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ATHENS COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES SEEKS VOTER SUPPORT ON NOVEMBER BALLOT

ATHENS, Ohio – September 10, 2024 - Athens County Children Services is seeking voter support for a levy that is on the November 5th General Election ballot.

The levy, originally passed in the year 2005, is renewing an existing 3 mill levy for the benefit of Athens County for the purpose of supporting Children Services and the care and placement of children. Athens County Children Services Executive Director, Otis Crockron, said this levy, if approved, will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home \$60 a year, or \$5 per month. Put another way, that is 16 cents per day, Crockron added.

The funds generated through this levy go to the costs associated with the care and placement of Athens County children. According to Executive Director Crockron, just the costs of care and placement of children was over \$4.5 million in 2023, up from \$1.77 million the last time this levy passed in 2015. “The lack of appropriate and available placements for children has led to a dramatic increase in costs associated with providing caring homes for children in recent years.”

Crockron continued, “The cases that we are seeing are becoming increasingly complex in the solutions needed for the children and families we work with. This levy will give our agency the tools and resources it needs to respond to the unique needs of children in Athens County and find them the care and placement required to respond to those needs while producing the best outcomes.”

According to Crockron, in 2023, there were 2,647 reports of suspected abuse or neglect in Athens County. The agency worked with hundreds of children and families from all over Athens County. 71 percent of the agency’s ongoing cases involved parents with substance abuse issues and the agency received 50 referrals involving drug-impacted infants.

In 2023, the agency had 191 children in custody and supervised or monitored 2,085 visits, provided 1,306 transports to families and children, and completed 349 virtual contacts with these families. “The services we provide to children and families we work with are necessary to help families maintain a safe home for their children and progress toward the ultimate goal of reunification,” Crockron stated.

Athens County Children Services is on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, responding to children and families in crisis, and providing safe homes to children when they cannot safely stay with their birth families.

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Athens County Children Services is focused on its mission of protecting children, strengthening families, and securing futures. For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.athenschilchildrenservices.com>.