



June 2020, Issue 5

OCTF News

A Note from OCTF Executive
Director Lindsay Williams1

OCTF Staff Updates2

Everyday Ohio Heroes Winners! . .2

National Child Abuse
Prevention Month4

Ohio Wears Blue5

Staying Healthy During
COVID-196

OCTF COVID-19 Response6

Keeping Families Together6

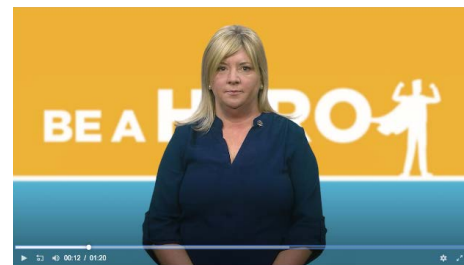
A Note from OCTF Executive Director Lindsay Williams

Greetings! Please allow me to begin by sincerely wishing you and your families good health and safety during these unprecedented times of the COVID-19 pandemic. As child and family-serving professionals, so much of our work has been greatly altered by the necessary distancing requirements that were implemented in March of this year.

The Trust Fund responded by altering programs to be delivered virtually to the extent possible, building a COVID-19 resource page on our website, establishing an optional COVID-19 response program to be delivered through our regional prevention vendors, and adjusting the messaging

of our April 2020 Child Abuse Prevention Month Awareness campaign. Please take a minute to check out the **public service announcement** (PSA) from myself and our OCTF Board Chair, Senator Stephanie Kunze, sharing some tips for families during these unprecedented times.

It has been heartening to observe how rapidly and



Senator Kunze delivering the PSA.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

efficiently our partners responded to ensure we are continuing to meet the needs of our families and children during these extraordinary times.

While a little later than usual, this second quarter newsletter highlights the 2020 Everyday Ohio Hero award winners, April National Child Abuse Prevention month, as well as the Trust Fund's COVID-19 response. Thank you all for your continued efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect! You are all Everyday Ohio Heroes!

OCTF Staff Updates



Please join us in welcoming Jasmine Hall, who has

recently joined OCTF as our new Administrative Professional. Jasmine has a BA in Business Administration from Strayer University and has worked for ODJFS for over 8 years. She began her career with the State of Ohio as a Clerk in Local Operations (now Office of Unemployment Insurance Operations), then as an

Administrative Professional 1 in the Office of Contracts and Acquisitions. Most recently she served as an Administrative Professional in the Office of Legal and Acquisition Services, Bureau of State Hearings. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Jasmine describes herself as “an extroverted introvert who enjoys music, traveling, and learning different languages.” When asked what languages she speaks, Jasmine shared that she is, “pretty good at Spanish and dabbles in Japanese and Italian here and there.”

Everyday Ohio Heroes Winners!



The OCTF issued a call for “Everyday Heroes” who dedicate their time, efforts and lives to preventing child abuse and child neglect in their communities.

“The Everyday Ohio Heroes campaign recognizes everyday heroes who make our community a safe place for families and children. They have made a commitment to stop child abuse and neglect, and their efforts have made a positive impact for vulnerable families and children across Ohio. I would like to thank each one for their acts of kindness and encouragement and commend them as heroes.” – Sen. Stephanie Kunze

The following winners were chosen from each Ohio's eight prevention regions:

Southwest Region:



Chrystal Green

Heather Wells nominated Chrystal Green for the Everyday Ohio Heroes Award in the Southwest Ohio Region. Chrystal is a family representative on the Southwest Ohio Regional Prevention Council. She has been a tireless advocate for the needs of at-risk families

and children. As a mother to three boys, Chrystal has exposed them to volunteerism through all the work that she does throughout Butler county. In addition to being a Family Representative for Butler County FCFC for 8 years, she also is a certified QPR (Question Persuade Refer) instructor. During her tenure with Butler County FCFC she chaired two committees, including one focused on promoting the 40 Developmental Assets and implementing the Little Free Library initiative providing greater access to books. Bringing the parent perspective to family improvement movements is her passion and is felt through her words and deeds.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

Central Region:

Fairfield County Protective Services nominated Kim Devitt for the Everyday Ohio Heroes award in the Central Ohio Region. Kim serves as the Early Childhood Programs Director for the Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency.



