

2015



Athens County  
Children Services

*annual report to the community*

## *A Message from our Executive Director*



Dear Athens Community,

On behalf of our ACCS Board and dedicated staff, it is my pleasure to present the 2015 Annual Report to the Community. First things first-- Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for your consistent support and steady backing of our work with Athens vulnerable and precious children.

ACCS serves hundreds of children and their families all across the county. On the pages of this report you will find 2015 highlights of the mandated protective services and innovative programs we have in place to address the complex concerns and increasing challenges faced by so many of our children and families in Athens County. The partnership we have with the community is the cornerstone of our work in protecting children, strengthening families, and securing futures.

In 2015 ACCS received a record 2070 referrals of child abuse and neglect. On January 1st we had 79 children in custody, on December 31 that number had risen to 96. ACCS had a total of 146 children in care at some point during the year. While new custody entries were about the same as the prior year, more children, with more complex needs, were staying in care for longer periods of time. This is indicated by placement days increasing from 31,362 to 35,600 and placement costs rising from \$1,055,000 to \$1,357,600.

Additions of young parents in our community continue to dominate our protective caseload and put increasing pressure on the safety and well-being of our children and families in Athens County. These trends are consistent with what is happening across the state of Ohio and in many communities across the nation. ACCS successfully partnered with local providers to implement an efficiency & innovation grant for recovery coaching and kinship supports for parents and families struggling with addiction in 2015. The early results are promising, but the need in our community continues to outpace available resources.

We look back over 2015 with gratitude and pride for the community that continues to support this important work through partnership and for the renewal of our operating levy. We have a dedicated and hard-working staff that is committed to providing trauma informed best practice, and one that has the distinction of earning re-accreditation from the Council on Accreditation in 2015.

Athens County Children Services Board remains steadfast in its commitment to providing the best possible outcomes for the children and families of Athens and in being fiscally responsible to the community that surrounds us here on Stonybrook Drive.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Hill". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Catherine Hill, MSW, LSW  
Executive Director



## Intake & Assessment

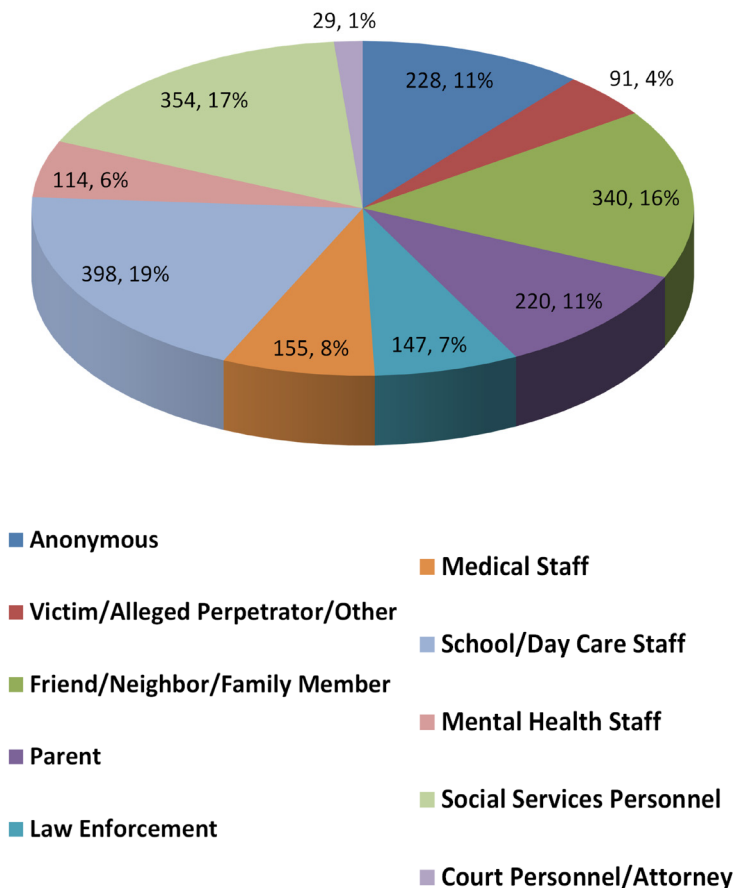
A referral is an allegation of child abuse or neglect and can be made by phone or in person. All referrals are documented and evaluated for services, referrals or investigation by our Intake staff.

