



Blue Ribbon Campaign

When you see a [blue ribbon](#) displayed in Fairfield County, I hope that it will bring to mind the [urgent](#) and [critical](#) needs of abused and neglected children in our community.

April was proclaimed Child Abuse Prevention Month, and blue ribbons were placed throughout Fairfield County in an effort to increase public awareness and to remind residents of our [shared responsibility](#) to protect children from serious abuse and neglect.

You can help by displaying a [blue ribbon](#) year-round in your home, office/workplace, or vehicle. To order a free [blue ribbon](#) office display, car magnet, wrist-band or lapel pin, email me at: orlanm@odjfs.state.oh.us.

Together, we can offer safety, hope, and opportunity to every child in Fairfield County.



FCJFS and Rapid Response partners host Information Sessions for dislocated workers of the Lancaster Glass Corporation.

FCJFS–Workforce and Job Development Department officials and Rapid Response community partners recently facilitated 4 information sessions for the dislocated workers of the Lancaster Glass Corporation.

Every department within FCJFS was represented on the Rapid Response team, and we had great community support from organizations such as the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS), Ohio University-Lancaster, OSU Extension, Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools, Roadmaster Driving School, Unemployment Compensation, Veteran's Affairs, and the Social Security Administration.

Over 120 LGC employees attended one of the four events. FCJFS career advisors have been assigned to every Lancaster Glass employee to help them navigate through the training and job placement opportunities available.

The Abuse Prevention Fund and Fairfield Medical Center make generous donations to the Child Advocacy Center of Fairfield County.

Generous donations from the Abuse Prevention Fund and Fairfield Medical Center have enabled the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) of Fairfield County to open sooner than anticipated. Child Advocacy Centers are community partnerships that use a facility based, multi-disciplinary approach to address the problem of child abuse. Professionals from the fields of law enforcement,

April 2007

June 4th 2007
County Department
Directors Meeting
9:00 am

July 1st 2007
Summer Edition FCJFS Link
Published





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.



child protective services, victim services, mental health, prosecution and medicine come together to investigate, treat and prosecute cases of child sexual and severe physical abuse. These institutions work cooperatively to ensure that children are not further victimized by the very systems intended to protect them, securing comprehensive and coordinated services for child victims and their families.

Abuse Prevention Fund founders and local philanthropists Dave and June Harcum recently announced a very generous \$30,000.00 cash donation, which was matched by the Fairfield Medical Center. These gifts will fully cover CAC facility costs for the first 2 years of operation. The Center will be located in a former medical office in the Kroger's complex at 1147 East Main Street.

We are extremely grateful to the Harcum's and to FMC for their generosity and support of this important initiative.

FCJFS CSEA partners with Sheriff Phaelen, Channel 6 to capture child support fugitive.

On April 24th, *Six On Your Side* featured two (2) delinquent Child Support obligors from Fairfield County on their "Most Wanted" series. See an update on Page 4 of this report.

On behalf of the entire FCJFS team, I would like to thank Sheriff Phaelen, Deputy Roberts, and *Six On Your Side*, for their assistance in bringing these individuals to justice.

FCJFS- Community Services sponsor temporary vehicle fuel assistance program to assist working poor families .

Nearly **2000 low-income working families** in Fairfield County will receive some temporary relief from the increasing costs of vehicle fuel as a result of the efforts of the Community Services Department of FCJFS.

The TANF Transportation Employment Bonus is available to employed families with children in the household who fall within the TANF income guidelines.

Utilizing expiring TANF funds, qualifying families will receive a total of 8-\$15.00 gas (\$120.00 in total) vouchers that can be redeemed before June 30 to purchase fuel to travel to work. The goal of the program is to reward consistent employment and to support family stability.

UPDATE: Protective Placement Cost

Last month, this report updated the Board of Commissioners and community on the sky-rocketing costs in 2007 for the protective placement of abused and neglected children in Fairfield County. At the end of the first quarter of the fiscal year (March 31, 2007), it was estimated that protective placement costs would exceed budget projections by nearly \$200,000.00 in 2007.

- Update: April 30, 2007:
- o % of FY 2007 CPS Protective Placement budget expended as of April 30, 2007: **35%**
 - o FY 2007 anticipated shortfall at current placement levels: **\$100,000.00**

It is important to note that only children **at substantial risk** for additional incidents of abuse and neglect are **court-ordered** into protective placement.

Child Protective Services Department officials will continue to intensify efforts to offer alternative response services and community resources to support at-risk families, reducing out-of-home protective placement costs when possible. Unfortunately, in emergency incidents of serious abuse and neglect, court-ordered protective placement is unavoidable and unpredictable.

Because of the serious nature of this Child Protective Services financial concern, FCJFS officials will provide monthly placement cost projections to the Board of Commissioners throughout 2007.



