



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 *

Limestone

Honorable Judge *

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

Honorable Gray West

Name of CPC Coordinator *

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

Elizabeth A. Halbrooks

CPC Coordinator Email *

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

peppermintlaw@bellsouth.net

Address *

Enter the address for mailing information to the CPC.

Street Address

Limestone County Courthouse, Attn: Judge West

Address Line 2

200 Washington Street West

City

Athens

State / Province / Region

Alabama

Postal / Zip Code

35611

Country

US

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	CPC Member	CPC Member
Hon. Gray West, CPC Chair	Elizabeth A. Halbrooks, CPC Coordinator	Natalie Tease, Judicial Assistant
Liletta Jenkins, Alabama CPC	Nichole McCants, Alabama CPC	Hon. David Puckett, District Judge
Beth Cobb, Judicial Assistant	Tara Pressnell, Chief JPO	April Smith, JPO
Katye Hanson, Service Coord. JPO	Ann Chandler, CAC	Christina Bowsher, CAC
Becky Bentley, CAC Exe. Dir.	Stephanie Abner, CAC	Jennifer Kassey, CAC
Cory Harris, DHR	Jennifer Sampieri, DHR	Lori Bateman, DHR Director
Betsy Howard, DHR	Ashira Harris, DHR	Bethany Foster, DHR
Claire T. Jones, DHR Attorney	Austin Pike, CASA	Lindsey May, CASA
Allynn Griffin, Family Treatment Ct.	Mike O'Rear, Truancy ACS	Lou Ann O'Rear, Counselor ACS
Michael Ross, Mental Health Coord. ACS	Shana Winter, Counselor ACS	Renee Kennedy, Counselor ACS
Ramona Malone, Counselor ACS	Kristen Clemmons, Assist. D.A.	Davis Delich, Assist. D.A.
Jeff Roberts, Assist. D.A.	Karen Burchfield, Truancy LCS	Casie Barksdale, Fed. Prog. LCS
Kathryn Lyons, Counselor LCS	Kristen Meeker, Counselor LCS	Happy Alexander, Counselor LCS
Lacy Williams, Counselor LCS	Paige Betterton, Counselor LCS	Glynn Cannon, Counselor LCS
Velvet Black, Counselor LCS	Autumn Rowe, Counselor LCS	Collette Bermundez, Parent Liaison LCS
Emily Sandlin, Parent Liaison LCS	Sandra Weatherford, Parent Liaison LCS	Wendy Yeager, Parent Liaison LCS
Lisa Novak, Parent Liaison LCS	Jessica Moore, Parent Liaison LCS	Amanda Mims, Parent Liaison LCS
Kelly Haney, Parent Liaison LCS	Rebecca Dunnivant, Dir. of Curr. LCS	Kandy Jones, Assist. Principal LCS
Sylvia Jones, LCS	Terah Neilson, Parent Liaison LCS	Margie Bishop, Juv. Ct. Specialist
Mary Kelly, Fed. Prog. LCS	Shawn Butler, LCS	Teresa Hill, Attendance LCS
Angela Schiff, Special Ed LCS	Andrea Mayer, Pre-K LCS	Michelle Mitchell, LCS Programs
Tonna Heard, Success LCS	Mark Kearley, Children's Rehab	Lisa Nail, Mental Health Center
Carin Rhodes, Mental Health Center	Dr. Quanda Stevenson, Athens State Univ.	Alan Ostrzychki, Pastor Lindsey Ln
Treca Springer, ACES Auburn	Africa Patterson, ADPH	Tana-Kae Lewis, ADPH
Maria Tyler, LCFAPA	Amanda Findlay, AL Connections	Dayna Earhart, CAPNA

Candy Chatman, CAPNA

Karen Jared, CAPNA

Raven Baker, CAPNA

Kendra Peoples, CAPNA

Jaeda Byrda, CAPNA

Joe McCalahan, Athens P.D.

Joshua McLaughlin, Sheriff

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. *

7

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? *

109

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

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.

Judge West received a grant to start a Family Treatment Court for Parents of dependent children. It just now started this year. Nine individuals are in the program. We won't know about recidivism rates till next year.

Additional information About Substance Abuse *

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

We have truancy court once or twice a month, depending on docket sizes. Every docket we have parents test positive for illegal substances, mainly meth, cocaine and pot. We have only had one docket in the past year where we didn't have a parent test positive for meth. Normally, we have at least two or more parents test positive for meth on every docket. Those parents are referred to DHR and the Family Treatment Court for services.

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? *

0

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.

Children and families can go out of county if they have transportation. If children are involved in the juvenile court system through dependency, delinquency or truancy cases, the Court will appoint the mental health court liaison to provide counseling.

Describe the greatest mental health needs in your county. *

We have no in-patient beds in Limestone County. There is no one in Limestone County that provides psychological evaluations to help with diagnosis and placements. There are no mental health services provided to small children, 3-5 years. Children requiring play therapy have to go out of county to receive services.

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.

Athens Limestone Counseling Center. Mental Health Court Liaison. Private Providers.

Transportation

A lack of adequate and accessible public transportation services creates barriers to employment, doctor visits, buying groceries, and meeting other basic needs of life.

Transportation 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

Indicate the availability of public transportation in your county. *

- Adequate public transportation services are available to serve the needs of the community.
 Limited public transportation services are available.
 There is not public transportation.

Select the choice that best describes transportation infrastructure in your county. *

- Roads and bridges do not need much improvement.
 Roads and bridges are in some need of repair.
 The road and bridge infrastructure in our county is in desperate need of funding and repair.

