



# 2018-2021 Strategic Plan

Making a difference for every child served

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# Background

Child and Family Advocates of Cuyahoga County (CFACC) was formed as a non-profit agency in 2016 to join the 38-year old Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) Project and the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court's recently established Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Cuyahoga County program. Ohio law requires a GAL to be assigned to advocate for the best interests of selected children involved in the child welfare and Juvenile Court systems. Staff of CFACC recruit, train, and assist attorneys and community volunteers to serve in that role. Currently there are 135 attorney GALs and 81 CASA volunteers that give a voice to children through their child-centered advocacy in collaboration with public and private agencies committed to addressing the needs of these vulnerable children.

The Cleveland and George Gund Foundations provided funding to CFACC to prepare a three-year strategic plan that supports quality work and future growth. A consultant was hired by CFACC to assist the Board of Directors and staff to develop the first strategic plan for this agency based on the results of stakeholder interviews and surveys, an independent evaluation, and facilitated discussions. The Board of Directors approved the 2018–2021 Making a Difference for Every Child Served Strategic Plan on June 21, 2018.



## Vision

Every child is seen, heard, and engaged, leading to permanency and hope.



## Mission

To make a difference for every child served through advocacy, education, and collaborative alliances.



## Values

- We are first and foremost child-centered.
- We understand, recognize, and respond to trauma.
- We willingly give of our time.
- We value and respect diversity.
- We give children a voice.
- We strengthen families.



## Goals

- Best practices executed fully
- Visibility, engagement, and collaboration
- Committed, capable, and culturally competent
- Sustainable and measured expansion



# Objectives & Performance Indicators

STRATEGIC GOAL 1:  
BEST PRACTICES  
EXECUTED FULLY

Children, family members, and agency partners recognize the value and quality of GAL and CASA advocacy.

Coordinator – GAL Program Director

OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<p>a. Establish GAL and CASA policies and procedures that achieve a child-centered and collaborative approach to advocacy services.</p>	<p>1) Updated GAL and CASA Policies and Procedures Manual.</p>
<p>b. Offer pre-service and in-service training that enhances GAL, CASA, and assigned counsel performance and understanding of and respect for the children and families served.</p>	<p>1) Pre- and in-service quarterly training schedules prepared and issued at least one month prior to each quarter.            2) Three pre-service and 12 in-service trainings conducted annually.            3) Individual trainings to receive a composite score of “good” or higher.            4) Annual training evaluation conducted and needs assessment report prepared that identifies topics to cover and strategies to make sessions accessible.            5) 90% of GAL and CASA to meet or exceed training standards.</p>
<p>c. Provide on-going assistance and support to GALs and CASAs to ensure they are prepared to provide high quality case advocacy.</p>	<p>1) Volunteer Coordinator meets with CASA volunteer in accordance with established standards.            2) CFACC staff responds to requests for assistance from GALs and CASAs within two business days.            3) Resource bank of specialized services made available and used.            4) Updates on the law and services offered.</p>
<p>d. Monitor and assess GAL and CASA performance to ensure children receive high quality advocacy.</p>	<p>1) Annual assessment report of GALs and CASAs prepared.            2) A peer review system established to respond to issues or complaints related to GALs and CASAs.</p>



# Objectives & Performance Indicators

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:  
VISIBILITY, ENGAGEMENT  
AND COLLABORATION

CFACC mission, purpose, and services are understood and appreciated.

Coordinator – Executive Director

OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
a. Increase awareness and understanding of how CFACC assists vulnerable children involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Traditional media campaign conducted and identified as the reason for contacting CFACC.</li><li>2) Social media activity options expanded and utilized at an ever-increasing level.</li><li>3) Targeted community presentations conducted and identified as the reason for contacting CFACC.</li></ol>
b. Establish and grow the Friends of CFACC, a group of individuals and agencies that assist in and support the work of CFACC.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) A Friends of CFACC operational plan developed.</li><li>2) 100 new Friends recruited annually.</li><li>3) The acts of the Friends of CFACC publicized quarterly.</li></ol>
c. Increase collaboration on cases and among child welfare and juvenile justice agencies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Quarterly case reviews with GALs, CASAs, and DCFS workers conducted, and quality improvement action plans developed.</li><li>2) Quarterly meetings with leadership of child welfare and juvenile justice agencies conducted, and quality improvement action plans developed.</li></ol>



# Objectives & Performance Indicators

STRATEGIC GOAL 3:  
COMMITTED, CAPABLE, AND  
CULTURALLY COMPETENT

CFACC succeeds at fulfilling its mission due to the collective work of the advocates, staff, and Board members.

