

Overview of Core Function: Building Community Capacity

Definition

One of the unique functions and a required mandate of Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council and County Family and Children First Councils is to *mobilize child and family serving partners to identify and address the needs of children and families through ongoing planning, implementing effective strategies, monitoring and reporting, and evaluating progress toward achieving desired outcomes.*

Mandated Responsibility

The mandate for county FCFCs to build community capacity comes from recently enacted legislation referred to as H.B. 289, effective August 2006. It requires county FCFCs to identify local interagency efforts and establish a process to identify local priorities to increase child well-being as defined by the six commitments to child well-being. The HB 289 planning model is based on a sound logic model as a means to achieve effective planning, manage multiple priorities, and monitor the achievement of outcomes. H.B. 289 also created a mandate for the OFCF Cabinet to build community capacity by establishing an interagency process to identify state priorities and efforts taken to increase child well-being as defined by the six commitments to child well-being. The OFCF Cabinet must also offer guidance and a process to monitor progress toward increasing child well-being in the state and in each county.

Philosophy

To effectively build community capacity, FCFCs need to spend considerable time mobilizing the mandated FCFC members and additional community partners to commit time and resources in the work that must be accomplished. With this commitment from a variety of partners, the county FCFC can structure their ongoing planning process under a core team focused on building community capacity with subcommittees based on the identified multiple priorities or focus areas the FCFC wants to address. This structure allows FCFCs to manage and effectively address multiple priorities that impact children and families. This crucial work should also be used to educate the community at large about key issues that affect children and families and how the FCFC and the community are positively impacting these issues.

State Sponsored Support

The support and assistance the OFCF Cabinet Council provides to county FCFCs to effectively build community capacity is an approach called Partnerships for Success (Pfs). Pfs exists to support and strengthen county Family and Children First and their efforts to:

1. mobilize and strengthen the cross system planning and implementation capacities of county FCFCs.
2. reduce duplication of effort between and among state and local agencies.
3. make better local decisions that lead to better investments of public dollars.
4. evaluate the impact of county investments with an eye toward accountability.
5. provide for long-term sustainability of effective state and locally sponsored programs and services.

The Office of OFCF provides support and guidance to the county FCFCs on H.B. 289 planning and reporting. The planning guidance is built on a sound logic model to help guide a county through a planning process and identify specific strategies that will impact the outcomes for children and families.