



Salary increases are step toward pay equity



From the Commissioner

Colleagues: Deputy Commissioner Lesa Dennis and Chief of Staff Shannon Hall and I originally shared this message with you as an email earlier this month. We feel it's important to reiterate its content and its impact on us all as a team.

Greetings DCBS, DCBS leadership wants to take a moment to communicate with all our employees in a transparent way around our pay equity work, salary increases/adjustments and announce our most recent success. We believe this will be beneficial to clarify and answer the recurring questions and concerns we have received.

As you are aware, 2021 was a very difficult year for our agency, we experienced the largest workforce capacity crisis in our history, hindering our ability to meet the needs of our consumers and placing staff in very challenging conditions due to managing additional work demands.

Our agency experienced an overall turnover rate of nearly 25%, and a 34% turnover rate in the Division of Protection and Permanency. This dramatically influenced our ability to meet the needs of the most vulnerable Kentuckians.

DCBS executive leadership with the support of Secretary Eric Friedlander, and advocacy from our staff, was able to elevate our concerns to Governor Andy Beshear. In December of 2021, Governor Beshear announced pay grade changes for a large contingent of job titles employed by DCBS in an attempt to stymie the outflow of staff and bring about much needed pay enhancements for 3,000 of our colleagues and peers within DCBS. This was a much needed and long overdue boost for the agency, increasing our ability to retain staff and stop the unending outflow of our highly trained workforce.

[Read the story here](#)



Misty Morgan

Two Rivers FSOS Misty Morgan is Superhero

Congratulations to our newest DCBS Superhero, Misty Morgan. Misty is a Family Services Office Supervisor in the Two Rivers Service Region. Misty is in the Monroe County office of the Division of Protection and Permanency.

Misty's nominator said she treats both clients and coworkers with respect. "Misty has been with DCBS for 20 years," they wrote "She provides excellent customer services and treats all individuals with respect and compassion. Misty is direct and straightforward with her team, community partners and clients."

Misty's team has been short-staffed for the last year.

But she has rarely complained and continued to provide the services to her community and clients we serve. Misty has continued to remain upbeat at work, even with the long hours she is working.

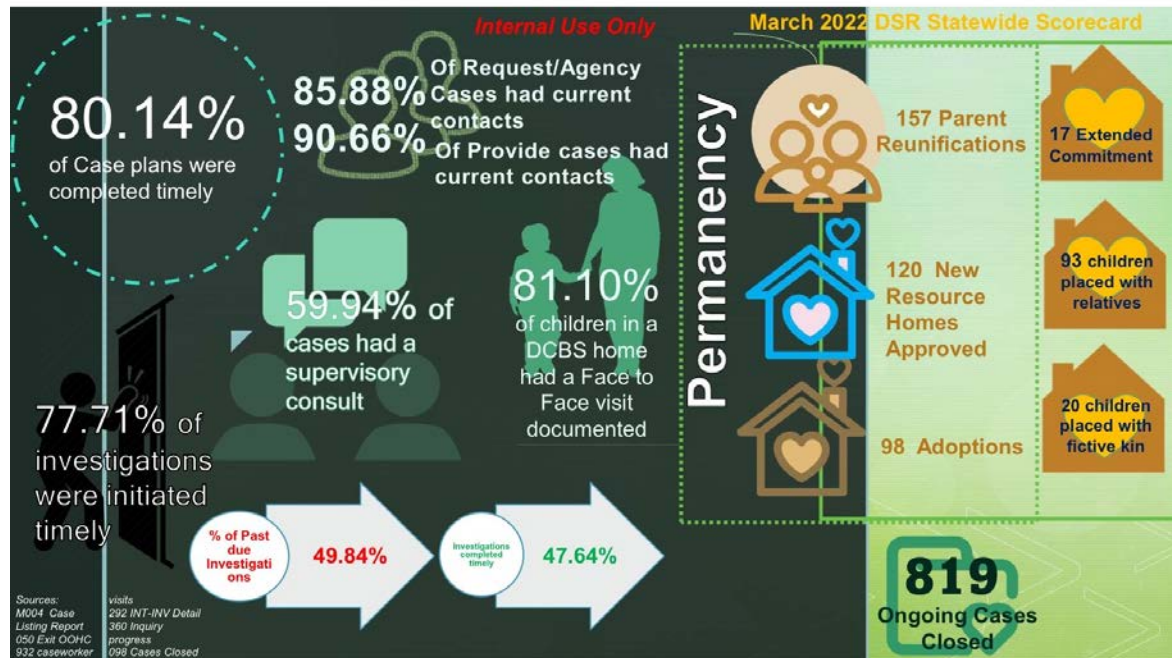
"She is a leader and has stepped up to the task when she had ZERO workers in her office," her nomination reads.

