



# ANNUAL REPORT

## FY 2021

Options & Advocacy for McHenry County

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## Mission

Empowering individuals and their families through advocacy and education while creating a more inclusive community.

## Guiding Values

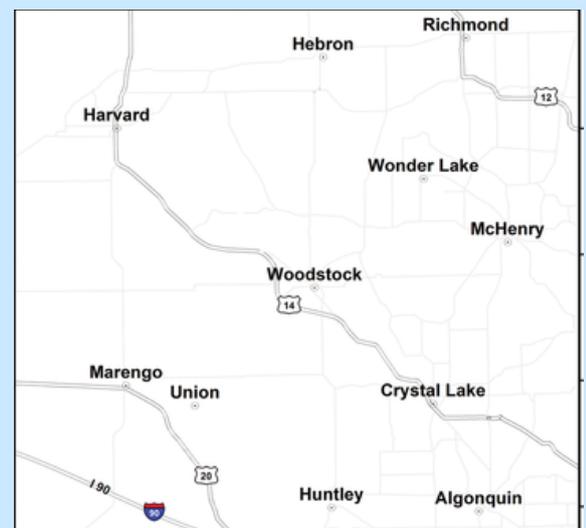
- Community-centered
- Collaboration
- Resilience
- Empowerment

## Vision

Creating an empowered and inclusive community.

## Who we Serve

- McHenry County families
- Individuals with autism
- Families with children pre-natal to three years old
- Children with developmental delays up to age three



# Leadership Transition

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Cindy Sullivan, of Woodstock, had been with Options & Advocacy for 21 years including the last 13 as executive director. She retired on November 13, 2020. Sullivan had worked on behalf of the disabled for more than 35 years and has been an ardent advocate for inclusion, equality and for an increase in support for families of disabled children. Like many parents of children with special needs, Sullivan's life changed forever after the birth of her daughter Stefanie. Purposely trying to create the best life for her daughter, she learned what services were available and also of the gaps where services and programs should exist. Her professional path led her from employment with a service provider to participating in the transformation of a new statewide early intervention agency that supported advocacy and the coordination of services. Cindy was a hero in McHenry County and throughout the state to families for decades and an exceptional leader in the nonprofit and social services communities.

**\*\*Statement extracted from the O&A Press Release, August 2020**

I have been with Options and Advocacy for 11 years. First as Technical Assistant for Child and Family connections and then as Program Manager for the Autism Resource Center. Prior to my work at O&A I attended Elmhurst College (Bachelor's degree in Speech-Language Pathology in 2001 and Masters of Education in 2003). I went on to teach a self-contained Early Childhood Special Education classroom. I absolutely loved teaching, and yet as I began to grow my own family I decided to take the steps necessary to become a certified in home Developmental Therapist for the IL Early Intervention system. My husband and I now have a crew of four amazing children (8, 11, 14, & 16).

I believe that McHenry County is an excellent community to live in and raise a family. There is a strong group of like-minded people here who care about developing needed services and programing. Raising my family in a place that cares about equitable and inclusive opportunities is important to me.

In many ways I feel like my life has come full circle, and I am excited to now have this opportunity as Executive Director of Options and Advocacy.



