



November 2009

Message

Welcome to *Children Services Connects!*
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 enews@fccs.co.franklin.oh.us.

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Dear Child Advocate,

Levy Passes: A Victory for Children and Families

Thanks to an incredible show of community support, Franklin County Children Services' 10-year, 3.1 mill replacement with reduction levy was passed by 61.6% of voters, allowing the agency to continue its mission to protect children and strengthen families.



This margin of victory was larger than that of the last five levies. Voters last approved a 1.9-mill levy for Children Services in 2004 with a 51 percent passage rate. This tax levy will cost the owner of a \$100,000 property about \$28 more a year.

In the last four years, the agency has increased its efforts to safely maintain children in their own homes by providing more intensive, front door services. When children are not able to remain safely with their families they are now being placed more frequently in their own neighborhoods and with their siblings. This message along with other accomplishments was the focus of this successful levy campaign.

The Committee4Children and Children Services staff were thrilled with the high level of community support generated throughout the campaign, especially in light of the present economic climate. "The overwhelming passage of this levy is a testament to the commitment this community has made to ensure the safety and well-being of all children," said Eric Fenner, executive director of Franklin County Children



Services. "We do not take this victory or our mandate in this effort lightly."

The agency has made a commitment to continue to provide high quality services to children and families and will not be coming to voters again until 2014 when the 1.9 mill levy expires.

Ways to Act Now!

Grant a Child's Holiday Wish



Franklin County Children Services' Holiday Wish needs community donors to sponsor nearly 4,500 abused, neglected and troubled children. These children may live with their parents, relatives or foster parents. There is no guarantee these children will receive a gift for their special holiday without the sponsorship of individuals, businesses and community groups who donate new toys for children age 11 and younger, and monetary donations for older children.

Over the years, many caring donors have given generously, making it possible for thousands of children served by FCCS to have a joyous holiday. Long-standing donor, Walmart Logistics Center, takes the holiday wishes of 200 children each year, ensuring they have gifts to open. JC Penney Logistics and Receiving Departments rally their employees and donate money to sponsor teens. In addition, Boy and Girl Scout troops, churches, school groups, civic organizations, and individuals help put smiles on the faces of children in need. Some area businesses that are having toy drives this year include Applebee's with WWHO-TV, Massey's Pizza and the Powershack Gym in Hilliard.

Children Services is located at 855 West Mound Street in

Columbus and all donations are tax deductible. Donors can help make children's wishes come true by [making a donation online here](#) or by calling 614-275-2525. This year, Holiday Wish progress can be followed on the agency [Facebook page](#). For more information, click here, or email Holiday Wish.

Parents Urged to Choose Your Partner Carefully

With an alarming rate of child abuse deaths, Franklin County Children Services, in partnership with the Center for Child and Family Advocacy at Nationwide Children's Hospital, has launched a campaign urging single parents, especially mothers, to carefully consider who they allow to care for and be with their children.



Since 2007, eight Franklin County children have died at the hands of a parent's abusive partner. Choosing a partner carefully is one of the most important decisions a parent can make, since a child's safety is at stake. Children should not be introduced to every dating partner, but only introduce partners once a commitment to the relationship and shared values have been established.

Before leaving a new boyfriend alone with your child, the following are a few essential questions parents should ask themselves about their new partner:

- Does your partner have children of his own? What kind of parent is he?
- Does he show anger or impatience when your child cries or has a tantrum?
- Does he ridicule or call your child bad names?
- Does he think it's funny to scare your child?
- Does he exhibit controlling behavior or get physically aggressive with you?

If you answered yes to even one of these questions, your child might be at risk and should not be left alone with your partner.

For parenting resources or literature, contact Franklin County Children Services at 614-341-6060 or [click here](#); or visit the Center for Child and Family Advocacy [webpage](#) or call 614-722-8200.

Taking A Stand Against Abuse

National Family Week: Connections Count



The National Family Week theme, "Connections Count" embraces the premise that children's lives are better when their families are strong; and families are strong when they live in communities that connect them to economic opportunities, social networks and services.

The Franklin County Children Services National Family Week event will take place Tuesday, November 17 from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Salvation Army, 966 E. Main St. and will honor deserving families who have worked to keep their families together, as well as community leaders who have contributed to their success. Dr. Joyce Beatty, senior vice president for outreach and engagement for The Ohio State University will also be speaking.

