

Dateline

July/August 2020

Published by the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities
"Helping people to live, learn and work in our community"

Equity Committee established

Gwynn Kinsel, EEO Officer and Legal Counsel and Becky Love, Director of Early Childhood Education will co-chair a newly established "Equity Committee" for the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

The recent, tragic death in Minneapolis and subsequent protests have shined a spotlight on racism in our county. This committee will be responding to where discrimination or racial injustices may exist in our agency and to provide suggestions or proposals on how we might eliminate and respond to issues or concerns.

In a memo to staff, Jed Morison stated:

"Part of the mission in our work every day is to do all we can to guarantee fair and equitable treatment of individuals with disabilities. We do good work here and have made amazing strides over the years, but can do more. Likewise, we can do more and better with other forms of discrimination, whether it is related to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, ethnic background or culture. Certainly, because of the recent events, racism in our country and community has again been highlighted and challenges us to do more. We want our staff and those we serve to know that they will be supported if they experience discrimination in any way."

At 'Dateline's' deadline, the committee was being formed, which will be followed by listening sessions and a review of existing policies and research on training opportunities.

Input to the committee can be sent to Gwynn Kinsel, (gwynn.kinsel@fcbdd.org) or Becky Love, (becky.love@fcbdd.org).



Becky Love, Director of Early Childhood Education



Gwynn Kinsel, Legal Counsel

School planning continues

Planning for the 2020/2021 school year for the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is continuing with plans for staff to return August 24.

At Dateline's deadline, specific plans for the preschool and West Central school programs were underway. Plans for the upcoming school year are being made with the COVID-19 Pandemic in mind.

Social distancing, hand washing and other factors are requiring a special focus this year. At West Central School, there will be no more than eight students per classroom and staff will be able to schedule programming in the classroom and other spaces, to practice social distancing. Other spaces in the school, include the gymnasium, cafeteria, smart apartment, courtyard and other rooms.

Preschool classes will be reduced from eighteen to nine students, per State Health Department guidance. Early Childhood administrators are discussing a schedule where children will alternate weeks in attendance with virtual learning the week not in the classroom.

Staff in the preschool and school programs have established protocols to sanitize areas before, during and after students are in attendance. Staff will wear face coverings such as cloth masks or face shields. Face coverings for students and other preventive measures are also being discussed.

Plans for transportation are also being considered. Fortunately, the large buses will allow for greater social distancing and Drivers and Assistants will have established safety protocols for sanitizing buses. Staff are expected to wear face coverings and will be asked to take temperatures of students with touchless thermometers. If a child has a temperature of 100.4° or more, they will not be able to board the bus.

For final details on the preschool or school programs, or to provide suggestions, call the Early Childhood Education Center at 614-342-5801 or West Central School and Transition Services at 614-276-8231. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, plans are always subject to change.

Franklin County Commissioners Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Editor's Note: Recently the Franklin County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis. This is consistent with the Commissioners' efforts to promote racial equity, inclusion and diversity in our community. The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities has adopted a resolution supporting the resolution and encourages other public and private entities to do the same. The resolution is included below in its entirety.

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners has a demonstrated track record of promoting racial equity, inclusion and diversity in all aspects of county government. This commitment is most recently exemplified in the development and execution of the Franklin County Rise Together Blueprint for Reducing Poverty, the Innovating New Pathways to Shared Prosperity Economic Inclusion Task Force and a historic investment in community-wide racial equity training; and

WHEREAS, these significant initiatives identified racism as a root cause of poverty and constricted economic mobility; and

WHEREAS, race is a social construct with no biological basis¹; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions: individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal; systemic racism that is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks²; and

WHEREAS, racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources³, and Franklin County's collective prosperity depends upon the equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin; and

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment and criminal justice; and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism itself is a social determinant of health⁴; and

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Rise Together Blueprint noted Franklin County's African American residents experience dramatically higher unemployment rates (Overall: 5.7%, African-Americans: 11.1%), face a higher poverty rate as a community (Overall: 16.7%, African-Americans: 29.9%), have lower home ownership rates (Overall: 53.6%, African-Americans: 33.4%), are more likely to live in neighborhoods with low performing schools and experience disproportionately higher incarceration rates (Overall: 223 per 100,000, African-Americans: 637 per 100,000)⁵; and

