



### 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 \*

Clay

#### Honorable Judge \*

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

James Malone

#### Name of CPC Coordinator \*

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

Lisa Runyan

#### CPC Coordinator Email \*

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

Lrunyan@mindspring.com

#### Address \*

Enter the address for mailing information to the CPC.

Street Address

PO Box 127

Address Line 2

City

Ashland

Postal / Zip Code

36251

State / Province / Region

AL

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.

3

**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	CPC Member	CPC Member
Lisa Runyan (CPC Chair)	Bethany Owens (Member at Large)	Samantha Brereton (Chamber of Commerce)
Tina Nolen (Ashland Library)	Melissa Willis (Alabama County Extension Office)	Shanon House (Ashland PD)
Kathleen Saucier (Samson's Strength)	Tiffany Young (Director, Chamber of Commerce)	Jarrod Wesley (Superintendent HS)
Phyllis Hubbard (First Assembly Christian School)	Kim Cain (City of Ashland)	Brad Kimble (Pastor, FUMC)
Tyler Sims (Attorney - Varner Law)	Tiesha Wilson (HS Counselor)	Terri Grogan (BOE)
Janet Ford (ARC of Clay County)	Cindy Roach (Clay County Christian Academy)	Kara Hubbard (Aletheia House)
Chloe Butler (Hugs for Families)	Patricia Self (Altapointe Health)	Catherine Memmolo (Lineville City Library)
Rebekah Hurst (DA Office)	Faye Burdette (Headstart)	Gwendloyn Brown (UAB Autism)
Pat McArthur (Teacher)	Julie Lett (JPO)	Alexus Hale (Headstart)
Jessica Hale (MH Alabama)	Sara McKemie (County Mental Health Liaison)	Donna Farrow (Carey Baptist Assoc)
Stephen Young (Director, CC Hospital)	Brittany Stevens (DHR, Director)	

**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](http://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

### School Success

School Success takes many forms. It begins in the early years as often measured through subject proficiencies, and in later years can be measured by graduation rates. The questions in this section are to help drill down into the root causes and specific factors contributing to the needs surrounding school success.

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### School Success 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

### Graduation Rate \*

Enter the estimated percentage of students who successfully graduate from high school in your county.

87.07

### Credit Recovery and Graduation Assistance \*

Describe programs in your county designed specifically to prevent dropping out of high school or to encourage reenrollment.

Central High School uses the Edgenuity program, which helps students get back on track for graduation. Students who are behind can take these classes online during a supervised class and make them up during the year. They also host a Summer School each summer which would allow the students to recover up to two classes per summer.

### Truancy Cases \*

Enter the number of truancy cases referred to early warning court.

12

### Discipline problems in schools \*

Describe the types of discipline issues in schools which disrupt or interfere with student performance, including suspensions and expulsions.

We are seeing problems with vaping and demerits in high school.

### School Success Factors \*

Mark the items that apply to your county's needs related to school success.

- Graduation rates
- Child literacy rates
- Unsafe school culture
- Truancy and absenteeism
- Need for alternative school placements
- Services for children with special needs
- Lack of tutoring and specialized teachers outside school hours
- Discipline issues
- Suspensions and Expulsions

### Chronic Absenteeism \*

Enter the percentage of students who are chronically absent, defined as missing 10-17 days of school, in your county.

18

### Reading Proficiency in 4th Grade \*

Enter the percentage of children who meet or exceed benchmarks for reading in 4th grade.

55.6

### Math proficiency in 4th grade \*

Enter the percentage of children who meet or exceed benchmarks in math in the 4th grade.

28.3

### Early Care and Education

The early childhood education experiences a child has before the age of five in First Class Pre-K, Head Start, Child Care Facilities, and Home Visiting programs builds social, emotional, cognitive and physical development that prepares them for school success.

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### Early Care and Education 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

### First Class Pre-K \*

Enter the number of children in your county who participated in First Class Pre-K in 2022-2023.

30

### Licensed Childcare Facilities \*

Enter the number of licensed childcare facilities located in your county.

5

### Exempt Childcare Centers \*

Enter the number of center-based license-exempt childcare centers located in your county.

2

### Access and Affordability \*

Provide information about access to, and affordability of, childcare for working families in your county.

The average cost of childcare averages \$310-425/child monthly. There is a waiting list of approximately 40 children at any given time. More childcare facilities are needed and programs for low-income families.

