



Introduction

The Children's Policy Council Needs Assessment is an opportunity for local communities to inform state policy-makers of the unmet needs of children throughout the state. The growing demand for evidence-based practice requires using metrics. As policy-makers rely more and more on data to drive decisions, we ask CPCs to provide objective data to support their identified needs.

We appreciate your willingness to dig deeply into what is happening at the local level to inform state leaders and ultimately guide policy and funding decisions.

About Your CPC

Please provide the requested information regarding your County's Children's Policy Council.

County *

Calhoun

Honorable Judge *

Please provide the name of the Judge who leads the county's Children's Policy Council.

Peggy P. Lacher

Name of CPC Coordinator *

Please provide the name of the contact person who coordinates the CPC activities.

CALHOUN COUNTY CHILDRENS POLICY COUNCIL

CPC Coordinator Email *

Enter the email of the contact person who coordinates the CPC activities.

peggy.lacher@alacourt.gov

Address *

Enter the address for mailing information to the CPC.

Street Address

25 West 11th Street

Address Line 2

Box 3

City

Anniston

State / Province / Region

AL

Postal / Zip Code

36201

Country

USA

School System/LEA Representation *

Are the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) all represented on the CPC?

- Yes, all are represented and active
- Yes, all are represented but not all are active
- Some are represented, but not all
- Only 1 school system is represented

Number of School Systems *

Indicate the number of school systems or Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in your county.

Does your county currently conduct a youth survey? *

- Yes
 No

CPC Members

Use the fields below to list the names of all CPC Members, with each name in a separate field. Use the "Add" link to create more fields as needed.

CPC Member

Lori Adams

Iesha Crook Beard

Tapaze Brockman

Deborah Bryant

Lesia Cotton

Annetti Felton

Riche George

Tammy Hall

Myra Holt

Stacy Jackson

Shannon Jenkins

Grady Lacher

Gayle McClellan

Laura Miller

Cathy Nichols

Faye Permenter

Teresa Simmons-Ross

Jessica Smith

Pam Stack

Kimberly Tucker

Zeldra Vawters

Brandi Welton

Lasonia Williams

Judge Tom Wright

Rep. Randy Wood

Chandy Gordon

CPC Member

Aracela Altamirano

Davieuntae Booker

Amber Butler

Kimberly Carter

Becky Cox

Gloria Floyd

Sonja George

Linda Hearn

Jeff Hyatt

Haley Jenkins

Bonnie Johnson

Judge Peggy Lacher

Brian McVeigh

Dianh Moore

Jennifer Ogle

Katie Pirkle

LaKeeshia Sandlin

Johnece Smith

Dr. Shannon Stanley

Mickey Turner

Tawanda Hunter

David West

Andi Wilson

Elaine Young

Rep. Mark Gidley

Regina Wynn

CPC Member

Jocelyn Armbruster

Rep. Barbara Boyd

Sarah Brewer

Courtney Clark

Kristen Fargason

Yashika Fomby

Jason Granholm

Robbie Hines

Bryon Jackson

Liletta Jenkins

Sen. Keith Kelley

Nichole McCants

Lynde Medder

Kelly Mumper

Jessica Patterson

Chad Robertson

Seyram Selase

Robin Snider

Bre Steele

Jordan Turner

Sheriff Matthew Wade

Kim Westbrook

Vanessa Wood

Rep. Steve Hurst

Latasha Aguirre

Jason Lindell

Does your CPC currently have 501(c)3 status? *

- Yes
 No

Needs Identification

The questions below relate to the needs of children ages birth to 19 and their families in your county. The sections

represent umbrella categories of needs which have been identified over the past several years through local CPC Needs Assessments. The data requested in each section aims to help identify root causes, risk factors and/or specifics within each category.

Please rank your county's top three needs and provide the requested data regarding those needs.

Links to several data sources and local organizations are listed below as a resource to assist CPCs in completing the needs assessment and locating the requested information.

Kids Count Data:

<https://alavoices.org/2021-alabama-kids-count/>

<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#AL/2/0/char/0>

CPC Website for AOC County Data: www.alcpc.org

Local Mental Health Center that serves county

Local County Department of Human Resources (DHR)

Three Most Urgent Needs *

Select the three needs below that are the most urgent. These are the ones you will provide more information about.

