

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

2014

LUCAS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES



Dear Lucas County Residents:

2014 brought a mixed bag of good and disappointing news for LCCS. On a positive note, the number of children referred to us as suspected victims of child abuse declined by 12 percent from 2013 to 2014, as did the number referrals for investigation. The number of adoptions jumped 24 percent; 130 children found new, forever families in 2014.

However, the agency faced a huge disappointment in November, when county voters rejected the agency's 1.75 mill ballot issue. It would have renewed an existing 1.4 mill operating levy and added 0.35 mills to offset income lost through reduced property tax collections and declines in federal funding.

This was the first time in 40 years that Lucas County residents chose not to approve an agency levy. Without the



Dean M. Sparks

additional \$2.4 million this measure represented, LCCS has been forced to cut important services and programs for children and families, including support to kinship providers. A number of vacant positions remained unfilled; LCCS ended the year with 345 employees, about 60 fewer than a few years ago. Our staff is making the necessary adjustments to ensure that services to children and families continue, uninterrupted.

While the number of children in agency and network foster homes held relatively steady from 2013 to 2014, the average number of children requiring residential care on any given day jumped nearly 50 percent. These children and young adults have exceptional behavioral and developmental needs that cannot be met in a traditional or treatment foster home setting and require intensive supervision. That care came at an average cost of nearly \$271 per day, \$7 more



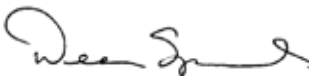
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than the year before. Between January and December 2014, LCCS spent nearly \$2.1 million just on institutional care, an increase of \$717,638 from 2013. The agency's total placement costs totaled \$10.0 million, our second-largest operating cost and nearly one-quarter of the agency's overall budget. It has been difficult to find a way to reduce these costs and provide these children with the treatment they need.

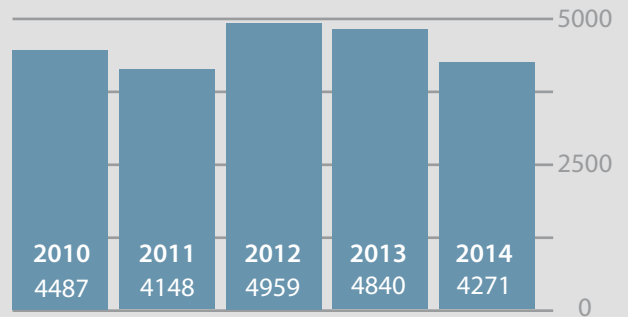
In 2014, as in previous years, more than half of the children LCCS served were age 5 or younger. We served slightly more “school age” children, and just about 20 percent of youth served were teens. Many of them have been under LCCS supervision for lengthy periods of time. LCCS has been challenged to help these youth make essential lifelong connections, and to provide them with programs and services —both pre- and post-emancipation—to prepare them for adulthood.

Lucas County's child welfare environment is constantly changing, and Lucas County Children Services will continue to do its best to meet the need while at the same time respecting community priorities.

