

Make self-care part of spring priorities

Spring is finally here! That means blooming flowers, basketball tournaments, and sadly for many of us, seasonal allergies. Spring is a season of renewal, where the world around us comes back to life after the dormancy of winter. The weather becomes warmer and, thanks to Daylight Saving Time, the days become longer. This time of year is a great reminder that everything is in a constant state of change and renewal, including ourselves.

From the Acting Commissioner



Just like a spring flower, our health must be cultivated and cared for. On stressful days, we may wilt. If we ignore our basic needs, we may stop growing. But with tender attention, we can bloom and become strong; we bring happiness to others.

The attention and love we give ourselves is self-care. For human service professionals like you, the importance of self-care cannot be overstated. You work tirelessly to support and assist others, often neglecting your own needs in the process.

But, as DCBS and Cabinet leadership emphasize, taking care of yourself is essential to maintaining your mental, emotional, and physical health, which in turn allows you to provide better care for others.

Read the story [here](#)



Jessica Pitman



Carla Tanner



Bobbi Frye

2 staff named CAC Legendary Partners

Two DCBS staff were among 16 individuals named 2023 Legendary Partners by the Kentucky's Children's Advocacy Centers at their Capitol rotunda ceremony earlier this month. CAC leadership was joined by Gov. Andy Beshear to present winners their awards, along with heroes' capes.

Each Legendary Partner was nominated by the CAC in their region. The honorees from DCBS are Jessica Pitman, Social Service Clinician II in the Southern Bluegrass Service Region and Carla Tanner, Family Services Office Supervisor in the Northeastern Service Region.

Read more [here](#)

Several DCBS staff are getting Shout Outs this month! Call Center rep **Rachel Howe** got praise from a community partner. **Bobbi Frye**, Executive Advisor in the Commissioner's Office, was a presenter at a national conference. And **Ashlea Dodsworth, Danelle Eversole, Lejla Kingsland and Dominic Stewart** testified about the challenges of their work before a legislative committee.

Read more [here](#)



From left: Ashlea Dodsworth, Dominic Stewart, Lejla Kingsland and Danelle Eversole

Staff Shout Outs spotlight good work from our DCBS colleagues! Send your Shout Out ideas to DCBSCommissioner@ky.gov.

Racial Equity Core Team update

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."



-James Baldwin

The DCBS Racial Equity Core Team continues work within Pillar One: Equity/Social and Economic Justice- Addressing Racism and Poverty.

One of the first steps of DCBS Racial Equity Core Team was using the Health Audit completed by Dr. Brandy Kelly Pryor. We have shared that the top recommendations were the C.A.R.A.T (Culture, Alignment, Readiness, Accountability and Transparency).

In addition to the recommendations, the Health Equity Audit provides frame and guidance as an emancipatory approach to addressing racism. The Health Equity Audit also discusses the systems of power, root causes and health outcomes.

Definitions

Racism: the belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially so as to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another.

Classism: prejudice against or in favor of people belonging to a particular social class.

Systems of Power: the beliefs, practices, and cultural norms on which individual lives and institutions are built; rooted in social constructions of race and gender

Root Causes: the core issue—the highest-level cause—that sets in motion the entire cause-and-effect reaction that ultimately leads to the problem(s).

Health Outcomes: Length of life and Quality of life. Health Factors include four sub-areas: Health behaviors, Clinical care, Social and economic factors and Physical environment

Please reach out to any of the DCBS Racial Equity Core team members if you have any questions. Find your office's team liaison at <https://bit.ly/3lpfnFV>. Thank you!



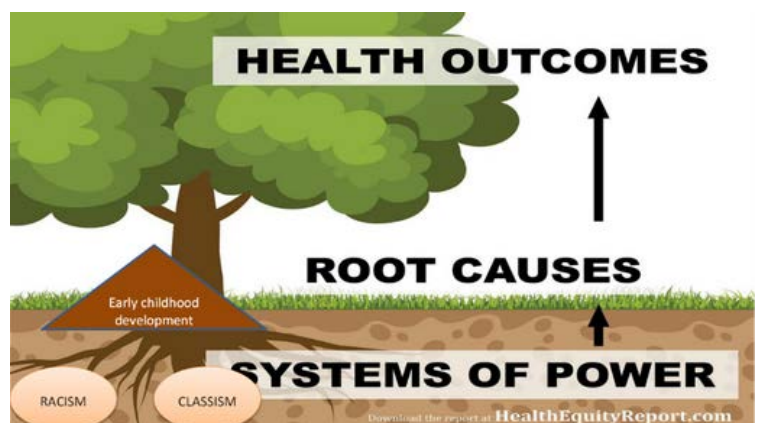
Division of Service Regions Assistant Director and DCBS Racial Equity Core Team Co-Chair Lynette Ponder appears in the most recent CHFS Racial Equity Community of Practice webinar.

Racial Equity Core Team Co-Chair Lynette Ponder was a featured speaker in the most recent CHFS Racial Equity Community of Practice webinar.

