



# Lorain County Children and Families First Council Full Council Meeting

April 3, 2025

## Attendees:

- Chelsea Freeman-Yates
- Christopher Cabot
- Dan Haight
- Rick Soto
- Franco Gallo
- Mark Adams
- Jeffery Graham
- Amber Fisher
- Michael Doud
- Jeff Riddell
- Isaac Young
- Billie Olsen
- Valerie Gonzalez
- Yacylin Velazquez
- Jon Paul Filipkowski
- Tammy Taylor
- Guest – Heather Pasterak
- Guest – Kate Morris
- Guest - Kathryn Perales

## Opening:

- ❖ The Full Council Meeting of the Lorain County Children and Families First Council was called to order at 9:02 am on April 3, 2025, in Elyria by Mark Adams.

## Welcome and Introductions:

- ❖ Mark Adams welcomed everyone, and Introductions were made around the room and introducing the new mandated member, Christopher Cabot, JFS Executive Director

## Approval of Minutes:

- ❖ Mark Adams asked for approval of the meeting minutes from the previous Full Council Meeting on January 23, 2025. Franco Gallo motioned to approve, and Billie Olsen seconded.
- ❖ The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

## Open Business:

- ❖ Early Intervention
  - Isaac Young shared that there wasn't much of an update and that their numbers have stayed pretty consistent for the number of children currently being served. They are currently around 570. They added a new evaluator about a month ago and he is currently in training. He will be servicing children in Lorain and Elyria.
  - Chelsea Freeman-Yates shared that they had not gotten their number yet from DCY regarding their early intervention funding. She's hoping it's not going to be given late and that with the new budget revisions that there will be an increase.
- ❖ Current Program Update
  - Data Committee information provided by Jon Paul Filipkowski



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- We currently have 22 children on the wait list. We are getting more referrals lately which tends to be normal this time of year after coming off of holiday breaks. We have received the following referrals this year:
    - ◆ January – 10
    - ◆ February – 1
    - ◆ March – 8
    - ◆ April - 1
  - Of the new referrals, 50% are coming from Children Services which is normally about 25%, 22% are from schools, 18% from mental health providers and 10% from juvenile justice.
  - Most of our cases are serviced within 90 days (are on the wait list) but they are getting closer to 100 days currently. The Service Coordination Mechanism will help on intakes but it has not been started as of yet.
  - Caseloads remain close to the max which is usually 15 to 18 cases per service coordinator
    - ◆ Denise – 14 cases, 4 of which are family support specialist cases
    - ◆ Kristen – 13 cases, 5 of which are plan of safe care cases
    - ◆ Jesse – 13 cases
    - ◆ Jon – 12 cases
    - ◆ Chelsea – 6 cases
  - Average months that a case is currently open 13.2 but there some that have been open a long time. Average months between open and close of cases is 9.5 months.
  - Of the current cases 38% are female, 68% are male and 1% is non-binary
  - Chelsea Freeman-Yates has some very extensive cases that take up a lot of her time and traveling so her cases are open longer. She has several case loads that have been open for years and are coming to an end as these children have been in residential facilities and are finally coming home.
- ❖ Old Business
- Shared Plan
    - We are closing out our old shared plan FSY23-25 and writing the shared plan for FSY26-28. Chelsea Freeman-Yates will be sending out some information via email to council requesting feedback and then it can be reviewed and put up for approval at the July Full Council meeting.
      - We are continuing to address infant vitality and healthy early development, working on the plan of safe care, beefing up early intervention and working on child find
      - Services and supports for multi-system youth will be taken in a different direction and focusing on preventing truancy and promoting school engagement. We have a collaboration group on truancy prevention and are working on a tool kit that will be available in May. We will be using some funds for education on truancy.
      - Access to prevention programs. This would include the No Wrong Door program.
  - Kids Summit
    - Save-The-Dates have been submitted through social media for the event on October 6, 2025 at The Shipyards in Lorain.



