

Bucks County Division of Human Services Newsletter

1st Edition, October 2020

Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. Diane Rosati, Executive Director

Prevention is a large part of our work. This past year 18,952 students, professionals, and community members were reached through prevention speaking engagements. If you would like additional information on prevention please contact Mallory Perrotti, mperrotti@buckscounty.org.

New Initiatives

The Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. has received its 2-year grant from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board to focus on underage and dangerous drinking. This grant is to increase collaboration with the DA's office and Bucks County Police Departments to host activities such as the Parents Who Host Lose the Most campaign, participation in town hall meetings, and to provide resources for parents and caregivers.

The Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. leads the Bucks County Connect Assess Refer Engage & Support (BCARES) initiative to provide warm-handoff programs to overdose survivors and others with substance abuse disorders in Bucks County hospitals. A Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS) provides support, education, resources, and secures a treatment bed in a drug and alcohol facility, offering treatment directly from the hospital. For more information please contact Sheri Rubin at slrubin@buckscounty.org

Do you have Narcan in your home? Read below before disposing!

The shelf life of Narcan has been extended! Emergent BioSolutions announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the extension of the shelf life of Narcan Nasal Spray from 24 months to 36 months which applies to all Narcan products. You can learn more about this change here: <https://www.pccd.pa.gov/AboutUs/Pages/Press%20Releases/Wolf-Administration-Encourages-Pennsylvanians-to-Review-Expiration-Date-of-Prescriptions.-Lifesaving-Overdose-Reversal-Drug.aspx>. If you have any questions please contact Mallory Perrotti, mperrotti@buckscounty.org

Narcan is available and can be mailed to your home. For more information please see link: <https://www.bcdac.org/prevention/narcan.php>



SAVE THE DATE!

October 23rd – 31st: Red Ribbon week. Be Happy. Be Brave. Be Drug Free. Wear a red ribbon to help amplify the campaign's mission to encourage children, families and communities to live healthy, happy and drug-free lives. Visit www.redribbon.org for more information.

Saturday, October 24th from 10AM – 2PM: National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Although Take Back Day will look a bit different this time around, we are excited to announce that there are 46 sites countywide to dispose of your unwanted, unused, expired medications! Visit www.bcdac.org to find a site near you and instructions.

Thursday, November 19th: The Great American Smokeout (GASO). Join thousands of other smokers across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life and reducing your cancer risk <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout.html>

Visit <https://www.bchip.org/quit-smoking-programs/> today to enroll in Tobacco Cessation Classes in Bucks County.



Hello & Welcome!

Rachael Neff, Human Services Director

I want to welcome you to the first edition of the Bucks County Human Services Division Newsletter. Whether you are a staff member, community partner or resident of Bucks County, I hope you take a few minutes to connect with us as we share information about the work happening across our Division. As the new Director of Human Services, I am fortunate to have joined Bucks County where our leadership at the County Commissioner and Director level values and embraces human services work. I work alongside an incredibly dedicated team that strives to ensure we have a strong, responsive human services community in place across Bucks County.

In this first edition, we hope to highlight for you several great programs and partnerships happening across our County. I have enjoyed visiting with agencies over the past few months and have seen firsthand the many ways agencies continue to come together to respond to community need. On behalf of our leadership team, we look forward to continued partnerships with community-based agencies, governmental offices, law enforcement entities, schools and foundations as the year moves forward. Check back for what those partnerships look like in future newsletter editions.

As a result of the health pandemic, over the summer our Division has responded promptly to agencies so that they could continue to keep their doors open and provide valuable services. Bucks County has distributed over \$5 million of federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) funds to over 60 human services agencies. We need these services to continue throughout the pandemic and we thank our providers and staff who show up to provide them.

Please share this newsletter with a family member or neighbor. Get involved in one of our events either virtually or in person. Please reach out to us for support. The year 2020 has been difficult for so many reasons. Our offices are open.



**NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION
DRUG TAKE BACK DAY
SATURDAY, OCT. 24, 2020
10 AM - 2 PM**

Unused | Unneeded | Expired | #BucksCoTakeBack2020



Behavioral Health and Development Programs

Donna Duffy-Bell, Administrator

Working to Reduce Risk Together

The Intellectual Disabilities/Autism (ID/A) Unit of the Behavioral Health/ Developmental Programs Department supports approximately 2,100 individuals each year across multiple funding streams. The Provider Risk Screening Project is a robust ID/A statewide initiative that is led by Bucks County in the Southeast PA region. This Initiative helps identify and mitigate risk through coordinated multi-county screening, information sharing, and response. The screening identifies areas of unmitigated risk (Financial/Organization & Operations/Regulatory/Health & Safety) within a provider agency, in order to ensure that areas of risk are remediated by the provider in consultation with counties, the State and Supports Coordination Organizations. For additional information please contact Stephen Caughie at sbcaughie@buckscounty.org or 215-444-2844.

Question Persuade Refer (QPR) The Bucks County Suicide Prevention Task Force (SPTF), among many other things, is passionate about preventing suicide by educating the public. QPR is an evidence-based, effective training model that was adopted by the SPTF due to its reliability and versatility to train all individuals in suicide prevention: community members, school staff, students, clergy, first responders, etc. By implementing caring and compassion at the forefront of QPR, participants learn how to recognize the signs of emotional and mental distress, learn how to ask an individual about suicidal thinking, and guide the individual to safety using relevant and appropriate resources within the community. This is a 2-hour training - free of charge. We are happy to now offer virtual trainings. For more information please contact Keeley Rosenthal at 215-444-2880 or kwrosenthal@buckscounty.org

1,700 individuals have completed QPR training in 2020, over a 200 percent increase from the 2019 total of 756!



