



**Commonwealth of Kentucky  
Cabinet for Health and Family Services**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**State social services staff gets enhanced training to help families with substance use disorder**

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (August 8, 2019) - Kentucky's Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) staff began specialized training today in best practices to address substance use disorder in the families they serve.

The training is part of the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE), the Cabinet for Health and Family Services' overall effort to combat the opioid crisis.

DCBS trainees will learn about stigmas surrounding substance use disorders, treatment and recovery, risk and safety assessment of substance use disorders, and how adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or early trauma can negatively affect childhood and beyond. Also, a parent in recovery from substance use will share her story and talk about key factors in support of her well-being.

Staff from the DCBS Division of Protection and Permanency, which focuses on the safety of children, vulnerable adults and families, will get the training, which will be available to all DCBS staff later this year.

DCBS Commissioner Eric Clark said the training is part of the department's larger reforms through its Child Welfare Transformation and stronger prevention investments through its October implementation of the federal Family First Prevention Services Act.

"Drug and alcohol addiction is a behavioral health condition, and we know that substance use disorder treatment works. Recovery is possible," Clark said. "This training helps support our staff to remove any stigma and to better engage with families to recognize safety concerns and assess treatment options. Our goal is always to make the best decisions for children and families."

Substance abuse was a contributing factor in 75 percent of all foster care placements in the 2019 fiscal year. As of Aug. 4, there were 9,660 children in out of home care in Kentucky.

DCBS' new training is provided through Cabinet's Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities' (BHDID) KORE project, which applies a comprehensive, targeted response to Kentucky's opioid crisis by expanding access to a range of high quality, evidence-based opioid prevention, treatment, recovery and harm reduction services, and supports in high-risk geographic regions of the state.

BHDID has received federal funding for KORE and designated part of it for the DCBS training.

Several BHDID experts are leading training sessions, and Commissioner Wendy Morris said her agency is proud to help enable DCBS staff to help families cope with the effects of addiction.

"Social workers are on the front-line of prevention and treatment, and our staff and research can help them understand more about the science of addiction and recovery," Morris said. "This partnership will help focus on achieving healthy outcomes for parents who are struggling with substance use disorder."

Clark said DCBS sees high success rates from intervention programs for parents of young children like the Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START) and Kentucky

Strengthening Ties and Empowering Families (KSTEP), as well as prevention services from contract providers across the state. One DCBS priority in the next state budget cycle is to expand these kind of prevention programs that address both children's safety in the home and the substance use treatment needs of their parents, Clark said.

For information about DCBS services or the KORE program, log on to the Cabinet's homepage, [chfs.ky.gov](http://chfs.ky.gov), and type "DCBS" or "KORE" into the "What can we help you find?" search bar.

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*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*