

2024 Annual Report



Marion County Children Services

Safe Children.

Strong Families.

Supportive Communities.

OUR WORK IN 2024



1 out of every 7 children received supportive services from Marion County Children Services

Philosophy: The Marion County Children Services Board believes that all children have the right to grow and develop within their own families in a safe and permanent home environment. We view families as the true experts regarding their needs and work jointly with them to identify concerns and determine solutions to assure child safety.



CHILD SAFETY

We rely on our community to stand up and be a voice for children by reporting concerns.



Medical Personnel



Law Enforcement



Social Services Staff



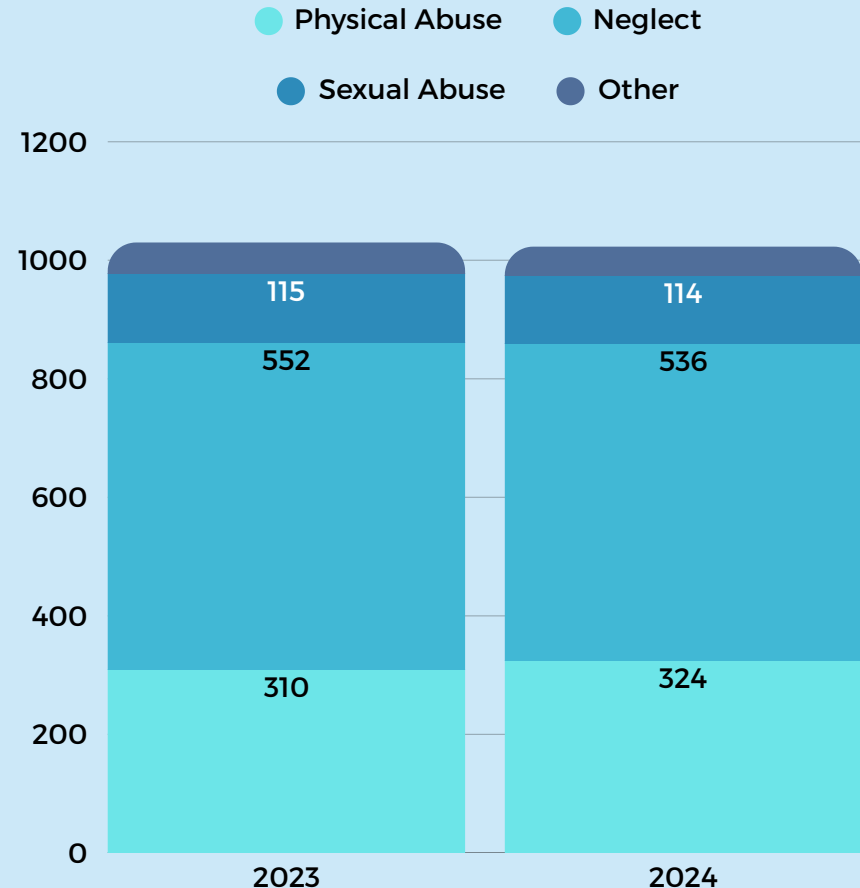
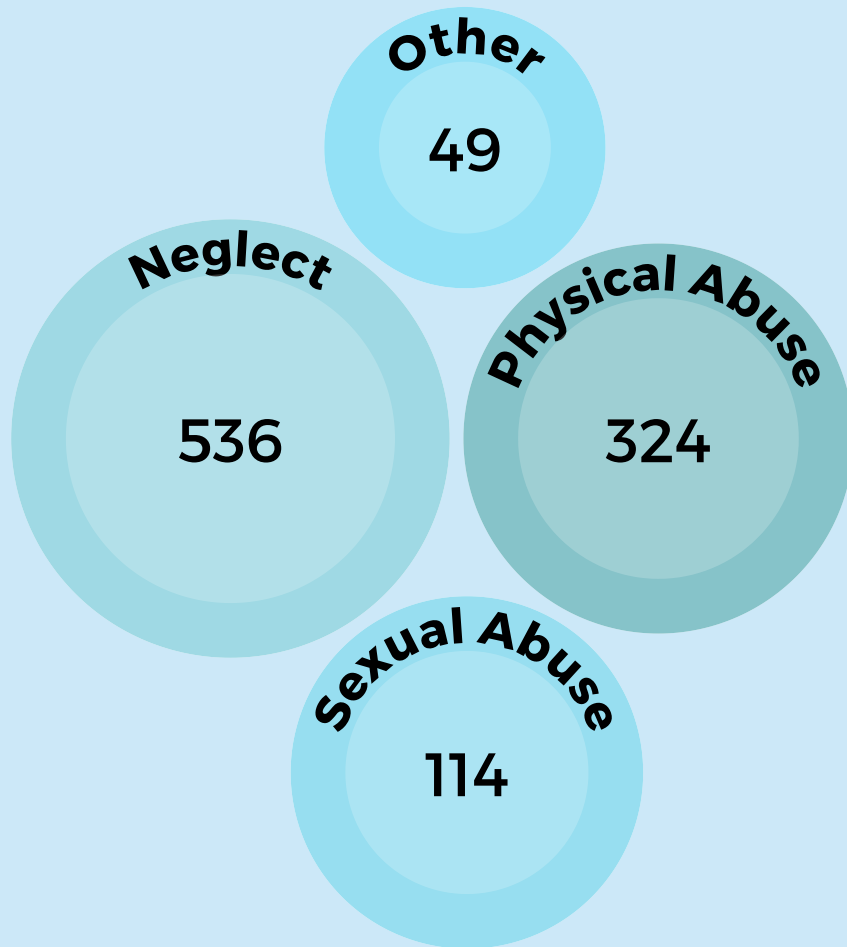
School Staff

