



Richland County
Children Services

2007 Annual Report



Richland County Children Services Board

Safe Children Today Build Strong Families Tomorrow



- Randy J. Parker, Executive Director of the Richland County Children Services Board honors Gerald F. Fuddy, Children Services Executive Director from 1961 to 1993, during the dedication of the Gerald F. Fuddy Training and Learning Center.
- Below, the Retired Senior & Volunteer Program holds its annual holiday gathering in the Gerald F. Fuddy Training and



Inside this report...

Dedication of the Gerald F. Fuddy Training & Learning Center

ProtectOhio Model, Improving Outcomes in Richland County

Melodye James Named to Statewide Kinship Board

Success Centers Improving Health and Learning of Kids



**Richland County
Children Services**

A Message from the Executive Director

Richland County Children Services Board experienced a busy year in 2007. For the fifth consecutive year, the Agency averaged 2,000 reports of child abuse and neglect. We are grateful to the community for responding to the Agency with over 6,600 calls for assistance. We, in turn, continue to provide prevention, protective, and placement services aimed at maintaining the integrity and strength of families while ensuring the safety and care of children.

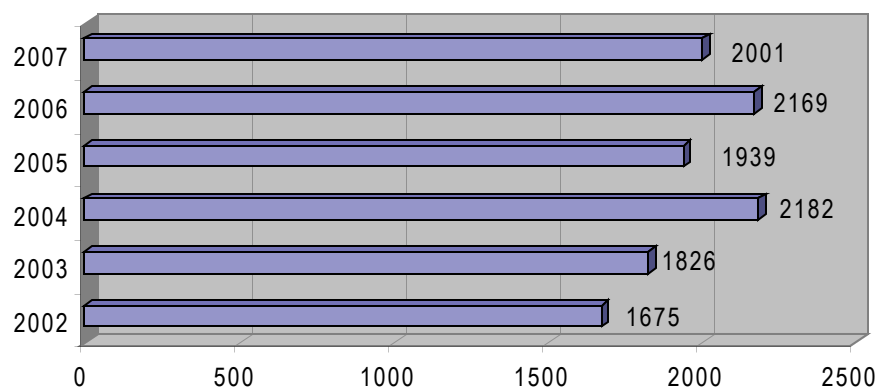
Throughout this report, we hope to provide you with an understanding of how the Agency works with families, partner agencies, and the community to provide services that enable families to stay together. In 2007, foster care placements in Richland County reached 54, an all time low. This accomplishment comes with a firm commitment to the ProtectOhio model which is featured later in this report. The model is proving successful by a commitment to strength-based social work practice through Family Team Meetings, expanded services for grandparents and relatives raising kin, and after-school and summer programming for children.

We would like to highlight the commitment of our staff by providing a new section, "Social Workers in their own words." This, perhaps, speaks best of the work that is being done 24-hours a day at Richland County Children Services.

Sincerely,

Randy J. Parker

Number of Investigations



Over the past five years, Richland County Children Services has averaged 2,000 referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of the 6,651 calls to screening in 2007, our staff investigated 2,001 as suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

Financial Contributions and Community Partnerships Enhance Kids' Health and Learning at the "Success Center"

The Fran and Warren Rupp Foundation awarded \$157,000 for the development and expansion of programming at The Success Center in the Ocie Hill Neighborhood Center and two locations within the Mansfield City Schools.

The Success Center model is based on positive youth development methodology. "Providing a structured environment for at-risk children between the hours of 4 and 7 o'clock reduces delinquency rates, increases academic performance, and improves social skills," explains Tim Harless, Program Director, Richland County Children Services.

The grant provides after-school and summer programming for children in grades K-12 in Richland County and within the Mansfield City School District.

There are nutritional, educational, and new exercise components to the program. Children receive meals and tutoring support Monday through Friday at three locations: Hedges Elementary School (4-6); John Sherman Elementary (K-3); and Ocie Hill Neighborhood Center (K-12).

Following the first grading period of the program's existence, all 125 students increased their academic scores across all age groups.

Mansfield Area Y staffers are facilitating the physical education component at Ocie



Students in the Success Center after school program compete in a relay race on the XerGames interactive sports wall at the Ocie Hill Neighborhood Center.

