



CLARK COUNTY

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FINAL REPORT

JULY 2005



A partnership of United Way of Central Ohio, the City of Columbus and the John Glenn Institute at The Ohio State University



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Audience at the PFS
Strategic Initiatives
presentation, June 29,
2005



This Strategic Plan is the culmination of the work of hundreds of Clark County residents, representing a broad cross-section of disciplines, who invested thousands of hours using the Partnerships for Success (PFS) process in a focused effort to improve the quality of life in Clark County and beyond.

In 2004, Clark County leveraged a grant from the Ohio Family and Children First Council (Family Council) to implement the PFS Community Planning Process with the assistance of Ohio State University's Center for Learning Excellence and Community Research Partners.

The goal was to use the proven PFS process to create a data-informed, long-range strategic plan that would articulate evidence-based recommendations aimed at building on community strengths and addressing community weaknesses. This Youth and Families focused grant was generously supplemented by the local Funders Forum (see box), and Clark County ambitiously expanded the PFS model to develop broader, more holistic strategies for a total of six impact areas targeting social and economic improvement community wide. This marks the first time that a community used the PFS model to facilitate change in multiple areas at the same time.

A PFS Core Team was assembled and began mobilizing the community during the summer of 2004. More than 100 community members attended a 2-day PFS training session in October 2004. At that time, a Community Planning Team (CPT) and the following six workgroups were created. (Members of the Core Team, the CPT, and workgroups are listed in the Appendix.)

- ▶ Youth and Families
- ▶ Early Childhood Education
- ▶ Housing and Neighborhoods
- ▶ Vulnerable Adults and Families
- ▶ Economic Development
- ▶ Public Health

For each workgroup the Funders Forum and Family Council identified six Targeted Impacts. The workgroups employed the PFS model to conduct Needs Assessment (data collection and review), which allowed the overall list of 36 Targeted Impacts to be narrowed to 12. The Community Planning Team reviewed the Needs Assessment and selected six of these Targeted Impacts to move forward into Resource Assessment. During Resource Assessment, workgroups inventoried ways in which Clark County agencies are currently serving the community and identified where there was a significant need to do more. From this process, nine critical Gaps were identified. These Gaps addressed 5 of the original 36 Targeted Impacts.

It is important to note that the PFS process is designed to be data informed in identifying critical gaps in community assets so that community resources can be prudently mobilized toward long-term change. It seeks to identify needs

PfS Assessment Funding Partners

Alcohol Drug Mental Health Board
 Center City Association
 City of Springfield
 Clark County Combined Health District
 Clark County Commission
 Clark County Department of Job and Family Services
 Clark County Family and Children First Council
 Della Selsor Trust
 Nehemiah Foundation
 Springfield Clark County Chamber of Commerce
 Springfield Foundation
 Turner Foundation
 United Way of Clark and Champaign Counties

that are relatively “under-resourced” and is disciplined about requiring any recommendation to be evidence based. Once started, the process is meant to be fluid and ongoing. Each stage of the process provides a “snapshot” of a community at that point in time. The ongoing nature of the process encourages continual data collection so as to create a more comprehensive and useful look at the community at any given point in time.

The Strategic Initiatives workgroup’s charter was to use the Gap Analysis generated by the Resource Assessment process to develop recommendations for the Family Council and Funders Forum, and ultimately the community. The PfS process strongly urges that recommended initiatives be evidence-based or research based practices. The workgroup was made up of representatives from each of the active assessment area workgroups. Those representatives kept in continual contact with their respective workgroups to broaden the ideas and strategies brought to the table.

Implementation, the second phase of the PfS Process, will now commence. An Implementation Team will work with funders and the community to choose specific actions based on the strategic initiative recommendations. During this phase, success measures for the chosen actions will be more completely defined to make meaningful evaluation possible and to ensure maximum impact.

Partnerships for Success Process

The community planning process conformed to the requirements of the PfS Process. This includes selecting assessment areas and targeted impacts related to each area; undertaking needs assessments, resource assessments, and gaps analyses; and preparing a strategic plan based on evidence-based practices. The planning process involves significant community participation by leadership, stakeholder organizations, and citizens.

The three phases of Clark County’s PfS Planning Process were as follows:

Phase 1: Needs Assessment (July 2004-April 2005)—The goal of the Needs Assessment is to define both broad targets for change in the community (Targeted Impacts) and factors (risk, protection, and assets) that are most closely associated with the selected Targeted Impacts. (Report and appendices are available on CD-ROM and at <http://www.clarkfamilyfirst.org>.)

Phase 2: Resource Assessment (March-April 2005)—The goal of the Resource Assessment is to create a realistic profile of current programs, services, and activities in the community related to the Targeted Impacts identified in the Needs Assessment. Assessing current resources supports an analysis of the gaps that exist in the community’s programs and services. (Report is available on CD-ROM and at <http://www.clarkfamilyfirst.org>.)

Phase 3: Identification of Strategic Actions (May-June 2005)—The goal is a 5-year strategic plan that indicates how to address the community’s high-priority needs. The data-informed profile developed from the Needs Assessment and Resource Assessment generated the baseline indicators that will be useful as the plan is implemented and evaluated.

This report summarizes the recommendations of the Strategic Initiatives workgroup as presented to the Community Planning Team on June 29, 2005.

Six workgroups presented Needs Assessment results to the Community Planning Team and Funders Forum in late February 2005. The CPT directed four workgroups to move forward and conduct resource assessments of programs and services that address the following high-priority Targeted Impacts:

- ▶ School Success
- ▶ Violence
- ▶ Birth-to-3 Services
- ▶ Preschool Programs
- ▶ Health Risk Behaviors
- ▶ Foreclosures

Resource Assessment is an attempt to profile the services currently offered in a community so that gaps in service can be identified and addressed with Strategic Initiatives. To form a detailed profile, very specific information about current services is compiled.

At the outset of Resource Assessment, the workgroups selected factors that are closely associated with each Targeted Impact. These include reducing certain risk factors or enhancing protective factors or assets*. The PfS process requires that the workgroups select a limited subset of the factors that affect the Targeted Impact.

Once these factors were selected, the groups identified programs and agencies that they felt would likely address the selected factors. Workgroup members then customized a data collection tool provided by the PfS Academy and spent most of April conducting surveys.

Data from the surveys were entered into a database to facilitate analysis of the results. The groups thoroughly analyzed the results, paying special attention to gaps in addressing particular factors. The groups also considered whether programs or services addressing a particular factor were well balanced between offering prevention, early intervention, and systems of care (chronic intervention). The data also supported a preliminary analysis of the types of evaluation applied to each program.

The workgroups met to consider the Resource Assessment data they had compiled. They reviewed not only the number of programs that addressed each factor, but also the relative mix of prevention, early intervention, and systems of care (chronic intervention) offered and the type of evaluation data each program relied upon. Through review of these data and discussion, the group prioritized the risk factors or protective factors and assets that they felt had the most significant gaps in programs or services.

After each of the four workgroups had completed Resource Assessment and Gaps Analysis, members from the workgroups combined to discuss and prioritize the gaps which emerged. The gaps, shown below, were presented to the Community Planning Team (CPT) on May 19, 2005. The gaps shown in bold type are the ones that were recommended top priorities to address with strategic initiatives.

Highlights of the Resource Assessment

*A *risk factor* is a condition that contributes to the problem; a *protective factor* is a condition that helps prevent the problem. *Assets* are positive experiences and personal qualities that influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults.

Gaps Analysis

Strategic Initiatives Process

- ▶ Family values education
- ▶ **Parents involved in their children's schooling**
- ▶ Supportive communication between parents and students
- ▶ Age-appropriate, consistent discipline at home
- ▶ Community norms against violence
- ▶ Alienation of youth from the mainstream
- ▶ **Parents and caregivers demonstrating poor social/emotional health**
- ▶ **First-time parents demonstrating basic knowledge of infant care**
- ▶ **Infants and toddlers cared for and living in cognitively stimulating environments**
- ▶ **Programs that address obesity and overweight**
- ▶ **Providing pre-purchase financial counseling or education**
- ▶ Providing post-purchase, early-intervention financial counseling or education

Following the CPT meeting, a single Strategic Initiative workgroup was formed, with representation from each of the four assessment area workgroups. This group met to discuss procedures and then had a working session with David Julian and Mindy Hutcherson from the PfS Academy. The workgroup then reconvened to further prioritize the gaps to be addressed with Strategic Initiatives.

The gaps finally selected were as follows:

- ▶ Parents involved in their children's schooling
- ▶ Age-appropriate, consistent discipline at home
- ▶ Community norms against violence
- ▶ Parents and caregivers demonstrating poor social/emotional health
- ▶ First-time parents demonstrating basic knowledge of infant care
- ▶ Infants and toddlers cared for outside their homes in cognitively stimulating environments
- ▶ Programs that address obesity and overweight
- ▶ Providing pre-purchase financial counseling or education
- ▶ Providing post-purchase, early-intervention financial counseling or education

In addition, the Strategic Initiative workgroup chose to pursue development of a strategy to address difficulties in data collection and analysis that each group had encountered:

- ▶ *Ongoing data collection and analysis at a community level*

The strategies that address these gaps are the subject of this report.

To this point, the Partnerships for Success process implemented in Clark County has successfully used available data and community expertise to narrow a long list of important concerns into a short list of issues (Gaps) so underserved in our community that they are likely to create additional problems for the community in the future.

This summary is organized first by Workgroup, then by Targeted Impact, then by Gap. It provides an overview of the strategies recommended to address each Gap. In some cases a potential tactic is recommended.

A more in-depth articulation is provided in the next section of this report. It includes a complete explanation of each Gap and corresponding Strategy, the workgroup's rationale, compelling data, and general success measures. A list of additional strategies for consideration in future planning for these Gaps is in the Appendix.