Which transportation-related issue most impacts access to services in your county? *

- Public transportation
 Road and bridge infrastructure
 Both are equally important

Describe how the issue of transportation impacts your county. *

Lack of transportation affects the populations ability to access medical care, employment and education. It creates a barrier to those trying to attain medical care, employment and education. Without it, the health of our citizens is negatively impacted their ability to make a living is reduced and their access to educational opportunities is lessened.

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.

Athens Limestone Counseling Center provided 4,279 hours of outpatient counseling services for 391 children, psychiatry services for 150 children, 163.67 hours of case management services for 26 children, 217 hours of outpatient services for 26 children through the mental health court liaison, provided anger management classes for children identified by the JPO office, 1,402.07 hours of services for 210 children through the Outpatient and School Based Mental Health Collaboration program, At-Risk Counselor services were provided on-site at Athens City Schools, 340.5 hours and 401 community contacts of drug, alcohol and other drug prevention services for children. Construction has started for a new Children's Clinic.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 1? *

Children in Limestone County and Athens City

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 1 *

0

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 1 *

Medicaid -52%, Contract with the Alabama Department of Mental Health - 38%, Federal Funding -4%, In Kind Contributions - 3%, Other Revenue - 2% and Local Government - 1%.

Accomplishment 2*

Describe this accomplishment.

CASA of North Alabama: Court Appointed Special Advocates served 431 children; 70 active volunteers with proper training provided 30 hours pre-service, 3 hours court observation, 12 hours annual CEUs; total volunteer hours of 4,005.63; and 35,489.9 volunteer miles driven.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 2?*

Children of Limestone County and Athens City

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 2*

0

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 2*

VOCA Grant (Victims of Crimes Act), other Grant sources, and multiple fundraisers

Accomplishment 3*

Describe this accomplishment.

Limestone County Juvenile Probation Office Diversion Program served 38 juveniles. There were three components of the diversion program, Ankle Monitoring, Community Service and Outpatient Substance Abuse Program. Of the 38 juveniles served, 14 participated in Ankle Monitoring, 9 in Community Service, and 18 in Outpatient Substance Abuse program. Currently, 14 are active participants.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 3?*

Juveniles from Limestone County and Athens City

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 3*

0

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 3*

Diversion Grant from the Alabama Department of Youth Services

Accomplishment 4

Describe this accomplishment.

Alabama Department of Public Health has partnered with the dental clinics of Calhoun Community College and Wallace State Community College and additional local dentists to provide free dental cleanings to pregnant mothers and children ages 1-17 years old.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 4?

Limestone County and Athens City pregnant mothers and children

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 4

0

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 4

It is a partnership between the Alabama Department of Public Health, Calhoun Community College, Wallace State Community College and other providers.

Accomplishment 5

Describe this accomplishment.

Huntsville Children's Rehabilitation Service (CRS) has become the largest CRS office in the state. They are serving 40 clients per month and gaining 100 new cases each year. They are now streamlining services to better assist clients. From early intervention services, vocational rehabilitation, Medicaid waiver application assistance, and independent living, they are offering services at every stage of development from infant to adult.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 5?

Children and families in Limestone County and Athens City

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 5

0

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 5

Federal Funding

Accomplishment 6

Describe this accomplishment.

The Limestone County Juvenile Court received a Grant to create a Family Treatment Court for Parents of dependent children to receive substance abuse treatment. The Family Treatment Court coordinates with in-patient treatment facilities to make in-patient treatment accessible to parents with drug and alcohol problems. With treatment, it is the hope that parents can reunify with their children.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 6?

Parents in Limestone County and Athens City who have drug and alcohol problems with dependent children

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 6

30,000

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 6

Grant

Accomplishment 7

Describe this accomplishment.

Limestone Child Advocacy Center provided forensic interviews, victim advocacy and counseling free of charge to victims of child abuse and their non-offending caregivers. They offered "Prevent" an educational abuse prevention program to our local schools, Boys and Girl's Clubs and local day cares that serve elementary age children. The program has served over 4,000 children. Their program called Building Stronger Families has offered parenting classes in English and Spanish to parents involved with the Limestone County Department of Human Resources, Truancy Court and private cases. They also offered Community Awareness Programs such as Darkness to Light.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 7?

Children and Families of Limestone County and Athens City

Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 7

0

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 7

Grants, Donations, Fund raisers and local Governmental Support

Accomplishment 8

Describe this accomplishment.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 8?**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 8****Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 8****Accomplishment 9**

Describe this accomplishment.

Who benefitted from Accomplishment 9?**Amount of Funds Dedicated to Accomplishment 9**

Source(s) of Funds for Accomplishment 9

Accomplishment 10

Describe this accomplishment.

Who benefitted 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 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

CPC Members List

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

Copy of CPC Membership Template.xlsx 26.09KB

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.

2022-.pdf 247KB

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.

2022-2023 CPC Sign In Sheets.pdf 7.33MB

Conclusion *

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

I think the CPC statute requiring submission of the Needs Assessment by July 1st of each year should be amended to August or September. The time period for data collection is from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. If we have to turn in our reports by July 1st, we cannot capture the true data for the month of June. For CPCs that turn in their reports as soon as submissions open, they may be losing the month of May and June for data collection. Since the next year's report begins with July 1st, you're never able to recapture the data lost for the months of May and June, if you're collecting real time data. In Limestone County, that's exactly what we do. When you ask the number of juvenile delinquency cases filed for drug and substance abuse violations, we count them in real time. But, we never have an accurate number for June because the report is due. Also, when you ask how many children have been removed from their homes due to parent drug use, our Juvenile Court Specialist goes through the cases and counts them. But, again, June data is not accurate. Thus, if we want our data to be correct, we need a later report submission time.