Hill using state of the art equipment by Sportwall. XerGames is an interactive sports wall for group fitness and training classes. Use of the sports wall increases range of motion, dexterity, speed, and accuracy. The equipment can be supported by curriculum to combine math skills with physical activity. It is proving to be a hit with the kids.

The Mansfield Art Center provides the art component for the Success Centers, and Family Life Counseling works with chil-

dren on bullying, anger management, and the development of positive social skills.

Additional funding is being provided by Richland County Job and Family Services (\$117,000) and the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (\$41,000).

All Richland County and Mansfield City School children in grades K-12 are eligible for the program.

The Mansfield City Schools provide certified teachers to assist with the educational programming at the Success Centers. Bus transportation is provided for all students enrolled within the school district. Parents are required to pick-up children from the program locations.

To enroll a student in the program or for more information, please contact Tim Harless, Program Director at 419-524-2626.

RUMO Award Winners Receive Honors In Columbus

Courtney Crawford and Navah Hurt were recipients of the Rising Up and Moving On Award presented by Governor Ted Strickland at the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) Statewide Conference in Columbus on September 27, 2007.

Courtney and Navah were two of seven foster youth from around the state who were recognized for their outstanding accomplishments and leadership in advancing the voice of youth in foster care.

Each received a proclamation from the governor's office and a check for \$500 from PCSAO. The ceremony was attended by Richland County Children Services staff, foster parents, representatives from Richland County Juvenile Court, participants of the conference, and friends of the youth.



Navah Hurt (pictured left) is a Madison Comprehensive High School graduate interested in pursuing a career in real estate. Courtney Crawford (right) is a Lexington High School graduate interested in pursuing a career in the medical field. Phil Farley, RCCS Social Worker, proudly poses for this photo at the PCSAO Conference.

32 Year Career Finds Permanent Home For Educating Future Generations

On January 1, 1961, Gerald F. Futy became the first executive director of what we know today as the Richland County Children Services Board. This was the beginning of 32 years of service in a changing profession.

In June of 1968, with the demolition of the Children's Home and the opening of the new County Administration Building at 50 Park Avenue East, the staff of the Agency then moved to the 4th floor of the Richland County Courthouse.

Under the leadership and direction of Mr. Futy, child welfare was on the move from institutional care to providing services in the home to help maintain families. This philosophy is evident from an excerpt of one of his many speeches, "It's the hope of the Agency that we can come in contact early enough with problem families so that we can help them to care for their own children, where the program can be more effective and also be done more economically."

Throughout the 1970s, the Agency continued to grow with the expansion of staff and services. In 1975, it was necessary to move the social service staff to new facilities in the Attention Center at 275 Hedges Street. The Agency continued at that site and expanded to several sites, including rentals in an office building on Diamond Street, a Park Avenue West office, and the parsonage at the church on the corner of West Third Street and Bowman Street.

The 1980s continued with Mr. Futy's commitment to community partnerships and child welfare advocacy. In 1984, "STOP" emerged as a multi-disciplinary community group confronting child abuse. The group was formed to aid in prevention, treatment, and education about child sexual abuse and to act as consultants in child abuse cases. The Agency received general membership in the Child Welfare League of America and joined the Family and Children's First Council during this decade.

The 1990s called for centralizing the Agency. On November 15, 1991, all office locations were vacated when the Agency moved into the newly built facility on Scholl Road. Mr. Futy was instrumental in developing the Agency's first personnel policy manual and in beginning the strategic planning process.

On March 1, 1993, Mr. Futy retired with 32 years of service to the children and families of Richland County.



Gerald F. Futy, Richland County Children Services Executive Director from 1961 to 1993, and his wife Mary Kay, were honored during the dedications of the Agency's Training and Learning Center.

The Agency is proud to be able to share Mr. Futy's passion with future generations of child welfare professionals, foster parents, and the community.

During the dedication of the Gerald F. Futy Training and Learning Center on October 26, 2007, Executive Director Randy J. Parker said, "On behalf of the Richland County Children Services Board, it is with great honor and respect that we dedicate this Training and Learning Center in your name."

Year of Construction Comes To A Close With Renovated Building, Keeping Children and Staff In Mind

The Open House and ribbon cutting on October 25, 2007 was the culmination of 15 months of construction work to provide a renovated Children Services building to better serve the community.

