

# Youth Wellness Program 2023 Year in Review

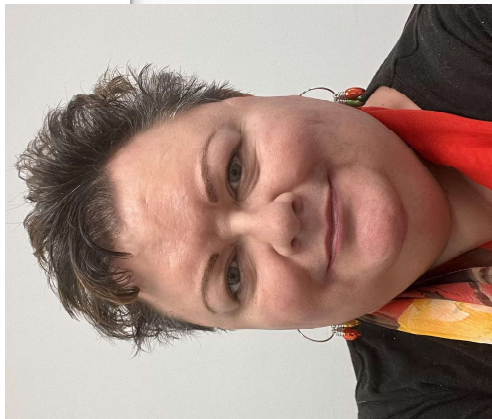
Assistant Director, Michael Demidenko  
BCDSS Office of Behavioral Health

# Youth Wellness Program Team

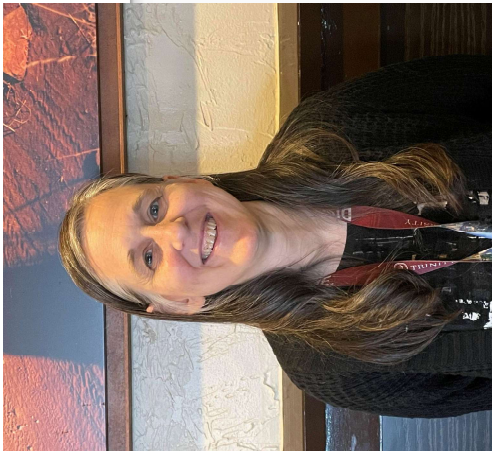
100% Rate of Staff Retention for 2023



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## 2023 Accomplishments - January

- The “Youth Wellness Program” was “soft-launched.” At the time, the Wellness team included:
  - Patricia Keene
  - Gary Green
  - Susan McEachron
  - Janet Bridges
  - Steve Cohen
  - Syreeta Williams
- 3 of 4 “Wellness Clinics” were onboarded with 5 clinicians
- Held the first round of quarterly meetings with the clinics
- The first 2 Wellness referrals for youth in care were received on 1/31/23

## 2023 Accomplishments - February

- Referral process was refined and Wellness began identifying certain youth who should be referred for therapy based on specific risk factors
- 14 referrals were received this month
- Initiated the process of providing information about the Wellness program to staff making referrals via email utilizing an outline developed by Steve Cohen which established a 1-business day turnaround

## 2023 Accomplishments - March

- Mike onboarded with BCDSS to administer the Wellness program
- One-on-one orientations to the Wellness program were implemented for BCDSS staff making a referral
- Coordinated with Ginna Wagner of BCARS to ensure youth in care identified as moderate to high-risk were referred to Wellness
- Provided administrative support at the BCDSS Child Welfare Conference attending all of the sessions
- Consulted with BCDSS Legal Services to devise a process to collect the Consent to Treatment for all referred youth 18+ and update the form
- Toured the BCDSS Banja Center to determine whether it could serve as a space/resource to support family therapy

## 2023 Accomplishments - April

- Responsibility for the Wellness program transitioned from Syreeta to Mike
- Developed draft youth and caregiver Satisfaction & Outcomes surveys
- Presented the Wellness program to the RTC/RCC Coalition which is a consortium of DHS-approved institutional and congregate-living placement providers
- The Wellness referral tracking spreadsheet was enhanced to collect additional descriptive data points and automated to highlight anti-psychotic meds
- Recruitment to fill 2 Mental Health Navigator vacancies was completed

## 2023 Accomplishments - April

- Introductory meeting with MATCH program leadership to showcase the Wellness program and to ensure coordination - developed an automated Wellness data extract report for MATCH
- Initiated the process of purposefully assigning a Wellness clinic to new referrals rather than using an indiscriminate rotational process
- Initiated 1:1 training sessions for the Wellness team on Google Suite and other tech applications essential to the business process
- Re-oriented the Wellness team to a different vision for customer service, timeliness and responsiveness, working with urgency and accuracy, and the shift in our philosophy of practice

## 2023 Accomplishments - May

- The Wellness program began receiving and accepting “unsolicited referrals” from BCDSS staff - this was an encouraging sign of staff awareness and recognition of youth’s needs
- Revised the Wellness Consent to Treatment document
- Represented the Wellness program at the BCDSS Learning Journey - Pittsburgh
- Initiated Cohort 1 of the BCDSS Foster Care Clinician training with UM/SSW, the Healing Youth Alliance, and the BCDSS Office of Learning for 8 “Wellness clinicians”
- Revised the Wellness Behavioral Health Services Scope of Work for the contract with BHSB to close gaps on training and documentation
- Presented the Wellness program to Nexus Woodbourne & RICA Baltimore