### In 2015 ACCS had

- 2070 referrals of abuse or neglect
  - up 12% from 2014
  - 489 were screened in
  - includes 974 children
- 27 referrals involving drug-impacted infants

ACCS is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. On weekends, holidays and after hours, we utilize a beeper service with a caseworker as the first responder and a supervisor as back-up. A Family Violence Investigator is contracted through the Sheriff's Office, housed in the Intake unit and is also assigned to sexual abuse cases and severe physical abuse cases. The investigator is responsible for making referrals to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office on potential criminal matters.

### ACCS receives referrals from a wide spectrum of community stakeholders:



## Alternative Response

Alternative Response (AR) allows ACCS to provide a different approach for lower risk cases. AR acknowledges that families are the best expert for their own situation. Families are involved in the decision-making process from the beginning, including the initial determination of whether AR is right for them. AR connects families to community organizations and service providers to address and resolve concerns as they arise. Identifying concerns early on and working with families as equal partners can alleviate the stresses that often lead to abuse and neglect. This approach helps sustain families and prevent foster care placements.

### In 2015 the AR team

- Worked with 31 families from the prior year
- 179 new families

## Family Services

Our Family Services unit provides ongoing services when a case needs more extensive intervention or a longer term to resolve family concerns. The families served by this unit have complex needs and are often involved with Juvenile Court, either through an order that requires the family to work with the agency while their children remain in their home, or the court has determined it is unsafe for the children to remain home and have placed the children in the temporary custody of the agency. Reuniting and restoring families is the team's primary goal.

### In 2015 Family Services

- Worked with 125 families
  - 250 children
- Worked with 43 families transferred from the Intake Unit
  - 28 Families (65%) were impacted by drug abuse
    - 7 families included drug-exposed newborns



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. ACCS staff and volunteers planted pinwheels to symbolize the referrals of neglect and abuse to the agency. The Athens County Commissioners and Mayor joined us for a dedication of the pinwheel display.

## Permanent Families

Permanency is a sense of stability, support and connection most of us take for granted. It is a vital component for life-long well being. Our primary goal is to restore and reunify children with their birth families whenever possible. A child may be placed in the permanent custody of ACCS by the juvenile court if a parent willingly surrenders, abandons a child, or is unable to adequately address safety factors in the home.

### In 2015 ACCS

- Was awarded permanent custody of 21 children
  - Up 5% from 2014
- Finalized the adoptions for 15 children
- Ended the year with 27 children available for adoption
  - Up 27% from 2014

ACCS has a unique caseworker position that provides post adoption services to families in Athens County that have finalized adoptions (public, private, kinship, or international). This is a voluntary program in which the worker can provide support in areas such as crisis management, behavioral management, and referral to services. This position also has quarterly activities for adoptive families. In 2015 there were 349 contacts with adoptive families made by this worker. Contact ACCS for questions or more information.



Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK), funded by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, is a grant-funded regional partnership that allows for a dedicated, full-time recruiter to do evidence based, child focused recruitment for adoptive families for children in permanent custody.

### In 2015 ACCS Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter

- Matched 10 children
- Finalized 6 adoptions



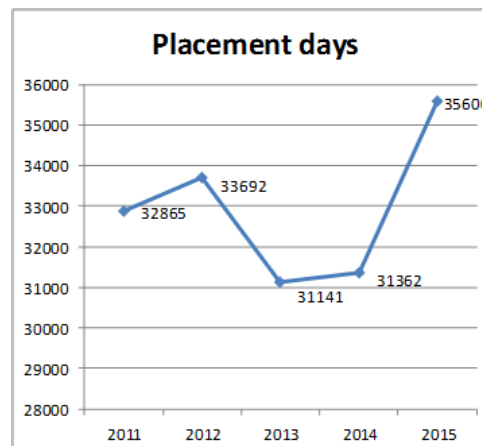
ACCS Foster Parent Emma McKibben received the 2015 Foster Parent of the Year Award at the Foster Parent Appreciation Banquet. Here she poses with our Intake Supervisor, Laura Bobo.