A needs assessment was completed by SBA (Steve Beilstein Architects) relating to office space and the safety needs of the Agency. Three areas of need were identified:

1. Additional work and office space for staff — the building was originally built in 1991 for 77 staff. Current needs call for 109 positions.
2. Education and training needs — additional space is needed to provide ongoing training for staff and foster parents.
3. Security — an area that would keep children and staff safe when removal or risk was posed.

Also, a secure parking area was designed into the building project to protect against:

- Staff who have been dealing with perpetrators
- Staff who are dealing with angry clients
- An area to bring children into the building when there are volatile situations (parents angry due to removal of their children)
- Easy access to the nurse's clinic for children coming into care
- Safe environment in which to store Agency vehicles

The top two illustrations at the right show a before and after of the cubicle space created in the new wing of the building. This area houses the Agency's Court Liaison Unit, Protec-

tive Supervision Unit, School Based Social Workers, and Placement staff. Richland County Children Services provides ongoing services for 800 children every month.

The bottom two photos are of the renovation within the original footprint of the building. This area houses the Intake and Screening Departments. Social workers respond to 200 referrals of child abuse and neglect each month.

Tour of the building

Construction Manager — SBA (Steve Beilstein Architect)

Architect, Dan Seckel — The Seckel Group

Square Foot Data:

- The original building was 19,036 square feet
- Total square feet of building 32,769
- Addition added 13,733 square feet for the entire project
- The Training & Learning Center is 2,535 square feet
- 20,444 upstairs
- 12,325 downstairs

Addition added:

- 29 cubicles
- 5 conference rooms
- 1 board room
- secure parking area

Cost: \$2.7 million



ProtectOhio, A Commitment To Systemic Change In Providing Child Welfare Services — Improving Outcomes In Richland County

Randy J. Parker, Executive Director of Richland County Children Services, is set to co-chair the ProtectOhio Consortium during, perhaps, the most important phase — the evaluation of the project approaching its end date.

The project began on October 1, 1997, and operated for five years followed by a two-year bridge period. Federal approval for Phase II of ProtectOhio began October 1, 2004, and is scheduled to end September 30, 2009.

ProtectOhio is a Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project. Simply put, the Waiver project allows for greater flexibility in spending federal funds appropriated under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act of 1935.

Parker explains the Agency's commitment to the project, "The ProtectOhio model fits within our vision as an Agency. All families have the skills and resources to maintain their integrity and function to the best of their ability. It is our aim to provide services to empower families and assist them in meeting their needs. Our focus is on maintaining the family while ensuring the safety of the child."

These are funds that are normally allowed to be spent only for foster care placement, but now can be used creatively in ways to improve child and family outcomes to keep families together.

Richland County is one of 14 "demonstration counties" including: Ashtabula, Belmont, Clark, Crawford, Fairfield, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Lorain, Medina, Muskingum, Portage, and Stark.

Essential to the evaluation of the Waiver project are 14 "comparison counties" which have been chosen based on their similarities to the demonstration sites: Allen, Butler, Clermont, Columbiana, Hancock, Hocking, Mahoning, Miami, Montgomery, Scioto, Summit, Trumbull, Warren and Wood.

The basic premise is that children and families served by Public Children Services Agencies with flexible use of Title

IV-E funds, experience better outcomes than the comparison group, and better outcomes than children in the demonstration sites prior to the Waiver.

Ohio's primary goals are to reduce the number of children coming into care, decrease the length of stay in care, decrease the number of placements experienced by children already in care, and increase the number of children reunited with their families or placed in other permanent situations.

Ohio counties reflected on activities from 1st Waiver period and reached consensus on core strategies to improve the desired outcomes. One mandated for all counties is the use of Family Team Meetings.

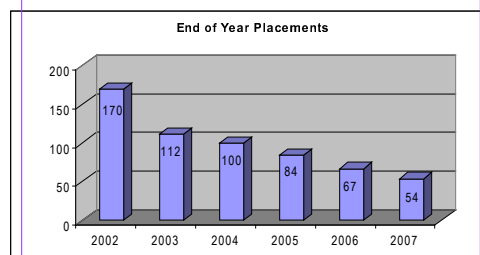
A Family Team Meeting is a gathering of family, friends, support people, and community specialists who join together to solve problems and improve the care and protection of children.