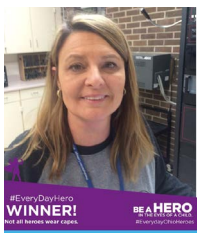
Kim Devitt

Mrs. Devitt has over 25 years of experience in working with children and families in Fairfield County. She continuously demonstrates a desire to create programs to strengthen services, increase opportunities for families and children and partner with other community providers to bring the best services possible.

She participates in several community groups which focus on enhancing community awareness, strengthening community practice and building strong communication amongst different service providers. It's difficult to encounter a professional or a family in the community who hasn't heard of Kim Devitt. Her work speaks volumes and she has proven to be an invaluable asset to Fairfield County.

Southeast Region:

The Southeast Ohio Region is proud to announce Tara Watts, as their 2020 Everyday Ohio Hero. Tara is the site coordinator for New Lexington Middle School After-School Program. Tara is constantly seeking and implementing ways to improve the children's lives.



Tara Watts

Tara is adept at helping children recognize they have value, all while helping students improve their grades and achieve academic success. Tara has coordinated a hygiene program that allows the students to meet their personal needs at school and has organized family nights. She organizes a giving tree program during the holidays that provides children with gifts including, what they need and also what they want. She is always ready with a listening ear and is dedicated to being a trustworthy, non-judgmental bright spot to each student. Tara Watts' deep commitment to the students she

serves is evident through her actions. Tara was nominated by Wendy Barcus for this award and Tara is truly an Everyday Ohio Hero!

Western Region:

Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction, & Mental Health Services Board (ADAMHS) has been selected as the Western Ohio Region's award winner.



Montgomery County
ADAMHS Board

"I am very proud of our staff and the great work our agency does to prevent, treat, and raise awareness about childhood trauma," said Helen Jones-Kelley, executive director of Montgomery County ADAMHS.

Childhood trauma will continue to be a focus for ADAMHS programs and services during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. "Our agency currently provides trainings to the community, some of which are specifically focused around the mental health and needs of children," Jones-Kelley said. "Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be adding virtual training options and resources to our website to equip families and children with the tools they need right now."

ADAMHS has trained over 2,600 professionals, parents, and caregivers in Trauma 101 and equipped over 100 individuals as trainers. The Western Ohio Regional Prevention Council includes 13 counties that have been able to engage local parents and community members in child abuse and neglect prevention by hosting ADAMHS trauma trainings.

"ADAMHS has demonstrated dedication and commitment to increasing awareness of the long-term effects of childhood trauma and building resiliency skills for families and caregivers," said Geraldine Pegues, Director of Montgomery County Human Services Planning and Development, who nominated ADAMHS for the Everyday Ohio Heroes Award in the Western Ohio Region. "We are thrilled to see them given this well-deserved recognition, and we celebrate their leadership team and staff members as Everyday Ohio Heroes."

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)



David Boyer

Eastern Region:

The Eastern Ohio Region is proud to announce David Boyer, as their 2020 Everyday Ohio Hero. Dave was nominated by Muskingum County Adult and Child Protective Services as a fitting tribute to his service to Muskingum County.

After 24 years of service, Dave retired in January 2020 from Muskingum County Adult and Child Protective Services. Dave is a passionate child advocate and had an office full of stuffed animals he would pass out to children waiting in the lobby with their parents or caregivers. Whether spending his time coaching kids or encouraging new and seasoned caseworkers, David is known for his creative ideas and leadership. For the past four years Dave has been the volunteer chair of the Eastern Ohio Region Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Council. In that capacity he is working with appointed prevention specialists from a ten-county area to determine regional needs and allocate resources. Dave is our Everyday Ohio Hero!



Kristin Gardner

Great Lakes Ohio Region:

The Great Lakes Ohio Region is proud to announce Kristin Gardner as their 2020 Everyday Ohio Hero. Kristin Gardner is also a member of the Great Lakes April Prevention Month Workgroup and has been a key asset in planning

and implementing all April Prevention Month activities for the Great Lakes Ohio Region. Kristin Gardner is the Outreach Coordinator for Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services. She organizes quarterly and ongoing volunteer and donation programs that benefit all of the youth involved with DCFS. The biggest programs are the annual holiday programs, Hope for the Holidays which benefits almost 3,000 youth in foster care and the Adopt-a-Family program which benefits almost 3,000 youth whose families' are receiving voluntary in-home supportive services. It is a massive undertaking that requires the support and generosity of hundreds of companies, groups, individuals, to donate their time and resources

to purchase and hand out the gifts to the youth. She has 3 staff and 40 committee members who work together to plan, implement, evaluate, and improve these programs. This goes to show it really does take a village! Thank you Kristin for all your hard work and dedication to helping families and children in the Great Lakes Region!

