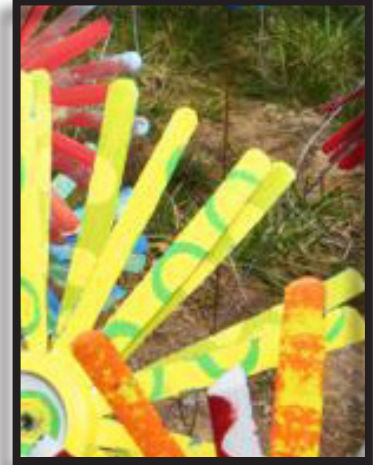
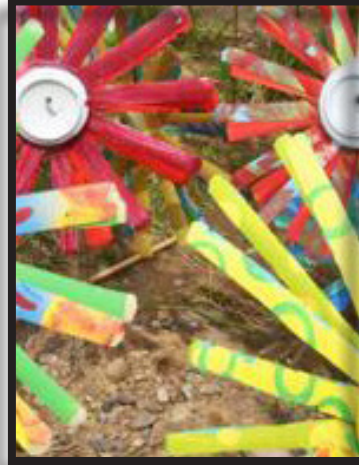


2018



Athens County Children Services



Annual Report to the Community

A Message from our Executive Director



Dear Athens Community,

On behalf of our dedicated staff and ACCS Board members it is my pleasure to present our 2018 Annual Report to the Community.

In 2018 Athens County Children Services saw addictions 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. It also takes a toll on our staff, foster parents, community partners, and provider community. These trends are consistent with what is happening in child protection across the state of Ohio, and in many communities across the nation.

Experts tell us to expect that the drug epidemic will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future. We are fortunate to be in our second year of the Ohio START program which is showing promising outcomes for some of our families. The intensive support and supervision that caseworkers and peer partners receive from being a part of Ohio START also supports the resilience of our workforce.

The trauma experienced by the children of this epidemic is complex, requiring extensive services to alleviate. Resources have been stretched to provide needed services for children. You will see this reflected in our placement and cost trends, which broke a new record again in 2018.

As we publish this report we are preparing for our levy request to the Athens County voters in the Fall. The increasing needs of children and families and related expenses make it necessary to request an addition to our existing 2 mill levy for the first time in 20 years. Fortunately, to update the levy with an addition, will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home just over twelve (12) cents a day, or \$47 for the entire year. We will provide information and education throughout 2019 as we ask the Athens County community to partner with ACCS to provide safety, permanency, and well-being for all children of Athens County.

Thank you – sincerely – for being a concerned and engaged community in supporting our vital mission of protecting children, strengthening families, and securing futures. We simply could not do this important work without the firm backing of 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

ACCS is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. On weekends, holidays and after hours, we utilize a beeper service with caseworkers as the first responders and a supervisor as back-up. A Family Violence Investigator is contracted through the Sheriff's office, housed in the Intake unit and also is 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.

In 2018 ACCS had 1,866 referrals of abuse or neglect.

- ***555 were screened in for assessment***
- ***50 referrals involved drug-impacted infants***
- ***Includes 789 children***



Alternative Response Caseworker, Stephanie McDaniel, paints faces at Kidfest in April.

Alternative Response

Alternative Response (AR) allows ACCS to provide a different approach for lower-risk cases. AR acknowledges that families are the best experts for their own situations. AR connects families to community organizations and service providers to address and resolve concerns as they arise. Identifying concerns early and working with families as equal partners can alleviate the stresses that often lead to abuse and neglect. This approach helps sustain families and prevents foster care placements.

In 2018 the AR team worked with 300 families including 607 children.

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 Family Services' primary goal.

In 2018 Family Services worked with 115 families including 238 children.



In May of 2018, ACCS named and dedicated the family visitation center the Laura Somers Family Center. Laura Somers worked for ACCS for 32 years and was Supervisor of the Family Services unit.

Family Support

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



Family Support worker, Chantel Andrews, stands ready to help apply temporary tattoos to kids at Kid's Day at the Athens County Fair in August.

In 2018 Family Support

- ***Worked with an average of 21 families a month***
- ***Worked with a total of 100 children***
- ***Monitored 1,137 visits between children and their birth families***
- ***Provided 754 transports to the families and children working with the agency***

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 Life Skills Caseworker is assigned to all school age foster youth to assure the best possible educational and independent living outcomes.