Coordinator – CASA Program Director

OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<p>a. Increase the number, diversity, and cultural competence of advocates, staff, and Board members.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) 35% annual increase attained in number of GALs and CASAs.</li> <li>2) Ensure that 10% of staff, Board members, and GALs and CASAs were previously involved in the child welfare system.</li> <li>3) Board members to offer increased business, fundraising, and marketing skills.</li> <li>4) Board members, staff, and GALs and CASAs to increasingly reflect the demographics of those served.</li> </ol>
<p>b. Improve retention rates of GAL and CASA and staff.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Magistrates and Judges utilize GALs and CASAs fully and recognize their contributions.</li> <li>2) Monthly GAL and CASA events offered to improve dialogue and appreciation for their contributions.</li> <li>3) Staff individual and/or group supervision sessions conducted bimonthly.</li> <li>4) Staff appreciation events held quarterly.</li> </ol>
<p>c. Increase the GAL support of the CASA programming.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Survey results of GALs and CASAs reviewed.</li> <li>2) Feedback from case reviews examined.</li> </ol>



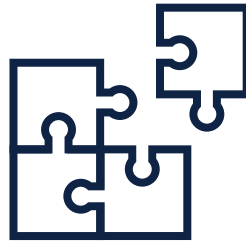
# Objectives & Performance Indicators

STRATEGIC GOAL 4:  
SUSTAINABLE AND  
MEASURED EXPANSION

CFACC has the funding to provide quality advocacy and grow to serve the number and unique needs of children.

Coordinator – Executive Director

OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
a. Increase budget annually.	1) Budget increased by 15% annually.
b. Increase percentage of revenues for events and individual donations.	1) Revenues for events and individual donations increased by 25% annually.
c. Add new programming to enhance advocacy for children.	1) Program established to involve and prepare children to participate in hearings and reviews. 2) Program established based on National CASA-developed discretionary models or approaches. 3) Program established to engage fathers in hearings and reviews. 4) 35% annual increase attained in CASA case assignments.



# Implementation

Implementation of the strategic plan will begin immediately after approval by the CFACC Board of Directors. The following steps will be followed:

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE
Place the plan on the CFACC website and share critical components of the plan with key stakeholders.	Executive Director, President of the Board of Directors	July 16, 2018
Develop and implement work plans for each goal and associated objectives.	Coordinators, work team members	July 30, 2018 – June 30, 2021
Prepare monthly progress reports and circulate to all coordinators, work team members, and the Innovation and Sustainability Committee.	Coordinators	Fourth Friday of the month starting August 2018
Update work plans quarterly, if needed.	Coordinators, work team members	First Monday of the month starting November 2018





# Oversight & Updating

The strategic plan provides focus and direction for CFACC activities over the next three years and will be adapted to respond to changing conditions and emergent issues. The Executive Director is ultimately responsible for implementation of the strategic plan, but the Innovation and Sustainability Committee and the Board of Directors will provide oversight and recommendations for changes, as needed. Responsibilities are as follows:

## Executive Director:

- 1) Ensure all progress reports are completed monthly and work plan updates are completed quarterly.
- 2) Review comments and recommendations from the Innovation and Sustainability Committee and take action, as needed.
- 3) Prepare an annual progress report on the strategic plan with recommended changes and submit to the Innovation and Sustainability Committee and the Board of Directors.
- 4) Identify the steps to prepare the next strategic plan at least six months prior to the end of the existing plan.

## Innovation and Sustainability Committee:

- 1) Include the strategic plan on every committee agenda.
- 2) Receive and review monthly strategic plan progress reports.
- 3) Submit comments and recommendations to the Executive Director, Coordinators, and President of the Board of Directors, as needed.
- 4) Submit recommendations to the Executive Director on the strategic planning process nine months prior to the end of the existing plan.

## Board Of Directors:

- 1) Approve the strategic plan.
- 2) Review comments and recommendations from the Innovation and Sustainability Committee and take action, as needed.
- 3) Review the annual progress report on the strategic plan and approve changes, as needed.
- 4) Approve the next strategic planning process.



# Strategic Planning Contributors

Child and Family Advocates of Cuyahoga County appreciates and recognizes the contribution of the individuals and organizations that took time to participate in the first strategic planning process of the organization as well as their ongoing assistance to CFACC, sometimes serving in multiple roles (i.e., GAL and CASA volunteers service on the Board of Directors and committees). Their observations and insights led to the final content of the plan, which will help CFACC realize its vision and mission. Those contributing their time and expertise include the following:

CFACC Board of Directors  
CFACC Program Operations Committee  
CFACC Staff  
Juvenile Court  
Prosecutor's Office  
Cleveland State University  
ProKids  
Lucas County CASA/GAL Program  
Athens County CASA/GAL Program  
Texas CASA  
Alaska CASA

CFACC Innovation and Sustainability Committee  
CFACC Development Committee  
Division of Children and Family Services  
Office of the Public Defender  
Case Western Reserve University  
CASA/GAL of Allen & Putnam Counties  
CASA/GAL Program of Stark and Carroll Counties  
CASA/GAL Program of Summit County  
Florida Guardian Ad Litem Program  
CASA of Travis County  
333 individuals that completed a survey on CFACC

CFACC is grateful for the financial support provided by The Cleveland and George Gund Foundations and the consulting services provided by Elsie Day to develop this strategic plan. Without their support and past funding, CFACC would not have been able to expand and enhance its services to the children and families of Cuyahoga County.



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