



In 2007, we began sending surveys out about our services to gather feedback to assist us in improving our agency. We now send surveys to Community Stakeholders, foster parents, adoptive and kinship families, youth in care and birth parents. We are growing in our ability to develop, launch and evaluate the feedback we receive.

One of the areas that comes up consistency (though we rate high in this area) are questions about Confidentiality. Therefore, we wanted to provide you with information, try to answer the most common questions, and let you know, if you ever have concerns about this on any specific case, you hear something that concerns you, let us know. Please don't wait for an annual survey to do so. This is one of our most sacred principles, but it is neither simple nor easy to understand.

The Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes define confidentiality for us, and the information flow differs if a case is in protective, prevention, or adoptive services.

This does not mean that people do not hear things they should not, or that they will not assume information and related that it was our staff who told them. One example of this is seen in the reporter of a case to us. This information is one of the most highly protected items in our service. However, there are times where parents guess, or a child was exposed to one person who could have called us and they figure out the information without our breaking confidentiality.

This is most common where children are at school, we receive a report and go to the home after school to ensure the child is safe. The child tells the parent "Mrs. Teacher talked to me today about..." We are at the door asking about the same issue, the parent will know it was the school. There is no way to prevent this from happening in many cases. Child is taken to the emergency room, we respond to the emergency room, not hard to figure out who called. Two parents fighting over custody, we get a call the day before the hearing in court... you get the idea!

We also have cases where there are other agencies involved such as the court, probation, CASA, counseling agencies, etc. and mistakes can be made by us or another entity. We all continually work together to see this does not happen. Finally, the parents themselves in many of our cases talk to each other, talk about who they might see in our building, families share information and so on. Confidentiality is very important to us, and we seek to control every aspect of it that is within our grasp, but it is important to remember, not everything is. We will always seek to address issues when brought to our attention, we are not perfect, simply because we too are human.

Please let us know if you have questions by calling us at : 740-439-5555.

Thank you for your work on behalf of children!

Confidentiality

What is it, What Does it Mean to Us?