### **Other Childcare Options \***

In instances where there is not sufficient access to childcare or it is not affordable, how does this impact your workforce?  
Where do children go for care?

Friends or family members keep many; many are left with older siblings or remain at home alone.

### **Is the local CPC an active advisory council for First Class Pre-K in your county? \***

- Yes  
 No

### **Describe your CPC's involvement with local First Class Pre-K providers. \***

The First Class Pre-K providers are members of the CPC, but we are not part of the advisory council.

### **Under-Represented Populations \***

Describe those populations which are under-represented in early care and education. These are populations which may specifically be hard to reach and may come to kindergarten less prepared than other students.

Low-income families

Children born to teenage mothers

Non-English speaking families

Families who live in remote parts of the county

### **Collaboration and Coordination \***

Describe both the opportunities and the barriers to collaboration and coordination within the early care and learning community.

Opportunities

Our county currently provides daycare to 345 children, with an active waitlist at each daycare. Our 2 Headstarts provide 100 of those seats. We are in desperate need of additional Headstart classrooms. Building and funding a large state-of-the-art central daycare would centralize resources and personnel and reduce the overhead for some of the smaller daycares currently in service. A centralized daycare would also allow for additional learning opportunities and programs.

Barriers

Keeping the cost of childcare affordable is always the goal, but as the cost of living increases, so does the need to increase fees to accommodate salaries and the increased cost of goods. Our average childcare monthly costs range between \$310-425/child. This is cost prohibitive for families with multiple children. Our statistics show 27.4 children under 5 live in poverty, and our median income averages \$44,000. A family with two children in daycare would spend nearly 30% of their living wage after taxes.

Several of our daycares use Church facilities, but these entities do not qualify for grant funding of any kind, even though they adhere to all requirements and guidelines. Daycare grant opportunities should be equally available to all centers.

### **Home Visiting Programs Availability \***

Does your county have sufficient access to home visiting programs such as HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters), PAT (Parents as Teachers), Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), or other Home Visiting programs?

- Yes  
 No

### Home Visiting Programs \*

Mark all that are available in your county.

- Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- HIPPY
- Nurse Family Partnership
- Early Head Start
- Family Check Up
- Healthy Families America
- Early Intervention Program for Adolescent Mothers
- Child FIRST
- Locally developed model
- Other

### Are children ready for school? \*

Describe the readiness of children for school success upon kindergarten entry. How do you know if they are or are not ready?

Preparing for School - A child's readiness to interact with others is a key indicator of their preparedness for school. Other factors, such as their reading comprehension, personal hygiene habits, independence, and level of maturity, are also taken into consideration. Sometimes, a child may be held back if their pre-screening test results show that they lack the necessary levels of reading and math awareness.

Unfortunately, many children are expected to meet standards that they are not quite ready for, which can hinder their progress. However, numerous studies have shown that age-appropriate play during early childhood can ignite a child's curiosity and create a love for learning, which can lead to success later in elementary school.

### 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? \***

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.

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

Describe how the unmet needs are currently addressed.

People are referred out of the county if the local mental health provider is unavailable. In-patient services are referred to other counties.

**Describe the greatest mental health needs in your county. \***

Intensive Outpatient to include -Individual/Family  
Outpatient Services  
Psychiatric Medicine Management  
Pediatric/Adolescent Psychiatry  
Counseling/Therapy  
Co-occurring Disorder Treatment

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

18 to 54 years old

**Top 3 Mental Health Resources \***

List the top 3 mental health resources in your county.

Altapointe

**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.

Mental Health Liasion - New Position December 2022- Current

This position is now fully funded and has been an amazing asset to our County.

In Spring 2022, the Clay County Children's Policy Council coordinated a round table discussion with community partners- Law Enforcement, Medical, Mental Health/Community Services, Education, and local business organizations - to prioritize the needs of children/families in Clay County. The greatest need reported was mental health for children and families. Clay County Children's Policy Council members met with local law enforcement leadership to proactively meet the needs in rural Clay County. Children's Policy Council members researched other counties within Alabama and, together with law enforcement leadership, created a position description for a Mental Health Liaison within the Clay County Law Enforcement agencies- Ashland Police Department, Lineville Police Department, and Clay County Sheriffs office. In addition, the Clay County Children's Policy Council supported locating and applying for grants to fully fund this new position. It is our hope this new role will serve as a model for other small rural counties.