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Every April, National Child Abuse Prevention Month is an opportunity to highlight strategies to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. When families are under considerable amounts of stress, it may impact a parent's ability to effectively care for a child. By providing strategies for families to strengthen their protective factors we can offer families the resources they need to persevere through challenging times.



Barbara Kudravy

Northeast Region:

Sheryl Villegas nominated Barbara Kudravy for the Everyday Ohio Heroes Award in the Northeast Ohio Region. Barbara has spent her entire career working tirelessly to promote healthy family relationships

and create environments where children can grow and flourish. In January 2019 Barbara became the Program Coordinator with Catholic Charities in Ashland and Wayne Counties for The Resilient Family Project. She has a passion to connect with parents and families to offer hope and encouragement during the critical years of childhood. Barbara takes special care of the referrals that she receives by contacting each caregiver to listen to their story and offer resources and assistance needed. Barbara is highly skilled in identifying strengths that a parent brings to the children in their care while delicately addressing areas that need improvement, each interaction with a parent or caregiver is seen as an opportunity to offer hope and encouragement.

Northeast Ohio Region winner wished not to be announced.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)



OCTF congratulates all Everyday Ohio Heroes award winners! Thank you for being real life super-heroes in your communities and in the lives of those around you! Your efforts to continuously make a difference in the lives of families and children do not go unnoticed.

The #EverydayOhioHeroes campaign for Child Abuse Prevention Month aims to raise awareness surrounding child abuse and neglect prevention and prompts a call to action to encourage all adults to, “Be a Hero in the Eyes of a Child – one simple act of encouragement at a time.”

Not All Heroes Wear Capes! One trusted adult support, a hero, can make all the difference in the life of a child.

Ohio Wears Blue

To raise awareness for Child Abuse and Child Prevention month OCTF partners participated in the #OhioWearsBlue campaign. Partners were encouraged to post a picture on social media wearing blue to raise awareness for Child Abuse and Child Prevention month. Thank you to everyone who participated! The campaign was a huge success!





Staying Healthy During COVID-19

It is important for parents and caregivers to take care of themselves during these unprecedented times. As stay at home orders begin to be lifted and some businesses are slowly returning their operations, it is beneficial for you to continue with established self-care routines.

Here are some tips to help ensure personal safety and slow the spread of coronavirus:

1. Continue to work remotely if possible
2. Stay home if you or someone in your household is sick
3. Practice social distancing
4. Maintain good hygiene (washing hands, not touching eyes, mouth and nose)
5. Wear masks when in public
6. Clean and disinfect "high-touch" surfaces daily (doorknobs, counter tops, remotes, cellphones, etc.)

OCTF COVID-19 Response

With the rapid changes the COVID-19 pandemic is having on daily life, OCTF Staff has worked hard to adapt to the stay at home order.

This year, our annual Everyday Ohio Hero campaign has taken a different approach, moving to an online setting while still highlighting and celebrating the work individuals across the state do to continue our fight to prevent child abuse and child neglect in our communities.

The OCTF understands that these unprecedented times can put children at a higher risk

for abuse. Families are more stressed than ever, trying to juggle working from home and home schooling.

To offer support for families during this difficult season, OCTF has launched the COVID-19 resources page.

Our page offers tips and ideas on how to manage stress, build family connections and stay safe and healthy during the pandemic.

Check out our new page COVID-19 resources page at octf.ohio.gov.

Keeping Families Together

Staying at home can be a great opportunity for families to reconnect and take care of each other. However, being home all day can also be stressful for both parents and children, causing tension in the home.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, here are some tips on how to reduce stress to ensure your family is safe during this difficult time:

Take breaks throughout the day like you would if working in the office or attending school. Engage in activities that everyone in the home can do, go for a walk, play a game, exercise or just practice deep breathing and meditation.

Reach out to a friend or relative if you need someone to talk to. Try to lower your expectations

for the amount of work you or the children in your care can complete while being home. Remember, everyone in the home is dealing with the changes to daily life and might be having a hard time. When you feel your stress levels rising, stop and take a few deep breaths. Try to keep your perspective by remembering that this situation is temporary, but the way you treat your loved ones could have long-lasting effects.