**TOP REFERRAL
SOURCES - 2024**

The safety of children is our first concern. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you should call us at 740-389-SAFE weekdays between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. For emergencies, after hours or on weekends or holidays, call the Marion County Sheriff's Office at 740-382-8244 and ask to speak with the on-call Child Protection Caseworker.

SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS - 1,023 TOTAL

We complete investigations on all reports that meet Ohio's legal definition of child maltreatment. These services are provided **24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**



During safety investigations, information is gathered to determine what resources the family may be lacking and if there is currently risk to the child's safety, health and welfare. This process emphasizes the working partnership between families, child protection, and community agencies to promote child safety, well-being, and permanency.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT IDENTIFICATION

Questions about the investigation process?
Consider attending one of our free training sessions.

Child Abuse & Neglect Training is offered throughout the year at Marion County Children Services. This training is intended to increase knowledge about child abuse and neglect, and the reports and assessment process. Our goal is to create awareness in the community and contribute to the protection of abuse and neglected children.

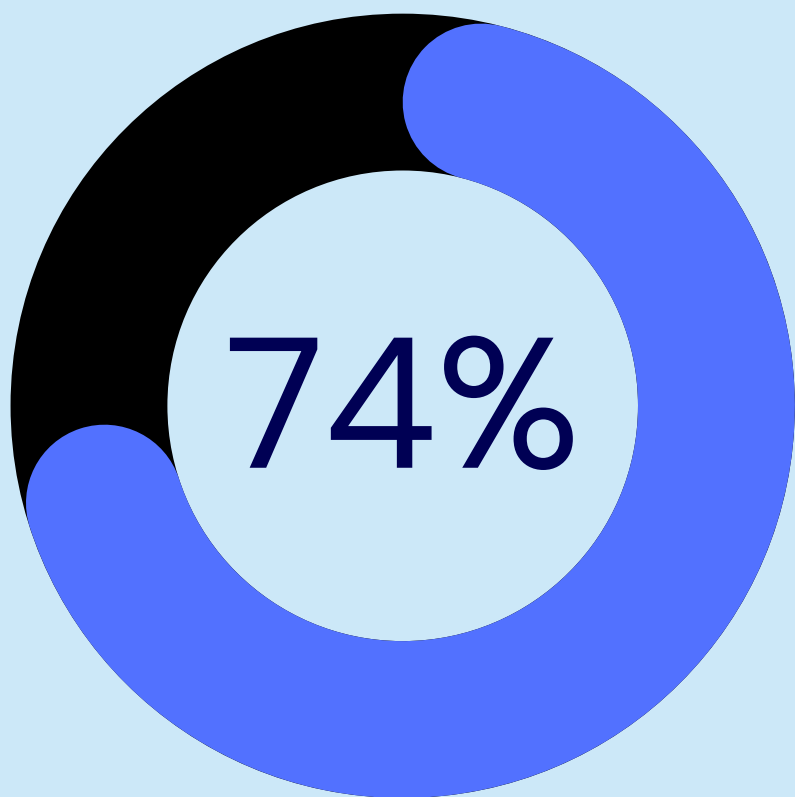
FREE for those who live or work in Marion County.
Out of county: \$15 for 3 hours and \$25 for 6 hours.

Contact us to sign-up for a current training, or to inquire about how to bring the training to your organization.