WHEREAS, through the leadership of the Board of Commissioners, the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board has committed to the elimination of racial disparities in the criminal justice system, to prioritize racial equity in our decision making processes, to acknowledge that communities of color have borne the burdens of inequitable social, environmental, economic, and criminal justice policies practices and investments, to understand that the legacy of these inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust, and to recognize that racial equity is realized when and only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes; and

WHEREAS, racism and segregation in Ohio and Franklin County have also exacerbated a health divide resulting in Black residents having lower life expectancies than White residents; being far more likely than other races to die prematurely (before the age of 75); and to die of heart disease or stroke, according to the Health Policy Institute of Ohio. Black residents also have higher levels of infant mortality, lower birth weights, are more likely to be overweight or obese, have adult diabetes, and have long-term complications from diabetes⁶; and

WHEREAS, communities of color, working class residents, and those that suffer from disabilities, are more likely to experience poor health outcomes as a consequence of their social determinants of health — health inequities stemming from economic stability, education, physical environment, food and access to health care systems⁷; and

¹ Garcia JJ, Sharif MZ. Black Lives Matter: A Commentary on Race and Racism. Am J Public Health. 2015; 105: e27–e30. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2015.302706

² Jones CP. Confronting Institutionalized Racism. Phylon. 2002; 50(1/2):7–22.

³ American Public Health Association. Racism and Health. Available at: <https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-equity/racism-and-health>. Accessed May 2, 2020.

⁴ Flynn, A., Holmberg, S., Warren, D., and Wong, F. REWRITE the Racial Rules: Building an Inclusive American Economy. Roosevelt Institute, 2016.

WHEREAS, a contemporary example of such disparity is highlighted by the coronavirus data in Franklin County that Black residents are hospitalized at twice the rate of other demographic groups (add source) and preliminary data in Ohio that suggest African Americans are dying at a disproportionately higher rate from the disease^{8 9} ; and

WHEREAS, more than 100 studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, Franklin County Public Health has acknowledged that the health impact of racism In Ohio and Franklin County rises to the definition of a public health crisis proposed by Dr. Sandro Galea who notes: “The problem must affect large numbers of people, it must threaten health over the long-term, and it must require the adoption of large scale solutions.”¹¹; and

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners stands with the residents of Franklin County and our partners at Franklin County Public Health in their declaration of racism as a public health crisis passed by declaration on May 12, 2020; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

1. Assert that racism is a public health crisis affecting our entire county.
2. Work to progress as an equity and justice-oriented organization, with the Board of Commissioners and its staff leadership continuing to identify specific activities to further enhance diversity and to ensure antiracism principles across Board of Commissioners leadership, staffing and contracting.
3. Promote equity through all policies approved by the Board of Commissioners and enhance educational efforts aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development and public safety.
4. Continue to advocate locally and through the National Association of Counties for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color, and supports local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism.
5. Further work to solidify alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.
6. Support community efforts to amplify issues of racism and engage actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.
7. To always promote and support policies that prioritize the health of all people, especially people of color by mitigating exposure to adverse childhood experiences.
8. Continue on-going racial equity training with the goal of reaching all BOC agency leadership and staff.
9. Encourage racial equity training among all community partners, grantees, vendors and contractors.
10. Identify clear goals and objectives, including periodic reports to the Board of Commissioners, to assess progress and capitalize on opportunities to further advance racial equity; and

Further resolved, that the Board of Commissioners supports all additional efforts in Franklin County the State of Ohio, and nationwide to address racism and public health disparities due to racial inequities; and, be it

Further resolved, that the Franklin County Board of Commissioners call upon the Governor, the Speaker of the Ohio House, and the Ohio Senate President to join with us to declare racism as a public health crisis and to enact equity in all policies of the state of Ohio.

5 American Community Survey 2013 – 2017 5-Year Estimates for Franklin County; Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Annual Survey of Jails (ASJ) and Census of Jails (COJ) 2015 Dataset; Ohio School District Report Card Website – Kinwan analysis).

6 Health Policy Institute of Ohio, 2017 Health Value Dashboard (Health equity profiles).

7/9 <https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/sustainable-communities/health-health-equity/building-a-healthy-ohio>

8 Franklin County Public Health Epidemiology Report, April – May 2020.

10 Institute of Medicine. Unequal Treatment. <https://www.nap.edu/read/10260/chapter/2#7>. May 2, 2020. 10 American Public Health Association. Racism and Health. Available at: <https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-equity/racism-and-health>. Accessed May 2, 2020.

