

Healthy Back at Work: Helping Families, Now Better Than Ever

This letter was sent to staff on June 8.



From the Commissioner

Dear DCBS Family:

We are thrilled to inform you that thanks to the bold leadership of Governor Beshear and Team Kentucky, the miracle of science and effective vaccinations, alongside Kentuckians' perseverance and strengths, the worst of this pandemic is seemingly behind us. It is a new day! We will continue to recover from its long-term impacts on our health and economy; however, it is clear that COVID-19 is no longer a looming threat to the Commonwealth. We now begin our recovery both as a society and as a team of caring professionals.

We learned last week that the Governor will be announcing the reopening of all public facing offices across the state at his June 11 press conference. This galvanized us into strategizing and planning, while communicating guidance

Read the story [here](#)

Powell is Governor's Ambassador Award winner for Volunteerism

Congratulations to Susie Powell, Social Service Clinician II in our Two Rivers Service Region, for being named the Governor's Ambassador Award winner for Volunteerism.

Gov. Andy Beshear announced the recipients in a video during National Public Service Recognition Week.

He said: "Team Kentucky is recognizing the sacrifices and dedication of our public servants who have remained on the front lines, even during the challenges of the global COVID 19 pandemic."



Read the story [here](#) Susie Powell



Kayleigh Graves



Kayleigh Graves

Graves, Harris win Superhero Award

Congratulations to the latest DCBS Superhero winners, Kayleigh Graves and Robyn Harris, both of The Lakes Region!

Read the story [here](#)

Lohr's expertise helps children thrive

As DCBS' efforts to redirect, reform and rebuild its services after the COVID-19 shine a spotlight on child welfare, our own agency Chief Medical Director, Dr. David Lohr, becomes more in demand for his expert judgment and advice.

Lohr said his main charge in the department is to improve the quality of health care and health outcomes for individuals in foster care which includes oversight of the use of psychotropic medications and ensuring access to appropriate services.

"My goals for children in DCBS care are for them to grow into healthy, happy, and productive adults," he said. "I hope they can experience healing from any trauma they've experienced and build those important emotional connections we all need to thrive."

A graduate of Transylvania University and Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Lohr also holds affiliation with Norton Children's Hospital in Louisville.

Read the story [here](#)



Dr. David Lohr



Celebrating Foster Parents

There are currently over 9,000 children and youth living in foster care in Kentucky. Over 6,500 of these children are placed in foster homes. In May we recognized and bring awareness to the families who are supporting children and families by opening their homes and lives.

Read the story [here](#)



Family Children and Youth

Kentucky selected for national Thriving Families, Safer Children effort

In the previous issue of the Vision, the Department's commitment to move upstream to primary and secondary prevention was highlighted. As part of that commitment, in January, Kentucky applied to be included in a national initiative aimed at creating a full continuum of prevention and community-based networks of support to achieve overall child and family well-being, equity, and prevent child maltreatment. Thriving Families, Safer Children: A National Commitment to Child Well-Being is a collaborative effort supported by the U.S. Children's Bureau, Casey Family Programs, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Prevent Child Abuse America.

Read the story [here](#)

More than 2,000 staff attend CQI forums

Currently the CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) Redesign continues to charge forward with full momentum following the regional forums. The forums illustrated a fantastic turnout with an audience of 2,016 Protection & Permanency and Family Support employees collectively joining in to the live virtual trainings.

Polls surrounding understanding and defining CQI, as well as barriers to engagement were collected from participants. Approximately 500 staff participated in the polls. The Redesign is evaluating implementation by developing targeted questions to assess impact surrounding and supporting key performance

indicators. A focus on increased and intentional efforts around stakeholder engagement, and continued training development for CQI Specialists is on the horizon.



Christa Bell

Bell appointed to state board

Gov. Andy Beshear recently appointed Christa Bell to the State Advisory Council for Exceptional Children.

Bell, an Executive Advisor in the Commissioner's Office, will represent DCBS to serve for a term expiring June 30. The SACEC provides policy guidance with respect to special education and services for children with disabilities.

Get more info about the panel, including meeting dates at <https://bit.ly/3eyzyeo>.

June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month

June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. You can be a part of preventing elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

- Find out how to join your Local Coordinating Council on Elder Abuse. LCCEAs provide elder abuse education and outreach at the local and regional levels depending on the needs of the communities. Kentucky's network involves local law enforcement, county officials, advocates, nursing homes, local businesses, social service agencies and individuals.
- Check in on elderly loved ones or neighbors.
- Learn the signs of elder abuse or neglect.
- Report suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation at 1-877-597-2331.

Learn more and get resources from the DCBS Adult Protection Branch at <https://bit.ly/34ndUnz>.



LivingWell Promise Reminder

KEHP members, don't forget you are required to complete the LivingWell Promise by July 1 to earn up to \$480 in premium discounts in 2022. You have two ways to do this:

- Take the StayWell/WebMD online health assessment at KEHPLivingwell.com. The health assessment only takes about 10 minutes to complete and asks various health and lifestyle questions; or
- Get a biometric screening from your physician, lab, retail clinic, or LivingWell Health Clinic. This blood test checks your cholesterol and more. Your BMI is determined by your waist circumference, height and weight.

If you need assistance logging in, call WebMD at 1-866-746-1316.



Commissioner helps announce human trafficking prevention

Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub joined Gov. Andy Beshear, Dr. Jennifer Middleton of the University of Louisville Kent School and Donna Pollard of Survivors' Corner recently to announce findings from UofL's Project PIVOT (Prevention and Intervention for Victims of Trafficking) and other ways Kentucky is addressing human trafficking prevention and survivor support.

Read the story [here](#)



Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub speaks at the May 19 news conference announcing findings from the University of Louisville's Project PIVOT.

Relationships Matter in Child Welfare

A cross-agency collaboration training series with the Kentucky Court of Justice and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services



DCBS, KCOJ partner for training

DCBS and the Kentucky Court of Justice (KCOJ) have partnered to offer a comprehensive series of child welfare training sessions through the remainder of the year. Staff are encouraged to sign up for each monthly workshop.

Read the story [here](#)

42 PCWCP students graduate

Congratulations to this spring's Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) graduates. There were 42 May 2021 graduates from all 11 of the program's participating universities.



Read the story [here](#)

Protection and Permanency Update

The Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP) program, combines child welfare practice, substance use disorder treatment, and intensive in-home services. KSTEP preserves families involved with child welfare, with substance use as a primary risk factor to child safety and out-of-home care placement. In SFY 20, 93% of children involved with the program remained safely in their homes at program closure. KSTEP was implemented in four counties in the Northeastern Service Region in July 2017, and expanded two times to all remaining counties in the service region.

Read the story [here](#)

WKU honors DCBS staff

- Three DCBS social work staff were honored at the 2021 Western Kentucky University Center for Child Welfare Education and Research Awards ceremony. Angela Lane was selected as winner of the Community Award for Outstanding Leadership in Child Welfare – newly renamed the Angela Lane Community Award for Leadership in Child Welfare in her honor.

Read the story [here](#)



Angela Lane



Shawn Johnson