[Read the story here](#)

DSR Scorecard shows outcome increases

The Division of Service Regions' statewide scorecard for March 2022 is ready, and its data reveals progress. Kentucky had 157 parent reunifications, 98 adoptions and 93 children placed with relatives, 20 children placed with fictive kin, 17 children extended commitment and 120 new resource homes approved.

Statewide, in March, Kentucky closed 819 ongoing request/agency APS/CPS cases.



Almost every outcome area has seen an increase from February to March.

Kentucky has seen an increase in provide contacts entered, request/agency contacts entered, the number of investigations initiated timely, face to face visits to children in home/placement location, the number of case plans completed timely, and the number of consults completed/documented.

Kentucky has seen a decrease in the number of

investigations completed timely and an increase in the number of past due investigations.

This scorecard utilizes evaluation calculations for the following elements: Timely Initiations, Consults, Case plans, Timely Completion, Contacts, % Past Due, and Caseworker visits. It references the 050 Enter/Exit Statistic report for reasons in which children exited care; Parent reunification, adoption, etc.

The 360 inquiry report was used to look at the total number of new resource homes approved.

Work schedules must meet clients' needs

Greetings DCBS,

As we continue to move forward with our vision for a 21st-century DCBS, I would like to take a moment to talk about and address a frequently asked question regarding our hybrid and telework models. As most of you know, we have been approved by the Personnel Cabinet and CHFS leadership to continue working a hybrid model that allows employees to work in a DCBS office at times while also being granted the privilege of working from home during other times. We have shown over the course of the last two years that this model works for our employees and our customers. We have shown a phenomenal resiliency when it comes to the amount of production we can accomplish while also meeting

the rigorous and complex needs of our populace.



Staff Corner: Shannon Hall

With that, we will continue to operate in a manner that allows our employees to maximize the work option of their choosing while also meeting the needs of the public. Simply, we want to integrate what works best for the employee with what must work for our customers.

I have received several inquiries of late asking why in specific situations employees selecting to work telework or hybrid schedules would be asked to come to the office on occasion. Remember, work options must continue to work for our constituency to remain solvent.

[Read the story here](#)

Legislative session brings some gains for child care, child welfare; staff raises

The 2022 Regular Session of the Kentucky General Assembly adjourned on April 14, 2022. During the 60-day legislative session, DCBS thoroughly reviewed and tracked over 60 unique pieces of legislation in addition to many amendments directly affecting department programs and the people we serve. The department developed parts of two pieces of legislation that passed and were signed into law. DCBS worked with many stakeholders and partners in the development of legislation, supporting and urging passage of legislation, and causing concerning legislation to be thoughtfully considered and sometimes amended. The following is a summary of legislation enacted during the 2022 session that impacts the department and Kentucky families. Unless otherwise noted, the legislation will become effective in July:

- House Bill (HB) 1 – the executive branch budget bill. This bill funds the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), supports for relative and fictive kin caregivers, child welfare prevention services, private residential and therapeutic provider rate increases, supports for youth aging out of foster care, additional social worker positions, recruitment and retention provisions for social workers, an across-the-board salary increase for state employees, and other department and cabinet programs.

Read the story [here](#)



Staff, partners open new visitation room in L&N Building

In our Jefferson Service Region, a new visitation room is open at the L&N Building. Though the space is for children of all ages, the room's main attractions are the games for older youth. Special thanks to Southeast Christian Church and Wednesday's Child, Inc. for donation of all items. And to a great group of DuPont Manual High School's National Honor Society students and to Jefferson Regional Administrative Specialist III Marty Franke and her family for setting up the room as a special place for guests. See more photos on the DCBS Facebook page: www.facebook.com/kydcbs.



