

March 26, 2007

Social Work Spotlight

A Personal Story: Service Aide 'Blessed' through Work

By Norma Birchfield

I came to work for the Cabinet in August 1990. One of the very first families I was assigned to work with was a young couple who had two toddler girls about one year apart.

Mom and Dad were in need of parenting skills, budgeting, household management and other daily living skills. At one point, the Cabinet removed the children for neglect and placed them with relatives.

I continued to work with the parents on the issues mentioned and for reunification. The family finally stabilized enough to get one of their daughters back. The oldest child remained with relatives until the relatives' death in 2003. At that time, she moved back with her mother, sibling and mom's boyfriend. Case was closed.

Mom and daughters' limitations created a household of chaos when the girls reached puberty. The Cabinet went back into the home. The oldest daughter was removed again. This time she went into out-of-home care and was placed in a program called "Host House" sponsored by Home of the Innocents.

I continued to work with this family and transported the oldest daughter for weekly visits with her mother and sibling. When she turned 18, she moved into another relative placement, finished high school and graduated. I continued working with this family -- it had become a maintenance case by then. Later that summer, we closed the case for good.

In October 2006, I received a call from the mother saying she was going to be a grandmother. She called several times since then

to update me on the progress of the mother-to-be – her daughter. Recently, I had a message on my voice mail from the grandmother stating that the mom and baby are fine.

I can't wait to see little "Mary Lee." I am sure that "Mary Lee's" parents are truly the happiest parents anywhere and her grandparents are also. Working with this family has been like riding a roller coaster throughout the years. But I have to say they have taught me so many things I wasn't aware of 17 years ago when I first met them. Some may call those lessons "rewards." I choose to call them "blessings."

I believe in my heart that even though the work we do cannot be comprehended by most people (and sometimes not by us either), most of us would not trade places to do another line of work. Regardless of pay or title, we are servants to the citizens of our state.

Facilities Management Thanks Staff

Every year, Kentucky prepares for stormy weather during March with awareness activities and statewide drills. On Tuesday, March 6, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services participated, along with other tenants, in CHR's severe weather drill.

The Division of Facilities Management would like to compliment CHFS employees for their proactive involvement in the drill. The drill was orderly and efficient with most everyone following the direction and guidance of the floor monitors and leaders. The elapsed time from alarm activation until the "all clear" was given was eight minutes.

Some CHR employees have conveyed a difficulty in distinguishing between the fire and severe weather alarms. The Finance Cabinet is addressing this issue. If employees cannot hear the alarms in their work area, contact Facilities Management Branch safety officers at 564-6631, or send an e-mail to Susan Montgomery, Phil

March 26, 2007

Howard or Norm Johnson, and they will inform the Finance Cabinet.

The following are rules to assist you in future severe weather drills or actual events:

- Evacuation alarms and shelter in place alarms involve everyone in the CHR and Health Services buildings, including staff, clients and visitors.
- Escalators are not to be used during an evacuation or shelter in place.
- Elevators, if operating, are to be used only by people who need assistance.
- Elevators will only work if the “fire” is not in/near the elevator shaft.
- Stairwells C in the CHR and E in CHR/HS do not go to the basement level. Do not use these stairwells for a shelter in place or severe weather drill as they direct you to areas with windows.
- Follow the direction and guidance of the floor monitors and leaders. Their job is to move you to a safe area as quickly and efficiently as possible. They have been trained for this task.
- Meet with your branch in the basement for a head count by the supervisor.

Facilities Management’s goal is to provide a safe environment for you if an emergency occurs. Thank you again for being efficient in this drill and in all future drills and events.

Produce Program Offers Local Foods to Frankfort Employees

Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership between consumers and farmers that offers numerous benefits on both sides.

Franklin County Farmers’ CSA Cooperative is a new CSA venture in Frankfort. The CSA is a pilot project working with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the Franklin County

Cooperative Extension Service, the Franklin County Farmers’ Market and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

The Franklin County CSA is offering CHFS employees an opportunity to join its pilot project. The pilot phase of the program is limited to 50 subscriptions. The program costs \$450. Payment can be made in one, two or three installments. A weekly assortment of fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruit will be packaged and delivered to the CHFS building for you for 27 weeks.

The weekly package is enough fruits and vegetables for a family of four regular fruit and vegetable eaters. You can also consider getting a group of co-workers together to pay for the program together and then split the produce. The sign-up deadline is April 20. The CHFS Wellness Committee will be the liaison between the CSA and the CHFS subscriber. The Franklin County Farmers’ CSA will provide recipes, delivery to the subscriber and the farm-fresh produce.