Family Team Meetings allow for shared decision making and shared responsibilities between the family and the Agency. A tailored case plan is developed to meet the needs of one particular family.

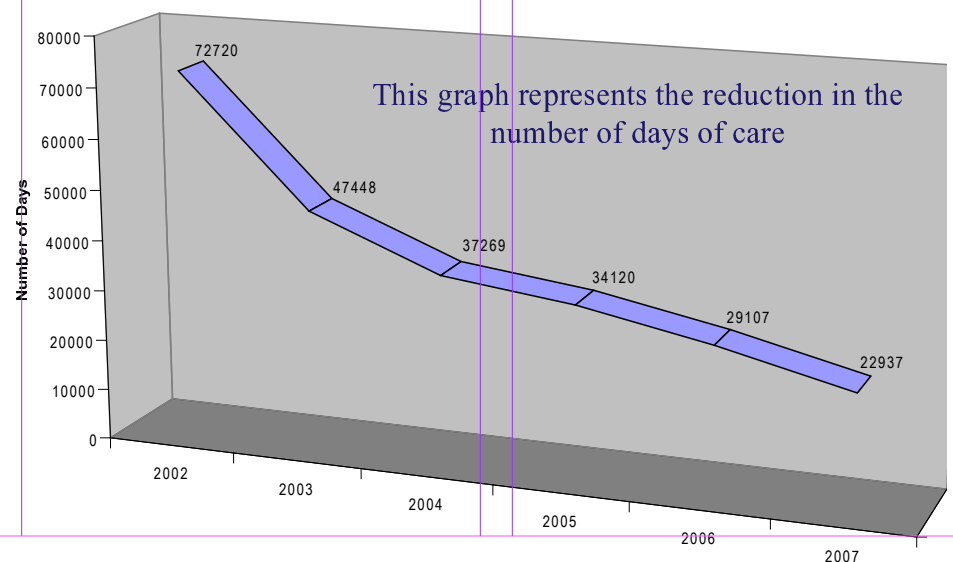
Meetings are held at regular intervals or may be requested by caseworkers, family, or other involved professionals at any time.

Richland County Children Services provides a full-time Team Decision Making (TDM) social worker who holds a Master's Degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Independent Social Worker. During 2007, 303 Family Team Meetings were facilitated using this strength-based model.

Ohio is one of only four states using the Waiver to reform its entire child welfare system.



The reduction in the number of placements and days of care correlate with the increase of kinship providers featured in the article on the following page. ProtectOhio enables families to stay together.



Melodye James Named To Statewide Kinship Caregiver Advisory Board

Melodye James, Kinship Navigator for the Rehab Center, was named to the Statewide Kinship Caregiver Advisory Board November 14, 2007.

This comes on the heels of the first annual Richland County Kinship Rally that was held November 5th at the Renaissance Theatre. Over 100 kinship caregivers, government leaders, educators, child welfare professionals, and social service providers attended the event.

“I am very honored and excited to be a part of the process that will make changes to how our state responds to supports for kinship caregivers,” says Melodye James, Kinship Navigator Coordinator for Richland County.

Kinship care is generating a lot of activity on Capitol Hill with the increase in the number of grandparents and relatives caring for children in their families. According to the 2000 Census, some 6 million children live with relatives — 4.5 million of whom live with grandparents — a 30% increase between 1990 and 2000.

Most of these families are not part of the formal child welfare system. In Richland County, there are 1,059 grandparents raising their grandchildren according to the 2007-2008 Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) Factbook, 8th Edition.

“As needs of kinship caregivers become



Melodye James

more apparent, and the benefits of supporting extended families outside of the child welfare system (either as a diversion, support or exit), PCSAO will continue to promote evolved kinship policy,” says Crystal Ward Allen, Executive Director, PCSAO.

Kinship families offer an additional option for achieving permanency for children living apart from their birth parents. Children are able to stay closely connected to family, their community, and the culture they know best.

Kinship Care refers to a temporary or permanent arrangement in which grandparents, relatives, or close family friends provide substitute care of a child whose parents are unable or unwilling to do so. The Navigator’s primary goal is to help kinship caregivers “navigate” the various governmental and local community programs and services available.

