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FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

Partnerships and collaboration enhance the quality of outcomes.

OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN

Welcome to the April 2021 First Friday Bulletin!

A Message from OFC Deputy Director Jeff Van Deusen



Jeff Van Deusen

Spring has finally sprung! This time of year is always a great reminder of new beginnings, growth and opportunities. I recently read a quote by an anonymous author that stated “Spring: a lovely reminder of how beautiful change can truly be”. As I reflect on the past year and the changes to children services, I also look ahead to the changes ahead to our system. Often change can be approached with apprehension or viewed as negative, however, as we continue to change the way services to children and families are delivered, keep in mind that change can be a great opportunity to rethink how our work is done. I look forward to walking along with each of you as we implement transformative changes.

I want to welcome Interim Director Matt Damschroder who recently joined ODJFS. For the past two years, Director Damschroder served as the Director of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services. He brings years of experience in leading government agencies, as well as a vested interest in the children services system as a foster and adoptive parent. We look forward to the great work ahead.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month! The Ohio Children’s Trust Fund (OCTF), which serves as Ohio’s state chapter for Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA), held its first virtual National Child Abuse Prevention Month Kickoff Event on April 1st, 2021. The Kickoff event featured local heroes from communities across Ohio and honored the winners of the Everyday Ohio Heroes Awards. The OCTF also shared a presentation from Brittany Pope of Ohio Guidestone highlighting the Father’s Feeling Project. You can read more about it in this issue.

Ohio Children's Trust Fund Updates

The Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF), which serves as Ohio's state chapter for Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA), held its first Virtual National Child Abuse Prevention Month Kickoff Event on April 1st, 2021. The Kickoff event featured local heroes from communities across Ohio and honored the winners of the Everyday Ohio Heroes Awards. The OCTF also shared a presentation from Brittany Pope of Ohio Guidestone highlighting the Father's Feeling Project.



The Everyday Ohio Heroes Campaign highlights the role of trusted adult supporters in the life of a child through the tagline, “Not all heroes wear capes”, with a call to action for adults to “Be a Hero in the Eyes of a Child – One Simple Act of Encouragement at a Time.” The OCTF established the Everyday Ohio Heroes award to honor individuals who dedicate their time, efforts, or lives to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The EOH awards were presented at the Virtual April Kick-Off Event on Thursday April 1, 2021. To see a list of this year's winners, visit [our Everyday Ohio Heroes page](#).

This April 2021, the OCTF will be spotlighting prevention partners across the state that are committed to working with families and professionals to help prevent child abuse and neglect. Programs and service providers will be spotlighted via pre-recorded video presentations that will be posted to the OCTF website and promoted via social media and/or email blasts.



OCTF was excited to share a presentation from Brittany Pope of OhioGuidestone at the Virtual April Kickoff Event.

The Trust Fund would also like to share some of the successes we've had this year, including being one of two states awarded a PCAA Chapter discretionary grant to expand the Father's Feelings Project into southeastern Ohio as well as being one of six states selected to participate in the Governor's Affairs Initiative to develop a comprehensive strategy regarding primary and secondary prevention messaging, communication, and advocacy. For more information about the Ohio Children's Trust Fund, visit us at [OCTF.Ohio.gov](#) and our social media @OhioCTF.

Center of Excellence

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) has announced that the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) Center for Innovative Practices at the Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education, a part of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (CIP/Begun/MSASS), has been awarded a two-year, \$3.6 million contract to coordinate a new statewide Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center of Excellence (COE).

OhioMHAS partnered with other state agencies, which include Job and Family Services, Medicaid, Youth Services, Developmental Disabilities, Health and Ohio Family and Children First, to develop and issue the RFP. Among its primary responsibilities, the COE will be responsible for building and sustaining a standardized assessment process, evaluating the effectiveness of services, and expanding service and care coordination capacity for children with complex behavioral health needs and their families. The COE will also provide orientation, training, coaching, mentoring, and other functions/supports as needed to support Ohio's statewide child caring provider network.

The new COE will bolster Ohio's ongoing system transformation and improvement efforts, which to date,

have included: expanding the behavioral health continuum of care to better serve youth and families; implementation of the Family First; and development of OhioRISE. The ODJFS is dedicating up to \$10 million in Family First Transition Act funds to build capacity and provide evidence-based prevention services to alleviate the need to place children in foster care and support children and families in community-based settings. For more information, please contact Hannah Knies at Hannah.Knies@jfs.ohio.gov.

The Center, in partnership with OhioMHAS and ODJFS, will be hosting an overview webinar on April 7 from 1-2:30pm. Registration is not required. Please use [this link](#) to join the Microsoft Teams meeting. Click [HERE](#) for a fact sheet about the new Center and [HERE](#) to view the March 10 media release announcing Case Western Reserve University's Center for Innovative Practices as the coordinator for the new Center.

Family First Prevention Services

ODJFS in partnership with seven counties and one IV-E Court will begin to pilot prevention services on April 1, 2021. The pilot counties include, Butler, Fairfield, Knox, Licking, Lucas, Stark, Trumbull, and Ashtabula's IV-E Court. The pilot counties will be utilizing the five evidence-based practices services identified in Ohio's Prevention Services Plan: Multisystemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, Ohio START, Healthy Families America, and Parents as Teachers.