Youth and Families Workgroup

Gap: Parent involvement in schooling

Strategy: Engage the parents or significant adults of elementary students who may otherwise be alienated from the educational environment with family and group activities in an educational environment during after-school hours.

Recommended Tactic: Expand the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program.

Strategy: Implement a plan to improve parent-teacher communications that encourages teachers to contact parents on regular basis to report positive elements in a student's work or behavior, particularly in sixth grade. The teachers may also inform parents of upcoming events or programs that will highlight the student's achievement.

Recommended Tactic: Implement the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program at the middle-school level county-wide.

Gap: Community norms against violence

Strategy: To positively and directly impact the youth in our county, we recommend addressing the violence-related norms present in the school and surrounding environment.

Recommended Tactic: Using the Positive Behavior Supports framework to include school and community participation, implement specific asset development programs that address clear and consistent rules and expectations within the school environment.

Targeted Impact:
School Success

Targeted Impact:
Violence

Gap: Age-appropriate, consistent discipline at home

Strategy: Increase the early intervention in parent-child relationships where early signs of abuse or neglect are evident. Provide capacity to address such relationships so “first responders” and others who see early signs of abuse potential are encouraged to intervene.

Recommended Tactic: Implement Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), a product of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Early Childhood Education Workgroup

Targeted Impact:
Birth-to-3 Services

Gap: Low public awareness of the importance of the Birth to 3 period for the development of a child’s educational and emotional readiness

Strategy: Increase community awareness of the importance of the Birth to 3 period of development. This strategy is fundamental to closing the other Early Childhood Education gaps.

Recommended Tactic: Implement an effective public awareness campaign.

Gap: Parents and caregivers demonstrate poor social/emotional health

Strategy: Implement a program to promote awareness of maternal depression, screen women with maternal depression, and refer them to treatment.

Gap: First-time parents lack basic knowledge of infant care

Strategy: Implement a parenting education program that provides comprehensive education around issues of child development, child care, stimulating environments, and the impact of social/emotional health on the development of the child.

Recommended Tactic: Select “Parents as Teachers,” “Triple P,” or “The Incredible Years” as a program to implement throughout the county.

Targeted Impact:
Preschool Settings

Gap: Many infants and toddlers are not being cared for outside their homes in cognitively stimulating environments

Strategy: Facilitate significant Clark County involvement with the Build Ohio Coalition to advance the value of high-quality childcare to employers, providers, and parents.

Public Health Workgroup

Gap: Overweight and obesity intervention in childhood

Strategy: Assemble an implementation workgroup to build sufficient capacity and seek grant funding for evidence-based programs to address adolescent overweight and obesity by involving adolescents and their families.

Recommended Tactic: A collaborative community effort to effectively address overweight and obesity issues, including referral resources and systems to assist children and families with awareness, adoption, and maintenance of healthy behavioral changes and lifestyle choices.

Housing and Neighborhoods Workgroup

Gap: Early intervention foreclosure prevention

Strategy: Enhance local capacity for positive early intervention in mortgage delinquencies.

Recommended Tactic: Partner with local lenders to identify and offer early delinquency counseling for their delinquent clients.

Gap: Financial literacy/money management

Strategy: Expand pre-purchase education and counseling programs.

Recommended Tactic: Expand the demand for, and capacity to provide, pre-purchase homebuyer counseling.

Recommended Tactic: Implement Junior Achievement's *JA Personal Finance* for students in grades 9-12 in Clark County.

Strategic Planning Workgroup

Gap (added by the Strategic Planning Workgroup): Our community lacks a centralized database for standardized data collection and regular trend analysis

Strategy: Assemble a task force to design a free-standing database and analysis platform that would be available to the community at large and to all of its social agency funders.

Targeted Impact:
Health Risk Behaviors

Targeted Impact:
Foreclosures

Targeted Impact:
Data-Informed Analysis and Decision Making (new target)

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of Strategies to Address Gaps

Strategic Initiative workgroup members researched evidence-based programs and continued to seek input from and discussion with the assessment area workgroups. Members continued to refer to the original Needs Assessment data, the Resource Assessment results, and their own knowledge of the community's capacity to support various strategies. Evidence-based programs were discussed in working sessions and via e-mail correspondence until a set of strategies and specific tactical recommendations was compiled.



The following pages present for each workgroup compelling data that justify the selection of gaps and the strategies that resulted from these discussions.

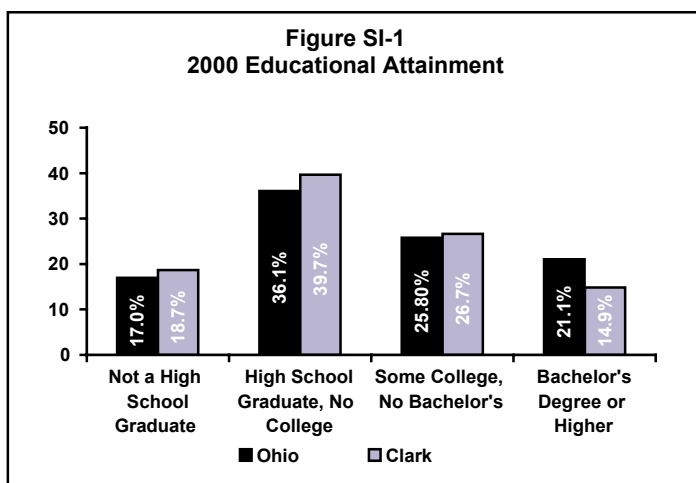
Photo: Winkie Mitchell,
Youth and Families
Workgroup, and Eli
Williams, Community
Planning Team

Compelling Indicator Data

Increasing school success is ranked as the top priority by the Youth and Families workgroup and the Community Planning Team. The educational attainment in Clark County is lower than in the state. The majority of school districts in Clark County do not meet the state standard for the fourth-grade reading and math proficiency tests and for the graduation rate. A detailed analysis of these compelling data follows.

**Table SI-1
Clark County Middle Schools and High Schools
Meeting the 2004 AYP**

	# of schools	# meeting AYP
High Schools	10	0
Middle Schools	12	12



Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3

¹Definitions

To meet the federal AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) requirements, all student groups (all races, all income levels, and students with disabilities) must be at or above the annual goals or make improvement over last year. Graduation and attendance goals must be met for the “all students” group.

Graduation rate: The Ohio Department of Education defines the graduation rate as the percentage of students who entered high school who received a regular diploma or honors diploma during the reporting year, including students who graduated the summer after the 12th grade and students who completed the course work and came back to finish the proficiency test and passed.

Adequate Yearly Progress¹

- ▶ All Clark County middle schools met the federal requirements for adequate yearly progress (AYP) in attendance in 2004. None of the county high schools met the AYP in graduation rate. (Table SI-1)

Educational Attainment

- ▶ In 2000, 81.2 percent of Clark County residents age 25 and over had a high school diploma or greater, compared to 73.4 percent in 1990. The percent with a bachelor’s degree or greater increased from 12.2 percent to 14.9 percent; these numbers are below the educational attainment level in the state (Figure SI-1).

Graduation Rate¹

- ▶ The overall graduation rate for the county was below the state standard in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 (Figure SI-2).
- ▶ All seven school districts showed an increase in the overall graduation rate.
- ▶ Four school districts (Clark-Shawnee, Northeastern, Northwestern, and Southeastern) met the state standard for graduation in 2002-2003. These four districts account for only 37 percent of total student enrollment in the county.
- ▶ Springfield City Schools have the lowest graduation rate (74.3 percent) among the seven county school districts. The district accounts for 40 percent of total student enrollment in the county.

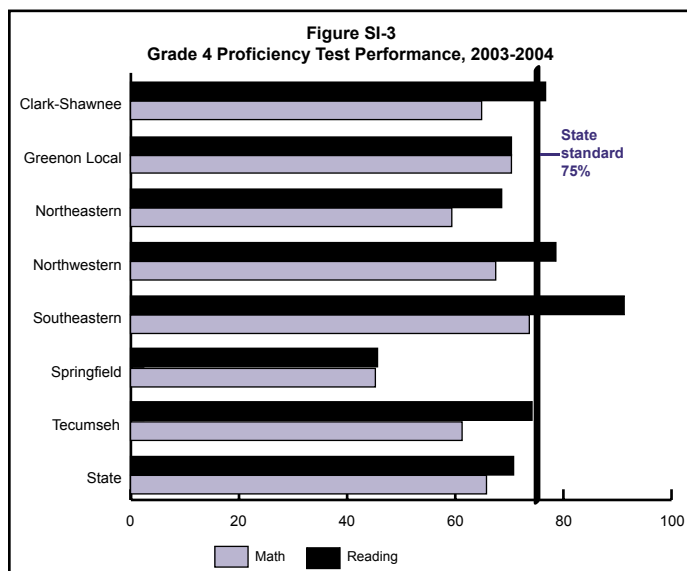
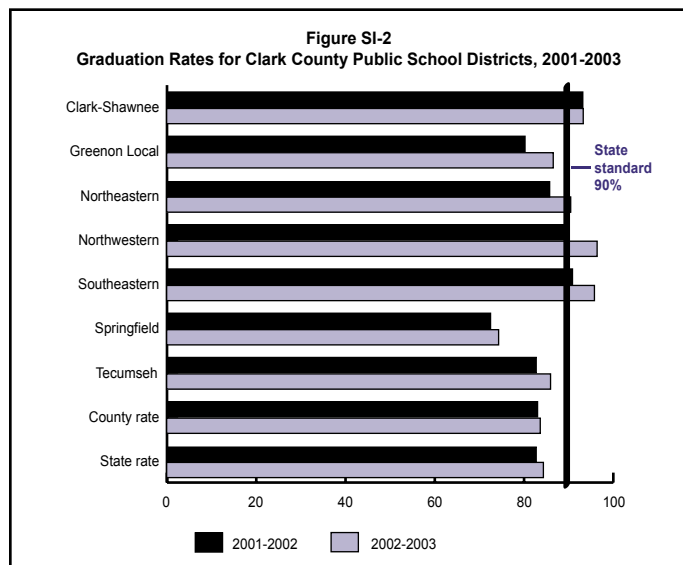
Proficiency Test Performance

Grade 4

- ▶ Overall, the county did not meet the state standard for fourth-grade proficiency test performance in reading and mathematics in the past 3 years.
- ▶ Proficiency test results improved in most school districts between 2001-2002 and 2003-2004. However, only 3 of 7 school districts and 8 of 27 school buildings met the state standard for reading in 2003-2004 (Figure SI-2, Table SI-2).
- ▶ None of the 7 school districts and only 3 of 27 school buildings met the state standard for fourth-grade mathematics in 2003-2004 school year.

