



Introduction

The Children's Policy Councils 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-base 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 in the spaces provided regarding your County's Children's Policy Council.

County*

De Kalb

Honorable

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

Steven L. Whitmire

Title of Judge

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

DeKalb County District Court

Address

Please provide the street address for mailing information to the CPC.

Street Address

300 Grand Avenue, SW

Address Line 2

Suite 101

City

Fort Payne

State / Province / Region

AL

Postal / Zip Code

35967

Country

DeKalb

CPC Members

CPC Member

Jimmy wilbanks (Chief JPO)

Dana Ryan (JPO)

Shannon Rice (JPO)

Denise Rains (Director DHR)

Dawn Osborne (DeKalb BOE)

Chris Hairston (DeKalb BOE)

Otis Washington DeKalb BOE SW)

CPC Member

Lorann Crow (FPCS BOE)

Kayla Magby (FPSC BOE SW)

Monica Rowland (DeKalb County Health Dept)

Ashley Helms (CED Mental Health)

CPC Member

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

- Yes
 No

Name of CPC Coordinator

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

Jimmy Wilbanks, Chief JPO

CPC Coordinator Email

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

jimmy.wilbanks@alacourt.gov

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. If your CPC would like to rank five or more needs, please feel free to do so. You are welcome to answer as many questions as you would like on this survey, but we ask that you please answer at least all of the questions under your top three ranked 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)

Most Urgent Needs

Please choose your three most urgent needs.

- 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 manifest through underage drinking, prescription drug abuse, as well as illegal substance manufacturing, access and use. If this issue is one of the top three needs in your county, please rank it first, second or third.

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

36

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

9

Urgent Needs

Please rank your top selected needs in the order of importance- 1 being the most important 2, and 3.

- 1
 2
 3

Parental Involvement and Family Engagement

Family risk and protective factors impact the involvement, or lack thereof, of parents in their children's social-emotional development and their academic education.

Number of children in foster care

122

Are there enough available placements for foster children in your county?

- Yes
 No

Urgent Needs

Please rank your top selected needs in the order of importance- 1 being the most important 2, and 3.

- 1
 2
 3

Mental Health

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

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

None

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

18

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

9 to 17 years old

Urgent Needs

Please rank your top selected needs in the order of importance- 1 being the most important 2, and 3.

- 1
 2
 3

Accomplishments

For your existing programs and accomplishments from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, please provide who benefited from the accomplishment, the source and amount of funds used for the accomplishment. Please provide at least three of your county CPC's accomplishments for the past year. You may include up to 10.

Accomplishment 1

Please describe this accomplishment.

Problem#1: Parentel Involvement and Family Engagement: Both Boards of Education have established Parental Involvement Specialist positions with the emphasis on increasing parental engagement in the respective childs educational process. Both systems are actively engaged in community based efforts to increase parents in their child's education. This is being addressed at the local school level and as a system wide effort. This involves promoting Parent/Teacher activities and community events

Who benefited from accomplishment 1

Children and their families. Both Boards of Education through improved communication and parental engagement.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 1

None from CPC. Projects covered by respective BOE and AL Dept of Education.

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 1

Respective BOE and AL Dept of Education.

Accomplishment 2

Please describe this accomplishment.

Problem #1 Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement; The DeKalb Youth Service Center has trained a staff member as a Parent Project (Inc.) Instructor. This position will provide after hours training for parents in parenting techniques. Parents may be referred through Juvenile Court, the respective School Board and/or DHR. The purpose of the service is to serve parents of Court involved youth and significantly "At Risk" youth.

Who benefited from accomplishment 2

The staff member was trained in June, 2022. Sessions will begin in October 2022. The service is intended to benefit parents/guardians and their respective children and the systems at large that work with children and adolescents.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 2

\$5000 is dedicated to the total project through the DeKalb Youth Service Center.

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 2

DeKalb Youth Service Center and DYS Grant funds.

Accomplishment 3

Please describe this accomplishment.

Problem #2 Mental Health: Both DeKalb County and Fort Payne Boards of Education added a Masters Level Social Worker to their staff. This is a new position in addition to the Mental Health Coordinator in each system. The new position proved successful in providing immediate response to potential crisis situations and in providing for ongoing therapeutic interventions with "At Risk" children and youth. The positions are direct service positions and provide need based assessments and related interventions and referrals as needed. The Social Workers work as part of the Student Service Center team in the respective school system. The DeKalb County Board of Education now has two licensed Masters level Social Worker and one BS level Social Worker. Fort Payne City Schools now has two Masters level Social Workers.

Who benefited from accomplishment 3

Students and their respective parents/guardians. Secondary benefits are to the respective school systems and agencies working with children and youth

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 3

None from CPC. Funding covered by the respective BOE and AL Dept of Education.

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 3

Respective BOE and AL Dept of Education.

Accomplishment 4

Please describe this accomplishment.