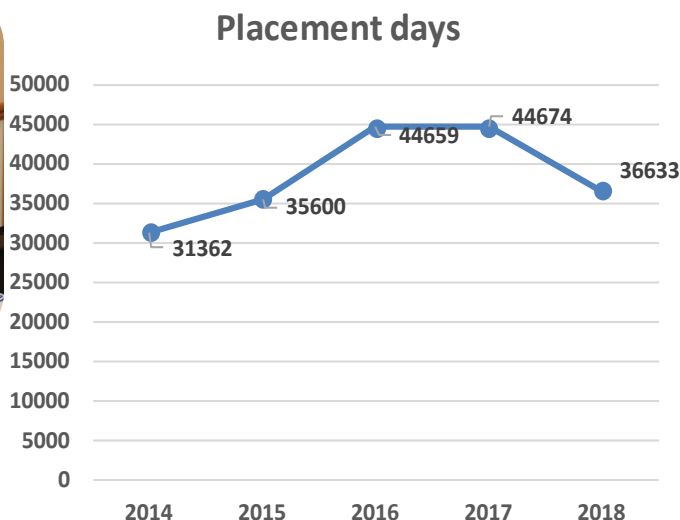
In 2018 ACCS had custody of 166 children throughout the year.

Supported by:

- 40 licensed foster homes • 6 new foster homes
- 27 kinship homes providing care for 39 children



ACCS Placement Caseworkers smiled for the camera at the 2018 Foster Parent Appreciation Banquet in May.



ACCS Foster Parents, Laura and Gary Champ, were the 2018 Foster Parents of the Year Award winners.



ACCS had more children in foster care in 2018. The cost for children in care ranged from \$24 to \$406 per child, per day, depending on the child's specific needs.

Permanent Families

Permanency is a sense of stability, support, and connection most of us take for granted. It is a vital component for lifelong 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 2018 ACCS

- Was awarded permanent custody of 33 children
- Finalized the adoptions for 16 children
- Ended the year with 43 children available for adoption



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. Our WWK recruiter serves Athens, Washington, Perry, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs and Gallia counties.

In 2018 ACCS' Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter worked with 22 children in our region.

The ACCS Adoption unit hosted a pool party in July for adoptive families in Athens County.



ACCS has a 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. In 2018 there were 368 contacts with adoptive families made by this worker.

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 2018 Quality Assurance facilitated 603 case reviews.

Regional Training Center

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 2018 SEORTC

- Hosted 140 workshops that were attended by 1,253 child welfare professionals for a total of 951 total training hours.
- Hosted 175 foster parent trainings for a total of 642 total training hours.

The Nationwide Opiate Epidemic Impacts Children In Our Community

Ohio leads the nation in opiate addiction issues.

Among the 100,000 cases entering Ohio's child protection system annually, families dealing with opiate or other drug abuse consume the most resources.

With the increase in number of children in our care, the cost to have them in care went up as well.

166 children spent a cumulative total of 36,633 placement days in our custody.

The costs for children in care in Athens County range from \$24 per day to \$406 per day.

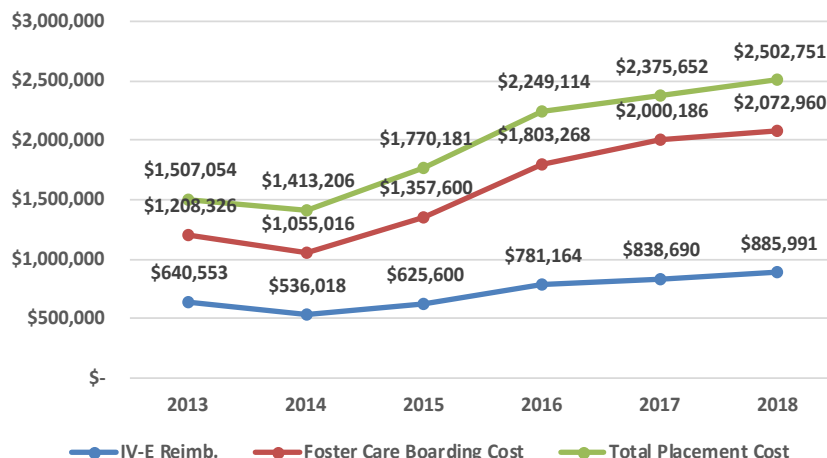
Athens County spent a record \$2,502,751 in care and placement costs in 2018.



Athens County

Substance abuse was a factor in 95 (68%) of the 140 total Family Services/Alternative Response ongoing cases. 50 referrals in 2018 involved drug-impacted infants.

Placement Cost & Reimbursement



In the Spring of 2017, ACCS was awarded a grant through the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Ohio START (Sobriety, Treatment, and Reducing Trauma) is a program to provide intensive trauma counseling and other services for the children who have been victims of abuse and neglect because of parental drug use. Additionally, this program provides specialized drug treatment for the parents of the children referred to this program. The specialized treatment includes certified Family Peer Mentors that serve as recovery supporters to work with children services caseworkers to provide intensive case management to the parents in recovery from drug addiction. 2018 was the second year of the Ohio START grant in Athens County.

