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Ashland County Commissioners

- Barb Queer
- Mike Welch
- Denny Bittle

Annual Report 2015

Ashland County Job & Family Services

Message from the Director

As another year closes and a new year is already upon us, the Ashland County Department of Job and Services (ACDJFS) staff looks forward to the challenges associated with change.

Change seems to be an ongoing theme for our agency and it generally represents progress. Our Family Stability unit continues to work closely with state personnel to implement the new statewide computer system overhaul known as Ohio Benefits Bank (OBB). Medicaid is the only program that is processed through the new OBB. Throughout 2016 and into 2017, we expect all public assistance programs to be processed through OBB at this time. Until then, the workers are operating two major computer systems to process public assistance cases. As a result, they are anxiously awaiting the full implementation of the system.

The economy seems to be recovering at a slow pace but there are always job vacancies posted in the Ohio Means Jobs Ashland unit. We are excited to be able to help our customers with resumes, training programs, job search activities and many other supportive activities. The workers share their enthusiasm when one of those we are assisting secures a job. Better yet, we love it when they come back to tell us how happy they are. Many people

are trying hard to make it through this difficult patch. The jobs in demand are evolving and the skills needed to fill these jobs are evolving too. In addition to this, local manufacturing companies need employees to fill production jobs. Moving forward, the OMJ Ashland unit will be working more intensely with our youth and young adult population to help them develop career pathways. We intend to meet the needs of employers and workers. The Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) unit works closely with the OMJ Ashland unit to help people with child support orders find and maintain employment. Because the CSEA, OMJ Ashland, Family Stability and Social Services are all under one roof, we can collaborate seamlessly. Working with people rather than referring them from one place to another is much more effective. Building community and neighborly relationships with those we serve is far more productive. As our Social Services unit confronts sensitive situations involving child and adult protective services, relationships are critical. While drugs have always been an issue in children service cases, the opiate and heroin epidemic has placed a great deal of pressure on the child protection system. The working relationships we build with

families, service providers and churches as well as other county and city offices are critical to long term success. These relationships are growing and developing. It has been an awesome experience working with church leadership! As we work together to build a stronger foster care system, I am confident that this will go a long way to building stronger families one child at a time. I am honored to serve with the staff of the ACDJFS. From the maintenance staff that keeps our building in good repair, organized and clean to the support staff who kindly welcome people, I appreciate the work they all do. If you visit, I hope you will agree that this group of people really care about what they do.

Cassandra Holtzmann





Ohio Means Jobs—Ashland

Ohio Means Jobs—Ashland's extensive network of employment and training specialists ensure that job seekers have both the necessary job skills and the desire to become stable, long-term employees. That's what makes OMJ different.

Services provided include:

- * Education/financial aid resources
- * Job lists
- * Job search assistance
- * Rapid Response services
- * Resource Room assistance
- * Resume assistance
- * TABE Testing/WIA orientations
- * TRADE appointments
- * Unemployment Compensation Re-employment Service Classes
- * Unemployment Compensation assistance
- * Veteran Services
- * WIA Adult & Dislocated Worker Services
- * WIA Youth services

OMJ lists a wide range of jobs, from entry-level positions to some that call for more experience.

The program is funded through the federal Workforce Investment Act and many of the core services are available to all

residents, regardless of income.

In 2015, OMJ served 2,865 customers, providing these customers with 5,764 services.

19 Individual Training Accounts were approved, they consisted of 5 CDL-A training programs & 2 LPN training programs. In addition, 10 On-the-Job Training Accounts were approved.

The Ashland Area Job Fair was held April 21, 2015 at Ashland University. The job fair was attended by 112 Job seekers and included 43 employers and training providers.

In addition to the AU Job Fair, there were 19 hiring events held by the Kroc Center, Snider-Blake Personnel, Kelly Services, Staffing Partners, Spherion Mid Ohio, Advanced Industry Task Force, Ball Bounce & Sport, and WIS International. The Ohio Means Jobs staff had a booth at the Ashland County Fair September 20 thru 26 in 2015.

OMJ responded with Rapid Response services for 11 Pentair employees that were laid off in February, 41 employees of Maverick Innovative Solutions in September and December 2015.

Jim Hoover of Valley Transportation writes:

"I would like to thank all involved in this program (OJT/WIA Program). Valley was able to hire 9 new full time employees in 2015. Valley will continue working with you accomplishing both our goals of providing job opportunities and employing more individuals."

An OMJ customer writes:

I would, and have, recommended this program to others. It has changed my life in so many positive ways and I am forever thankful!

