



Fairfield County Job & Family Services e-Link

SERVE • CONNECT • PROTECT

a word of
Welcome.



Aundrea Cordle

Director, Fairfield County Job & Family Services

A Great Quarter, Indeed!

Hello friends. I am proud to share this edition of our quarterly e-Link that recaps some of our major accomplishments and initiatives in the areas of Protective Services, Workforce Development, Child Support Enforcement, and Community Services. Please share this newsletter with anyone who might have an interest in Job and Family Services or is curious to know what we are doing to meet the needs of our community.

With Thanks,

Aundrea Cordle
Director, Fairfield County Job & Family Services




Now Live! The New FCJFS Website!

JOB & FAMILY SERVICES
TANF SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Do you know a 16-24 year old that is interested in gaining summer work experience? If so, Job and Family Services TANF Summer Youth Employment Program provides work experience for income eligible youth in Fairfield County. Employed youth will gain work experience, a source of income, and the opportunity to develop skills to add to their resume. We are currently looking for youth ages 16-24 that have a household monthly income that does not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Fairfield County Community Action and Business Systems Solutions, Inc. are administering the program and will provide approximately 65 youth the opportunity to learn job readiness skills, earn a paycheck and the opportunity to work in a variety of positions. To learn more about this program please contact Job and Family Services Youth Coordinator, Ginny Grilli, at 740-652-7808.



Child Abuse Awareness Month A Huge Success



Fairfield County Job and Family Services has recently launched an all-new, more user friendly website. The new website provides easy access to information regarding all of our programs. Just go to www.FCJFS.org

Emancipation Season for CSEA

For many, May marks the end of the school year and for some non-custodial parents it translates into the termination of a child support obligation. For the Fairfield County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) and Terminations Case Manager, Mandy Huffman, May is a busy month while children turn 18 and graduate from high school.

There are various reasons why a child support order should terminate. Generally speaking, under Ohio law unless ordered by the court, current child support terminates upon the emancipation of the child. The most common reason for child support to terminate is when the child turns 18 years old and graduates (emancipates) from an accredited high school. A child support order cannot remain in effect past 19 years of age, unless ordered by the court.

The process of investigating an 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.
- The parties have the right to request an administrative hearing concerning the results of the CSEA investigation. The parties may also object to the Administrative Hearing Decision by filing a motion with the court within 30 days of issuance of the decision.
- Once the investigation is completed, a proposed order is completed and mailed to both parties.

Did you know?

Fairfield County CSEA issues approximately 800 termination investigations annually.



When discussing serious issues like child abuse and neglect, terms like "more" or "bigger" do not usually evoke a sense of success. Fairfield County Child Protective Services has shown that when it comes to child abuse and neglect awareness and education, "more" and "bigger" achieve that goal. April was national Child Abuse Prevention Month. For Fairfield County Child Protective Services, the size and number of events continue to grow year after year. Prevention month offers opportunities for staff to raise awareness and advocate for children experiencing abuse and neglect in our community, while recognizing the efforts of community organizations and individuals dedicated to serving children throughout the year. This year's activities included:

- An art project with Pleasantville Elementary School
- The Family Fun Fair: Sponsored by Fairfield Association for the Education of Young Children
- A Neat Tweet Contest in which employees were encouraged to provide ideas of facts and information regarding child abuse prevention to be shared on our social media pages
- The Wear Blue and Abuse Prevention Kick-off breakfast held on April 13th
- The 16th Annual Candlelight Walk

Throughout the month of April, Child Protective Services staff worked tirelessly to coordinate efforts to organize these events in the hopes that even one child's life can be affected in a positive way. Thank you to everyone who participated in or volunteered for these events.



Fraud Investigator Receives Rookie of the Year Award

The Ohio Council on Welfare Fraud awarded Fairfield County JFS Fraud Investigator, MaryJo Fox, the statewide award of Rookie of the Year. The award is presented to an individual who has been a fraud investigator for less than two years and has demonstrated outstanding performance in the prevention, detection, and prosecution of public assistance fraud. A few highlights of MaryJo's accomplishments include:



Pictured Above: MaryJo Fox

- Incentives collected by Fairfield County for public assistance fraud totaling \$76,964. This is more than an 81% increase from the previous 5 years.
- Total collections to the state increased by 78% totaling \$353,597.
- Thirty-six Intentional Program Violations were completed with 5 of those criminally prosecuted, which is a 73% increase in Intentional Program Violations from 2014.
- Provided training to 40 Eligibility Specialists to improve early detection and content of fraud referrals.

