



## State Fiscal Year (SFY) 08-09 Budget –The *devil* is in the details

At first glance, there were some limited successes to celebrate for JFS umbrella services in the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2008-09 budget. Upon careful analysis however, there are a number of service areas that will face significant challenges during the biennium budget period. The Ohio Job & Family Services Director's Association (OJFSDA) and the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) are engaged in joint strategic planning efforts to address these serious budgetary concerns.

Leadership and fiscal officials from ODJFS and the Office of Budget and Management met with JFS Director's Association representatives to discuss the impact of the SFY 08-09 budget on local services. The Director's explained the challenges of maintaining ongoing quality services while dealing with multiple changes in available resources and fiscal procedures. Specifically, the loss of TANF incentives, the reduction in Income Maintenance Control allocation and the message that ODJFS does not intend to cover allocation expenditure overages, even up to the statewide allocation is affecting county agencies' ability to invest in their communities. It is also abundantly clear that the reduction in local resources will have an immediate and dramatic impact on the clients we serve.

In Fairfield County, programs created as options to combat poverty and provide services in the community will be cut, including:

- o Family Stability Unit
- o Pay it Forward
- o Job Opportunity
- o Breaking Out

Fairfield County will make all of the necessary cuts to services and programs with a heavy heart and foreboding feelings after seeing first hand the difference these investments can make and have made over the years.

What is perhaps the most disconcerting is that while state budget makers struggle with ways to stabilize the TANF budget, Ohio counties have an 11 year history of living within our TANF budget, which has not increased since 1997. Since the creation of TANF, not once have counties overspent their total county allocations and continued to find new ways to help poor families and children in need. Now, the most creative and innovative local programs face elimination while other special interest groups reap the benefit of a swiftly disappearing TANF surplus requiring additional TANF funding and at the same time threatening the stability of the entire human service program.

### Programs and Services Most Impacted

#### **TANF**

- o Loss of TANF Incentives statewide
- o Loss of TANF Demonstration Programs statewide (\$19.1 million)
- o Politically motivated TANF Ear marks provided to organizations in Ohio (\$171.3 million annually)

#### **Income Maintenance Allocation (Eligibility Program Services)**

- o Reduction in allocation statewide from \$124.5 million in SFY 07 to \$108 million in SFY 08.
- o Fairfield County eligibility caseloads are at an all-time high due to dramatic increase in population.
- o The Ohio Legislature has increased eligibility for CHIP Health Insurance program from 250% to 300% of federal poverty level, while at the same time reducing administrative resources available to counties (unfunded mandate).

**October 5th**  
Faith Based and  
Community Partnership  
Summit  
8:00 am – 11:30 am  
Liberty Center

**October 13th**  
Food Distribution to OWF  
Families  
Ohio Food Bank  
9:00am – 1:00 pm  
County Maintenance  
Building

**October 24th**  
FCJFS All-Staff  
Informational Session

**October 30th**  
FCJFS Quarterly Meeting  
with The Board of  
Commissioners  
9:30 am  
Courthouse





### JFS Vision Statement

JFS, through state and local partnerships, will be Ohio's premier family support and workforce development system, contributing to skilled, safe, healthy Fairfield Countians, successful businesses and a strong community.

### JFS Mission Statement

Through a spirit of community cooperation, the mission of Fairfield County Job and Family Services is to provide services that encourage productivity, develop competencies, ensure accountability, and promote self-reliance, family stability, and child safety.

### JFS Strategic Goal Areas:

1. FCJFS will responsibly obtain, maximize, and allocate financial resources according to agency priorities.
2. FCJFS will value and respect employees as our greatest asset.
3. FCJFS will provide exceptional public service to the community.
4. FCJFS will demonstrate, inspire, and empower leadership.
5. FCJFS will continue to improve and measure performance in all areas, utilizing technology and available resources.
6. FCJFS will initiate, promote, and enhance community and inter-governmental relationships to further our mission.

