

**ALLEN COUNTY  
CHILDREN SERVICES**

**2009 ANNUAL REPORT**



**REPORTS OF ABUSE & NEGLECT INCREASE**

The economic conditions of 2009 devastated many families in our community. For the first year since 2002, we experienced a marked increase in the number of reports of child abuse and neglect. A large portion of the increased stressors families were facing centered around or included economic conditions. Last year, ACCS initiated 655 new cases for investigation and assessment involving 1,572 children. (A 15% increase from 2008. This is the most children since 2002, at 1,678.)

The total number of children assessed and provided services with was 2,209 in 2009, which is a 9% increase over 2008.

**Decrease of Children in Placement:**

For two years, ACCS has been aggressively working to reduce the time it takes for children in foster care and other out of home placements to have a safe reunification with their family or achieve another form of permanency in their lives. Since January 1, 2008, we have safely reduced the number of children in court ordered, out of home placement by half, from 159 to 80 (as of January 4, 2010). This benefits everyone in our community. More children are nurtured and cared for in their own homes, learning how families appropriately resolve issues, helping one another and learning how to prepare for adulthood. This also benefits the community as tax money is not being spent on unnecessary paid placements, but rather on collaborative efforts to engage families in trouble as soon as possible. Below is a chart that demonstrates our progress in this area:

In 2007, 90% stayed of children in out of home care stayed longer than 120 days  
 In 2008, 76% stayed longer than 120 days  
 In 2009, 69% stayed longer than 120 days

In 2007, 73% stayed longer than 150 days  
 In 2008, 65% stayed longer than 150 days  
 In 2009, 59% stayed longer than 150 days

**Increase of Children in Court Ordered, Protective Supervision:**

ACCS continues to serve a high number of families and children. We began the year with 78 children in our court-ordered, protective supervision. During 2009, ACCS was granted an order of protective supervision of an additional 186 children. In total, ACCS provided court ordered, in-home protective services to 264 children during the year. We ended the year with 136 children under a protective supervision order, which is an increase of 75%. Through the community's safety net, we are striving to engage families as quickly as possible before a child is hurt and needs removal from his home. In summary, the number of children in ACCS court ordered custody and our protective supervision was 563 for 2009.

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**ACCS Loses Champion of Children**



ACCS board member Mary Jane Hawk died at the age of 87. She was a retired educator from Shawnee Local Schools and was inducted into the Ohio Senior Citizen's Hall of Fame in 2009. Her compassionate contributions toward our mission will be greatly missed.

Scott H. Ferris, MPA, LSW  
 ACCS Executive Director

## COMMUNITY RALLIES AROUND CAMPAIGN



Sometimes, mothers in love can't see the warning signs. They think that because their partner loves them, he will love their child. It is a mistake that can be fatal. Around Ohio far too many children have been injured and even killed at the hands of their parent's partner. In an effort to prevent future incidents, the "Choose Your Partner Carefully Campaign" was born. The campaign is aimed at increasing awareness among women of the risk their children face when a non-related male is entrusted with their care. The Allen County effort now boasts 71 local members. You can find a list of them on our website, [www.allencsb.com](http://www.allencsb.com). A new billboard campaign has been unveiled and the first Choose

Your Partner Carefully class is planned for Tuesday, April 6th at the agency. Call Kelly Smith at 419-227-8590 for more information.

## SPOTLIGHT ON A WAITING CHILD

Aleeyah is a sweet little girl. She seems to enjoy each day, whether she is listening to someone sing a song, moving to the radio, splashing in a pool or taking someone's hand for a walk. She attends a special needs school five days a week, where she gets help learning some sign language. So far, her teacher says that the sign she uses most frequently is "more." She likes breakfast, lunch, and snack times at school and she has learned this year to sign if she is ready for the next bite or snack item. She also sometimes uses her "more" request for an extra hug. A social worker who knows her quite well said she has heard her say a single word sometimes, saying one word like, "Go," or "Yeah," or "Geez." Some of her caregivers hold hope that with continued speech therapy and encouragement Aleeyah's vocabulary might increase. Time will tell. She appears to love music, dancing, and spending time on her mini trampoline or on a swing. Aleeyah enjoys movement, and the textures, tastes, sounds and colors of things— treats for each of her senses. Aleeyah was born with a genetic condition that requires ongoing special care, and the school where she is enrolled adapts to her needs every day. Her teachers and aides all report that she is "happy, bouncy, lovable, and busy." She "gives back" they say, as if to thank them for their efforts, with smiles that "light up a room."