In addition, MaryJo currently has 17 cases with the County Prosecutor awaiting criminal prosecution. She is also investigating an average of 50 fraud referrals and calculating 20 overpayments each month.

"MaryJo combines her unwavering persistence and more than 10 years experience as an Eligibility Referral Specialist with her stubbornness to find the truth, resulting in her being the best Fraud Investigator in our county for the past 15 years", states Laura Holton, Chief Deputy Director of Community Services.

Foster Parent Recognition Month

On Tuesday, May 17, 2016, Fairfield County Commissioners Steven A. Davis, Mike Kiger, and David L. Levacy, issued *A Proclamation Recognizing May as Foster Care & Adoption Recognition and Recruitment Month*. Commissioner Levacy presented the proclamation to JFS Director, Aundrea Cordle, Protective Services Deputy Director, Kristi Burre, Permanency Manager, Johanna Pearce, Permanency Supervisor, Dave Henwood, and Permanency Worker, Ruth Hoch, during the May 17 meeting.

The proclamation acknowledged the need for more foster and adoptive parents and kinship caregivers to meet the needs of children to heal and reconnect while establishing permanent lifelong connections for those needing consistent, loving care. Currently, Fairfield County JFS/Protective Services has 35 foster families caring for 51 children. Another 35 children are in network foster homes. Moreover, kinship caregivers are caring for an additional 68 children.



Protective Services wishes to express sincere appreciation for all foster, adoptive, and kinship caregivers for your commitment and dedication to children in need. **If you are interested in learning more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, please call 740-653-4060 and ask to speak with someone on the foster care team.**



Apply for Medicaid Over the Phone!

New Partnership Helps Those in Need



Fairfield County Job and Family Services is pleased to announce that The Community Services

Fairfield County JFS/Protective Services is proud to be the Ohio pilot for a unique partnership with the faith based community of Fairfield County to serve children and families. This partnership, which launched in late 2015, involves collaboration between churches and Fairfield County Protective Services to identify ways participating churches can partner with their local child welfare agency.

Care Portal has met a variety of needs for children and families ranging from a gas card to beds and household furnishings. Pickerington area churches include the Church of the Nazarene, Prince of Peace Presbyterian, and Ephiphany Lutheran. Lancaster churches include Lancaster Vineyard, Life Church in Lancaster, and Victory Hill. For more information contact Johanna Pearce at johanna.pearce@jfs.ohio.gov or at 740-652-7727 or janelle.shelton@gmail.com.

Ms. Shelton is the current coordinator of this project for area congregations. You may also learn more about Care Portal by visiting their website at www.careportal.org.

May was Fraud Abuse Awareness Month



May was Public Assistance Fraud Awareness Month in Ohio, and Fairfield County Job and Family Services spread the word that "Fraud Costs All of Us." During May, billboards and posters shared this important message with the community.

Individuals who mislead caseworkers, or lie on an application for benefits, are believed to account for a small percentage of the funding disbursed, but the department takes fraud cases, no matter its size, very seriously. "In 2015, the agency received 586 fraud referrals. Five cases were prosecuted with individuals ordered to pay restitution of \$188,718.00. We also processed 182 repayment agreements due to recipients receiving more assistance than they were eligible to receive and disqualified 30 individuals who committed fraud. We appreciate the support and cooperation of the Fairfield County Prosecutor's Office to fight fraud," explained Laura Holton, Deputy Director of Community Services.

Fairfield County Fraud Investigator, MaryJo Fox stated, "It is extremely important for individuals receiving public assistance to accurately report income and household composition."

Individuals found to be committing fraud are removed from the program, must repay any improperly obtained benefits, and may face criminal charges and jail time. Residents of Fairfield County may report suspected public assistance fraud by calling Fairfield County Job and Family Services Fraud Hotline at 740-652-7616 or via the agency website at www.fcjfs.org.

