



Ashtabula County Children Services Board

Spring 2013



From the Director

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



On April 3rd, we moved our Pinwheels for Prevention display from its usual spot at the Donahoe Center to the front lawn of the Old Court House in hopes that this new location would bring more awareness for child abuse prevention. The pinwheels represent the number of calls that were made to the agency with concerns for children. Last year, we received 2766 calls. Of those calls, 960 new cases were opened due to concerns of child safety. We are very grateful to those who spoke up on behalf of a child in need. The event was attended by several community members, county employees and elected officials. Commissioner Carlo presented a proclamation to Children Services and BACA (Bikers

Against Child Abuse) closed the event by reading their creed. The display will remain on the lawn through May 1st.

This year our annual "It Takes A Community" luncheon was expanded to include a Human trafficking training thanks to our partnership with the Ashtabula County Family and Children First Council. The luncheon was held on April 11th to coincide with the Statewide **WEAR BLUE** campaign.

Many who attended wore blue to show their support for abused and neglected children. Pictures were posted on the Friends of Children Services facebook page—check them out at: www.facebook.com/friendsofchildrenservices

This luncheon is very special for us as it is our chance to recognize our families' and children's successes by presenting them with the

"Rising Up and Moving On" award. It is also our chance to thank community members or organizations who have helped us improve the lives of children or helped to make our jobs a little easier by presenting them with our "Above and Beyond" award. Our speaker this year was Melinda Sykes Haggarty from the Attorney General's office. She is head of his Children's Initiatives and spoke of her first hand knowledge of the child welfare system as a former foster child and adoptee herself. During lunch, guests were entertained by Geneva's Image show choir—they are very impressive!

Ms. Haggarty followed up the luncheon by presenting the training on Human trafficking which has become a hot topic for child welfare thanks to Ohio's new law and protocol for dealing with perpetrators and victims.

Award Winners...



Rising Up/Moving On

Tyree Santiago— Tyree is a senior at Geneva High School. When we first met Tyree nearly 8 years ago, he was a shy, quiet boy with not much of a future. He was adopted by a wonderful family and is now looking forward to graduating high school this year. He is a talented singer and participates in Geneva's Image show choir. He has become a well-spoken, thoughtful young man.

Heather Hayes & Tim VanDrei— Heather and Tim were the parents of a very young child when we became involved with their family. They were dealing with addiction issues prevented them from safely parenting their daughter. However, one thing was clear—they loved their daughter and they were committed to making positive changes in their lives. There many obstacles for them to overcome, but with determination and the support of their family, they were able to complete their case plan and demonstrate their ability to safely provide for their child.

Looking ahead...

It's a "Shoe" Thing

We've partnered with Faith in Action, H2O Ministries and Lighthouse Harvest Foundation to collect your old or unwanted shoes (any condition). Our portion of the proceeds will go to our local Children's Trust Fund. Call Kathryn Whittington for details. 998-1811.



Longest Day of Play

Join us for a day of play at Lake Shore Park on June 21st. Free and open to all families!

Summer Foods

We will be sponsoring the Summer Foods program again this year. Look for flyers and site information soon.



★ **THANK YOU!**

Above & Beyond

Chad and Valerie Ovak— The Ovaks are foster parents who have provided a loving, nurturing home for many children who cannot safely remain in their own home. They have provided care for children with serious medical issues that required trips to Cleveland, they have met with birth parents to share information about their child and participate in visitation for the families. Chad volunteers his time to be Santa Claus for the foster children and encourages his employer's participation in providing gifts for the children at Christmas. He is also a volunteer on the Friends of Children Services Levy Committee.

Ben Bissett—Ben has volunteered his time and talent to helping us promote who we are and what we do. With his expertise in graphic design, he has created banners and signs for us to use in our recruitment of foster parents. At a time when our budget would not allow for such luxuries, these are greatly appreciated!

School Supply Giveaway

We are accepting school supply donations for our giveaway event in August. Call Kathryn Whittington for more details. 998-1811

3rd Annual Friends of Children Services Golf Outing... Save the date!

Sept. 13th, 2014 @ Hickory Grove Golf Course.





Photo Gallery



Tyree Santiago



Heather Hays & Tim Van Drei



Ben Bissett



Chad & Valerie Ovak



Pastor Fred Grimm
ACCSB Board Member



Julia planting pinwheels!



Don't forget to "like" our Friends of Children Services Facebook page!

Contact Us

Tania Burnett
Executive Director
Burnet@odjfs.state.oh.us

Beverly DeFazio
Social Service Director
Defazb@odjfs.state.oh.us

Barbara Legeza
Finance Director
Legezb@odjfs.state.oh.us

Mission

To assure that children at risk of abuse or neglect are protected and nurtured within a family and with the support of the community.

Address: 3914 C Court
Ashtabula, OH

Phone: 440-998-1811 or 1-888-998-1811

Website: www.help-a-child.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/friendsofchildrenservices

Ashtabula County Children Services Board
3914 C Court
Ashtabula, OH 44004
