

KECC stands for neighborly assistance

It's not unusual to hear stories from staff about being inspired to choose human services as a career because of a time when they benefitted from services similar to what they provide through their roles at DCBS. Some say they are paying it forward. Some say it's a way to give back. It all boils down to neighbors helping neighbors – and that is the theme of the 2023 Kentucky Employees Charitable

From the Commissioner



Campaign (KECC) that DCBS is proud to be a part of.

In Kentucky, the neighbors helping neighbors is just a way of life. Whether you live side by side separated by an apartment wall, or down the road a country mile, your



neighbors are often the first people you greet in the morning, the ones you commune with during times of celebration, and the friends you depend on when you find yourself needing immediate help. Our neighbors are there, and the good ones always come through.

[Read more here](#)

Client compliment reflects DCBS' 'why'

A big DCBS Staff Shout Out goes to several staff in our Northern Bluegrass Service Region's Kenton County office and underscores the "why" of DCBS and our staff in supporting families.

Recently, a father called into the CHFS Listens Hot Line, administered by the Office of the Ombudsman, to compliment several Division of Family Support staff for their assistance to him in securing health care through kynect for his special needs child.

On what he said was his first in-person visit to the DCBS office since before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the man said he was immediately put at ease by welcoming staff.

"We went to do our Medicaid renewal, and it was just such a nice experience," he said. "Staff were friendly, helpful, kind and understanding."

Staff who helped the father and his family that day included **Family Support Specialist II Julie Green**, **Family Support Specialist II Mary Riggs**, **Family Support Specialist III Norma Ashley**, and **Family Support Specialist I Danielle Long**.



Michael Vincent

Michael Vincent named Recruiter of the Year

Congratulations to our own Michael Vincent, a Social Service Specialist of the Division of Service Regions, for an incredible national honor! At the 2023 Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) Summit earlier this year, our partners the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA), recognized Michael as a Recruiter of the Year for his work finding forever families for youth awaiting adoption. Among his peers, Michael is known for his positive attitude and unique ability to build lasting connections with the young people he serves in Kentucky.

Through WWK, the DTFA supports the hiring of adoption recruiters, like Michael, dedicated to serving children in foster care who are too often overlooked. In Kentucky, the WWK partnership has helped with more than 900 adoptions.

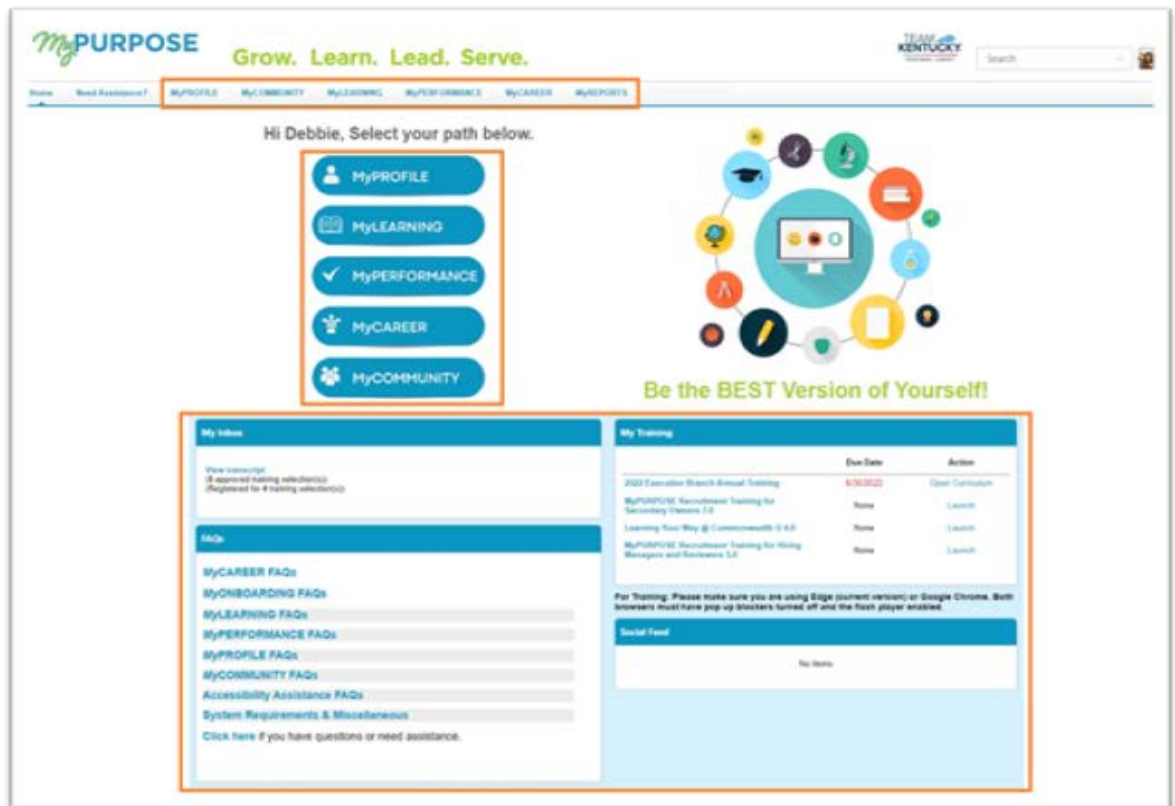
[Read more here](#)

