

### Karen's Corner



On May 21, I had the honor of joining First Lady Joanne Jaeger Tomblin at the Appalachian Child Welfare Leaders Roundtable, which provided a forum for leaders from six states to share ideas and develop strategies for stabilizing families and improving child welfare. This was a great opportunity to collaborate and address some of the challenges within the region.

This also allowed us to reflect on what West Virginia has accomplished under the leadership of Governor Earl Ray Tomblin. Our state ranks second highest in the nation for binge drinking and number one for the highest rate of prescription drugs filled in the United States. Governor Tomblin has made it a priority in his administration to focus on combatting the issue of substance abuse and our state and has taken several steps toward improvement. Through the Governor's Advisory Council on Substance Abuse, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety have created a number of critical initiatives to support ongoing efforts in local communities and

provide those struggling with addiction with access to the help they need.

We've included the voices of families, local law enforcement, education and the medical and behavioral health communities in Regional Task Force meetings to make recommendations to GACSA. Through GACSA, we've taken action to reduce the number of methamphetamine labs and decrease the prevalence of prescription drug abuse with new rules for licensing pain clinics and, for the second year in a row, West Virginia has decreased the overall misuse of prescription drugs.

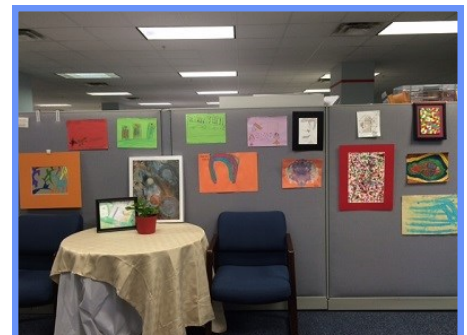
In addition, GACSA recommended the development of West Virginia's first-ever Behavioral Health Referral & Outreach Call Center, a statewide 24-hour call center, which will provide resources and referral support. The Call Center will be a centralized point of entry for accessing behavioral health resources (substance abuse and mental health). Anyone that contacts the call center will be offered education on behavioral health and information on service options in their region, as well as a facilitated referral to an appropriate level of care based on the individual's need in coordination with providers.

Issues surrounding substance abuse can often lead to children being taken out of their homes. Based on a sample size of 156 Child Protective Services cases, more than 70% of the cases reviewed indicated drug and/or alcohol use in the home. DHHR received a Federal Title IV-E Waiver, which provides an opportunity to change how we use federal funds designed to support certain aspects of West Virginia's child welfare system. This will allow us to conduct a demonstration project called Safe at Home West Virginia, which aims to provide wrap-around behavioral health and social services to 12-17 year olds with specific identified behavioral health needs who are currently in congregate care or at risk of entering congregate care.

I am proud of what West Virginia is doing to fight the epidemic of substance abuse, stabilize families and improve child welfare. Everyone deserves the opportunity to lead safe, healthy and successful lives and our initiatives are helping many West Virginians achieve that success. To all of our employees, community members, lawmakers and partners, thank you for your support. Each of you are the key to improving the overall health and well-being of our residents.

### Wall of Fame Features Children's Art

DHHR's Bureau for Children and Families' *Wall of Fame* displays art collected from group homes and child care centers. The gallery is currently located in the Diamond Building.



## Importance of Pediatric Emergency Response Highlighted

On May 20, 2015, DHHR celebrated Emergency Medical Services for Children Day by commending Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies across the state for their ongoing preparedness for pediatric emergency response.

More than 5% of all emergencies responded to by an EMS field provider in the United States is to a child under the age of 18 years. This means special care and attention is needed by first responders for those emergency calls.

“Children cannot be treated as merely small adults as they respond very differently than an adult would in a medical emergency,” said Dr. Rahul Gupta, State Health Officer and Commissioner for the Bureau for Public Health. “The Bureau for Public Health’s Office of Emergency Medical Services works with EMS agencies across West Virginia to ensure that paramedics and emergency medical technicians are receiving the pediatric medical training necessary to ensure that every child and adolescent patient treated receives consistent, optimal care in a medical or trauma emergency.”

West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin issued a proclamation recognizing May 20 as Emergency Medical Services for Children Day in support of all children and adolescents receiving appropriate care during a health emergency, regardless of where they live, attend school or travel.

“I want to commend the State’s EMS for Children Program, EMS field providers and EMS agencies for their time and dedication it takes preparing for pediatric response,” said Gupta. “West Virginia is a leader when it comes to being prepared with the training and equipment necessary for pediatric emergency response which serves as an example to other states.”

Learn more about the Department’s EMS for Children Program at [www.wvoems.org](http://www.wvoems.org) or by calling (888) 747-8367 or (304) 558-3956.



## DHHR Purchasing Office Again Receives Global Recognition



Back: Bryan Rosen; David Darr; Althea Locke; Robert Price; and Roberta Wagoner. Front: Kim Debolt; Mary Farley; Theresa Dorsey; Susie Teel; and Joe Bess.

For the second year in a row, DHHR’s Central Purchasing Office has achieved the Universal Public Purchasing Certification Council (UPPCC) Agency Certification Award in the Small Agency category, recognizing the team’s commitment to the value of certification in the public sector.

The Department’s Purchasing Office, led by Director Bryan Rosen, is the first West Virginia state agency to accomplish this distinction and is one of 171 agencies and organizations around the world holding UPPCC Agency Certification status.

“I appreciate the continued commitment of employees in the Purchasing Office, as well as the outstanding leadership of Director Bryan Rosen,” said DHHR Cabinet Secretary Karen L. Bowling. “I am proud of this amazing team’s success and am confident these individuals will continue to demonstrate the Department’s competency and dedication to professional standards and excellence.”

Certification by UPPCC requires staff members to meet established criteria consisting of public purchasing experience, education/training and successful completion of a rigorous examination. The UPPCC is an international governing body that has certified more than 10,000 professionals around the world.