## 2023 Accomplishments - May

- Onboarded 3 new Wellness clinicians bringing the total number of therapists to 8
- Onboarded Wellness clinic #4 - A Better Tomorrow Starts Today - BTST
- Gary Green tested the process of 'Group Orientation Sessions' to the Wellness program for BCDSS staff making a referral - this was done given the growing number of referrals
- Met with DJS representatives and administration at Sheppard Pratt Mann RTC to orient them to the Wellness program and determine how therapists can access youth
- Developed the Overview of the LJ v. Massinga Federal Consent Decree PPT for the Office of the Director
- Represented the Wellness Program at the BCDSS Foster Parent Appreciation Event at Oriole Park

## 2023 Accomplishments - June

- Presented the Wellness program to Resource Homes leadership, Resource Homes staff, Ready by 21 staff, Janet & Netricia's OHP Teams, Circuit Court CINA Division, and St. Vincent's Villa
- Met with Magistrate Kataria of the Circuit Court CINA Division, Jenny Jumbelick of DHS and Ted Gallo of SCCAN to orient them to the Wellness program
- Developed the Wellness program Referral Process & Tips for Success Guidance
- Initiated the expectation that Wellness clinics begin sending a youth's Individual Treatment Plan to the BCDSS worker and the Wellness team for signature as BCDSS representative
- Conducted interviews for the Mental Health Navigator positions - one of two applicants selected - Ericka Morgan

## 2023 Accomplishments - June

- Included the Wellness program in the FY25 Budget Testimony
- Numerous enhancements to the Wellness referral tracking spreadsheet to improve data reliability
- Initiated process to ensure that assessments and other documentation produced by Wellness, the clinics, or Dr. Barnett is sent to MATCH on a weekly basis for upload to CJAMS
- Represented the Wellness program at the Kinship Center Open House event
- Trish Keene and Mike represented the Wellness program at the TAMAR Technical Assistance Immersion Session at Baltimore Unity Hall
- Partnered with Dr. Kyla Liggett-Creel of UM/SSW to develop 1-day Supervisory training for direct supervisors of “Wellness clinicians”

## 2023 Accomplishments - July

- The Wellness program entered the 2nd year of its 3-year funding term on July 1st with a revised contract - updated Scope of Work and additional Deliverables and Measures
- Presented the Wellness program to Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital & Sheppard Pratt Hospital @ Towson
- Developed the Wellness program Frequently Asked Questions Guide
- Initiated the expectation that Wellness clinics begin sending a youth's Medication Management documentation to the BCDSS worker and the Wellness team
- Initiated the practice of BCDSS Legal Services notifying Children's Counsel of a youth's referral to a Wellness clinic

## 2023 Accomplishments - July

- Assumed full administrative responsibility for the Wellness program allowing Gary Green, Susan McEachron and Janet Bridges to focus exclusively on OHP
- Onboarded Wellness clinician, Janae Daw, of IHEAL
- Cohort 1 of the BCDSS Foster Care Clinician training was completed on July 21st - Certificates and CEUs issued
- Partnered with Jarmal Desire of Innovations to develop an automated Wellness program monthly report
- Initiated practice of receiving and reviewing CIP Notices, PAFs, and 1080 notices and notifying therapists directly with updates on changes in placement or status

## 2023 Accomplishments - August

- Assumed responsibility for direct supervision of Patricia Keene
- Onboarded Ericka Morgan with the Wellness program
- Re-referred all youth assigned to Tatiana Ellerbe of ABH to Mary Schulz also of ABH
- Updated the DHS/BCDSS response to the LJ Dispute Resolution with information on the Wellness program
- Developed the 1–pager “Introduction to the BCDSS Youth Wellness Program for Caregivers”
- Updated the working document “Guidelines for Children in the Building”
- Enhanced the Wellness referral tracking spreadsheet to include linked documents for all referred youth
- Initiated the practice of prioritizing the referral of youth in OHP to the Wellness program when seen at the ER for psychiatric reasons

