



OACCA
Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies, Inc.

2009-2010 COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADOPTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Rhonda Greer, Christian Children's Home of Ohio

The committee meets by conference call on the first Wednesday of every odd month from 10am-12pm

2009 Activities

- Represented private agency input and concerns on the Ohio Adoption Planning Group (OAPG)
- Co-sponsored *Filling Family Portraits: an Adoption Advocacy Event* at the Statehouse, to call attention to the need for state funding for recruitment of, and subsidies for, adoptive parents
- Organized two collaborative Statewide Adoption Matching Expos with ODJFS and OAPG

2010 Goals

- Plan and organize two Statewide Adoption Matching Expos (May/November) for public and private agencies
- Collaborate with the Advocacy Committee to restore funding for special needs adoption
- Educate the public and legislators about adoption and related issues
- Meet quarterly with legislators/Governor/ODJFS

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Chris Wolfe, ViaQuest Behavioral Health of Ohio

The committee meets on the third Friday of every month from 10am-2pm at OACCA

2009 Activities

- Continued advocacy for Medicaid ceiling rate increase
- Supported efforts that restored \$14 million to the Ohio Department of Mental Health's budget
- Convinced state departments to amend numerous regulations to support services for children and youth and the agencies that serve them
- Worked with ODMH on transition to a rate based system vs. reconciliation
- Worked with General Assembly to give MFTs equal professional status, including independent licensure and inclusion on the Provider Matrix, with other behavioral health professionals
- Worked with Senator Sherrod Brown on SAMHSA reauthorization

2010 Goals

- Participate in transition to "fixed rates" and work with ODMH to establish a process for increasing provider rates
- Advocate for initiatives to increase the number of licensed behavioral health professionals – particularly those that have expertise in working with children and youth
- Amend the law/regulations to allow Medicaid access for children and youth receiving services in residential treatment facilities
- Ensure that ODMH includes a full continuum of care for children and youth and that all who need services have access to them before they qualify as SED

FOSTER CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Chrissy Staggs, Focus on Youth

The committee meets on the second Tuesday of every month from 10am-2pm at the Rosemont Center

2009 Activities

- Collaborated with ODJFS regarding private agency participation in SACWIS through rule changes
- Participated in the SACWIS Private Agency Planning Council that was developed collaboratively with ODJFS and provided input and direction in identifying needs for private agencies to participate in the rollout of SACWIS
- Provided advocacy and consultation to maintain the Ohio Foster Parent Training Stipend Allowance Program
- Assisted the ODJFS to identify which of their rules should be classified as Serious Risk Rules
- Collaborated with ODJFS to improve consistent application of licensing standards throughout the state

2010 Goals

- Work with ODJFS to ensure that the needs of private agencies are met so that full participation in SACWIS is possible
- Provide consultation to ODJFS to influence future rule changes that are more realistic for private agencies
- Provide mutual support on the implementation of ODJFS rule changes that impact foster care

INDEPENDENT LIVING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Shellie Stolfo, Choices, Inc.

The committee meets on the last Thursday of the odd months at OACCA and by conference call

2009 Activities

- Collaborated with various Foster Youth Advisory Boards
- Provided assistance to OACCA regarding transitional youth services funding in the state budget
- Participated in advocacy for funding of the ODJFS Independent Living Initiative in the state budget
- Co-sponsored and founded the Ohio Reach Conference, to improve higher education opportunities for foster youth
- Collaborated and helped found Ready to Launch, a statewide coalition of advocates for transition-age youth

2010 Goals

- Develop and implement state and federal advocacy initiatives for IL
- Meet with the Governor about the importance of permanent state funding for transitional youth services
- Promote expanding access to IV-E reimbursement for a wider variety of independent living settings
- Develop Regional IL Youth Summits that will become self-sustaining

JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Colin Fowler, ViaQuest Behavioral Health of Ohio

The committee usually meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 10am-12pm via conference call

2009 Activities

- Served as the Steering Committee for our federally funded trainings on the juvenile sex offender treatment standards; developed training curriculum
- Informed OACCA about the effects of the Adam Walsh Act and other policies that affect juvenile offenders
- Informed OACCA about institutional changes in the Department of Youth Services

2010 Goals

- Oversee development of statewide trainings on the JSO treatment standards
- Partner with ODYS regarding the deinstitutionalization of the juvenile justice system
- Monitor state efforts to reform juvenile justice laws and policies

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair: Steve Plottner, LHS Family and Youth Services

The committee meets on the last Thursday of every even month at OACCA

2009 Activities

- Provided input on the effects of enforcement of the federal IMD on Ohio providers
- Provided input on the development of legislation to extend state standards for residential care
- Examined issues relating to Restraint and Seclusion including the Governor's Executive Order
- Provided information on auditing and contract monitoring