[Read more here](#)

MyPURPOSE homepage gets a refresh

The Kentucky Personnel Cabinet is excited to release a refreshed welcome screen within MyPURPOSE! Along with creating a brighter look and minimizing wasted space, the next time you log in you'll notice the following changes, as outlined and shown in the screenshot.

- The navigation options at the top of the screen have been renamed and match the new buttons, which have replaced the previous path tiles.



- Profile = MyPROFILE
- Connect = MyCOMMUNITY
- Learning = MyLEARNING
- Performance = MyPERFORMANCE
- Open Opportunities = MyCAREER

- Your worklists have been moved towards the top of the screen for easier access.

Please note that any MyPURPOSE system training will continue to reflect the original welcome screen until we complete

all updates; however, all functionality remains the same. Staff can access MyPURPOSE through KHRIS.

Child welfare training for social work students is now CW PREP

*A partnership with UK College of Social Work;
Current application period open through 10/31*

The state's child welfare worker college training program to help educate students and get them ready for the workforce is now known as CW PREP, and the current application period ends Oct. 31.

CW PREP, administered by staff at the University of Kentucky College of Social Work, is a partnership of DCBS and the 12 Kentucky universities and colleges that offer undergraduate degrees in social work. CW PREP takes the place of the program formerly administered by Eastern Kentucky University – the Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP). CW PREP pays two years' full tuition for qualifying students at a participating school. Students also receive a stipend and are placed into employment at a DCBS office for two years upon graduation.



CW PREP helps students make a difference for Kentucky's children and families as child welfare workers through tuition assistance, modern training and multiple academic and professional supports.

Watch a short video about CW PREP [here](#). And learn more about CW PREP or connect with program staff [here](#).

Please share this information with stakeholders and college students!

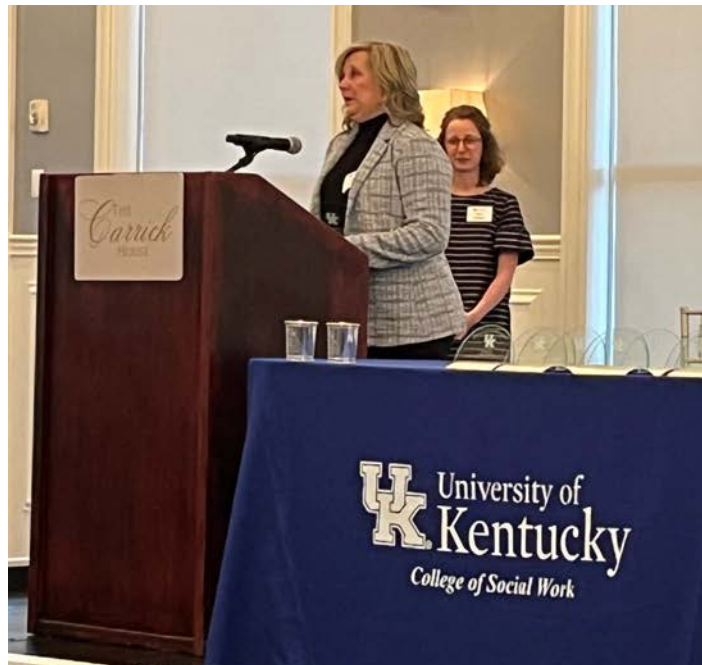
DCBS receives UKCOSW Outstanding Field Agency Award

The DCBS Division of Protection and Permanency received the inaugural Outstanding Field Agency Award from the University of Kentucky College of Social Work Alumni Association.

This award recognizes an organization who has provided volunteer service to the UK College of Social Work by providing outstanding leadership and supervision to students during their field education, showing a commitment to preparing future social workers. Our Commissioner Lesa Dennis, Chief of Staff Shannon Hall and Director of Service Regions Amanda Gehring attended the Lexington ceremony on Sept. 28 to receive this honor on behalf of all staff.

The 2023 SWAA Awards provide formal recognition of the accomplishments of outstanding social work professionals, as well as those who contribute to their development. The SWAA Awards are the highest honors bestowed by the UK College of Social Work for alumni and other supporters of the college.

Congratulations on your great work, DPP!