Aleeyah's foster dad speaks thoughtfully of their relationship, nodding and simply saying, "She needs me." And of course, like every child, Aleeyah needs life-long patience, encouragement, love, and the count-on-it commitment of adoption to be her very best. Is Aleeyah calling to you? For more information about adopting Aleeyah call Allen County Children Services at 419-227-8590.

## LONGTIME BOARD MEMBERS STEP DOWN



Will Cason



Bruce Wells

After serving more than a decade each, two members of the Allen County Children Services Board have stepped down. Will Cason, Vice President at St. Rita's Medical Center served for 12 years. Bruce Wells, from the Allen County Engineer's Office was on the board for 10 years. Wells was also the first foster parent to adopt in Allen County. ACCS, the community and it's children appreciate their service.

The **MISSION** of **Allen County Children Services** is to protect children by supporting and strengthening families in partnership with the community.

# OHIO BENEFIT BANK SITE

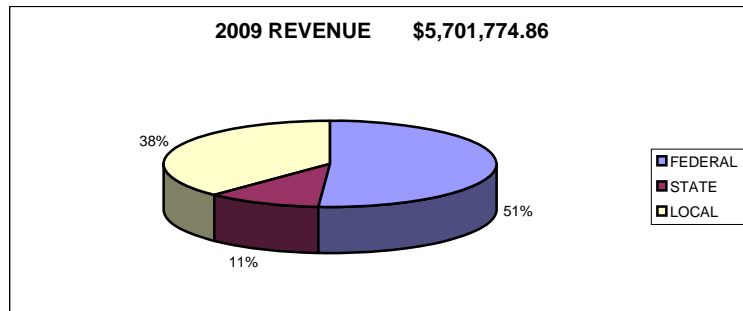
Hundreds of thousands of Ohioans are eligible for government benefits but have never applied. ACCS and the Ohio Benefit Bank are teaming up to get them faster access to assistance. Every year, nearly \$2 billion in benefits and tax credits go unclaimed in the State of Ohio. The Benefit Bank helps residents find out if they are eligible for certain benefits and directs them to those potential supports... "Benefit Bank is an online software program that can actually register people and help them apply for a wide variety of public benefits," said Debbie Jamison of ACCS. "People are frequently surprised to learn that they might be eligible for public assistance. And the fact is, if you're struggling, if you're having a hard time getting by, it's worth a check." Ohio Benefit Bank has matched 70,000 Ohioans with various forms of assistance, from free income tax preparation to food stamps to child care support. Officials estimate 500,000 Ohioans are eligible for food stamps but have never applied for the program. The Ohio Benefit Bank can quickly determine if a person or family is eligible. For more information contact Debbie Jamison at 419-227-8590.



## ACCS FINANCES

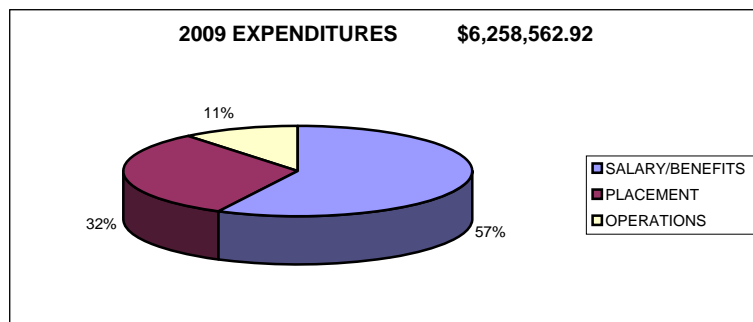
### 2009 REVENUE

Federal	\$2,908,029.42
State	\$647,140.32
Local	\$2,146,605.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,701,774.86</b>