Lynette appeared with moderator Rashaad Abdur-Rahman of the Department for Behavioral Health, Development and Intellectual Disabilities and two other racial equity champions from across the cabinet: Heather McCarty of the Family Resource and Youth Services Centers and LaToya Payne of the Office of the Ombudsman and Administrative Review.

Lynette explained her “why” for promoting racial equity work: “For me, racial equity work is an absolute must. Even though racial equity work focuses on advancing and improving conditions for minorities, it ultimately affects everyone, not just minorities.”

This is a good discussion that explores some of the ways different departments have set goals for their equity work. If you missed it, tune by visiting <https://bit.ly/3Tv7XxA> and using passcode iQ.j#T3S. Thank you for representing DCBS, Lynette!



Take part in Child Abuse Prevention Month

Our partners at Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky have plans under way for April to recognize Child Abuse Prevention Month. DCBS staff are invited to participate in these events and trainings, with supervisor approval.

CAPM Kickoff

Staff are invited to participate in Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky's Child Abuse Prevention Month Kickoff at the Capitol's English Garden for a pinwheel planting at 10 a.m. EDT on Monday, March 27, rain or shine. All ages are welcome, and Gov. Andy Beshear and First Lady Brittainy Beshear will be in attendance. There will be pinwheel planting and the launch of "Lean on Me."

Lean on Me Training

Lean On Me Kentucky is a movement, an imperative, a call to action for each of us to help build stronger communities so our children grow up healthy and safe, and our families - all families - are valued and thrive. DCBS supports PCAK in the Lean on Me effort as a partner and will be sharing tools and resources with staff. Sign up for one of the virtual training sessions described at right to learn more.

Wear Blue Day – March 31

Join with your work teams to all wear blue on Friday, March 31. By wearing blue, you bring awareness to child abuse and support the work of prevention, as well as honor all of the youth, families and communities who have been impacted by child abuse. Take a group photo and send it to anya.weber@ky.gov to be shared on DCBS' social media with an "@to PCAK!"

Learn more and get resources for Child Abuse Prevention Month from PCAK to use and share at <https://pcaky.org>.

Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky's Child Abuse Prevention Month Kickoff at the Capitol

March 27 | 10 a.m. EDT

The Capitol Rotunda | English Garden

Special Guests:

Governor Andy Beshear and First Lady Brittainy Beshear

Free! — All ages welcome! — Rain or shine!

Join us for the start of Child Abuse Prevention Month 2023! We will be announcing the launch of Lean On Me Kentucky and planting pinwheels outside the Capitol Building!



 **Prevent Child Abuse
Kentucky**

LEAN
Empathy. Affirmation. Non-Judgment.

#CAPM2023 | #LeanOnMeKY

This project is funded in part or in whole with state or federal funds through a contract (#PON2 736 2200003127) with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

Lean On Me Kentucky Training (Offered Twice)

April 18, 2023 - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. EDT
April 27, 2023 - 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. EDT

The Lean On Me Kentucky Initiative, created by Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky and the Department for Community Based Services, is officially launching this month. This training will introduce participants to the initiative, identify primary prevention strategies to help families prior to child protective services involvement, and teach participants ways to become community supporters, utilizing Lean On Me Kentucky tools and resources!

April 18



Scan or visit bit.ly/3ZYSc4k to register for the April 18 session

April 27



Scan or visit bit.ly/3FAMlJy to register for the April 27 session

Giving back: Scout project helps foster youth in Two Rivers Region

A special thank you goes out to Austin Phelps and his mother, Amy Phelps, an Administrative Specialist II in our Division of Administration and Financial Management, in the Two Rivers Region. Austin is from Scout Troop 611 in Owensboro. Amy also serves as a Cub Master for the Ohio County pack.

For his Eagle Scout project, Austin put together 150 care bags for children going into foster care. Bags were packed for three age ranges: 0-5, 6-12 and 13-18, and each group had 50 bags – half for girls and half for 25.

Each bag contained a blanket, stuffed animal, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush or comb, body wash, shampoo, deodorant for the older kids, crayons, pencils, notebooks or coloring books, pens, flashlight and a game or toy depending on the age.



After hearing his mother describe how she helps serve young people coming into care - sometimes with nothing -- Austin decided he wanted to gather essential items and new backpacks for children in foster care to help them feel supported.

Austin packed the bags earlier this month with the help of his fellow scouts and the Hartford Cub Scout pack, then he delivered the bags to the DCBS office.

Thank you for supporting youth in care, Austin! And congratulations on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout!

Staff featured on CHFS podcast

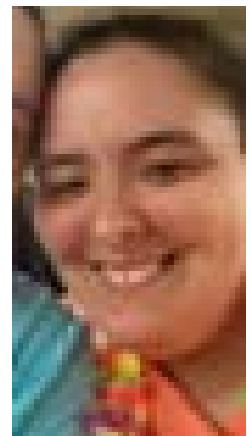
Two DCBS Staff were recently featured on the CHFS Community Podcast, hosted by Secretary Eric Friedlander.

Family Support Specialist I Ambre Irby of the Northern Bluegrass Service Region and Social Service Worker I Monica Gregory of the Salt River Trail Service Region both spoke to Secretary Friedlander in separate podcasts about their work at DCBS and a little about how their personal experiences have motivated them and some of the challenges and rewards of their jobs.