Grade 6

- ▶ Overall, the county did not meet the state standard for sixth-grade proficiency test performance in reading and mathematics in the past 3 years.
- ▶ Most of the school districts showed improvements in proficiency test scores between 2001-2002 and 2003-2004. However, only 1 of the 7 school districts and 3 of the 16 school buildings met the state standard for sixth-grade reading in 2003-2004 school year (Table SI-2).
- ▶ Only 1 of the 7 school districts and only 4 of the 16 school buildings met the state standard for sixth-grade proficiency test performance in mathematics in 2003-2004 school year.



**Table SI-2
District and Building Performance on Proficiency Tests, 2001-2004**

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Reading Grade 4			
Districts meeting state standard (of 7)	1	0	3
Buildings meeting state standard (of 27)	5	4	8
Mathematics Grade 4			
Districts meeting state standard (of 7)	0	0	0
Buildings meeting state standard (of 27)	3	2	3
Reading Grade 6			
Districts meeting state standard (of 7)	0	3	1
Buildings meeting state standard (of 16)	0	5	3
Mathematics Grade 6			
Districts meeting state standard (of 7)	2	0	1
Buildings meeting state standard (of 16)	3	1	4

Source (Figures SI-2 and 3, Table SI-2): Ohio Department of Education, Interactive Local Report Card

Gap: Parent involvement in schooling

Increased involvement of parents and families² is often cited as one of the most important ways to improve public schools³. A variety of studies (Henderson and Berla, 1994⁴) confirm that parent involvement makes an enormous impact on students' attitude, attendance, and academic achievement⁵. Although some working and single parents may be unable to contribute to schools because of work commitments and time constraints, educators are discovering many additional ways that parents can help students and their schools. Some of these ways are dependent upon the school's desire to involve parents. To effect change, parents must find time to participate in their children's education whereas schools must provide the supports necessary for them to be involved. The resulting partnerships between parents and teachers will increase student achievement and promote better cooperation between home and school. Together these efforts will connect families and schools to help children succeed⁶ in school and in their future.

Strategy #1

Engage the parents or significant adults of elementary students who may otherwise be alienated from the educational environment with family and group activities in an educational environment during after-school hours.

Tactic

Expand the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program. This program, aimed at families of young at-risk students, includes a component of home visitation during the recruitment phase. The FAST program is currently implemented in two Springfield elementary schools by the Family Service Agency.

Evidence

FAST has been evaluated locally as well as nationally. The FAST experimental studies across populations and sites show statistically significant results in the following selected areas. (Results in additional areas available at www.wcer.wisc.edu/FAST/).

- ▶ Increased FAST parent involvement in school
- ▶ Improved FAST child's academic competence and performance
- ▶ Improved FAST child's behavior (social skills and attention span)
- ▶ Reduced FAST child's problem behaviors

Sources

²"Involvement of Parents and Families" (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/famncomm/pa1lk1.htm>)

³"One of the Most Important Ways to Improve Public Schools" (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/famncomm/pa1lk2.htm>)

⁴Henderson, A., and Berla, N. (Eds.). (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education, Center for Law and Education.

⁵"Parent Involvement Makes an Enormous Impact" (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/famncomm/pa1lk3.htm>)

⁶"Connecting Families and Schools to Help Our Children Succeed" (U.S. Department of Education, 1994, <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/02-1994/parent.html>)

Success Measures

1. Participating students will positively increase attendance rates.
2. Participating parents will increase their interactions with school personnel.

Strategy #2

Implement a plan to improve parent-teacher communications that encourages teachers to contact parents on regular basis to report positive improvements in a student's work or behavior, particularly in sixth grade. The teachers may also inform parents of upcoming events or programs that will highlight the student's achievement.

Tactic

The Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is recommended as a framework that can facilitate community participation in implementing specific programs. It could first be implemented at the middle-school level in all districts in Clark County.

- ▶ PBS emphasizes proactive strategies and the creation of a positive school atmosphere. It is not just for the students identified as being the "problem kids" but for all children. The vast majority of students do not present serious behavior problems in school. They are however, often affected by the disruptive behavior of other students. Since PBS emphasizes proactive strategies, all students can benefit from PBS. (See articles at www.ncoserrc.k12.oh.us.)
- ▶ PBS elements include setting academic and behavior targets that are endorsed and emphasized by students, families, and educators; implementing interventions and strategies that are evidence based; and incorporating data-based effectiveness used to identify status, need for change, and effects of interventions. (www.pbis.org)

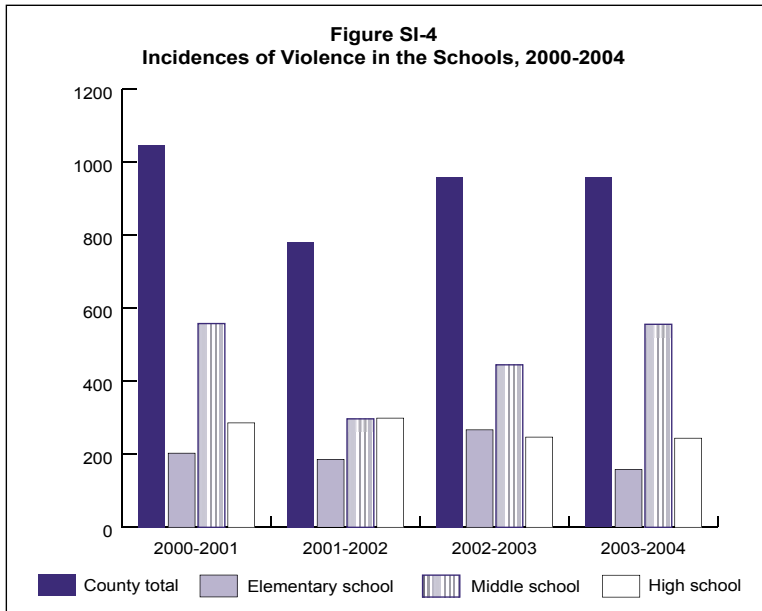
An implementation workgroup that includes community and school representatives should be formed to select the most feasible program and determine which school districts will participate. These decisions should be made by August 19, 2005. The implementation workgroup must include middle school representatives in addition to community members who have expertise and/or interest in education.

Evidence

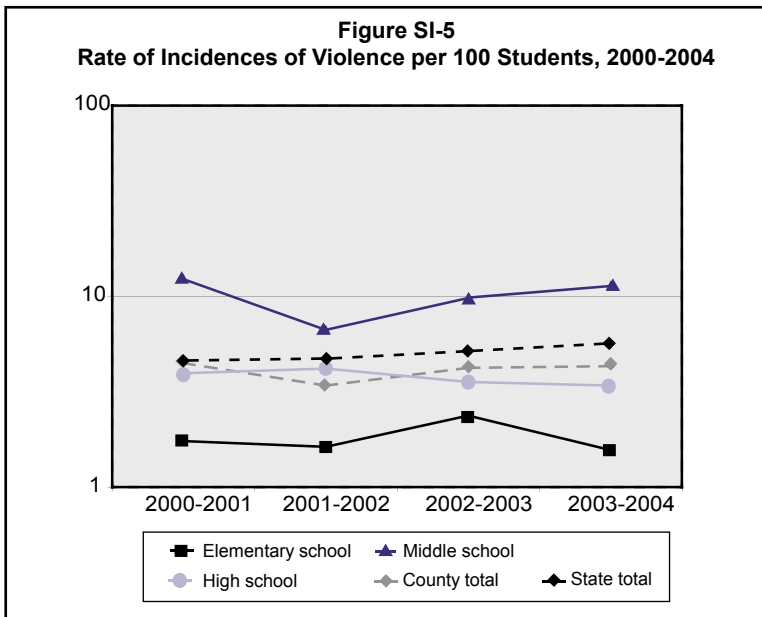
This evidence-based program has been documented in many Ohio counties and nationally.

Success Measures

1. Increase the number of students and parents receiving positive feedback.
2. Increase the frequency of teacher contacts with parents throughout the school year.



