

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 31, 2022

MEDIA CONTACTS:  
Bill Teets, 614-403-2331  
[Bill.Teets@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Bill.Teets@jfs.ohio.gov)

Dasia Clemente, 614-817-2945  
[Dasia.Clemente@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Dasia.Clemente@jfs.ohio.gov)

## Ohio Youth and Family Ombudsmen Office Opens

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio’s first-ever Youth and Family Ombudsmen Office began operations today. The office, recommended in Governor Mike DeWine’s [Children’s Services Transformation Advisory Council Final Report](#), is housed in the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

“We’ve heard from youth and families that they need a greater voice in Ohio’s foster system,” said Governor DeWine. “Under this office, both youth and families will have an independent ombudsman to listen to concerns, help navigate the system, and to find solutions to issues that are raised.”

The office consists of both a Youth Ombudsman and a Family Ombudsman, who will ensure the independent and impartial review of youth, family, and community complaints and concerns, while attempting to resolve the issues. Jenny R. Stotts will serve as the first-ever Youth Ombudsman, while Jennifer A. Sheriff will serve as the first-ever Family Ombudsman.

“A positive foster care experience can make a world of difference, not only in providing stability and support for the youth, but also to the resource families who step forward to help that child,” said ODJFS Director Matt Damschroder. “The Youth and Family Ombudsmen Office stands ready to empower everyone involved in order to better navigate the system and improve the experience for all.”

Youth wishing to bring a matter before the Youth Ombudsman can call **1-877-649-6884** or **1-877-OH-YOUTH**, Monday –Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. They can also submit their concern online at [YouthOmbudsman.ohio.gov](http://YouthOmbudsman.ohio.gov).

Individuals or families wishing to report unresolved concerns to the Family Ombudsman can call **1-877-649-6884** or **1-877-OH-YOUTH**, Monday –Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. They can also submit their concern online at [FamilyOmbudsman.ohio.gov](http://FamilyOmbudsman.ohio.gov).

Governor DeWine created the Children Services Transformation Advisory Council in late 2019 to hear directly from those who have experienced the children’s services system first-hand and make recommendations to help children’s services better meet the needs of the families they serve. Following 10 field hearings, the council issued their [final report](#) that included 37 recommendations. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has fully implemented or has made significant progress in implementing 36 of the recommendations to ensure lasting change for Ohio’s children and families.





**Department of  
Job and Family Services**

Mike DeWine, Governor  
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor  
Matt Damschroder, Director

A stylized map of the state of Ohio, filled with a pattern of small grey circles, positioned behind the "News Release" text.

# News Release

include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, child care, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support services.