- Substance Abuse
- Parental Involvement and Family Engagement
- School Success
- Early Care and Education
- Mental Health
- Juvenile Crime and Safety
- Poverty
- Health and Well Being
- Neighborhoods and Housing
- Transportation

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse affects youth, families and all parts of society and is manifested through underage drinking, prescription drug abuse, as well as illegal substance manufacturing, access, and use.

Substance Abuse Rank *

Rank this need in order of its importance with 1 being the most important, 2 as second most important, and 3 as the least important of your top three urgent needs.

- 1
- 2
- 3

Number of juvenile delinquency cases filed for drug and substance violations. *

177 (74 direct charges and 103 violations of supervision due to substance abuse)

Have substance abuse violations and delinquency cases increased or decreased over the past year? *

- Increased significantly
- Increased somewhat
- About the same
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased significantly

How many children have been removed from their home due to parent drug use in your county? *

129

Characterize the trend of children removed from homes due to parent drug use year over year. *

- Each year, significantly more children are being removed from their homes due to parent drug use.
- We are seeing a leveling off of this trend.
- We have seen a significant decline in children being removed from their homes due to parent drug use.

Is there a Juvenile Drug Court in your county? *

- Yes
- No

How many juveniles went through the court last year? *

55

Substance Abuse Characteristics

Please select all that describe characteristics of substance abuse in your county.

- Youth Substance Abuse
- Underage Alcohol Sales
- Family Prescription Abuse
- Family Illegal Substance Abuse
- Drugs in Schools
- Lack of space to refer individuals with addiction issues

Recidivism Rate *

Provide the recidivism rate and any additional relevant information such as length of time drug court has been in existence and contributing factors to recidivism.

Our recidivism rate was 2%. Calhoun County Juvenile Drug Court has been in existence since 2002.

THC use has increased dramatically due to the legalization of marijuana in other states. Unfortunately many parents now use THC and are under the belief that THC use is acceptable and should result in less consequences.

Additional information About Substance Abuse *

Provide additional information and data regarding why you believe substance abuse is a significant problem in your county.

Legalization of THC in other states has resulted in many adults viewing THC use as acceptable behavior. It has also increased parents and caretakers own use in the home and made THC more accessible to our youth.

Mental Health

Mental Health is important at every stage of life from childhood, through adolescence, to adulthood. Mental Health is an essential component of overall health and well-being for children and their families. Children need to have any mental health conditions identified early so they can receive proper treatment through outpatient or inpatient services that meet their needs.

Mental Health Rank *

Rank this need in order of its importance with 1 being the most important, 2 as second most important, and 3 as the least important of your top three urgent needs.

- 1
- 2
- 3

Needs Related to Mental Health *

Select all statements that apply to your county.

- We have a dire need for inpatient mental health facilities.
- We have a dire need for outpatient mental health facilities and care.
- Our need and the demand for mental health services match pretty well.
- We do not have enough counselors to fill the needs in our county.
- Children with mental health issues is a growing problem in our county.
- We do not have a need for mental health services and care in our county.
- Services are only available for those with ability to pay.

How many facilities in your community maintain inpatient beds for mental health issues? *

1

How many inpatient beds are available in your county for children? *

0

Does this number meet the demand? *

- Yes, demand is almost always met.
- Demand is mostly met. Occasionally, there are not enough beds.
- Demand almost always exceeds the supply of available beds.

How many inpatient beds are available in your county for adults? *

16

Does this number meet the demand? *

- Yes, demand is almost always met.
- Demand is mostly met. Occasionally, there are not enough beds.
- Demand almost always exceeds the supply of available beds.

If the demand for services is unmet, what are some actions taken? *

Describe how the unmet needs are currently addressed.

Children are found beds by Regional Medical Center or they go to Jefferson County to receive treatment.

Describe the greatest mental health needs in your county. *

There are no inpatient mental health beds for children.

Which population has the greatest mental health need in your county? *

9 to 17 years old

Top 3 Mental Health Resources *

List the top 3 mental health resources in your county.

1. Mental Health Center
2. Private Practice
3. Family Services

Poverty

Poverty has many faces: unemployment, poor living standards, and the working poor not having enough money to provide for the basic needs of their children.

Poverty Rank *

Rank this need in order of its importance with 1 being the most important, 2 as second most important, and 3 as the least important of your top three urgent needs.

- 1
- 2
- 3

What is the unemployment rate in your county? *

1.9

What is the number of SNAP recipients (all ages) in your county? *

18,430

What is the rate of "children in poverty" in your county? *

20%

Describe access to higher education and job training in your county. *

Calhoun County has Jacksonville State University and Gadsden State College as local higher education institutions in our County; however in 2020 of the 1,219 students in Calhoun County that graduated from high school only 533 of those graduates enrolled in a two or four year post educational program.

