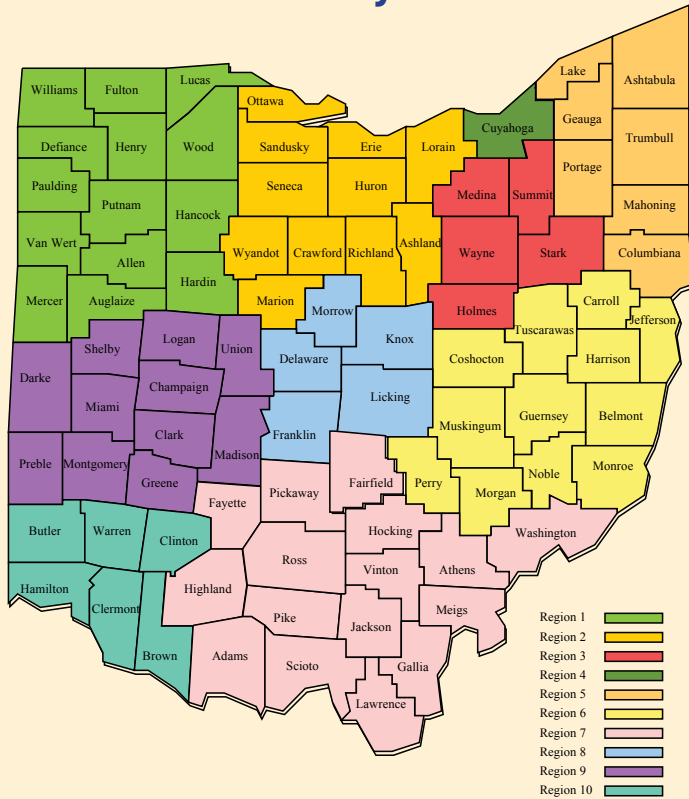


Parent Advocacy Connection



NAMI Ohio
747 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43205

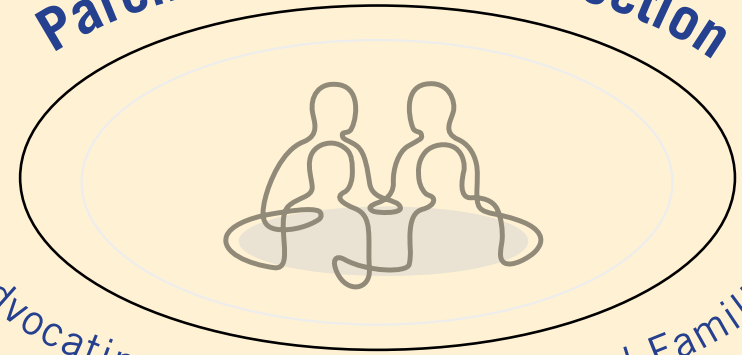
Voice: (800) 686-2646, or (614) 224-2700
TTY: (866) 924-1478
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Email: amiohio@amiohio.org



Ohio's Voice on Mental Illness

Administered by NAMI Ohio through a grant from the Ohio Department of Mental Health

