

LORAIN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

2022-2024

STRATEGIC PLAN



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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 of protection, and prevention services to children and families.

Our Vision: We believe all children should have an absolute right to a safe, permanent and 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, Inclusion, Family and Individual Rights (DIFIR)	Responding to Trauma/ Advance Trauma-Informed and Resilient Professionalism	Family First Act Implementation and Innovation
<p><i>Create a diverse and inclusive workspace, with respect for families and individuals of various customs and backgrounds, acknowledging their constitutional and civil rights.</i></p>	<p><i>Become a resilient, empathetic and trauma-informed agency both in our interactions with children, families, and resource families as well as with each other.</i></p>	<p><i>Utilize evidence-based foster care prevention services and internal innovations to support children remaining in their own home.</i></p>
SECTION OBJECTIVES	SECTION OBJECTIVES	SECTION OBJECTIVES
<p>Establish a learning journey to destigmatize mental health, income-based, medical, education-based, lifestyle, addiction-based, family-role and root cause reasons for children and families entering our care, reducing racial disproportionality and disparities, supporting caregivers, children, and biological parents in optimizing their upward-mobility across the stability-spectrum. (DIFIR Training and Education)</p>	<p>Further evolve a culture of professionalism to advance resilience practices throughout all levels of agency staff. (Culture of Resilient Professionalism)</p>	<p>Fully implement federal and state laws, rules, and regulations, including the Families First Prevention Services Act. (Laws and Rules)</p>
<p>Lorain County Children Services will create HR structures and opportunities to support career advancement. (Staff DIFIR)</p>	<p>Staff will become advanced in their knowledge of how trauma impacts those families with children that we encounter. Also, how emotional intelligence can enhance human relations. (Impact of Trauma and Empathy)</p>	<p>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)</p>

Implement individually tailored strategies to promote family values, positive role-models, and reduce disparity and instability across the practice continuum. **(Decision Points)**

Lorain County Children Services staff will make the resilience and professionalism of all staff a priority at each stage including physical violence prevention, organizational responses to threats, providing support to staff who experience physical violence, and clear measures to ensure resilient professionalism, empathy and active listening. **(Staff Resilient Professionalism)**

Innovate internal process to support staff in identifying and linking families with children to appropriate FFA Prevention Services to increase ability for families to remain safely together. **(Reduce Number of Children in Placement)**