### Title XX

- o Reduced Title XX resources available in Fairfield County by \$262,000 in SFY 08
- o Deprived Fairfield County of \$300,000. in newly earned Title XX revenue.
- o Adult Protective Services Unit will be required to reduce costs by \$262,000. while referral activity has increased dramatically in 2007.

To end on a more positive note, the SFY 08-09 Budget includes a slight increase in funding for independent living, adoption assistance, kinship permanency and child welfare programs. In addition, a state CSEA subsidy of \$17.1 million was approved to offset a commensurate federal CSEA funding cut.

### Adult Protective Services Update

FCJFS officials will meet with the Board of Commissioners on October 30<sup>th</sup> to review the Adult Protective Services (APS) funding concerns that were detailed fully in the June 2007 Monthly Report to the Board of Commissioners, and to establish a strategy for addressing the significant reduction of available funding announced by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. A copy of the June 2007 Report to the Board of Commissioners referenced above is available on our web site at [www.fcjfs.org](http://www.fcjfs.org).

Month	2005	2006	2007
January	31	32	50
February	16	24	42
March	34	33	48
April	19	19	46
May	37	35	71
June	32	26	58
July	30	31	49
August	23	22	53
September	33	26	
October	23	31	
November	20	27	
December	18	28	
Yearly Totals	316	334	417

### CPS Protective Placement Costs Update

The March 2007-FCJFS Report to the Board of Commissioners first updated stakeholders and community leaders about the skyrocketing costs being incurred by the county for protective placement of Fairfield County's abused and neglected children in 2007. At the conclusion of the first quarter of the fiscal year (March 31, 2007), it was estimated that if current trends continued, protective placement costs in 2007 would exceed budget projections by \$200,000.00.

Update August 30, 2007: Based on current trends, protective placement costs will exceed budget projections by only \$35,000.00 in 2007.

Child Protective Services officials are to be commended for on-going efforts to offer alternative response services and community resources to support at-risk families, reducing out of home placement costs when possible. It is important to note that only children at substantial risk for additional incidents of abuse and neglect are court-ordered into protective placement.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Faith-Based and Community Group Partnership Summit- October 5<sup>th</sup>

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Faith-based and Community Group Partnership Summit will take place on Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 am to 11:30 am at the Liberty Center. Please join Summit participants as we come together to:

- o Recognize and celebrate the common mission of faith-based organizations, service providers, and community groups that serve adults, children, and families.
- o Review and celebrate the work accomplished by the sub-committees
- o Create valuable networks and share information about services and resources available here in Fairfield County

It's free and you still have time to register. Please contact Kim Teague at 740-687-6728 to register, or for additional details.



August 2007

**The Season of Parades, Festivals and Fairs**



*A  
Blue Ribbon  
Campaign*

FCJFS team members and their families, along with our community partners continue to participate in parades, festivals, and fairs throughout Fairfield County to increase community awareness concerning the need for foster and adoptive homes, and to inform residents of the critical and urgent needs of hundreds of children in our community that are victims of serious physical abuse and neglect each year.

In Pickerington our float won the 2<sup>nd</sup> place award. Look for the big "blue ribbon" float rolling down the highway on our way to your town or village.

**Customer Count**

Customer Count Aug 1 – 31	2007	2006	2005
Community Services	8771	7448	6336
Child Support	795	812	736
Children Services	766	893	757
WorkNet	1695	1812	1752
YTD (Jan 1 – Aug 31)	82203	83460	71787



### Helping Families with School Clothing and School Supplies



In May, Community Services initiated school clothes assistance to eligible families through the Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) program. Families who are below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and have children in grades K-12 may be eligible for \$200.00 for the purchase of school clothing, shoes, and supplies. We assisted with \$200.00 per child to be used for school clothes, shoes, and supplies. Participants must come to Fairfield County Job and Family

Services, complete an application, and submit income verification to be eligible for the assistance. For example, a family of four could be eligible if their gross income for the last 30 days is less than \$3,442. Participants can utilize Value City, K-Mart, or Meijers for their school clothing vouchers. Vouchers can only be utilized to purchase school clothing or shoes. The participating stores provide detailed receipts identifying type of purchase and dollar amount for each voucher issued. We stopped accepting applications on 8/17/07. To date we have processed \$535,721.93. We issued 1,464 vouchers and helped 2,679 children! Funding for this program was available through one-time incentive dollars provided by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to Fairfield County Job and Family Services because of the high caseloads. Success Coaches and Eligibility Referral Specialists in the Community Services Department worked diligently on getting families into the office to make sure kids were ready for school. We are very proud to be able to serve so many children at this very important time in their life.