# Autism Resource Center

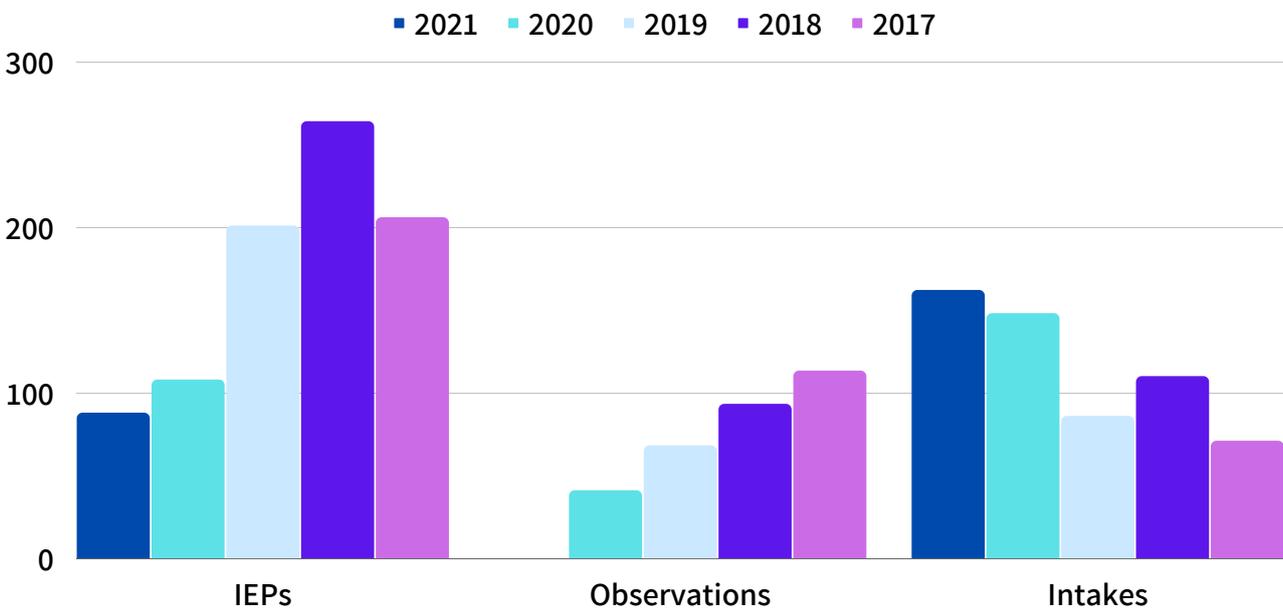
PROGRESS FOR JULY 1, 2020-  
JUNE 30, 2021

In FY2021, the Autism Resource Center (ARC) completed 162 intakes, and a total of 348 clients served.

Compared to previous years, FY2021's numbers in regards to intakes, observations, IEPs, and screenings were slightly lower due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

ARC conducted a variety of virtual support groups during FY2021. These included social-skills groups, hang out groups, caregiver support groups and more.

## Annual Comparisons



# Child and Family Connections

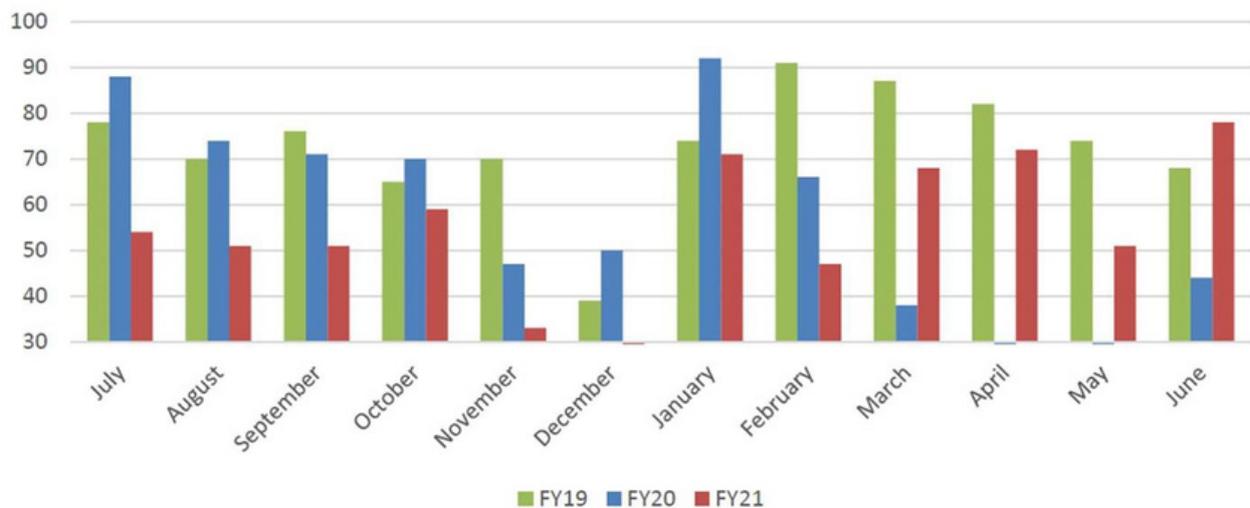
## PROGRESS FOR JULY 1, 2020- JUNE 30, 2021

From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, Child and Family Connections (CFC) received 640 new referrals.