CSEA Now Accepting Credit Cards

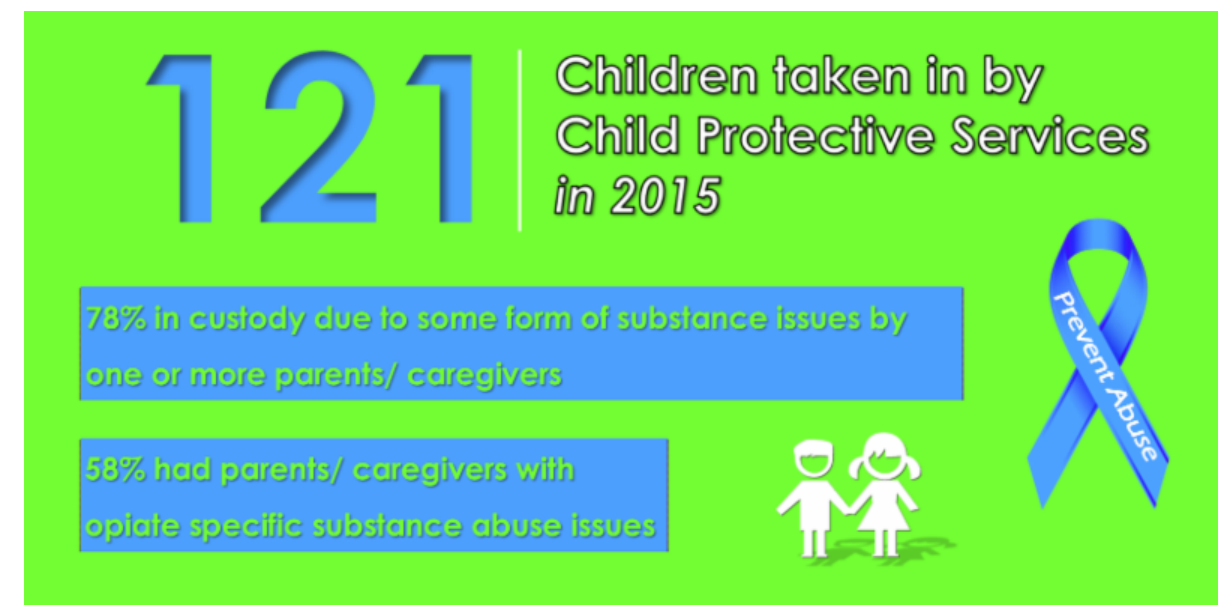
Department has recently implemented a virtual service center for new Medicaid applications with nine other counties in east central Ohio.

This is a new and innovative approach that will allow counties to provide efficient and effective customer service to those who are applying for Medicaid assistance.

The virtual call center operation brings together the resources of Columbiana, Coshocton, Fairfield, Guernsey, Licking, Monroe, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, and Wayne County Departments of Job and Family Services.

Customers who call the state number at 844-640-OHIO and live in one of the ten counties will be routed to the first available customer service agent in any of the ten counties. The county who takes the call will be able to assist the customer with Medicaid applications. This process is not available for customers applying for nursing home, waiver, or Aged, Blind or Disabled Medicaid. Those customers should continue to apply through their county Job and Family Services agency. This virtual call center system allows each county to efficiently utilize available resources to meet and respond to increases and decreases in caller volume.

Did You Know?



Parental addiction and substance abuse are driving rising child protection caseloads. Staff are stretched due to the number and challenges of these cases, and the engagement of parents is suffering from the disease of addiction. Across the state, there is a shared desire to better understand and communicate the impact of parental drug use and the use of opiates specifically on children and families involved with the child protection system.



The CSEA recently began accepting credit/debit cards for child support payments. Non-custodial parents now have the option of making these electronic payments either by phone or in-person at the agency in addition to the long standing alternatives of cash, check or income withholding through their employer.

Visa, Mastercard, Discover and American Express are all accepted through the vendor, *Point & Pay* and a 2.5% (minimum \$2.50) fee is assessed with each payment. Non-custodial parents wishing to access this option should visit our website at www.fcjfs.org and click on the "make a payment" tab.

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Fairfield
County

Visit
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for more info

Fairfield County
Job&Family
Services

 **Send to a Colleague**

Employee Spotlight



Brian Woodruff
Eligibility Referral Specialist II

How many years have you worked for the agency?

Will be 6 years August 20th

What is the hardest thing you've ever had to do?

Not having a father

What three people (living or dead) would you have over to dinner?

Wyatt Earp, Ernest Hemingway and the apostle Paul

What is your favorite meal?

Depends on the season/weather, but hard to beat steak or fish. Anything Italian is also swell.

What is your motto?

I will. We will.

What are you most proud of?

My children are probably the most accomplished thing I can say I was a part of.

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