School Outreach

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

In 2018 the School Outreach team

- *Received 6,766 referrals for services*
- *Provided service to all 5 Athens County school districts and provided 13,556 direct units of service*
- *Hosted 263 group support sessions*
- *The 11th Annual PB&J Project served 3,640 children*
- *Referred 1,712 children for additional services*



Staff and Volunteers ready for the first day of PB&J Project distribution in June.



ACCS Staff at the 5th Annual PB&J5K/10K hosted by the Athens Professionals for Philanthropy.

The Ohio University Combat Veterans Club pose with a donation of food and supplies they made to The Plains Elementary.



In the Community

ACCS sponsored a number of community events in 2018, including Kidfest, Lace Up For Kids, and the Santa Tree Project. ACCS staff and volunteers also participated in a number of community events, including the annual Athens Area Stand Down, the Ohio University Homecoming Parade, the Paw Paw Festival, Kids Day at the Athens County Fair, Wear Blue Day and more.

In 2018 ACCS

- *Provided Santa Tree gifts to over 1,189 children*
- *Sent over 250 children back to school with new shoes through the Lace Up for Kids project*



ACCS Caseworkers, Chris and Liesl, conducted a training in the Nelsonville-York school district about mandated reporting requirements for faculty and staff in September.



EERC

Through the collection of money on Casual Fridays by our Employer-Employee Relations Committee (EERC), our employees donated \$2,058 to 17 different organizations as well as individuals in our community who were experiencing extraordinary circumstances of need.

ACCS' Volunteer & Intern program continued to grow in 2018. These future professionals served in every unit of our agency and worked in prevention, casework, public relations and administration.

In 2018 the Volunteer & Intern program ended the year with 116 volunteers.

- *Our volunteers gave 931 volunteer hours, valued at an estimated \$21,934 to the community**
- *Supervised 21 interns from 5 different majors*

**<https://www.nationalservice.gov/vcla/research>*

ACCS Volunteer and Intern, Aida Diop, works with children on crafts for our annual OU Homecoming parade float at the Pawpaw Festival in September.



2018 Financial Summary

Executive Director

Catherine Hill, MSW, LSW

Deputy Directors

Otis Crockron, MBA
Finance and Operations

Sheila Shafer, MA, LSW
Programs

2018 Athens County Commissioners

Charlie Adkins
Chris Chmiel
Lenny Eliason

2018 Board Members

Nancy Schell, Chair
Linda Main Clark
Chris Innis
Barry Oches
Shelley Lieberman
Dave Diggle
John Sole
Timarie Francis
Jenny Shadik

Beginning Balance	\$3,176,092.22
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2018 Revenues

Local Operating Levy	\$4,230,811
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Federal Funds	\$3,092,365
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State Funds	\$935,943
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Other Local Funds	\$256,832
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Total Revenue	\$8,515,951
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2018 Expenditures

Employee Salaries	\$2,929,714
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Employee Healthcare and Benefits	\$1,508,192
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Placement Care	\$2,502,751
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Clothing, Food, and Transportation	\$154,850
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Health-Related Expenses for Children	\$242,067
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Building, Supplies, & Contracted Services	\$448,721
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Community Education & Staff Training	\$77,265
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Other Expenditures	\$621,995
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Total Expenditures	\$8,485,556
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Ending Balance	\$3,206,488
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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 are vital for ACCS to be responsive to the ever-changing needs of the children and families of Athens County.

2018 in Numbers

1,866 referrals of abuse and neglect

238 children worked with Family Services

166 children in custody during 2018

6,766 referrals to School Outreach caseworkers

16 adoptions finalized

40 licensed foster homes

3,640 children were given PB&J, bread and canned goods as part of the Peanut Butter & Jelly Project

37 children were in kinship care

1,189 + local children received Santa Tree gifts

1,137 visits with families in our visitation center

116 community volunteers

50+ organizations set up at Kidfest

603 case reviews

250 + children received new tennis shoes at Lace Up For Kids



ACCS staff, and Board Chair, Nancy Schell, posed for a quick picture at the building dedication ceremony for the Laura Somers Family Center in May.



In September, ACCS staff and volunteers joined other county agencies and the recovery community in the 1st Annual Walk for Recovery, hosted by the Athens County Prosecutor's Office.

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 1.866.863.7373



ACCS volunteers spent several evenings throughout the month of February constructing and hand-painting upcycled pinwheel flowers, made from recycled soda cans.



Athens County
Children Services