This annual event recognizes the power of community-based support in helping families achieve strength and stability. "National Family Week is a time to honor our community's families who have faced the unimaginable and successfully kept their homes together, and to acknowledge our partners who advocate, support and believe in family well-being," said Walter Torain, FCCS director of community development. [Click here](#) for more information on the Family to Family Program.

The Kinship Permanency Incentive Program

The Kinship Permanency Incentive (KPI) program is a state funded initiative that assists relatives and legal guardians to incorporate a child into their family. The funding establishes financial support for families that are transitioning the children into new and permanent environments. Hundreds of these applications are processed yearly by FCCS and the program was recently re-approved this fall after being closed over the summer due to budget cuts



from the state.

The KPI program has been truly instrumental for Sherrie Williams who has custody of her nephew and spends a great deal of time helping her mother take care of her niece. Williams' sister, the mother of the children, passed away a few weeks ago.

Williams has two daughters, ages 13 and 6, in addition to caring for her nephew. "I'm on a budget with my girls and I didn't want to see the kids caught up in the system," said Williams. "In the same breath, I knew I needed help financially, because kids grow and are in constant need of something."

Williams is optimistic about what will happen once she has received the maximum amount of payments under the KPI program and is no longer eligible for funding. "I anticipate finishing my last year in school and starting my career as a middle school math teacher so that I am able to be a role model and provide for my kids." [For more information on the Kinship program, click here.](#)

Children's Heroes

FCCS Employee Spotlight: Jennifer Klaiber

As a busy social service aide at Franklin County Children Services, Jennifer Klaiber is committed to doing everything she can to help her families, every day of the week. "I'm the go-to person whenever something needs to be done," said Klaiber, who's been with the agency for eight years.



Giving back is a longstanding tradition in her family, said Klaiber, whose uncle also worked as a Franklin County Children Services social service aide and inspired her to get into the social service field. The best part of Klaiber's job is watching families overcome their difficulties and "pull it around," she said. Seeing children achieve permanency is especially heartening. "Knowing that the kids are going to have a stable life, that's the biggest reward of being here," said Klaiber.

Tips for Today

Using Social Media to Promote The Tipping Point



For young children, the home is a playground, and while many parents childproof to ensure that their home is a safe place, some may not be aware that TVs, furniture and appliances are hidden hazards lurking in every room. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that in 2006, 16,300 children 5 and younger were treated in emergency rooms because of injuries associated with TVs, furniture, and appliance tip-overs and between 2000 and 2006, CPSC received reports of at least 134 deaths. Additionally, CPSC is aware of at least 30 media reports of tip-over deaths since January 2007 involving children age 5 and younger. [Click here](#) to see the poster.

CPSC recently launched CPSC 2.0, a comprehensive social networking initiative that will make lifesaving information more accessible to millions of consumers. CPSC's *OnSafety* blog, will consist of safety messages, articles, videos, podcasts and other information. The site will feature a recall widget tool that can be easily added to a web site. CPSC will also have an official presence on YouTube, Twitter and Flickr page. [CPSC.gov](#) has links to all of these social media sites.

Upcoming Events

November

November is National Adoption Month and highlights the need for more families to welcome adoptable children into their homes.

Now through Thurs. Dec. 24 - Holiday Wish

Donations are being accepted online now for Holiday Wish! [Click here!](#) Community donors are needed to help donate gifts for thousands of abused and neglected children.

Thurs. November 12 through Fri. Jan. 29 - Art from Waiting Hearts

Art from Waiting Hearts will display the work of 25 adoptable youth in Franklin County at the King Arts Complex. [See photos here.](#)

Tues. November 17 - National Family Week Event

On November 17 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Salvation Army, 966 East Main St. in Columbus, FCCS will honor deserving families who have worked to keep their families together, as well as community leaders who have contributed to their success.

Wed. November 18 - National Adoption Day

Observance of National Adoption Month continues with the local adoptions of six children, ranging in ages 1 to 17, by six adoptive families. The adoptions will be finalized in Franklin County court.

December

Thursday, December 3 - Volunteer Holiday Event

The Volunteer Holiday event will take place at Skate Zone 71. This event is for volunteers and their matched child. RSVP to 614-275-2736. [View the flyer here.](#)

Contact Information

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