### Managed Care Plan Open Selection Month for Covered Families and Children

November 2007 will be the first annual open selection month for Fairfield County and the entire Central region. Three Managed Care Plans are available in the Central region: Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, CareSource, and Molina Health Care of Ohio. Open selection month is a designated month in which customers receiving Covered Families and Children Medicaid can choose a different Managed Care Plan. Customers do not have to reselect the current plan they are utilizing. Open selection is only for those consumers who would like to change plans.

In order for the customer to change plans he/she would need to call the Managed Care Enrollment Center at (800) 605-3040 Monday- Friday, 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. The customer will speak with a Selection Specialist that can tell him/her about the different plans available and make the change for them.

Another method of changing your plan is by attending an Open House on November 15<sup>th</sup> from 10 A.M. - 6 P.M. at Fairfield County Job and Family Services. During the Open House, all three Managed Care Plans and a Selection Specialist will be available to customers for question and answers. Customers can change plans during the Open House. Light refreshments will be furnished by each Managed Care Plan.

If you have any questions about Managed Care or the Open House, please feel free to contact Beth Boyle at 687-7156 or [boylee@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:boylee@odjfs.state.oh.us)

### Three Boxes of Groceries Provided to Ohio Works First Families



State legislators carved out TANF dollars at the state level for special projects. One of the projects involved distributing additional food to families in need. In conjunction with Mid-Ohio FoodBank, we are able to provide OWF families three boxes of groceries and non-food products. These OWF cases or ongoing cash assistance also include child only cases that are involved with Child Protective Services and who may be placed with grandparents or other relatives.

This great selection of non-perishable groceries includes canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, chicken and tuna, juice and soup. There are several meal-in-a-box products such as ravioli, stew, and macaroni and cheese. Families will also receive a box of non-food products that include household and personal items. More than 800 letters were mailed in late September to those eligible families. Families must bring the letter to receive their food boxes.

We are having a kick-off distribution event at the Fairfield County Maintenance Building, 355 Lincoln Avenue on Saturday, October 13th from 9:00 to 1:00 pm. Because this is very specific eligibility, (only families eligible will receive the letter), it is not appropriate to make referrals. Mid-Ohio FoodBank will be delivering more than 18 pallets of food boxes prior to October 13<sup>th</sup>. A special thank you to the Maintenance Department for their assistance and use of the building that day.

### Community Services Stats:

The Community Services **caseload for August 2007 is 5,702 open cases**. This includes Healthy Start/Healthy Families, Food Stamps, and Ohio Works First. This is the highest open caseload in more than five years.

**In August there were 338 scheduled intakes; 265 customers attended intake appointments**, (families who do not currently have an open case requesting assistance). Twenty percent were a no show to the appointment.

**Help Desk staff answered 1,478 requests from families**. Of those 905 were walk-in customers and 573 were phone contacts. Help Desk is staffed by one Success Coach and one Eligibility Referral Specialist each day.

**Food Stamp cases totaled 2,706 open cases in Community Services** with 41% of those families in receipt of earned income.

**Families receiving only Medicaid benefits** such as Healthy Start, Healthy Families, or Transitional Medicaid total **1,860 open cases in August**. The majority of these families have employment in the household.

**In August, 654 families are receiving Ohio Works First (ongoing cash assistance)**. Many of these cash assistance cases are children involved with Children Services who are residing with grandparents or other relatives.

