



PROTECTING CHILDREN IS A TEAM EFFORT.  
AND WE APPRECIATE BEING ON YOUR TEAM.

# Protecting Lorain County's Abused and Neglected Children: Safety, Permanency, and Long-Term Well-Being

Lorain County Children Services  
Kristen Fox Berki, Executive Director





## Who we are

- LCCS is the county agency responsible for assessing allegations of child abuse or neglect and providing services to impacted children and families.
- Our social services staff are master degreed social workers who meet with children and families in their homes.
- We are nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) and have met these high national standards since 1999.
- We are supported by a local Board and are supervised by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

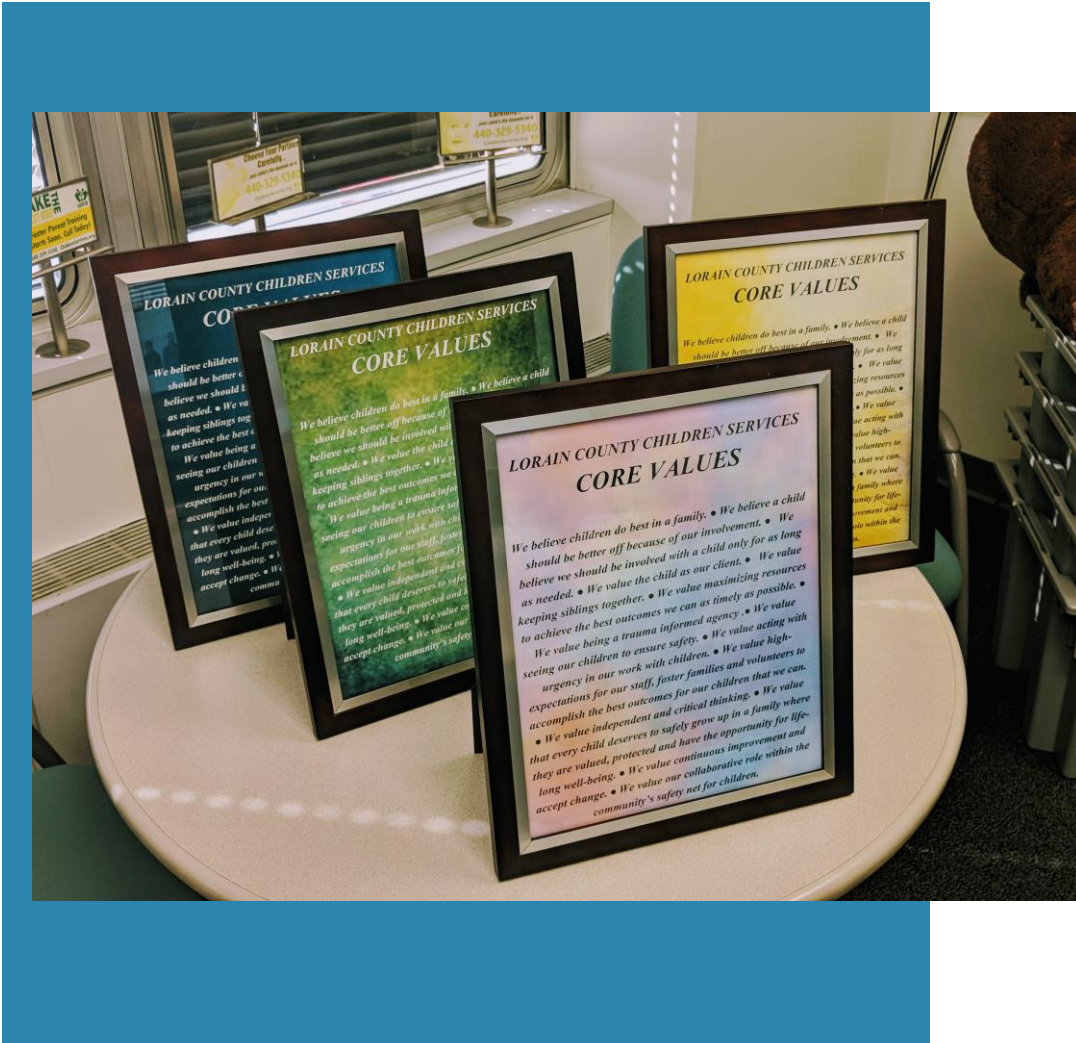
# Core Values

We believe children do best in a family. ● We believe a child should be better off because of our involvement. ● We believe we should be involved with a child only for as long as needed. ● We value the child as our client. ● We value keeping siblings together. ● We value maximizing resources to achieve the best outcomes we can as timely as possible. ● We value being a trauma informed agency ● We value seeing our children to ensure safety. ● We value acting with urgency in our work with children.



