

# Portage JFS Open Lines

Portage County Department of Job & Family Services, Anita D. Herington, Ph.D., Director

*Portage County Department of Job and Family Services Mission Statement:*

*To provide children, adults and families an effective support system to assist in obtaining self-sufficiency and a safe, stable, healthy living environment.*

## New Child Health Administrator focuses on community outreach

Heather R. Pavlich joined the JFS staff in March when she was appointed the new Child Health Administrator. She has responsibility over Child Health Services including the Well Child Clinic, Help Me Grow, Help Me Smile and FLIGHT.

“Heather brings to Portage County her high energy level, leadership, educational background, grant writing capabilities and strong communication skills,” Director Anita Herington said.

Prior to her new position, Heather worked as a graduate research assistant at Kent State University while she earned her Master of Public Health degree from the Consortium of Eastern Ohio Master of Public Health Program through NEOU-COM.

She also served in Africa for two years with the U.S. Peace Corps where she facilitated, developed and managed local rural infectious disease prevention education. In addition, she developed and managed local volunteer groups there.

“I am very motivated and have a focus on community health from the Peace Corps. That gave me a lot of experience in networking, collaboration and working on breaking down duplication of services,” Pavlich said.

Community outreach and collaboration will be her focus. She wants to involve community organizations that work with infants, children and adolescents to improve the health of children in the



**Heather Pavlich, Child Health Administrator**

county.

“There is a need in our community for community outreach and it is our responsibility to do that,” she said.

Half the funding for Child Health Services is from federal dollars in the major Ohio Department of Health grant. Other funding includes Medicaid patient and other government funding.

Another goal for the new director will be to increase the use of the Well Child Clinic which provides complete physicals and exams, hearing and vision testing, developmental screening, lab work including pregnancy tests for Healthy Start applicants, well and sick child care.

The clinic is open for appointments on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:20 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:20 to 11:00 a.m. The first Monday of the month, unless it is a holiday, the Ravenna clinic has late hours, taking appointments from 10:20 a.m. to 5:20 p.m.

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## Medicaid ABD population required to enroll in managed care

Some consumers who are receiving benefits through the Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD) program of Medicaid will now be required to enroll in the Medicaid Managed Care Plan (MCP). A representative from the Selection Services Center will be in the Administration Building on Tues., April 17 from 9:30 a.m.-Noon to help consumers select a Managed Care Plan and answer questions.

A Managed Care Plan is a private health insurance company that contracts with OJFS to provide Medicaid health care. Covered Families and Children Medicaid consumers have already been in Medicaid Managed Care. Three MCP's will be available to certain groups in the ABD programs of Medicaid. Consumers can choose from: Buckeye, CareSource and Unison.

"Managed care offers consumers

a primary care physician who will help manage their medical problems, a 24 hour toll free medical line, special help for members with chronic health problems and some plans may cover services that Medicaid does not usually cover such as over-the-counter medications. These aspects will be very helpful," Linda Seeman, Public Assistance Direct Services Manager and Managed Care Coordinator said.

Exclusions to the MCP's will be children under twenty-one years of age, individuals who are dually eligible under both the Medicaid and Medicare programs, institutionalized individuals, Medi-

caid spend down recipients and those receiving Medicaid waiver services

Managed Care Plan (MCP) members will no longer receive a monthly Medicaid card but will get a permanent MCP membership ID card, a

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## Kiwanis donates to Help Me Grow



Cheri Michael, Family Support Specialist with the Help Me Grow program of Child Health Services, helps Dylan Martz and Andrew Thompson try out the new toys donated to the parent and child playgroup by the Kent Kiwanis Club. The play group is open to Portage County residents with children under age three as well as families in the Help Me Grow program

Help Me Grow is a Child Health Services program for pregnant women, new mothers and children to age three who have a developmental delay, are at risk for developmental delays or who have a diagnosed medical condition that puts them at risk for a developmental delay. It provides home visits by nurses, developmental screening, parenting support and education, linkage to community resources and service coordination at no cost to families at any income level.

