



# Family Connections

A monthly E-newsletter connecting the agencies of the Morrow County Family and Children First Council

The Family and Children First Council  
of Morrow County

October 2008

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2008 Council Meetings  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays each month  
except July & December

Full Council meetings in  
January, April, August, and October

Next meeting: Full Council:  
Tuesday, October 21, 1:30-3:00  
p.m., Conference Room, Community  
Services Bldg., 619 W. Marion Rd.,  
Mount Gilead.



## Service providers from throughout Morrow County gather for first Summit on Children

At the invitation of Common Pleas Court Judges Howard Hall and Robert Hickson, and Job & Family Services Director Donald Wake, nearly 60 community leaders gathered October 9 for the county's first Summit on Children.

In May the Morrow County Juvenile Court Judges, Court Personnel, Job and Family Services Key Personnel, and other community leaders met in Columbus for a 1 1/2 day seminar hosted by Ohio's Governor, Ted Strickland, and Thomas Moyer, the Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court. The concern: How to keep good kids out of the juvenile justice and foster care system? Those who attended were challenged to find ways to help kids without worrying about "turf-building" or duplicating "another ineffective program".

Morrow County's Supervision Team of Judges Hall and Hickson, Don Wake, Sharla O'Keefe (Children's Services JFS) and Dan Wallis (Common Pleas Court Administrator) facilitated Morrow

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## 2007-2009 Officers & Members

### Executive Committee

President: Jerry Manuel

Superintendent, Morrow County  
Board of Mental Retardation  
& Developmental Disabilities,  
Whetstone River Family & Children's  
Center, Whetstone Industries

Vice-President: Steve Hedge

Executive Director, Delaware-  
Morrow Mental Health & Recovery  
Services Board

Secretary: Susan Hanson

Executive Director, HelpLine of  
Delaware & Morrow Counties

Administrative/Fiscal Agent: Don Wake

Director, Morrow County  
Department of Job & Family Services

Davin Berrier, Probation Officer,  
Department of Youth Services

Janet Chandler, Associate Director,  
Recovery & Prevention Resources Del/  
Mor Cos.

Rodney Clinger, Commissioner  
Board of County Commissioners

Joe Devany, Executive Dir,  
Ohio Heartland Community Action  
Commission/ Head Start

Tim Hilborn, Superintendent  
Highland Local Schools

Dan Wallis, Court Coordinator  
Juvenile Court

Krista Wasowski, Health Commissioner  
Health Department

Mike Porter, Mayor  
Village of Mount Gilead

Kathy Winters, Early Childhood Consultant,  
Child Care Choices

### Full Council Members

Vickie Adkins-Marcum, WIC -  
Women, Infants and Children;

Marsha Taylor, Heartbeat, Inc.;

Paula Burnside, Turning Point;

Dennis Erwin, Principal, Northmor Jr. High;

Rosemary Levings, Chamber of Commerce/  
United Way;

Linda Shellito, Youth Cluster;

Amy Stewart, Highland Schools, Safe  
Schools/ Healthy Students;

### Help Me Grow

Kelly Worstell, Program Director;  
Robyn Corwin, Julie Gregory, and  
Sue Taylor

### Parent Representatives

Sally Brokaw, Beckie Ellinger,  
Mike Haught

All hyperlinks in the *Family Con-  
nections* newsletter are accessi-  
ble by Cntrl key + left click. In-  
cluding ours

[www.morrowcounty.info/  
morrowfcf](http://www.morrowcounty.info/morrowfcf)

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County's Summit on Children to assess at-risk situations and service gaps in our county.

A history and description of the STARS (Students Achieving Results with Support) program was presented by Hilary Bunting, guidance counselor at Northmor Junior High School. STARS has been in place at Northmor for two years and is now being instituted by Highland Schools, with individual school district direct services and a combined coalition and advisory board.

The goal of the Supervision Team is to assist a county-wide collaboration of community agencies, individuals, and resources to create positive outcomes for children and families effected by or at-risk for child abuse, neglect, or delinquency.

For more information you may contact the Supervision Team <http://morrowcommonpleas.com> See under "News" and the "Morrow County Summit on Children" survey.