### 2009 EXPENDITURES

Salary/Benefits	\$3,599,562.21
Placement	\$1,973,892.00
Operations	\$685,108.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,258,562.92</b>



## **ALLEN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES**

123 W. Spring Street  
Lima, Ohio 45801  
Phone: 419-227-8590

**We're on the web!**  
**[www.allencsb.com](http://www.allencsb.com)**

### **2010 Board of Directors**

Professor Jennifer Hughes, MSW, LISW  
Richard Meredith, Retired  
Donald Brubaker, Retired  
Christine Provaznik, VP SRMC  
Josh Ebling, Family Resource Center  
Linda Buckley-Skaja, Lima City Schools  
Missy Roush, LSW, Retired  
Brad Settlege, American Township  
Dr. Thomas Holmes, Covenant Ministry Services  
Brook Elrod, LMHS

### **2009 Staff Community Involvement**

ACUTE  
Allen Co. Family & Children First Council  
Allen Co. Health Insurance Committee  
Allen County Healthy People 2020  
Allen-Lima Leadership  
Apollo GRADS Committee  
Black Achievers  
Black Swamp Council of the Boy Scouts  
Bluffton University Social Work Advisory  
Council  
Board of Trustees of The Arc  
Building Partnerships Initiative  
CAST Advisory Committee  
Chamber of Commerce  
Child Abuse Response Team  
Child Fatality Review Board  
Early Childhood Conference Committee  
Early Childhood Mental Health Committee  
Family Abuse Prevention Team  
Family Life Center

#### **Administration**

Scott H. Ferris  
Jacquelyn Loescher  
Pamela Meihls  
Michelle Vorhees  
Brenda Kidd  
Mike Carpenter

#### **Management Services**

Cindy Prye  
Donna Guerra  
Jenna DeRose  
Sharon Jones  
Joanne Sidener  
Kim Swallow

#### **Quality Improvement**

Michael Hensley  
Dena Sunderland  
Sharleen Hartzog  
Kris Romo  
Pam Swickrath  
Bonne Toth

#### **Intake/Investigations Unit**

Staci Nichols  
Jenny Knippen  
Linda Andrews  
Seth Bowersock  
Kylee Cramer  
Elizabeth Dilworth  
Sharon Fenton  
Ken Gross  
Liz Lengerich  
Amber Litsey  
Amy Murphy  
Bill Pierce  
Sarah Pierce  
Wendy Winder

#### **Family Stability**

Shelly Conrad  
Megan Coffman  
Megan Harmon  
Debbie Jamison

Family Promise  
Girl Scouts of America  
Help Me Grow Core Committee  
Lima/Allen Co. Housing Consortium  
Lima Exchange Club  
Lima Rotary Club  
Partnership for Violence Free  
Families  
Public Child Safety Assn. of Ohio

Zerian Peterson  
Anna Rex  
Sylvia Schulz  
Jan Waltmire

#### **East Family Services**

Brent Bunke  
Tobias Adkins  
Yvonne Cusac  
Missy Makley  
Kelly Smith  
Lawrie Warner  
Sarah Ridenour

#### **West Family Services**

Karen Martin  
Nicole Christy  
Tiffanie Geren  
Abigail Herbst  
Amber Martin  
Michelle Miller  
Marion Roach  
Christin Winter

#### **Foster Care/Adoption Unit**

Brad Rabley  
Ericka Boddie  
Lori Hubbard  
LaKenya Johnson  
Volanda Kirkman  
Nicole Long  
Bonnie Monford  
Barb Nichols  
Jessica Parsley

\*As of January 20, 2010.



Rape Crisis Coalition  
Safe Neighborhoods Committee  
Teen Pregnancy Prevention  
Task Force

\*The staff of Children Services participated in more than 50 different community presentations or training events in 2009.