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- We have gone into contract with Darryl Bellamy Jr. for a keynote speaker
- Department of Youth and Children will have Joel Potts representing and he will be speaking
- Youth panel and caregiver panel
- Lorain Cares Partnership
  - Agencies involved are LCCFC, LCCS, ESC, and MHARS
  - Putting on an event called Engage to Reengage Conference which is May 8<sup>th</sup> at the Columbia Ballroom
  - CEU's
  - Preparedness training taking place next week
- Plan of Safe Care
  - Heather Pasterak of LCPH provided information on the program which is for families and pregnant women that have past or present substance abuse issues
  - Kristen takes all of the Plan of Safe Care cases at the LCCFFC
  - There are 75 referrals for the current funding cycle
  - Most referrals are for Lorain and Elyria residents
  - None are currently pregnant, so cases are coming from LCCS
  - Meeting with Recovery Court to build a referral system
  - Meeting with a new treatment center for community medical services
  - Meeting with DCY (Department of Children and Youth) to align with their initiatives
  - 3 nurses going through addiction counseling training
  - 6 total reunifications with children back with parents
  - LCCFFC is calling this the CARA Service Coordination and helps with LCPH
- Ohio Start Collaboration with LCCS
  - Similar to Plan of Safe Care, but engagement is made with the mother after she delivers
  - We are in contract with the Ohio Start program for \$5,000 to provide additional incentives
- Outreach and Community Events
  - Blessing House – Heroes for Children Luncheon – April 2025
  - Lorain Care Summit – Engage to Reengage - May 2025
  - Crocker Kids - Summer sponsorship for 4 events
  - El Library partnership – Chelsea Freeman-Yates reached out to Amherst and Elyria and are interested in doing development bags and LCCFFC will provide funding
  - LCCFFC annual family event – Chelsea Freeman-Yates met with Mayor Kevin Corcoran of North Ridgeville and he's excited to partner for the fall festival in North Ridgeville
  - Youth Leadership Council
    - In person meeting in April but meeting once a month (first Tuesday) at 7PM via Zoom
    - Slowly gaining traction
    - There are approximately 8 youths and they will be invited to a part of the youth panel at the Lorain County Kids Summit
    - They have recently done a smoking cessation program with LCPH
  - Service Coordination Mechanism
    - Approved by the state
    - Aimee Matusik gave glowing reports and has shared portions with other counties
  - Truancy Work Group
    - Lorain County Tool Kit will be rolled out at the end of May



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- Pre-K-3 Truancy marketing education campaign
- Safe Families Safe Communities Grant is not being opened up to new counties until FSY26
- Respite Work Group – 4C through MHARS board is leading
  - Just awarded \$16,402 for the shared plan incentive funds. This money will go to create a respite program in Lorain County and for marketing professionals, getting them interested in becoming respite providers, background checks, drug tests, training and then put them on a list for families that need respite care to be able to pick from based on needs. Funds for the respite care would come from the collaboration.
- LCCFFC Share Plan Mini Grant
  - The draft version has been shared with council members but has not been approved with the prosecuting office.
  - Five (5) \$5,000 grants will be awarded and need to align with the shared plan initiatives
  - The winners of the grants would need to provide pre and post data which would be shared with the state.
  - Promoting would take place mid to end of Summer, applications submitted by end of September so they can be reviewed and put up for approval at the October council meeting and funds disseminated.
- Committee Reports
  - Finance meeting was held on 04/02/25
    - Mandated members received a copy of the fiscal report
    - Opening balance for January 2024 was \$1,303,000 and the opening balance for February 2025 was \$1,668,000
    - We are being able to retain funds but also to increase some of our revenue and that includes us doing billable work, paying for crisis placements, paying for family stability items, sponsorship, etc.
    - Quickbooks has started to be utilized to keep better track of the different funds
  - Program, Data and Evaluation
    - Did not meet this quarter but one is scheduled in two weeks
  - Early Childhood Committee
    - Did not meet this quarter
- New Business
  - Family Support Specialist
    - We have started preliminary referrals
    - Potential position for FSY26 depending on the Safe Families Safe Communities grant

## Board and Guest Comments:

- ❖ Jeff Riddell voiced his concerns over the sound issues at The Shipyards for the Lorain County Kids Summit. Chelsea Freeman-Yates is looking at getting an outside company to provide audio and visual expertise. There were pros and cons for all facilities that we looked into.
- ❖ Valerie Gonzalez brought up the discussion of legalized marijuana use and court proceedings with Heather Pasterak.



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## **Next Meeting:**

- ❖ The next meetings are scheduled for July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 @ 9:00 am, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 @ 9:00 am and January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 @ 9:00 am. We will look into possibly changing locations for future meetings and the website will reflect these changes.

## **Comments/tasks assigned:**

- ❖ None

## **Adjournment:**

- ❖ Mark Adams made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Jon Filipkowski and Jeffery Graham. Meeting adjourned at 9:58 am by Mark Adams.

Minutes submitted by: Tammy Taylor