And there is a wealth of resources available on the Ohio website: <http://www.summitonchildren.ohio.gov/>

## Prenatal Care Services Sub-Committee is formed

A Prenatal Care Services Sub-Committee has been formed to address the needs of expectant parents in Morrow County. A heightened awareness of the need for increasing the quantity and quality of prenatal services surfaced during the Family and Children First Council's House Bill 289 planning conducted in 2007.

The focusing purposes of this Sub-Committee include: identifying, referring, and supporting expectant parents during their prenatal months and helping them transition into the Help Me Grow program and other available services.

This collaborative effort invites all agencies and individuals that serve expectant parents to join together to meet the goals of the sub-committee. For more information or to gather to network and to share resources, contact Dennis Schultz, FCFC Coordinator.

## FCFC Welcomes Rebecca Crockett, D.O., Gynecologist/Obstetrician to Morrow County Hospital

Dr. Rebecca Crockett provides weekly clinic hours in the Medical Specialty Center West and performs surgical procedures in MCH's operating rooms. She will provide comprehensive women's health services, including obstetrical care. Expectant mothers will be able to make obstetrical care appointments at MCH, but the deliveries will be scheduled for Marion General Hospital. For more information:

<http://www.morrowcountyhospital.com/>

## FCFC Web-Sites

[www.ohiofcf.org](http://www.ohiofcf.org)

**Ohio Family and Children First** is a partnership of state and local government, communities and families that enhances the well-being of Ohio's children and families by building community capacity, coordinating systems and services, and engaging and empowering families.

<http://ofcfca.org>

**The Ohio Family & Children First Coordinators Association** represents coordinators of Family and Children First Councils established in 1992 by Section 121.37 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Family and Children First is a partnership of government agencies, community organizations and parents committed to improving the well-being of children and families through strategic coordination of resources. This partnership is designed to draw people out of their day-to-day systems and align resources and activities around a shared vision that Ohio's families and children will thrive and succeed.

The Association is uniquely positioned to assess front-line needs, develop best practices, share lessons learned, encourage and support accountability in local councils and service providers and enter strategic partnerships with other organizations that address issues having to do with children and families.

## Council lends support to Health Department and MR/DD levies on November ballot

On behalf of the Morrow County Family and Children First Council, I encourage Morrow County voters to vote Yes in support of the levies for the Health Department and the Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Whetstone. At the September 2008 meeting, the Council registered its whole-hearted backing of these November levies.

Both of these vital agencies have been laboring far too long in tireless efforts to serve all the citizens of Morrow County—while functioning as under-funded agencies. This has not just been a time of necessary belt-tightening. They are already doing more with less. Rather, both agencies have been severely restricted in what they can do and what services they can provide for county citizens because of the defeat of past levies.

Important services have already been cut from both agencies, and these gaps in services have forced county families to seek assistance from other sources. Now is the time for Morrow Countians to help out one another, and particularly the least of these, who need these services., through the passage of these two levies.

The MR/DD levy request is for 0.8 mills (\$25.20 annually for a \$100,000 property value, or \$18.90 per year with the homestead exemption). For just over \$2.00 per month we can help our Morrow County neighbors and friends with disabilities. Passage of this levy would help restore such services as residential assistance, Early Intervention, adult activities, capital needs, and school age student help.

The Health Department is asking for a 1 mill levy (a cost of \$2.63 a month on a \$100,000 property) to restore services and necessary staff positions to meet the health needs of Morrow County. The Health Department is dependent on voters and this levy to fund the restoration of lost services as Morrow County's "Partner in Prevention and Preparedness."

*Dr. Dennis Schultz*

Coordinator Morrow County Family and Children First Council

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## **Article Regarding FCFC Visits for the “Juvenile Jottings” By Frances Strickland, Ohio’s First Lady**

John Glenn spoke of the need for leadership that uncovers the “liberating opportunities concealed within daunting challenges.” He believes “this is the defining ability of American genius.” I believe the ability of the Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet (OFCF Cabinet) and local county Family and Children First Councils (FCFC) to find ways to help families deal with our increasingly complex world will be its defining genius as well.

The purpose of Family and Children First is coordination and collaboration of services impacting children and families at the state level and in our local communities, but it is also about leadership. We need strong leadership at the local level just as much as at the state level. The local FCFCs meet regularly with public and private service providers and parent representatives.