11 Galea, Sandro. Crying “Crisis”. Dean’s Note. Boston University School of Public Health.

<https://www.bu.edu.sph/2017/04/23/crying-crisis/>.

STABLE Accounts and COVID-19 Stimulus Payments

Editor's Note: Recently Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague's Office prepared responses to frequently asked questions about COVID-19 Stimulus payments and STABLE Accounts. The questions and answers follow.

A STABLE Account is an investment account available to eligible individuals with disabilities. STABLE Accounts are made possible by the federal Achieving a Better Life ("ABLE") Act. The accounts allow people to save and invest money without losing eligibility for certain public benefits or programs, like Medicaid, SSI or SSDI. The Ohio Treasurer's Office administers STABLE Accounts.

For more information, go to www.stableaccounts.com or call 1-800-439-1653 or email team@stable.com.

What is the stimulus payment I am receiving?

Through the CARES Act, the federal government has provided or will provide a stimulus payment to most people in America in the amount of \$1,200 per adult, with the possibility of an additional \$500 if they have a dependent, minor child. The stimulus funds can be spent any way the recipient chooses. This payment is meant to help our country's struggling businesses and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you filed income taxes in 2018 or 2019, or if you are already getting monthly Social Security benefits, you should receive the stimulus payment. The stimulus payment will not count as a resource toward the \$2,000 public benefits resource limit for 12 months. After 12 months, it will count as an asset and could reduce your benefits. The stimulus payment will also not count as income for public benefits programs that consider how much you earn in determining eligibility.

Below is additional information for you to consider.

Is fraudulent activity an issue?

YES! Beware of scams! The IRS will not call or email you about the stimulus payment. Do not share your personal information on the phone or over email.

Can I deposit the stimulus payment into a STABLE Account?

Yes! You can put all or part of your stimulus payment into a STABLE Account. That way, you don't have to worry about spending the money right away if you don't need to. Transferring stimulus funds into a STABLE Account also allows these funds to be kept separate from other personal funds that count toward the \$2,000 resource limitation of public benefits eligibility. Plus, it will have the same flexibility and protection that the other money in your STABLE Account has.

Why should I consider putting some, or all, of this payment into a STABLE Account?

A STABLE Account can help you save for things that are not covered by benefits. If you don't need to use the stimulus payment for things right now, you could use it to start saving. You can save for whatever you need to be independent and participate in your community. That includes adaptive equipment, a vehicle, a home, assistive technology, personal support services, and many other expenses. You can also use a STABLE Account to save for emergencies.

Do I have to use the stimulus payment the same way that I use my SSI benefit money?

No. The stimulus payment is NOT a payment from Social Security. You do not have to follow Social Security rules when you spend it. Your stimulus payment can be used in any way you choose. You could use your payment now. You could spend it within 12 months. You could save it in a STABLE Account to give yourself more time to spend it while preserving your benefits.

Will the stimulus payment disqualify me from the benefits I need?

Not for 12 months. After a year, whatever is left, will count toward your \$2,000 SSI and Medicaid asset limit if you leave it in a regular account. If you save it in a STABLE Account, it won't count toward your \$2,000 asset limit.

How does a STABLE Account help me keep from exceeding my \$2,000 asset limit?

Funds in your STABLE Account are not counted toward your \$2,000 asset limit. You will not lose your benefits or lose eligibility for federal benefits (like SSI, Medicaid and HUD) by owning a STABLE Account. In fact, your STABLE Account balance can reach up to \$100,000 and not impact your monthly benefits.

Can other people help me decide how to spend the money or set up a STABLE Account?

Yes. However, it is your decision how to spend the stimulus payment. Making financial decisions are hard for many people. People you trust can help you decide what to do with your money. This includes family, caregivers and others. They might also be able to help you set up a STABLE Account.

What should my family, rep payee, service provider, and other trusted supporters do to help me decide what to do with the stimulus payment?