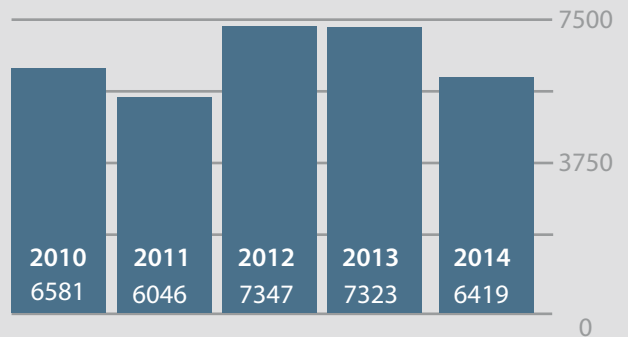


Dean M. Sparks
Executive Director

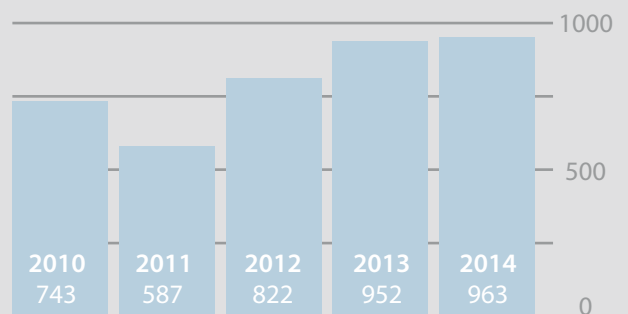
Investigations by Year



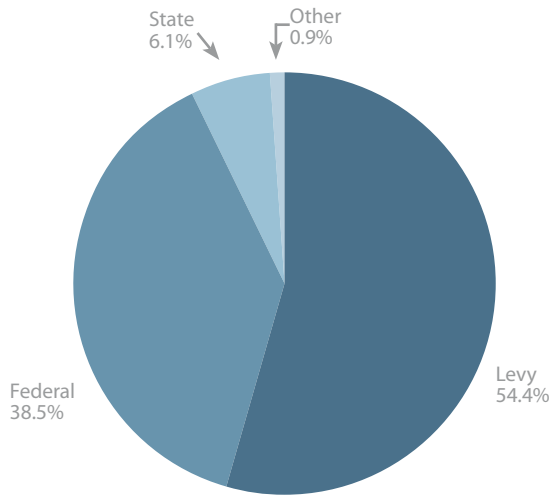
Alleged Child Victims/Subjects



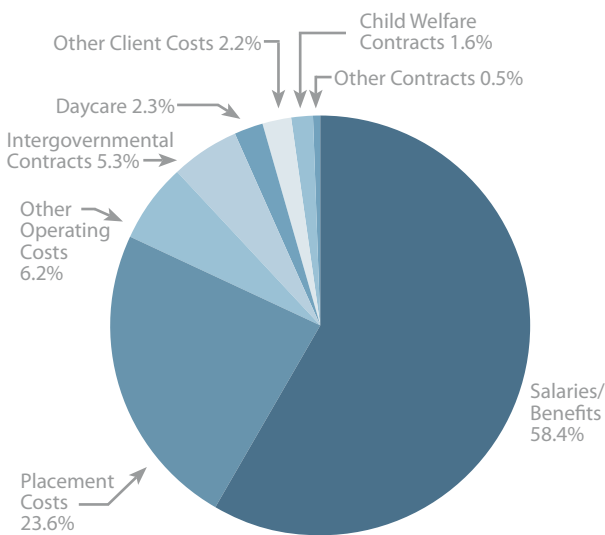
Substantiated Victims



Financial Summary



REVENUES	\$	%
Levy	\$22,975,241	54.4%
Federal	\$16,277,785	38.5%
State	\$2,586,590	6.1%
Other	\$397,061	0.9%
Total Revenue	\$42,236,677	100.0%



EXPENSES	\$	%
Salaries/Benefits	\$24,803,112	58.4%
Placement Costs	\$10,007,698	23.6%
Child Welfare Contracts	\$674,448	1.6%
Daycare	\$961,784	2.3%
Other Client Costs	\$923,389	2.2%
Intergovernmental Contracts	\$2,255,486	5.3%
Other Contracts	\$208,711	0.5%
Other Operating Costs	\$2,619,098	6.2%
Total Expense	\$42,453,727	100.0%

Highlights

REVENUES

Agency revenues were \$42,236,677. Revenues increased 21.8 percent from 2013 to 2014, largely due to the increase in one of two LCCS tax levies from 1.0 mill to 1.85 mills, and due to an increase in the amount of federal Title XX TANF Transfer Funds.

LCCS also collected a second, 1.4 mill operating levy that will expire in 2016. Both levies are five-year measures. Total levy income increased by \$5,854,559 from 2013 to 2014, and represented 54.4 percent of agency revenue. Federal funds increased from 2013 to 2014, and comprised 38.5 percent of operating dollars.

LCCS began 2014 with a \$1,627,019 fund balance, and concluded the year with \$1,409,969 in reserves, a decline of \$217,050.

EXPENSES

During 2014, LCCS spent \$42,453,727, a 2.6 percent increase over 2013. Employee salaries and fringe benefits remained the largest expense, at 58.4 percent of the budget, but total spending in this category declined by 1.2 percent compared to 2013 as the total number of employees declined.

Placement costs represented 23.6 percent of agency spending this past year, a 2.7 percent increase over 2013. Although the average daily number of children in paid care decreased, the average daily cost of care increased, as more children required care in costly institutional settings. There was also an increase in the number of adoption agreements signed, which translated into an increase in the total amount of adoption subsidies.

Child welfare and other contract expenditures decreased by \$321,989 over the course of the year as a result of decreased utilization and reductions in several child welfare contracts and decreased funding for the Preferred Choice program.

Crossover Youth Project

Provided joint assessment and case planning services for youth involved with both LCCS and the Juvenile Court with a goal of reducing the need for congregate care placements. Between 15 and 25 youth were served at any given time.

Trauma Informed Child Welfare Initiative

In November 2014, LCCS applied for, and was awarded, an "Efficiency and Innovation" grant through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. These funds will be used to transform the agency into a trauma-informed child welfare organization, and to extend trauma training to caregivers and community partners with the goal of recognizing and addressing the far-reaching implications of unresolved trauma in children. LCCS will be collaborating with the National Child Traumatic Stress Network to develop training programs and identify qualified trainers.

