

# Athens County Children Services

Dear Athens County Community Member,

On behalf of the staff and Board of Athens County Children Services, we present you our 2006 Annual report. We are very proud of the efforts of this agency to protect children and support families but at the same time we recognize there are challenges ahead of us.

We know children living in a safe, stable and nurturing family environment have the greatest chance of growing into productive, contributing members of the community. Research identifies protective factors in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. These include:

- Children sharing a nurturing bond and attachment with their family.
- Parents with knowledge of parenting and child development.
- Parents with the ability to handle life stressors in an appropriate manner.
- Families connected with extended family, friends, neighbors and their community
- Families having the basic resources to ensure the health and well-being of their children.\*

\*Promoting Healthy Families in Your Community, US Dept. of Health and Human Services

There are families in this community who do not possess these protective factors. The issues of poverty, substance abuse, lack of appropriate parenting skills, domestic violence along with mental illness can put stressors on families and put children at risk of abuse and neglect.

Athens County Children Services has been working very hard to provide or arrange services that develop or enhance these factors to protect children and promote stable, nurturing families. We provide prevention services that support families so incidents of abuse and neglect are reduced or eliminated. The Nelsonville Family Center provides resources to support and develop children, parents and families. Social workers have been placed into two local school districts to promote school readiness, assist children and families and address problems. The agency promotes a strong in-home parent education program to help parents develop the skills necessary to raise their children in a positive manner.

The agency continues to improve services as well as continuing to partner with our community to further enhance services to children and families.

Please review our 2006 annual report. We remain committed to working with families, service providers and community members to provide children with safe, stable and nurturing homes.

Sincerely,

Andrea Reik  
Executive Director

# Annual Report 2006

2007 ACCS  
Board  
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**Our Mission**

*Athens County Children Services is a child-focused, family-centered agency protecting children at risk of physical and emotional harm by strengthening families through innovative services.*

*We are invested in a community effort of child abuse prevention, education, public awareness and are dedicated to the challenge of providing children the opportunity to grow in a safe, nurturing, and permanent family.*

**Social Workers in Schools**

The addition of two school social worker positions in 2006 helped provide additional services to two school districts (Trimble and Federal Hocking) in Athens County. School social workers seek to strengthen families and promote positive school relationships to enhance student school success by:

- Supporting students, families and teachers,
- Increasing access to community resources,
- Skill building,
- Crisis intervention,
- Improving communication between school and community, and
- Providing opportunities for children.

The school social workers served an average number of 37 families (school and community contacts) and received an average of 10 referrals per month over a ten month period (school is closed during June and July). These referrals are received from school staff and parents.

One school social worker continued to provide services as the Girl Power coordinator in the Glouster area during the entire year with an average of 19 girls attending meetings per month.

Average interventions per month per domain during the year at Trimble Elementary School:

Behavior issues:	9	Medical issues:	3
Medication:	2	Lice:	4

**Referrals**

A *referral* is an allegation of child abuse and neglect of a child which can be made verbally or in writing. It includes, but is not limited to, allegations involving individuals, families, and out-of-home care settings. There was a total of 1376 referrals during 2006 (a **1% decrease** from 2005).

**Referrals by School District**

Alexander	141 (10%)
Athens	480 (35%)
Federal Hocking	155 (11%)
Nelsonville York	307 (22%)
Trimble	184 (13%)
Other	106 (8%)

## Help Me Grow

In July 2001, ACCS became the fiscal and administrative agent for Help Me Grow (HMG), which is a child development program serving families with children age birth to 3 years and pregnant women.

HMG Service Coordinators work with families by providing child development information, home visits, information and referral, and support. They help families develop goals that will enhance their abilities, support parents, and encourage child development. Help Me Grow received **242** referrals to the Service Coordinators during the year, and worked with an average of **216** cases per month.

HMG also provided **147** visits made through the Newborn Nurse Visitor Program.



## Child Advocacy Center



The mission of the Athens County Child Advocacy Center is to bring together already existing disciplines and organizations in a collaborative and cohesive

manner to respond to child abuse. The Athens County CAC uses a multi-disciplinary approach to provide for the needs of the victims of Child abuse and their families and to reduce further victimization. There were 24 children (6 male and 18 female) served at the CAC during 2006.

### AGE AT THE TIME OF REPORTED ABUSE:

- 0-6 years: 5
- 7-12 years: 5
- 13-18+ years: 14

### CHILDREN RECEIVING SERVICES:

- Medical Exam: 10
- Forensic Interview: 24

## Custody Termination

Custody is terminated when determined by the Juvenile Judge that keeping the child in a substitute care placement is no longer in his/her best interests. There were **66** child custody terminations during the year (a **16% decrease** from 2005).

Of the 66 custody terminations:

**48** children (73%) were reunified with parents or other relatives.

**13** children (20%) were adopted.

**5** (8%) turned 18 and left agency custody.

## Custody

The agency began 2006 with **96** children in agency custody and ended the year with **102** children.

There were a total of **163** children in agency custody during 2006 (**down 3%** from 2005), with **72** (69 children) new custody entries (**up nearly 20%** from 2005).

Substance abuse was a major factor in most of these cases.

## Placement Services

The Placement Services Unit is made up of a foster/adoption recruiter who recruits, trains, and licenses foster and adoptive homes; two foster care caseworkers who complete homestudies, provide support to foster parents, and arranges placements for children in custody; plus an independent living caseworker who works with teens in agency custody to prepare them to live independently at age 18. This team also has a diverse array of additional tasks and responsibilities.

Licensed Foster Homes 1/1/06	43
New Homes	7
Closed Homes	17
Licensed Foster Homes 12/31/06	33
Kinship Homestudies Completed	44
Life Skills Assessments Completed	18
Independent Living Cases (avg/month)	13

## Family Support Services

Family Support services, as part of the Family Service Units, involve Parent Mentors that provide parents with the intensive services to eliminate and reduce the issues that have led to a family's involvement with the agency. These services include parenting services, home, health management skills and transportation. All services can be provided in a family's home. Case Aides provide visitation and transportation services for families who are involved with the agency and whose children are living in either kinship care or foster care. The Case Aides supervised 796 visits and completed 350 transports during the year, while the Parent Mentors worked with 27 families during 2006, an average of 19 per month.

## Nelsonville Family Center

The Nelsonville Family Center is a resource for families.

Programming includes family support groups, a clothing bank, a community garden, playgroups, Girl Power!, Guy Time peer support groups and much more.



## Adoption

A child may be placed in the permanent custody of the agency if a parent willingly surrenders the child, the child is abandoned, or has spent the past 12 out of 22 months in agency custody with the court awarding Permanent Custody.

ACCS was awarded Permanent Custody (PC) of 19 children in 2006 for a total of 60 children in PC during 2006. The Adoption caseworkers found permanent homes for 13 of these children. And of the 45 children remaining in Permanent Custody at the end of the year, 7 (16%) were in an adoptive placement.

## Financial Report

### EXPENSES

Children/Families-41%	\$2,314,256
Operating-11%	\$643,498
Personnel-48%	\$2,698,785

**TOTAL** **\$5,656,538**

### REVENUES

Federal-37%	\$2,609,552
Local-55%	\$3,857,721
State-8%	\$578,052

**TOTAL** **\$7,045,324**