I agreed to accept the appointment as Chair of the OFCF Cabinet because it provides a direct path to the front-lines of human services, and so far, it is the best decision I have made as First Lady. Both Ted and I worry about losing touch with the real world problems facing Ohioans given the fact there are 88 counties to cover. We know the danger of letting numbers and statistics drown out the stories of real people whose lives have significantly benefited from supportive services as well as those whose needs fall through the proverbial crack. The county FCFCs visits keep that from happening.

Various OFCF Cabinet Directors go with me from time to time and we have heard many helpful and moving stories. Particularly compelling was the woman who experienced “Wraparound” from the local FCFC after she broke under the weight of trying to care for her suicidal teenage daughter. She said it was as if they put their arms around her and said: “Don’t worry. We’re going to get through this together.” Step by step they helped her bring her world back under control. Then there was the unwed mother who turned to the Juvenile Judge and thanked her for helping her out of her drug-dominated world—a world of abuse and prostitution where she felt she was looked down on as having the worst reputation in her county. We read the writings of a young girl pleading for adults to care about the rough times young people go through now. Several parents of children with severe developmental delays talked of how Help Me Grow saved their lives. We also heard firsthand about the lack of available health care services, transportation services, youth transitional supports, respite care, and kinship supports.

I see Family and Children First as a dynamic system that constantly seeks to improve itself through continual learning and discovery of creative and innovative solutions through interagency interactions and collaborations. There is no shortage of impressive professionals and we expect to learn more from them through followup meetings, possibly through teleconferencing. We also need local multi-agency

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engagement to help develop a seamless system of care, including alignment of existing services and planning for filling the gaps in services.

The most exciting part as Chair of the OFCF Cabinet is the opportunity to work closely with the Cabinet Directors. Each Director is dedicated to finding better ways to serve, including removing unnecessary barriers and restrictions. These Directors include: Terry Collins (Rehabilitation and Correction), Angela Cornelius

Dawson (Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services), Dr. Alvin Jackson (Health), Helen Jones-Kelley (Jobs and Family Services), John Martin (MRDD), Barbara Riley (Aging), Pari Sabety (Budget and Management), Sandy Stephenson (Mental Health ), Tom Stickrath (Youth Services), and Dr. Susan Zelman (Education). Also participating on OFCFC are Robin Harris and Amy Rohling McGee (Governor’s Executive Assistants for Health and Human Services), and Alicia Leatherman, Director of the Early Childhood Cabinet.

The goal to visit each of the 88 counties will be reached by the end of July—having completed 73 visits to date. Visiting every county is important because each county has unique needs and service priorities, along with different leadership qualities and styles. We ask about their problems and concerns, but we are equally interested in any ideas they have for solutions to the problems. We look for “returning themes” as a way of helping the OFCF Cabinet prioritize statewide challenges and problems. These returning themes include the need for behavioral treatment programs for severely disturbed children and youth, alarming increases in the levels of youthful substance abuse and suicide attempts, and the need for support during times of transition either out of the youth system or from one program to another. Also frequently mentioned are issues related to excessive paperwork required by the State, redundant data entry, and “silo funding”. Currently, the OFCF Cabinet has formed two work groups at the Deputy Directors’ level, headed by OFCF Cabinet Director—Angela Sausser Short. One group is exploring a data collection system that could possibly be linked between agencies and the other deals with the potential for more flexible funding related to grants than is now available.

Some confusion has been expressed about the role Juvenile Judges can play on the local FCFCs. I can say, almost without exception, that those Juvenile Judges who do participate in the FCFC process provide a positive effect that is difficult to put into words. Their compassion and willingness to work with the other agencies responsible for helping troubled youth has resulted in far better outcomes than experienced earlier and at a greatly reduced cost to the community. Further, Juvenile Judges show incredible insight and understanding in their decisions and rulings. They recognize the complicated family situations our young people deal with today and work with Youth Services and family services to find ways to keep them in their communities.

In September, we will begin the second round of visits to the 88 counties.

Our hope is that we established a good working relationship in the first visits and

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that the second round will lead to even deeper discussions. At the same time, the OFCF Cabinet is working on identified problems as well as considering suggested remedies and implementation strategies. This cycle of continuous face-to-face communications between the state and local levels is the best way I know of to show that we do value the work the FCFCs do and that we are committed to a new style of leadership and support.