In July, the **Transportation Team provided 6,645 one-way trips** through the Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation program and through TANF funding. A total of 3,832 one-way trips utilizing gas vouchers were issued through the Non Emergency Medicaid Transportation, 919 one-way trips were provided by JFS drivers, and 815 one-way trips were provided through contract agencies such as; Lancaster Public Transit, Functional Training Services, Center for Disabilities, and Salvation Army. Families involved with Child Protective Services were provided 556 one-way trips; 138 gas vouchers, 157 through contract agencies, and 261 one-way trips utilizing JFS drivers.

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**FCJFS – Child Protective Services Department Selected as Pilot County:**

The Supreme Court of Ohio recently announced that Fairfield County CPS has been selected among 10 Ohio counties to participate in the innovative Ohio Alternative Response Pilot Project that will provide another tool to child protection agencies for working with children and families in trouble. The pilot project, which was authorized last year by the Ohio General Assembly, is the result of a joint effort by the Supreme Court and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). Since 2004, the Supreme Court of Ohio's Advisory Committee on Children, Families & the Courts has participated in ongoing efforts to develop and implement recommendations to improve Ohio's system for accepting and investigating reports of child abuse and neglect. One of the fundamental components of the recommendations submitted by its Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency was initiating an "Alternative Response" child protection model in Ohio. In 2006, the legislature passed Amended Substitute Senate Bill 238 which authorized the Alternative Response Pilot Project. Alternative response is a form of practice in child protective services that allows for more than one method of response to accepted reports of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. This approach recognizes the variation in the nature of reports and the related value of responding differentially, either a traditional investigation or a family assessment response. A family assessment response assesses the needs of the child or family and offers services without requiring a formal disposition (substantiation) that maltreatment has occurred or that the child is at risk of maltreatment. Fairfield County is pleased to be recognized as a county that is continuously monitoring trends, assessing needs and establishing a planful approach to assure our community is providing the best service delivery possible.

**Patience Is A Virtue**

On Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, FCJFS – CPS anticipated the rollout of a new information system designed to promote communication and collaboration across the state. This sharing of information will allow counties to quickly identify common cases and provide casework staff with a more streamlined process of entering and collecting necessary data. Unfortunately, the rollout has not progressed as planned. As a result, staff are growing somewhat frustrated since they have worked so hard to prepare for a system that is currently inaccessible. FCJFS leadership remains in constant contact with state officials to develop a remedy. In the meantime, everyone's patience is very much appreciated as our department wades through an entire system conversion.

**You're Invited!**

On Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, you are invited to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Party. Come and witness the spectacular transformation that takes place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of FCJFS. Join FCJFS Staff, Foster Families, Adoptive Families, Community Partners and many, many others as together we weave our way through the hallways and aisles as we enjoy the creative decorations put together to honor our kiddos. Each year this small celebration grows bigger and bigger. This has become a special event when we are given the opportunity to see the innocent faces who were beaten and bruised a short time ago, now alive with sparkling eyes and a vibrant smile. I'm sure we derive much more happiness from this than the kids do. You don't want to miss this. See you there.



August 2007



**Federal Tax Information Inspection**

Recently the CSEA participated in a mandatory Federal Tax Information (FTI) Inspection. During this inspection, the Office of Child Support (OCS) toured the building, reviewed files and evaluated current policies and procedures for safeguarding IRS information. These inspections are required by the IRS in order to insure that tax information is only being used for its intended purpose and that it can not be accessed by unauthorized individuals.

According to their report, we will need a secured door somewhere leading into the CSEA and also locked cabinets for ALL CSEA case files. These are the two major findings although there are several minor ones. If we are able to move forward with Electronic Data Imaging of all case files, this would resolve the security concerns as the IRS information would be stored electronically on the server.

**Local Most Wanted Poster**

The CSEA is currently exploring the possibility of implementing a local version of the State's Most Wanted Poster. Obligor who meet the specified criteria (unable to be located, delinquent in payments by at least 6 months, signed approval by custodial parent, and not known to be a recipient of public assistance or Social Security benefits) would have their pictures and descriptions on posters throughout the county. The posters would include a toll free number to call with any information that may lead to the location and arrest of the obligor.