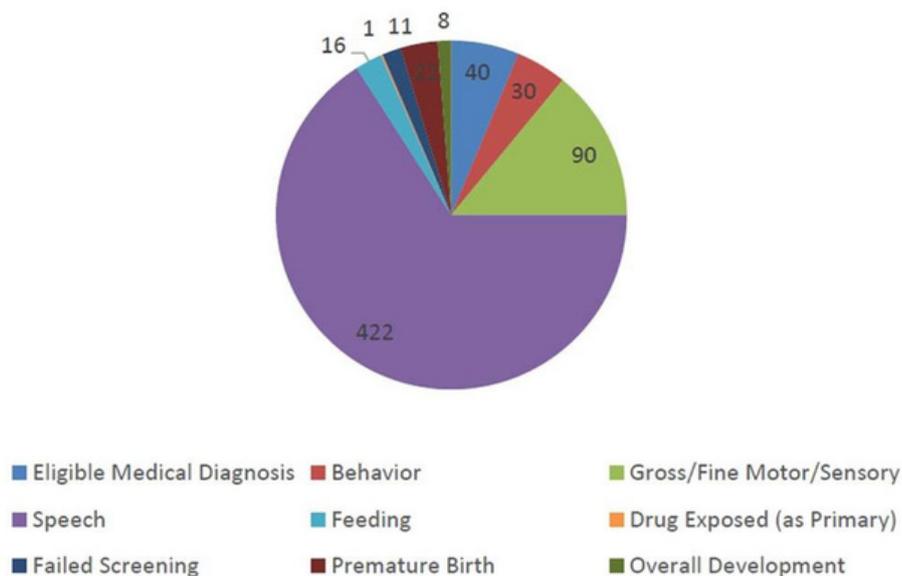
Most referrals pertain to speech concerns, motor concerns, and prematurity.

CFC served 1,124 children (unduplicated) in FY2021. 99.7% of these services were done in the child's natural environment.