The next playgroup meets Friday, May 4 at the United Church of Christ, 1400 E. Main St., (Rt.59), Kent from 10-11:30 a.m. For more information call Cheri at 330-298-4229 or Judy at 330-298-4545.

Bright Beginnings is another Help Me Grow program which has a speaker on "Guiding Behavior, What Works and What Doesn't" on Tuesday April 24 from 10:00-Noon at the Ravenna Church of Christ, Summit Rd.

## Successful Ex Offender Workshop held

Research indicates that employment is a key factor in the likelihood that a released offender will remain a free and productive citizen. Representatives from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction recently presented a "Successful Ex-Offender Job Linkage" workshop to employers and agencies that hire or assist in finding employment for ex-offenders.

They presented information on the Federal Bonding Program at the workshop, hosted by the Portage Workforce Connection.

"The bonding program will pay the bond for an ex-felon if one is required for employment up to \$5,000.00 for six months. This will get the job seeker in the door and a chance at employment. It is an incentive to hire an ex-felon and a quick process to assist the employer," Brandy Hemphill, Employment Services Counselor at the Workforce Connection said.

There is no application to complete and no cost to the employer or potential employee to utilize the program. Once a job seeker has an offer of employment, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's Adult Parole Authority office must be contacted prior to the first day of work. Information is taken over the phone regarding the job seeker, the employer and the nature of employment. The bond will be effective the day of the call so the employee can start immediately.

## **\$219,000 in federal funds set aside by JFS for services for seniors**

Portage JFS has the statutory requirement to provide Adult Protective Services (APS) but, unfortunately, the State's biennium budget for 2005-07 and Governor Strickland's proposed budget for the next two years do not include any funding for APS.

In response to the need in Portage County, JFS chose to set aside \$219,900 in Title XX federal funding for social services to help senior citizens and their families.

Mistreatment typically results from neglect (self-inflicted or other-inflicted), physical abuse, psychological abuse, and material abuse. Neglect is the most common form of maltreatment comprising 50% of the reported cases. Intervention services insure the safety of the victim.

The support services are available through four contracts with local social service agencies authorized by the County Board of Commissioners.

The contracts are with Family

and Community Services for Senior Track case management services; Coleman Professional Services for adult day services; Home Instead Senior Care for home based services, and Community Action Council for emergency home improvements such as furnace inspection and replacement.

These programs are available to county residents over 60 years who are in need of supportive services as well as those over 60 who are reported to Adult Protective Services for abuse, neglect, exploitation and self neglect.

According to Dr. Anita Herington, Portage County JFS Director, "The money that we have allocated clearly does not meet the need for intake, validation and case management services in our county. The staff is doing a good job within the current financial constraints that we have in the county, based upon the estimates that 1000-2000 of our seniors have the potential to be labeled as victims of abuse, more work needs to be done to protect our seniors."

Last year, APS trained social workers investigated 105 cases of reported elder abuse in the county. APS conducts investigations of abuse, neglect or self neglect, emotional abuse or exploitation including exploitation of financial or personal assets.

According to the State of Ohio Elder Abuse Task Force, for every one case that gets reported five others go unreported. APS is mandated by the state to provide investigations. If the person is in need of case management, they are referred to the Senior Tract program of Family and Community Services or the Passport Program of the Area Agency on Aging.

"A good aspect of these contracts is that those over 60 that only need supportive services can receive them, not only those that are reported to us as abuse or neglect cases," said Cathi Rufener, Assessment Supervisor.

For more information about these services call 330-297-4291.

## ***PCSA staff lauded during Social Workers Appreciation Month for their***

Children Services staff have all been working evenings and weekends for months for the benefit of the department and the county's children, preparing to implement a new web-based automated case management system. In recognition of their efforts, the staff was celebrated at a special training session with guest speaker, Glenn Saltzman, Ph.D. and surprise luncheon speaker the Honorable Thomas Carnes, Judge of Juvenile and Probate Courts.