- We value high-expectations for our staff, foster families and volunteers to accomplish the best outcomes for our children that we can.
- We value independent and critical thinking.
- We value that every child deserves to safely grow up in a family where they are valued, protected and have the opportunity for life-long well-being.
- We value continuous improvement and accept change.
- We value our collaborative role within the community's safety net for children.





**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.

# In 2019



---

4,525  
Referrals  
Received

1,476 Referrals  
Screened in for  
Investigation/  
Assessment



---

395 Children  
spent at least  
part of the year  
in Kinship Care

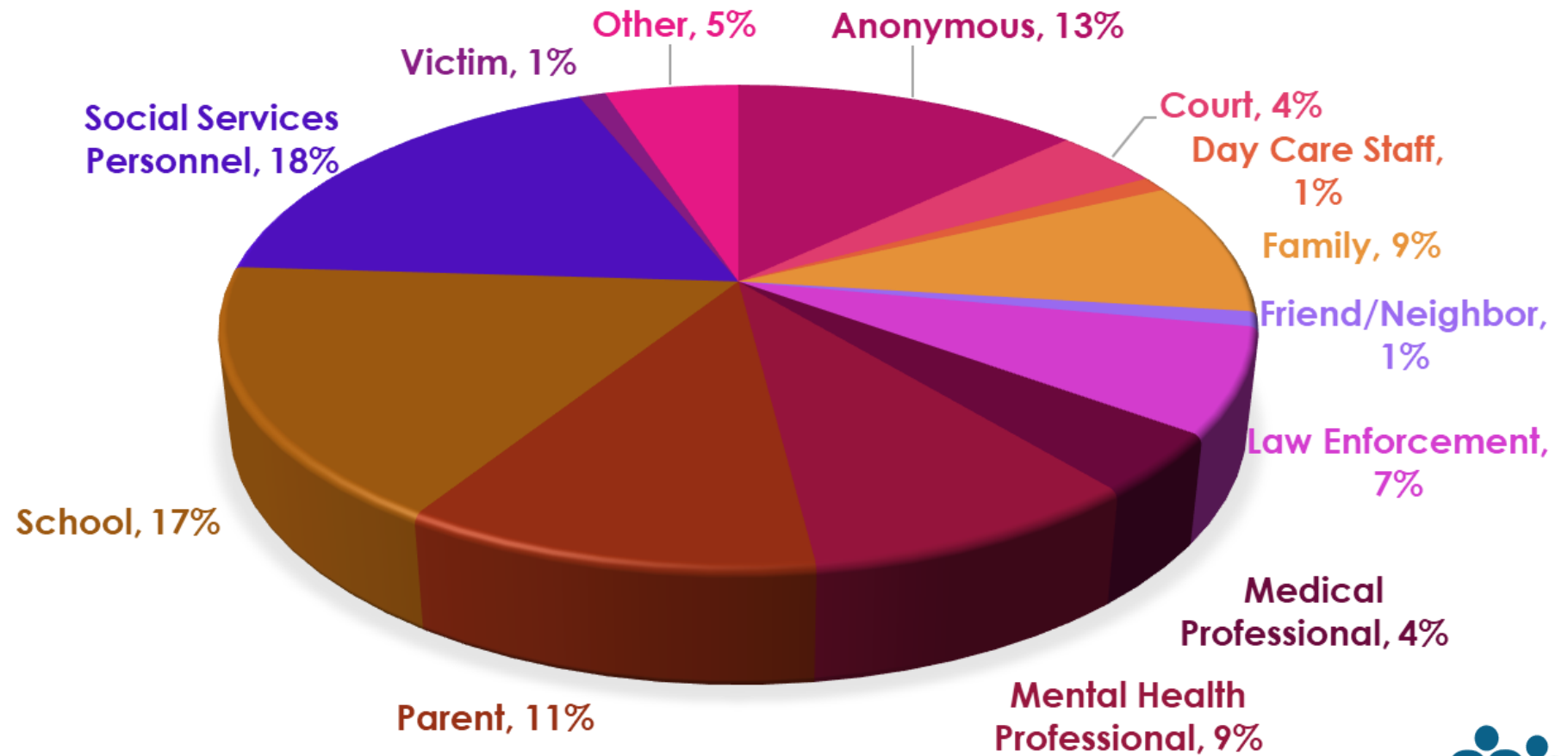
124 children  
spent at least  
part of the year  
in Foster Care