The Kinship Navigator Program is

funded through Richland County Children Services by a TANF grant acquired from Richland County Job and Family Services.

Support is available to Richland County grandparents and relatives by calling: Melodye James at the Rehab Center, 419.756.1133 or Joan Day, at the Ocie Hill Neighborhood Center at 419.524.2626.



Kinship providers, Ms. Gwendolyn Buck (left) and Ms. Diane Asher, speak of the challenges and rewards of raising grandchildren at the Richland County Kinship Rally.

Rally for the Kids

For the past three years, Lakewood Racquet Club has provided an event for foster children, kinship families, and children recently adopted called “Rally for the Kids.” It is accomplished with donations from area businesses.

Instruction is provided by Ron Schaub and volunteers from Lexington High School’s tennis team. Each child receives a tennis racquet, event T-shirt, and tennis ball to continue their play with family and friends.

Melodye James, Kinship Navigator Coordinator for Richland County says, “My grandparents tell me that the children really enjoyed playing at tennis - very positive feedback. One grandmother said her grandson said he met a friend who he wants to stay in touch with. Fortunately, they both are in my kinship group. Those positive social interactions are so critical - when the kids find a ‘friend’ — that’s success!”



Social Workers in their own words...



Rhonda Massey

"My position entails a variety of job duties. I am the front receptionist which means I answer and route all calls that come into the Agency. I am responsible for keeping the various forms available to the social work staff. I am a member of the Support Unit which means I assist the administrative secretaries with lunch breaks and vacation coverage. I also file, copy, and do data entry. I choose to work at Children Services because I am a people person, I love children, and want to give back to my community," Rhonda Massey, Support Specialist.

"I worked with a young mother who had serious developmental disabilities. She had given birth to a baby girl whom she did not have the ability to care for. I allowed her to hold her daughter for the first time and assisted her with placing the child into an adoptive home. It was difficult because I could tell that she loved her daughter very much, but she knew that she could not care for her," Paula Johnson, Intake Social Worker.



Paula Johnson



Charity Hamler

"Working with people, accepting differences, relating to others and striving for that positive change are the characteristics best liked of this position. Of course managing my own schedule, tapping into creative options to address problems and the flexibility of social work is refreshing. There is no one way to look at a concern involving families and children and there definitely is not just one way to solve a problem when dealing with people," Charity Hamler, Ongoing Social Worker.

"I have experienced several memorable moments and classify any situation where a child's life is changed for the better as memorable. There is one case in particular where I worked very closely with a grandmother and helped her maintain custody of her four grandchildren. Although there were many odds against this family, the grandmother's strengths prevailed and she continues to provide for her grandchildren," Melissa Tucker, Foster Care Worker.