For more information, contact Wellness Committee Chairperson Mike Schardein or visit the Wellness Intranet site (<http://chfsnet.ky.gov/wellness/>). You must be a Frankfort employee or be able to pick up the food in Frankfort to participate in this program.

Living Well: Activities

By Kris Hayslett

The time change sprung us into spring a little sooner than normal, so let’s take advantage of some extra daylight hours to explore new activities.

Everyone’s exercise routine needs a little boost and learning a new task or doing something different is always refreshing. Today we will be starting the Get Healthy Kentucky Cabinet

March 26, 2007

Challenge. We are asking you to log all of your physical activity on the Get Healthy Kentucky (www.gethealthy.ky.gov) Web site. However, do not limit activity to just walking, biking, swimming or running.

When you log your individual information on the site, select your favorite activities. But if you scroll through the entire list, you'll see it includes housework or household chores, lawn mowing or yard work, home improvements, and high adventure activities like sailing as exercise. After reviewing the list, you'll find there are activities for everyone from the thrill-seekers to the weekend warriors to everyone in between.

If you're a thrill-seeker, the outdoors hold a hint of danger and excitement. Hiking to the highest mountain peak, sky diving, scuba diving or white water rafting are just a few activities that may excite you. These activities really should be left to individuals who are in good physical condition or have been trained to do them.

Weekend warriors are those who do not engage in regular physical activity during the week, but when the weekend comes the "inner athlete" takes over. Physical activity is often easier to fit in on the weekends because of free time. But be careful not to push yourself too hard because that can lead to burnout or injury.

The majority of us struggle with many issues in our efforts to lead a healthier lifestyle, such as eating nutritious foods and correct serving sizes from the different food groups; staying physically active; getting enough rest; and sustaining our everyday lifestyles. That's enough to make a lot of people throw in the towel.

The key is to not totally overhaul your lifestyle, but to make small adaptations over time. These small changes can be carried over into the types of activities you select. Look over the list below and discover the different activities that are considered physical activity.

Hiking/backpacking
Kayaking
Mountain climbing
Mountain biking
Scuba diving
Sky diving
Rock climbing
Rappelling
Surfing
Water skiing
Baseball
Softball
Flag football
Sailing
Home improvements
Cycling
Lawn mowing or yard work
Lifting or hauling
Horse back riding
Horse shoe pitching
Biking
Baseball or softball
Tennis
Baton twirling
Croquet
Fishing
Skating
Shuffle board
Swimming
Trampoline
Frisbee
Soccer
Jumping rope
Snorkeling
Water jogging
Water aerobics
Canoeing
Gardening

This list can be used as a guide or a tool to discover new activities. The weather is starting to warm up and opportunities for outdoor activities outdoors are plentiful. Use the Internet as a tool to research activities, events and fun sites. Kentucky has a great state park system and

March 26, 2007

is also home to Mammoth Cave, a national park and the world's largest underground cave system.

During your work week think of ways to increase your activity level by taking the stairs or parking away from the building to get those extra steps in and some additional spring air. Grab a co-worker and hit the walking path during your break on those warm days. A little extra physical activity throughout the day will help relieve stress, increase your productivity, and enhance your mood throughout the day.

CHFS News Briefs

OIT Bowls for Kids, in Memory of Colleague

This year's Office of Information Technology Bowling Teams Ding a Lings, Divas, Gig a Pens, KAMES 1, KAMES 2 and Techno Chicks raised \$1,700 for Big Brothers/Big Sisters during its annual bowl-a-thon. The bowler with the highest score was Barry Hume. Jackie Melton collected the most money for the charity event.

The Divas wore black ribbons in memory of Danny Adams, an OIT employee who passed away Sunday, March 4. All OIT bowling teams dedicated their games to Adams. Also, OIT donated money to Big Brothers/Big Sisters in memory of Adams, who always participated in Big Brothers/Big Sisters events. Adams worked on KAMES and systems help desk projects. He was well-liked and respected by those who knew and worked with him.

Healthy Foods with Chef Nancy

In conjunction with National Nutrition Month, the CHFS Wellness Committee welcomes Chef Nancy on Wednesday, March 28. Chef Nancy will be outside the cafeteria conference room from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. cooking, offering free samples and healthy recipes. Healthy cooking

can be a challenge, so stop by and get some information on how to prepare healthier meals.

