



JOB AND FAMILY MATTERS

APRIL* MAY* JUNE 2022

REMEMBER WHEN.....

In 1997 we didn't have any computers here at the agency. We had a typist who ***typed*** (YES – typewriters!) all the notes for Children Services workers.

Starting pay was \$9.28 as a caseworker in children services.

PA had an entire clerical division in the past....each day they would pull physical cases to be handled that day from the file room.

Those green note pads you now use to take notes on were called Route Slips and they were attached to case files with instructions on where it went, etc.

The drive thru window we are now actively using was closed for almost 20 years before opening back up during Covid times!! (and it still worked!)

How the times have changed!!

CHILDREN SERVICES



Did you know May is Foster Parent Appreciation Month? Every year the State of Ohio recognizes our selfless, hardworking foster parents. To honor Sandusky County Foster Parents, the Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner was held on May 20, 2022, at Ole Zim's. The evening began with a welcoming from Director Melanie Allen acknowledging the dedication of all foster parents and their commitment to our children. Dinner and dessert were served, and attendees also enjoyed a guest speaker close to our heart, Jessica Drenning. Present for the event were Judge Brad Smith, Magistrate Croy, Magistrate Bova, and Sandusky County Commissioners Scott Miller and Russ Zimmerman. The event was also attended by Children Services staff and supervisors. Nearly all Sandusky County Foster Parents were present for the event where they received years of service awards. Sandusky County currently has 13 licensed foster homes. Our longest licensed foster parent has been with the agency for 11 ½ years! One family has been licensed for 9 years, 4 families 5-6 years, 5 families 2-3 years, and 2 families two years or less. Combined, these licensed Sandusky County foster parents have opened their home to 74 children in need!!! The Placement Unit looks forward to holding future events including a summer BBQ, fall bowling event, and a return to the annual Christmas Party. Thank goodness to getting things back to normal!

Treatment Foster Care:

Pressley Ridge pre-service training certified

Getting pre-service trainings scheduled, currently gauging interest!!

Attended Free Movie Night in Seneca county

Attending fair events in Sandusky, Seneca and Wyandot counties

Has 8 home studies pending...hoping for at least 1 to be Treatment

Going to New Orleans for Family Focused Treatment Association Conference on 7/15/22 to get more ideas on recruitment and retention of family foster and treatment homes

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Lots of great stuff going on in PA. The unit just recently transitioned to using Jabber. It has been an experience to say the least. Hopefully things will continue to run smooth, and we won't have any further issues with assisting the public and processing documents.

There are two exciting opportunities for community members to receive extra assistance. We are teaming up with the Sandusky County Health Department to provide baby items to WIC eligible families. This started July 7, 2022 and will be for a limited time only. Those items will include diapers, wipes, and health and safety items. The other opportunity is for Sandusky County families currently receiving cash assistance. Those individuals are potentially eligible for a one-time lump sum of \$750 per household. If you are working with any individual who meet the above criteria, please advise them of these great opportunities.

With the returning of civilization as we know it, our processing in PA is slowly but surely getting back to normal. Interim reports are again going to be required of our families. A form will be sent in the middle of their certification period, which is required to be filled out and returned for their SNAP benefits to continue. This is to report any changes regarding household size, income, address, child support, and/or lottery or gambling winnings. The form will also need completed and returned stating there are no changes. Hopefully this is the beginning of normalcy for us all!



CHILD SUPPORT

Summer has finally arrived in Northwest Ohio, with its perfectly predictable, unpredictable weather. One minute its bright and sunny, the next it's pouring down rain with straightline winds, followed by blazing heat and drought-like conditions for a week. Why do we live here? Then again, we also work where we get yelled at on a regular basis for trying to help people, so I guess we're just a little nutty.

There are a few constants that happen every summer in the wonderful world of child support—seizing tax refunds and graduations. Mixed feelings follow both of these actions when it comes to our clients. When there are arrears on a case, we may get State or Federal refund money, and sometimes both. It's an automated process and doesn't require any action on our part. There are some obligors who are fine with it and are actually happy to get that balance paid down. Others...not so much.