People who help you with your money need to be sure they do not put their needs or wishes ahead of yours. That includes when they help you with decisions about the stimulus payment. They should talk with you about your options, your needs and your wishes. Some people utilize an Authorized Legal Representative (ALR) to assist in managing their STABLE Account. These people providing support might choose to use something called 'supported financial decision-making practices'. This may help when talking about the stimulus payments and the 12-month spending timeline. Some people may choose to save some of the money for later. A STABLE Account is a way to save and still protect your benefits. A good place to start is to contact your state's ABLE plan administrator.

Are there any other payments related to COVID-19 that I should be aware of?

If you were working and lost your job, you may be able to receive unemployment benefits. The federal government is giving people who receive unemployment an extra \$600 a week because of COVID-19. Unemployment benefits are counted as unearned income for SSI. You must tell Social Security if you are receiving unemployment. This could affect your benefits.

You can save your unemployment benefits in a STABLE Account so that they will not count as an asset.

Where can I get more information about Stimulus payments?

IRS Economic Impact Payments:

<https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payments>



Did you know?

Jennifer Cunningham, staff member with the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Human Resources Department, has been appointed to the Ohio Treasurer's STABLE Account Advisory Board.



Star Awards postponed

The 2020 Community Star Awards ceremony, scheduled for September, 2020, has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The award ceremony has been held annually since 2003, to recognize individuals and organizations for extraordinary services that help to fulfill the mission of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Recognition is provided in fourteen categories, including individuals served, family members, staff in the field, volunteers, providers, etc. Generally 500-600 people are in attendance, which makes social distancing a challenge.

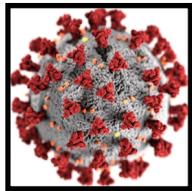
According to Jed Morison, Superintendent/CEO, "we will definitely reschedule the event -- it is one of our favorite times of the year as we share so many good examples of how the people are 'helping individuals to live, learn and work in our community'."

The reschedule date will be established when guidance from the health officials indicate it is safe. Nominations for awards that have already been submitted will be considered at a later date.



COVID-19 Pandemic is still here

The COVID-19 Pandemic is still with us. There still is not a vaccine and many are still contracting the virus



This is the message from our Health Departments and Community leaders in an effort to prevent additional surges.

Franklin County and Ohio have done a good job preventing the spread of COVID-19, but still there are several thousand confirmed cases. There is concern that if people relax preventive measures, there may be another surge.

We remind those we serve, family members, staff and providers to continue to practice safe preventive measures including:

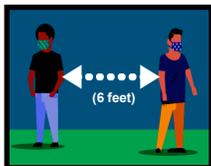
- **Wear face coverings in public**



- **Wash hands frequently for 20 seconds each time**



- **Maintain social/safe physical distances (at least 6 feet)**



2020 Transition to Work Summer Program

by Dave Cosart, Employment Services Manager, Hattie Larlham of Central Ohio

The Transition to Work Summer Program (TTW), a Career Discovery program offered by Hattie Larlham of Central Ohio (formerly Add) and the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, will conduct their fourth year of partnership for the program.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this summer, each of the 39 students, representing 19 different school districts, will interact only through virtual technology with their Discovery Specialist. Content will range from vocational assessments to soft skills curriculum during learning sessions detailed on the Hattie Larlham Employment Services website <https://sites.google.com/view/hlc-employment-services/home> including:

- virtual interviews with business owners and employees
- virtual jobsite tours of businesses around Franklin County
- work skills that students will be able to practice at home
- identify employment options in their community
- identify personal skill sets and conditions necessary for successful future employment
- completion of a **Discovery Profile** that will be used during a virtual Future Planning Meeting at the end of the summer, so the student's team can determine the next steps on the pathway to employment

The 2020 TTW leadership team consists of Elizabeth Jones, Director of Day Programming, Laura Gregory, Quality Manager, and Dave Cosart, Employment Services Manager for Hattie Larlham in partnership with Lilian Beck, FCBDD Transition Resources Coordinator. Components of TTW began in May of 2020 and will finish in the fall.

Good For You

Notable achievements in the FCBDD community

Thank you to Dr. Angela Ray, who will serve as the 2020 Coordinator of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Combined Charities Campaign. This year's theme is **Franklin County Cares**.



Special thanks to Health Commissioners Joe Mazzola, Franklin County, Dr. Mysheika Roberts, Columbus and Franklin County Commissioners for continued leadership throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. The County Commissioners have hosted daily meetings on COVID-19 since mid-March, which include a daily update from Health Commissioner Mazzola.

