

# DCY On The Move

## Director Wente, Team DCY Participate in Statewide Leadership/Life Skills Summit



Director Kara Wente attended the 2025 Leadership and Life Skills Summit on June 17 in Columbus. The event brought together current and former foster youth, ages 14 to 24, from across Ohio.

The youth participated in sessions on leadership, financial skills, healthy relationships, and how to do well in job interviews and school. They also had a quiet space to relax and focus on self-care.

One highlight of the day was Suits for Success, where attendees

received free professional clothing and hands-on guidance—like learning how to tie a tie—to help them feel confident and prepared for future opportunities.

The Summit was hosted by the Overcoming Hurdles in Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OHIO YAB), ACTION Ohio, with support from the Ohio Children's Alliance, the Department of Children and Youth, and The Ohana Project.



## DCY Team Member Part of Effort to Make September 19 "Stillbirth Prevention Day"

Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 4, designating September 19 as Stillbirth Prevention Day in Ohio.

Pam Stevens, a Curriculum and Assessment Consultant at DCY, who is also involved with her family's foundation "Mile's Mission," was invited to attend the ceremony.

Pam says she is proud her family was part of this process.



"We presented this to Senator Kunze in Fall 2024. Because of a technical error, the bill did not get passed through," Pam says. "Then in February 2025, Representatives Adam Holmes and Cecil Thomas reintroduced it to the House committee. My dad, Dr. Michael Bullock, and my sister, Jennifer Bullock-Moore (NBC4 Anchor) gave testimony then, as well as in April at the Senate level. This is a huge step forward."

Stillbirth refers to fetal death, the loss of a baby before or during delivery, at 20 or more weeks gestation.

- In 2023, there were 775 stillbirths in Ohio.
- That year, Ohio's stillbirth rate was 6.1 per 1,000 live births and fetal deaths. The U.S. rate was 5.5.
- The stillbirth rate in non-Hispanic Black women is more than twice that of non-Hispanic White women (10.9 versus 5.0).
- The cause of death is unknown in about a third of stillbirths.
- Among known causes, the most common cause of death is complications related to the placenta, cord, and membranes.

Women with chronic health conditions such as diabetes and hypertension had higher rates of stillbirth.



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## Fatherhood Team Celebrates Responsible Fatherhood Month at Conference



Ohio Commission on Fatherhood Executive Director Kim Dent and Project Manager Ashiko Hudson attended the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Fathers and Families Conference in Bethesda, Maryland during June, which is Responsible Fatherhood Month. Several Ohio Fatherhood practitioners also attended and participated in workshops and plenary sessions, providing the latest on father and family research and practice. Dent participated in two panel discussions and was awarded a certificate of appreciation, as well as a plaque for serving as a Legacy Leader in the nation's first Fatherhood and Mentoring Training Academy.

*Pictured left to right: Quinnan Howard, Montgomery County Office of Re-entry; Ashiko Hudson, OCF; Executive Director Kim Dent; OCF; Dr. Mike Newsom, Montgomery County Office of Strategic Planning*

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## Child Care and ECE Topics at Appalachian Ohio State of the Region Conference in Athens

“**DO WHAT’S RIGHT FOR KIDS**” was front and center when Assistant Director Jeff Van Deusen joined leaders at the Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association in May.

The annual Appalachian Ohio State of the Region Conference brings public officials, economic development experts, business and organizational leaders, and others to Ohio University each year to discuss key issues impacting economic growth in the Appalachian Ohio region.



From expanding child care access to boosting workforce participation, Ohio is making bold investments in families and early education:

- ✓ 8,000+ more children connected to quality early learning through the Child Care Choice Voucher Program
- ✓ 100+ new in-home child care providers added
- ✓ \$115M in grants fueling 5,000+ new child care slots
- ✓ Early Care & Education Business Partnership supporting working parents and local employers
- ✓ Continued growth of Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Ohio and early intervention services

These investments not only support kids and families—they help strengthen Ohio’s workforce and economy.

*Pictured: DCY Assistant Director Jeff VanDeusen (left) participates in a panel discussion.*

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## Director and Team Tour Crisis Shelter and Young Adult Housing

Director Wente; Elisha Cangelosi, DCY Services and Supports Administrator; Colleen Tucker, Ohio Family and Children First Executive Director; and Lucy Gobble, Placement Project Manager, visited Huckleberry House in Columbus in May. They were not only able to meet with the Huck House team to hear about their programming and ways in which they are serving youth and young adults in their community, but they were also able to tour the youth crisis shelter, their housing programs for young adults, and the youth outreach program.



## Team DCY Leading the Way in Shifting from Reporting to Supporting

“Meet families at the question—not the crisis.”

This guiding principle was central to the recent Shifting from Reporting to Supporting in Ohio event, where DCY Director Kara Wente and Deputy Director of Outreach & Engagement Katina Bays joined prevention leaders from across the state to advance Ohio’s family support system.



Bays detailed how DCY is continuing to make prevention a priority through ongoing listening sessions, the Parent & Youth Ambassador (PYA) initiative, and strong partnerships with organizations such as Ohio Families and Children First, Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, and Head Start—working proactively to support families before they enter the child protective services system.

Nicole Sillaman, Director of the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund, highlighted key efforts, including upgrading future Mandated Reporter training and a pilot project using Family Success Networks to help with screened-out referrals in two counties.

A highlight of the event was a fireside chat facilitated by Melissa Palmer featuring three parent-helper pairs: a PYA and parent, an OhioKAN Navigator and parent, and a Family Success Network Coach and parent. The conversation emphasized the importance of building trust, meeting families where they are, and creating an environment where parents feel supported and empowered to seek help.



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