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 1? \***

All citizens of Clay County

All agencies that work within our county

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 1 \***

50,000

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 1 \***

Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama; Stringfellow Grant  
The Daniel Foundation of Alabama

**Accomplishment 2 \***

Describe this accomplishment.

Wellness Wednesdays - weekly programs that target key areas such as  
Healthy Nutrition  
Meal Planning  
Mental Health Strategies  
School Success Programs  
Family Craft Workshops  
Container Gardening  
Family Book Clubs

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 2? \***

Open to Public - target audience is parents/grandparents/guardians and school-aged children. Our goal is to provide opportunities to engage and support parental involvement, mental health initiatives, and school success within our community.

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 2 \***

Approximately \$4,000 - 5,000

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 2 \***

Library Grants

**Accomplishment 3 \***

Describe this accomplishment.

Yellow-Meated Watermelon Festival (3rd year)  
A fun weekend of events for tourists, county residents, families, and children of all ages

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 3? \***

Open to the public - target audience is parents/grandparents/guardians and school-aged children. Our goal is to engage and support parental involvement activities within our community. Attracts tourists from other parts of the state and surrounding states. Attendance 1,500-2,000 each year.

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 3 \***

Approximately \$6,000

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 3 \***

City of Ashland

**Accomplishment 4**

Describe this accomplishment.

The Historic Ashland Theatre  
Now showing weekly movies throughout the summer as well as hosting other activities for our county youth.

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 4?**

All citizens and tourists.

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 4**

Ongoing 700/mthly

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 4**

Clay County Arts League



**Accomplishment 5**

Describe this accomplishment.

Clay County Arts Camp

A week of crafts, art projects, fitness, and health activities.

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 5?**

Children ages 5-12,

Teen counselors 14-18,

Adult Teachers Employed

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 5**

Approx 10,000

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 5**

Donations/Fundraising

**Accomplishment 6**

Describe this accomplishment.

Library Summer Reading Programs - Open to all ages

First Books

1,000 books before kindergarten

After School Reading

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 6?**

Open to Public - Target audience - parents/grandparents/guardians with school-aged children

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 6**

2,500

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 6**

Library Sources

**Accomplishment 7**

Describe this accomplishment.

Clay County Fair -

A weekend of fun for all ages. Rides, Food Vendors, Games, and Music

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 7?**

County Residents, Parents, Guardian, Children of all ages -  
approximately 3,000 participant

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 7**

\$5,000

**Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 7**

Sponsor, Chamber of Commerce

**Accomplishment 8**

Describe this accomplishment.

Summer Sizzle

Music Festival/Food/Gift Vendors. Every Thursday night throughout the month of July.

**Who benefitted from Accomplishment 8?**

All county citizens. Family-friendly atmosphere.

**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 8**

5,000

### Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 8

Clay County Arts League  
Local Sponsors

### Accomplishment 9

Describe this accomplishment.

Community Health Roundtable - biannual

This event creates a space for community connections between Mental Health and Community stakeholders, advocacy groups, resource partners, Health Care Professionals, Law Enforcement, and the community. The goal is to find solutions to our most pressing issues with community support and input. This is led by our new county Mental Health Liaison who acts as our main point of contact.

### Who benefitted from Accomplishment 9?

All Community Health Care Providers, Practitioners, Pharmacists, Nursing Staff and Support Personnel  
State Mental Health providers and agencies who were in attendance.

### Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 9

100

### Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 9

CPC Donations

### Accomplishment 10

Describe this accomplishment.

Speaker - The Alabama School of Alcohol and Other Drug Studies (ASADS) April 22, 2023

A team of 4 CPC members spoke at this annual conference in Tuscaloosa, AL.

Workshop Title: Creative/Collaborative Strategies for Rural Alabama Communities to Address the Mental Health Crisis

Course Description:

This course will provide an overview of the process to identify and address the mental health and law enforcement needs in rural Alabama communities. You will have the opportunity to learn from leaders of the Clay County Law Enforcement Agencies and the Clay County Children's Policy Council about the collaborative efforts they utilized to create and put in place a Law Enforcement Mental Health Liaison position within their rural community.

### Who benefitted from Accomplishment 10?

Workshop Attendees - 20

### Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 10

0

### Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 10

ASADS provided lodging and waived conference fees

### 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

## Annual Report Documentation

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### CPC Members List

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

2022 Clay CPC Membership List.xlsx 16.44KB

### 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 2022.docx 11.9KB

**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\_MT Signatures 2022.docx

262.86KB

**Conclusion \***

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