

Protecting children is our top priority

In the United State a child is abused or neglected every 36 seconds.* That's 876,000 children a year who need help from an agency like Guernsey County Children Services. Reaching out to children and families in need is what Guernsey County Children Services is all about. Every child deserves to grow up in a safe and loving home. For those who don't, we help provide the support they and their families need. Every day we assess reports of abuse or neglect, work to assist families struggling to stay together safely, and look for permanent, loving homes for children. In addition, we support one of the most active programs of Community Outreach, Education and Child Abuse Prevention in the State of Ohio. We also continue to provide support to numerous kinship, foster and adoptive families through workshops, support groups and activities which integrate youth in foster care and kinship care in independent living activities. We continually seek to improve our practice and are presently seeking accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA) which we expect to achieve in the fall of 2009. In addition, we are one of 10 pilot counties for Alternative Response; an effort to serve families differently than past interventions that required blaming a family to help them. With compassion and commitment we touch the lives of thousands of people every year by providing a voice for children and supporting the families who care for them. Please join us in our unwavering dedication to making a difference in the lives of children.



Children need forever homes, we hope with their parents, but if not, with caring and compassionate adoptive parents or relatives.

What can you do?

We cannot do this alone. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected you can call us 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year at 740-439-5555. Please let our mission become your mission as well. Reaching out is the first step. It takes a community to protect a child and to strengthen a family

*Children's Defense Fund

It takes a community



To protect a child

Guernsey County
**Children
Services**

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Website: <http://www.guernseycountycs.org>

Mission:

Guernsey County Children Services strives to ensure that all children have an environment free from abuse and neglect while assisting to preserve and empower families to provide for the safety, stability and well-being needs of their children.

Stronger

Who are we?

Guernsey County Children Services, with the support of the community, provides family-centered services to protect children from abuse and neglect. We do this by working with families to create situations which are safe for their children. Only when this is not possible do we request the court to place children in our temporary care while we work with families to create safe and stable homes so children may return home. Sometimes, this is not possible and we must ask the court to place children in the custody of a relative or close family friend, or our permanent custody. We seek forever homes for the children in our permanent custody through adoption.

Our strength is in the support of our community through donations, volunteer help and levy funding. Our biggest assets are the experience and commitment of our skilled staff, our dedicated kinship, foster and adoptive parents, and our collaboration with the other organizations that also serve Guernsey County's Families.

We are funded by federal, state funds and the generous support of our local community through a 10-year levy.

Families

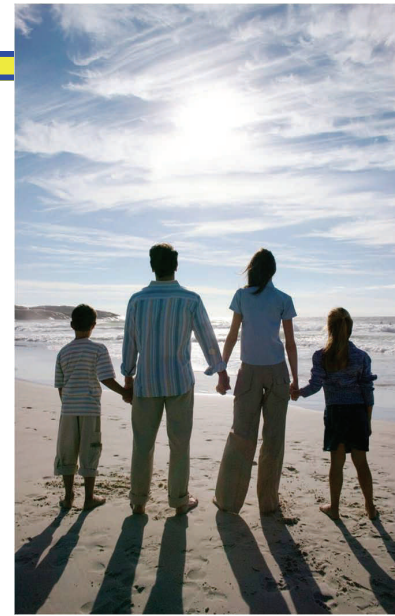
Without this local support, there would be no way to provide the services which keep children safe, support kinship situations such as dedicated grandparents raising their grandchildren, or ensure that children who need it are guaranteed safe, supportive foster or adoptive homes. We are committed to developing and maintaining the highest standards of professional competence and excellence.

We are run by a 7-member Board made up of members of our community and appointed by the County Commissioners.

What do we do?

Screening and Intake: We handle more than 1200 reports on average each year alleging child maltreatment, dependency or families in need of services. Our screening function determines if reports meet state and federal requirements for our intervention and assigns cases to the assessment unit which works with families to determine if there is a need for continued intervention.

Safety and Family Assessments: Each year, we assess over 1000 children for safety and then work



with families to find ways to provide safe, stable environments for their children. When families need more support than the assessment unit can provide, families are referred to the ongoing services unit.

Ongoing Services: This unit works with approximately 32-40 families on average during any given month, and services generally last from 3 to more than 12 months. These services may be voluntary or ordered by the court and include families who's children reside at home with them or are placed in foster care or residing with relatives while we work cooperatively with the family to create safe conditions so the child may return home.

Safer Children

Foster Care: Foster families provide full-time temporary care for children. We arrange foster care in homes with fully screened, qualified and licensed families. Our goal is to reunify children with their primary families once their homes are safe and stabilized. We prefer family foster care to group or residential services and strive to keep children in the most family-like setting possible. We hold support groups for foster parents monthly.

Adoption: If children cannot return safely home to their own family, we work diligently to find forever homes for them. We hold support groups for our adoptive parents monthly.

Independent Living: Our independent living program serves youth between the ages of 13 and 21 based on an assessment of the youth's ability to participate prior to the age of 16 when this program is mandated. This group does community service activities and learns skills to help them become independent just as any teen or young adult would do.

Kinship Services: We offer a wide variety of services for families working with children through our protective units, or for members of the community who are raising their kin and need support. We offer a monthly support group for kinship families regardless of their formal involvement with our agency.

Community Outreach and Prevention: We provide community education on abuse and neglect recognition and reporting, numerous activities during April – Child Abuse Prevention Month, and parenting education through a nationally recognized model known as Incredible Years. Through the generous community support of donations to our Magical Moments of Childhood Program, we are able to provide children and families with a Christmas most would never have, badly needed school supplies, clothing and other services. We thank our community partners who support these needed activities each year.