Congratulations to Providers and Direct Service Professionals (DSPs) for continued quality services in both residential settings and adult services providers, who are now expanding options for individuals.

Thank you to Gwynn Kinsel, Legal Counsel and Becky Love, Director of Early Childhood Education for Co-chairing the 'Equity Committee,' established to research where discrimination exists and to offer suggestions or proposals on how to eliminate or respond to any forms of discrimination.



Special thanks to the Technology Department of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, for supporting all the technology required to maintain services during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Career Milestones

30 Years

Paula Balcarcel
Eugenia Ray
Shanon Mason
Carol Elvin

25 Years

Connie Fields

20 Years

Catherine Berner
Debbie Finley
Julie Manyo
Mary Poe
Monica Powell

15 Years

Christina Conrad

10 Years

Maureen Halaiko
Megan Middleton
Laura Mongold
Lindsay Musser
Stephanie Perez

5 years

Yacine Diallo
Ivett Domalewski
Meghan Dus
Melissa Holloway
Carey Humphreys

OSU / Nisonger Center hires Dental Director

Dr. Stephen Beestra has recently accepted the offer from The Ohio State University College of Dentistry (CoD) and Nisonger Center to join the CoD faculty and become the next Program Director of the Nisonger Center Dental Services.

Stephen Beestra, DDS, MHSA was the Director of Dental Services at Arkansas Children's Hospital, the largest provider of dental care for individuals with developmental disabilities and complex medical conditions in the state of Arkansas. He was also an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Special Needs Dentistry, College of Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Throughout his career, Dr. Beestra has been committed to providing dental care services to individuals with developmental disabilities and related special needs. He has published several articles and presented at national meetings on various topics related to dental program development, models for dental care for the under-served, and dental care for individuals with complex medical and behavioral issues. He is also the in-coming President of Special Care Dentistry Association.

In addition to the Nisonger Dental Clinic, there is a Dental Clinic located in the Early Childhood Education and Family Center at 2879 Johnstown Road, where Dr. Diego Solis serves as the Dentist.

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities has a long history of supporting the Nisonger Dental Programs.



NADD Conference plans

NADD (National Association for the Dually Diagnosed) Ohio has decided to move the 18th Annual Mental Illness/Intellectual Disability Conference to a virtual platform.

The conference will be held on September 14-16, 2020, with presentations focusing on supporting individuals with a dual diagnosis of mental illness and intellectual disability.

Keynote speakers will be Karyn Harvey, clinician, trainer, publisher and consultant with developmental disability systems in Connecticut and Maryland; Dr. Allison Cowan, MD and Psychiatrist specializing in mental illness in individuals with developmental disabilities and Dr. Ruedrich, MD, Professor and Vice Chair of Psychiatry at University Hospitals of Cleveland.

For details on the NADD Ohio conference, visit thenadd.org.



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The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Marie Crawford, Vice President
Michael Underwood, Secretary
John Bickley
Linda Craig
Renée Stein
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Superintendent/CEO **Jed W. Morison**

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities does not discriminate in employment or services on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or disability.

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Information about the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities is always available on the internet at:

www.fcbdd.org

Calendar

Editor's Note: The following calendar is tentative due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Call 614-342-5950 before attending any meeting to see if it is still scheduled.

July, 2020

- 3 Independence Day Celebrated - all county facilities closed. 
- 23 Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Finance, Human Resources & Ethics Committees meeting, 2879 Johnstown Rd., (Time to be Determined)
- 23 Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities Board meeting, 2879 Johnstown Rd., (Time to be Determined)

August, 2020

- 24,25 ECE and School staff returns - Staff Preparation/ Development Days.
- 26 First day of classes at West Central School. (Subject to change due to Pandemic)
- 26-28 ECE Program Service Days – Parent Visitation (No Transportation).
- 31 First day of classes, ECE - please consult program schedule. (Subject to change due to Pandemic)

COVID-19 testing

For information on COVID-19 testing, call the Columbus Health Department at 614-645-1519.

At 'Dateline's' deadline, free testing is available for anyone, with or without symptoms, at the Columbus Health Department, 240 Parsons Avenue or other sites.

Or visit the Columbus Health Department website at:

www.columbus.gov/publichealth/Coronavirus-Portal/

