

A Message from Commissioner Hill-Lilly



October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**. We are seeing an escalation of violent acts in our communities and are called upon to raise awareness of the supports available for families.

**CT Safe Connecticut** is a 24/7/365, free and confidential information and resource line for anyone impacted by domestic violence. Contact can be made by calling **1-888-774-2900** or visiting [CTSafeConnect.org](https://CTSafeConnect.org) to call, chat, text or email for assistance.



Watch as **Alison Karimi, Program Supervisor for the Office of Intimate Partner Violence and Substance Abuse and Recovery**, talks with our partners at **WFSB** about the signs of Domestic Violence: [Great Day at 9a](#)

**Fathers for Change (F4C)**, is a psychotherapy intervention with a dual focus on domestic violence and child maltreatment. Read about this program in this month's "Spotlight" and the impact it has on men by **emphasizing and building on their roles as fathers**.

October honors those impacted by Domestic Violence with a national day of action - "**Wear Purple Day**" - and a **Purple Flag Raising** ceremony at the Capitol.



October is also **National Breast Cancer Awareness Month**. The 2024 theme is "**No-one should face breast cancer alone.**" Early detection saves lives!

The **Connecticut Department of Public Health's [Early Detection and Prevention Program](#)** provides breast cancer screenings at locations throughout the state for patients who have low income and who have no or limited health insurance. Anyone who needs **assistance**

**obtaining a mammogram** can find resources available online at [ct.gov/dph/screening](https://ct.gov/dph/screening) or they can call (860) 509-7804.



**Child welfare professionals across the country care deeply** about the families they serve. Every day, they make decisions that have a tremendous impact on families, children and their future. Please take some time to read a national article I wrote, "[The Blame-and-Shame Cycle in Child Welfare Needs to End](#)" which reinforces **safety decisions are not solely made by a single individual** as they are only one part of a complex system.

Shout out one more time to the **September Employees of the Month!** Who has been nominated to receive the **October Award?** Who is described as a "*team player,*" "*amazing,*" and "*fierce advocate?*" Read on.....





The relationship between fathers and their daughters is unique. Read **"A Father's Bond"** and hear the reunification story of Joe who is now spending the holidays with his daughters after he overcame years of substance abuse and incarceration. **"This is the best day of my life,"** his daughter exclaimed as they attended a recent WWE event.

The dedication of our staff is immeasurable. **Gabe Oliva Rapoport** is a **DCF Wilderness School Instructor** who has co- led an impressive 20 expeditions, including three extensive 20-day trips and four 14-day trips. His story, **"Into the Woods,"** tell us about his **transformative journey** to arrive as the school and how he is now giving back to those around him!



Congratulations to **Gladys Ortiz**, an **Intake Social Worker in the Norwich Office**. Described as maintaining the *"highest level of integrity and respect with her interactions with her colleagues, providers, children, and families,"* she was awarded the **William Rivera Humanitarian Award** at the Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month Celebration.

**Community Outreach Coordinator Jacqueline Ford** was nominated for a **FOX61 and United Way "Impact Award,"** recognizing and honoring individuals, groups and organizations who make a significant contribution to health care, housing, financial empowerment and/or the education sector in Connecticut.



Were you seen at the **"Trunk or Treat"** event at **The Olive Branch**? A great night of fun for DCF involved families and youth!

Earlier this month, I was the Keynote Speaker at the **Minority Professionals Leadership Development conference** in Washington, DC. *"Planting Seeds, Growing Leaders, Transforming Systems,"* was the theme as I attend with **Director of Multicultural Affairs Monica Rams** and **Program Supervisor John Lachack**.



Connecticut was represented well in Chicago for the **National Partnership for Child Safety (NPCS) Conference**. Along with **Deputy Commissioner Dr. Joyce Taylor**, **Director of Communications Peter Yazbak**, **Bureau Chief of Continuous Quality Improvement Rose Wieworka**, and **Director of Organizational Development Lenisa Mathew**, we



presented and discussed Connecticut's Safe and Sound Culture, supporting staff and the complex work we perform each day.

Thank you to **Social Work Supervisor Winston Taylor** in the Norwich Office for the opportunity to provide opening remarks as the **14<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Prison Awareness and Prevention Gathering** with this year's theme *"Building and Strengthening Leadership to Serve Our Community."*



Why was our media partner, **Amber Diaz**, from **NBC 30** interviewing **Behavioral Health Program Director Christa Rider**? Stay tuned for more information and when the discussion will air.

Lastly, **Kris Robles Behavioral Health Program Manager** attended the unveiling of 'RiseUp for Arts' newest public art piece, **The Able Table**, a picnic table designed with accessibility in mind.



A special **THANK YOU** to our **24/7/operations - Careline, Solnit North and South PRTFs and Solnit South Hospital** - who are always open - **365 days a year**. They work nights, weekends, holidays, and when offices are closed to due inclement weather and other adverse conditions to support our children and families!

**We are grateful for you!**

Another busy month has gone by and once again, I would like to reinforce to all of you to be mindful of work/life balance!

**Thanks for all you do!**