Source: Ohio Department of Education, Interactive Local Report Card



Source: Ohio Department of Education, Interactive Local Report Card

Compelling Indicator Data

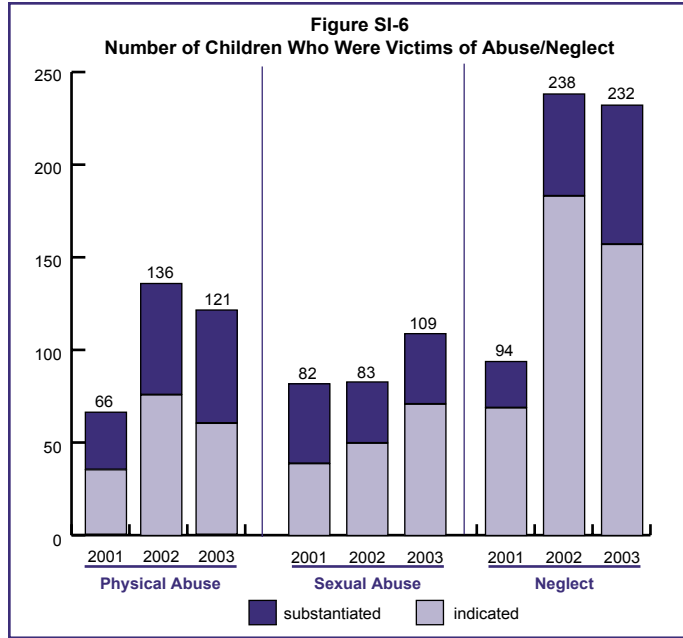
Decreasing violence among youth is ranked as the second-highest priority by the Youth and Families workgroup. The rate of violence in middle schools compared to elementary or high schools is particularly noteworthy. Clark County is also seeing a striking rise in overall abuse and neglect and a shift toward a larger percentage of juvenile adjudications for more serious offenses. A detailed analysis of these compelling data follows.

Incidences of Violence

- ▶ The overall rate of incidences of fighting/violence in Clark County schools has been below the state rate in the past 3 school years (Figure SI-5).
- ▶ Springfield City Schools had the highest rate of incidences at all three levels; this district accounts for 40 percent of the total county enrollment. Tecumseh had a rate above the county average only in middle schools.
- ▶ County wide, the rate and incidence of violence in middle schools are higher, compared to elementary or high school. The middle school rate is also increasing (Figures SI-4 and SI-5).
- ▶ The number of juvenile adjudications for violent offenses has fluctuated between 2000 and 2003. The 2003 total is 7 percent higher than the number in 2000.

Abuse and Neglect

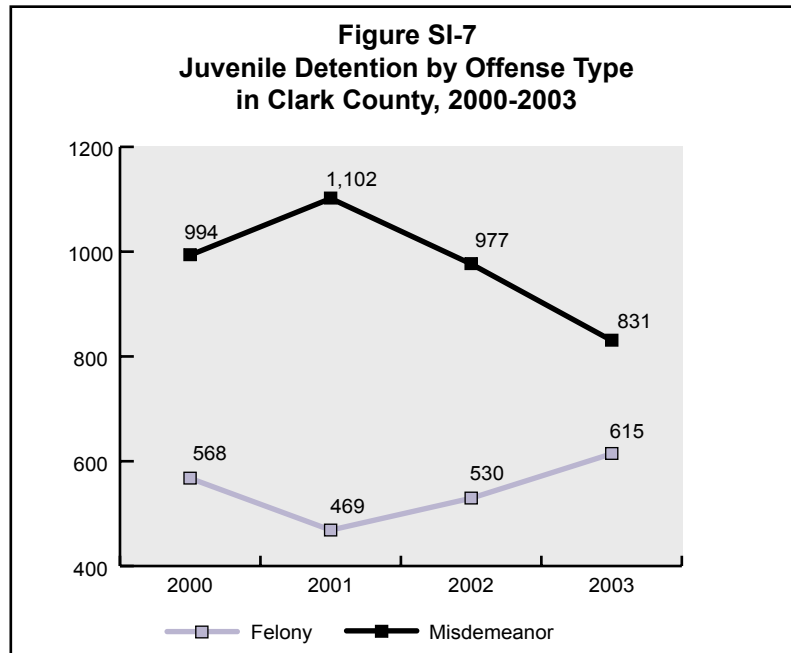
- ▶ The number of indicated/substantiated reports of abuse or neglect in Clark County increased from 190 in 2000 to 462 in 2003 (143 percent increase). The state of Ohio overall showed a decline between 2002 and 2003.
- ▶ Of the total reports of abuse or neglect in 2003, 26.2 percent were related to physical abuse, 23.6 percent were related to sexual abuse, and 50.2 percent were related to neglect (Figure SI-6).
- ▶ The number of neglect reports showed a four-fold increase between 2000 and 2003.
- ▶ The number of physical and sexual abuse reports nearly doubled between 2000 and 2003.



Sources: Clark County Children Services; Public Children Services Association of Ohio, Fact Book

Juvenile Detention

- ▶ Total admissions to the Juvenile Detention Center decreased by 7.4 percent from 1,562 in 2000 to 1,446 in 2003.
- ▶ Between 2000 and 2003, the admissions for misdemeanors decreased by 16.4 percent. However, the admissions for more serious felony crimes increased by 8.3 percent during the same period (Figure SI-7).
- ▶ The number of Clark County youth bound over to adult court increased from 13 in 2000 to 30 in 2003. The overall numbers for Ohio declined during this period.



Source: Clark County Juvenile Court

The attitudes and policies a community holds in relation to drug use, firearms, and crime are communicated in a variety of ways: through laws and written practices, informal social practices, and the expectations parents and other members of the community have of young people (Channing Bete Company). Due to current economic conditions and to Clark County's socioeconomic make-up, attitudes and behaviors that are necessary for "street survival" or "survival in poverty" have become more common in a variety of environments such as schools.

Gap: Community norms against violence

Strategy

To positively and directly impact the youth in Clark County, we recommend addressing the community norms present in the school and surrounding environment.

Tactic

Using the Positive Behavior Supports framework to include school and community participation, implement specific programs that address clear and consistent rules and expectations within the school environment (school boundaries⁷).

Evidence

Existing research and evidence-based programs that specifically address youth violence in the school environment are available from the Search Institute, Channing Bete Company, and other providers. We recommend the implementation workgroup also administer a youth survey, such as the Search Institute Survey of Developmental Assets, to develop baseline data for planning and evaluative purposes.

Success Measures

1. Increase the violence-related asset scores of the county's youth, as measured by the Search Institute Survey of Developmental Assets, administered to students community wide before the start of the campaign and at meaningful intervals during the campaign.
2. Reduce the number of school referrals based on behavioral problems.
3. Reduce the number of suspensions from school due to violence.

⁷"School Boundaries" is one of the 40 Developmental Assets described by the Search Institute (www.search-institute.com) as being important for adolescents if they are to develop into successful adults.

Gap: Age-appropriate, consistent discipline at home

Nearly a half century of psychological research has shown that violence is a learned behavior, which is often learned when a child is very young. But young children can be taught nonviolence just as well, from the best teachers they have—the parents and other adults around them. They can learn constructive ways to solve problems, deal with frustration, and handle anger. Children who learn these skills early in life are far less likely to grow up to be violent or to be victims of violence (www.actagainstviolence.org/violprevent).

Our community has programs and agencies that intervene in child abuse and neglect when the neglect or abuse is at a level that requires the most serious consequences (legal proceedings, change of custody). However, “first responders” (often law enforcement officers) do not have sufficient intervention and referral options if the abuse is not severe enough to warrant opening a case.

Short-Term Strategy

Increase the early intervention in parent-child relationships where early signs of abuse or neglect are evident. Provide capacity to address such relationships so “first responders” and others who see early signs of abuse potential are encouraged to intervene.



Tactic

Implement Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), a product of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (www.NCTSNet.org).

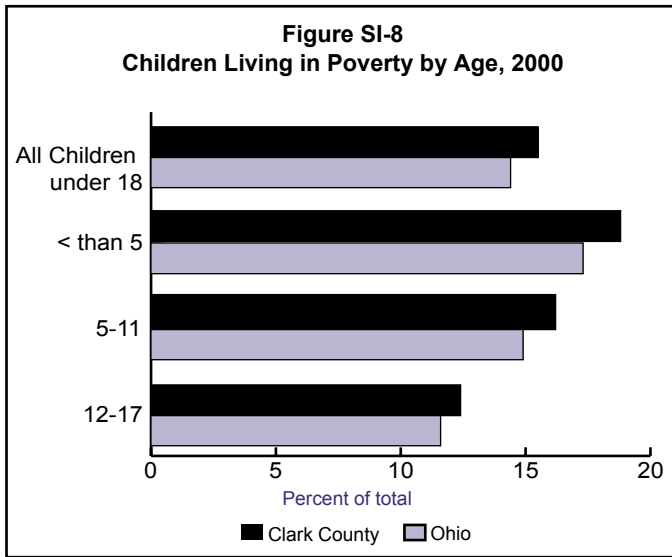
Evidence

This program is evidence based and nationally endorsed by NCTSN and by the Office of Victims of Crime. Specific evidence of effectiveness can be found on the website listed above.

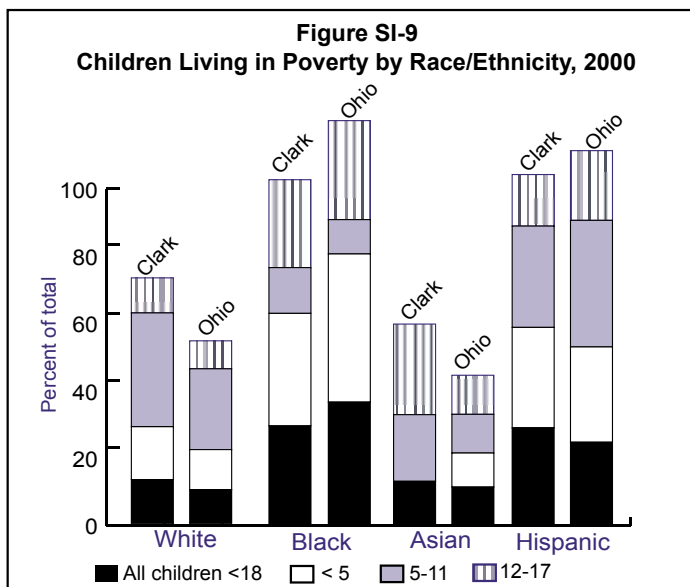
Success Measures

1. Improvement in the quality of parent-child relationships,
2. Increase in parenting skills, including positive discipline.

