

LORAIN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

2021-2023

STRATEGIC PLAN



KRISTEN FOX BERKI, MSSA, LISW-S
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2021-2023 Strategy Map

Our Mission: In partnership with the community, the staff, foster parents, and volunteers of Lorain County Children Services are committed to the safety and well-being of abused, neglected, and dependent children and will provide the highest quality protection, permanence and prevention services to children and families.

Our Vision: We believe all children have an absolute right to a safe, permanent, stable home which provides basic levels of nurturance and care, and is free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Values: We value Safety, Permanency within One Year and Improved Well-Being for all Children and Families We Touch



Diversity and Inclusion	Responding to Trauma/ Advance Trauma-Informed	Family First Act Implementation and Innovation
<i>Create a diverse and inclusive workplace and employ a racial equity lens to policy, procedures, and practice decisions.</i>	<i>Become a safe and trauma-informed agency both in our interactions with children, families, and resource families as well as with each other.</i>	<i>Utilize evidence-based foster care prevention services and internal innovations to support children remaining in their own home.</i>
SECTION OBJECTIVES	SECTION OBJECTIVES	SECTION OBJECTIVES
Establish a learning journey that will lead to addressing systemic and root-cause reasons for children and families coming into care, and reducing racial disproportionality and disparities in children services. (D/I Training and Education)	Further evolve a culture of safety to advance psychological safety practices throughout all levels of agency staff. (Culture of Safety)	Fully implement federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. (Laws and Rules)
Lorain County Children Services will create HR structures and opportunities to support career advancement. (Staff diversity and inclusion)	Staff will become advanced in their knowledge of how trauma impacts the children and families that we encounter. (Impact of Trauma)	Create a team of licensed caregivers to foster children with significant needs but who are not eligible for a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (Specialized Foster Care)
Implement strategies to reduce disparity, injustice, and disproportionality at key points along the practice continuum. (Decision Points)	Lorain County Children Services staff will make the safety of all staff a priority at each stage including violence prevention, organizational responses to violent/safety threats and provide support to staff who experience violence. (Staff Safety)	Innovate internal process to support staff in identifying and linking families to appropriate FFA Prevention Services to increase ability for families to remain safely together. (Reduce Number of Children in Placement)

Strategic Plan	Diversity and Inclusion	Responding to Trauma/ Advanced Trauma-Informed	Family First Act Implementation and Innovation
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judith Padua • MaShonn Sullivan • Amanda Pittner • Chris Turcola • Patricia Kushner • Dena Jones • Kimberly Kassam • Heather Jamison • John Alvord 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrea Hall-Miller • Michelle Hunt • Lisa Hatcher • Deborah Bailey • Tina Meade • Katelyn Miller • Cheryl Morris • Elizabeth Nuti • Anastasia Williams • Amy Loch • Stacey Spicer • Tammy Ruiz • Nancy Griffiths • Holly Dobias • Julie Schoenlein • Anne Rucker • Felicia Fair • Heather Bell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kristin Ross • Chris Turcola • Sheryl Botts • Lauren Gruhn • Rhonda Conway • Michelle Hunt • Deanna Wise • Patti-Jo Burtnett • Kristen fox • Julie Haight • Racheal Cambarare • Amber Gaikwad • Dory Zemanek • Jessenia Velez Matias • Tina Cottrell • Angela Malcolm • Dean Horn Stacy Schmidt • Caroline McKinney • Elizabeth Nuti • Felicia Fair
January – June 2021	Create committee	Create committee	Create committee
July 2021- December 2021	<p>Create staff training about the history of racism in the child welfare system and how the history of the system shapes present day racial disproportionality, disparities, and inequities. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Schedule and promote Cultural Diversity Committee Lunch and Learns to highlight advocacy efforts throughout our community (Training and Education)</p> <p>Provide staff access and instruction on how to use the Implicit Association Test (IAT) to measure attitudes or beliefs about a variety of topics. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Use available resources and assess the use of programs from Public Children Services</p>	<p>Staff at LCCS will agree to the accepted definition of Psychological Safety: it is a shared belief held by members of a team that others on the team will not embarrass, reject, or be punished for speaking up. (Culture of Safety)</p> <p>Lorain County Children Services staff will commit to the psychological safety of all staff. Staff within the agency will support each other by listening to opinions and concerns and to encourage a culture of trust and open communication in which all levels of the agency can learn from one another. (Culture of Safety)</p> <p>Safety committee will continue to meet and will include representatives from managers, supervisors, caseworkers, and administrative staff to troubleshoot and address safety threats and agree upon action items. (Staff Safety)</p>	<p>Establish process with CQI/Procedure Review Committee to begin flagging procedures likely to change with Family First or to make the change as new rules are promulgated. (Laws and Rules)</p> <p>Assure staff access to state trainings on Family First philosophy, laws, rules, changes, and concrete supports like OhioRise and Center of Excellence. (Laws and Rules)</p> <p>Offer agency training on how the CANS is used for QRTP assessments. (Specialized Foster Care)</p> <p>Offer training to a select 1-2 staff to be qualified in using CANS. (Specialized Foster Care)</p>

