

# 2023 Annual Report



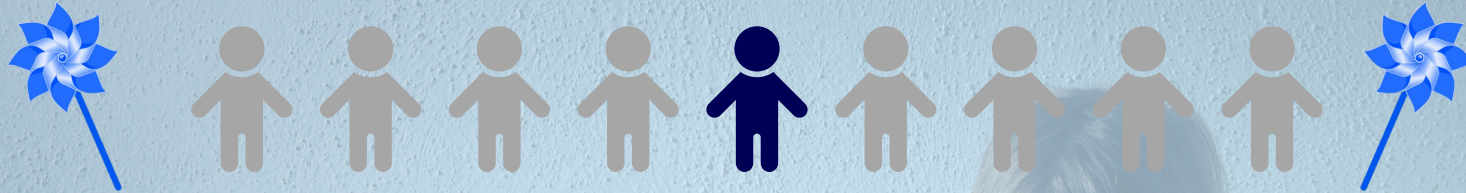
## Marion County Children Services

**Safe Children.**

**Strong Families.**

**Supportive Communities.**

# OUR WORK IN 2023



**1 out of every 9 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

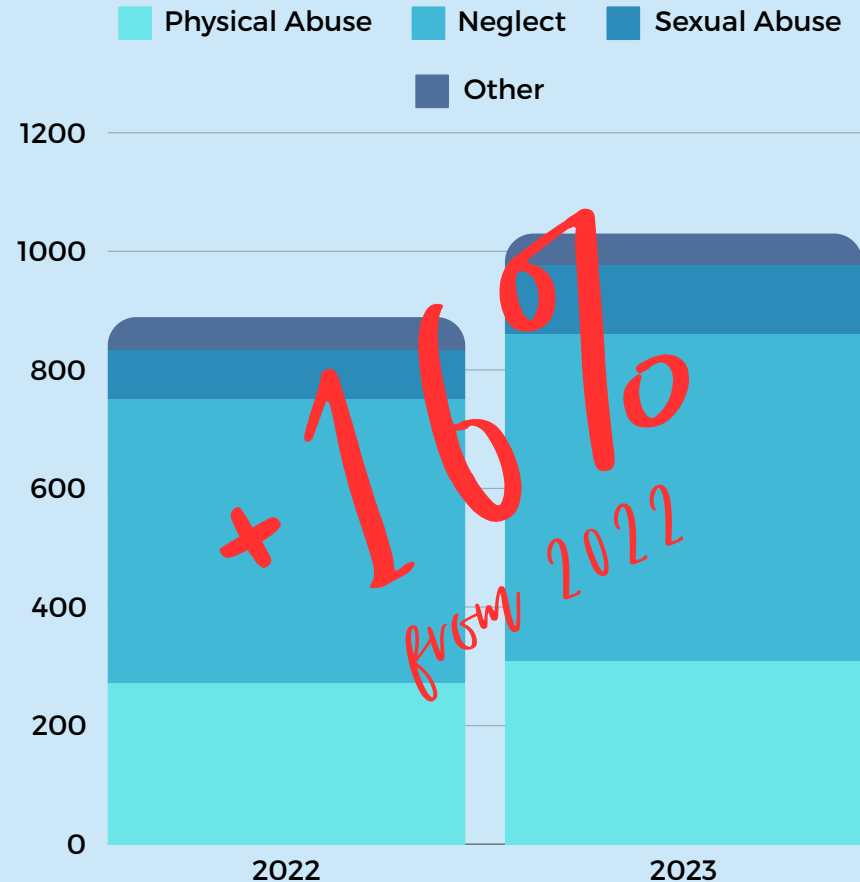
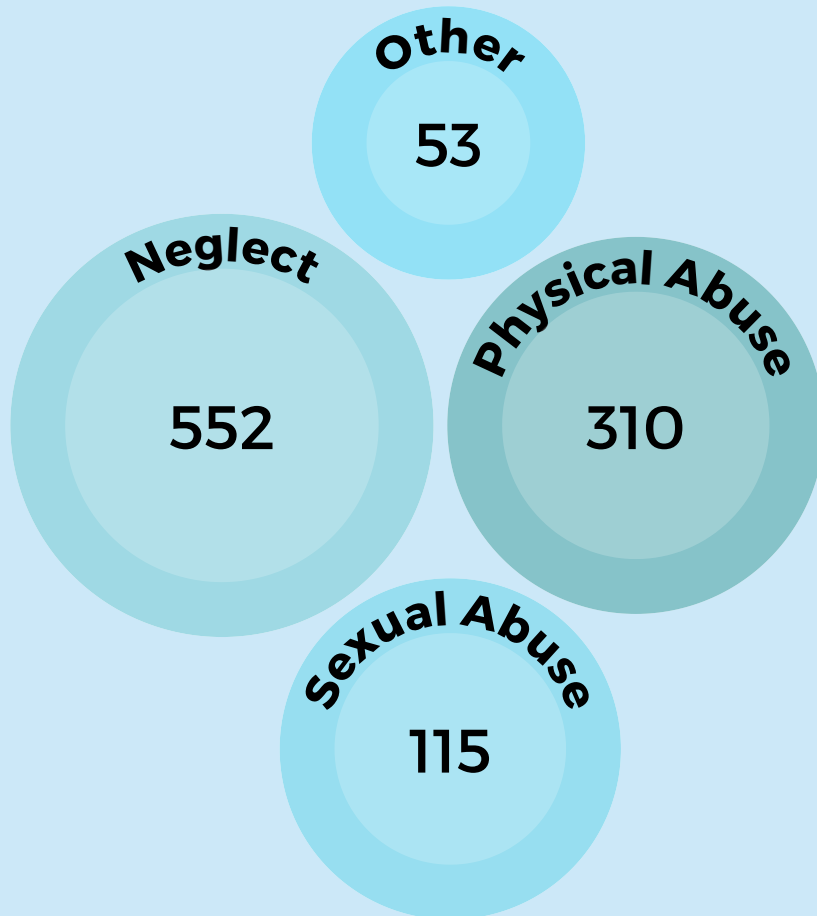
We rely on our community to stand up and be a voice for children by reporting concerns.