2010 Goals

- Promote placement of Ohio children in placement settings within our state borders
- Eliminate redundancies in audits, contract monitoring, etc
- Monitor state negotiations regarding the IMD issue and promote residential care and its viability in Ohio

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES LEARNING COMMUNITY FOR SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT REDUCTION

Chair: Tom Standish, Abraxas Ohio

The Learning Community meets quarterly from 10am-2pm at the Buckeye Ranch

2009 Activities

- Collaborated with the Governor's Office on the prevention of restraints
- Successfully reduced the number of restraints in CRCs in Ohio
- Participated on the Statewide workgroup with ODJFS, ODMH, MR/DD, DYS, and the Health Department on the prevention of restraints

2010 Goals

- Continue to collaborate with the Governor's Office on the prevention of restraints
- Continue participation on the Statewide workgroup on the prevention of restraints

OUTCOMES DATA PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

Chair: Harry Blackmon, LHS Family and Youth Services

Harry will provide an overview during the Ohio Summit on Children and the Use of Data panel

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Bob Sprague (The Village Network), Don Warner (Oesterlen Services for Youth)

The committee meets the third Tuesday of every month from 10am-12pm by conference call

Overview of Committee

- **Ongoing goals:** 1) participate in advocacy efforts related to legislation and the state budget, 2) assist staff to implement the annual Public Policy Agenda, 3) host regional events that provide our members opportunities to interact with policy makers, 4) assist in the planning of the annual OACCA Advocacy Conference
- **Roster:** Kristina Allwood, Jim Miller (The Village Network), Bryan Brown (Starr Commonwealth), Doris Edelman (FCAA Ohio), Bilreka Ferguson (Mended Reeds), Kathy Franz (NOAS), Nancy Pepler (Cleveland Christian Home), Ed Sparks, Scott Timmerman (NYAP), Jane Wusik (Necco)

2009 Activities

- Coordinated advocacy on federal legislation and policies, including:
 - Health care reform legislation and the ARRA federal stimulus legislation
 - HR 911 – Stop Child Abuse in Residential Centers Act
 - Revision of the IMD Law and its regulations
- Coordinated advocacy on state legislation and policies, including:
 - HB 1 – State operating budget
 - HB 446 and SB 142 – Standards for out-of-state residential care
 - HB 371 – Child in Need of Protective Services (CHIPS)
 - Various other state legislation
 - Implementation of provisions from Fostering Connections Act
 - ODJFS rules for transition plans for foster youth and delegation of public agency responsibility for caseworker visits
 - Ohio’s CFSR evaluation from the federal government and our Program Improvement Plan
 - Private agency-public agency contracting issues
- Developed and held regional Community Roundtables on Children and Family Services
 - Events were held in Cincinnati, Van Wert, Youngstown, Wooster, and Cleveland and drew over 150 participants, including: a Member of Congress and staff members, state legislators, county commissioners, a city mayor, directors and senior staff from county children services, mental health and alcohol and drug board, and family and children first council agencies, and directors and senior staff from private OACCA member agencies.
- Developed the 2010 Public Policy Agenda
- Helped to plan the 2010 OACCA Advocacy Conference

2010 Goals

- Advocate for passage of HB 446 & SB 142 (out of state placements) and HB 62 (Social Work Civil Service Exemption)
- Participate in the development of HB 371 – CHIPS
- Continue to advocate for a state budget that meets children’s needs by creating a plan for FY 12-13 budget advocacy that will, at a minimum, include funding for: adoption services, children’s behavioral health, services for transitioning youth, re-entry services for juvenile justice youth, maintaining the Foster Parent Training Stipend Allowance Program
- Engage the gubernatorial candidates in dialogue about the next state budget
- Convince ODJFS that counties should retain their responsibility for caseworkers visiting children in care
- Promote expanding access to IV-E reimbursement for a wider variety of independent living settings
- Facilitate the resolution of agency contracting concerns
- Advocate for changes to the IMD law and regulations to allow Ohio children access to Medicaid for necessary services
- Investigate a potential lawsuit to make Ohio compliant with the Child Welfare Act and its funding requirements
- Participate in OACCA’s advocacy efforts at all levels of government

2010 OACCA Public Policy Agenda – “Top 2010 Goals” (from Executive Summary, page 3)

1. Advocate for the state to come into full compliance with federal Medicaid and IV-E laws and federal Child and Family Service Review requirements. Children are entitled to a level of care that they do not always receive. Further, the state and its 88 counties have not been willing to reimburse private agencies for costs imposed from ever-changing and inconsistent requirements, including use of varying reporting forms and contracts;
2. Develop recommendations for cost cutting and consistency through regulatory reform in order to reduce the financial and administrative burden on private agencies without jeopardizing the care of children; and
3. Work closely with U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown, the National Association for Children’s Behavioral Health and the Ohio Departments of Job and Family Services and of Mental Health to maintain Medicaid eligibility of Ohio children receiving services in residential centers.