

# Montgomery County

Judge Nick Kuntz

Judge Anthony Capizzi

## Program Name

Learning Independence & Family Empowerment (LIFE) Program

## Program Intervention

Functional Family Therapy

## Primary Service Location

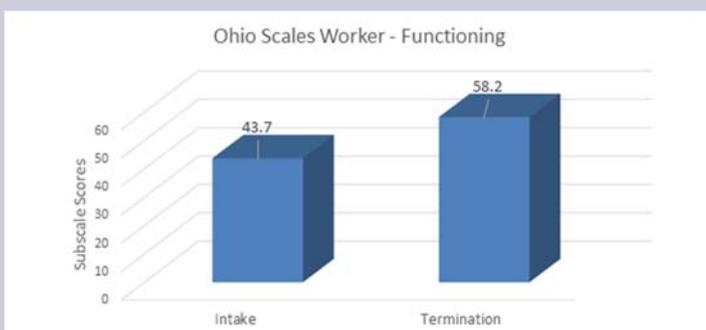
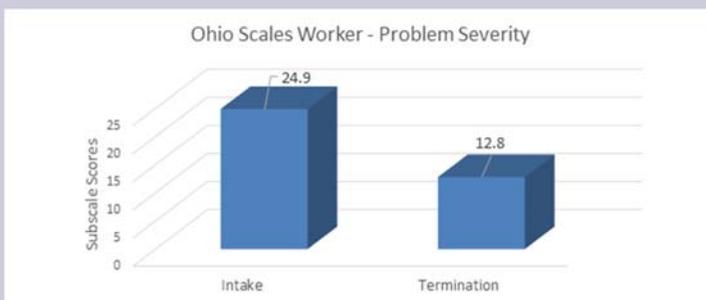
In-Home

## Program Description

The LIFE Program provides clinical and family-driven home based services utilizing Functional Family Therapy (FFT), an evidenced based practice model that serves youth and their family members involved in the juvenile justice system between the ages of 10 and 18 years old. The LIFE Program has a successful history of providing cost-effective and quality care and has shown significant improvement in mental health and substance abuse concerns with youth and their families. The LIFE Therapist will work with the entire family to help learn better ways to communicate and relate to each other, develop goals and a plan to address the needs of the family, and assist the family with any needed referrals to other resources in the community.

## Outcomes

The Montgomery County LIFE Program is designed to improve behavioral health functioning of participating youth as measured by the Ohio Scales. Significant and positive improvements for both Problem Severity and Functioning has been observed. Lower scores on Problem Severity indicate fewer problems, while higher scores on Functioning indicates better functioning.



## Program Snapshot

(As of June 30, 2016)

### Gender:

Male 60%, Female 40%

### Race/Ethnicity:

38% African American

56% White, 6% Other

### Age Range:

10 -18

### Offense Level:

Misdemeanors, Status, & At-Risk Youth

### Youth Re-offense Risk Level:

Low & Moderate

### Screens and Assessments:

OYAS Diversion Tool

### Program Start Date:

April 29, 2015

### Received Services:

52 Youth & 49 Families

### Program Completion Successes:

20 Youth

18 Families

21 Youth & 20 Families Continuing into

FY 2017

### Average # of Service Units:

15.6 Direct Service Hours Per Successful Youth & Family

### Program Partners:

Montgomery County Juvenile Court -

Intervention Center

South Community

Case Western Reserve University

Montgomery Co. Commissioner's Office

Montgomery Co. Alcohol Drug & Mental

Health Services Administration

Family Functional Therapy - FFT Inc.

Reclaiming Futures

## Program Information Contact

Tiffany Dulin

Intervention Center Director

Montgomery County Juvenile Court

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## Lessons Learned

Any significant delay in getting referred clients/families started in treatment significantly impacts their ability to accept and complete treatment.

# Montgomery County Early Successes - LIFE

“The family focused in home therapy has proven to be most successful with children and families.”

## The Honorable Nick Kuntz

“It is important to serve children and youth in the community-based LIFE program who are currently low risk because it is key in treatment services to offer the right service at the right time. Any interventions that we can offer in treatment through the LIFE program are a success in addressing factors such as school, poverty, family dysfunction and behavioral issues that influence behaviors and court involvement. It is important in offering services through the LIFE program to prevent further involvement with the judicial system.”

**Carol Smerz,**  
CEO, South Community

“The LIFE program remains a leader in providing quality services that match the client’s needs. LIFE’s home-based therapy is the advantage in ensuring a top notch treatment plan is constructed for the client’s success.”

**Brett Jung**  
Intervention Center

**Youth Success Story** – At the start of treatment, the father reports, “I felt like I was losing my son and my family was falling apart.” He goes on “I was skeptical that DeNell (the therapist) would be able to help us, but she did.” The youth reports that “I was mad and frustrated a lot of the time.” Father states that “we worked on our communication and problem solving and it was just what we needed. Now I feel like we are a real family.” The youth reports that they don’t argue the way they use to and he feels heard instead of frustrated. The family has had no further involvement with the Juvenile Court.



**Program Success Story** - Since its inception, the program has served 40 families in the Montgomery County and 20 have successfully completed the program. The collaboration of Montgomery County Juvenile Court and South Community has been successful by working together with a common goal of providing services that best address the needs of these families. This collaboration has been successful in keeping families together and preventing them from further court involvement. Of those 20 juveniles who have successfully completed the program to date, 18 have not had any further involvement with the Juvenile Court.

## Lessons Learned

Any significant delay in getting referred clients/families started in treatment significantly impacts their ability to accept and complete treatment.



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