Melissa Tucker

Agency Staff

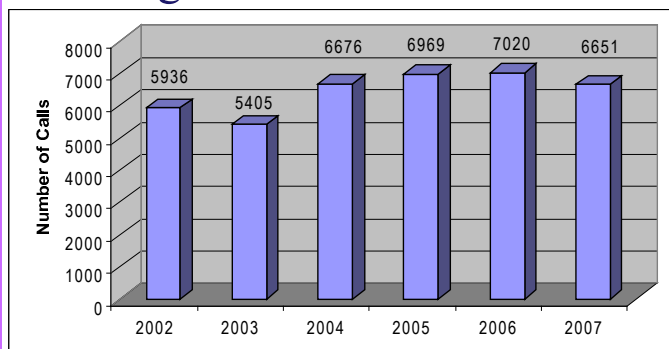
Teresa Alt	Christine Dunn	Shane Hendrick	Anne Mathes	Carol Sgambellone
Brenda Ammons	Jeanetta Elia	Heather Higgins	Ruth Maurer	Terrie Sgro
Gina Bandy	Phil Farley	Elizabeth Hollar	Jennifer McElvain	Carol Smith
Scott Basilone	Lori Feeney	Vicki Hopp	Tim Merle	Dusty Smith
Carol Baxter	Roland Flick	Pearl Howard	Drew Miller	Susan Smith
Liz Bekeleski	Kimberly Ford	Stephanie Hughes	Joycelynn Moree	Lindsay Smouter
Brandi Berry	Nicole Foulks	Alison Hustack	Matthew Mott	Tiffany Sommers
Tracy Bly	Noah Fraley	Brandy Hutchinson	Kelly Mott	Peter Stefaniuk
Debbie Bowling	Kelly France	Terri Jacobs	Cynthia Myers	Michele Stiggle
Sarah Bradley	Greg Frankenfield	Jennifer Jacobs	Tanna Neal	Shawn Strong
Sherry Branham-Foltz	Ruth Frye	Paula Johnson	James Nicholson	Michelle Sutton
Amber Braughton	Kristin Galownia	Sylvia Jordan	Audrey Ousley	Heather Swanson
Brooks Brooks	Carla Glover	Gregory Kahl	Randy J. Parker	Maryann Syrek
Beth Burns	Kevin Goshe	Andrea Karpiak	Luann Payne	Melissa Tucker
Dawn Butterman	Vickie Graves	Mark Keck	Heather Petty	Kelley VanGilder
Elleena Cameron-Rosa	Sharon Gray	Patricia Kever	Paul Pfeifer	Pamela Varnes
Amanda Campbell	Sheryl Groff	Melissa Kilgore	Davinette Phillips	Rachel Wappner
Larry Chaffin	David Hackedorn	Monique Kilgore	Angie Poth	Sandra Watrous
Billie Chester	Joe Hamilton	Brianne Kindinger	Donna Puckett	Kevin Wharton
Linda Cole	Charity Hamler	Jennifer Lovra	LaShaun Reuer	Carla Wilkinson
Teresa Coll	Nikki Harless	Patrick Ludwick	Carol Rissler	Kathleen Wukela
Ron Copenhaver	Tim Harless	Patricia Markley	Nidhi Saini	Lisa Zinn
Joan Day	Holly Hartman	Jennifer Marsh	Angie Sams	
Cheri Denney	Doug Heestand	Rhonda Massey	Katherine Schiraldi	

2007 Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue*		
Federal Funds	\$5,028,241	53.3%
State Funds	\$954,017	10.1%
Local Levy Funds	\$3,308,824	35.1%
Parental Support	\$11,418	0.1%
Other	\$128,569	1.4%
TOTAL	\$9,431,069	100%

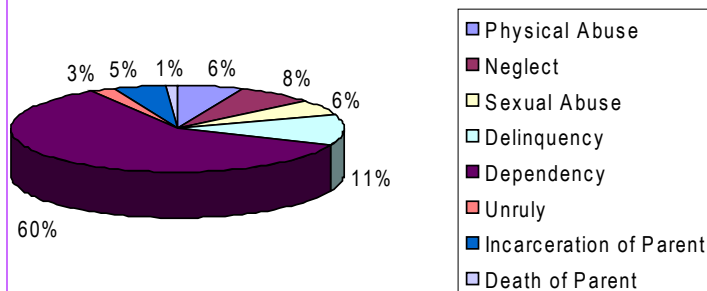
Expenses*	
Personnel	\$5,985,761
Placement Services	\$1,128,320
Adoption Services	\$375,699
Purchased Services	\$488,862
Administrative Support	\$610,027
TOTAL*Unaudited	\$8,588,669
12/31/07 Resources Available	\$4,539,120

Screening Statistics



The Agency has maintained a steady stream of calls. For the fourth straight year, screening has received over 6,600 calls.

2007 Placement Statistics



This graph depicts the reasons for out-of-home placements of children in Richland County.

“Dependent child” means any child who is homeless or destitute or without adequate parental care by reason of mental or physical condition of the child’s parents, guardian, or custodian; or whose condition or environment is such as to warrant the state, in the interests of the child, to assume the child’s guardianship.

Report Child Abuse and Neglect

Call 419.774.4100

24 hours, 7 days a week

www.richlandcountychildrenservices.org

Our Mission

Protect children at risk of abuse, neglect, or dependency;

Provide children the opportunity to live in a safe, nurturing, permanent family;

Strengthen and support families in meeting the needs of their children;

Join with the community to provide culturally sensitive services necessary to protect children, strengthen families, and promote well-being.

Executive Director

Randy J. Parker

Board Members

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Connie Hoffman, MSW

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Tim Harless, BSW, Program Director

Angelica Poth, MBA, Interim Human Resource Manager

Pamela Varnes, BA, MIS Administrator



Richland County Children Services

Board

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