Photo: Don Reed, Community Planning Team, and Amy Riegel, Youth and Families Workgroup



Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3



Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3

Compelling Indicator Data

Children Living in Poverty

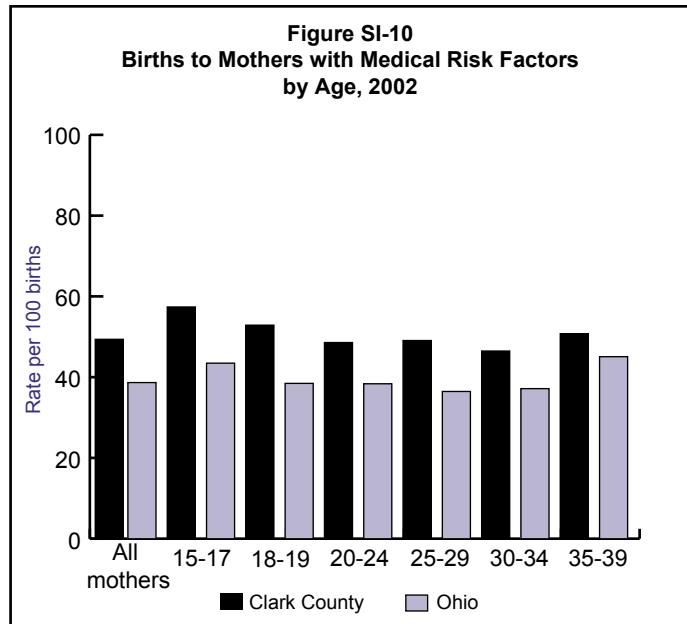
- ▶ In 2000, there were 5,531 children in Clark County living in poverty. Of these, 1,785 were less than 5 years of age. The poverty rate⁸ for children in Clark County was slightly higher compared to the rate for the state.
- ▶ Black and Hispanic children in Clark County were more than twice as likely to be poor compared to white or Asian children.

⁸Definition

Poverty rate: The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is poor. Poverty rate is the percent of all persons/families for whom poverty status is determined with incomes less than the poverty thresholds. Poverty status is not determined for select population groups, such as those in group quarters.

Efficacy of Prenatal Care

- ▶ In 2002, the Clark County rate for births to mothers with medical risk factors⁹ (49.4 per 100 births) was more than 10 percentage points higher compared to the state rate (38.7 per 100 births). The rate for Clark has increased by more than 6 percentage points since 2000.
- ▶ In 2002, mothers in the 15-19 age group had the highest rate for births with medical risk factors in Clark County. Among races, black mothers had the highest rate (62.1 per 100 births).
- ▶ In 2002, the rate of births to teens (15-17 years) in Clark County (31.1 per 1,000) was substantially higher than the state rate (19.9 per 1,000).
- ▶ Compared to the state, a higher percentage of births in Clark County in the past 3 years have been to mothers with an education level of high school or lower.



Source: Ohio Department of Health, Information Warehouse

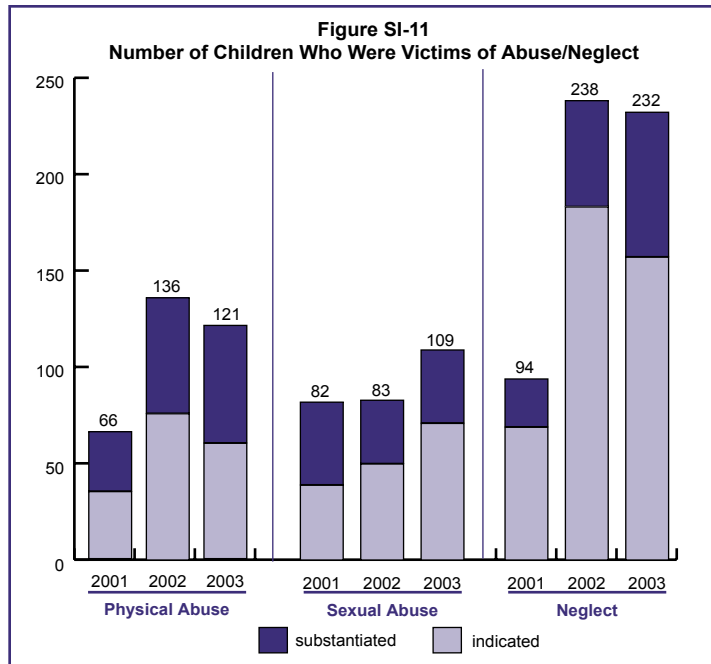
**Table SI-3
Births by Education Level of the Mother, 2000-2002
(Percent of Total Births)**

	Clark			Ohio		
	2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
Grades 1-8	1.6%	1.8%	2.5%	2.9%	3.0%	3.1%
Grades 9-11	21.8%	21.5%	21.5%	14.6%	14.1%	13.8%
Grade 12	40.1%	40.4%	37.4%	34.5%	34.5%	33.4%
College 1-3 years	21.6%	22.4%	24.6%	22.2%	22.1%	22.4%
College 4 or more years	14.6%	14.0%	14.1%	24.9%	25.5%	26.4%
Unknown	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%

Source: Ohio Department of Health, Information Warehouse

⁹Definition

Medical risk factors include anemia, pregnancy-associated hypertension, and diabetes.



Sources: Clark County Children Services; Public Children Services Association of Ohio, Fact Book

Table SI-4
Kindergarten Readiness Scores,
Springfield City Schools

	Combined Scores 2002	Combined Scores 2003	August 2004
Motor	63	61	60
Concepts	50	46	53
Language	49	42	45
Composite	54	48	52
Scores are expressed as percentiles.			

Source: Springfield City School District Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL-3) data

¹⁰Definitions

Child abuse/neglect can include (1) physical abuse—a child with bruises, marks, or injuries inflicted by other than accidental means; (2) sexual abuse—any sexual activity between a child and adult; (3) emotional abuse—a child who is belittled, ignored, or subject to mental or psychological maltreatment; (4) neglect—a parent or caregiver fails to act on behalf of a child to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical care, supervision, or education; or (5) dependent child—a child who is homeless, destitute, or without adequate parental care and support through no fault of the parent or caregiver, or a child who lives in a home in which another child is abused, neglected, or dependent.

Substantiated report of child abuse/neglect: Report finds an admission of child abuse or neglect by the person responsible, an adjudication of child abuse or neglect, other forms of confirmation deemed valid by the Public Children Services Agency, or professional judgment that the child has been abused or neglected.

Indicated report of child abuse/neglect: Report finds that there are circumstantial, medical, or other isolated indicators of child abuse or neglect, but confirmation is lacking.

Abuse and Neglect

- ▶ The number of indicated/substantiated reports of abuse or neglect¹⁰ in Clark County increased from 190 in 2000 to 462 in 2003 (143 percent increase). The state of Ohio overall showed a decline between 2002 and 2003.
- ▶ Of the total reports of abuse or neglect in 2003, 26.2 percent were related to physical abuse, 23.6 percent were related to sexual abuse, and 50.2 percent were related to neglect.
- ▶ The number of neglect reports showed a four-fold increase between 2000 and 2003.
- ▶ The number of physical and sexual abuse reports nearly doubled between 2000 and 2003.

Kindergarten Readiness

- ▶ The composite score for the city of Springfield increased between 2003 and 2004, but is lower than in 2002.
- ▶ There is a need to focus on language—preparing children for school.

Overarching Gap: Public understanding of the importance of the birth to three time period as critical for a child’s long term education and emotional health

Prominent brain research shows that the early years of life provide the best opportunity to influence a child’s moral, intellectual and physical growth. Studies have shown that when a child has high-quality early childhood experiences, there is a reduced need for special education and welfare programs. Children with good early childhood experiences are less likely to end up in the criminal justice system (High/Scope Foundation). If a child begins school without high-quality early experiences, it is difficult—if not impossible—to catch up.

Strategy

Increase community awareness of the importance of birth to 3 period of development. This strategy is recommended to create an environment in which all strategies to address early childhood and youth and families issues are more successful.

Tactics

Implement an “off-the-shelf” public awareness campaign, available from organizations such as the Family and Work Institute, the I Am Your Child Foundation, or develop a local campaign based on model campaigns, such as that available at www.cabellwayne-youngchild.org.

Success Measures

1. Increased participation in effective parenting programs
2. Increased parenting skills demonstrated by participants
3. Better informed consumers of childcare services

Gap: Parents/ caregivers exhibit poor social/ emotional health

A variety of factors, including physical, emotional, social, economic, and educational issues contribute to a parent or caregiver’s ability to adequately nurture young children. Local data indicate that these many of these issues are more significant in our county than the state average. In addition, workgroup members’ collective anecdotal evidence indicates maternal depression is common, there is an increasing number of children who appear to have attachment disorders, and children are exhibiting more severe behavior problems at young ages. Children of parents who experience depression are more likely to exhibit symptoms of depression and behavioral problems.

Strategy

Implement a program to promote awareness of maternal depression, screen women with maternal depression, and refer them to treatment.

Evidence

When parents receive treatment for depression, their infants, toddlers, and children exhibit fewer symptoms and parents become more emotionally available in ways that promote appropriate behavior¹¹.

Success Measures

1. Decrease in number of parents/caregivers who exhibit poor social/emotional health
2. Increase in mothers and caregivers receiving appropriate treatment for depression
3. Improvement in depressive symptoms of child and parent after completion of treatment

If parents are to provide safe and nurturing environments for their children, they must understand the importance of a variety of physical, emotional, and cognitive supports. Local data on the number of teen parents, the low educational attainment of parents, the medical maternal risk factors, and the increasing prevalence of child abuse and neglect indicate a significant gap in knowledge of appropriate infant care.

Strategy

Implement a parenting education program that provides comprehensive education around issues of child development, child care, stimulating environments, and impact of social/emotional health on the development of the child.