Benefit Recovery



The *Benefit Recovery Unit* is responsible for investigating intentional acts of fraud and improperly paid benefits for public assistance programs regardless of cause. This includes the tracking and collection of overpayments. The *Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS)* is designed to detect fraud related activities in public assistance programs by matching benefit program recipients via computer with state and federal wage records, unemployment compensation records, Social Security Administration records and earned income records from the Internal Revenue Service. Ashland County JFS works with the Ashland County Prosecutor's office for felony theft prosecution of grievous offenders.

Claims were established on 63 cases, totaling \$74,475, these claims included overpaid Food Assis-

tance, OWF Cash, & Medicaid benefits.

There are three types of claims:

- * Administrative Error
41 claims totaling \$24,831
- * Household Error
11 claims totaling \$22,423
- * Intentional Program Violations
18 claims totaling \$27,221

The Benefit Recovery Unit completed 3,927 IEVS matches, collected \$60,665.78 in overpayments and earned \$11,610 in incentive dollars on recouped claims of food assistance, cash assistance & Medicaid cases.

Ashland County ranked 19th overall of 88 counties in 2015

Family Stability

The Family Stability Division is responsible for the eligibility determination of all public assistance programs; Ohio Works First (OWF) cash assistance, medical assistance, food assistance, child care assistance, Prevention, Retention and Contingency (PRC) emergency assistance.

Medicaid is a state and federally funded health care program that provides assistance to certain low-income and medically vulnerable people.

The Affordable Care Act and Medicaid Expansion created some changes in how some cases/applications are processed. We are determining eligibility for Medicaid in OIES (Ohio Integrated Eligibility System) using a budgeting process called MAGI (Modified Adjusted Gross Income).

The **Food Assistance Program** is designed to raise nutritional levels, to expand buying power and to safeguard the health and well-being of individuals in low-income households in Ohio.

Ohio Works First was established to provide time-limited assistance to eligible families with emphasis on employment, personal responsibility and self-sufficiency. Federal law requires most able-bodied adults enrolled in the Ohio Works First cash assistance program to participate at a minimum, 30-35 hours per week in an approved work activity. Failure to comply results in a sanction for the household.

States must show that at least 90% of adults in two-parent households, and at least 50% of all adults are working the required number of hours. Non-compliance by the state results in a potential federal penalty.

PRC benefits and services are for needy and low-income employed families who need short term help to support an individual or family during a crisis or episode of need. 205 PRC applications were processed for car repairs, utility shut offs, rent, clothes & shoes for work, and more.

~ 219 applications for **Project Comfort** were processed, providing families with a onetime payment toward heating expenses.

~ 359 applications for the **Ready, Set, Learn** program were processed, providing many children with school supplies and clothing.

Child Care assistance is available to eligible parents to pay for child care while they engage in work or approved school or training activities.

Family Stability monthly average numbers:

- **141** individuals received OWF cash assistance. Of these **129** were children.
- **4,981** individuals received food assistance, serving an average of 2,237 families.
- **10,047** individuals received Medicaid assistance.
- **273** children were cared for through publicly funded child care.

The Family Stability Unit received and processed a total of 5,400 public assistance applications, and as of December 2015 there were 7,137 open cases.

The required Application Timeliness Measure is 95%. Ashland County averaged 94%.

In 2015 our expenditures were nearly \$68,000,000. These are funds that go back into our community to grocery stores, hospitals, doctors, nursing facilities, landlords, utility companies and more.



These programs and services help meet the basic needs of families as they become stable and self sufficient.

Child Support Enforcement

The Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) is committed to providing quality child support services, including: establishing paternity, child support and medical support, modifying support orders, enforcing medical and child support orders, monitoring collection and disbursement of support payments.

One in three Ohio children are involved in a child support case. Receiving child support helps families to manage their basic living expenses and helps alleviate dependence on public assistance programs.

Our agency receives requests for services from custodial parents, non-custodial parents, and caretakers.

The State has provided the counties with en-

forcement tools, including:

- * APPRISS—prisoner locate
- * Racino/Casino collections of one million dollars in Ohio
- * Debt Next—private collection agency
- * CSLN-private search/match insurance claims
- * CLEAR— Location & public records
- * Unclaimed Funds Match

The average caseload size for each child support Case Manager is 900 cases, handling over 3600 cases total in Ashland County. They also provide customer service throughout the day, by answer-



ing phone calls and assisting customers that drop by the office.