# In 2019



4,525  
Referrals  
Received



# In 2019

1,476 Referrals  
Screened in for  
Investigation/  
Assessment



Neglect	830
Physical Abuse	758
Sexual Abuse	166
Multiple Allegations	61
Medical Neglect	53
Emotional Maltreatment	50
Shaken Baby	0

- Kinship includes relatives and close family friends who know the child and family
- Approval process
- Kinship Unit
- Kinship Subsidy
- Legal pathway



---

**395 Children  
spent at least  
part of the year  
in Kinship Care**



# In 2019

## Kinship Subsidy – First Month

Eligible in July:

74 caregivers = 74

122 children = 122

Total investment in helping kin care for children: \$36,600



---

395 Children  
spent at least  
part of the year  
in Kinship Care

# In 2019

LCCS has a long history of valuing family connections, even if a child needs to stay someplace else for a while.



395 Children  
spent at least  
part of the year  
in Kinship Care

124 children  
spent at least  
part off the year  
in Foster Care



# In 2019

When children need to stay with a different family and relatives (Kinship Care) isn't available, Lorain County's children can stay with a highly qualified foster parent.

On January 1, 2019, 124 children lived with a foster parent. During 2019, 74 children entered foster care and 88 children exited foster care. On December 21, 2019, 110 children lived with a foster family.

124 children  
spent at least  
part of the year  
in Foster Care



# In 2019

Lorain County residents can become foster caregivers through a rigorous licensing and training process.

Foster parents are required to

- have 36 hours of training;
- complete a homestudy and
- have a thorough background check, including random drug screen before they can receive a license.

On January 1, 2019, 74 licensed foster families were available to care for children/sibling groups. During 2019, 24 additional homes were licensed and 13 homes closed their license.

The reasons foster families closed their license include:-

- They adopted the child they were caring for (5)
- They moved/transferred license (3)
- They retired from fostering (1)
- Their family situation changed (4)

124 children  
spent at least  
part off the year  
in Foster Care





## WHY MORE PEOPLE SHOULD CONSIDER FOSTERING TEENAGERS

THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS YOU DON'T LEARN IN SCHOOL, BUT FROM YOUR MOM OR DAD OR FAMILY. THINGS LIKE:  
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS.  
LEARNING ABOUT WORLD ISSUES.  
LEARNING ABOUT MONEY MANAGEMENT, TAXES AND BILLS ETC..  
FIGURING OUT WHAT CAREER YOU WANT TO PURSUE.  
AND ALL OF THE OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS WE ALL HAVE TO SORT OUT.

MOST FOSTER TEENS HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT ANY OF THIS BECAUSE THE SYSTEM CAN'T PREPARE FOSTER YOUTH FOR ADULTHOOD AS WELL AS A FAMILY. FOSTERING A TEEN GIVES YOU THE CHANCE TO GIVE A CHILD LIFE SKILLS THAT THEY WILL APPRECIATE AND NEED LONG AFTER THEY HAVE LEFT YOUR CARE

YOU'LL NOT ONLY CHANGE THE LIFE OF THE TEENAGER, BUT ALSO YOUR OWN.

Lorain County Children Services is actively recruiting families who can foster older children and teens. If you or someone you know would make a great foster parent, you can learn more at one of our upcoming free no-obligation information sessions - May 4, June 9 or July 9. Call Julie 440-328-2467 to RSVP!





