Give back to complement services of DCBS, gain a greater sense of purpose

This month is the unofficial “DCBS Superhero Month.” We have many skilled and committed staff being recognized for going above and beyond to serve our children, youth, families and communities.

Take a moment to read about all five of them, and send them a note of congratulations for a job well done!

When I created this award two years ago, I wanted a way to recognize staff and partners whose service to the children, adults and families we serve goes above and beyond their position description. Every one of the heroes we have named so far is just what a superhero should be – a person with extraordinary abilities who performs heroic deeds in the course of their work.

Read the story here

Top row (l-r): Angie Taylor, Emily Vivieros, Lisa Tucker
Bottom Row (l-r): Brittiny Janes, Jack Justice

Five staff named DCBS Superheroes

We celebrate five new DCBS Superheroes this month! They have been honored by their peers - and a partner - for this award recognizing work above and beyond their job. The new Superheroes are:

- **Brittiny Janes**, Social Service Clinician I, Cumberland Region
- **Jack Justice**, Social Service Clinician II, Southern Bluegrass Region
- **Angie Taylor**, Central Intake Branch Manager, Division of Service Regions (retired)
- **Lisa Tucker**, Social Service Clinician I, Cumberland Service Region
- **Emily Viveiros**, Safety Administrator, Division of Service Regions

Read the story here
Screenings are key to good youth mental health

Mental health screenings are a key part of youth mental health. Approximately 50% of lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75% begin by age 24. At the same time, the average delay between when symptoms first appear, and intervention is approximately 11 years.

It is believed early identification and treatment may reduce long-term disability and prevent years of suffering. Health care screenings are common in this country, and mental health screenings should be no exception. For this reason, mental health screenings are supported by professional associations and advocacy groups.

Visit the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to learn more about mental health screenings for youth mental health. Click here: https://bit.ly/3LAvPvH.

Melanie Taylor named Director of Division of Protection & Permanency

Melanie Taylor has been appointed to the position of Director of Protection and Permanency effective Sept. 1.

Melanie has been with CHFS for 24 years and has held many positions with the agency. She began her career as a frontline CPS worker and served as a worker and Family Services Office Supervisor in Madison, Fayette, and Jessamine counties for 19 years. Melanie also served as a regional Social Service Specialist for a period of time in Fayette County. She came to DPP in 2017 and started as the PCC liaison and moved to the Assistant Director position in DPP in 2018.

Melanie has earned a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in social work from the University of Kentucky and is also a certified social worker with the Kentucky Board of Social Work.

Melanie is mom to a 7-year-old basset hound named Mabel and lives in Lexington. She is a huge UK sports fan and never misses a football or basketball game. Go Cats!

Melanie’s experience and credibility will be an asset to all of us in the Commissioner’s Office and the Department as we transform outdated practices and create inclusive and participatory leadership.

Congratulations and welcome to your new role, Melanie!

Racial equity action plan includes teams in each office

This DCBS Racial Equity Core Team has completed a report on the continued racial equity work taking place across the state and is sharing it here with all staff.

Structure
The Community of Practice is a cabinet wide racial equity initiative led by Secretary Eric Friedlander and Executive Advisor Rashaad Abdur-Rahman. Representatives from all departments and agencies within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services meet to network, collaborate and share racial equity work. The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) is a part of the Community of Practice. DCBS also has its own racial equity team, the Racial Equity Core Team. The DCBS Racial Equity Core Team is made up of volunteers from all our divisions and service regions. Many thanks to all of you on our DCBS Racial Equity Core Team!

Plans
The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) is committed to becoming a racially equitable organization. DCBS developed a racial equity action that that will be our roadmap and guide as we make changes to our agency. This racial equity action plan builds out from the equity audit completed by Dr. Brandy Kelly Pryor.

Our racial equity action plan also includes the Enterprise Goals as outlined by Secretary Friedlander. Our racial equity action plan will be a continuously evolving document outlining our goals, objectives, accountability, and progress in eliminating racial disparities. All agencies share common Enterprise Goals.

Clinical Corner: Dr. David Lohr

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Equity, Social and Economic Justice

Read the story here

Read the story here
Being part of a community can help you stay healthy

Friendship can help your health thrive. By spending more time knitting, talking, laughing and connecting with others, you can help prevent some serious health conditions like heart disease and even help live a significantly longer life.

To learn more about keeping close connections for your health, attend Kentucky Employee Health Plan (KEHP) Benefit Learning Sessions. You'll earn 5 LivingWell Engagement points per session (25 points max for up to five learning sessions) toward the maximum $200 in gift cards, $100 if you're a spouse! Log on and find the sessions right for you at www.KEHPlivingwell.com.

Registration open for Fatherhood Summit

The 2022 Kentucky Fatherhood Summit, sponsored by the Kentucky Department for Income Support, Child Support Enforcement Division, the Commonwealth Center for Fathers & Families and other collaborating agencies, will be Oct. 11 – 12.

Registration is free and attendees can choose to participate in person or virtually. This year’s theme is “Healthy Fathers – Healthy Families.” Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub and Executive Advisor Mary Carpenter will be presenters at the event. Please visit https://bit.ly/3Sa2nPu for more information or to register.
Open house welcomes staff back to office

The Commissioner’s Office hosted an Open House at its Frankfort Central Office this month to welcome staff back to the in-person service as the new telecommuting policy began.

Staff enjoyed autumn decor, goodie bags with fidget toys and small journals, delightful desserts and good company as they took a break to get reacquainted in person.

Goodbye and good luck to DFS Director Jason Dunn

This month, we said farewell and thanks to our Division of Family Support Director Jason Dunn, who has served Kentucky families through his work at the Cabinet for Health and Family Services for 30 years. Chief of Staff Shannon Hall, Deputy Commissioner Lesa Dennis and Commissioner Marta Miranda-Straub presented him with a certificate of appreciation. Jason moves on to a federal position doing similar work to build a better network of assistance for all Americans, just like he has for the Commonwealth.

Congratulations and good luck to Jason!
DCBS joins Recovery Month event

Staff from our START (Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team) office joined the Recovery Community Centers event earlier this month in Frankfort. They provided information about START and how it helps families with parental substance use get healthy and stay together. Here are some images of the celebration of the thousands of Kentuckians in recovery. Learn more about START at https://bit.ly/2kYJyEO.