We get a lot of calls about this process and what is happening with this money, especially if its from a joint refund. As you can imagine the joint filer can be a little upset that their portion of the refund went to arrears for their current spouse's ex. There is a remedy offered for this. Those refunds go on hold for six months to allow the joint filer time to submit an injured spouse claim to the IRS. A portion or all of the money on hold can then be pulled back depending on how much is determined to belong to the joint filer. Our custodial parents aren't always thrilled with the money sitting for six months, but its better than potentially having to pay back money they should not have received.

As for graduations, this triggers a process we lovingly call emancipation. It happens when a child on a case is 18 and graduates from high school. (If a child turns 19 but hasn't graduated yet, child support still stops as of the 19th birthday regardless of school status.) A report is worked every month letting us know when a child's 18th birthday is approaching. Since January, 212 emancipations have been processed. Letters are sent to the parents asking them to provide proof of full-time high school enrollment and a graduation date. Once we receive proof of that (or not) we send out recommendations on what will happen next. If there are no arrears or additional children on the case, the order will terminate as of graduation. If there are arrears they will continue to be collected until the case is paid off. Support for any additional minor children will also continue to be charged, and just the portion for the emancipating child will stop.

Making all of this happen takes some time. Obligor sometimes get upset about that, but we can't send new orders to an employer until after the emancipation date. It then can be a few weeks before the employer stops withholding or starts taking a reduced amount. A hold is usually put on a case to prevent overpayment, and some obligees (person receiving support) aren't happy about that because the hold could go on a few weeks in advance, but again, it's a better alternative than having to pay money back.

In addition to tax offsets and emancipations, summer means Child Support Awareness Month in August. As in past years we are doing a warrant amnesty program as well as reduced requirements for license reinstatement. The CSEA staff will be participating in a training and fun group activity with a catered lunch on August 11. There will be other surprises throughout the month to show our staff how much they are appreciated. Although, we may be two workers short as our CSEA family is growing! Congratulations to Celina Arter on the birth of her new daughter Everly. As of this writing, Megan Rapier is due to welcome her baby boy next week. (I'd share his name, but what if changes when he is born?! It happens.) We look forward to meeting the newest members of the family. Best wishes to mamas and babies!

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

OMJ:

Monitoring season is upon us! WIOA program monitoring from our fiscal agent, Migrant Seasonal Farmworker monitoring and daycare licensing monitoring and observation.

We are getting an electronic billboard sign to advertise our services and job openings!!!

Arcadia came back on 6/27/22

We have an open WA position

Natalie and Everett are two new state employees working with the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program

ANNIVERSARIES

APRIL

Paula Olds – 33 Years
Gabrielle Henry – 25 Years
Kerri Moyer – 25 Years
Rachel Hessick – 10 Years
Brittiny Reed – 5 Years
Megan Sweeney – 5 Years

MAY

Laura Warren – 33 Years
Kristi McEwan – 7 Years
Bridget Coleman – 5 Years
Leslie Adams – 4 Years
Johanna Baun – 3 Years

JUNE

Ana Ortiz – 30 Years
Cassandra Walter – 18 Years
Jill Wagner – 17 Years
Amanda Branstrator – 9 Years
Natasha Bor – 8 Years
Abby Roberts – 3 Years
Amber Sidoti – 3 Years
Jenny Ayres – 4 Years
Skyler Andres – 1 Year
Megan Rapier – 1 Year
Celina Arter – 1 Year
Yolanda Santoya – 1 Year

NEW HIRES



APRIL MIDDLETON
5/2/22
OMJ ELIGIBILITY WORKER



ASHLEY SEHLEMYER KINSEY
5/31/22
PA ELIGIBILITY WORKER



JADE REYNOLDS
5/31/22
CHILDREN SERVICES



HANNAH HELFRICH
6/28/22
CHILDREN SERVICES



KEELY HOOVER
6/29/22
CHILDREN
SERVICES



SHOUT OUTS FOR THE SECOND QUARTER 2022.....

Lisa Mullholand – shout out to Lisa for stepping in and helping to do the BCI fingerprints on new hires.

Brittney Jahna - Brittney made the transition to investigations in February. She has caught on quickly to her role and is doing a great job balancing everything. At one point she had seven cases with numerous safety plans, which is very hard to monitor as an experienced worker, let alone a new caseworker. Brittney was able to meet all of her mandates. She has already filed five complaints in Juvenile Court. This doesn't typically happen to a new worker in their first few months. Brittney is doing a great job staying on task, getting her logs in, and working her cases/meeting her mandates. KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!!!