“Parents as Teachers,” an evidence-based program that has documented results with parents, children, and the parent-child relationship may be appropriate to be implemented throughout Clark County. This program is currently available, but only to a very small number of families, through Help Me Grow; however, it is a stand-alone program that could be implemented by other organizations or agencies and made available to a wider range of ages and income levels. Alternative evidence-based programs include “Triple P” and “The Incredible Years.” An implementation workgroup should select one of these programs by mid-September.

Evidence

Results for the PAT, Triple P, and The Incredible Years programs are available at <http://www.parentsasteachers.org>, <http://www1.triplep.net/>, and <http://www.incredibleyears.com/>

Gap: Parents lack knowledge of infant, toddler, and child growth and development, beginning with prenatal care

¹¹Sources

Hernandez-Reif, Maria; Field, Tiffany; Diego, Miguel; and Largie, Shay. (2002, November). “Depressed mothers’ newborns show longer habituation and fail to show face/voice preference.” *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 23(6), 643-653. (2002).

Kelley, Sue A., and Jennings, Kay Donahue. (2003, January-February). “Putting the pieces together: Maternal depression, maternal behavior, and toddler helplessness.” *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 24(1), 74-90. (2003).

Lundy, Brenda; Field, Tiffany; Cigales, Maricel; and Cuadra, Anai. (1997, Fall). “Vocal and facial expression matching in infants and mothers with depressive symptoms.” *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 18(3), 265-273. (1997).

Zeanah, Charles H. (2000). *Handbook of infant mental health. 2d ed.* New York: Guilford Press.

Gap: Infants and toddlers are not being cared for outside their homes in cognitive stimulating environments

Success Measures

1. Children of participating parents have higher kindergarten readiness scores.
2. Participating parents are more confident in their parenting skills.

Children with high-quality early childhood experiences start school ready to learn. They are more likely to graduate from high school and be productive members of the workforce (High/Scope Foundation). The key to harnessing each child’s potential is the environment. Children need enriching experiences. They need to have their senses stimulated through music, books, toys, and especially people who love them.

Strategy

Facilitate significant Clark County involvement with the Build Ohio Coalition to advance the value of quality childcare, both to employers, providers, and to parents. Build Ohio is an alliance with the following goals:

A comprehensive, well-integrated early care and education system that—

1. Provides high-quality services and supports in a variety of settings
2. Utilizes a well-trained and educated professional workforce
3. Is available and affordable to all families who want and need it
4. Prepares children for success in school

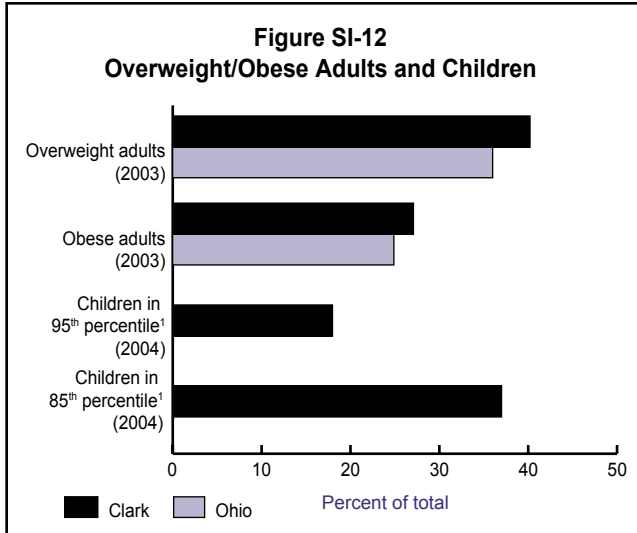
Workgroups within Build Ohio are addressing quality (Step Up to Quality) and public awareness, among other relevant topics.



Success Measures

1. Formal collaboration between established Clark County organizations and Build Ohio or its workgroups
2. Implementation of a public awareness or voluntary quality improvement process in Clark County

Photo: Denise Sharp and Jeannine Fox, Early Childhood Education Workgroup



Sources: *Adults*—Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Ohio Department of Health and Clark County Combined Health District; *Children*—Rocking Horse Center, Springfield (subset of patients at the center)

Compelling Indicator Data

- ▶ The percentage of overweight and obese¹² adults in Clark County is substantially higher compared to the state.
- ▶ In 2004, a chart review of children treated at the Rocking Horse Center in Clark County showed that 18.0 percent were overweight¹². An additional 19.0 percent were at risk of becoming overweight. Comparative data for the state were not available.

¹²Definitions

For adults, overweight and obesity ranges are determined by using weight and height to calculate a number called the “body mass index” (BMI). BMI is used because, for most people, it correlates with their amount of body fat.

Adults

- ▶ An adult who has a BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight.
- ▶ An adult who has a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese.

Since total body fat normally changes with a child’s age, BMI is then compared with age- and sex-specific percentile standards based on large national surveys of children as old as age 20.

Children

- ▶ At risk of overweight: BMI-for-age 85th percentile to < 95th percentile
- ▶ Overweight: BMI-for-age > 95th percentile

**Gap: Adolescent
overweight
and obesity
intervention**

Obesity in Clark County seems to have increased over time in adults. Extensive local data for overweight and obesity in children are not readily available. (BMI data for children in Clark County are currently being collected).

Like adult obesity, the prevalence of childhood obesity is rising. As these children age, the obesity epidemic will lead to epidemics of diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Adults who want to lose weight can choose from many pharmaceutical and over-the-counter weight loss products and programs, but substantial, sustained weight loss is rare. However, studies in obese children suggest that interventions focused on improved eating and activity behavior may lead to marked, sustained weight loss, with long-term outcomes superior to adult studies. Intervention in childhood may be particularly effective to prevent obesity, control additional weight gain, and reduce excess weight when already present¹³. However, “the treatment of childhood obesity should not focus on the overweight child. Rather the treatment approach should focus on the behavior of the entire family, the behavior of the parents, siblings, and any other caregivers or role models living at home”¹⁴

An analysis of the resources in our community indicates that there are opportunities to determine if a child or adult are overweight or obese. This usually occurs during a visit to a primary care provider, but also at various health fairs and/or school screenings. However, there do not appear to be referral resources to assist children and families in addressing overweight or obesity issues once identified. Additionally, systems to assist children and families with education related to physical activity, healthy eating, and healthy meal preparation are limited. Although there are advocates for obesity intervention within Clark County, there is not a collaborative community effort to effectively address overweight and obesity issues.

Strategy

Assemble an implementation workgroup to build sufficient capacity and seek grant funding for evidence-based programs to address adolescent overweight and obesity by including adolescents and their families. The CANfit Program (www.canfit.org/programs) and programs compiled by the American Association of Pediatrics (www.aap.org/obesity), National YMCA, and the Harvard School of Public Health include evidence-based best practices that support community collaboration targeting overweight and obesity issues.

The implementation workgroup should include representatives from the Health Department, the Action for Healthy Kids Coalition, pediatric practices and clinics, the YMCAs, the National Trails and Parks Recreation District, and the school districts, as well as other interested community members. The workgroup should be formed by mid-September, 2005, and have finalized the selection of an evidence-based program by January 2006.

Sources

¹³Barlow, S. E., et al. (2002, July). “Treatment of child and adolescent obesity: Reports from pediatricians, pediatric nurse practitioners, and registered dietitians.” *Pediatrics*, 110(1), pt. 2, 229-235.]

¹⁴<http://www.shapeup.org>

Evidence

Community action, at national or local levels, can help promote healthier physical activity and eating habits. Health care visits, during which providers can identify, evaluate, and treat obesity, offer more individualized opportunities to prevent and manage obesity in children and adolescents. (Barlow et al, 2002)

Success Measures

1. Sufficient capacity is in place to support introduction of an ongoing obesity management program for adolescents.
2. Participating adolescents demonstrate progress in increasing physical activity.
3. Participating adolescents demonstrate improvement in nutrition and/or appropriate caloric intake.

Compelling Indicator Data

- ▶ Like the state, Clark is experiencing more foreclosure filings. Between 2000 and 2003, the number of foreclosures in Clark County increased by 69.4 percent compared to a 61.3 percent increase for the state.
- ▶ In 2003, 1 of every 60 households experienced foreclosure. Clark has the fourth-highest foreclosure filing rate¹⁵ in Ohio.
- ▶ Between 2000 and 2003, the number of sheriff sales¹⁵ in Clark County increased by 45.6 percent. Clark has the 14th-highest rate of sheriff sales in the state.

**Table SI-5
Foreclosure Rates, 2000-2003**

	Clark				Ohio			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
New foreclosure filings	556	733	904	942	35,377	43,419	55,274	57,083
Filing rate		77		60	NA			78
Filing rate rank among Ohio Counties	NA		NA	4				
Sheriff sales	410	523	468	597		24,597		36,505
Sheriff sale rate		108		95		181		118
Sales rate rank	NA	6	NA	14		NA		

Source: Policy Matters Ohio, Home Insecurity Foreclosure Growth in Ohio—2002, 2004

¹⁵Definitions

Filing rate is the number of households divided by the number of new foreclosures. In Clark County in 2003, one of every 60 households had the home foreclosed.

Sheriff sale rate is the number of households divided by the number of sheriff sales.

Foreclosure intervention programs address the needs of homeowners once they have encountered problems meeting their mortgage obligations, generally once they are in default. The major goals of foreclosure intervention programs are to assist homeowners in becoming more financially stable and to allow homeowners to keep their homes, or, if that is not possible, to find alternative housing. Foreclosure intervention services provide crisis intervention and are delivered primarily through one-on-one counseling face-to-face, over the telephone or, less commonly, over the Internet.

Strategy

Enhance local capacity for positive early intervention in mortgage delinquencies.