Community Services stats for April 2007

5,419 open cases (highest open caseload in more than five years).

306 scheduled intakes: 254 attending, 52 no show.

Help Desk answered 1,687 requests. 575 walk-in customers, 1,112 phone contacts Help Desk staffed by one Success Coach and one Eligibility Referral Specialist each day.

2,574 open Food Stamp cases (41% with earned income).

1,886 Medicaid only cases (Healthy Start/Families, Transitional Medicaid) majority have employment in the household.

634 Ohio Works First (ongoing cash assistance) cases. Many of these cases are involved with Children Services who are residing with grandparents or other relatives.

March: Transportation team provided 5,594 one-way trips through the Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation program and TANF funding. 3,224 one-way trips utilizing gas vouchers, 939 one-way trips provided by JFS drivers, and 1,283 one-way trips provided by contract agencies (Lancaster Public Transit, Functional Training Services, Center for Disabilities, and Salvation Army).



Community Services Assists Working Families with Gas Vouchers

Utilizing the TANF High Performance Incentive dollars received by Fairfield County Job and Family Services, Community Services developed a two-prong approach to expend these dollars assisting working families. The TANF Transportation Employment Bonus is available to employed families with children in the household who meet the TANF income guidelines (200% F.P.L.). If determined eligible, four \$15.00 gas vouchers will be mailed for the months of May and June to assist families with the high cost of gasoline for travel to work. Over 2,000 letters and forms were mailed on May 1 to employed families in receipt of Food Stamps or Medicaid. We could potentially expend \$240,000 to assist families in traveling to work. The gas voucher to any one of eight local gas stations can only be redeemed to purchase gasoline and no monetary change will be provided to the family. The response has been immediate and very positive. One woman contacted us to thank us for the offer of assistance with the high cost of gasoline, but all she needed was the Medicaid coverage for her children.

Assistance with School Clothing Available Through TANF Funding

Community Services staff began taking applications to assist families who are below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level and have children in grades K-12 with the purchase of school clothing and shoes. Participants must complete an application and submit income verification to be eligible for a school clothing/shoes voucher for \$200.00 per child. Participants can utilize Value City, K-Mart, or Meijers for their school clothing vouchers.

Benefit Recovery Collections Ensure Accountability

The Benefit Recovery Program employs one Benefit Recovery Specialist to calculate potential overpayments of Food Stamps, OWF (cash assistance), or Medicaid benefits received by participants. Potential overpayments are identified by caseworker staff and referred to Benefit Recovery and the Fraud Investigator for potential fraud. Each month approximately 10-15 claims are submitted to the Benefit Recovery Specialist for potential calculation of an overpayment. In 2006, \$74,788 in overpayment claims were established by the Benefit Recovery program. Participants repay these overpayment claims by a monthly deduction of their Food Stamp allotment or a reduction in their OWF grant. The agency also recoups significant dollars utilizing the tax offset program. This program allows us to intercept participant's tax returns to repay the Food Stamp or OWF program. From January through April, approximately \$63,601 in overpayment claims were established by Benefit Recovery.



April 2007



Fugitive Files Update

On April 24th, NewsCenter Six featured one of the CSEA Obligor on their *Fugitive Files* segment. The story included short interviews with the custodial parent and Deputy Paul Roberts as well as pictures of the child in the case. A number of calls were received and all leads were pursued. A couple weeks after the airing, a Columbus Attorney called to inform the CSEA that he was representing the obligor and that the obligor was attempting to raise enough money to pay the arrearages in full (approximately \$17,000). Stay tuned!

Emancipation Season is Upon Us

For many, June marks the end of the school year and for some obligors is translates into the termination of a child support obligation. For the CSEA, June is a month of emancipations.

Ohio's age of majority is defined as 18 years of age, or as long as the child attends high school on a full time basis or a court order requires the duty of support to continue. Unless specified in the court order, no duty of support extends beyond the nineteenth birthday of the child (Ohio Revised Code section 3103.03).

The CSEA will conduct an investigation as to a child's emancipation. The agency will determine if the child support order should terminate or continue and send notice of the child support investigation to both parties. Once the investigation is completed, a proposed order is completed and mailed to both parties.

The obligee and obligor have the right to request an administrative hearing concerning the results of the CSEA investigation. The obligee and obligor may also object to the Administrative Hearing Decision by filing a motion with the court within 30 days of issuance of Administrative Hearing Decision.

CSEA to Host CLE Training

August is Child Support Awareness Month in Ohio. In recognition of that fact, the CSEA will be hosting a FREE CLE Training for local attorneys. This half day event will provide up to 4 CLE's for attendees and include presentations by all four of the CSEA Attorneys on various topics. The main focus of the training will be upcoming changes in medical support requirements.