The counties will pilot prevention services in children services casework practice from April 1, 2021 through go live on October 1, 2021. Throughout this time, counties will provide feedback on prevention services implementation, system functionality and assessment monitoring tools in their work with families through the prevention services case category. The pilot will inform any modifications needed prior to full, statewide implementation in October.

Children Services Transformation Recommendations Update

In February, the Office of Families and Children (OFC) took over the project management and day to day implementation of the Children Services Transformation Advisory Council recommendations. Work has already been completed to map out the implementation of the recommendations, prioritize a governance structure, address budget bill considerations, and assign project leads to manage the individual recommendations through the next biennium. As the work moves forward, OFC will continue to engage stakeholders as well as state level leadership through joint planning.

Updates on individual recommendations include:

- Language has been drafted for both the **Resource Family Bill of Rights** and the **Foster Youth Bill of Rights**. Initial feedback has been received from a variety of partners. Additional opportunities to provide feedback are being planned.
- Work to finalize a vendor to develop a **Consistent onboarding program** for new PCSA staff continues.
- As May is foster care month, the **Elevate foster youth and caregiver recognition and appreciation** team has coordinating efforts with the Governor's Office to recognize both foster youth and resource families. They have also been meeting to discuss recognition and appreciation opportunities that could occur ongoing.
- Updates on the **Foster Care and Adoption Assessor Registry** include the Assessor Registry functionality in SACWIS is now live and a Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek a vendor to support resource home recruitment, assist agencies in locating homes for children in care and to create a pool of Assessors.

Look for monthly updates on this important work in future First Fridays. If you have any questions, please contact Karen.McGormley@jfs.ohio.gov

Adult Protective Services

On December 27, 2020, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act which allowed for the establishment of the “Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021: Grants to Enhance Adult Protective Services to Respond to COVID-19” by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). This grant provides funding to enhance and improve Adult Protective Services (APS) related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency. The act provides one-time funding for APS services totaling \$93,880,000 across all US states and territories. The project period for these awards is to be 18-months, with a start date of April 1, 2021, and an end date of September 30, 2022.

Awards will be provided to the state agency having the legal responsibility for providing adult protective services within the state (the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)). It is anticipated that Ohio will receive \$3,319,395.00 in grant funds. There is no required match for the funding, and it will be distributed to the county Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) equally. Funds received under this grant are intended to supplement, and not replace, existing funding for APS that is currently provided by state and/or local government and cannot be used to replace existing funding already appropriated for APS programs and services. All funds must be spent in ways consistent with the Elder Justice Act Section 2042(b), the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021, and guidance provided by ACL and ODJFS. ODJFS will be sending out guidance regarding how the monies can be used in the coming weeks, and a virtual meeting will be held for county agencies and their designees to give them an opportunity to ask questions of the ODJFS APS staff.

Creative Corner: Best Practices for *Family Team Meetings* and *Family Group Decision Making*

Family Team Meeting (FTM) and Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) have been an integral part of casework practice for years. Many find these strategies crucial in making inclusive family decisions. OFC selected a few counties, which have an extensive history of conducting FTMs and FGDMs, to identify strategies that could be adopted in other counties.

OFC learned that these counties developed an impressive set of tools to advance the practice. To broadly share these resources a SharePoint site was created, and it is available to anyone with a State User ID (e.g., SACWIS ID). Here is the link: [Resources for Family Team Meetings \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

If you do not have a State User ID and would like to learn more about the tools or have general questions about these tools, email Roger.Ward@jfs.ohio.gov

Rule Review

There were no Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rules posted to the Ohio’s Families and Children Rule Review Website at www.ohiorulereview.org during the month of March 2021, but please continue to visit the site periodically for new postings. We welcome your input and hope you use this opportunity to share your experiences. The website received 1,641 page views during March 2021.

Missed an issue of First Friday?

No problem. All First Friday updates are posted on the OFC website under the Partners for Ohio's Families button. [Click here](#) to check them out!

Global Communications

The following emails were sent in December to PCSA directors and/or private agency directors:

March 1, 2021	Kinship Support Program Kinship Assessment Approvals for Payment
March 3, 2021	Mohican Young Star Academy - Notice of Legal Action
March 4, 2021	Mohican Young Star Academy - Notice of Legal Action Update
March 5, 2021	Join Us for An Overview of the Kinship Support Program March 29, 2021
March 5, 2021	OFC 'First-Friday' Bulletin - March 5, 2021
March 10, 2021	Join Us for an Adoption Rules Update Webinar March 24, 2021
March 11, 2021	Center of Excellence Announcement
March 16, 2021	Press Release- Racial Inequality in Children Services
March 17, 2021	Consolidated Appropriations Act- Updated Guidance
March 19, 2021	OFC Touchpoint Meeting
March 26, 2021	Information Sessions for Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021: APS Funding & Supporting Foster Youth Through the Pandemic Act Funding
March 31, 2021	Kinship Support Program FCL 005A
March 31, 2021	Introductory Webinar for New Child and Adolescent BH Center of Excellence – April 7