Commissioner Chuck Keiper presented a resolution from The Portage County Board of Commissioners declaring March as Social Workers Month in Portage County. The resolution expressed Portage County's great appreciation to our Social Workers in PCSA and throughout the county for their commitment to Portage County children and families who depend on well-trained and educated caseworkers to make important decisions about their lives. The Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System



(SACWIS) will assure the latest information regarding a child throughout the state will be available and accessible to all counties. The state is rolling out the new computer system for child welfare caseworkers to ease management of adoption, foster care and child-protection cases.



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Food Stamps, Medicaid,

Healthy Start/Healthy Families 330-297-3750

Portage Workforce Connection 330-296-2841

Child Health Services 330-297-5437

Child & Adult Protective Services 330-296-2273

Foster Care and Adoption 330-297-3462

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**[www.portage.co.oh.us/jfs](http://www.portage.co.oh.us/jfs)**

### **Moving In, Moving Up**

#### New Hires:

Heather Pavlich - Administrator (Child Health)

Karen Osborne - Clerical Specialist 2 (Child Support)

Kristin Fields - Social Service Worker 3 (Assessment - Children Services)

Clarence Lee - Social Service Worker 3 (Intake - Children Services)

Jennifer Biltz - Administrative Asst./Certified Medical Asst. (Child Health)

Amanda Schultz - IM Worker 3 (Public Assistance)

#### Promotions:

Lisa Fay - from CSEA Case Manager to CSEA Investigation Supervisor

**[Check out the new Child Support "WANTED" poster on www.portage.co.oh.us/JFS](http://www.portage.co.oh.us/JFS)**

### *Medicaid Managed Care for ABD*

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handbook and provider directory before their effective date.

The consumer will receive a notice telling them they must choose a Managed Care Plan, including a deadline date. To choose a plan, the consumer must contact the Selection Services Center by calling 1-800-605-3040 or visiting the website at [www.ohiossc.com](http://www.ohiossc.com). If they do not choose one, they will be assigned to one of the three plans.

### *Pinwheels events for Child Abuse Prevention*

Many JFS staff members bowled in the "Bowl Against Abuse" event at Kent Lanes Saturday, April 14 and the Excellence Committee donated money to sponsor a lane. The day of bowling with funds pledged and donated to child abuse prevention projects is one of the main events of the Pinwheels for Prevention state-wide campaign to bring awareness to child abuse in April.

On April 24, the Crime Victims Rights Week Luncheon, Day in Our Shoes Memorial and the Local Heroes Awards presentation will be held at the First Christian Church in Kent. Pinwheels, each representing a victim of child abuse in the County for the year, will be displayed at the courthouse lawn April 24-26.

Information, games and events for children will be featured at the Family Carnival and Crime Victims Rights Week Vigil on the courthouse lawn Friday, April 27. Many of our staff will be hosting a booth or otherwise assisting with the Pinwheels event.

This year, the prevention message for April's, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month is the 5 R's: Raise the issue, Reach out, Remember the risk factors, Recognize the warning signs and Report suspected abuse or neglect.

*To report Child or Elder Abuse or Neglect call 330-296-2273*

### **Milestones of dedicated service**

We are beginning a new column recognizing the service milestones at Portage County Job and Family Services that our staff has reached. As of April of 2007, the following have served JFS:

#### **Five Years:**

February 4 Teresa Reagan, Case Manager, Child Support

March 18 Janet Hayes, Facilities Supervisor

#### **Ten Years:**

January 21 Valarie Picelle, Case Manager, Child Support

February 3 Sheila Grega, IM Worker 3, Daycare

April 14 Judy Corley, Clerical Specialist 3, Children Services

#### **Fifteen Years:**

January 27 Richard Nord, IM Worker 3, Public Assistance

February 24 Laura Esposito, Assessment Supervisor, Children Services

April 13 Cheryl Schneider, Social Service Worker 3, Children Services

#### **Twenty Years:**

April 20 Theresa Nelson, IM Worker 3, Public Assistance

### *Include family's much loved recipes in cookbook*

Historical and ethnic recipes are being collected now by the Portage County Bicentennial Committee. They will be published in a historical cookbook as part of the 2008 Bicentennial celebration. For more information contact Kerry Macomber at [kmacomber@portageco.com](mailto:kmacomber@portageco.com).