Transitional Services Branch shines at CASA state conference

The Division of Protection and Permanency Transitional Services Branch was invited to attend and lead a workshop at the 2023 Kentucky CASA Conference held on October 4, 2023 in Lexington, Kentucky. Jeff Culver and Paula Saenz teamed up to provide attendees with an overview of benefits available to Kentucky transition age foster youth for both current and former foster youth in Kentucky. Their workshop also included a detailed review of the roles and support provided by Independent Living Specialists and other program staff on the Transitional Services Branch. The workshop was a huge hit at the conference and the KY Rise booth was highly trafficked though out the event.

The highlight of the conference featured former Voices of the Commonwealth, Cameron Galloway, share his emotional 15-year journey through Kentucky's foster care system. Cameron was featured as one of two keynotes. During his keynote he walked the audience through this time in his life and how various adults in the child welfare system made a difference in his life. His message left the audience feeling motivated, encouraged, and to never underestimate the impact they can make on a young person's life.

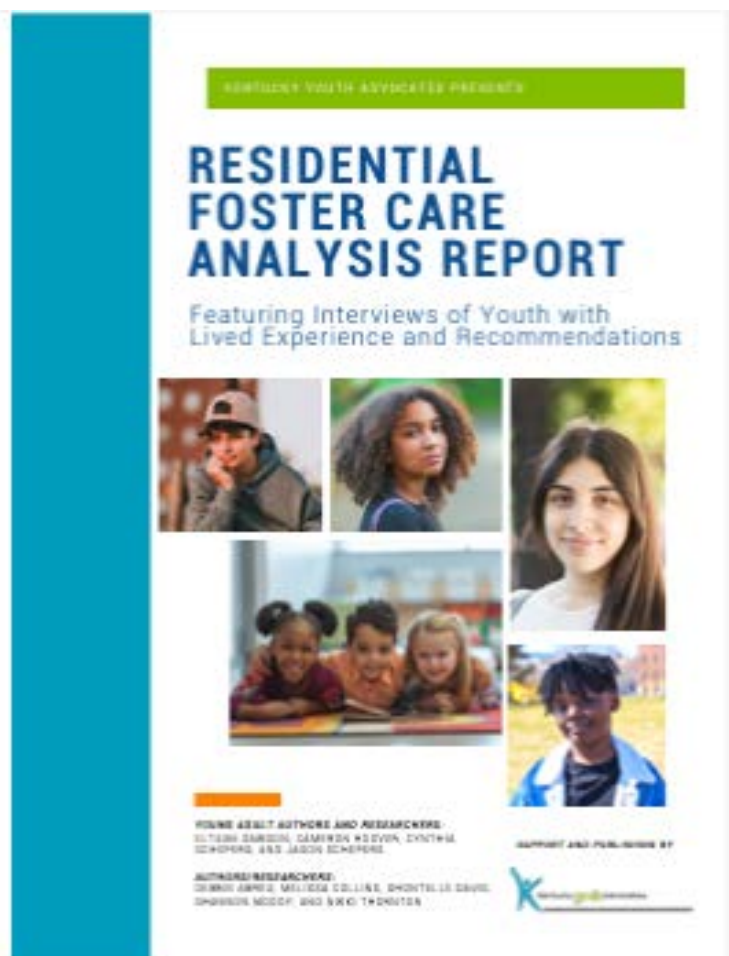
Learn more about services for youth at KYRISE.Ky.gov.



Forum, report highlight youth experience

Kentucky Youth Advocates recently hosted a series of discussions on their Residential Foster Care Analysis in our Northern Bluegrass Service Region. Many of our NBSR staff and stakeholders attended in this effort to improve youth experiences in foster care. These were part of KYA's statewide forums with advocates, particularly youth themselves, about the results of the report and how DCBS can improve services to youth in foster care.

Read the report at
<https://tinyurl.com/5n9yvmff>.



Living > Well

Open Enrollment available for staff through Oct. 27

The Kentucky Employees' Health Plan annual Open Enrollment (OE) period for 2024 is Oct. 9 – Oct. 27, 2023.

The employee self service system is available on the KHRIS page.

Staff can choose to make changes to their benefit selections or opt for their current selections to roll over without any changes.

Staff have many choices in benefits to select. Beyond health benefits, vision and dental benefits, flexible spending accounts and health reimbursement accounts are all options to consider.

For more information visit www.KHRIS.ky.gov and click the "Open Enrollment" link, or call 502-564-6534 or 888-581-8834.

Watch a short video overview of Anthem benefits available to staff at <https://tinyurl.com/459kdkd5>.



Chief of Staff Shannon Hall gives remarks at the Neighborhood Place Annual Day.

Neighborhood Place marks 30 years of collaboration

Our Chief of Staff Shannon Hall joined Louisville leaders recently for the Neighborhood Place Annual Day, celebrating 30 years of the partnership serving Jefferson Region customers with eight full-service locations across the county.