Problem #2 Mental Health: The DeKalb County Board of Education implemented a Peer Helper Project in the Elementary, Middle and High schools across the County system. The program was established through the Mental Health Coordinator and implemented as a team approach with multiple levels of intervention and training of the "Peer Helpers". The students were selected by their respective schools and trained prior to implementation of the service. The program was established to help identify and meet unmet needs within the respective school. A secondary benefit was to establish a sense of ownership and pride in school as a whole. The program built in a reward trip for the "Peer Helpers" with focus on their accomplishments.

Who benefited from accomplishment 4

Students, parents/guardians and the respective schools.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 4

None from CPC; \$56,000.00 Grant Funding.

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 4

DeKalb BOE and Grant funding.

Accomplishment 5

Please describe this accomplishment.

Problem #3 Substance Abuse: Vape Sensors were installed in school restrooms in both school systems. this serves as a security tool but also is a front line intervention in substance abuse prevention and intervention. Administrative staff are alerted if a vape device or other form of smokeing product is being used. New wide angle HD security cameras have also been installed outside the restrooms to monitor entrance and exits from the restrooms. The cameras have motion tracking features which allow administrators to quickly intervene. Students with Delta 8 vapes, THC vapes or other illegal substances are sent for a Drug Screen to determine legal status and related consequences. Based on the results of the screen, students are referred for a Substance Abuse Assessment through The Bridge, Inc for treatment options.

Who benefited from accomplishment 5

Students, Administrators and the school system as a whole.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 5

None from CPC. Funding was through LEA's and AL Dept of Education.

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 5

Respective school systems and AL Dept of Education

Accomplishment 6

Please describe this accomplishment.

Overall Progress: The DeKalb Youth Service Center is in the 14th year of service as a DYS licensed comprehensive youth service center. The program operates under the DeKalb County Children's Policy Council and works directly with the DeKalb County Juvenile Court, DeKalb County Board of Education and the Fort Payne City Schools Board. The program works with area providers to ensure a coordinated service spectrum approach in order to provide in County interventions and prevent out of home placements when possible. The primary focus is on providing for public safety and for the needs of the respective youth. The porgram continues to operate the Off Campus Intervention program for the DeKalb County Board of Education and the DeKalb Youth Initiative Program for adjudicated youth from the DeKalb Juvenile Court. Overall these programs and services have proven successful in addressing the needs of area youth.

Who benefited from accomplishment 6

Youth, parents/guardians, school systems, Juvenile Court and area providers working with children and youth.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 6**Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 6**

DBOE and FPCS Boards of Education, DYS Grant Funding

Accomplishment 7

Please describe this accomplishment.

Overall Progress: Both School systems have improved security measures at each campus by adding wide angle HD security cameras inside the schools and at key perimeter locations. The cameras have motion tracking features, continuous recording, zoom features and sound. This allows Administrators continuous access to monitor the campus. The schools have also added security fencing and gates to manage traffic and provide enhanced security. Automated lock systems and enhanced security entry/exit points have also been added on all school campuses. School Resource Officers have also been added and each school campus in the County is covered by a Resource Officer.

Who benefited from accomplishment 7

Students, parents, staff and administrators, community at large.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 7

No CPC Funds

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 7

Respective BOE, AL Dept of Education, Federal funding, DeKalb County Commission, Fort Payns City Council.

Accomplishment 8

Please describe this accomplishment.

Overall Progress: Both School systems have installed enhanced technology monitoring systems that alert Administrators of anyall potential threat risk. The system alerts for any comments in the respective system involving comments related to self harm, harm to others, drugs and/or sexual content. This information is also shared with School Social Workers for intervention. The system monitors all devices logged onto the system.

Who benefited from accomplishment 8

Students, parents, staff and Administrators.

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 8

No CPC Funds

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 8

Respective BOE, AL Dept of ED, Federal Funds.

Accomplishment 9

Please describe this accomplishment.

Who benefited from accomplishment 9

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 9

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 9

Accomplishment 10

Please describe this accomplishment.

Who benefited from accomplishment 10

Amount of funds dedicated to Accomplishment 10

Source(s) of funds for Accomplishment 10

CPC Self-Assessment

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

Level I CPC

Please select all that apply.

- Mandate 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
- CPS 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

Please 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

Please select all committees which have been established.

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

Level III CPC

Please 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

Please upload a CPC membership list with contact information.

CPC Meeting Minutes

Please upload minutes from CPC meetings from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Please ensure all minutes are scanned together as one document.

CPC Sign-In Sheets

Please upload all CPC Meeting Sign-In sheets from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Please ensure all sign-in sheets are scanned together as one document.

Conclusion*

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

The DeKalb County Children's Policy has not met post COVID. The Board President stated that meetings will resume ASAP. The respective School Boards and County service agencies have continued to make progress in addressing the needs of children and youth in DeKalb County. Significant progress has been made through both school systems in identifying and meeting needs ranging from enhanced safety and security measures to additional school Social Workers and Parental Involvement measures. CED Mental Health has also continued to make strides in services to children and adolescents. A number of out-patient mental health providers are now operational in the County for a significant increase in out-patient treatment options. The Bridge, Inc has also increased its service time in the County for improved timeliness on assessments and treatment options for substance abuse issues with adolescent cases.