List the 3 largest employers in your county. *

Anniston Army Depot
New Flyer
Tyler Union

Describe the types of jobs available in your county. *

Retail; sales; medical professionals; clerks; guards; truck drivers; manufacturing; fast food; laborers; secretarial; legal; drivers; general and operational managers; pharmacy technicians; maintenance and repair workers; food preparation and serving; cashiers; computer specialists; data entry; housecleaning and janitorial; automotive service technicians and mechanics; educators; engineers; professionals etc.

According to the 2019 Workforce characteristics 21.9% of available jobs earned less than minimum wage; 38.9% earned between minimum wage and \$3,333 per month and 39.2% earned more than \$3,333 per month.

Describe the workforce in your county. *

Is the workforce adequately prepared for the available jobs? Does the workforce commute into the county from another location?

44% of our graduating seniors did not pursue a college degree in 2020 whereas 25.1% of the available jobs required some college or an associate's degree. 16.5% of the available jobs required a bachelor's degree or advanced degree. Only 23.4% were available to persons with only a high school diploma or its equivalent while a mere 9.5% of the jobs were available for applicants without a high school diploma or its equivalent. (25.5% were unknown)

As of 2019 52.7% of the workforce lived and worked in Calhoun County and 47.3% of the workforce worked outside of Calhoun County.

Accomplishments

With regard to your programs in existence from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, consider accomplishments in those areas. Provide information about who benefited from the accomplishment and the source and amount of funds used for the accomplishment. Describe at least three of your county CPC's accomplishments for the past year. You may include up to 10.

Accomplishment 1 *

Describe this accomplishment.

CALHOUN COUNTY JUVENILE DRUG COURT PROGRAM:

Juvenile Drug Court had 55 juveniles enter the program and only 1 was unsuccessful. 90% of the juveniles who entered Juvenile Drug Court stopped using illegal or non-prescribed controlled substances and remained substance free for the duration of the program. Only 1 child out of 55 received delinquent charges after completing the program. 89% of those 55 juveniles worked jobs while in the program,

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 1? *

All children who participated in the program as well as their parents and the communities where they lived benefited.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 1 *

\$48,000.00.

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 1 *

The funds come from two separate grant sources.

Accomplishment 2 *

Describe this accomplishment.

CALHOUN COUNTY'S EARLY WARNING PROGRAM:

Calhoun County's Early Warning Program had 1617 children and their parents referred to the program. The purpose was to explain the Compulsory Attendance Law and stress the importance of the child attending school; avoid future charges related to truancy and refer the children and their family to other resources in the community.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 2? *

All children who participated in the program as well as their parents and the school systems they attend benefited.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 2 *

none

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 2 *

The program is conducted by the Juvenile Probation Office. No funds are dedicated to the program.

Accomplishment 3 *

Describe this accomplishment.

NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION TAKE BACK DAYS:

On October 29, 2022, the Agency for Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) led a local National Prescription Drug Take Back Day event along with community partners Calhoun County Children's Policy Council, law enforcement agencies: Calhoun County Sheriff's Department, Anniston Police Department and Jacksonville Police Department. 300 pounds of unused and/or expired prescription drugs were collected at this event. ASAP held a drive-thru National Prescription Drug Take Back Day event on April 22, 2023 and were able to provide a prize giveaway of a 50-inch 4K Smart TV via R.O.S.S (Recovery Organization of Support Specialist) who sponsored the television. This giveaway truly helped boost participation in the event and ASAP collected a total of 577 pounds of unused/expired medication that day.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 3? *

As of the 2020 census, Calhoun County's population was 114,324 people. All residents benefited from this program which creates barriers for youth and adults to have access to un-prescribed prescription drugs as well as protects the local water system from improper disposals.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 3 *

\$3,000 per event

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 3 *

This amount includes ASAP staff funding through the Alabama Department of Mental Health, in-kind services donated through various media outlets and volunteer hours from CPC members and the law enforcement agencies

Accomplishment 4

Describe this accomplishment.