November 7th: Our Fall Event Series - Hope is Not Canceled. September's Suicide Prevention month may have ended, but events are still happening. Join us, in partnership with Bucks County NAMI, for this Hope is Not Canceled virtual event by visiting www.holdonyoumatter.com to register now and help support suicide prevention and mental health awareness in Bucks County!

From May 2019 through September 2020, Bucks County Managed Care Operations funded Recovery Housing for 324 individuals. In collaboration with the Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc., this effort continues to provide means for individuals to transition from treatment into the community, while supporting individual resiliency and recovery.



Area Agency on Aging

Kathy Bennett, Director



Over the last year, AAA processed a total of 1,782 reports of elderly and adult abuse reports, and provided 1,303 investigations of senior abuse cases.

If you are concerned about an elderly individual, please contact: 267-880-5700 or aging@buckscounty.org

Do you know a senior citizen who may require some assistance or services? Read below for amazing opportunities for your loved ones!

The Area Agency on Aging continues to distribute **COVID Care Packages** that include face masks, hand sanitizers, tissues, thermometer, carry case, safety information, and books. To receive a package, you must be age 60 or older and in need of a face mask. As one recipient shared, *“I would like to thank you all for the care package I received yesterday at Pennridge Community Center. It was greatly appreciated. Such good information also.”* Roberta, Community Member

Grocery Shopping Assistance is available for those older adults who are not able to shop for themselves, do not have someone to assist them, or are medically compromised and feel unsafe going to a store. We match them with a volunteer in the community who can shop for them and bring the groceries to their homes.

Telephone Reassurance Program- Due to COVID, many seniors feel isolated and lonely and would like a friendly person to talk to. We have volunteers who are happy to provide this service for seniors. We are all in this together!

Informational Presentations:

APPRISE Medicare Services
Ombudsman Services
Caregiver Services
Overall Agency Services
Protective Services

Health and Wellness Classes for Seniors:

Tai Chi
MyLife MyHealth
Walk With Ease
Chair Yoga

For any of our services or to register for any virtual presentations or classes listed above, please call 267-880-5700 or email us at aging@buckscounty.org.

Senior Technology Outreach Project Launches!

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it became increasingly evident that many seniors were facing growing isolation and loneliness. Some seniors had technology capabilities, such as access to the internet to attend online classes such as exercise sessions and learning opportunities, order groceries online, and shop for other necessities. However, many seniors still lacked access to the internet, did not own any technology equipment, or did not understand how to use new technology such as Zoom. Recognizing the extent of the technology divide for seniors, the Bucks County Area Agency for Aging (BCAAA) met with the managers of two senior centers, specifically Bristol and Bensalem Township senior centers, to discuss ways to improve technology access for seniors. The agency is entering into a partnership with Comcast to sponsor low-cost internet services to seniors through their Comcast Internet Essentials Partner Program, with additional support from Bucks County Community College to provide tech support. Additional support through CARES funds allows for basic equipment to be purchased. We could not be more excited about this program that involves our senior centers and Comcast in helping our seniors to stay connected! Thank you, Comcast & BCCC!

Bucks County Children & Youth Social Services Agency

[Marjorie McKeone, Director](#)



Human Services Division Leadership hosts the Family First Act Implementation. We welcome you to RSVP today.

Come learn about the Family First Prevention Services Act with us! The Family First Prevention Services Act is federal legislation aimed at promoting prevention services for children who are at risk for entering out-of-home placement. One of the overarching goals of this legislation is to adequately fund prevention services so that families can safely stay together. In Bucks County, we recognize that so many valuable agencies play a role in prevention work such as our behavioral health, housing, community-based and child-serving provider agencies. Pennsylvania is moving through implementation of the Family First Act. We invite you to join us either virtually or in person at the Bucks County Administration Building in our 1st Floor Commissioners' Meeting Room for a presentation around Family First. Please RSVP for this event as space will be limited for in person attendance to allow for proper social distancing.



Monday October 26th from 1PM – 3PM – Family First Prevention Services Act Stakeholder Forum. For more information or to RSVP please contact Shannon Kirby by skirby@buckscounty.org or 215-348-6302.

The Children & Youth Advisory Board typically hosts an early December event for Children – Breakfast with Santa. Save the Date! This year it is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, December 6th. Check back on their site for additional information <https://www.bucksforkids.org/>

Contact Us

Division of Human Services

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55 East Court Street Doylestown, Pa 18901

215-348-6302

<http://www.buckscounty.org/government/HumanServices>

[Bucks County has an award-winning team!](#)



There are over 200 staff in our C&Y Department who work every day to support children and families. One of those staff members just received recognition for her dedication and work. Diane Meyer, Program Specialist II, received an Advocate Award during the 2020 Paving the Way to Educational Success Conference. The Conference was held October 13-15, 2020. Congrats Diane!

Our Bucks for Kids (B4K--non-profit fund-raising group/501c3) is nominated in the Bucks County Courier Times and the Intelligencer in the Best of Bucks campaign under Charity/Fundraiser. The proceeds of this Fundraiser help B4K to raise money that is used for our foster kids—scholarships, summer camps, clothes, yearbooks, etc. <https://www.bucksforkids.org/>

Last year the Children & Youth Department completed intake investigations involving 4,383 families which included 9,190 children.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER WORK?

Shelters could use your support! Local shelters need your services more than ever with winter approaching. Visit the two shelters' links below to learn the requirements for volunteering and additional information.

<https://www.ahtn.org/volunteer-with-ahtn>

For more information contact Crystal Myers, Program Consultant at 215-550-3868 x106 or email Cmyers@ahtn.org

www.co2ssh.org/volunteer