Referrals by Month FY19-FY21



Primary Reason For Referral July 2020 -June 2021

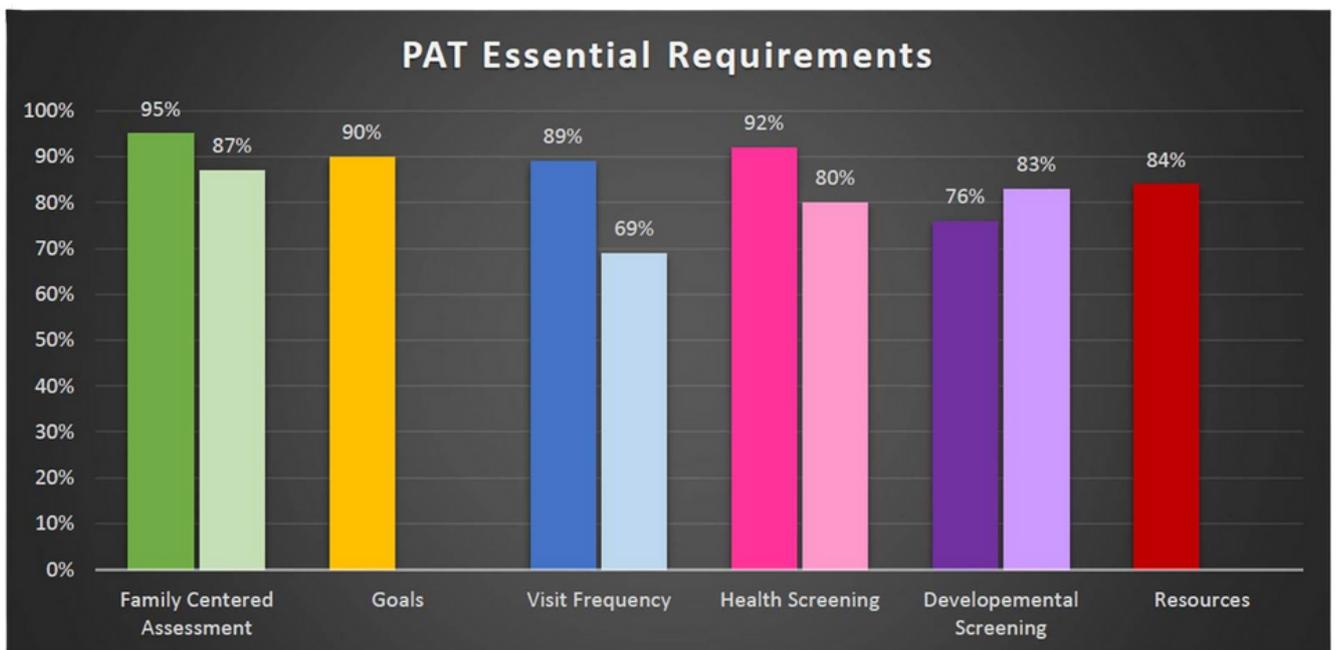


# Helping Us Grow

PROGRESS FOR JULY 1, 2020-  
JUNE 30, 2021

The Helping Us Grow program (HUG) conducted 762 personal visits from July 1, 2020 through June 30th, 2021.

HUG served 69 families and 83 children. These numbers are consistent with FY2020 despite the pandemic and recruitment challenges the program faced. Below are the Parents as Teachers (PAT) essential requirements that HUG follows.



- Initial FCA: % of newly enrolled families (enrolled >= 120 days) who had an initial family-centered assessment completed within 120 days
- Com FCA: % of families that had a family-centered assessment completed and documented during the program year
- Goals: % of families with at least 1 documented goal during the program year
- VisitFreq1: % of families with 1 or fewer stressors that received at least 75% of the required number of visits per month
- VisitFreq2: % of families with 2 or more stressors that received at least 75% of the required number of visits per month
- Initial Health: % of newly enrolled children who received a complete initial health within 90 days of enrollment
- Annual Health: % of children that received a complete annual health review during the program year
- Initial Dev Screening: % of newly enrolled children who received a complete, initial child developmental screening within 90 days of enrollment or birth
- Annual Dev Screening: % of children who received a complete annual child developmental screening during the program year
- Resources: % of families connected by their PE to at least 1 community resource during the program year

# Who We Help

MCHENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS



INDIVIDUALS WITH  
AUTISM



CHILDREN WITH A  
DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY  
OF 30% OR MORE



TEEN PARENTS & SINGLE  
PARENTS



FAMILIES ACCESSING  
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE



CHILDREN WITH A  
MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

Options and Advocacy is proud to support families of all backgrounds, abilities, and structures who live in McHenry County.

We serve families in need of Early Intervention service coordination, in-home support to pregnant women and young children, and individuals on the autism spectrum and their families.

O&A has been a part of the McHenry County community since 1994 and has provided support to thousands of families since then.

# Supporting the Community

## HOW WE'VE HELPED

### Sibshops

Sibshops are workshops for siblings of children with special needs. These groups are held on the first Saturday of each month during the school year. Sibshops are engaging celebrations of the contributions made by siblings. By acknowledging that having a sibling with special needs can be a good thing, a not-so-good thing, or somewhere in between, Sibshops can be therapeutic for some children even though they are not therapy.

### Parent Support Groups

Parent Support Groups are offered in both English and Spanish and take place once a month regardless of the child's age or ability. These groups provide safe spaces for open discussion between families and caregivers in accordance to the topic of the month.

### Trainings

Options and Advocacy is here to support our community! Each of our specialized teams have regularly occurring trainings and opportunities to develop tailored learning experiences. These trainings can be found on the O&A website or our Facebook page that is updated regularly.