# Independent Living/Emancipated Services

## Eligibility:

- Youth who are 13 ½ and older
- In the custody of Children Services

## Emancipated Youth Services

- Young adults who have left foster care at 18 or older
- Engaged in services
- Funding through TANF-IL
- Boarder home

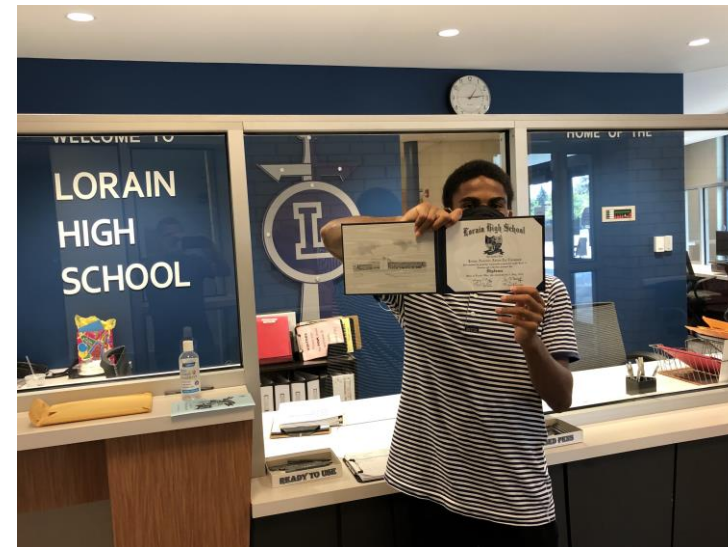
## Statistics (current)