Protection & Permanency Update

April sees CAPM activities, SDM Tool launch

The Structured Decision Making (SDM) Intake Assessment Tool went into



Family Children and Youth

production on 4/2 and was live for use starting on Monday 4/4. Along with implementation of this tool, the associated policy revisions (SOP 2.1, SOP 2.2, SOP 2.3, SOP 2.4, SOP 2.6, SOP 2.7, SOP 2.14, SOP 2.15.8, SOP 2.16) and updated resources (FAQ on Residency Determination, KY SDM Intake Manual, and DPP-115) were sent to field staff on 4/2 as well. These updates appear to have been well received by staff and the overall feedback has been positive. EKU has scheduled approximately 30-33 training sessions throughout the month of April to train field staff on the intake tool. Several of these training sessions have already occurred and appear to have gone well. Participants have been engaged and asking great questions, leading to constructive conversations. Many staff report that they are extremely excited to see that the entire state will have the same definitions to use when screening a report and they feel like there is less room for unnecessary subjectivity.

The SDM project leads are continuing to work with Evident Change and TWIST regarding the safety and risk assessment tools. These tools are in the process of being developed in the TWIST screens as we move toward final automation and SDM certification. The training sessions for the safety and risk assessment tools are set to occur starting in late July and run through September. The anticipated release date for both tools is October 1.

Read the story [here](#)



Leadership joins PCAK's Capitol Pinwheel Planting

DCBS leadership joined state leaders, child advocates and other partners at Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky's annual Pinwheel Planting at the Capitol this month. Gov. Andy Beshear signed a proclamation recognizing Child Abuse Prevention Month, and dozens of guests placed Pinwheels for Prevention to help raise awareness on child abuse and neglect prevention. See more pictures on the DCBS Facebook page: www.facebook.com/kydcbs.

CCC hosts color run, carnival to kick off CAPM

Our Community Collaboration for Children, its statewide groups and partners hosted the Heroes for Children carnival and color run in late March to kick off Child Abuse Prevention Month. The family-friendly Frankfort event featured games, prizes, child abuse prevention resources and a lot of color! Thanks to all the event participants, sponsors and organizers!

See more pictures on the DCBS Facebook page: www.facebook.com/kydcbs.



PCAK launches body safety campaign

Our partners Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky have launched the “Safety and Awareness for Every BODY” campaign with a variety of tools for individuals, families and communities. New campaign tools include the tip sheet, online training and educational video, starring amazing youth advocate Charlotte!



Children should never be made responsible for their own safety. Research tells us when parents and caregivers talk openly about body safety with their children, it strengthens the family and lessens risk of sexual abuse.

PCAK invites us to help share their campaign information. Here are ways you can become involved and make an impact in your community:

- Watch and share the Watch the “Safety and Awareness for Every BODY” video within your network: <https://bit.ly/3OfMqGh>
- Download the “Safety and Awareness for Every BODY” tip sheet here: <https://bit.ly/3xwT4St>. It’s never too early or too late to start this conversation with children or empower the parents and caregivers you work with to start these conversations.

- Take time to watch the new online training “Raising Safe, Smart, & Healthy Children: Addressing Healthy Child Development as a Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse.” Find out how healthy child sexual development strengthens families and lessens the risk of child sexual abuse. Learn more at <https://pcaky.org/healthy-child-development>. This training can be taken at any time, 24/7. Participants who complete the evaluation will receive a general certificate of completion. Family Resource and Youth Service Center training credits are available, as well as Social Work CEU’s. Promote this training to colleagues, partners and anyone who works with or serves young children.
- Share PCAK’s social media messaging on your own pages. Use #SafetyAwarenessEveryBODY and tag PCAK.



KEHP offers stress relief help Health

April is Stress Awareness Month. Through the Kentucky Employee Health Plan (KEHP), the LivingWell program offers several stress relief resources. One is the Work Life Balance Plan, where staff can begin forming daily habits through weekly, monthly or one-time activities.

The LivingWell Promise is due July 1. KEHP members are required to complete the LivingWell Promise by July 1 to earn up to \$480 in premium discounts in 2023.

Learn more: www.kehplivingwell.com.

Lohr named to state council

Gov. Andy Beshear recently reappointed Dr. David Lohr to the Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders (KYACA).

Lohr, our Chief Medical Director, will represent DCBS and will serve for a term expiring Oct. 15, 2024.

April is Autism Awareness Month. Learn about the KYACA at www.kyaca.org.



Dr. David Lohr