**Head Start**

One of the unique functions and a mandate of the Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council and County Family and Children First Councils is to coordinate child and family serving partners to identify and address the needs of children and families through ongoing planning, implementing effective strategies, monitoring & reporting, and evaluating progress toward achieving desired outcomes.

**Why you are here.**

* To promote early childhood education and connection to services.  Head Start lays the foundation for children's future learning and development and helps to prepare young children for success in school and beyond. Head Start also helps to identify developmental delays through screenings.
* To help kids prepare for school academically and socially; identify kids that are struggling and get services in place.
* To ensure that families served by Head Start are aware of services available and how to get involved.
* To recruit families in the community to enroll in head start/early head start.
* To examine early childhood supports and needs in the community.
* To collaborate with non-profit, system and government partners to increase the capacity to support eligible families and children.
* To help lead efforts to improve kindergarten readiness and provide your expertise on the needs and trends with young children and families with young children. Provide information and updates on your system of care, best practices, and the projects you are working on that others can assist with or simply need to be aware of.
* To fulfill governance and fiduciary responsibilities with respect to the operational and fiscal operations of the council.

**How can you support the system of care efforts in our community.**

* Share data regarding early childhood developmental needs.
* Share data from local surveys; common themes/needs among children and families.
* Identify the number of families that do and potentially could qualify for services.
* Share your needs assessments and strategic plans. Share information on successful programs. Provide indicators for the [shared plan](https://fcf.ohio.gov/fcfc-resources/shared-plan-and-updates/shared-plans-and-shared-plan-update).
* Share data on children in Head Start regarding the city's budget for opportunities to develop family programs, events, and activities that promote a sense of community and family engagement.
* Provide staff representation for Clinical Committees and other Council committees that work to support the well-being of families.
* Complete referrals to Family and Children First Council for service coordination, especially as children transition from Head Start to kindergarten.
* Provide in-kind supports with technology, payroll, office space, and/or supplies.