Listen to the conversations at <https://chfscommunity.libsyn.com/>.



Ambre Irby

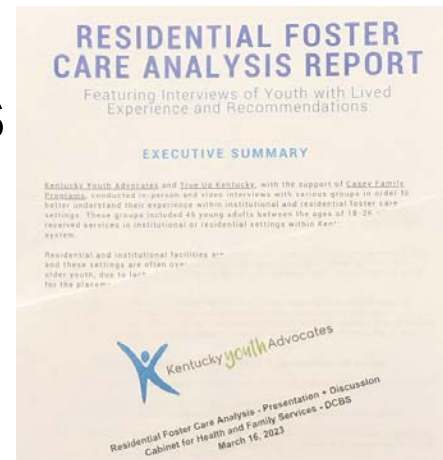


Monica Gregory

Leadership learns about foster youth's residential experiences

Thank you to Kentucky Youth Advocates staff - Engagement Coordinator Melissa Collins, Director of Strategic Engagement Carli Mosby-Smith and Policy and Advocacy Analyst Tamara Vest - who recently spoke to our leadership team about results and recommendations from their Residential Foster Care Analysis

Report. It was good discussion that led to plans for engagement and action. Thanks also to the KYA Youth Adult Research Team for leading this charge and participating youth and staff representing service providers. We are learning a lot from this report. Read the full study: <https://bit.ly/3ToiryZ>.



Top left: Katy Mullins, Shannon Greer and Acting Commissioner Lesa Dennis in a small group discussion
Top right: The leadership team focuses on the report.
Bottom left: KYA staff Carli Mosby-Smith, Melissa Collins and Tamara Vest present details of the report.
Bottom right: Shauna Moore, Chief of Staff Shannon Hall and Michelle Baize in small group discussion.

March is Social Work Month

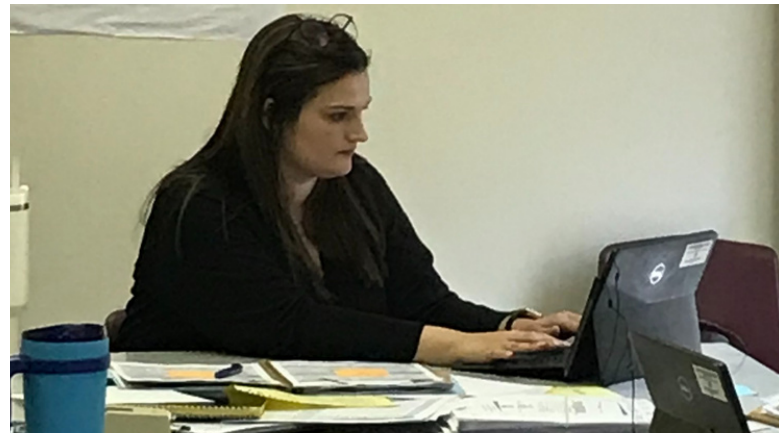
Thank you to all DCBS social workers and social services staff for your dedication and the life-changing work you do every day.
 You make a difference!

**SOCIAL WORK
 BREAKS BARRIERS**

EMSR, APS and DSR staff assist with facility closure

Several staff from the Eastern Mountain Service Region, the Adult Services Branch and the Division of Service Regions Safety and Facilities Branch are being recognized for their dedicated service involved with a recent Pikeville facility closure and helping the center's 76 adult residents relocate to appropriate new long-term care.

Read more [here](#)



Above: Family Services Office Supervisor Morgan May.



Left: Morgan May and Eastern Mountain Service Region Adult Protective Services staff Jeremiah Ferran, Hollie Newsome, Janie LeMaster and Kayla Hall.



LivingWell Join the Steps Challenge

Coming Soon: The LivingWell Invitational Team Steps Challenge. Join a team to increase physical activity accountability and motivate each other to get in your steps to improve heart health, mood and energy levels.

During this five-week, five-round challenge, KEHP members across the state will try to get as many steps as possible. You could earn \$5 in LivingWell Rewards when you log at least five days of steps in each round.

Registration will be April 5-25, and Round 1 will begin April 26. Check your email for details soon on how to register!

Want more information? Click [here](#) to view a how-to video.



Staff must complete online security training by 3/31

It's time again for the annual Security Awareness training. The 2023 training is available on the Kentucky Online Gateway (KOG) website - <https://kog.chfs.ky.gov/home/> - through March 31. Annual FTI training also will be available in users' KOG training queues for those required to complete this training.

After logging in to KOG, if you do not see the training links on your dashboard, click your name at the top of the page, select the "Training Modules" tab and scroll to locate the 2023 training and quiz(zes).

Employees have until March 31 to complete the training. If training is not completed by then, access to systems necessary to perform your daily duties may be locked. Supervisors, please help ensure all staff complete training in a timely manner.

Not every DCBS employee uses KOG for their daily duties; however, everyone is required complete the training. Online safety is vital to our agency's success in serving customers well.

Log onto KOG at <https://kog.chfs.ky.gov>.