## Foster Care and Beyond

The ACCS Placement unit manages all child placement related services. This includes recruiting, training, licensing, and maintaining a dedicated group of foster homes to care for children in agency custody. The agency continuously recruits new foster parents needed for sibling groups, children and youth of all ages in all Athens County school districts. Our Academic and Life Skills Caseworker is assigned to all school age foster youth to assure the best possible educational and independent living outcomes for all children and youth.

### In 2015 ACCS

- Had custody of 146 children
  - Up 7% from 2014
- 68 children came into custody throughout the year
- 36 licensed foster homes
  - Licensed 6 new homes
- Had 23 kinship homes providing care for 40 children
- Completed 46 kinship homestudies



In addition to having more children in foster care in 2015, the number of days they stayed in our care increased as well. The cost for children in care can range from \$24 to \$420 per child, per day, depending on the child's specific needs.

## Training

The Southeast Ohio Regional Training Center (SEORTC) is hosted by ACCS and is one of eight sites of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program sponsored by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The SEORTC provides high-quality, family-centered, competency based training to staff and caregivers of public child welfare agencies in 13 surrounding counties.

### In 2015 SEORTC

- **Hosted 145 workshops**
  - **Attended by 1533 child welfare professionals**
  - **1012 total training hours**
- **Hosted 160 Foster Parent Trainings**
  - **Attended by 2238 foster parents**
  - **594 total training hours**



The Athens County Child Advocacy Center, the CASA/GAL Program, and ACCS collaborated to host the Champions for Children Breakfast on WEAR BLUE DAY in 2015.

## Quality Services

In order to assure the best possible outcomes for children and families the Quality Assurance (QA) unit is responsible for training staff and monitoring compliance with administrative rules. The QA unit facilitates important case review meetings for ACCS, parents, and partner agencies to measure progress and plan services.

### In 2015 Quality Assurance

- **Facilitated 558 case reviews**



All smiles. ACCS staff pose for a picture with foster parents Laura and Gary Champ at the 2015 Foster Parent Appreciation Banquet.



Parent Mentor, Karyn Armstrong (left), and School Outreach Supervisor Kristin Waltz (right) play with kids at Kids Day at the Athens County Fair.

## Family Support

The Family Support Unit consists of parent mentors, family support caseworkers, and transportation workers. The unit provides visitation and transportation services to families whose children are living in kinship or foster care.

### In 2015 Family Support

- **Worked with an average of 26 families a month**
  - **Worked with a total of 126 children**
- **Monitored 1788 visits between children and their birth families**
  - **Up 18% from 2014**
- **Provided 1626 transports to the families and children working with the agency**



Peanut Butter Jelly Time! ACCS Staff, Interns and Volunteers getting ready for a busy day of distributing PB&J!



Kids helping kids. 1 year old Spencer (left) and 5 year old Emma (right) used their birthday parties to collect PB&J for the PB&J Project. Way to go, Emma and Spencer!





Operations Manager, Kim King, is helping kids try on shoes at the Lace Up for Kids event held every August.

## ***In the Community***

ACCS sponsored a number of community events in 2015 including Kidfest, Lace Up For Kids, and the Santa Tree Project. ACCS staff and volunteers also participated in a number of community events, including My Sister's Place Family Fun Day, The Ohio University Homecoming Parade, Boogie on the Bricks, Kids Day at the Athens County Fair, Wear Blue to Work Day and more.

### ***In 2015 ACCS***

- ***Provided Santa Tree gifts to over 1500 children***
- ***Sent over 500 children back to school with new shoes through the Lace Up for Kids project***

ACCS's Volunteer & Intern program continued to grow in 2015. These future professionals served in every unit of our agency and worked in prevention, casework, public relations and administration.

### ***In 2015 the Volunteer & Intern Program***

- ***Ended the year with 122 volunteers***
  - ***Our volunteers gave 854 volunteer hours, valued at an estimated \*\$18,326, to the community***
- ***Supervised 23 interns***
  - ***From 8 different majors***

***\*[www.volunteeringinamerica.gov](http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov)***

## ***School Outreach***

Our School Outreach Team seeks to strengthen families and promote positive school relationships to enhance student school success.