In addition to DCBS, Neighborhood Place includes partnering agencies like the Louisville Metro Office of Resilience and Community Service, Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness, Jefferson County Public Schools, and Seven Counties Services. Shannon told the group that Neighborhood Places are the state's model of serving families holistically, and DCBS aims to replicate that in other regions.

Learn more about Neighborhood Places at <https://tinyurl.com/36yfckjj>.

Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky seeking input for project on opioid use and child maltreatment

Survey deadline is Nov. 1

Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky is seeking input related to new funding. PCAK was awarded funding from the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Commission, which will allow them to focus on the correlation between Opioid Use Disorder and child maltreatment prevention. To inform the project, PCAK is seeking survey responses from both service providers (health care, social services, substance use disorder treatment and recovery, law enforcement, first responders) as well as members of the community on how we can better support families and children affected by opioid misuse.

DCBS staff are invited to take the service provider survey [here](#).



Community members are invited to take the survey [here](#).

Please feel free to share the links with your networks. All survey responses will be anonymous. Deadline to complete the surveys is Nov. 1.

If you have questions, would like more information on the project or would like a flyer with a QR code to hang in your office to solicit participation, please reach out to pcaky@pcaky.org.

Bobbi Frye retires after 27 years of service with DCBS

Congratulations to Bobbi Jo Frye, Executive Advisor in the Commissioner's Office, upon her retirement after almost 27 years of service at DCBS. Bobbi is retiring at the end of October. Bobbi's coworkers and family celebrated her at a reception in Morehead earlier this month.

Bobbi began her employment with DCBS on Jan. 1, 1997, as a front line worker. She has previously held the positions of Public Assistance Program Specialist, Service Region Administrator Associate, Service Region Administrator and Assistant Director.

With so many good memories about her service, Bobbi said that her fondest ones "have been made when we gather as a team and work on solutions. I have enjoyed the people that I work with, always working together, embracing a family work type atmosphere."

Bobbi said her words of wisdom to staff would be a reminder to remember the "why" behind every action of service: "We often refer to work that is outstanding as tasks. Remember, there is a family behind each task that is seeking our assistance."

Thank you for your dedication in service, and congratulations, Bobbi Jo!



Bobbi Jo Frye



Northeastern Region gets kind donation

Thank you to these wonderful members of the Louisa First Baptist Church Women's Missionary Union – including one who recently retired from DCBS! - who organize projects for their community.

For this project, they filled backpacks for girls and boys and donated to the Lawrence County Protection and Permanency team in our Northeastern Service Region.

This is the second year they have graciously donated to DCBS. We appreciate their generosity!

Learn more about how you can help children involved with DCBS child protective services at kyfaces.ky.gov.



Northeastern Region pups raise awareness for foster recruitment

Our Northern Bluegrass Service Region team is working to raise awareness of the need for more foster/adoptive families in the area, and they have a little help from their canine friends. Meet Maddox and Mazie, whose doggone cute kerchiefs even show their support! A big round of a-paws for these two! Thank you Maddox and Mazie!



New DPH website keeps public informed on respiratory viruses

The Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) has launched a new respiratory virus website, CoverYourCough.ky.gov, a one-stop spot for finding information on COVID-19, influenza and RSV.

According to KDPH Commissioner Dr. Steven Stack, today's move follows the approach the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other states are taking to help families find respiratory virus information at one location.

"As we continue into the fall and winter cold and flu season, this site, and a new Respiratory Virus Data Dashboard that is part of this site, will provide awareness of where Kentucky stands with regard to spikes and decreases in these viruses to help inform personal decisions," Dr. Stack said.

The Respiratory Virus Data Dashboard will include COVID-19 and influenza data beginning the first week of October, the official start of flu season. Data will be updated weekly, on Thursdays, and will replace the current flu report and current COVID-19 dashboard.

Weekly reports will be archived.

Retreat includes poverty model, discussion with Trusted Advisors

Our DCBS leadership's fall retreat at Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park earlier this month focused on the agency's strategic plan and steps to meet and implement immediate and long-term goals. The University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work and Family Science - Center for Family and Community Well-Being and Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky led staff through a poverty simulation, giving a glimpse into the challenges families with children in poverty face when they navigate the system of services. This program will be offered to more staff in coming months. There was a great discussion facilitated by Kentucky Youth Advocates Strategic Initiatives Associate Valerie Frost and several members of our Trusted Advisors Council. Strengthening communication, engagement and trauma resources for children and families was a main topic. Leadership also discussed communications challenges and strategies with our partners from the Youth Villages New Allies team. Talk focused on how the DCBS values are being modeled at the front line to better support children and families and opportunities to instill those ideals every day. An educational highlight for many staff was a tour of the National Underground Railroad Museum in Maysville and heard incredible stories of bravery and resilience of those who sought freedom from enslavement.