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 - 1,030 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.

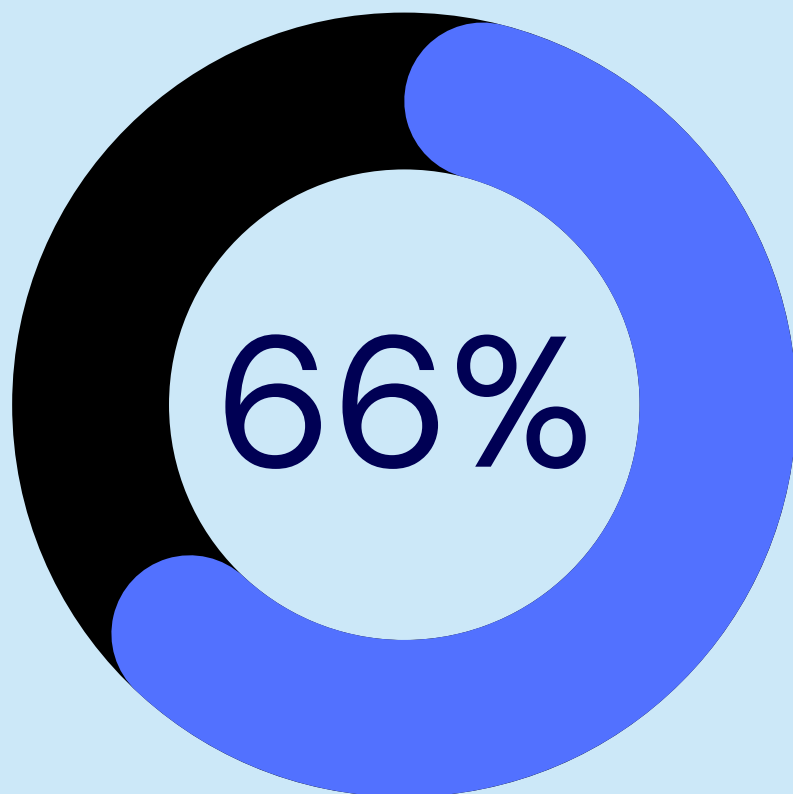
FREE for those who live or work in Marion County.  
Out of county: \$15 for 3 hours and \$25 for 6 hours.