	<p>Agencies of Ohio (PCSAO), Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS), Casey Family Foundations, National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) and other institutions or organizations that provide strategies to address barriers in establishing diversity in LCCS workforce. (Staff Diversity)</p> <p>Identify the data to know where specific disparities exist and share this information with all staff. (Decision Points)</p>	<p>Incident reports will be tracked to identify trends, needed training/supports to minimize potential violence to staff. These reports will be reviewed at the safety committee meetings. Clinical risk committee will track incidents to determine potential trends in practice and will address those issues. (Staff Safety)</p>	
<p>January 2022- June 2022</p>	<p>Develop and support unit and case level discussion and analysis strategies to reduce disproportionate outcomes for children and families. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Review and recommend updates to core values, agency vision and mission as well as policies and procedures to promote diversity and inclusivity (Training and Education)</p> <p>Develop targeted HR strategies to support staff diversity and retention including opportunities like mentorship and leadership development. (Staff Diversity)</p>	<p>All staff will participate in a training about psychological safety. (Culture of Safety)</p> <p>Prioritize teamwork and communication based on trust within all levels of staff. Staff can discuss issues candidly with no fear of reprisal. (Culture of Safety)</p> <p>All staff will continue to have the opportunity to participate in various committees at the agency including, safety, clinical risk, wellness, procedure review and cultural diversity committees. This will allow staff at all levels of the agency to be part of change efforts and focused discussions to ultimately improve outcomes for children and families. (Culture of Safety)</p> <p>Staff will gain and develop awareness of the impacts of trauma on the families we serve, recognize signs and symptoms of trauma, integrate our knowledge into policies, practices and procedures and expedite services to children who have been separated from their family of origin if needed. (Impact of Trauma)</p> <p>Caseworker and supervisor staff at LCCS will have the opportunity to complete a Trauma Certification program through ODJFS Offices of Family Assistance and Families and Children, in partnership with OhioMHAS, Ohio Trauma Certificate. This certificate program is designed to move staff from</p>	<p>Review Family First fiscal report and explain to staff how the practice shift connects to fiscal shift. (Laws and Rules)</p> <p>Identify the collaborations needed to create wrap around system to support specialized foster parents caring for children who either do not qualify for a QRTP or who need to step down from QRTP. (Specialized Foster Care)</p> <p>Execute focused marketing campaign to recruit and license foster parents who agree to care for children with complex needs who do not qualify for a QRTP. (Specialized Foster Care)</p> <p>Increase family finding trainings and tools for use by DS caseworkers. (Specialized foster care)</p> <p>Review internal options to support staff in increasing the number of children who remain safely at home with the provision of foster care Prevention Services. Identify several specific innovations. (Reduce the Number of Children in Placement)</p>

		being trauma aware to trauma competent. (Impact of Trauma)	
July 2022- December 2022	<p>Update public art, public communication, and visitation room resources to reflect diversity and promote inclusion. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Monitor ongoing data related to racial disparities at the following decision-making points of a case: All Calls, Screened-in Reports, Traditional Case Pathway assignment, Ongoing case assignment, Custody intervention, Kinship Care placement, Foster Care placements, Adoptive placement, placement changes, Permanent Custody, Permanency with Kinship, and Case Length (time). (Decision Points)</p> <p>For each data point that has racial disparities, identify a specific tool or practice to positively impact this disparity. (Decision Points)</p>	<p>Ensure a physically safe workplace including easy access to exits, alarm systems that can alert others of a current safety risk and visually open spaces to meet. Additionally, the presence of a coworker or supervisor when meeting with an aggressive individual. Ensure there is no access to easily weaponized objects such as scissors, staplers, etc. (Staff Safety)</p>	<p>Choose an innovation that will likely lead to more children remaining safely at home and pilot its use. (Reduce the Number of Children in Placement)</p> <p>Conduct internal evaluation of its effectiveness. If not effective, implement the next innovation. (Reduce the Number of Children in Placement)</p>
January 2023 – June 2023	<p>Review tools used for effectiveness and replace or adjust as needed. (Decision Points)</p>	<p>Connect children and families to services to get treatment for their trauma to mitigate the symptoms of trauma including health, mental health, and substance abuse issues. Trauma informed therapist will be available to initiate services with children and families that we refer within 7-21 days. Trauma informed therapist will be available for children entering LCCS care within 7-10 days. (Impact of Trauma)</p>	<p>Implement the selected innovation that helps reduce the number of children who are separated from their parents. (Reduce the Number of Children in Placement)</p>
July 2023- December 2023	<p>Delegate ongoing tasks for continuous review and implementation to Cultural Diversity Committee to continue the dialogue and sustain awareness for Training and Education. (Training and Education)</p>		