25 IL youth

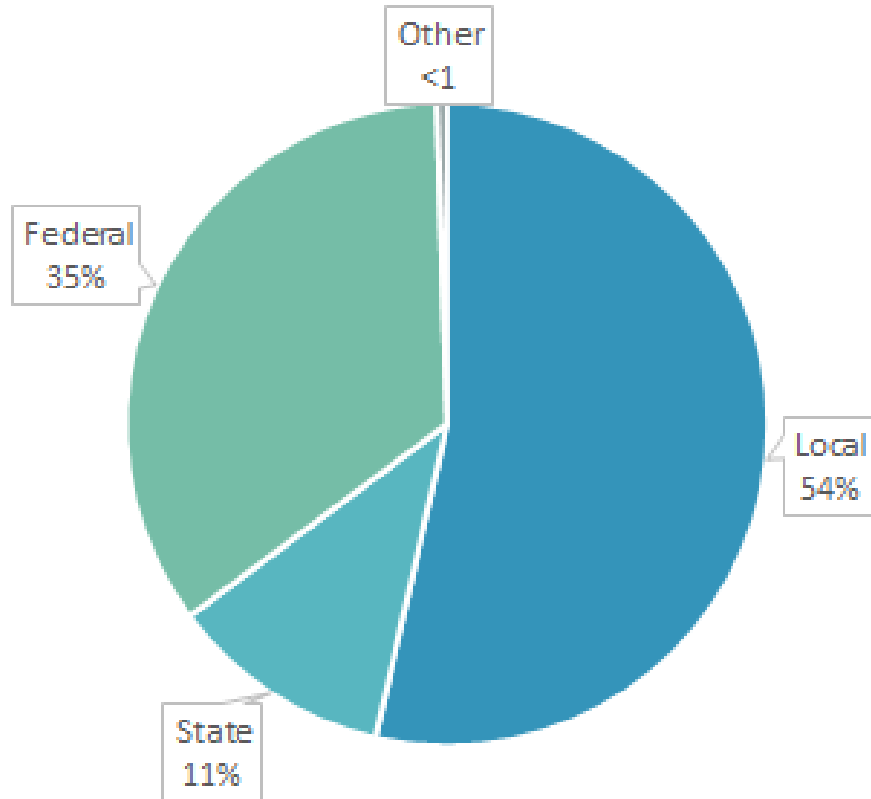
13 Emancipated Youth

5 out of 7 youth graduated

- 2 are going to Lorain County Community College
- 3 in the workforce

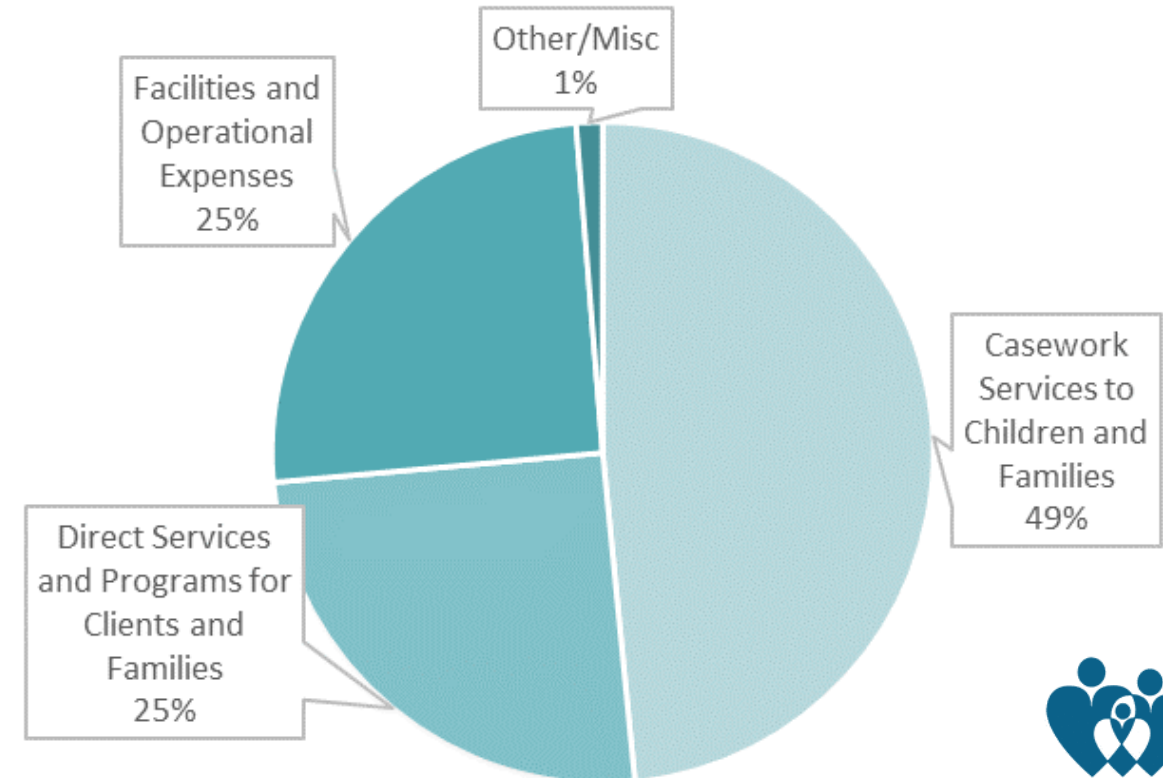


# 2019 Finances



Revenue: \$21,030,076.52

## Expenditures



# Family First Act



## Supporting System Transformation in Ohio



### Strategies for Achieving System Transformation

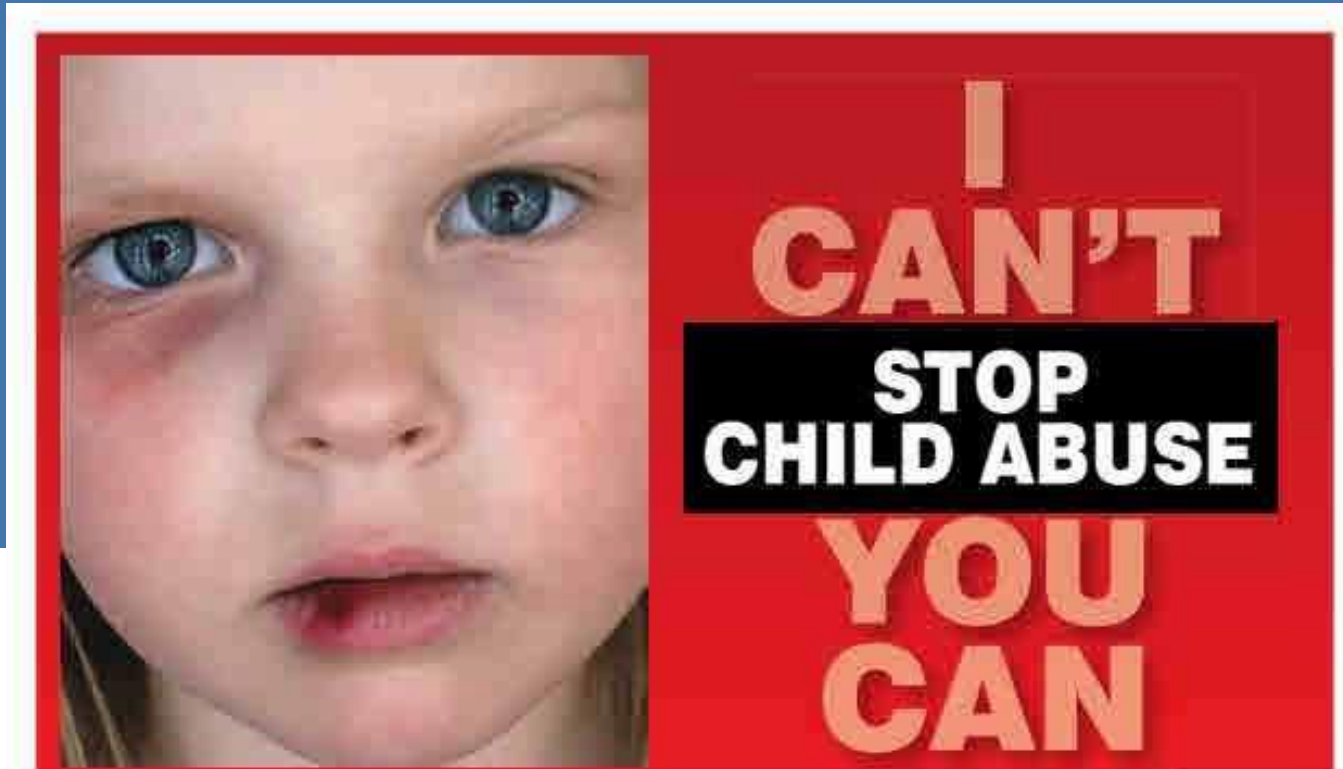


### Ohio's System Transformation Goals

Children deserve safe families and communities that prioritize their best interests and family of origin

Children and families should have access to a standard level of care regardless of where they live

Children should be raised in family-based settings and have a family to call their own before becoming an adult



*Protecting children from abuse and neglect is a team effort. And we appreciate being on your team.*

## Local Funding Provides for Flexible and Responsive Services Beyond State Minimum/Mandates

- Issue 24, the levy to provide services to abused and neglected children, will be on the November 2020 General Election ballot. This levy will be a 1.8 mill renewal! Renewal levy = No New Taxes
- The need for services to abused and neglected children remains critical to the overall success of our community. **In 2019, our agency received 4,525 referrals.** After fully assessing each situation, our staff provided protective services to all children determined to be at risk of abuse or neglect. **This comes out to a referral every 2.5 hours, 24 hour a day, 7 days a week.** As first responders to emergency situations involving child abuse and neglect, our staff is available around the clock.





## Local Funding Provides for Flexible and Responsive Services Beyond State Minimum/Mandates

- The levy provides over half of the agency's \$21 million dollar budget. As you are aware, a renewal levy does not increase taxes. This levy would cost a \$100,000 homeowner \$49.84 per year or less than \$.14 per day.