### Group Connections

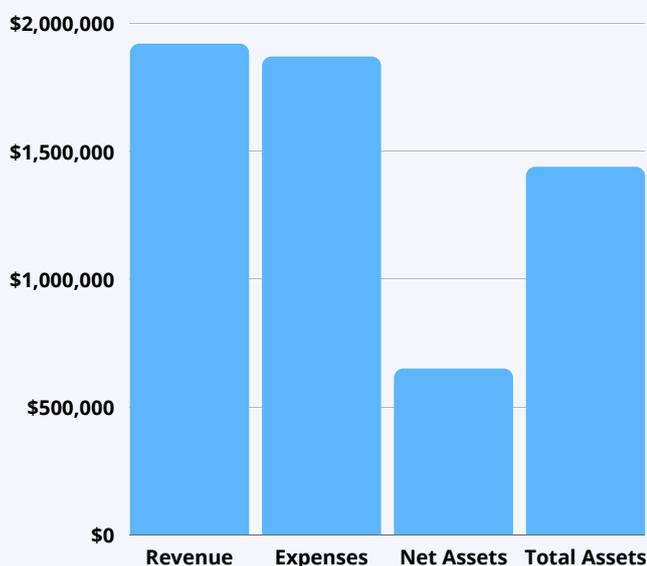
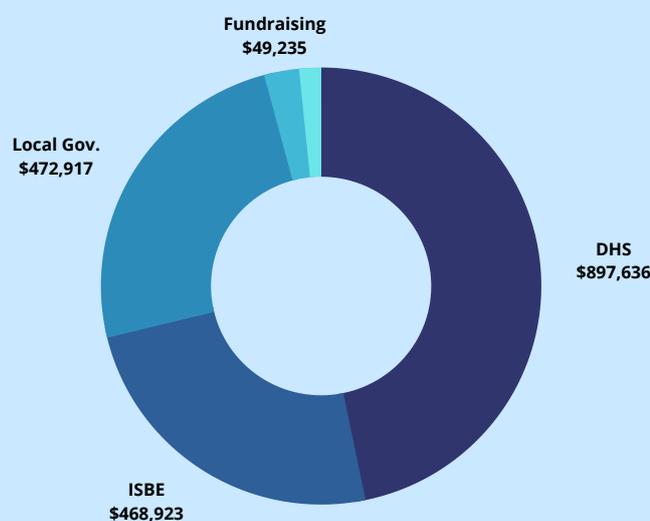
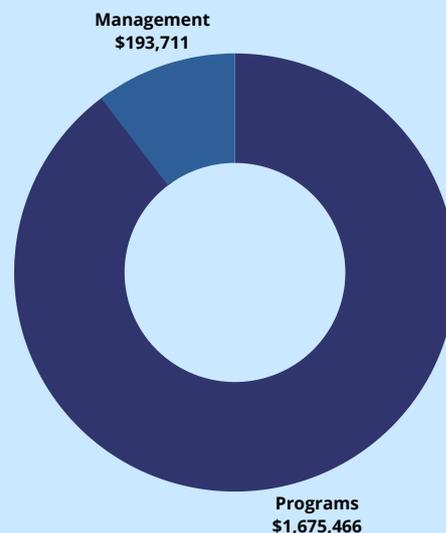
Group Connections are monthly groups conducted by the Helping Us Grow program to encourage parent's patterns of engagement with their child's education. They are also an opportunity to increase social connection between parents and children to develop friendships, new support networks, and discover new ideas for addressing day-to-day challenges of parenting.

# Financial Overview

During Fiscal Year 2021, Options and Advocacy recieved funding from a number of different sources.

The State of Illinois - DHS and ISBE - funded 71% of Options and Advocacy's total revenue. The other 29% originated from the local government, fundraisers, and other grants/miscellaneous funders.

Our three programs, ARC, CFC, and HUG, received 90% of our total revenue leaving the other 10% for management and other general expenses.



Options and Advocacy's total revenue from July 1, 2020-June 30,2021 was \$1,919,527. From that, our expenses totaled to \$1,869,177.

Our net assets came to \$648,384 leaving our total asset amount at \$1,437,812.

# Program Highlights

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## ARC STORY

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"Options and Advocacy helped us navigate the IEP process with our school district. This was the best decision we made. The advocates we have had for the past five years have been the most knowledgeable and empathetic individuals that we have met during this journey with our son. They 100% have our back and knowing that this organization is there for us every step of the way helps us to see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel."



## CFC STORY

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"We were extremely thankful for the services we received through EI. Everyone communicated beautifully and always made sure that our needs were being met. Our son definitely benefitted from the speech therapy and other input from other specialist."