Recommended Tactic

Partner with local lenders to identify and offer early delinquency counseling for their delinquent clients. In such a program, a local, non-lender-based organization would partner with local lenders by establishing early delinquency notification agreements. The lenders would refer names of delinquent clients to the organization for foreclosure intervention services, including counseling and assistance with developing a plan to avoid foreclosure, correct credit deficiencies, and improve their money management abilities.

Evidence

There are a number of best-practice organizations providing loan-based foreclosure prevention that can serve as model programs for a Clark County implementation. These include Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Greater Atlanta, Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership and the Home Ownership Center. (Source: Report by Christi Baker from the Fannie Mae Foundation available at KnowledgePlex.org)

Success Measure

Decrease the foreclosure rates for the loans of referred lenders.

Gap: Early
intervention
foreclosure
prevention

Gap: Financial literacy/money management skills

Homeowners make poor financial decisions that lead to and exacerbate their financial problems, including home ownership. It is not unusual for homeowners to wish to refinance their mortgage for a variety of reasons, such as to obtain lower interest rates or better loan terms or access money for unexpected costs or emergencies. New homeowners are commonly bombarded with offers for refinancing and home equity loans from a variety of sources, including lenders offering predatory loans. Refinancing is often a time when homeowners fall prey to bad financing options and/or become over-extended financially. Homeowners need reliable information on how and when to refinance their mortgage loans or obtain home equity loans.

Strategy

Expand pre-purchase counseling programs.

Recommended Tactic

Expand the demand for, and capacity to provide, pre-purchase homebuyer counseling.

Evidence

Education and counseling on topics such as budgeting for life as a homeowner, maximizing your home as an asset, insuring your home, paying for repairs and improvements, and home maintenance reduce the long-term likelihood of foreclosure. In 2002, Staten, Elliehausen, and Lundquist¹⁶ of Georgetown University found counseling helps borrowers have better overall credit health. Hartarska, Gonzalez-Vega, and Dobos¹⁷ of Ohio State University reported that counseled borrowers present half the default-risk of non-counseled and lenders can better measure “ability to pay.”

A local program offered by the Neighborhood Housing Partnership provides Homebuyer Education to low-income persons. Initial data from this program show success in minimizing foreclosures among those who purchased a home after the pre-purchase counseling (161 of 163).

Success Measure

The number of clients who were delinquent or in foreclosure but remain in their homes after 1 year and 3 years as compared to the general foreclosure rate for the county.

Sources

¹⁶Staten, Michael; Elliehausen, Gregory; and Lundquist, Christopher. (2002, March). *The Impact of Credit Counseling on Subsequent Borrower Credit Usage and Payment Behavior. Monograph #36*. Washington, DC: Credit Research Center, Georgetown University.

¹⁷Hartarska, Valentina; Gonzalez-Vega, Claudio; and Dobos, David. (2002, February). “Credit Counseling and the Incidence of Default on Housing Loans by Low-Income Households.” Columbus: Rural Finance Program, The Ohio State University.

Recommended Tactic

Implement Junior Achievement's *JA Personal Finance* for students in grades 9-12 in Clark County. This program consists of a series of 8-16 activities designed to help students make informed decisions about the effective use of income to reach personal financial goals. Students complete activities that explore the option of buying a home, explain the differences between 15- and 30-year mortgages, analyze interest rates, types of mortgages, the importance of location when purchasing a home, and hypothetical debt to income ratios for various salary ranges to determine the feasibility of home ownership. *JA Personal Finance* also provides an activity related to personal financial responsibility, budgeting, and choosing among alternatives in spending for housing, transportation, and consumer goods. Students in the program also learn about the advantages and disadvantages of credit, explore the rights and responsibilities of credit users, and compare rates to allow them to determine the credit that suits their needs. They analyze the pros and cons of several specific actions that can be taken in case of credit over-extension or other financial difficulties.

Evidence

In September 2003, the Worldwide Institute for Research and Evaluation (WIRE) conducted a comprehensive evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the *JA Personal Finance* program. They administered objective-referenced testing (ORT) to the students both before and after completion of the program. Students participating in the study scored an average of 15 percentage points higher on the post evaluation ORT than the pre-program ORT. *JA Personal Finance* was also shown to have an impact on students' attitudes and perceptions through the administration of a quality of life survey. This evaluation revealed that program impact is positive and is likely to be realized for most students who participate. Findings show that students who participated in *JA Personal Finance* increased their understanding of economic, business, and financial concepts and also increased their awareness of how this knowledge relates to important decisions in their own lives.

Success Measure

1. Financial literacy program is offered in more high schools during the next school year.
2. Participating students show improved financial literacy (results of pre- and post-testing).

Gap : Central database with standardized data collection and regular trend analysis

This gap was added by the Strategic Initiatives workgroup. Throughout the PfS process it was clear that a consistent data collection mechanism does not exist in our community. Data collection and retention vary from organization to organization and from field to field. Data, when found, vary in depth, dependability, and format. This situation leaves funders unable to consistently reference uniform statistical information or cross-reference evidence from program to program. Establishing data-informed, “big-picture” priorities and engaging in data-informed decision making is difficult in most instances.

Therefore, it is a high priority recommendation that our community look for ways to create a central database with standard data collection from many of the area’s agencies and a declared process of trend analysis.

Strategy

Assemble a task force to design an ongoing, free-standing (i.e., not managed by any of the current social agencies) database and analysis platform that would be available to the community at large and to all of its social agency funders. To maximize effectiveness, data collection would be standardized in format and input frequency and logically compared to available regional and national statistics in an effort to determine trends. It would include evidence of the efficacy of current programs and programs under consideration.

In a relatively short period, the community and its funders would have a credible and affordable way to objectively identify specific gaps in service and to objectively review programs based on actual evidence. Ultimately, Clark County would have the information to be efficient and proactive in dealing with critical issues.

The PfS process has worked well to narrow the focus from broad community goals to specific factors that can be addressed to make an impact on those goals. Clark County's Resource Assessment showed a relative shortage of preventative programs in most areas and an overall shortage of evidence-based approaches applied to community issues.

The specific focus on evidence-based programs that address the high-priority risk factors, protective factors, or assets gave direction and purpose to the daunting task of selecting a very few initiatives to recommend to our community. Finding evidence-based or research-based programs via the Internet and professional associations is not difficult; however, selecting which program may work best in our community and limiting the selection to just one recommendation is difficult. This task would have been utterly impossible without the focus provided during Needs Assessment and Resource Assessment.

Barriers and Lessons Learned

Needs Assessment

1. The workgroups needed more time for dialogue about the indicators and the analysis. Granted, they would have used up whatever time they were allotted, but this was not enough to give them an adequate amount of time to absorb and individually process the data.
2. Definitions and caveats about the data and the source information are as important as the data.
3. Data entry skills in Excel or some other spreadsheet or database program are critical in order to minimize the amount of time it takes to process this data and get it into a usable format.
4. A community indicators database is needed to centrally store data and routinely update the information for future decision making.
5. A central database of at least a subset of indicators, and corresponding county data that could easily be pulled from state data warehouses, would be useful to all counties.

Resource Assessment

1. The "Profiling Community Resources" tool did not collect data to identify needs of specific populations or geographic areas, if any. Clark County's Resource Assessment data did not support analysis of how many people were served or any geographic disparities in service.
2. RPAs and evaluation techniques were overstated by some of the respondents, which generated the need for additional follow-up.
3. Use of geographic data and maps would have been an added benefit in many instances. In some instances, however, local data collection is tied to such varied geographical units that analysis below a county aggregate is not useful.

4. A resources database (funding, programs, geographies) would be a useful component of the central database. A routinized update protocol would be needed to keep the data current and track changes made as a result of this process.

Gaps Analysis and Strategic Initiatives

1. The workgroups relied upon the Resource Assessment data for the initial selection of the gaps. However, a more detailed look at the individual “resources assessed” allowed the groups to confirm or modify those selections based upon their expertise. It is very important that this stage of the process and the final Strategic Initiative phase include workgroup members with expertise in both the subject area and the ongoing programs and providers in the community.
2. The Strategic Initiative worksheets were helpful starting points, but the semantics of this process and insufficient operational definitions of terms such as strategies, success measures, and evidence led the group to develop several reporting formats before one could be agreed upon.

Next Steps

This plan was presented to the Community Planning Team on June 29. During the summer, we will be assembling an Implementation Workgroup to carry the recommendations into the second year of the PfS grant.

When evidence-based programs were found to be present and perceived to be working well within our community, the workgroups recommended expansion of those programs. They felt that this approach would be advantageous to implementation. However, those recommendations are not meant to imply that only the current agency providing the program is considered for expanded implementation.

When selecting programs to work within our community, the workgroups tried to be mindful of the existing capacities of the target organizations. By purposely considering the barriers to implementation, the workgroups hope to put forward recommendations that can be implemented in the immediate future. For instance, when faced with a selection of two evidence-based programs as frameworks to address parental involvement with schooling, the workgroup selected the program for which we believe that local training is being made available without cost.

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Housing and Neighborhoods



Vulnerable Adults Needs Assessment

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Economic Development Needs Assessment

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Photo: Phyllis Nedelman and Clark Perks, Community Planning Team; Tina Koumoutsos, Housing and Neighborhoods Workgroup

These strategies were considered valid approaches to the gaps, but were prioritized lower when the workgroups decided which strategies to implement first. They should be revisited as the plan is updated or as additional funding or capacity becomes available.

Youth and Families

Gap: Parental Involvement in Schooling

Strategy

Engage the parents or significant adult of elementary students who may otherwise be alienated from the educational environment with family and group activities in an educational environment during after-school hours.

Tactic

Implement Channing Bete's Supporting School Success, an evidence-based program aimed at the parents of children K-3, across all elementary schools in the county. This program is appropriate for participants before any problems have been identified.