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

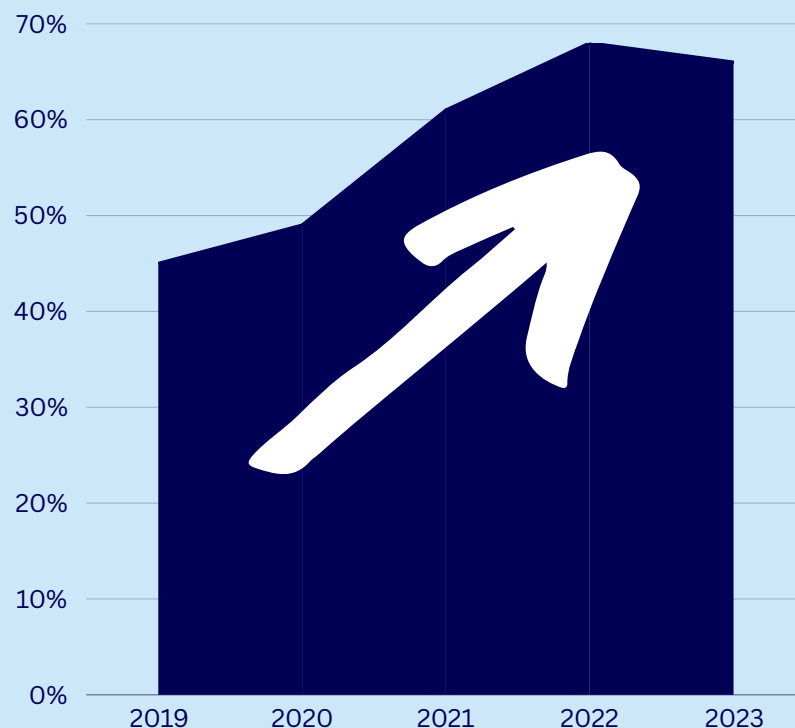
[moreinfo@marionkids.com](mailto:moreinfo@marionkids.com) or 740-389-2317

# 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



 Positive Results

# 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

**151**

children were in kinship care - due to our continued expansion of family search and engagement efforts.

## Out of Home Care

**252**

children required out of home placements in 2023.

## Foster Care

**101**

children were in agency custody and placed in various foster care settings - 13% 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.

**The KCP Program provides family stabilization and caregiving services for kinship caregivers when the caregivers have accepted temporary custody of a child.**

**Stabilization funding can help pay for incidental costs incurred when beginning to care for a child unexpectedly. Caregiving funding can be provided as a reimbursement for child caring services.**

**KINSHIP  
CAREGIVER  
PROGRAM**

**KSP is a state program that provides time limited financial payments to eligible kinship caregivers for the placement of children in their homes when a child is in Agency custody.**

**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  
SUPPORT  
PROGRAM**

**The KPI program 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.**

**Eligible kinship caregivers hold custody and will receive an initial payment to defray costs of initial placement. They may receive subsequent payments at six-month intervals to support the stability of the child's placement in the home.**

**KINSHIP  
PERMANENCY  
INCENTIVE**

**KGAP is a program available to kinship caregivers who become legal custodians or guardians of the children after caring for them for at least six consecutive months as foster parents.**

**The kinship caregiver must have committed to caring for the child on a permanent basis.**

**KINSHIP GUARDIAN  
ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM**

# ADOPTION SERVICES

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

9

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. 98 children (57 families) received post-adoption services.

98



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

1-844-OHIOKAN



# Youth in Marion need **YOU.**

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 24% decrease in the number of available foster homes in 2023.**

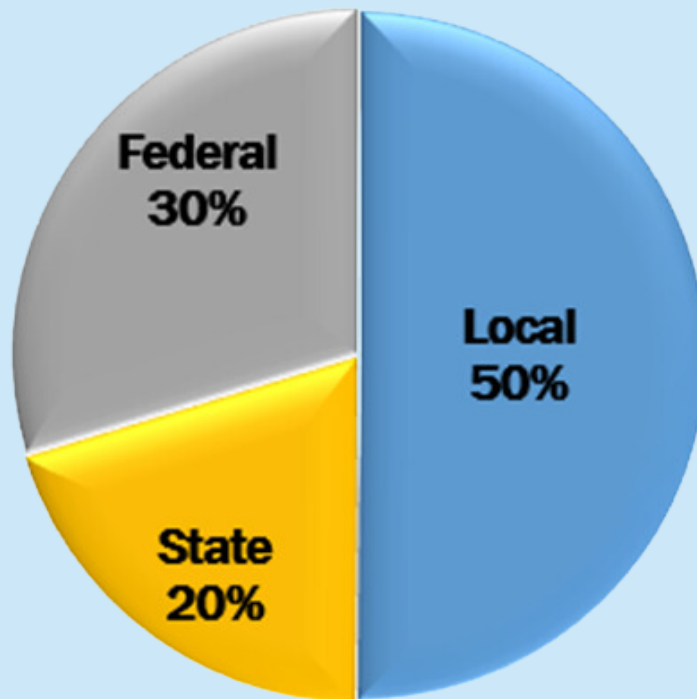


For more information, contact us at 740-389-2317 or [moreinfo@marionkids.com](mailto:moreinfo@marionkids.com)