Parent Partnership Program (P3)

Parents who at one time received case plan services through LCCS volunteer as parent representatives, parent facilitators or parent advocates, working with families currently involved with LCCS. Parent facilitators run the agency's Building a Better Future program to help parents whose children have been removed from their care to better understand their situation and improve their skills. In 2014, five different parent partners conducted six BBF groups with a total of 28 parents graduating.

Imagination Station Partnership

Through a grant from Lockrey Manufacturing, Imagination Station has provided regular activities for families utilizing the agency's Visitation Department and provided low-cost passes to the science center for families in the process of reunification. This is one of only three such partnerships in the United States.

(continued)

LCCS Fatherhood Initiative

LCCS participated in the Ohio State Conference on Fatherhood and received an honorable mention for the services that the agency has provided. LCCS also received a \$2,500 grant from the Ohio State Commission on Fatherhood to develop an activity to help fathers become more involved with their children. LCCS used the funds to hold a resource fair at Woodward High School.

Kinship Orientation

LCCS continued to offer its orientation/workshop to kinship providers who agree to care for their relative children. In 2014, LCCS offered 28 different sessions; nearly two-thirds of eligible families attended.

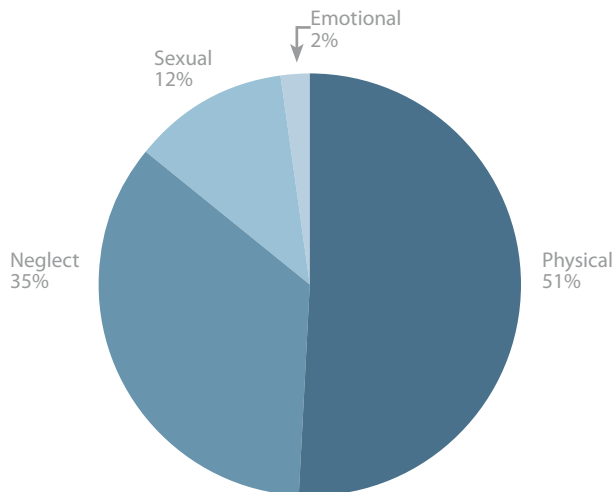
Of the 4,271 reports of suspected child abuse received, a slightly lower proportion (35.6%) of them were opened as “traditional response” in 2014 compared to the previous year (37.6%). A higher percentage of cases were opened with a “differential response,” allowing caseworkers to work more collaboratively with those families. The number of Family in Need of Services (FINS) referrals increased three percent in 2014 to 480.

The number of new cases opened for ongoing services in 2014 (443) decreased 16 percent from 2013. Parental substance abuse was, by far, the most common reason (35%) for LCCS to open a case. Heroin use represented 70 percent of cases opened due to substance abuse.

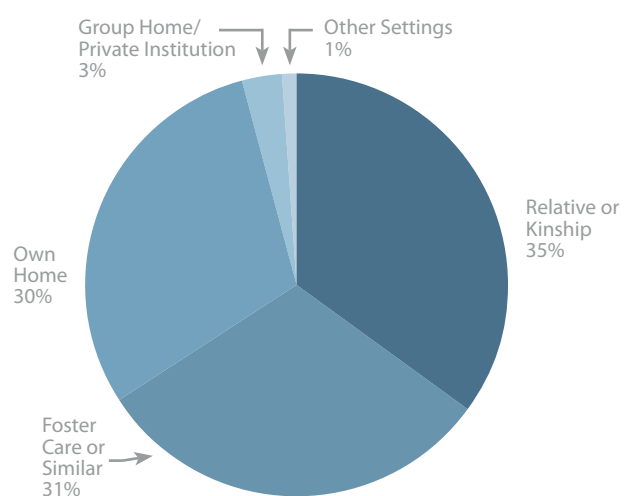
Key Statistics

Children Served	12,116
Families Served	5,016
New Cases Opened	443
Average Number of Children on Caseload	1,288
Adoptions Finalized	130

Investigations by Types of Abuse - 4,271



Placement of Children in Services - 1,288 Youth



Based on 2013 Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) data, LCCS met performance expectations for 12 of the 17 federal Child and Family Service Review data indicators. This is a dramatic improvement from FFY 2012, when LCCS met eight of the 17 indicators. LCCS made notable improvements in areas related to the absence of maltreatment recurrence and timely exists to reunification.

At the close of 2014, the Children's Bureau announced significant changes to the CFSR process, reducing the number of indicators to seven. LCCS will adjust its future reporting to reflect the new structure.

Executive Director

Dean M. Sparks, MSW, LISW-S

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