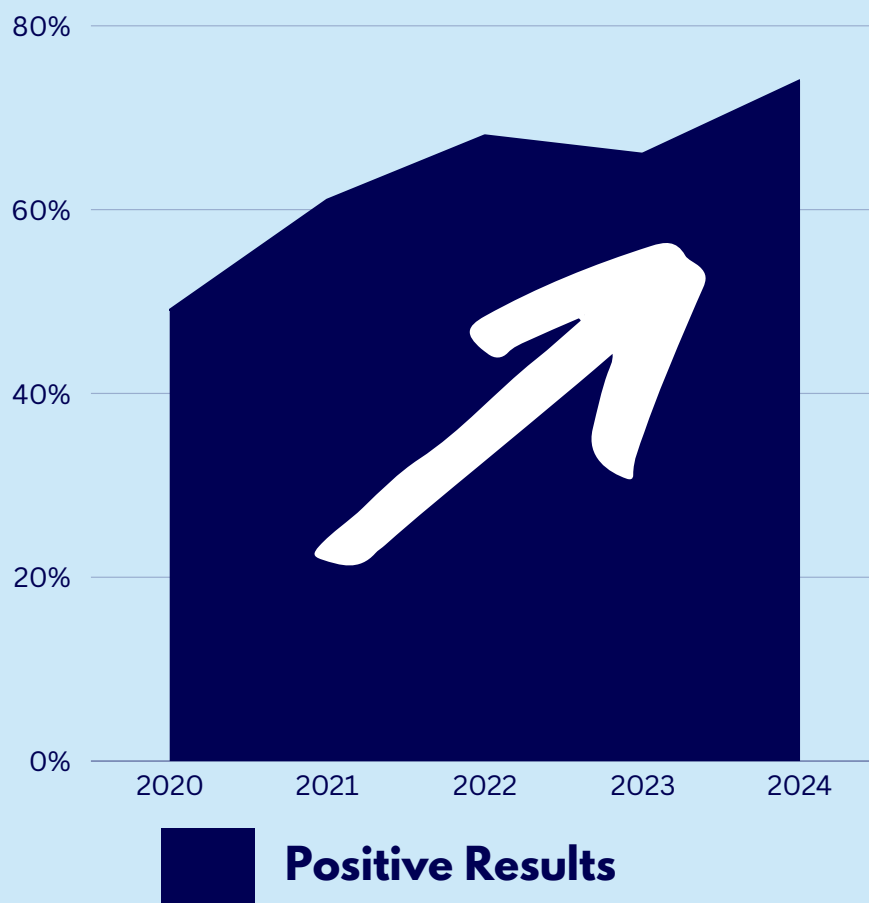
moreinfo@marionkids.com or 740-389-2317

DRUG SCREENS

Parental drug abuse and neglect are the leading causes for the removal of children from their homes. They truly are the **silent victims**.



POSITIVE DRUG SCREENS



HOME BASED SERVICES

When our continued assistance is needed, supportive services are provided to promote the safety of children within the home whenever possible. The caseworker and the family work jointly to create and set goals to strengthen the family and reduce risk to the children.

Families



Children



FOSTER CARE & KINSHIP SERVICES



When children are at serious risk of harm, removal from their home environment is necessary. We make every effort to place children in the least restrictive, most family-like setting while working with families to improve situations and promote successful reunification. Children placed with extended family or friends are less likely to suffer from stress that results from being removed from their family.

Kinship

188

children were in kinship care - due to our continued expansion of family search and engagement efforts, 47% increase from 2023

Out of Home Care

279

children required out of home placements in 2024, 14% increase from 2023

Foster Care

91

children were in agency custody and placed in various foster care settings - 15% decrease from 5 year average.

KINSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES

Children placed with kinship have reduced trauma, and are typically able to stay in their community, connected to their schools and other providers.

KINSHIP SUPPORTS INTERVENTION

The purpose of KSI ensures kinship caregivers have the support they need to meet the child's physical, emotional, financial, and basic needs. Kinship caregivers are supported to connect with community resources, including financial resources, for maintaining placement stability. KSI allows MCCS to provide vouchers to kinship families caring for children placed in their home.

KINSHIP PERMANENCY INCENTIVE

KPI was created to support children in the homes of family or friends who have committed to caring for them when birth parents cannot. KPI provides time-limited incentive payments to families caring for their kin. Applicants of the program who are eligible kinship caregivers that hold legal custody can receive a payment every six months for a total of up to eight payments to support the stability of the child's placement in the home.

KINSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

KSP is a state program that provides financial payments to eligible kinship caregivers for the placement of children in their homes when a child is in Agency custody for up to six months. A kinship caregiver who is not certified as a foster caregiver is eligible to receive KSP funding for a child(ren) placed in the kinship caregiver's home when the child(ren) have an open case with the agency and for whom a kinship assessment is completed.