Current language in Budget Bill HB 119 provides for developing new requirements for cash medical support. Cash medical support is defined by ORC 3119.30 as "an amount ordered to be paid toward the cost of health insurance provided by a public entity or by another parent through employment or otherwise, or for other medical costs not covered by insurance". CSEA's will be responsible for the tracking and collection of cash medical support.

Update on the Job Opportunity Program

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 **247** customers have obtained employment
- o **82** customers have paid at least 3 straight months of child support payments
- o **202** customers have been referred to various community resources
- o **\$114,045** collected from Job Opp customers (as of 4/18/07)

April Child Support Collections	2006	2007	\$ Diff	% Diff
	1,638,915	1,894,662	255,747	15.6%



84% INCREASE IN ELDER ABUSE REFERRALS TO APS

During the first four months of 2007, referrals to Adult Protective Services increased by **84%** from the same time period in 2006. Although many advocates urged the legislature to provide a line item in the biennial budget for Adult Protective Services, it was not included in the final plan.

With only three Caseworkers to investigate, assess, and provide ongoing case management services to APS customers, the referrals must now be prioritized as to need and severity of risk. At the time of referral, all allegations involving abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation are opened for investigation, assessment, and possible case management. Those referrals which do not involve specific allegations of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or exploitation, but which demonstrate the need for a specific and immediate service are opened as PINS – Persons in Need of Services.

Cases designated as PINS are assigned to a Caseworker, who visits the customer and assesses the service need. Services are then arranged or provided, and the case is closed once the customer's needs are met. An example of a case designated as PINS is a customer who fell behind in utility bill payments and risks shut off if not paid within a certain time frame. APS will assist the customer by contacting MOW-OAA, Information & Referral, and Community Action. If these agencies cannot assist, or can help with only a portion of the bill, APS will remain involved until the situation is rectified.

Other calls, which involve only questions about available services or resources, are designated as "I & R" calls – Information & Referral. In April, 25 referrals were designated as PINS, 10 as I & R's.

Cases initially designated as PINS may be opened for ongoing case management at any time based upon the additional findings of the APS Caseworker. Currently, each of the three Caseworkers provides ongoing case management to an average of 30 customers (total is an average of 90) at any given time.

IMPLEMENTING QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES IN SOCIAL SERVICES

In an effort to determine our progress in achieving goals advancing the agency mission, Social Services has implemented a quality assurance tool for several facets of the department.

Beginning in May, all Social Services staff are utilizing varying forms of logs that document and track voice mail messages and the timeliness of return phone calls. Per agency policy, all voice mail messages must be returned within one business day.

The Absentee rate for Social Services staff is also being measured. A baseline percentage has been established, with the goal to reduce absenteeism by at least 10% in 2007.

In addition, the Adult Unit has begun to reduce their customer "no show" rate by calling each scheduled customer the day prior to their appointment. For the Disability Determination staff, this practice has already reduced the rate of missed appointments by 90% in the first two weeks.

FOOD PANTRY COMMITTEE RECEIVES DONATIONS

The Faith-Based Food Pantry Committee, including Jenny Ruff, Jackie Terry, Lisa Householder, Crystal Lieser, Kathi Sisco, Ann Torrey, Sabina Hosafros, Diana Griffin, and MaryJo Fox raised over \$800 as part of Saturday's (April 28) food drive at Carnival Foods.

In addition to boxed and canned food, monetary donations will be doubled in value by Dan Bay, owner of Carnival, and turned into food donations for area pantries.

49% OF ALL MEDICAID PAYMENTS GO TO NURSING HOMES

In April, 48.89% of Medicaid payments made on behalf of Fairfield County residents was paid to nursing homes and long-term care facilities. A total of \$1.9 Million in Medicaid was paid to nursing homes in April, representing 530 Fairfield County residents.

CHILD CARE APPLICATIONS INCREASE 48%

From January through April 2007, the Child Care Division has received 305 applications for subsidized Child Care, a 48% increase over the same time period in 2006. In addition, provider rates were modified by the state, requiring a renegotiation of all provider contracts.





April 2007

Lancaster Glass Rapid Response Meetings

JFS held a series of meetings on Monday, May 14 and Friday, May 18 to cover unemployment benefits, reemployment training, career counseling, finance management, and various workshops on interviewing, resumes writing and related topics in searching for employment. All parties involved, company, union, and JFS have been working hand in hand to guarantee a positive experience for the laid off workers in their next step of obtaining employment.

Success Story

Gail Walls secured a position with Care Star as an Intake Coordinator. Gail is a single mother with 2 children, ages 5 and 7. She will be taking applications for home health care. Gail has been working with Ginni Grilli and Shana Blank and most recently she has been working with Mark White helping tutor GED applicants. Gail is very excited about her new position and looks forward to becoming a very successful employee.

