

DCY On The Move

Ohio 211 Annual Conference

Jeff Van Deusen, Assistant Director of the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY), spoke at the Ohio 211 Annual Conference on November 7. He outlined DCY's long-term goals, which include supporting children and youth, empowering families, and uplifting communities. He emphasized key objectives such as reducing infant mortality, improving kindergarten readiness, and decreasing the number of children entering foster care. Jeff also highlighted recent listening sessions with Ohio families, the launch of new parent and youth ambassador resources, and the Family Success Network—a community-based prevention model that provides case management services to families at risk.



Executive Leadership Explores Vital Perinatal Support at Pregnant with Possibilities

During a recent tour and introductory meeting, Department of Children and Youth Director Kara Wente visited Pregnant with Possibilities Resource Center, a crucial Cuyahoga County organization dedicated to supporting perinatal health. The center provides free, confidential services focused on empowering individuals through education, support, and research-based programs that aim to improve birth outcomes and help overcome personal barriers. This visit underscores the city's commitment to comprehensive family and child wellness strategies.



Exploring Early Education: Executive Leadership Visits Horizon Education Centers

During a visit to Horizon Education Centers, executive leadership engaged in an in-depth exploration of the organization's educational landscape. The meeting covered the center's rich history, comprehensive child care programming, and commitment to quality early education. Leadership discussed current challenges and emerging opportunities in the early learning sector, highlighting Horizon's pivotal role in supporting children's developmental needs and family services.

Ohio Association of County Boards 41st Annual Convention

Department of Children and Youth Director Kara Wente joined the Ohio Association of County Board's at their 41st Annual Convention. Under the theme "Uplifting Voices," Director Wente shared insights about the new department, its three key goals, and strategies to support children and youth with disabilities.

Pictured: Adam Herman, CEO (OACB); Lyndsay Nash, Deputy Director (DODD); John Martin, Director Emeritus (DODD); Kevin Miller, Director (OOD); Kara Wente, Director (DCY)



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Multi-Disciplinary Legal Representation Pilot Convening



Director Wente provided remarks at the Multi-Disciplinary Legal Representation Pilot Convening where she discussed the pilot that spans six counties—Clark, Wayne, Erie, Cuyahoga, Summit, and Stark.

In the first two-years of this initiative, Ohio's Multi-Disciplinary Legal Representation Pilot Program served 271 families and impacted 600 children proving targeted, compassionate intervention works. Director Wente also recognized Summit County's recent 2024 Innovative Court Programs and Practices Award which demonstrates that by breaking down traditional silos and crafting localized solutions, these counties are creatively supporting families through collaboration.

DCY Director Shares Vision at Winter Conference

Department of Children and Youth Director Kara Wente addressed the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges, highlighting three key departmental goals focused on making Ohio the best state to raise a family. Wente outlined the department's strategic efforts to reduce Ohio's infant mortality rate, increase kindergarten readiness, and decrease the number of children and youth entering foster care.



DCY Provides Updates at the Public Children Services Association of Ohio Executives Meeting

Elisha Cangelosi, Executive Director of the Ohio Family and Children First Council highlighted the Department of Children and Youth's strategic efforts to reduce foster care entries and address the placement crisis. She discussed key initiatives including the Menu of Supports, Congregate Care Capacity, and Treatment Foster Home Pilot, all aimed at supporting counties and minimizing children's time in foster care.

DCY had several team members serve on the Prevention Services Panel where they discussed the future of Prevention Services, Family Success Network, and the importance of building trust at the family and community level. DCY team members included Angie Hughes, Bureau Chief of Federal and State Initiatives and Nicole Sillaman, Executive Director of the Ohio Children's Trust Fund. Director Wente and Assistant Director Jeff Van Deusen were also in attendance.



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Easterseals Redwood Visit

Members of the DCY Executive team joined Ohio State Representative Rachel Baker for a tour of the Easterseals Redwood Fort Mitchell child care center. In August 2022 Easterseals Serving Greater Cincinnati and Redwood merged, creating Easterseals Redwood (ESRW).

ESRW meets the needs of the growing number of individuals with disabilities, veterans, and individuals facing economic challenges in the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky region. Learn more about ESRW Early Learning Center [Here](#).

Greene County Celebrates National Adoption Day

Greene County Probate Court, Adoption Link, and Greene County Children Services hosted an event in Xenia on November 22, attended by families who were recently touched by adoption. Greene County families who have recently adopted were present, along with staff from the three host organizations, county officials, and state officials.

The event featured fun activities and giveaways for the children as well as presentations from local officials about the importance of adoption, as well as remarks by DCY Chief Government and External Affairs Officer Joel Potts.

Greene County Children Services facilitated the adoptions of 10 children in 2023 and 10 so far this year, with one additional adoption awaiting finalization.



Photo showing Joel Potts speaking at Greene County's Adoption Day event is courtesy of the Beavercreek News-Current.

DCY Represented at OSU State Advisory Council

The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (OCF) Executive Director Kim Dent attended the OSU State Advisory Council (SAC) end-of-year meeting. The OSU SAC is a council, led by OSU's Dr. Barbara Boone, made up of parents, educators, family-serving organizations, and state staff who meet quarterly to discuss how parents can better engage in their children's schools and how schools can better engage parents in their children's education and school activities.

Parent voice is a key focus of the council. Executive Director Dent provided OCF flyers and brochures during the resource fair. After lunch, the council members met in workgroups to discuss topics like preparing kids for the workforce, the pulse of families in education, family texting programs, and literacy communication. The council received a surprise visit from Brutus, O-H-I-O.



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