Employee Spotlight: Becky Doucette



Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?
I am a mother of three "adult" children who I am incredibly proud of. My oldest daughter, Aubrey, is a first-grade teacher at a Kentwood Elementary School. My son, Nolan, is a junior at Western Michigan University studying Math and Economics. And my youngest is a Senior at Kenowa Hills and is enrolled at Grand Rapids Community College; her major is unknown but she is a very hard worker and has a lot of spunk.

I was a single mom for a while and have been remarried to my husband for almost 10 years, who makes me laugh every day. He has two children, and I am happy to have been a part of their lives as well.

We have a Black Labrador Retriever and three cats and throughout the past few years, I have fostered around 35 kittens through the Humane Society and the Kent County Animal Shelter (shout out the AWESOME staff at our Animal Shelter). My family is thankful I have only foster-failed 3 times. 😊 I have my Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from Grand Valley State University and my passion has always been Public Health. My work history at Kent County includes 5 years working as a nurse in Children's Special Health Care Services, 9 years as a nurse in the WIC and Immunization Program, and 8 years working with the Infant and Maternal Health Program. My current position is as a Public Health Nurse in the Nurse-Family Partnership Program, since 2022.

What is your position at Kent County and what individuals do you work with?
My position in Nurse-Family Partnership is as a home visitor. Our program enrolls first time expectant mothers before their 28th week of pregnancy, until their child turns 2 years old. The Nurse-Family Partnership model is client centered and each client's goals guide our visits. With supportive visits, the purpose is to promote health during pregnancy, care of their child and support personal growth and development, to empower families.

What are two or three critical aspects of your role that you think our staff should be aware of?
It is extremely important to know what resources Kent County has available. Parents in our community have a lot of needs and knowing who to refer to can make a huge impact. Our program works on outreach with community partners to support in the best way we can.

Connection is key to success and knowing yourself is so important. Understanding your

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own implicit bias is extremely helpful as well because the families we serve come from many different backgrounds. I am amazed everyday by the strength, resiliency, courage, and problem solving I see in the women I work with. Being open to their stories is inspiring.

Lastly, flexibility is needed when working with families and you never know what type of environment you may be walking into or how your agenda may change very quickly.

What do you find most rewarding about your job? Conversely, what do you find most challenging?

I absolutely love the babies, but the most rewarding part of my job is watching a parent love their child and get excited about what their baby can do. Play is a big part of my job because there is so much learning and bonding occurring when you play. And believe it or not, a lot of people do not know how to play. Hearing the giggles, and seeing the smiles is absolutely beautiful.

The most challenging part is not having enough time in the day or week to follow up on all I want to. Our program has a lot of necessary documentation due to the complexity of the program, funding received, and research in outcomes. Also, there are so many learning opportunities within the program and through Kent County that I wish I could sign up for everything! I love learning new things especially when it will help me give better service to my clients. I just need more hours in the day!

Do you have any interesting or amusing anecdotes from working at the health department?

There are too many to even discuss. I have had a lot of fun over the years working on various teams and with clients. I like to pretend I don't have to work and do just because it is fun.

Is there anything else you'd like to discuss or share?

Kent County has given me many great career opportunities. I am blessed to have been working at the Health Department in public health in the various positions I have held. There are so many incredible, talented, and kind people I have been inspired by. Working with others that share the same mission is why I love where I work.