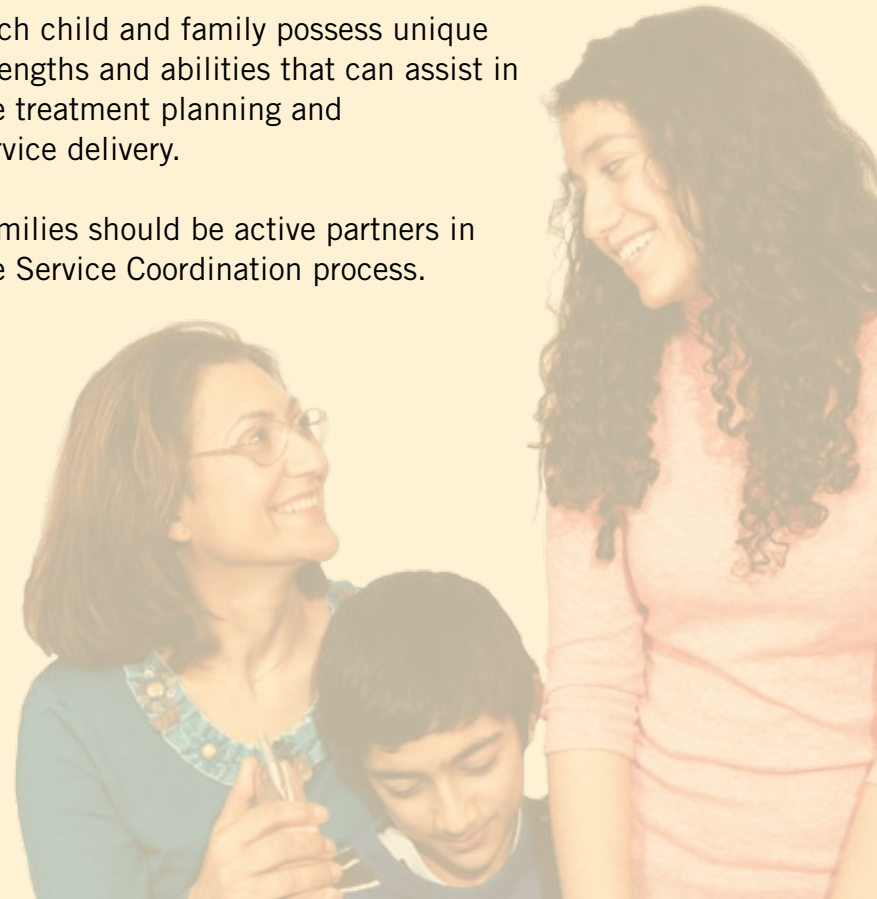
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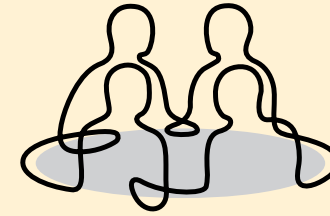


Advocating for Ohio's Children and Families

PAC believes that:

- ✓ Parents are the foremost experts on their children.
- ✓ Each child and family possess unique strengths and abilities that can assist in the treatment planning and service delivery.
- ✓ Families should be active partners in the Service Coordination process.





When children require services from multiple agencies (mental health, schools, juvenile courts, mental retardation/developmental disabilities and alcohol and other drugs) it can be difficult for their parents to navigate their way through these various service systems. Oftentimes, families become so overwhelmed that they have a hard time expressing their needs and the needs of their child. Ohio's Service Coordination process recognizes this challenge and has made support for families available through the Parent Advocacy Connection.

What is the Parent Advocacy Connection (PAC)?

Parent advocates are available to families with children who are involved in the County's Family and Children First (FCFC) Service Coordination process. The purpose of parent advocates are ensure that the voice of these families's are heard.

What do Parent Advocates (PAs) do?

Parent Advocates support families whose children are involved in FCFC Service Coordination by:

- Listening to family as they express their needs and concerns
- Attending school meetings (such as individualized education plan (IEP) meetings), juvenile court hearings, case reviews and treatment team meetings with parents
- Informing and educating parents about the Service Coordination process and other services available to them in their community
- Enhancing parents' advocacy skills and encouraging parents to speak on behalf of their children and their family

Who are Parent Advocates?

- Volunteers trained to help families whose children are involved in the community service delivery systems
- People who understand the service delivery system in your community
- Often, people who have been involved in the FCFC Service Coordination process themselves
- Parent Advocates are not employees of the agencies providing services in your community

How do I go about getting connected with a Parent Advocate?

Before you can be assigned a Parent Advocate, your child must be part of the county Service Coordination process. To learn more about how to your family can participate in service coordination, contact your local Service Coordination manager or Family and Children First Coordinator. If you think you would benefit from the support Parent Advocate, ask the representative to assign you a Parent Advocate.

If you still have questions about the Parent Advocacy Connection or need help getting connected with a Parent Advocate... Contact Us!

Let us know where you live, that your child is involved in Service Coordination, and that you would like to have the help of a Parent Advocate. We will provide you with the information you need to contact a local Parent Advocate.

The mission of the Parent Advocacy Connection is to empower, educate, encourage and equip families to partner with community professionals to improve their access to needed services that are family-centered, community-based, comprehensive and culturally competent.