



## Staff deserve gratitude, honor for service

### From the Commissioner



During this holiday season, as we come together to celebrate and reflect, it is essential to recognize the critical role you play in fostering hope and positive change. Your efforts extend far beyond the scope of your job descriptions; you are the pillars of support and purveyors of prevention for those who may have no one else to turn to.

[Read more here](#)

Dear DCBS Family,  
As we approach the holiday season, I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for every one of you. In a world where compassion and dedication often go unnoticed, your unwavering commitment to the well-being of children, families, and vulnerable adults shines brightly and deserves the utmost recognition.

The work that each of you does is nothing short of remarkable. Day in and day out, you tirelessly navigate the intricate and often challenging landscape of child welfare and human services, making a profound impact on the lives of those who need it most. Your compassion, resilience, and dedication do not go unnoticed, and they certainly do not go unappreciated.

## Deck the Halls with Laughter



**DCBS staff celebrate the holiday season with smiles, laughter, love and engagement!**

Across the Commonwealth, DCBS teams are coming together to celebrate the holiday season. Each photo captures the spirit of the season and the camaraderie shared in our workplace.

[See more photos here](#)

## Public Health Corner



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Dr. Trinidad Jackson,  
Senior Advisor on Public Health**

### Unpacking Inequities in Public Health

#### Hello DCBS!

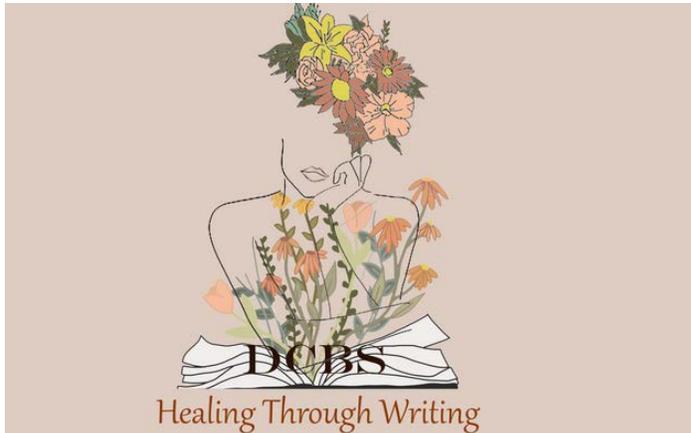
Thus far, past newsletters have discussed what public health is, why health must be considered in ALL policies, identification of social determinants, and how these considerations align with our responsibilities to secure human rights for ALL lives. Our current Cabinet and Department leadership is explicit about our need prioritize race, equity, and public health thinking in all that we do; however, that has not stopped some from still asking, “why do we have to talk about race?”

[Read more here](#)

# Weaving a Tapestry of Care

DCBS Healing Through Writing campaign accepted submissions for the 2nd volume E-book. One colleague, James Pittman wrote about how DCBS staff provide a “tapestry of care” to Kentucky families, children, and vulnerable adults. Through intertwined support and empathy, DCBS programs empower families to navigate life’s struggles and cultivate resilience. DCBS staff are like a beacon of light in the darkest of times and instill hope and nurture strength within families.

[\*Read James’ submission here\*](#)



DCBS staff embrace families with compassion and care. One colleague, Cynthia Dickerson found herself unemployed and needing assistance. While applying for SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) and the encouragement of her case worker, she got something else that she needed- consistent and dependable employment with DCBS. Cynthia serves her clients with empathy and her goal is to help them navigate through all the required paperwork and get the assistance they need with the LEAST number of barriers.

[\*Read Cynthia’s submission here\*](#)

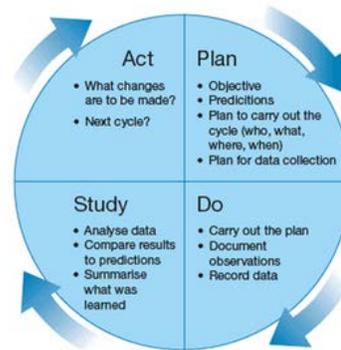


# Performance, Retention, & Well-Being: The Triple Crown of a Thriving Workforce

DCBS Leadership & University of Louisville’s Professor Anita P. Barbee, PhD, MSSW discuss the interplay between performance, retention and employee well-being.

Dr. Anita P. Barbee presented to DCBS leadership in December about the three main categories of workforce outcomes; employee performance, employee retention/turnover, and employee well-being.

Goals of the presentation included an evaluation of training and its impact on organizational outcomes, review trends from the University of Louisville’s findings, zero in on what the results signify, and brainstorm with DCBS Leadership on potential next steps.



## It’s time to reflect on the journey we've shared: DCBS 2023 Recap Video



As we stand at the crossroads of another year, it's time to reflect on the journey we've shared. Across the vast tapestry of the commonwealth, a silent symphony of dedication has unfolded, each note a testament to the unwavering commitment to serve those who need it most: children, families, and vulnerable adults.

# Bridging Divisions & Fostering Collaboration

The Northeastern Service Region (NESR) held their Joint Family Support/ Protection and Permanency Leadership meeting on November 28, 2023. The meeting focused on celebrating the accomplishments of the past year, as well as brainstorming on ways to improve community engagement, staff retention, and leadership development.

[Read more here](#)



**Northeastern Leadership Team**



## Good Words about our DCBS Colleagues

To whom it may concern,

First and foremost, I am very grateful for the services this agency has provided for my mother. In addition, I would like to commend a representative I spoke with yesterday, Jameela. She was fantastic! She was very patient and knowledgeable in relaying and receiving information, pertinent to my mothers case.

She was extremely courteous and helpful! I do understand this is a vital assistance program and am very aware it takes time to process this type of information. That being said, I do feel compelled to state my concerns, thoughts, and suggestions. These are a few issues that I have encountered as a representative for an elderly person trying to receive assistance.

