

OFCF CABINET COUNCIL:

smart decisions for kids & families



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The Children’s Cabinet Network is managed by the Forum for Youth Investment. Across the country, Children’s Cabinets are systematically changing the fragmented and ineffective ways that states typically do business for children and youth. The Forum for Youth Investment is a nonprofit, nonpartisan “action tank” dedicated to helping states and communities make sure all young people are Ready by 21®: ready for college, work and life. **For more information contact Elizabeth Gaines, Director of the Children’s Cabinet Network, at elizabeth@forumfyi.org.**

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OHIO FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST CABINET COUNCIL



CHILDREN'S CABINET
NETWORK
Managed by the Forum for Youth Investment



When budgets are tight, families count on leaders to make smart decisions that are more efficient while also improving outcomes for kids. Using a business-minded approach, Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) Cabinet Council streamlines and integrates government programs, resources, policies and programs that serve children and youth. This improves efficiency, saves the state money, and is better for Ohio’s kids.

About the Children’s Cabinet:

The OFCF Cabinet Council was created in 1993 to help families and their children by coordinating existing government services. Made up of all the child and youth serving agencies in the state, the OFCF Cabinet Council also oversees the local Family and Children First Councils, which coordinate services in each of Ohio’s 88 counties.

Mission and Vision:

The mission of the OFCF Cabinet Council is to build a partnership of state and local government, communities, and families that enhances the well-being of Ohio’s children and families.

The vision is for children and families to thrive and succeed within healthy communities.



The Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council has:

- Developed a child-well-being indicator as part of the *Better Lives, Better Ohio* website to track how well children are doing by county. This helps state and local leaders to make better decisions about child and youth policy.
- Executed a strategic plan to coordinate and strengthen the state's efforts to assure that youth are educated and successfully enter the workforce as they become adults.
- Increased coordination of family engagement in health, education, and social service programming.
- Improved access to needed services for children with multi-system needs by leveraging over \$6.4m of federal funds with state funding from numerous state agencies to provide respite care, family support programming, early childhood mental health consultation, and parent advocacy services.

Local Successes & Savings for Children & Families

In Stark County, the local Family and Children First Council developed a coordinated approach to manage the care of kids with complex needs. Rather than receiving services from a number of different agencies, resources from individual agencies are blended together so that families and children can have support plans that are specific to their needs. These plans use a blend of paid supports as well as family and community supports, which are effective and cost less than providing these supports through public programs. As a result, the county has realized cost savings in: residential placements, juvenile justice placements, foster home placements, and Medicaid costs. The resulting cost savings are used to support more families. In addition to generating savings, these coordinated services have a better impact on kids than services provided by a single government agency alone.

In 2006, each organization providing home visiting services to support and empower families in Greene County used a different curriculum. As a result, there was little continuity when families changed programs. Through a grant from the OFCF Cabinet Council, the county Family and Children First Council provided training on a home visiting model, *Parents as Teachers*, to each organization providing these services. This resulted in reduced costs, better parenting skills in families, and better environments for kids.

“A strong and effective Children’s Cabinet can improve coordination and efficiency across state departments and local levels of government; mobilize resources around the governor’s priorities for children; facilitate a holistic approach to serving children; and strengthen partnerships with the non-profit and private sectors.”

– NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION CENTER FOR BEST PRACTICES



The OFCF Cabinet Council is a member of the Children’s Cabinet Network, which represents a bi-partisan group of over twenty states.

Learn more about the *OFCF Cabinet Council* at WWW.FCF.OHIO.GOV