

# Lucas County

Judge Denise Navarre Cubbon  
Judge Connie F. Zimmelman

## Program Name

Functional Family Therapy

## Program Intervention

Functional Family Therapy

## Primary Service Location

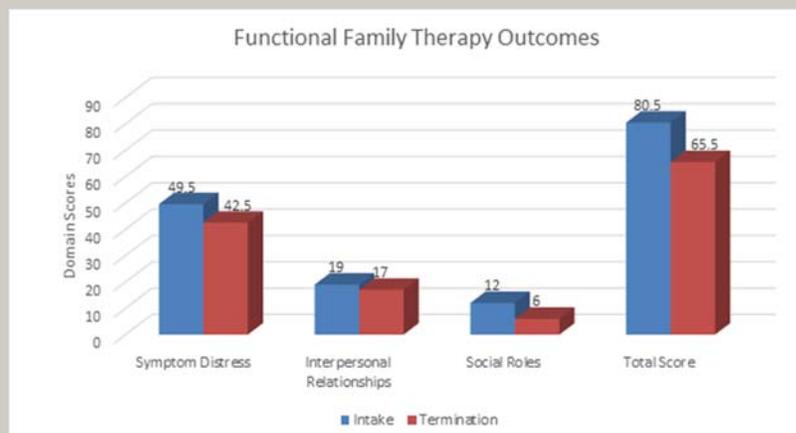
In-Home

## Program Description

- Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is a high quality intervention program for juvenile justice, child welfare, and behavioral health system involved adolescents.
- At its core is a focus on assessment and intervention to address risk and protective factors within and outside of the family that impact the adolescent and his adaptive development. Working primarily with 11 to 18 year olds, it is short term (averaging between 12 to 14 sessions over a three to five-month time frame) and is conducted in the home.
- The model's focus on familial factors and sustained adaptive behavior change is in line with the goal of the project to increase and support family engagement and reduce continued delinquent behavior. The goal is to reduce or eliminate problems that led to the youth being referred to court by improving family functioning and individual skill developments. For more information on this model visit (<http://www.ffitlc.com>).

## Outcomes

One of the main goals of the program is to improve behavioral health functioning of participating youth. As part of the FFT model, pre- and post-tests are completed by the youth. Lower scores indicate better functioning in a domain. Improvements were noted in all four domains measured by the Outcomes Questionnaire (OQ).



## Program Snapshot

(As of June 30, 2016)

### Gender:

Male 59%, Female 41%

### Race/Ethnicity:

White 47%, African American 47%, Other 6%

### Age Range:

14-17

### Offense Level:

Felony & Misdemeanor

### Youth Re-offense Risk Level:

High & Moderate

### Screens & Assessments:

OYAS Disposition Tool, GAIN Short Screener, FFT Assessment

### Program Start Date:

November 19, 2015

### Received Services:

17 Youth and Families

### Program Completion Successes:

1 Youth and Family

10 Youth and Families Continuing into FY17

### Average # of Service Units:

23.5 Direct Services Hours Per Successful Youth & Family

### Program Partners:

- Lucas County Juvenile Court
- A Renewed Mind Behavioral Health
- Functional Family Therapy, Inc.
- Lucas County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- Lucas County Reentry Coalition
- Lucas County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
- Case Western Reserve University
- Bowling Green State University
- The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency
- Lucas County Youth Advocate Program Inc.

## Program Information Contact

Kendra Kec, Assistant Court Administrator  
Lucas County Juvenile Court  
1801 Spielbusch Ave.  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419.213.6712  
Email: [kkec@co.lucas.oh.us](mailto:kkec@co.lucas.oh.us)

# Lucas County Early Successes – FFT

“Lucas County Juvenile Court appreciates the ongoing partnership with the State of Ohio. The Competitive RECLAIM funding has allowed Lucas County to fill a gap in its Continuum of Care by providing this evidenced based service to children and families in Lucas County. Functional Family Therapy is recognized by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for improving outcomes for youth at risk of delinquency.”

**Denise Navarre Cubbon**  
**Administrative Judge,**  
**Lucas County Juvenile Court**



“The partnership with FFT trainers, the Lucas County Juvenile Court, and A Renewed Mind has done more than create a successful community partnership. It has changed the lives of individuals and families who make up our community. Simply put, it’s *micro* level change that has macro level impact.”

**Matt Rizzo, Chief Executive Officer**  
**and President, A Renewed Mind Inc.**

“To date, through all funding resources, 26 families have been served by Functional Family Therapy. In the cases that I have seen, FFT has filled that gap where families just need help in the community and don’t know where to get it. “

**Connie Zimmelman**  
**Judge, Lucas County Juvenile Court**



**Youth Success Story** – KS and family was referred to the FFT program with a moderate risk level for physical and verbally aggressive behaviors. Additional risk factors, for this Client, included substance abuse, association with antisocial peers and trauma. Using the FFT model, Therapist Matt Materni, was able to engage with each family member to build trust, instill hope and provide a safe environment that would allow for change. Matt was able to assist the family with identifying the function of their negative behaviors and reframe them according to the emotional need they were attempting to satisfy. This family’s cycle of violence revolved around their inability to effectively communicate their feelings of anger, guilt and shame, surrounding a traumatic event, and the years of defensive behavioral patterns that had developed as a result. Once this was identified and addressed, in a strength-based manner, Matt was then able to develop a behavioral plan that assisted the family with effective communication and problem solving skills. The positive effects of the FFT model, for this particular family, are demonstrated in this email received from referral source Amy Lentz, Court Domestic Violence Therapist: *“Just wanted to share I saw K and her mom yesterday. They are so happy with Matt, they said he is just what they needed, he speaks to them in a nonclinical way. They are using his suggestions and are getting closer.”* As a young mom, KS continues to show progress as she works toward her goal for graduation and currently has a part time job. She and her family are currently in the final phase of the model and will successfully complete the program by the end of June.

**Program Success Story** - State and local OYAS analysis revealed that while youth were making remarkable improvement in pro social skills as a result of Cognitive Behavioral interventions, more programming was needed to strengthen family bonds. Once thought too costly for start-up and initial training, Lucas County combined funding sources to be able to bring FFT, a high fidelity, evidenced based model to the community. Together with Ohio House Bill 153 funds, Competitive Reclaim and OJJDP federal Reentry dollars start up and training costs could be afforded. After much planning, Lucas County was thrilled to award the contract to A Renewed Mind after they successfully submitted a bid to provide FFT services. It truly has been an effort of many partners. Twenty-six youth have been referred to FFT since program start up (from all funding sources). Probation, Court and treatment staff were trained together on the referral process as pictured below.



## Lessons Learned

Based on the dropout rate with the higher risk FFT families, FFT Team needed to take a closer look at barriers preventing successful engagement. The team acknowledged concerns with the ability to establish the trust needed to match with the diverse population of families referred to the FFT program.

It was also determined that the team needed to approach families in a non-clinical manner. To address these issues, the team has made changes with attire, body language, using nonclinical language, offering weekend sessions, and matching the right therapist with a referred family.

The team is also working to identify and problem solve potential barriers before they interfere with successful engagement and completion of the FFT program.

FFT program start up and training is costly and time consuming. One time grant funding for training costs is extremely helpful. The Court was able to use ODYS HB 153 funds to support that cost. Other activities included from 7/1/16 – 11/30/16 include grant revisions (for Federal Reentry, and ODYS funding), the invitation to bid process, bid selection, contract negotiation, hiring of therapists and training staff and referral agents.

## Program Information Contact –

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**Assistant Court Administrator**  
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