Again, I am appreciative of the assistance and the opportunity to share my concerns and experiences. ~Mrs. Flannery

# Gobble up Gratitude

## NESR Retention Committee Hosts “EXTRA Thankful for You” Fundraiser



In the spirit of Thanksgiving, the NESR Retention Committee hosted a heartwarming fundraiser called "EXTRA Thankful for You." The initiative aimed to foster appreciation and camaraderie among staff members by giving them an opportunity to express their gratitude for their colleagues. Staff were encouraged to purchase a Turkey, a symbolic gesture of thanks, to be sent to a coworker they were particularly grateful for. The Turkeys came with a special message expressing appreciation, and they were personally delivered to the recipients by a member of the Management Team.

[Read more here](#)

## Voices From Our Youth: Youth Experience survey

What youth are saying about their social worker:



“She is very reliable and always there when I need her.”

“She is super nice and is there for me no matter what.”

“I am really happy she is a part of my life.”

“Has been my social worker since I was 14. She has done so much for me.”

“Communicates well, always makes sure I have what I need.”

“He is cool and I like him very much.”

“I want to thank her for helping me through all of this.”

“I love her.”

“Listens to me when I am talking.”

“She is very sweet and helpful.”

# Building Holiday Memories



## DCBS Collaborates with Local Partners to Celebrate with Foster Families

Salt River Trail hosted the 2nd Annual Holiday Party for Foster Families, held at Skateland in Radcliff, was a resounding success thanks to the generosity of several community partners. Skateland owners opened their doors early for the event, allowing foster families to enjoy roller skating, pizza, soda, and festive cheer.



[Read more here](#)



# Unwrapping Joy

DCBS hosts Holiday festivities for children in foster care.



The Cumberland Service Region’s Recruitment & Retention teams are spreading holiday cheer to children in foster care by coordinating Holiday parties focused on kid-friendly crafts, festive photo booths, delicious holiday treats, and of course, a visit from Santa clause!

# The Unseen Impact of Microaggressions

## Equity, Social and Economic Justice- Addressing Racism and Poverty

Every day, seemingly harmless actions or comments that subtly undermine, offend, or exclude members of marginalized groups. They can be verbal ("Wow, you speak English so well!"), nonverbal (avoiding eye contact), or environmental (culturally insensitive jokes in a workplace). Watch this short video to learn more!

**CLICK**  
to learn more!



### Examples of Micro Aggressions:

Treating someone as lesser due to race, gender, or sexuality.

Praising a person of color's English while assuming they're not American.

Body-shaming or unsolicited weight-loss advice.

Interrupting or silencing marginalized voices in discussions.

Exclusionary body language that conveys disinterest or disrespect.

[Read more here](#)

# DCBS Kentucky Employee Charitable Campaigns End for 2023

DCBS had another successful year full of wonderful campaigns, volunteers, and participation. In total, DCBS raised over \$6,100 for Kentucky families, children, and vulnerable adults!

DCBS would like to thank Jessica Bowman and all 9 service region coordinators for leading the KECC work! Congratulations team for another successful year!

Thank you KECC Regional Coordinators!

- Patricia Franke
- Patty Murphy
- Brent Richey
- Stephanie Bradley
- Debra Collins
- Brandy Hillard-Brown
- Susan Lay
- Marcus Haycraft



**SALE**

Get Hooked on KECC

AMOUNT RAISED  
**\$425**



**SALE**

Apprecia-GRAM!

AMOUNT RAISED  
**\$624**



**SALE**

KECC Weight Loss Challenge 2023

AMOUNT RAISED  
**\$820**



**AUCTION**

Not Just Cookies- It's Love-Cookie Auction for KECC

AMOUNT RAISED  
**\$70**



**RAFFLE**

KECC Is Going Bananas for the Savannah Bananas!

AMOUNT RAISED  
**\$2,310**

# Navigating the Holidays with Ease: Get Moving!

*Living*  **Well**

The holidays are a time for celebration, but they can also be hectic and stressful. With all the parties, shopping, and travel, it's easy to let your fitness routine fall by the wayside. But staying active is important, especially during this time of year. Exercise can help you manage stress, boost your mood, and give you more energy to tackle everything on your plate.

The good news is that you don't have to give up on your fitness goals just because you're busy or sitting at a desk.

Here are 5 easy ways to fit some exercise in at work!

- Lunch Break Work Out
- Lose Your Desk Chair
- Workout At Your Desk
- Turn Your Commute Into A Workout
- Stretch

Here is a great chair workout video.



Make sure to consult with your doctor before starting any exercise program.

## 5 WAYS TO EXERCISE AT WORK



### 1 LUNCH BREAK WORK OUT

Just don't skip lunch, grab a shake and head to the gym for a swim, or a light workout.

### 2 LOSE YOUR DESK CHAIR

Consider sitting on a stability ball or change your desk to a standing desk.



### 3 WORKOUT AT YOUR DESK

Do some light Golf putting by your desk  
Use a hand gripper or dumbbells  
Do calf raises for a full minute 10 X a day  
Squeeze your glutes and hold for 30 sec.



### 4 TURN YOUR COMMUTE INTO A WORKOUT

If you live in a city try to rely on public transportation, try getting off the bus a stop or two away from your usual stop. If you live close enough to work, skip the bus and hop on your bike or hit the sidewalk.



### 5 STRETCH

WebMD suggests: Torso twists, leg extensions, standing and sitting down several times without no hands, shrugging your shoulders to release neck and shoulder tension.



BE HAPPY - WORK HEALTHY   
ARE YOU STILL SITTING AT YOUR DESK?  
GET UP AND GET MOVING!