WorkNet partners with employers to hold interviews and take applications

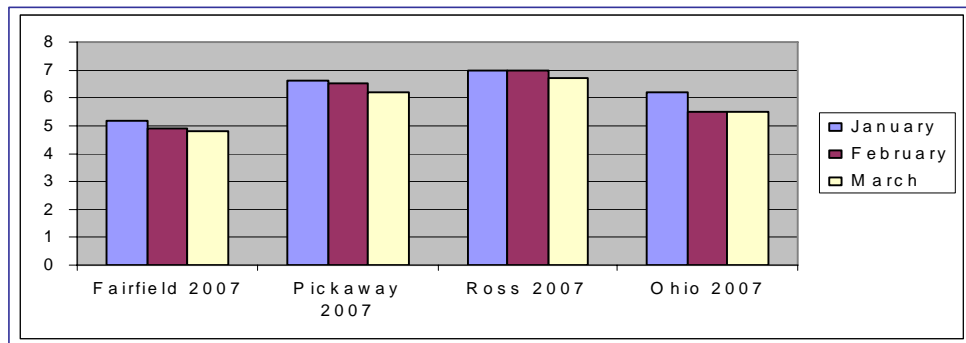
WorkNet has once again partnered with Anchor Hocking by taking applications for various positions and will continue to do so over the next few weeks. WorkNet in partnership with various employers have been holding open interviews at WorkNet to help businesses with their hiring process. Over 255 job seekers this month have used these free services as interviews continue. This is one of the basic services WorkNet provides. The following companies were on site during April: Volt Services, Anchor Hocking applications, and various Staffing Agencies

WorkNet Customer Count

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

Unemployment Rates

The following is a graph depicting the Unemployment Rates (in percent) for Fairfield, Pickaway, and Ross Counties in comparison with the overall rate for Ohio.





April 2007

**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.

March 2007 Statistics**Visitation/Exchange Services**

Monitored Exchanges: 48
Supervised Visits: 193
Referrals received: 13
Number of adults served: 155
Number of noncustodial parents: 57
Number of children: 81

Parent Education Services

Parent Education Sessions (Hours): 6.5
Parent Education Related Events (Hours): 19.75
Parent Educators in Family Court (Hours): 4
Referrals Received: 1
Number of Adults Served: 41
Number of noncustodial parents: 12
Number of children: 47

May is Supervised Visitation Month!

The orange ribbon is a symbol of supervised visitation. Visitation centers exist to provide safe haven for children during parental visitation. What color signifies safety better than orange? Orange is a bright color used to warn people to watch out or take notice. We want the world to see the orange ribbon and take notice of the thousands of children and families in need of this service.

In April the Center received 25 referrals for **Visitation and Exchange Services** in which currently, there 3 families on the waiting list. There were 180 supervised visits and 45 monitored exchanges.

The **Parent Education Services** Team of the Family Support and Visitation Center has received 64 referrals since the program began. There are 20 families currently participating in ongoing services. There were 13 new referrals in April.

The second series of the **Parent Project** is in its 3rd week. There are 17 participants. Some of the participants from the 1st series are meeting once a week in a support group format, on their own, as intended.



April 2007



The Newest Additions to the JFS Staff



Rachael Duck comes to JFS as an Eligibility Referral Specialist 2 with the Community Services Team. Rachael holds an undergraduate degree from Ohio University in Public Administration with a minor in Interpersonal Communication. After graduating from OU, Rachael completed a three month internship in Sydney Australia at a consulting firm for high-end hotels. Prior to relocating to Lancaster, Rachael was an account examiner at ODJFS and a customer service representative at CF Bank.



Jennifer Isenberg joins JFS as an Eligibility Referral Specialist 2 with the Community Services Team. Jennifer recently relocated from Canton where she held the position of Case Manager 2 at the Summit County Department of Job and Family Services since February 2005. Jennifer completed her Associate in Human and Social Services from Stark State College of Technology and is working on completing her Social Work Degree from the University of Akron.

Public Relations Team Updates

The recent addition of our Public Information Specialist, Lori Lovas, has allowed the agency to increase our public relations and community outreach efforts.

For April's Child Abuse Prevention Month and May's National Foster Care Month, the agency was able to utilize state provided marketing funds to conduct the following outreach and marketing activities:

- o Billboards aimed at promoting adoption
- o Participate in adoption fairs
- o Creation of a calendar that promotes fostering and adopting
- o Promotion of upcoming Foster/Adoption information meetings via newspaper advertisements

In addition, numerous press releases and letter's to the editor have been submitted to the local media to promote agency-wide initiatives as well as departmental specific programs. This increased communication with the local media has resulted in positive promotion and increased awareness and education.

A number of activities are planned for the upcoming summer months that include participating in area parades and hosting artists from Lancaster City Schools during the Lancaster Festival Artwalk.