Linda Ackerman - Linda continues to be an amazing asset to the children services team. Linda has been facilitating family team meetings for numerous workers in our unit recently and this has been very beneficial to address concerns and/or make progress on cases. Despite her busy schedule and having new hires of her own, Linda facilitated 3 meetings this week alone for ongoing workers. It is truly appreciated because I know we are all extremely busy and wearing many different hats these days.

Amber Sidoti - A customer called the call center with questions about Medicaid. She had a lot of questions and Amber was so patient and kind. Amber answered all her questions, gave it to her straight, which the customer appreciated. Amber went over what the customer qualified for and what they didn't. The customer stated Amber "brightened up my day just by being so kind to me and not making me feel like mental case!! ESPECIALLY after keeping her on the phone for SOOOO long, I know that could be VERY frustrating and annoying!!" The customer felt Amber handled the call very professionally. The customer wanted to give Amber kudos for doing her job so effectively, with pride, joy, character, and most of all KINDNESS.

Tember Smith and Erika Haeusser - I'd like to nominate Tember Smith for recognizing some backup was needed for active kids. Erika Haeusser also keeps fruit snacks in the cupboard up front for kids who need a snack. We have a great front desk staff!

Tember Smith and Leah Doering - Tember and Leah are working on case destruction in the child support file room. In the process of pulling files, they have taken upon themselves—without being told—to look into other older cases they have found to see if they can be destroyed. They have moved cases that are closed, but can't be destroyed to another section and labeled that row, then rearranged the rest of the physical files so we can get rid of empty shelves. They saw an opportunity to clean up our old files and just did it. Thank you, ladies!

Matt Kreilick - Matt came all the way over to the PA side of the building to notify me that the county van had a flat tire and he noticed it when he pulled in to the agency lot this morning. While I already knew it was flat I appreciated him going out of his way to tell me he saw it and wanted to make sure it got fixed!

Jolene Smith - The agency took custody of a child who presented with many barriers, particularly her ability to speak English. When the young girl was brought into the agency, she was taken into a visitation room to sit and wait while many caseworkers began completing paperwork and looking for a foster home placement. Jolene without a second thought stepped right in and took her under her wing. She worked to ensure she was comfortable while being at the agency for many hours. To most this will not come as a surprise as this is just what Jolene does, countless times. Jolene finds a way to just be there without any questions or hesitations. She is never asked or instructed to do this; she just does. She is support to the youth we work with and to all agency staff. I am not sure Jolene knows how to say no. If you see Jolene, you will notice she is constantly asking "what do you need". Jolene is the first to respond to help others out. She doesn't complain and she finds a way to be a positive in some not-so-great situations. Jolene continues to go above and beyond her role. There are not enough words to describe how appreciative I am of Jolene as our many of her co-workers.

Paula Olds - Even though child care is not one of her responsibilities, she has been instrumental as child care benefits roll into Ohio Benefits. As the local OB expert with all things caseload, worker related and more, she has assisted us with ensuring caseloads are set up properly and single handedly completed the user upload to the readiness project folks. We are SO thankful for her expertise and assistance in getting us through this part of the process 🙏

AND THE WINNER OF THE SECOND QUARTER
2022 SHOUT OUT GIFT CARD.....

AMBER SIDOTI

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!!



MIS Marti's Megabytes

Public Assistance is now on Jabber. Jabber is a program on your computer that acts like your desk phone. There have been some learning curves, but it's working, and they no longer have to use an agency cell phone to get on the Call Center from home 😊

Children Services' scanners have finally all been delivered. Everyone will be getting a desktop scanner soon

You are going to want to setup a second device for MFA/DUO **BEFORE** you forget your phone. A How-to was emailed on 01-11-2022. This is also in SPO when you search "Adding an Additional line to DUO". We all have those days... 😊

The state keeps updating our system weekly. It usually does this over night on the network, so if you work remotely on a regular basis, you may have to check your Software Center on a regular basis for any updates you might have missed. While connected to the State network, open the Software Center icon on your desktop or under Start.

You will want to check Applications, Updates, and Operating Systems!



[Requesting a DUO re-enrollment link \(Self-service for existing DUO customers\)](#)

ohiodas.sharepoint.com

The steps to for existing DUO customers to request a re-enrollment link (for example, new device with same phone number).

Ctrl+Click the link above or find it in SPO when you search "DUO".