New Horizons Frankfort Schedule Updated

New Horizons Computer Learning Center has updated its Frankfort schedule. Visit the company's Web site to view the schedule. (http://www.nhlexington.com/State_Government/State_Schedule.htm)

To register for a class, go to the CHFS OHRM Intranet site and follow the Computer Training policy and procedure. If you have any questions, please contact your [Department Training Liaison](#).

All approved training is dependent on the availability of department funds.

Mileage Reimbursement Changes

The state Finance and Administration Cabinet has announced that the state mileage reimbursement rate for authorized travel will be 40 cents per mile for the period April 1-June 30.

Please refer to the state controller's Web page for all related travel information: <http://finance.ky.gov/internal/travel/>

Kentucky Deferred Compensation Invitation for All Employees

Kentucky Deferred Compensation is an optional, state-sponsored benefit available to all public employees. Kentucky Deferred Compensation is an easy, tax-sheltered way to supplement your retirement needs. At Kentucky Deferred Compensation, we want to help employees like you take full advantage of this important tool to help you achieve financial independence at retirement. Join us for a brief enrollment presentation on Kentucky Deferred Compensation, and take the actions necessary to:

March 26, 2007

- Learn about the different risks and rewards associated with investing.
- Discover the best way to invest your money to help meet your retirement goals.
- Enroll in a 401(k)/457 and/or Roth 401(k) plan immediately.

Several sessions are available for CHFS employees to learn about Kentucky Deferred Compensation. Enrollment workshops are scheduled for the following dates and times in the CHFS Health Services Auditorium:

April 19 - Thursday (Administrative and Fiscal Affairs)

April 20 - Friday (Children and Family Services)

April 27 - Friday (Health Services)

April 30 - Monday (Human Services)

Two sessions each day:

10-11 a.m. (current non-participants only)

11 a.m.-noon (open to all participants)

Please take this opportunity to learn more about this important benefit. Registration is required two days before the workshop. To register, e-mail or call Larincia Bowers at larinciam.bowers@ky.gov or (502) 352-9729. Please specify which workshop you plan to attend. If you are unable to attend a workshop on the date specifically assigned for your division, you may attend any other workshop listed. If you are unable to attend any of the workshops and would like information, please call Carol Cummins (502) 573-7925 for an enrollment kit.

Kentucky Deferred Compensation Invitation for New Employees

Kentucky Deferred Compensation will have an enrollment and information seminar for employees hired within the past year from 12:10 p.m. to 12:50 p.m. March 29, at 105 Sea Hero Road, Suite 1, Frankfort. Lunch will be

provided. Seating is limited. Pre-registration is required. To register, call Carol Cummins or Kerry Azbill at (502) 573-7925 or (800) 542-2667. Call for an enrollment kit if you are unable to attend.

Focus Health Tip

From Walking to Running

As the Cabinet gears up for the Governor's Get Healthy Kentucky Cabinet Challenge and the Governor's Office of Wellness and Physical Activity 5K road runs, this weekly update will supply useful tips and schedules on how to stay motivated and reach your physical activity goals.

Everyone - not just those who want to finish the races - can use these tips. The goal is to become more physically active. Here are some useful tips on how to get started.

- Start slow. Overachieving will only lead to injury and fatigue.
- Stretch before and after any physical activity. Stretching is the best way to ward off injury, but it's the first thing people forget to do.
- Your feet are one of your body's most important parts, so invest in a good pair of running or walking shoes. It's best to go to a store that specializes in these types of shoes because they have trained salespeople who can point you in the right direction.
- Some soreness is to be expected, but sharp pain should be a sign of serious injury that needs to be looked at by a doctor. Stretching and the use of ice after completing the activity can control most soreness.
- If you've had heart problems or high blood pressure, it's always best to check with your doctor before starting a physical activity program.

If you would like a weekly physical activity training schedule, e-mail Mike Schardein. You can also visit www.runnerworld.com. The site has many different schedules to fit all types of activity levels.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

If you are trying to adjust your communications style to be brief and more direct, you may get some help from these tips from Dorothy Neddermeyer, Ph.D., an expert in personal growth and a writer for ezinearticles.com.

- Make your most important point first.
- Get to the point quickly.
- Use bullet points on all your main ideas.
- Fill your documents with data and results.
- Curb your emotions and expressing them when you are relating your case.
- Being brief requires you to really know your material, so it pays to memorize your points if you have to give an oral presentation.