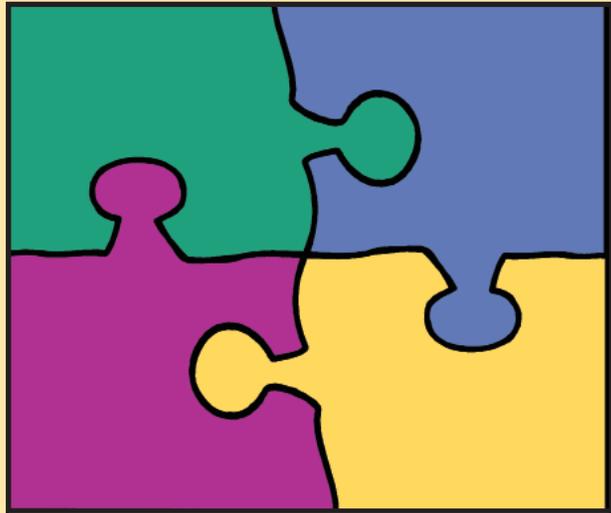


Thank you for helping us
serve you and your children.

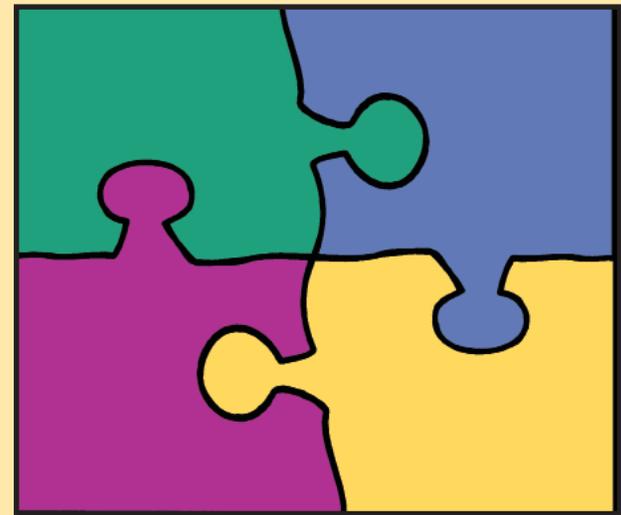
PARTNERING



WITH PARENTS



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ST. CLAIR COUNTY

DCFS Parent Partners Councils
Work with Parents to Build Strong Families



Welcome!

Welcome to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Partnering with Parents Council, an advisory committee of and for families created through birth, who are served by DCFS and private child welfare agencies.

Our goal in partnering with parents is to assist them on their journey to become stronger and more flexible, to develop a rich network of support, to be able to access public and private resources when they need them, and to use knowledge of their families to create strong, healthy relationships with each child.

DCFS needs your help to teach us what we need to do and how we need to change in order to better assist you on your journey. We recognize that you are committed to doing the hard work necessary to bring your children back home. Be assured that we are committed to working with you to provide the resources and support as you strengthen yourself and your family.

In this process, caseworkers and the court are empowered by the state to help make decisions on your behalf. This is frustrating, but it helps the child welfare agency caring for your children to reunite you and your child as soon as possible. We need you to help us teach you how we can assist you on your journey. Your caseworker is best able to make good decisions with your collaboration and participation.

The Partnering with Parents Council is governed by parents with assistance from staff advisors and provides a voice for parents in the child welfare system. Please join us and help us build stronger families.

What is the Parent Partners Council?

The Parent Partners Council is an official council DCFS created to advise the department on issues affecting families we are working with. Parents meet with agency representatives to talk about issues. Parents review and comment on DCFS rules, programs and practices. Parents have a chance to let DCFS know what works and what else would help a family involved with the child welfare system.

The goal of the Parent Partners Council is to give families a voice in how DCFS is working with families. This is one way you can help DCFS to see, hear and understand the needs of families as they work to stay together or to be reunited.

Council members receive education and information on services available through DCFS and their communities. Members discuss areas of concern and interest. They may discuss issues, give opinions and make recommendations to the department. Council members will be able to help other parents who are new to the system by mentoring them and helping them learn what is needed to succeed.

Who may participate on the Parent Partners Council?

Parents of families DCFS and private agencies serve are the most important members of the Council. A parent who is receiving DCFS services now or received service in the past may participate. The experience of these family experts is needed to shape the thinking and direct the planning of DCFS. Other Council members include caseworkers, managers and program staff.

When do parents meet?

Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of each month from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the DCFS Area Office at 10 Collinsville Ave., East St. Louis.

Need more information?

Questions about the St. Clair County Chapter should be directed to Deadra Humphrey-Vinson, DCFS, at 618-583-2169. Parents may also call Ray Gates in the DCFS Division of Caregiver and Parent Support at 217-524-2422.