

Senator Kevin Bacon
Chairman



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Executive Director

Sunset Review Committee Ohio Children's Trust Fund Testimony February 23, 2016

Chairman Jordan and members of the Sunset Review Committee, I am Kristen Rost, Executive Director of the Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the OCTF Board.

The Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF), statutorily created in 1984, is Ohio's sole public funding source dedicated to the primary and secondary prevention of child abuse and neglect. The mission of the OCTF is to prevent child abuse and neglect through investing in strong communities, healthy families and safe children. It is our vision that every child will grow up nurtured by a network of strong communities and healthy families. The OCTF also serves as the Ohio Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America.

The Trust Fund is a quasi-public entity governed by a board of 15 members representing a broad public-private partnership. Eight members are appointed by the Governor to represent the citizens of Ohio, four members are legislative appointees and three members are agency directors (Ohio Departments of Health, Job and Family Services and Mental Health and Addiction Services) or their designees.

Current OCTF Board members reflect a diversity of expertise as well as geographic interest. The board consists of representatives from the following fields: social work and child abuse and neglect services; expertise in government relations and advocacy; the healthcare industry and the private sector; expertise in higher education; the legal community and the medical community; and expertise in mental health and non-profit executive leadership. The board supervises the policies and programs of the Trust Fund and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) serves as the Trust Fund's administrative agent in that it provides for procurement and budgeting functions.

The OCTF is governed by Ohio Revised Code (ORC) sections 3109.13 through 3109.179. The core purpose of the Trust Fund's five year strategic plan revolves

around further enhancing our collaborations and partnerships as we invest in child maltreatment programs and services as well as advocate for national, state and local policies that advance the development of a diverse and sustainable child maltreatment infrastructure. This core purpose guides OCTF operational, programmatic and fiscal decisions as we work in concert with our state and local partners to achieve our mission while becoming a state and national leader in building strong communities and increasing the health and well-being of Ohio's children and families.

The Trust Fund receives revenue from three sources: fees collected at the local level on certified copies of birth certificates, death certificates and divorce decrees and dissolutions (1980 Fund - state special revenue); federal funding as Ohio's lead agency on the United States Department of Health and Human Services Community Based Child Abuse Prevention grant (3D30 Fund - federal); and private funding as a result of the Trust Fund's ability to solicit and accept donations from private sources as well as engage in public-private partnerships.

OCTF revenues are invested in prevention programs at the local level by providing funding to private and public Ohio entities to fund child abuse and child neglect prevention programs and services. Every year, the Trust Fund coordinates public awareness and advocacy efforts for April child abuse and neglect prevention month.

In addition to providing community based child abuse and neglect prevention programs and services at the local level, the OCTF continues to invest in statewide prevention programming. These statewide initiatives address the following key areas: parenting education, home visiting, and building the infrastructure for child abuse and neglect prevention in Ohio.

The OCTF strives to ensure that the prevention programming the Board approves and funds produces positive outcomes for children and families. Accordingly, the OCTF staff provides grantees with one-on-one support and programmatic guidance on day-to-day operational questions as well as substantive programmatic expertise and technical assistance. Guidance and technical assistance is provided through ongoing individualized technical assistance, online webinars and in-person trainings.

The Trust Fund has been, and continues to be, Ohio's leader in bringing child abuse and neglect prevention policies to the forefront.

The OCTF believes that child abuse and child neglect prevention is the most critical issue we can address for the long-term prosperity of our state and nation. The Trust Fund recognizes the need for everyone to actively participate in the prevention of child abuse and child neglect, which represents a never-ending commitment.

Over the past few years, the OCTF has significantly increased its partnerships and collaborations with national, state and local entities as well as enhanced its shared services coordination with multiple Ohio state agencies particularly those who serve on the OCTF board.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) - ODJFS serves as the Trust Fund's administrative agent in that it provides for procurement and legal services as well as OCTF fiscal functions and occupancy expenses. The Trust Fund operates all prevention programming for ODJFS Child Welfare.

Ohio Department of Health (ODH) - the Trust Fund and ODH collaborate on multiple evidence-based child abuse prevention program trainings and we communicate regularly to ensure that the populations being served by our programs is non-duplicative and we share data whenever possible. In addition, the OCTF utilizes a shared service approach with ODH to invoicing county registrars for birth certificate and death certificate fees owed to each of us.

Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) - the OCTF and OhioMHAS coordinate child abuse prevention program trainings as well as partner on multiple child abuse prevention programs including child sexual abuse prevention. Through this coordination, we work to ensure that the populations being served by our programs is non-duplicative and we share data whenever possible.

The Trust Fund is very grateful to Chairman Bacon and Senator Gentile as well as Representative LaTourette and Representative Boyd for their continued service on the OCTF board and for their leadership on numerous OCTF issues and initiatives.

I and other OCTF board members thank them for their leadership in enacting provisions, through House Bill 64, that shift OCTF child abuse and neglect prevention efforts to a locally controlled regional model through which prevention funding will be provided on a regional basis to each of Ohio's eight child abuse and child neglect regional prevention councils. The new Trust Fund regional model

will result in a more efficient locally chosen and data driven delivery of essential child abuse and neglect prevention programs and services.

Chairman Jordan and members of the Sunset Review Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the OCTF board. The Ohio Children's Trust Fund appreciates your continued support and we respectfully request reauthorization by this committee. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.