## 2023 Accomplishments - August

- Initiated practice of receiving and reviewing all Hospitalization Notices and notifying therapists directly of youth's status and points of contact
- Initiated the practice of introducing the Wellness program and staff during the BCDSS World Tour new employee orientation
- The Wellness program referral tracking spreadsheet was enhanced with automation to include routine data updates from the OOH Milestone report
- Participated in the BHSB RFP Review Committee to review the Technical & Financial proposals from vendors for the Mental Health Stabilization Services contract to replace BCARS
- Participated on numerous Interview Panels to support Child Welfare staff and fill caseworker and Supervisory vacancies
- Redeployed to Calvert St Office to support the CPS Team for 5 weeks and developed a comprehensive record review feedback document

## 2023 Accomplishments - September

- Worked with Jarmal Desire of Innovations to create a secondary Wellness Formstack referral and referral tracking system to support the transition services for youth served by Hope Health Systems and the Institute for Healing (IHEAL)
  - Transitioned Wellness services for 47 youth being served by Hope Health Systems
  - Transitioned Wellness services for 21 youth being served by IHEAL
- Presented the Wellness program to Terri's OHP Adoption/Guardianship Team
- Completed a policy analysis and opinion for agency leadership regarding Psychotropic Medication Oversight and Monitoring and the role of the caseworker
- Onboarded Sheva Spangler, MSW Intern with the Wellness program
- Trish Keene and Mike hosted a Wellness program table at the Ready by 21 Back to School event providing resources, information and giveaways to youth and caregivers - numerous informational resources were distributed on Mental Health care and well-being



## RB21 Back to School Event

Photographs removed.

## 2023 Accomplishments - September

- Partnered with Mariel Pfister and Dr. Kyla Liggett-Creel of UM/SSW to offer in-service Ethics and Supervisory training for BCDSS staff
- Enhancements to the Wellness referral tracking spreadsheet's Data Dashboard
- The Wellness program instituted the practice of referring both youth with lower risk and youth whose needs require more specialized services to other, non-Wellness community-based service providers
- Conducted interviews for the Mental Health Navigator positions - two of four applicants screened-in
- Represented BCDSS and the Wellness program at the BTST 15-year Anniversary Gala - leveraged this opportunity to share the work of the Wellness program with Baltimore City Council Chairman Nick Mosby and Councilman Robert Stokes
- Supported the Resource Homes Team by attending the joint BCDSS/BCoDSS Family Fun Day at the Baltimore Zoo

## BTST 15-year Anniversary Gala

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## 2023 Accomplishments - October

- On October 12th, the Wellness referral process was reopened after a 6-week hold
- Trish & Ericka completed the re-referral of 33 youth from Hope Health to BTST and IHEAL internally requiring no additional effort from the caseworker
- Onboarded Dr. Barnett to the Wellness Team and assumed responsibility for managing her role as the BCDSS Consulting Psychiatrist
- Instituted the practice of Mental Health Navigators vetting all referrals with the Child Welfare team for appropriateness before assigning a clinic
- Expanded the Wellness referral pool to include formal Kinship families and established Kinship Navigator, Tracie Cook-Thomas, as a source of referrals
- Instituted a practice of Teaming all referrals when a youth has not been engaged for 60 days
- Onboarded Wellness clinician, Amanda Piper, of ABH
- Implemented an Archive process in the Wellness referral tracking spreadsheet to preserve all Closed/Withdrawn referrals and associated data and documentation

## 2023 Accomplishments - October

- Released the Wellness program Role of Mental Health Navigators with Children in the Building Guide and Ericka Morgan developed the Wellness Referral Decision Checklist
- Responded to the Consent Decree IVA's inquiry about the Wellness program
- Developed and implemented a data report for the Wellness clinics to share real-time referral status and updates with the Wellness program
- Initiated the "Wellness Notebook" to track task assignments and items in the future development queue
- Updated the Director's Presentation for New Employees to include the Wellness program
- Represented the Wellness program at the Healing Youth Alliance Conference
- Initiated the practice of updating the Overstay/Waitlist report on a weekly basis to reflect current status of youth referred to Wellness for the Secretary's Report
- Ericka developed individual tracking spreadsheets to monitor clinic documentation

## 2023 Accomplishments - November

- Sheva Spangler & Jarmal Desire partnered to implement the 'Looker Studio' interactive Data Dashboard on the Wellness referral tracking spreadsheet following 'focus group' survey and staff feedback
- Received and reviewed the Technical & Financial proposals from 3 vendors that bid on the BHSB contract to provide Wellness services
- Developed the BCDSS Youth Wellness Program - Snapshot for new employee orientation to Wellness program services
- The Wellness Formstack referral was updated based on feedback from BHSB
- Revised nearly all of the Wellness Guide and Resource documents to ensure they comport with the Wellness SOP
- Initiated practice of meeting with clinics once per month (rather than 2x monthly) based on feedback from BHSB and clinic administrators as Wellness stabilized
- Provided an overview of the Wellness program to the QSR/CQI Team
- Wellness program reached referral capacity - clinics/therapists fully maximized