# FINANCIALS

## Revenue

\$6,964,031.31

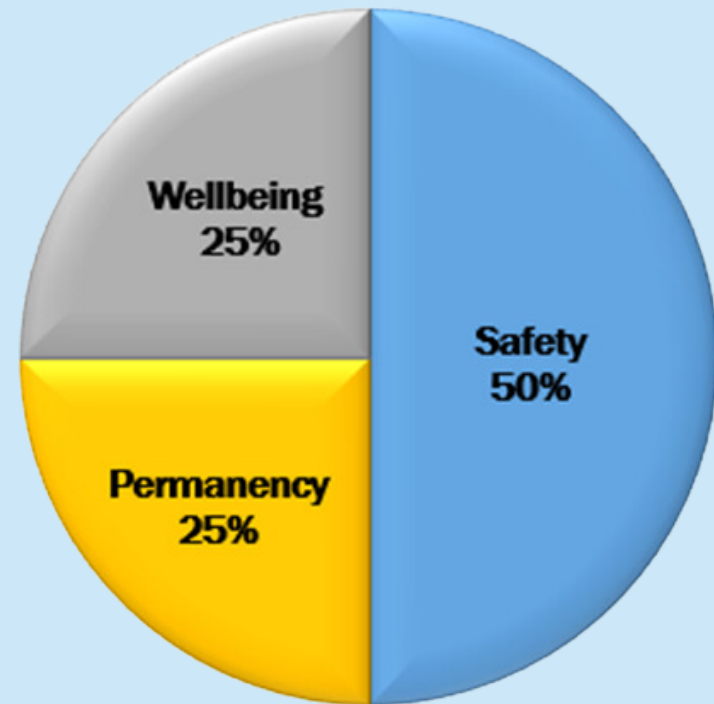


Our primary funding source is a 10-year property tax levy. The levy generated \$3,378,134.86 in 2023.

**Thank you for your continued commitment to children and families!**

## Expenditures

\$6,741,405.51



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!**

# **MOST IMPROVED**



The Office of Families and Children recently established a Best Practice Incentive Program. This program provided funding to agencies who increased or maintained benchmarks in certain areas of child protection. Advancements in these areas are critical to our state's success in making transformative change for families served by our child protection system.

Marion County was in the top three most improved medium-sized counties in Ohio!

The Agency has received a total of over \$18,981 in incentive funds in 2023 as a result.

**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 2023.

Workforce Recruitment & Retention Grant (ODJFS) - to support workforce recruitment & retention needs - total of ~\$43,000 for 2023

ASAP (ODJFS) - \$8,325.50 to promote comprehensive assessments of safety

Multi-Systems Youth - \$126,413.10 to support the emotional/behavioral health treatment needs of youth

United Way of North Central Ohio - \$4,000 to develop and manage a family-to-family foster parent mentoring program

SORS thru Crawford-Marion ADAMH - \$27,465.68 to address opiate use disorder/overdoses for high risk cases

Marion County Children's Home Endowment Board - \$5,500 to enhance agency efforts to support kinship and foster families of Marion County and promote community engagement



**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  
Ann Bristoll  
Elizabeth Moore  
Dan Downes  
Ellen Thrush  
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](mailto:moreinfo@marionkids.com)

 <http://marionkids.com>

## Marion Community,

As I reflect upon 2023, I am reminded of the Frederick Douglass quote, “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.” Ohio’s youth are experiencing profound emotional, mental, and behavioral health needs. The unfortunate reality is that we are facing a foster care and treatment crisis across the State, resulting in challenges finding appropriate and available placement and treatment options for families.

One out of every nine children in Marion County received supportive services from our Agency in 2023. Last year, 1,030 assessments of child safety were completed. Research indicates the stability and connectedness kinship placements provide leads to better outcomes for children. There were 252 Marion County children unable to remain safely in their homes and kinship placements were successfully secured for 60% of those children.



In Marion County, our available foster homes decreased by 24%. While we continue to work with our local and state stakeholders to advocate for service availability to support our children and families, we need loving and patient homes within our community willing to open their hearts to children in need.

The child protection workforce is an essential piece to achieving safe children and strong families. We applied for and were awarded \$43,200.32 through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Workforce and Retention Grant and successfully reduced our casework turnover rate by 41%. Additionally, our dedicated workforce met a critical benchmark and was awarded an additional \$18,981 from ODJFS in Best Practice Incentives.

We are dedicated to the Marion community and will continue to advocate for the services needed to provide hope for families. Our 2024 focus is to increase our kinship services, maintain youth within their community by recruiting and supporting local foster families, and decrease the time children remain in foster care.

Thank you for joining our efforts to strengthen our community.

Respectfully,

*Jacqueline Ringer, MPA/LSW*