

Talbot County DSS Announces New Director Linda Webb, LCSW

Talbot County Department of Social Services welcomed Linda Webb as the agency's new Director on August 8, 2016. Linda joins the agency with nearly 25 years of experience in the human services field. As the new Director she is charged with overseeing the operations of all programs housed within the local department: Family Investment, Child Welfare, Adult Services, Child Support and Local General Administration.

In addition to her role as the leader of agency operations, she will play an integral part in the community of Talbot County. She is excited about supporting the work of this county and continuing to develop additional resources and partnerships.

Linda earned a B.S Degree in Psychology and Special Education from McNeese

State University in 1982, an MSW from the University Of Maryland School Of Social Work in 2005 and completed the DHR Leadership Development Program in 2008. She is a licensed social worker and certified mediator.

She is no stranger to leadership and comes to our agency after serving as Director of the Kent County Department of Social Services for over five years. She understands and values the relationships in rural communities and is a long time resident of the region.

Prior to Kent County DSS, Linda served as the Assistant Director of Family Investment and Child Support for Caroline County DSS for six years. She has experience across all of the program areas in the local department and experience in the private sector, as well.

While serving as Assistant Director at Caroline County DSS, Linda worked part-time as a mobile crisis specialist. Before joining a DSS workforce, she held positions as director of marketing, insurance agent, vocational rehabilitation counselor and unemployment interviewer.

In addition to professional experience, Linda is an active volunteer in the community.

Linda has volunteered since 2009 for Mid Shore Community Mediation, both as a mediator and a board member. She has served as the President of their Board of Directors since December 2012. While serving as the Director in Kent County, Linda was also on the Board of Directors for Rebuilding Together Kent County. She maintains

membership in the Maryland Program for Mediator Excellence and the Maryland

Council for Dispute Resolution.

Linda Webb has been personally and professionally invested in the Mid-shore for many years. She raised her two daughters, Adrienne and Lindsey in Caroline County. Currently, Adrienne lives with her family in Denton, MD and is a practicing dentist for Choptank Community Health Systems in Federalsburg, MD. Lindsey and her husband reside in Baltimore, MD where she is a PhD student at Johns Hopkins University. Linda is a proud grandmother of two and enjoys spending time with Gabe, 7, and his sister Quinn, 4.

Talbot County Department of Social Services is very fortunate to have Linda at the helm and eager to see what is to come under her leadership!



Pictured above is Linda Webb, TCDSS Director, her children and grandchildren enjoying their traditional May Crawfish Boil!

Highlights

Wellness on the Rise at TCDSS!

Employee wellness at TCDSS is a top priority. The Wellness committee at the agency works to identify new ways to encourage wellness for staff. This year two great additions were brought to the agency through the work of this committee.

The committee pursued The Worksite Physical Activity Grant that was awarded by the Healthiest Maryland Businesses through the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. This grant provided TCDSS with \$2,500 to implement a program to increase physical activity during the workday. The agency bought fitness trackers for all the current staff and anticipated future staff.

In testimonials staff reported increasing their physical activity as a result of wearing the tracker. Many also mentioned increased family physical activity when they encouraged their spouses and children to walk with them to reach their daily goal.

In addition to the fitness trackers the committee also developed a proposal to transform a rarely used conference room into a relaxation and lactation room. Staff are encouraged to take a break in the room to mitigate the stresses of the day and practice self care. Every element of the room was designed with wellness in mind. Including the lighting, massage chair, adult coloring, essential oils, fresh herbs and several other self care items. Staff report truly enjoying a break in this most delightful relaxation room.



Oxford Police: Reaching out to youth in Foster Care

After reading a Christmas wish for a “day with a policeman”, Oxford Police Chief Maxwell made a commitment to fulfill this young man’s wish! The day included Chief Maxwell picking the child up and taking him (in a police pick-up truck) to the Oxford police station for a tour, lunch, and then a staged traffic stop.

At the end of their day together, Chief Maxwell returned the young man back to his home. Not only did this fulfill a Christmas wish for this young man but it also helped reinforce the community investment of our local law enforcement. This trip gave this young man a real experience of a career in service to his community. Huge thank you to his social worker Rebecca Skinner for coordinating this and Chief Maxwell!

Maryland's Food Supplement Program Increases

Good News for SNAP Recipients 62 years and Older

The State of Maryland has increased the minimum monthly Food Supplement benefit for recipients 62 years or older. Households that receive \$29 or less a month in benefits will now receive a state supplement to bring the benefit up to \$30.

They will receive the additional benefit on the first day of each month. New applicants will begin receiving the state supplement the month after they apply.