CSEA collected \$8,198,925 in child support for families and \$78,906 in Medical Support. In addition, \$177,986 was collected in processing fees. 464 Administrative and Court hearings were conducted resulting in paternity establishments, child support order establishments, enforcement action and resolutions of objections. 94 child support orders were modified through the Administrative process, as well.

Child and Adult Protective Services

Ashland County Children Services is dedicated to protecting children, as well as, strengthening and empowering families to prevent abuse and neglect. Children Services constantly strives to develop and implement effective methods and strategies to provide children with nurturing, safe and permanent families. In most cases where a need for services has been identified, ACJFS provides services to the child and family while the child remains in the home. However, when the Court determines the child is not safe and must be removed from the situation, the Agency develops a plan to enable the child to return home safely. If this is not possible, the plan will identify an alternative safe, stable, permanent living situation that promotes the child's health, growth and development.

Child Protective Services has a Dual Pathway Response System:

- ◆ **Traditional Response** is the way the community knows child welfare response to be at the present time. Investigations are completed on allegations of child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Each investigation has an alleged perpetrator, alleged child victim and a disposition/finding, whether that be substantiated, indicated or unsubstantiated.
- ◆ **Alternative Response** allows child protection agencies to divert cases to different tracks or response paths in order to better address the specific circumstances and needs of each report of child maltreatment. There is an adult subject of report and a child subject of report. There is no disposition or finding of abuse, neglect or dependency.

Our agency received 988 calls/reports of child abuse/neglect in 2015.

411 Incidents

- 136 neglect
- 80 sexual abuse
- 127 physical abuse



Maintenance and Transportation

The Agency provides non-emergent transportation (NET) for Medicaid covered services to people residing in Ashland County. This program helps Medicaid-eligible families cope with chronic or life threatening illnesses, by alleviating concerns about getting to and from medical appointments and procedures. ACJFS has two (2) full-time drivers; mini-vans are utilized to transport clients for their comfort. A secondary mode of transportation is Ashland Public Transit.

Transportation numbers:

- **1801** Medicaid related trips by Agency drivers serving **162** individuals
- **562** Medicaid related trips by Ashland Transit serving **112** individuals

The drivers are utilized, when available, to help the full-time maintenance worker with building maintenance.

The Maintenance and Transportation unit strives to make our building efficient and as safe as possible.

- 38 Family in Need of Services
- 16 Dependency
- 14 emotional maltreatment

There were 91 children in our care, consisting of:

- ◇ 44~ age 1-7 years
- ◇ 22~ age 8-13 years
- ◇ 25~ age 14-18+ years

We are happy to report 3 completed adoptions in 2015!

Foster Care Licensing

- 13 inquiries
- 13 homes total
- 4 closed
- 13 active homes

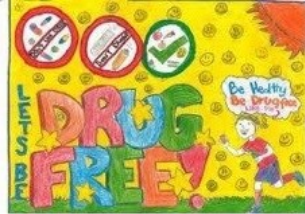
Adult Protective Services investigates reports, assesses situations, and provides ongoing case management and support to families.

34 Victims/Reports Investigated

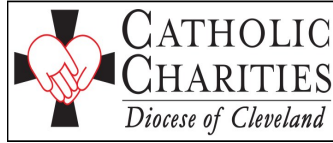
- 6 Neglect by others
- 18 Self Neglect
- 5 Exploitation
- 5 Physical Abuse



Throughout the year Ashland County Job and Family Services partners with various community agencies and organizations. We sincerely thank our community partners for the help and services provided to the children and adults we serve.



Ashland County Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse



Ashland Parenting Plus
making a difference one person at a time



Administrative and Operating Expenditures

Administrative Expenditures

are expenses related to the operation of the agency, which include payroll, insurance, utilities, fuel, forms printing, postage, telephone lines, office machines and consumables.

Shared Overhead: \$972,716

Child Support: \$415,079

Family Stability: \$769,163

Social Services and Workforce Services: \$943,164

Program Expenditures

Foster Care Placement: \$1,477,026

Foster Care Other: \$105,192

Disability Financial Assistance: \$21,172

Medicaid: \$67,930,306

Medicaid Transportation: \$40,750

OWF Cash Assistance: \$352,394

Food Assistance: \$6,252,904

Child Care: \$376,920

Prevention, Retention, Contingency: \$46,302

Project Comfort: \$45,600

Ready, Set, Learn: \$114,500

Contract Partners

Ashland Parenting Plus: \$257,724

Tri-County Education Service: \$193,501

Transformation Network: \$30,102

Ashland County Sheriff's Office: \$65,565

Ashland County Juvenile Court: \$19,337

Ashland County Domestic Court: \$19,337