Implementing a local version of the poster would allow us to expand the use and number of obligors submitted. It would also allow us the opportunity to update it as often as necessary to ensure that the information stays current.

**Job Opportunity Program Update**

The *Job Opportunity* program is a collective effort to assist child support customers with obtaining and maintaining employment, and thus, increasing their ability to meet their child support obligation. This program is 100% funded through a state grant for TANF Demonstration projects. Below are some of the current statistics for the program:

- o **332** customers have obtained employment
- o **120** customers have paid at least 3 straight months of child support payments
- o **363** customers have been referred to various community resources
- o **\$176,700** collected from *Job Opportunity* customers

**Child Support Collections**

	2005	2006	2007	\$ Diff	% Diff
<b>January</b>		1,720,232	1,736,549	16,317	0.95%
<b>February</b>	1,575,277	1,660,532	1,598,250	85,255	-3.75%
<b>March</b>	1,932,875	2,066,808	1,936,927	129,881	-6.28%
<b>April</b>	1,803,903	1,638,915	1,894,662	255,747	15.6%
<b>May</b>	1,836,895	1,938,947	1,979,043	40,096	2.07%
<b>June</b>	1,886,337	1,980,235	1,862,029	118,206	-5.97%
<b>July</b>	1,674,182	1,748,439	1,713,398	35,041	-2.00%
<b>August</b>	1,773,680	1,711,087	1,799,685	88,599	5.18%
<b>September</b>	1,669,438	1,711,172		41,734	2.50%
<b>October</b>	1,735,554	1,746,150		10,596	0.61%
<b>November</b>	1,754,887	1,689,702		-65,185	3.71%
<b>December</b>	1,801,702	1,773,269		-28,433	1.58%
<b>Total</b>	21,058,316	21,385,488		327,172	1.55%

## APS PARTNER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

In order to determine our success in meeting the needs of older adult and disabled customers, Adult Protective Services queries community partners annually through a "Partner Satisfaction Survey." On August 1, 86 surveys were mailed to all community partners who provide services to the older/disabled adults of Fairfield County.

By September 1, the deadline for responses, **38** (44%) completed surveys were returned. Many of the respondents identified themselves by name and agency, and wrote additional comments. A synopsis of the results follows:

- **35** respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that **Response to referrals made to APS are appropriate and timely.** (3 checked "N/A")
- **34** respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that **Calls are returned within one business day.** 2 respondents checked "disagree," 1 checked "N/A," and 1 respondent left this blank.
- **38** respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that **APS staff are knowledgeable and helpful when I/we have questions or concerns.**
- **37** respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that **APS staff are courteous.** 1 left this blank.
- **33** respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that **Those customers I/we have referred benefited from APS intervention.** 1 respondent checked "disagree," and went on to explain his response; 3 respondents checked "N/A" and 1 left it blank.
- **31** respondents "strongly agreed" or "agree" that **APS caseworkers consistently follow through with interventions for customers I/we have referred.** 2 respondents checked "disagree," 1 respondent checked "strongly disagree," 3 respondents checked "N/A," and 1 left it blank.

## INCREASE SEEN IN NUMBER OF CHILD CARE RECIPIENTS

During the month of August, the Child Care division of Social Services experienced a dramatic increase in the number of applications for subsidized child care. **106** applications were processed, bringing the total number of eligible families to **656**, and the total number of children served to **1,360**.

Child Care currently contracts with 45 home providers, 92 centers, and 16 limited providers. Payments to providers during the month of August totaled **\$490,607.38**.

## INCREASING NUMBER OF PEOPLE USING KINSHIP CLOSET

**137** people made use of the "Kinship Closet" during the month of August. The small shop on Columbus Street is open three days per week, and during other times as customers need to access it, for people who need clothing, shoes, household supplies, food, and toiletries.

The Kinship Closet is staffed by workers enrolled in the Work Experience Program, as well as workers enrolled in Experience Works for older adults. Jenny Ruff, the Kinship and Community Outreach Coordinator, continues to seek and accept donations for the closet. Jenny can be reached at 687-6710.