### ***In 2015 the School Outreach team***

- ***Received 3915 referrals for services from parents and school staff***
- ***Worked in all 5 Athens County School Districts with an average of 470 families per month***
- ***Hosted Girl Power and other group meetings***
  - ***109 meetings were held in 2015***
  - ***An average of 19 youth attended***
- ***Hosted the 8th annual Peanut Butter and Jelly Project***
  - ***Distributed 4,543 units (pb&j and bread)***
- ***Served 1,637 families, covering all 5 Athens County School Districts***



Girls rule! Over 100 young ladies were treated to an evening of fine dining and dancing at the Girl Power Etiquette Formal.



Volunteer & Intern Coordinator, Katherine Marshall, represented ACCS as we were honored at the Ohio University Social Work Awards Luncheon as the year's outstanding field placement site.

## 2015 Financial Summary

### Executive Director

Catherine Hill, MSW, LSW

### Deputy Directors

Otis Crockron, MBA  
Finance and Operations

Sheila Shafer, MA, LSW  
Programs

### 2015 Athens County Commissioners

Charlie Adkins  
Chris Chmiel  
Lenny Eliason

### 2015 Board Members

Nancy Schell, Chair  
Missy Bond  
Linda Main Clark  
Chris Innis  
Mary Mitchell  
Barry Oches  
Lacy Russell  
Shelley Lieberman  
Dave Diggle

Beginning Balance	\$2,147,401
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### *2015 Revenues*

Local Operating Levy	\$3,832,724
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Federal Funds	\$2,627,650
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State Funds	\$550,422
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Other Local Funds	\$282,793
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<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$7,293,588</b>
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### *2015 Expenditures*

Employee Salaries	\$2,912,162
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Employee Healthcare and Benefits	\$1,393,032
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Placement Care	\$1,770,181
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Clothing, Food, and Transportation	\$173,522
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Health-Related Expenses for Children	\$154,906
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Building, Supplies, & Contracted Services	\$457,299
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Community Education & Staff Training	\$71,938
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Other Expenditures	\$786,930
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<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$7,719,970</b>
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<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$1,721,019</b>
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Athens County Children Services staff and board greatly appreciate the continued support of the Athens community. The primary funding source for Athens County Children Services is a 3 mill ten-year property tax levy approved by the voters in 2015 and a 2 mill ten-year property tax levy approved by the voters in 2010. These operating funds allow ACCS to be responsive to the ever-changing needs of the children and families of Athens County. Fortunately, the agency carryover balance serves as a contingency funding source when expenses exceed revenue.

## 2015 in Numbers

**2070** referrals of abuse and neglect

**365** children received AR services

**250** children worked with Family Services

**146** children in custody during 2015

**3915** referrals to School Outreach caseworkers

**4543** Units (1 jar of Pb, 1 jar of jelly, 1 loaf of bread) distributed to Athens County children as part of the Peanut Butter & Jelly Project

**40** children were in kinship care

**1500** local children received Santa Tree gifts

**55** Girl Power meetings held

**122** community volunteers

**50+** organizations set up at Kidfest

**582** case reviews

**500 +** children received new tennis shoes at Lace Up For Kids



The Athens Professionals for Philanthropy once again hosted their annual PB&J 5K/10K to benefit the Peanut Butter & Jelly Project. ACCS joined in on the fun! The APP donated almost \$5,000 to the PB&J Project in 2015.

## Protecting Children, Strengthening Families, Securing Futures

Athens County Children Services  
18 Stonybrook Drive  
P.O. Box 1046  
Athens, OH 45701  
Phone: 740.592.3061  
Fax: 740.593.3880  
athenschildrenservices.com

To report child abuse or neglect:  
M-F, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm  
Please call 740.592.3061

After-hours or emergencies:  
Please call 1.877.477.0772



The ACCS float came in 2nd place for the Ohio University Homecoming Parade. The theme was "Same Bricks, Different Stories", and we had volunteers, staff, and community members make "bricks" that help tell the stories of the children we've been serving on these same Athens County bricks since 1948.

