Drugs and the Impact to the Ohio’s Child Protection System

**STATEWIDE**
- Ohio has witnessed a 12% increase, or over 1,400 children, in agency custody in the past five years: 19% (2,000) since 2009 and 6.7% (almost 1,000) just in the last year and a half.
  - This counts only those removed from their homes and placed in out-of-home care due to safety risks.
  - This increase does not take into account the large volume of families served through kinship care or in their own homes.
- **PCSAO survey of those in custody in 2015 revealed:**
  - 50% of children taken into custody in CY2015 have had parental drug use identified at the time of removal.

**COSHOCTON COUNTY**
- Since 2003, Coshocton County has experienced a 55% increase in the number of children placed in foster care.
- Since January 2016, we have faced the following:
  - 368 Intakes—43% were due to drug issues. 14% of the children were placed with kin within the first 45 days.
  - 109 Ongoing cases—56% of these were/are drug related. 30% of the children have been placed with kin and 67% of the total going caseload is court involved.
  - 42 children have been in foster care this year with 67% of those parents having drug or alcohol abuse issues.
  - Unlike other counties who are experiencing an increase in opioid abuse, the drug of choice in Coshocton is methamphetamine.
What the Numbers Tell Us

According to the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) state funding for child protection has decreased 17% since 2009. Due to the opiate crisis in Ohio, the state legislature has provided additional funding for treatment. However, we have not experienced an increase in resources for the children impacted by their parent’s addictions. While parents are in treatment programs, children need to be placed in safe and loving environments. Agencies focus on placing children with kin but when that option does not exist, foster placement is necessary.

In 2014, counties had the opportunity to apply for Children Services Innovation Grant funds. Coshocton County applied for, received and spent $131,000 through this process. Although this additional funding was welcome, it did not provide our county, as well as others, with the necessary funding to absorb the costs of an ever-increasing caseload and additional placements.

Locally, for the last fifty years, Coshocton County residents have supported child protection with a property tax levy. Renewed since 1984, this 1 mil levy provides our agency with just over $500,000 annually. For many years, these funds adequately supported staff and foster care expenses. With expected placement costs of over $800,000 in 2016, this local support falls very short of meeting the need in our community.

**Our gross Foster Care costs have increased 150% since 2010 and net costs have increased 260% during the same time period.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FC pmts</strong></td>
<td>$311,705</td>
<td>$394,694</td>
<td>$424,647</td>
<td>$523,861</td>
<td>$509,409</td>
<td>$528,301</td>
<td>$794,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FC mileage</strong></td>
<td>$17,030</td>
<td>$24,100</td>
<td>$34,346</td>
<td>$32,099</td>
<td>$30,915</td>
<td>$31,122</td>
<td>$28,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROSS COST</strong></td>
<td>$330,745</td>
<td>$420,805</td>
<td>$461,005</td>
<td>$557,973</td>
<td>$542,338</td>
<td>$561,438</td>
<td>$822,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less reimbursements</td>
<td>$60,611</td>
<td>$81,932</td>
<td>$66,902</td>
<td>$102,677</td>
<td>$133,546</td>
<td>$109,364</td>
<td>$293,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProtectOhio waiver funding</td>
<td>$122,581</td>
<td>$139,354</td>
<td>$130,163</td>
<td>$127,648</td>
<td>$139,812</td>
<td>$148,372</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td>$183,192</td>
<td>$221,286</td>
<td>$197,065</td>
<td>$230,325</td>
<td>$273,358</td>
<td>$257,736</td>
<td>$293,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET COST LOCAL</strong></td>
<td>$145,543</td>
<td>$197,508</td>
<td>$261,928</td>
<td>$325,635</td>
<td>$301,687</td>
<td>$528,912</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEWIDE

We are struggling to maintain an adequate workforce for these children.

- Ohio’s child protection caseworkers are often the first responders to assess homes with opioid addicted parents.
- These cases aren’t easy. They are complex, time consuming, and, frankly, emotional.

Child safety is of greatest concern as there is no such thing as a functional opioid-addicted parent.

- Experts say these cases are the most traumatic, thus causing many of our caseworkers to become burned out.
- With no new fiscal resources, agencies aren’t able to hire additional staff to assist with the increase in cases, thus forcing the current workforce to be overburdened.
- 2,000 more children in care since 2009 requires at least 167 additional caseworkers (national recommendation is 12 cases per worker). This is only for the children in custody and does not take into account the increase of cases in the home and with kinship families.

COSHOCTON COUNTY

- Our Children Services administrator retired 10/15 and the Intake Supervisor was promoted to this position while retaining Intake Supervision.
- Intake Staff—4 staff members—Average Caseload size is 8-12—average length of experience in position is less than 18 months.
- Due to the increase in new staff, we promoted a line worker to trainer who has 6 months experience in this position.
- Ongoing Supervisor retired 10/16, an experienced line worker was promoted to this position.
- Our foster/adopt worker retired in 2016 and a caseworker with 5 years of experience replaced her.
- Ongoing Staff—5 staff members—Average Caseload size is 12-16—average length of experience in position is 9 months.
- Due to the need for supervised visits, we created a case aide position and that employee has been with us for 5 months.
- As a Phase I Pilot County in the Supreme Court of Ohio Statewide System Reform Program (SSRP) Family Drug Courts Project, we received funding to work with families with drug issues. In October 2016, hired a caseworker who is in recovery to assist these families.

Children Services staff in Coshocton have an average of 10 months experience in their current positions.

- All of our current Children Services caseworkers Bachelor’s Degrees. This is a first since our merger in 2000. Often we would hire Associate Degree people who had to get their Bachelor’s within 5 years.
- Over the next four years our starting salary for Children Services caseworkers will increase to $14.47/Assoc. Degree and $14.81/Bachelor Degree in addition to a total of $1.40/hour cost of living increase over that time period.

State data provided by Joel Potts, Executive Director of the Job and Family Services Directors’ Association (JFSDA) and Angela Sausser, Executive Director of the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO).