



**In 2007,  
Hamilton County  
Children's Services...**

**Served 17,717 children**

**Handled 65,340 calls to 241-KIDS**

**Investigated 6,437 reports of child  
abuse and neglect**

**Worked to protect 8,305 children in  
an average month, including  
1,284 children who were in foster,  
relative or group care**

**Finalized 135 adoptions**

***In an average month, about one  
out of every 12 Hamilton County  
children is involved with Children's  
Services.***

**About:**

## **Children's Services** **Background**

**Hamilton County Children's Services is the local public organization legally responsible for taking reports of child abuse, neglect and dependency;** investigating those reports; and acting to protect child victims and children at risk. 241-KIDS, a part of Children's Services, is the county's 24-hour line for reporting allegations of abuse and neglect.

**Children's Services is part** of the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services.

**Children's Services has 426 employees and receives federal, state and local funding.** Hamilton County residents support a tax levy that raises \$41-42 million a year to keep kids safe.

**Children's Services is part of a child protection system.** All parts work together. They include juvenile court, law enforcement, and private service providers. In addition, everyone should act to protect children by reporting suspected abuse or neglect and reaching out to families in trouble. Professionals who work with children, such as doctors and teachers, are required by law to report suspected child maltreatment.

### **Examples of abuse and neglect:**

- 3-year-old home alone
- Adult sexual contact with a child
- Non-accidental injuries
- Squalid, hazardous home

### **Why does it happen? Examples:**

- Substance abuse
- Immature, unskilled or overwhelmed parent
- Untreated mental illness

***More information: 241-KIDS (5437); [www.hcjfs.org](http://www.hcjfs.org)***

## Services, eligibility and applications

### Eligibility:

**241-KIDS/Children's Services:** Anyone can make a report of suspected abuse or neglect to 241-KIDS. Children's Services is available to families and children when there is an identified risk for child abuse or neglect.

No application is necessary.

**Foster Parents:** Any resident of Ohio over the age of 21 can apply to become a licensed foster parent. For more information, call (513) 632-6366 or visit [www.hcfoster.org](http://www.hcfoster.org).

**Adoptive Parents:** Our Adoption and Foster Care section will help an adult interested in adoption. For more information, call (513) 632-6366 or visit [www.hcadopt.org](http://www.hcadopt.org).

### Services:

**Operate** 241-KIDS

**Investigate** reports of child abuse and neglect

**Provide ongoing help** when children are at significant risk of serious harm. Services include drug abuse and mental health treatment, emergency housing, and parent training.

**Involve families** and community partners in decisions

**When necessary, place children in temporary care** with relatives, foster parents or in group settings

**Seek protective, temporary or permanent custody** through Juvenile Court

**Recruit and train** foster and adoptive families

**Support** foster homes

**Prepare children** for adoption

**Arrange for post-adoption** services to families

**Train older foster teens** in skills for independent living

## Trends and Highlights

### We face many challenges, including:

- High costs for care and treatment of children removed from home
- Recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive parents
- Improving relations with our partners, such as Juvenile Court
- Shortages of certain services in our community, such as options for delinquent youth
- Federal reviews that focus on outcomes

### Record number of adoptions:

Increased awareness and focus on recruiting resulted in 135 adoptions in 2007.

### Background checks of foster parents:

The agency worked with the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts office to institute a system where local background checks on foster parents would be conducted daily immediately alerting Children's Services workers to any arrests so they could take steps to ensure foster children were safe.

### Background checks for caregivers:

The agency also increased background checks for emergency caregivers, such as relatives or friends. Workers now require national background checks before granting emergency custody of a child.

### Additional caseworkers hired:

Nearly 100 new caseworkers were hired at a hiring fair in a bid to increase the department's ability to protect children.

## Help and contact information

### Mailing address

HCJFS  
222 E. Central Parkway  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

### Telephone

General: 946-1000  
Foster Care/Adoption: 632-6366  
Report abuse/neglect: 241-KIDS (5437)  
Ways to help: 946-2188

### Web sites

[www.hcjfs.org](http://www.hcjfs.org)  
[www.hcfoster.org](http://www.hcfoster.org)  
[www.hcadopt.org](http://www.hcadopt.org)