KINSHIP GUARDIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

KGAP is available to eligible kinship caregivers who become legal custodians or guardians of the children placed in their home. The kinship caregivers must become licensed by the State of Ohio to care for the children they have placed in their home in order to receive the funding. The kinship caregiver must commit to caring for the child on a permanent basis.

ADOPTION SERVICES

Children who are unable to return to family deserve a safe and permanent home. Six children found their forever families through adoption.

6

Post-adoption special services subsidy are available for qualifying families to help ensure their ability to meet the special needs of their children after adoption. 99 children (56 families) received post-adoption services.

99



OhioKAN is a flexible and responsive kinship and adoption navigator program designed to assist children, caregivers, and families statewide.

1-844-OHIOKAN



**HALF OF 2024 ADOPTIONS WERE
YOUTH AGED 13 AND OLDER -
YOUR FAMILY COULD BE NEXT**

Strengthen your life, and the life of a child, by becoming a foster parent. Scan the QR code to get started today.

There was a 19% decrease in the number of available foster homes in 2024.

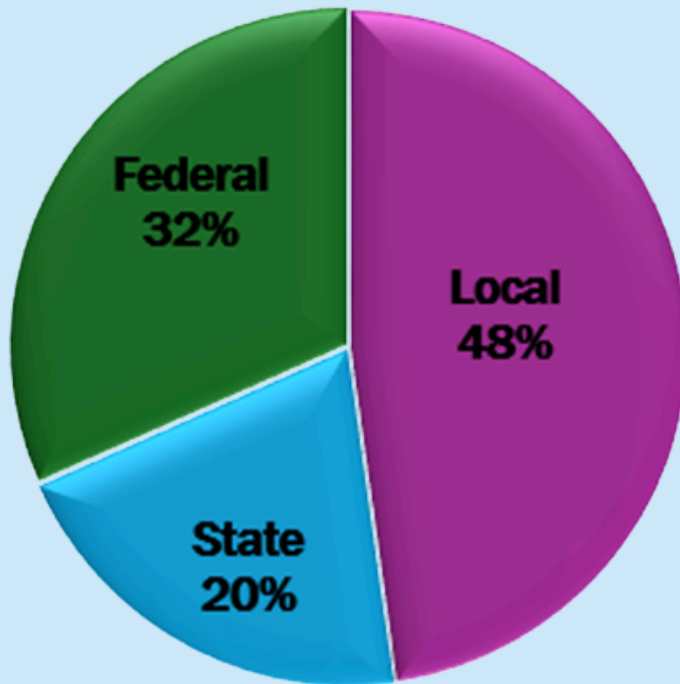


For more information, contact us at 740-389-2317 or moreinfo@marionkids.com

FINANCIALS

Revenue

\$7,378,471.03

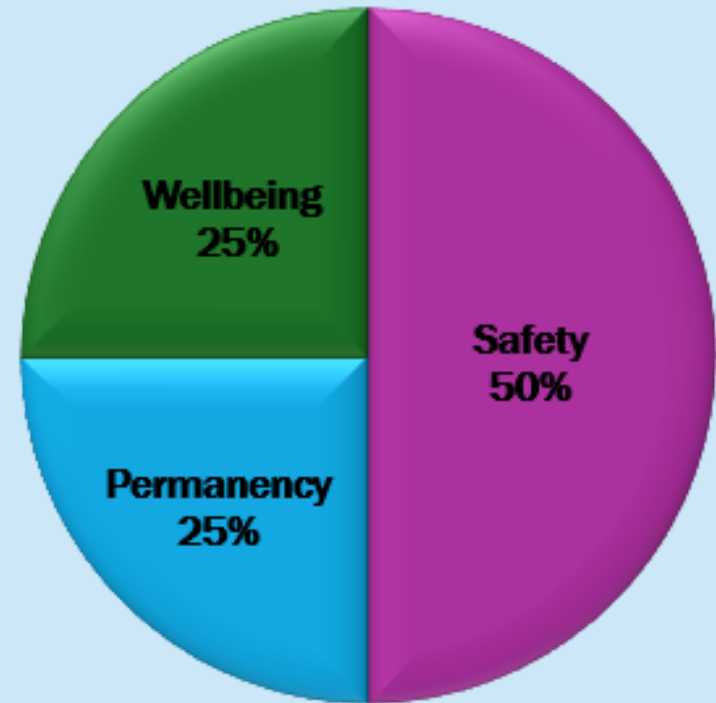


Our primary funding source is a 10-year property tax levy. The levy generated \$3,433,029.37 in 2024.