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**STEP AHEAD Program**

WFD in cooperation with AEP, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and OUL sponsored the FISH Module Training program held September 26 at the Moose Lodge. Over 100 people from various employment backgrounds attended the event aimed at increasing customer services awareness. Kim Hoch who owns a medical records company and uses the FISH training program was the presenter and inspired the crowd with her own style of customer service using the 4 phases of FISH; 1) Be There, 2)Make Their Day, 3)Play, 4) Choose your attitude.

**From Missy Bennet...**a dislocated worker from Lancaster Glass secured employment in the Auditors office working in payroll.

**From Tonya Tisdale...**a dislocated worker, steadily employed for 20 years, who resides in Hocking County, heard about the great things happening in WorkNet, applied and earned his GED and is now enrolled in a JVC welding program.

**Lancaster Glass**

TAA sessions were held at OSU Extension to assist Lancaster glass workers in their quest for extended benefits. 80 employees were given specific instruction in various areas. Representatives from local, state and Federal offices worked together in coordinating this event.

**WorkNet partners with employers to hold on site interviews and take applications**

Volt Services, Fed Ex, Ambassador Home Health Services, are all companies that used WorkNet to hold interviews this month. WorkNet in partnership with various employers have been holding open interviews at WorkNet to help businesses with their hiring process.

**WorkNet Customer Count**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>January</b>	-	749	958	924	1580	1879
<b>February</b>	-	651	846	699	1419	1020
<b>March</b>	-	807	1004	1184	1895	1606
<b>April</b>	592	943	985	917	1305	1425
<b>May</b>	547	748	989	979	1411	1614
<b>June</b>	371	1100	1126	1165	1675	1493
<b>July</b>	447	1129	877	1180	1466	1674
<b>August</b>	492	992	1015	1752	1813	1695
<b>September</b>	566	906	1020	1334	1611	1655
<b>October</b>	683	895	689	1277	1471	
<b>November</b>	442	757	767	1172	1110	
<b>December</b>	452	712	811	1106	1085	

## July 2007 Statistics

### Visitation/Exchange Services

Monitored Exchanges: 42  
 Supervised Visits: 135  
 Referrals received: 18  
 Number of adults served: 202  
 Number of noncustodial parents: 84  
 Number of children: 123

### Parent Education Services

Parent Education Sessions (Hours): 25.5  
 Parent Education Related Events (Hours): 74.51  
 Parent Educators in Family Court (Hours): 8.5  
 Referrals Received: 3  
 Number of Adults Served: 80  
 Number of noncustodial parents: 32  
 Number of children: 71

In August the Center received 12 referrals for **Visitation and Exchange Services** in which currently, there are 11 families on the waiting list. There were 129 supervised visits (for a total of 185.5 hours of supervised visitation) and 47 monitored exchanges.

The **Parent Education Services** Team received 3 new referrals in August. There were 32 families who were either participating in ongoing services or involved in the referral process.

The third series of the Parent **Project** began Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, and is being held in the ADAMH Board Conference Room at 108 West Main Street. There are eleven participants.

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, the Visitation/Exchange Services staff attended training entitled Working Together to Keep Families Safe, sponsored by the Ohio Chapter of the Supervised Visitation Network. The focus of the day was Basic Domestic Violence/Victimology, Protection Orders and Safety and Security in Visitation Programs. Keynote speaker **Attorney General Marc Dann** praised the efforts of visitation centers in keeping families safe. He reviewed some of his plans for the state, and encouraged the Chapter's use of the Attorney General's legislative office for assistance with establishing standards for supervised visitation statewide, through legislation. He encouraged us to invite our legislators to "visit on a Wednesday" to give them an idea of the scope and volume of our services. He thanked us for the work we do.



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**Our Mission:**

The mission of the Family Support and Visitation Center is to support children and families who have been affected by divorce, separation, abuse, neglect or domestic violence. Through education and provision of a safe, comfortable environment, our focus is to promote family engagement and healthy, meaningful adult/child relationships.