



**Community Voices** is a subcommittee of the Licking County Children and Families First Council (CFFC) and was formed by CFFC Family Representatives\* **with the purpose to engage, support, provide information and empower families** whose children are receiving services or have needs in systems or areas such as mental health, developmental disabilities, juvenile justice, school, child protection, health, etc. Members have an interest in creating a community where children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Members offer CFFC their opinions on the impact of proposed policies, activities, etc. on families and educate CFFC about how to work more effectively with families.

### Meeting Guidelines

- Community Voices members, CFFC and partner agencies may invite system-involved parents/family/caregivers to Community Voices for the purpose stated above.
- Presenters and individuals/organizations that seek Community Voices input should be pre-approved by members. Ideally, at Community Voices meetings, or via email/phone call to members.
- Meetings are run by the CFFC Family Representatives that are present at the meeting.
- Community Voices members are encouraged to participate! Topics should be related to the purpose above. Members are encouraged to share personal experiences with systems and services, ask questions, contribute to discussions, offer support, and help each other solve problems.
- It is ok to disagree respectfully-- Attack the problem, not the person. Avoid language that is judgmental and blaming. Avoiding monopolizing or trying to convert someone from one religion, belief, or opinion to another.
- Community Voices members, including CFFC staff, may assist members in identifying dispute resolution policies of systems/agencies when needed.
- Personal information that is shared at meetings is kept confidential, with the following exceptions-
  - Members are encouraged to share presenter information with other families.
  - Family Representatives provide reports at Full CFFC meetings, sharing general information with CFFC members to identify service gaps, problems with a service, or that identify program strengths. For example, if parents have difficulty accessing a program or service, or have positive experiences with services, this may be shared at the full Council meeting.
- Community Voices meetings cannot be used to engage in political activity, activity toward support or failure of a political candidate or political party.
- Community Voices member contact information should not be used without permission, especially regarding politically related activities and activities unrelated to Community Voices.

### Meeting details:

- Community Voices volunteers will schedule meetings at a public meeting space.
- CFFC staff will take notes and share these notes with Community Voices members and Family Representatives presenting at CFFC meetings.

**The mission of CFFC is to build community capacity, coordinate systems and services, and engage and empower families.**

\* CFFC Family Representatives are currently/have received services from an agency represented on the CFFC, are approved by CFFC members, and are appointed by the Licking County Commissioners. Agencies Represented on Council- Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Family Health Services, LAPP, LEADS Head Start, Licking County Job & Family Services/Children Services, Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Licking County Commissioners, Licking County Educational Services Center/Flying Colors, Licking County Health Department, Licking County Juvenile/Probate Court, Licking Memorial Health Systems, Mental Health America, Mental Health and Recovery for Licking and Knox Counties, Nationwide Children's- InCK, Newark City Schools, Ohio Department of Youth Services, Pathways, United Way of Licking County, The Woodlands.