



## **A Message from OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – April 4, 2014**

April is a benchmark month that I am ready to welcome! This winter has been tough, and I say that with the added emphasis of a Floridian who never is totally comfortable under 70 degrees. We all felt the impact of the relentless snow, frigid temperatures, high heating costs, school closings and suspension of public transportation. But for many of our families, these added burdens were the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. I believe we all are ready to embrace the prospect of spring, warmer temperatures and the bright landscape that April can bring.

This sense of hope is the foundation of April as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month. Through our state and local celebrations, we are promoting the idea that child abuse prevention is possible. Too often, the media focuses on the tragedies that can happen within our work. It's good for us to remember that these outcomes are not inevitable. As a former prevention specialist, I believe that most parents want to do their best for their children; they just need the opportunity and the skills. When we as individuals or systems can invest ourselves or our resources in ways that support parents' ability to "do it right," everyone benefits.

Recently, I read a blog that encouraged companies to transform the way they engage customers by thinking of them as the only set of customers the company ever would have. To illustrate the difference, the author asked if we would treat today's children the same way if they were the world's last generation, our final chance to get humanity right. It made me wonder whether I might pay more attention to those around me or be more likely to speak out if I thought that a particular child or family was the last chance I had to ensure it was right. During April, we celebrate the possibility and share awareness that we can do it right, right now.

Those of us reading this are the experts in child abuse and neglect. We go to workshops on the subject, we read the research, and we are all too familiar with the damage that can occur when families and systems don't get it right. So this April, I encourage each of you to join my new "get it right" effort. My plan is make sure my friends, family and the people I meet all know the many ways we each can engage someone who needs extra support, stand up for someone who needs an adult advocate, and reach out to make a difference.

Congratulations to the Ohio communities that will celebrate families during Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, and thanks to all individuals who find some way to strengthen families in their daily lives.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month Kick-off Event**

The statewide observance begins at 10 a.m. on April 10 at the Columbus Main Library, 96 S. Grant Ave. The event will feature remarks by nationally known early childhood education speaker Jo Kirk; the distribution of pinwheels, which are the national symbol of child abuse prevention; and special guests the Berenstain Bears. Children from Franklin County Head Start programs will be on hand to engage in music and learning.

Jointly sponsored by the Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF) and Franklin



County Children Services, this event is the first of many prevention month activities that will take place throughout Ohio in April. We know that past Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month efforts have successfully raised awareness about the active role everyone needs to play in preventing child abuse and neglect. These activities publicly affirm that it takes a community – and the shared participation of all its members – to support safe and stable families. Let’s all remember that each of us can be instrumental in helping children develop to their fullest potentials.

To learn more about Kirk and her early childhood learning program, WeJoySing, visit [www.wejoysing.com](http://www.wejoysing.com).

### **A Look at Local Prevention Month Efforts**

Every April, OCTF coordinates Child Abuse and Child Neglect Prevention Month activities and provides information about events across Ohio. Help spread the word about your community’s events by emailing information about them to [ohio\\_children’s\\_trust\\_fund@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:ohio_children’s_trust_fund@jfs.ohio.gov). OCTF will then post notices on its [Facebook page](#) and [website](#).

Here are just two of many events planned:

- Montgomery County kicked off Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month on March 31 at CARE House, a child advocacy center in Dayton. This event also marked the start of the April 2014 “Every Child Matters” campaign. Throughout April, billboards and radio spots will highlight four key prevention messages: the [ABCs of Safe Sleep](#), [Not a Single Drop](#), Internet and social media safety, and choosing a partner wisely.
- Cuyahoga County will host a collaborative community event from 1 to 3 p.m. on April 27 at the Great Lakes Science Center. This event will educate families about child maltreatment, including how to prevent and report it, and how to keep their children safe. It will feature information booths staffed by local agencies, a presentation by state and local leaders, and a pinwheel planting outside the center.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month Allocations**

OCTF again is allocating \$2,000 to each county PCSA to support local prevention month programs, campaigns, activities and events. Agencies should be aware of the following four changes that have been made to the Ohio Administrative Code fiscal rule (5101:9-6-40) that governs allocations:

1. *Clarity on allowable expenses*

Because the funding source is OCTF’s federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grant, allocations are subject to federal spending guidelines. Additional restrictions have been added to reflect federal prohibitions.

2. *OCTF logo*

The OCTF logo must be included on all printed materials that are purchased with allocation dollars.