Thank you for your continued commitment to children and families!

Expenditures

\$6,997,013.61



Services are aligned with our mission and a national set of measures in three areas: child safety, well-being and permanency.

We are committed to providing effective services that promote safe children and strong families!

BEST PRACTICE



We were awarded \$127,470 in Best Practice awards, recognizing our achievements in two key practice areas:

- **Timely Assessment/Investigations**
- **Composite visitation score for all required face-to-face visits with children and parents.**

From 2023 to 2024, we received \$146,361 in recognition of our continuous efforts.

**COLLABORATION
IS THE**



Partnerships increase our ability to connect our families to the best resources. Thank you to these partners who have provided crucial collaboration or grants in 2024.

United Way of North Central Ohio - \$4,100 to implement an employee productivity pilot

Marion County Children's Home Endowment Board - \$6,500 to enhance agency efforts to support kinship and foster families of Marion County and promote community engagement

Youth Centered Permanency Round Table - \$10,000 due to efforts to establish permanency for older youth in care

SORS thru Crawford-Marion ADAMH - \$36,529.61 to address opiate use disorder/overdoses for high risk cases

Multi-Systems Youth - \$129,465 to support the emotional/behavioral health treatment needs of youth



Thank you to all of our generous community partners who made this year memorable! We could not possibly thank them all, but would like to highlight some who have been dedicated to serving the families of Marion with us.



LEADERSHIP

OUR BOARD

Marianne Bailey – Board Chair
Dr. Henry Heinzmann – Vice Chair
Ellen Bryant Messenger – Secretary
Jordy Braddy
Shawn Jackson
Terrie Robinson
Staci Thomas

SUPERVISORS

Elizabeth Arthur
Amanda Bacon
Ann Bristoll
Dan Downes
Elizabeth Moore
Angela Windle

Members of the Marion County Children Services Board (MCCSB) are responsible for defining the mission, goals, and scope of the agency's programs and services. This process encompasses the requirements set forth in the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code. The agency mission, purpose, and services is defined and maintained in such a way as to meet the needs of the community and the population which is served by the agency.


MISSION

To lead the community in the protection of children by working with families to promote, develop, and maintain safe and permanent homes.

VISION

Safe children.
Strong families.
Supportive communities.

 Find us on Facebook

 740-389-2317

 moreinfo@marionkids.com

 <http://marionkids.com>

Marion Community,

As highlighted in this annual report, 2024 brought many milestones for Marion County Children Services. One of the most significant achievements we're proud of is that half of our finalized adoptions were for youth over the age of 13. With permission, we are spotlighting one of those adoptions and the incredible family behind it.

The work our staff does is both challenging and rewarding. Adoption, while a reason for celebration, is ultimately a last resort. Our team works tirelessly to reunify families. However, when the court grants permanent custody, our placement unit makes every effort to find a forever family for every child in our care. Teenagers, who make up 40% of the youth in custody, are often the hardest to place. Many require placements outside of our community due to a shortage of available foster homes, and some have higher needs that necessitate congregate care settings.

Josh, a 14-year-old who had already spent several years in foster care, once feared that no one would want to adopt him. When we asked him to participate in one of our recruitment days, he told his caseworker he didn't think anyone would want him but agreed to give it a try. While we truly believe that every waiting youth deserves a family, older children don't often have the same opportunities for adoption as infants or toddlers.

Several years before, Josh attended Royal Family Kids, a local program that partners with our agency to serve children in foster care. There, he met Zack and Hannah McAvoy, two volunteers who learned about Josh's need for a forever family. Determined to help, they began the process of obtaining their foster and adoption licenses, with the goal of adopting Josh.

Once licensed, Zack and Hannah spent months bonding with Josh. They traveled to activities, spent long weekends together when school allowed, and said many sad goodbyes as Josh returned to his foster home. Finally, the day arrived when Josh could officially move in with them, marking the beginning of his new life with a loving family.

The endings of these stories vary. Sometimes it's a beautiful reunification; other times, it's legal custody with kinship families who have kept kids safe for years. But sometimes, as in Josh's case, it's adoption for a child who feared they were unwanted—while a family quietly worked in the background to bring them home.

For Josh, at 16-years-old, 2024 marked the end of his foster care journey and the beginning of his new life with the McAvoy family.

To our community, your support is crucial. Helping youth in foster or kinship care goes beyond fostering or adopting—it also means supporting the families who are already licensed. Make 2025 the year you help Marion's youth feel valued and wanted.

Respectfully,

Jacqueline Ringer, MPA/LSW