- A portion of the money collected from this levy **also provides Lorain County's contribution toward Ohio's Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps**, formerly known as the Crippled Children's Fund.



## **Local Funding Provides for Flexible and Responsive Services Beyond State Minimum/Mandates**

- Establishment of partnerships with the courts, public and private child-serving agencies, law enforcement, schools, county government, churches, the business community and others who understand that it really does take the whole community to protect our children. Agency staff conduct mandated reporter trainings to people like school staff, child care staff, and police officers.
- Use of the OhioStart protocol for specialized services to families involved with both Substance Use Disorder services and Children Services. This evidence-informed model includes peer mentors with lived experience, helping families overcome addiction and be able to safely parent their children.
- Increased the structured support of kinship families; grandparents taking care



## **Local Funding Provides for Flexible and Responsive Services Beyond State Minimum/Mandates**

- of their grandchildren for example. Over the past levy cycle, although the number of children entering foster care increased, the number of children living with relatives saw a much larger increase. Created a team of specialized caseworkers to provide ongoing support to those families just as we have always had a team of caseworkers providing support to licensed foster families.
- Increased the number of foster families. Last year, the number of new licensed families was greater than the number who closed their license.
- Increased the team who assures that children have frequent and high-quality visits with their parents and siblings and helps families without transportation to get to critical appointments at the agency or court.
- Established a modest subsidy for kinship families to assist in their ability to provide for the children they have agreed to care for.