For more information please visit

Save the Date

Upcoming Events

October

- BOONANZA**
Community Halloween Event
10/26/16 6:00pm – 8:00pm
For more information contact
410-770-8050

November

- Talbot County DSS Adoptive Parent Appreciation Event**
11/6/16, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
For more information contact
410-820-7371
- Foster Care Informational Meeting**
11/16/16, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.,
Queen Anne’s County DSS.
For more information contact
410-820-7371
- Commission on Aging Speaker Series**
11/15/16 5:00pm Wye Mills
11/17/16 2:00pm Trappe, MD
For more information contact
Childlene Brooks, 410-822-2869
- Empower Me Committee Meeting**
11/22/16 9am, TCDSS
For more information contact
Katie Russ, 410-770-5227

December

- Foster Care Informational Meeting**
12/14/16, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.,
Talbot County DSS.
For more information contact
410-820-7371

January

- Nurturing Program**
Parent Education Program
1/3/17, 5:30-7:00pm, TCDSS
For more information contact
Lindsay Newcomb, 410-770-5750

Parenting Programs in Talbot County

Talbot County has consistently offered the Nurturing Parenting Program for over 20 years. This program is held at the agency and offered to parents in the community through agency and self referral. The success of this program has sparked efforts to provide similar programming to incarcerated parents, beginning with fathers and now expanding to mothers as well.

Community Parenting Program

The Nurturing Parenting Program is an evidence based program that promotes positive, healthy interactions between parents and their children. The program provides parents an opportunity to learn alternatives to physical discipline, establish family rules and rewards, relate to and learn from other families, improve children's behaviors and attitudes, build on their parenting skills, and much more.

The program is free for all participants, including dinner and childcare. It is held on Tuesday nights from 5:30-7:30pm for approximately 10 weeks. To register for the next Parenting Program, please call Lindsay Newcomb at 410-770-5750.

“Inside” Parenting for Fathers

The Talbot County Young Fathers Program, launched an outreach with the Talbot County Department of Corrections in the Fall of 2010 utilizing Inside Out DAD's Curriculum, an evidence based program obtained from the National Fatherhood Initiative focused on reducing recidivism. Four modules of 12 classes each are facilitated in each fiscal year focusing on: Personal Effectiveness, Employment Readiness, Vocational Assessments, Personal Financial Management and Goal Setting. Since that time we have served over 80 incarcerated men, providing them with valuable information and plans for re-entry thereby strengthening families and increasing collections in child support.

“Inside” Parenting for Mothers

A Woman's Parenting Program was launched in April 2016 at the Talbot County Detention Center. The Woman's Parenting Program is being modeled after the Talbot County Young Fathers Program, but the program currently being utilized is the "Nurturing Skills for Families" Curriculum. Research indicates that over the past few years the number of mothers being incarcerated is on the rise. The Woman's Parenting Program is working on implementing a second phase to the Woman's program to include services to the incarcerated mom, her children and current caregivers in hope of reunifying moms with their children upon their release from the jail if possible or just working on strengthening the mother child relationship.

All three of these programs are making a difference for Talbot parents. For more information on any of the programs mentioned above, please call 410-770-4848.



Older Youth Summit 2016: Camp Pecometh, Centreville, MD

The Mid Shore and Lower Shore local Departments of Social Services have partnered over the years to provide an annual Older Youth Summit to serve the foster youth on the shore with a fun filled day with valuable information, networking opportunities, resources and fellowship. Budget cuts across the local departments made it unlikely that a 2016 summit would be possible. Sticking with the Shore tradition, a strong partnership was formed with Thrive@25 and together the teams pulled resources and executed an unprecedented event for youth on the Shore. The “Choose Your Adventure: Older Youth Summit 2016” was held on August 27, 2016 at Camp Pecometh in Centreville, MD.

One of the unique characteristics of this summit is that it included resource parents, social workers and group home staff in addition to the youth as participants. The day was youth focused, but there was also great emphasis on the partnerships across these roles and the importance of a strong team! The day included keynote speaker, Dave Armstrong, separate workshops for youth and adults, giveaways, delicious meals, team building ropes course, cooking class, wilderness walks, canoeing and swimming. Youth and adults alike truly enjoyed the day and are hopeful to partner with Thrive@25 in the future for other events.



Pictured above are staff from Thrive@25, DSS, and youth preparing to embark on a canoe tour on the Chester River.

Senior Summit 2016

“The Graying of the Shore”

On Thursday, June 9, 2016, Talbot Community Connections and Talbot County Department of Social Services hosted the first “Senior Summit” at the Talbot County Community Center on Route 50 in Easton, MD. There were a total of 167 registrants, not including speakers, vendors, or legislative representation. Vendors, speakers, and government representatives brought the total to 228. The registrants were evenly divided amongst social workers, who received 5 CEUs, senior citizens, and the general public (caregivers, families of senior citizens, adults approaching their senior years, and those in the field of social work). This day-long program for seniors, professionals and concerned citizens provided presentations and discussions on the issues that seniors face today.

The morning Plenary Speaker was Dr. Memo Diriker on “The Graying of the Shore”, and the afternoon Plenary Speaker was Rev. George R. Merrill on “Spirituality and Aging in the Post Modern Era”. In addition to the two speakers, there were 4 workshops and 2 panel discussions.

