**Weekly COVID Memorandum**

To:       All DCF Staff

From:   Commissioner Vannessa Dorantes

Date:   7/26/2020

Re:       Update on Department Operations and Commissioner Weekly Video

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**HELP NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC**:

Remote technology and teleworking presents communication challenges. This past week had many e-mails, memorandums, videos and other sources information being provided to you. As we look for ways to communicate more effectively & efficiently, this week's video highlights a few important items => [Commissioner's Weekly Video 7-26-20](https://youtu.be/xULvUQUwOtY)

**HELP PARENTS & CAREGIVERS KEEP CHILDREN SAFE**:

A summer safety flier was sent for you to share with our families. As the summer months continue, especially in this extreme heat, this document serves to advise families of some basic, yet important aspects to keeping children safe: Here is a link to that flyer =>[Summer Safety Flyer](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DCF/Agency/COVID-Emails/Summer-Safety-Reminders.pdf)

Please share it by any means you use to get important information out. SAFETY has always been and remains our #1 priority. Sharing these warnings could save lives!

**HELPING US KNOW WHAT HAS WORKED & WHAT HASN'T:**

Hearing directly from you helps in:

* increasing our remote productivity,
* developing ReOpening strategies to Resume Full Operations
* planning what short term adjustments are needed and
* anticipating what longer term options may be necessary.

Please take 15-20 minutes this week to tell us what you have experienced through the telework feedback survey sent to all staff and can be found here => [Telework Survey](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-nyLEd2juUiwJjH_abtzi_Q8DkrFUUVPtdsVGH6sl-NURUZRVFNIUjVMTFI3SkY2UFlTWFpTTTNHSy4u).

*Your success is mine and mine is yours!*

By sharing ideas and solutions, we will better serve families & get through all of this TOGETHER.

**HELPING US STAY CONNECTED:**

HUGE shout out to the staff at the **Help Desk!** Given the technology we now have, the volume of work for this group is intense. We know that over half of the issues brought to the Help Desk are related to connectivity. Many issues don’t require Help Desk level intervention.  A quick trouble-shooting tip is to turn off your electronics and re-start them to try and resolve connection issues. Another common problem is too many devices connected to and drawing *from* your home WiFi simultaneously -- sometimes we don’t even realize it!   We are also asking the Help Desk experts to put together an FAQ cheat sheet with more tips like these. In the meantime, we would like you to check with your supervisor first before starting a new ticket or calling the Help Desk. We believe some issues can be handled locally with the knowledge of your colleagues.

We need to preserve this limited resource to ensure they can be sustained to help with complex problems.

Please help the **Help Desk** 😊!

**HELPING TO KEEP TIME MORE ACCURATELY:**

Kronos is here & is now up and running. The *'soft launch'* is designed to help us become familiar with how to navigate all the timekeeping functions.  It will serve so much more than to rid us (once and for all!) of paper time sheets. Attendance, scheduling, managing accruals and leaves will be much more efficient and accurate.

Supervisory attention is required to tighten up on *what we are doing* and for *how long we are doing it*. In order to stay sharp in attending to our **mission critical** work, now more than ever, it is everyone's responsibility to ensure a healthy work/life balance.

The safety, permanency and well-being of children ultimately depends on our DCF workforce safety, retention and job satisfaction. Help us help YOU help kids & families.

**HELP US THANK THE HELP FOR THE HELPERS**:

This week marks the farewell of Dr. Mike Schultz. For over 20 years, Dr. Mike has given to and supported our staff in the unique roles he has played. Most importantly, he has been a source of "*help for the helpers*". 20 *weeks* ago, with the pandemic at our doorstep, Dr. Mike delayed his retirement to help our workforce emotionally navigate the uncharted, frequently turbulent COVID-19 waters. We cannot thank him enough for what he has given us and his legacy within the agency. He has certainly been an important part of developing my own professional ***her***story. The Spotlight article thanking Dr. Mike can be found here => [Thank you Dr. Mike!](https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/SPOTLIGHT/April/DrMike) It's YOUR time now !

**VANNESSA L. DORANTES, LMSW**

COMMISSIONER

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*" I do my best because I'm*counting on *YOU counting on me…"*

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