"I am so grateful for this program. Not sure where my child would be developmentally if it wasn't for this program. To see my child overcome his barriers has been amazing and I'm truly from the bottom of my heart grateful "



# Program Highlights

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## HUG STORY

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“This program did an exceptional job adapting when COVID-19 hit. Most other parent support groups and mom groups in our area closed and have yet to reopen. It was a relief to know that I still had the HUG program to talk to when things were even more stressful than they normally are.”

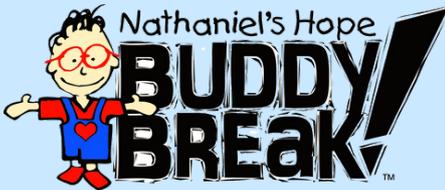


## CHRISTMAS FOR ALL

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Litera, St. Mary's Church (Huntley, IL), and Toys for Tots generously donated toys and activities that supported 100 of our O&A families. We are so grateful for our community who care so deeply for the families that live here. We couldn't do what we do without their help! Each child from our Christmas gift list was able to receive multiple toys from this pile.

# Community Partners



THE DIAPER BANK OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO

Division of Specialized Care for Children

# Ways You Gave

## WEBSITE

[optionsandadvocacy.org](https://optionsandadvocacy.org)

Donations through the "How Can I Help" tab on the O&A website

## GIVE LIVELY

Giving Tuesday Fundraiser

Donations from generous community members in honor of Giving Tuesday 2020

## RESTAURANT NIGHTS

Local restaurant fundraisers

Various local restaurant fundraisers who donate a portion back of proceeds to O&A.

## DONATIONS/ VOLUNTEER

On-Site

Friendly volunteers and donations of clothes, toys, diapers, and more help us assist families across the county.



Options & Advocacy is appreciative of everyone who has donated between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.

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John & Barb Affinito

Amy Aponte

Anna Baker

Susan Beckman

Robin Boushie

Bobbie Bredfeldt

Belinda Brinkman

Melissa Bruett

Darbi Carbone

Irene Corzo

Kris Cozzi

Marge Dalbke

Mary Ellen Dammyer

Noelle Dodge

Todd Draper

Sharon Dunker

Shawna Egan

Glenn Erickson

Juan Escutia

Gabi Flores

Foglia Family Foundation

Lori Gerhardt

Steven Gerhardt

Sheryl Graff

Martha Granatelli

Lee Grivett

Mary Guzniczak

Christine Hallstrom

Gilbert High

George Huensch

JA Frate, Jill Dinsmore

Darlene Jones

Dr. Jonathan Kaufman

Robyn Kavan

Angela Krambeer

Anna Kreller

Catherine Kunz

Greg & Pat Lofgren

Kevin Lyons

Dr. Mike Thomas of Marengo

Vision Center

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Meri Marquez  
Megan Martin  
Carol Maurin  
Ellen Meier  
Bob Meschewski  
Steve & Shawn Middaugh  
Mueller Interiors  
Danielle Murray  
Kathy Naughton  
Scott & Winter Noe  
Jessica O'Connor  
On Small Feet  
Tracy Paulson  
Susan Perkins  
Stephanie Pokorney Walter  
Michelle Prickett  
Erin Sahlberg  
Helen Salamanca  
Louise Schmidt  
Audrey Smith

Danielle Smith  
Robert St. Germain  
Cindy Sullivan  
Katie Thomas  
Rich Voss  
Mike Weigel  
Barbara Weiner  
Holly Wendt  
Lyn & Todd Wenzon  
Karen Wilson  
Fay & Al Wilson  
Hannah Wilson  
Glenn Winikates  
Chip & Denise Yager



A special thank you to the Foglia  
Foundation for their generous donation  
in honor of Cindy's Legacy Fund.

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# Board of Directors

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**Steve Middaugh**  
President

**Bob Meschewski**  
Vice President

**Jeff Seda**  
Treasurer

**Jennifer Wollpert**  
Secretary

**Melissa-Ann Bruett**  
Director

**Tom Carroll**  
Director

**Dr. Jonathan Kauffman**  
Director

**Kevin Lyons**  
Director

**Dr. Mike Thomas**  
Director





# Options & Advocacy

*for McHenry County*

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## Connect with us!



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