Workshops and panel discussions covered the following topics:

- Long Distance Care Giving
- Aging by Design
- Rx Drug Misuse
- Financial Exploitation
- Villages
- Social Media & Internet Safety
- Care Transition and Partnerships
- Family Caregiving
- Palliative Care
- Hospice Care
- Signs & Symptoms of Vulnerable Adults
- Continuum of Care

April Sharp, then Director of TCDSS, was piggybacking off a statewide initiative to deal with some of the problems Dr. Diriker raised regarding the Shore’s aging population. “We are expanding our partnerships so that we can look at unique ways to expand the services for individuals in our community who want to age in place,” Sharp said.

One of the goals of the Talbot Senior Summit was to bring people together who may have something to give back, creating partnerships to aid with the aging population issue.



From the Directors Desk.....

Since joining the Talbot County Department of Social Services in August, I’ve had the great pleasure of meeting many wonderful folks, both on the DSS staff and through community partnerships. It is clear that Partnership is the way of life here. Just take a look at two of the ways in which collaboration has most recently emerged:

Thrive@25 Housing Symposium: Youth in Transition

On October 13, this important symposium explored housing needs of youth transitioning out of Foster Care to young adulthood; housing resources that exist at the local, State and Federal levels; and accessing resources and crafting creative solutions to meet the housing needs of our youth. The Thrive@25 grant has the goal of preventing homelessness of youth with a Foster Care history and is organized through a collaborative consisting of The Institute of Innovation and Implementation of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, the National Center for Housing and Child Welfare, the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the five Mid Shore Departments of Social Services (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot). The symposium, organized by the Thrive@25 team, brought together professionals from State and Federal housing agencies, social service and other agencies and non-profits serving youth, representatives of the regional homelessness Continuum of Care, shelters and other programs serving individuals experiencing homelessness, resource parents, Court Appointed Special Advocates, members of the legal community and others. The symposium was well-attended and culminated in a next steps discussion.

Thrive House Opening

The Thrive House, a partnership between Main Street Housing, Thrive@25, and the Mid Shore Departments of Social Services, is now open for occupancy. The house, which contains two apartments with two bedrooms each, provides safe, stable, affordable, independent housing for youth transitioning from Foster Care to young adulthood on the Mid Shore. These partnerships represent individuals and organizations coming together to develop innovative responses to the needs of our friends and neighbors. I look forward to meeting more of our community collaborators and joining these partnerships in the weeks and months to come!



Pictured from left to right 2016 Senior Summit Planning Committee:

- Ruth Sullivan, Jennifer Wright, Shari Blades, Glory Aiken, Angela Preston, April Sharp, Cheryl Blades, Debbe Fairbank, Lee Newcomb and Amy Steward**

Pictured to the right are participants at the 2016 Senior Summit, enjoying a cup of coffee during a break.





the missing link

Dear Missing Link,

My family has recently lost our medical coverage through our employer. I have heard all of the horror stories about obtaining medical assistance since the changes in the Affordable Care Act. Do you have any suggestions on how I can best do this?

Thanks,
Nervous for Change

Dear Nervous for Change,

Applying for Medical Assistance (MA) has become easier and easier as time goes by. Most people apply for MA online at MarylandHealthConnection.gov. You can do it from your personal computer or from one of the computers in our Resource Room. For those with limited computer skills, we have staff members available to assist customers one on one.

The Navigator is also available to assist MA customers by appointment. If the customer is over income for MA, the Navigator can also assist in finding a Qualified Health Plan for the consumer to purchase. The Navigator can be reached at (443) [515-0069](tel:443-515-0069).

For those receiving Medicare, they can apply online at MyDHRbenefits.dhr.state.md.us Customers can also complete paper applications at their local DHR.

Dear Missing Link,

After many recent events on the news I feel like I need to better prepare my children. Are there any programs available to teach my child about personal body safety?

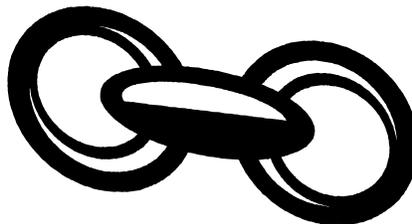
Thanks,
Concerned Parent

Dear Concerned Parent,

Many parents struggle to have these difficult conversations with their children. There is a now a program available in Talbot County to help parents teach their children about personal body safety. The program is called Empower Me and has a component for both adults and children.

A presentation can be requested for ages K-5th grade by any youth serving organization. An adult presentation is also available for parents and community members to help educate them about keeping their children safe. It's a kid's job to be a kid and an adult's job to keep them safe!

If you would like more information about this program, contact empower.me@maryland.gov or call (410) 770-4848 and ask to speak to Katie Russ.



Highlights from Talbot DSS Talbot County Department of Social Services

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Paris Quillet, Editor

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