3. *Collaboration incentive dollars*

Public agencies that partner with a children’s advocacy center or local child abuse and neglect prevention advisory board are eligible for an additional \$1,000 to promote any of the following:

- Ohio’s Safe Sleep Campaign ([Safe Sleep Resources](#))
- Governors Kasich’s campaign to end human trafficking (<http://humantrafficking.ohio.gov/>)
- OCTF’s prevention campaign (<https://jfs.ohio.gov/OCTF/CAPM.stm>)
- Student contest to develop a child abuse and neglect prevention/awareness poster or video
- Child abuse and neglect prevention training

4. *Improved accountability measures*

Full completion and timely submission of a programmatic report now is tied to reimbursement. This information helps OCTF analyze the value of continuing April allocations.

Questions about prevention allocations should be directed to [ohio\\_children’s\\_trust\\_fund@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:ohio_children’s_trust_fund@jfs.ohio.gov).

## Raise Awareness with Wear Blue Day

April 9 is Wear Blue Day! OCTF and the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) encourage all Ohioans to wear blue to show their support for preventing child abuse and neglect. If you email a picture of yourself or your coworkers wearing blue to [ohio\\_children's\\_trust\\_fund@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:ohio_children's_trust_fund@jfs.ohio.gov), OCTF will post it on its Facebook page.



### What Can YOU do for Prevention Month?

- Participate in the “Wear Blue” day on April 9 (see above)
- Praise good parenting when you see it
- Reach out to a neighbor who may need help
- “Like” the OCTF [Facebook page](#)
- Donate to OCTF
- Find out more about prevention month events in your community and across the state
- Contact your county’s PCSA to learn how you can participate in local events

## Independent Living Meeting Available on Video

OFC hosted a statewide independent living/transitional youth meeting on March 13 in Columbus. Our thanks go out to each of the many individuals who took the time to attend in person or via webcast. In addition to county partners, this meeting welcomed representatives from Ohio’s state-level independent living and transitional youth program partners: Connecting the Dots, Ohio Reach, the Ohio Youth Advisory Board, the Ohio Independent Living Association, the Ohio Department of Health, and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP).

The meeting featured an explanation of new child welfare legislation by Nicole Harper, PCSAO’s legislative director, and presentations by Charlotte Osterman on the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program and Zach Reat on the transitional planning options available through the Ohio Benefit Bank. OFC’s Dan Shook was on hand to clarify how agencies can use Temporary Assistance for Needy Families allocations for independent living and Chafee programs.

If you were unable to attend, you may view the meeting via the Silverlight web application until April 18, 2014, at <http://media.dot.state.oh.us/DOTMediasite/Play/e351bf0e0c0d4f2d9946faa289ee64c61d>.

For additional information or to receive notice of future events, contact Susan Halter at (614) 752-0088 or [Susan.Halter@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Susan.Halter@jfs.ohio.gov), or Laurie Valentine at (614) 752-1122 or [Laurie.Valentine@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Laurie.Valentine@jfs.ohio.gov).

## Safe and Together Evaluation

Partners in the Ohio Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Collaborative have been working together for more than four years to fulfill their mission of reducing the number of foster care placements for children exposed to batterers. They aim to do this by developing shared language, policies and practice in a network of community partners. The collaborative was formed in response to early Differential Response findings, which indicated a need for additional training in child welfare cases that have domestic violence components.



Ohio now has 34 counties that have implemented or started training in the collaborative’s selected model: “Safe and Together,” which is trademarked by Dave Mandel & Associates. The Safe and Together program is an enhancement to Differential Response. To support its continued rollout, Ohio has 12 certified trainers.

Although Ohio’s efforts to effect significant systemic change are relatively new, the [HealthPath Foundation](#) of Ohio and the Supreme Court of Ohio funded an independent evaluation the training’s impact on child welfare practice. Other states are using Safe and Together, but none has evaluated the impact of the program on child protection practices, policies and collaborations. Our thanks go out to the HealthPath Foundation, the Supreme Court of Ohio, David Mandel & Associates, the National Center on Adoption Law and Policy, and the staff, agencies and stakeholders that made this study possible.

The competitively selected evaluators, Sherri Chaney Jones and Kenneth Steinman, brought significant expertise in both the domestic violence and child welfare fields. They designed and implemented a multifaceted evaluation model based on the IPV Collaborative goals and the Safe and Together training.

The evaluation collected data in five ways: through an online pre- and post-test survey of 837 child protection services (CPS) caseworkers and supervisors, interviews with 16 supervisors, interviews with eight community stakeholders, desk reviews of 191 CPS case files, and review of written policies from 15 counties that had completed Safe and Together training.