Evidence

Parents who complete this program are more likely to interact with their child's teacher, spend more time reading to their child, and share the school's views on discipline, socialization, and academic expectations. (*Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, March 1999)

Strategy

Offer families a resource that can assist in the promotion of communication and cooperation between parents and schools concerning educational issues. This resource could consist of some or all of the following: a walk-in center, a staffed phone line, a website, and/or other vehicles to facilitate communication.

Tactics

District-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) (www.pbis.org) or the Strengthening Families Program (www.strengtheningfamilies.org) should be further investigated as frameworks to establish this resource. A school/community task force, which includes school districts' leadership, should work to determine the feasibility and begin implementation by January 2006.

Evidence

Both programs suggested here are well-established evidence-based programs that have elements of community participation and have accumulated a large body of effectiveness data.

Success Measures

1. Establish a resource that has appropriate support from the school systems.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of the resource within the community.

There are few programs active in Clark County that specifically address changing attitudes, policies, and expectations. Although we recognize that many good programs to address violence in specific settings exist, the workgroup feels that changing expectations about violence at a community level is needed to provide the best environment for the success of specific programs.

Strategy

Support development of a community-wide initiative to address violence that includes law enforcement, health department, schools, faith community, and others. Such an initiative will be a long-term project that includes aspects of prevention and intervention. Useful models may be found in Salinas, California, and other Prevention Institute projects, as well as in other community plans.

Early Childhood Education

Strategy

Enhance the quality of existing informal opportunities (such as neighborhood or church-based groups) providing group support for parents/caregivers.

Success Measures

1. Reduction in the number of child neglect and abuse cases
2. Decrease in number of parents/caregivers who exhibit poor social/emotional health

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Strategy

Offer a consumer-based mortgage default counseling program. The program would help families gain the tools and education needed to recover from financial difficulties relating to homeownership. Through one-on-one counseling sessions, clients would be guided through the process of determining their best option for resolving their financial crisis, which may involve a plan to remain in their home or give up ownership.

Evidence

Consumer Credit Counseling Service, a program of Lutheran Social Services, provided mortgage default counseling to 290 Montgomery County homeowners in 2004; 87 percent of those counseled were able to avoid foreclosure. In 63 percent of the cases (183), the families remained in their home; in 29 percent of the cases (85), they sold their homes or entered into a deed-in-lieu agreement with the bank, and in only 8 percent (22) they were foreclosed. Also see the best practices of Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, Long Island Housing Partnership, and the National Foundation for Credit Counseling. [Source: Baker, Christi. (2004). "Descriptions of Post-Purchase Program Models. Report 2" Fannie Mae Foundation. <http://www.knowledgeplex.org/showdoc.html?id=42017>]

Gap: Community Norms against Violence

Gap: Parents/ Caregivers Exhibit Poor Social/ emotional Health

Gap: Early Intervention Foreclosure Prevention

Success Measure

The percentage of families who remain foreclosure free for six months after counseling

Strategy

Formalize a community-wide referral system for assisting clients with delinquency and foreclosure issues. Create a clearly defined system of referrals with comprehensive contact information by building upon the current, informal referral system being used in Clark County.

Success Measure

A written plan for early intervention foreclosure prevention referrals exists in Clark County.

Strategy

Develop lending pools to provide short-term loans and long-term refinancing options to assist consumers with transferring out of high-cost mortgage loans into local portfolioed, low-interest loans.

Homeowners may face foreclosure because of a temporary financial setback such as a short-term job loss or unexpected medical bill. Even when the family's income is restored, however, it can be difficult to find the necessary funds to bring a mortgage current and pay any additional penalties and fees. In such cases, bridge loans and other emergency assistance to get families through the immediate crisis can be crucial to saving homes from foreclosure. Some housing services providers offer their clients loan refinancing services so that they can maintain a long-term equity investment in their home. Grants typically range from \$500-\$2,000, and no- or low-interest loans can be up to \$10,000. [Source: Baker, Christi. (2004). "Essential Components of Post-Purchase Program Models. Report 3" Fannie Mae Foundation. <http://www.knowledgeplex.org/showdoc.html?id=42018>]

Success Measures

A local, low-interest lending pool, the number of participating lenders in the pool, the size of the refinance pool

Strategy

Develop the community's capacity to assist consumers with fraudulent lending issues. Predatory lenders initiate illegal loans, lure homeowners into unreasonably high loan rates, practice flipping of loans, and generally are responsible for the most grievous loan practices and the most foreclosures.

Evidence

Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago (NHSC) has several best practices.

Success Measure

1. Reduced number of known fraudulent loans in 6 months
2. The number the number of predatory loans settled in 6 months

Strategy

Provide financial literacy educational through classes targeted at low income and credit-challenged individuals. Focus on a small at-risk group where financial literacy will have the most impact in the short term.

Evidence

Financial Peace, a nationally recognized model and the best practices of the Community Development Corporation of Long Island. [Source: Baker, Christi. (2004). "Descriptions of Post-Purchase Program Models. Report 2" Fannie Mae Foundation. <http://www.knowledgeplex.org/showdoc.html?id=42017>]

Success Measures

The number of people who complete the program in first year, the number of people with a test score of 75 percent or better, and their percentage of foreclosure

Gap: Financial Literacy/Money Management Skills

Adequate Yearly Progress: To meet the federal AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) requirements, all student groups (all races, all income levels, and students with disabilities) must be at or above the annual goals or make improvement over last year. Graduation and attendance goals must be met for the “all students” group.

Assets: Positive experiences and personal qualities that can decrease levels of negative targeted impacts and increase levels of positive targeted impacts, complementing each other and increasing each other’s effects on targeted impacts.

Body Mass Index (BMI): A weight and height calculation used to calculate the amount of body fat.

Community Planning Team: The group charged with overseeing the community planning, implementation, and evaluation processes and making recommendations about the array of programs and activities that should be supported in the community.

Comprehensive Education: Focuses on age-appropriate activities that promote the development of the whole child. Areas of development include physical, intellectual, social, and emotional stages of growth.

Core Team: A team of people, led by the PfS Coordinator, that maintains a daily working knowledge of PfS planning efforts and lends their expertise to ensuring that the integrity of the PfS Model is maintained.

Data-Informed Decisions: Four levels of data-informed decisions are involved in PfS: (1) to determine the magnitude of problem behaviors in a community and prioritize efforts to respond to those problem behaviors; (2) to identify levels of risk, protection, and assets that exist within the community to help target potentially effective strategies; (3) to determine best practices related to implementation decisions for new programs; and (4) to continually evaluate the progress of the PfS Initiative within the community.

Early Intervention: This program/activity is designed for participants who have been identified as having problems but before those problems become entrenched.

Evidence: Information that supports the linkages between a strategy, outcome, and targeted impact.

Factor: A result at a program level that contributes to a change in a targeted impact. There are three potential types of factors in the PfS Model: reduce a risk factor, enhance a protective factor, and increase an asset.

Filing Rate: The number of households divided by the number of new foreclosures.

Graduation Rate: The Ohio Department of Education defines the graduation rate as the percentage of students who entered high school who received a regular diploma or honors diploma during the reporting year, including students who graduated the summer after the 12th grade and students who completed the course work and came back to finish the proficiency test and passed.

Needs Assessment Workgroup: A team of people charged with developing a profile of community needs in an assessment area. This group makes recommendations for which targeted impacts, risk factors, protective factors, and assets should be addressed based on data and community values.

Obese: An adult who has a Body Mass Index of 30 or higher.

Overweight: An adult who has a Body Mass Index between 25 and 29.9.

Poverty Rate: The percent of all persons/families for whom poverty status is determined with incomes less than the poverty thresholds. Poverty status is not determined for select population groups, such as those in group quarters.

Prevention: This program/activity is designed for all eligible participants and is provided before any major problems are identified.

Protective Factors: Conditions that help prevent a problem, e.g., by decreasing levels of negative targeted impacts and increasing levels of positive targeted impacts. Protective factors are thought to be independently related to specific targeted impacts.

Resource Assessment Workgroup: A team of people charged with developing a profile of all of the organizations, programs, and activities in the community relative to the selected targeted impacts. The information is summarized in a fashion that facilitates the identification of gaps between community needs and available community resources.

Risk Factors: Conditions that contribute to a problem, e.g., by increasing levels of negative targeted impacts and decreasing levels of positive targeted impacts.

Sheriff Sales Rate: The number of households divided by the number of sheriff sales.

Strategic Action Identification Workgroup: A team of people charged with comparing the community needs with the available community resources, identifying gaps in services, developing recommendations for addressing those gaps, and drafting the strategic plan.

Strategic Planning: Oriented toward finding a workable solution; in a strategic planning process there is great emphasis on opportunities. Recommendations derived from a strategic planning process may not be perfect but can usually be implemented and represent a satisfactory solution to a problem.

Strategy: The action necessary, based on a review of relevant evidence, to ensure that a desired outcome on the selected targeted impact and risk factors, protective factors, and assets is achieved.

Success Measure: Specific, measurable indicators of each targeted impact. A change in success measures over time suggests a change in targeted impacts. Example: Number of arrests for delinquency over a 12-month period.

Systems of Care: This program/activity is designed for participants who have serious and chronic problems. May be called chronic intervention.

Targeted Impacts: Urgent issues that seriously affect the development of a community and that instill communities with a sense of urgency for change. Thus, identification of the targeted impact(s) is a critically important step for a community, because the targeted impact becomes the “big prize” that drives the PfS Initiative.

Glossary Sources

- Census Bureau
- Ohio Department of Education
- Ohio Department of Health
- PfS Community Tool Box, <http://www.pfsacademy.org/communitytoolbox/model/glossary.htm>
- Policy Matters Ohio
- Public Children Services Association of Ohio

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