## 2023 Accomplishments - November

- Meeting with Jenny Jumbelick of DHS to discuss challenges with obtaining Certificates of Need from area hospitals when youth have been cleared for discharge and are 'Overstay'
- Analyzed SB41/Chapter 743 to determine impact on Wellness program protocols
- Reviewed MDH, Health General and OPTUM standards for the completion of Certificates of Need for inclusion in the Wellness SOP
- Identified as BCDSS representative to the Mayor's Office Sentinel Event Review Committee
- Worked with Senior Leadership and Trish Keene to initiate clinical supervision of LMSW staff
- Presented "Best Practices" for reporting CF, SPI and CI on the 1080 A, B, C forms to the Child Welfare Leadership Team - offered several Guidance Memos from SSA and the updated 1080
- Represented the Wellness program at the BCDSS Adoption Day event
- Onboarded Shaderic Chism, OHP Liaison to the Wellness program, to Wellness' purpose, goals and activities
- Consolidated feedback from Wellness, MATCH and BCDSS staff and offered suggestions to improve the BCDSS Psychotropic Medications SOP

## 2023 Accomplishments - December

- Youth Wellness Program SOP released 12/15/23
- Through consensus decision, the RFP Review Committee selected Empowering Minds Resource Center - EMRC, as the vendor to replace Hope Health Systems
- Assumed responsibility for reviewing all Certificate of Need requests made of Dr. Barnett and for reviewing and approving all CONs prepared
- Additional guidance was added to the Wellness Formstack referral for BCDSS staff
- Prepared a Summary of CJAMS Health Tab concerns based on record reviews for youth involved with the Wellness program
- Ericka Morgan developed the Engagement/Re-engagement Teaming Guidance document for the Mental Health Navigators



## 2023 Accomplishments - December

- Developed a data report for Hope Health Systems to share the status of the 16 referrals which remained with HHS after their separation from the contract on 9/30/23
- Fully revised the MS-22 for the Mental Health Navigator position
- Dr. Barnett initiated a spot-check process and data collection spreadsheet to track medication and consent documentation
- Developed the Wellness program 'Procedural Overview' PPT to highlight protocols addressed in the Wellness SOP and deliverables specified by the FY24 contract - delivered presentation to ABH and IHEAL staff
- Prepared a proposed CJAMS Health subtab and Document Tab review spreadsheet for youth referred to Wellness to support the Child Welfare Contract Monitoring Team's oversight of the MATCH contract
- The Wellness Team held a Strategic Planning Session and luncheon

## Wellness Team Strategic Planning Session

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# 2023 Accomplishments - Referrals

Number of Referrals to the Wellness Program - 2023

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	2	14	20	31	30	11	13	17	2	14	10	5

- 169 youth referred to the Wellness program during 2023◆
  - 121 of the referred youth during 2023 remain open for services
    - 107 of the referred youth are open with the Wellness Program
      - 48 of the 107 youth are noted as ‘Engaged’ (45%)
      - 16 of the 107 youth are noted as ‘Intermittently Engaged’ (15%)
      - 14 of the referred youth remain open with Hope Health Systems

◆ Not a mutually exclusive count as some youth were referred twice. Also, does not include referrals received that were withdrawn before services were initiated.

## 2024 Goals

- Sheva Spangler will administer youth and caregiver surveys, prepare a Summary Report - results will be shared with the clinics and Wellness will use lessons learned for program enhancement and quality improvement
- Hire to fill the vacant MHN position and identify a resource for Administrative support
- Work more closely with the Family Preservation team particularly for youth exiting OOH care who are subject to an OPS and explore expansion of referral base
- Present the Wellness program to the Local Coordinating Council
- Revise the BCDSS Psychotropic Medications SOP
- Partner with Dr. Barnett to develop and deliver a spring in-service training for Child Welfare staff on psychotropic meds, consents, and documenting medications, etc.
- Work with the Mayor's Office and other sister agencies and community partners on the Intensive Case Management Taskforce (not to be confused with the BCDSS ICM Unit)
- Onboard EMRC as Wellness clinic #4 and additional clinicians - expand the number of youth served
- Launch Cohorts 2 and 3 of the BCDSS Foster Care Clinician Curriculum with improvements based on feedback from Cohort 1

## The Wellness Team Kicks Off 2024 in Blue

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