The key findings are summarized below:

Strong evidence that:	Mixed evidence that:	Little evidence that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) CPS staff assign less blame to victims for staying in a violent relationship.</li> <li>(2) CPS staff increase their concern about and documentation of children witnessing domestic violence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) CPS staff increase their understanding of coercive control.</li> <li>(2) CPS staff enhance safety planning for victims and children.</li> <li>(3) CPS staff increase perpetrators’ accountability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) CPS agencies change written policies.</li> <li>(2) Community stakeholders become more receptive to Safe and Together policies and principles.</li> </ul>

The final report notes that the collaborative should be proud that the first-ever evaluation of Safe and Together training provided some strong evidence of the program’s effects. It also recommends that the collaborative discuss whether the training should be adapted or expanded, and it notes that future evaluations may require additional approaches to documenting outcomes.

To read the full study, visit the Ohio IPV collaborative website at [ohiochildlaw.org](http://ohiochildlaw.org).

### **Six Principles of Partnership**

Many of OFC’s recent efforts to improve outcomes for Ohio’s families and children have focused on ways we can support both local public and private agencies and each other within the state office. It’s not as simple as it sounds. We all have complex jobs with many inherent and always-evolving challenges. But children and families benefit when state, county and private agency staff work in partnership, when we trust that we share the same values, act with the best intentions, and acknowledge our different but not contradictory roles and perspectives.

Like any relationship, our partnership requires ongoing attention. Within OFC, we have established the Six Principles of Partnership as the foundation for our collaborations and our work with families. If you have participated in a Partners for Ohio’s Families event, a regional team meeting or even a Differential Response training, you may have heard about the principles. In case you need a refresher or would like to learn more, OFC recently posted a 10-minute overview of the principles on our [website](#).

### **Free Custody Evaluation Training Sponsored by AFCC’s Ohio Chapter**

Congratulations to the domestic relations and juvenile court professionals, guardians, and others who have been working to establish an Ohio chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC). Their

efforts have come to fruition. Ohio filed its letter of intent to AFCC and is on its way to becoming a full-fledged chapter, dedicated to interdisciplinary education and networking.

Ohio has at least 75 AFCC members. The new chapter is hitting the ground running with a free training from 1 to 4 p.m. on April 23 in Columbus. The training, titled "Custody Evaluations in the Face of Domestic Violence Allegations," will feature Dr. Arnold T. Shienvold, a former AFCC president and a leading trainer in the field of child development and custody evaluations. After the training, the Supreme Court of Ohio will sponsor a Domestic Relations Summit.

For information on how to register for the training, email [P.Latham@sc.ohio.gov](mailto:P.Latham@sc.ohio.gov). This session has been approved for three hours of Continuing Judicial Education/Continuing Legal Education, and continuing professional education units have been requested.

AFCC is an interdisciplinary and international association of professionals dedicated to the resolution of family conflict. Its members include family court practitioners, researchers, teachers and policymakers. They share a strong commitment to education, innovation and collaboration in order to benefit communities, empower families and promote a healthy future for children. To learn more or to join AFCC, visit [afccnet.org](http://afccnet.org).

<p><b>CASA DAY</b> in ohio <b>2014</b></p> <p>A CEREMONY RECOGNIZING Court Appointed Special Advocates throughout Ohio &amp; CELEBRATING the youth they serve.</p> <p>5 p.m., April 29 Ohio Statehouse Columbus</p>	<p>HOSTED BY SENATOR PEGGY LEHNER District 6 - Montgomery County Sponsor of S.B. 152 Ohio's Foster Care Reform Bill</p> <p>WITH Attorney General Mike DeWine's Office The Department of Job &amp; Family Services Ohio CASA/GAL Association</p> <p>RSVP by April 21 <a href="mailto:agilbert@ohiocasa.org">agilbert@ohiocasa.org</a> COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES <b>OHIO CASA</b> A Child's Voice in Court</p>
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### April 2014 Global Emails

The following emails were sent in March from Jennifer Justice to PCSA directors and/or private agency directors. They are organized below by mailing date and key word.

3/19/14 - Primary Parent Partner Program

### PRINCIPLE OF THE MONTH:

OFC policies and supports should be strength-based and recognize the uniqueness of each community and agency.

If you want to subscribe to First Friday, have comments or ideas about content, or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email to [First\\_Friday@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:First_Friday@jfs.ohio.gov). For additions to or removals from the list, be sure to include your name, organization and email address.



PARTNERS  
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES