formal process available only to an individual named as the alleged perpetrator on a substantiated or indicated report of abuse and/or neglect of a child. An appeal must be submitted to the Client Rights Office no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the dispositional letter. Information on appealing the disposition is included in the dispositional letter. A copy of the Disposition Appeals procedure and form for submission is provided by the Client Rights Officer upon request and is also available at the SCCS front desk.

Community Resources

The United Way of Summit & Medina County helps people across Summit County find local resources when they need help. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phoning 211. You may also scan the QR code below to connect to the 211 website and find resources.



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Safe Sleep and Shaken Baby Syndrome

This information is reviewed with all caretakers who have routine responsibility for the care of an infant under 12 months of age.

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and accidental suffocation are the leading cause of death for infants between one month and twelve months of age, most commonly occurring among infants who are one to four months old. Infants should sleep Alone on their Back and in a Crib, pack n play, or bassinet. If possible, the infant should sleep in the same room as the parents, but not in the same bed. Three Ohio infants die each week in unsafe sleep areas. 66% of these deaths happen to infants who were not sleeping alone.

An empty crib, pack n play, bassinet, or other safe sleep surface is best. The mattress or sleep surface should be firm and should not have loose sheets. Many parents believe their infant won't be warm or comfortable without bumper pads, blankets, pillows, and stuffed animals, but these items can be deadly. Infants can suffocate on or be strangled by any extra item in the crib, pack n play, bassinet, or other safe sleep surfaces.

Avoid letting the infant get too hot. The infant could be too hot if you notice sweating, damp hair, flushed cheeks, heat rash, and rapid breathing. Dress the infant lightly for sleep. A sleep sac or one-piece sleeper is best. The ideal room temperature for an infant is between 68 to 72 degrees.

Talk to those who care for your infant, including childcare providers, family, and friends, about Safe Sleep practices for each and every sleep. About 1 in 5 deaths happen while someone other than a parent is caring for an infant.

Do not smoke in the home or around the infant. Secondhand smoke causes numerous health problems in infants and children, including more frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Chemicals in secondhand smoke appear to affect the brain in ways that interfere with its regulation of infants breathing.

Shaken baby syndrome is brain injury that occurs when someone shakes an infant or throws an infant against an object. It is a form of child abuse. It may happen to children up to 5 years of age, but it is most common in children younger than 1 year old. Shaken baby is the leading cause of child abuse deaths in the United States.

It is never okay to shake or throw a young child. It may not leave any obvious sign of injury, but it can cause serious long-term problems or even death. The number one reason a child is shaken is because a parent or caregiver becomes so frustrated with an infant's crying that they lose control and begin to shake them. When frustrated put the infant in a safe place, walk away, take a time out, or ask for help.

When I need help or I am feeling frustrated, I will reach out to:

(Sources: ohioapp.org, odh.ohio.gov, cds.gov and uwhealth.org).

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