OPIOD ROUND TABLE:

On March 7, 2023, ASAP hosted with multiple community partners an Opioid Round Table. Approximately 310 community members were in attendance as well as it was led by a panel which included Jason Lindell: Agency for Substance Abuse Prevention, Lina Evans: Shelby County's head coroner, Shajuanne Jones: State Director of SAFE Care Program, Wendy Sprayberry: Director of MAT Services, Sabrina Nuckols: Nurse practitioner, Haley Horne: Outreach worker with R.O.S.S. This event was held via Zoom. The event was a huge success.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 4?

As of the 2020 census, Calhoun County's population was 114,324 people. All residents benefited from this program which educates the public about opioid use and addiction.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 4

\$1,500.00

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 4

Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH)

Accomplishment 5

Describe this accomplishment.

CASA OF THE CHEAHA REGION:

From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, Cheaha CASA provided advocacy to 319 children across 167 families increasing its children served each year in operation. The goal of Cheaha CASA is to provide every child under the Court's supervision or DHR's custody with a dedicated child advocate to speak to their best interest and be a constant in their ever changing lives.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 5?

The children and their family members who find themselves involved with the Calhoun County Department of Human Resources and well as educators and community members who interact with and care about those children.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 5

\$222,000 plus \$200,00 for the purchase of a building and \$60,000 in building donations

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 5

VOCA grant; Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama; SAMCO; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints; building donations; and various community donors.

Accomplishment 6

Describe this accomplishment.

THE POWER OF ONE CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR:

In April 2023, Cheaha CASA hosted The Power of One Childhood Mental Health Seminar in Oxford. The seminar featured keynote speaker Ian Humphrey's powerful message before attendees broke off into informative sessions that offered social work CEUs. With over 70 participants, the event is expected to be a growing, annual success offering continuing education to a multitude of professions working with children, including the CASA volunteer.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 6?

The 70 participants who attended the seminar as well as any individuals the attendees work with in their careers.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 6

\$8,000.00

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 6

Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama's Stringfellow Health Fund gran

Accomplishment 7

Describe this accomplishment.

HELPING FAMILIES INITIATIVE:

Helping Families Initiative (HFI) of Calhoun & Cleburne Counties is a collaborative partnership with the District Attorney's Office (7th Judicial Circuit), United Way of East Central Alabama, Anniston City Schools, Calhoun County Schools, Cleburne County Schools, and Oxford City Schools. The program exists to prevent and reduce chronic absenteeism, and truancy, offer wrap-around services for students and their families, and provide crisis intervention and case management to ensure student well-being. Ultimately, HFI works to improve student success, graduation rates, and family stability, all while reducing substance misuse, self-harm, suicidal behaviors, crime, and juvenile detention. HFI Case Officers made 4,504 contacts with students and families experiencing chronic absenteeism. 1,453 connections were made for these households to additional services with 828 referrals made to school system services and 628 referrals made to community-based resources.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 7?

All students and family members and educators involved with the 4,504 contacts made by HFI personnel.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 7

200,000.00

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 7

District Attorney's Office: \$75,000

ADECA Juvenile Justice Grant: \$50,000

Calhoun County Schools (Title IV): \$45,000

Cleburne County Schools (Title IV): \$10,000

Oxford City Schools (Title IV): \$20,000

Accomplishment 8

Describe this accomplishment.

SUCCESS ACADEMY:

United Way's Success Academy is a youth diversion day program seeking to provide a holistic approach to the needs of each student. Success Academy is structured to serve students, ages 13 to 18, who are engaged with the juvenile justice system and are identified as potentially benefiting from a youth diversion program. The program creates an environment that promotes learning, provides clinical services for mental well-being, and empowers students to succeed. By providing critical intervention through academic remediation, wrap-around services, and a robust suite of therapeutic services, Success Academy students leave the program prepared for resiliency and ready to thrive into adulthood, preventing future crime, substance misuse, incarcerations, and other negative behaviors.

Success Academy staff works closely with the Department of Youth Services, Juvenile Probation Office, Family Court Judges, and multiple community partners to ensure the greatest outcome possible for each student.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 8?

The families and educators and community members who have interaction or involvement with the 24 students who successfully completed Success Academy during the 2022-2023 year as well as the families, educators and community members interacting with the 15 students currently enrolled in the program.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 8

\$256,100

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 8

Department of Youth Services Grant

Accomplishment 9

Describe this accomplishment.

WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS:

United Way's WorkFORCE Connections provides a comprehensive workforce development initiative that helps under-resourced, in-school & out-of-school youth, get started on a path to a sustainable career. The program targets high school seniors but has the ability to work with youth ages 16 to 24. The program connects participants to employment internships and pre-apprenticeships to attain skills, experience, and credentials in high-demand fields. Participants include youth who are high school dropouts; who are homeless; who are in foster care or aging out of foster care, who are pregnant or parenting, who live in poverty; who have a disability, or who are deficient in basic skills. The end result is individuals who are empowered to be career-ready and financially stable for life. 32 participants graduated from WorkFORCE Connections with 19 participants being employed and 9 participants enrolled in post-secondary education as they exited the program. All participants graduated with their high school diploma, with 1 participant being the first in her family to ever graduate from high school. A total of 96 industry-recognized credentials were attained collectively by the 2022-2023 program participants. There were 18 students in WFC's aftercare program (12-month follow-up program after graduation), with 80% of those participants successfully maintaining employment or still attending post-secondary institutions.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 9?

The families and educators and community members who have interaction or involvement with 32 participants who graduated from WorkFORCE Connections during the 2022-2023 year.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 9

\$198,861

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 9

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Accomplishment 10

Describe this accomplishment.

SAFE CARE PROGRAM FOR SUBSTANCE INVOLVED MOTHERS AND INFANTS:

The SAFE (Safe Assessments for Family Engagement) Care Program works with pregnant women or women (families) with children from birth to 3 years of age with substance misuse disorders to create Plans of Safe Care. Plans of Safe Care address safety concerns of infants and moms while a coordinator helps families navigate recovery, safety and stability to ensure the well-being of the family. The program is designed to help build and retain families affected by substance misuse disorder.

It is the goal to get involved with the family during the pregnancy to ensure that the mother is connected to the necessary recovery resources, reduce the exposure of the infant to drugs, and prevent DHR and/or law enforcement involvement.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 10?

Pregnant women or women who have recently given birth with a current substance misuse disorder and their families benefit from the program.

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 10

\$240,000 total grant from 2023 through 2025 and \$22,000 donation.

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 10

The \$240,000 which covers the funding through FY 2025 is provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Alabama Department of Mental Health, and Children Cooperative of Jefferson County under the Jefferson County SAFE Care expansion grant.

The \$22,0000 donation was from the Sparrow Song.

CPC Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is an integral part of the County CPC development. Please provide the information below and indicate your CPC's level of development.

Level I CPC

Select all that apply.

- Mandated Members (at least 8 of 15) attended at least two meetings last year
- At Large Members (at least 5 of 7) attended at least two meetings last year
- Minutes and sign in sheets were kept for all meetings
- CPC met at least quarterly
- Membership list was kept current
- Needs assessment was turned in on time and in correct format
- Annual Report submitted with needs assessment

Level II CPC

Select all that apply.

- At least 10 of the 15 mandated members attended 2 or more meetings last year
- At least 6 of the 7 At Large members attended 2 or more meetings last year
- At least 3 members attended the CPC conference last year
- New Member Orientation Manual was developed
- Committees met at least quarterly in addition to regularly scheduled CPC meetings
- Committees presented reports at CPC meetings
- Committees took action toward identified issues
- CPC has a mission statement
- CPC has an elected Vice-Chair
- CPC has an elected Secretary

Level II - Committees

Select all committees which have been established.

- Early Care and Education
- Economic Security
- Education
- Health
- Parent Involvement and Skills
- Safety

Level III CPC

Select all that apply.

- Council has developed strong leadership
- Fiscal agent has been identified or a 501(c)3 has been established
- Bylaws have been written and approved
- Members have attended CPC Leadership Training
- Council is active in child advocacy efforts
- Council sponsors community efforts for children's issues
- Committees are active and performing specific actions
- 5 or more members attended the CPC Conference last year
- Communication line has been developed with legislators
- Communication with the media occurs
- CPC has a strategic plan in place

Self-Rating*

Based on the answers above, how would you characterize your current level?

- Striving for Level I
- Level I moving toward Level II
- Level II moving toward Level III
- Level III

CPC Members List

Use the upload button below to provide a CPC membership list with contact information.

cpc list.pdf 90.96KB

CPC Meeting Minutes *

Upload minutes from CPC meetings from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. Please ensure all minutes are scanned together as one document.

CPC Minutes (September 14 2022- June 21 2023).pdf 1.57MB

CPC Sign-In Sheets *

Upload all CPC Meeting sign-in sheets from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. Please ensure all sign-in sheets are scanned together as one document.

CPC Sign in Sheets.pdf 339.13KB

Conclusion *

What have we not asked you about that you feel is important?

No comment to add.