Strategic Plan	Diversity, Inclusion, Family and Individual Rights (DIFIR)	Responding to Trauma/ Advanced Trauma-Informed and Empathetic Professionalism	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 • Amy Loch • Tammy Ruiz • Nancy Griffiths • Holly Dobias • Julie Schoenlein • Anne Rucker • Felicia Fair • Heather Bell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kristin Ross • Chris Turcola • Lauren Gruhn • Rhonda Conway • Michelle Hunt • Deanna Wise • Patti-Jo Burtnett • Kristen fox • Julie Haight • Racheal Cambarare • Amber Gaikwad • Dory Zemanek • Tina Cottrell • Angela Malcolm • Dean Horn • Stacy Schmidt • Caroline McKinney • Felicia Fair
January – June 2021	Create committee	Create committee	Create committee
July 2022- December 2022	<p>Create staff training about the history of prejudice and stigma in the child welfare program, and how it shapes opportunities for the individuals and families we serve. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Provide staff information and instruction on positive personal traits with the Clifton Strengths, Big Five Aspects Scale, and</p>	<p>Staff at LCCS will agree to an accepted definition of Resilient Professionalism: being reliable, setting your own high standards, and showing you empathetically care about every aspect of your job, including that your colleagues are worth listening to and staff will not be punished for speaking up. (Culture of Resilient Professionalism)</p> <p>Lorain County Children Services staff will promote Resilient</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>Character VIA tests, identifying the diversity of results and how individuals of multiple character/strength assessments can be included in the workplace. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Use available resources to assess the use of programs from Public Children Services Agencies of Ohio (PCSAO), Family Rights Group, Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), 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, inclusion, family and individual rights in the LCCS workforce. (Staff Respect)</p> <p>Gather data and disseminate results, acknowledging how our differences can be assets or barriers to improve our understanding of one another. (Decision Points)</p>	<p>Professionalism for all staff. Within the agency, staff shall support each other by listening to opinions and concerns and to encourage a culture of robust and open communication in which all levels of the agency can learn from one another. (Culture of Resiliency)</p> <p>Safety Committee will continue to meet and will include representatives from managers, supervisors, caseworkers, and administrative staff to troubleshoot and address barriers to resiliency and agree upon action items. (Staff Resiliency)</p> <p>Incident reports will be tracked to identify trends, needed training/support to minimize potential threats to staff. These reports will be reviewed at the Safety Committee meetings. Safety Committee will track incidents to determine potential trends in practice and will address those issues. (Staff Resiliency)</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>January 2023- June 2023</p>	<p>Develop and support unit and case level discussion and analysis strategies to improve lagging indicators, enhance equal treatment, and bolster tailored family strategies (including paternal and maternal role-model training, when identified) for families with children. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Review and recommend updates to core values, agency vision and mission as well as unprejudiced policies and procedures, promoting diversity, inclusion, family and individual rights for our families with children. (Training and Education)</p>	<p>All staff will participate in training about resiliency. (Culture of Resiliency)</p> <p>Prioritize teamwork and communication based on trust within all levels of staff. Discuss issues candidly without fear of reprisal. (Culture of Resiliency)</p> <p>All staff will have opportunities to participate in various committees at the agency including resiliency, clinical risk, wellness, procedure review and FIR committees. This enables staff at all levels of the agency to be part of improvement efforts and focused discussions to ultimately enhance income mobility, life-skills training, et al. (Culture of Resiliency)</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>Develop inclusive HR strategies to support staff retention, diversity, inclusion, family and individual opportunities like mentorship and leadership development. Embrace staff of various individual and family characteristics, celebrating our differences, while supporting equality of opportunity. (Staff DIFIR)</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 families of origin, if needed. (Result 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, in partnership with OhioMHAS, Ohio Trauma Certificate. This certificate program is designed to move staff from being “trauma aware” to “trauma competent.” However, a definition of trauma will not include reasonable efforts by parents to establish customs, norms and behaviors for their children (FIR Committee). (Result of Trauma)</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>
<p>July 2023- December 2023</p>	<p>Update public art to reflect diversity, inclusion, individual and family rights. (Training and Education)</p> <p>Monitor ongoing data, examining several metrics (including structure of families, marital and partnership status, workplace hours and time for caring, education, income, racial disparities etc) 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, examine how improved opportunities can be promulgated for diverse individuals and families,</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. Practice “Active Shooter” drills, to include training in the “run, hide, fight” model of responsiveness to active shooters. Staff will also acknowledge key children services events, including, but not limited to “National Foster Care Month” in May, and “National Reunification Month,” in June, to celebrate both foster families, and those who successfully reunify. (Staff Resilience and Preparedness)</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>

	expanding inclusion and upward mobility. (Decision Points)		
January 2024 – June 2024	Review tools used for effect and replace or adjust as needed. (Decision Points)	Connect families with children to services to get treatment for their trauma so symptoms of trauma are mitigated including physical health, mental health, and substance abuse issues. A trauma-informed therapist will be available to initiate services with families that we refer within 7-21 days. Trauma-informed therapists will be available for children entering LCCS care within 7-10 days. (Impact of Trauma)	Implement the selected innovation that helps reduce the number of children who are separated from their parents. (Reduce the Number of Children in Placement)
July 2024- December 2024	Delegate ongoing tasks for continuous review and implementation to Cultural Diversity Committee, continuing the dialogue while sustaining awareness for Training and Education. The agency will operate with sufficient respect for civil liberties, including various viewpoints, lifestyles, and backgrounds. (Training and Education)		