

February 2023

Issue 17

Washington County Department of Human Services



IN THIS ISSUE

PG. 2

Dates to Remember and Washington County DHS-Meet the staff

PG. 3-4

Provider Spotlight- Adelphoi Village - Amber Dablock, M.S. Ed., LPC, Community Service Supervisor

PG. 5-7

Parent Alliance-Guest Columnist-Melissa Fawley

We are now accepting submissions for the March, April and May newsletter. Please reach out to Rebecca Salsbury at Rebecca.Salsbury@co.washington.pa.us if you are interested in being a guest columnist or if you know of any upcoming events!

Spirit Night

Thursday, February 2, 2023, 4:00pm – 8:00pm



Join us for food and fun. Come support Washington Drug and Alcohol Commission – Problem Solving Courts and 20% of tonight's sales will be donated accordingly.

Chick-fil-A Washington (PA) FSU
375 Washington Rd, Washington, PA 15301
<https://www.chickfilarestaurants.com/washington-pa/>
<https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonPACHickfilA/>

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Dates to Remember

February 2023

February 2-Spirit Night

February 28-PathFinders Suicide Prevention Task Force Meeting [Click here to join the meeting](#)

2ND ANNUAL VETERAN FUNDRAISING GALA

WHEN
March 4th, 2023
5pm - 9pm
(mix and mingle 4:30-5)

WHERE
DoubleTree by Hilton
MAIN Ballroom
340 RaceTrack Rd, Washington, PA

ADVANCE TICKETS
\$50 General
\$500 Corporate Table (8 Seats and Mention)

SPONSORS
Capital Closings, LLC
Nicolò Maltesic Real Estate
Rusty Gold Brewing
Grande Jr. Pizza
All Ways Safe Flagging
One Hope Wine
and More

BENEFITING
PTSD Foundation
MFS Service Dog Program
PTSD Dog Adoptions

PTSD FOUNDATION OF AMERICA
PROVIDING HOPE AND HEALING FOR THE UNSEEN WOUNDS OF WAR

WWW.PAVETPETS.ORG/DONATE

Tickets Purchased by Mail can be sent Now—Feb 22nd to: PA VetPets P.O. Box 79 Washington PA 15301

Meet the Faces Behind the Department of Human Services:

Brianne Spurlock-Fiscal Technician

Brianne Spurlock joined the Human Services Department on November 15, 2022 as a Fiscal Technician. Although her family moved around the northeast in her early childhood, they eventually settled in Elizabeth Township. After graduating from Elizabeth Forward High School, Brianne obtained her bachelor's degree from Central Bible College in Springfield, MO. It is here that she met her husband of almost 20 years. Since then, Brianne has relished moving to new and exciting places, spending 5 years in her husband's hometown in the extraordinary Pacific Northwest and 8 years in the "wild west" of Montana, before returning home to Pittsburgh in 2018. Although she has greatly enjoyed the adventures that these places have granted, Brianne counts her most treasured adventures as those her 4 children have provided.

Brianne comes to the Human Services Department after almost 4 years as the co-owner of a small business in Bridgeville, a business that allowed her to not only put her entrepreneurial acumen to work, but also gave her an outlet for her creativity and love of D.I.Y. Prior to that, in Montana, Brianne held the title of Deputy Treasurer in the County Treasurer's Office for over 7 years. Brianne and her family are new to Washington County, but she is excited to live in such a beautifully historic place and join the ranks of those who are working hard for those who reside here.





Provider Spotlight Information provided by

Amber Dablock, M.S. Ed., LPC, Community Service Supervisor



Visit our website www.adelphoi.org
for more information on our
programs. For admissions, call
724-804-7000 or email
candice.rinaldi@adelphoi.org.
To view program brochures, visit
[www.adelphoi.org/adelphoi-
brochures](http://www.adelphoi.org/adelphoi-brochures)

Adelphoi was founded in 1971 by a Benedictine Monk from Saint Vincent Archabbey, Father Paschal Morlino, as “Adelphoi House,” a single group home for troubled boys in need of a second chance. Adelphoi, the Greek word for “my brothers for whom I am concerned,” has grown over the past 50 years to meet the needs of more than 60,000 children and families throughout Pennsylvania. The boys and girls that enter Adelphoi have countless challenges including dysfunctional family life, mental illness, economic deprivation, physical and sexual victimization, drug abuse, academic failure, and association with delinquent peers. Adelphoi’s vast continuum of care offers youth the skills, tools, and emotional healing they need to turn their lives around and have a chance at a better and brighter future.

Adelphoi offers a broad continuum of services to youth and families. These programs include residential programs, secure care, detention, independent living, foster care and adoption, in-home services, mental and behavioral health services, Multisystemic therapy, and education.

Adelphoi serves youth who are abused, neglected, delinquent or at-risk, and their families. Adelphoi has programs in 30 counties in Pennsylvania and has contracts with 64 counties in PA, as well as with several counties in surrounding states. Adelphoi provided services to over 2,400 youth and families and had over 170 foster, kinship, and adoptive homes in 2021.

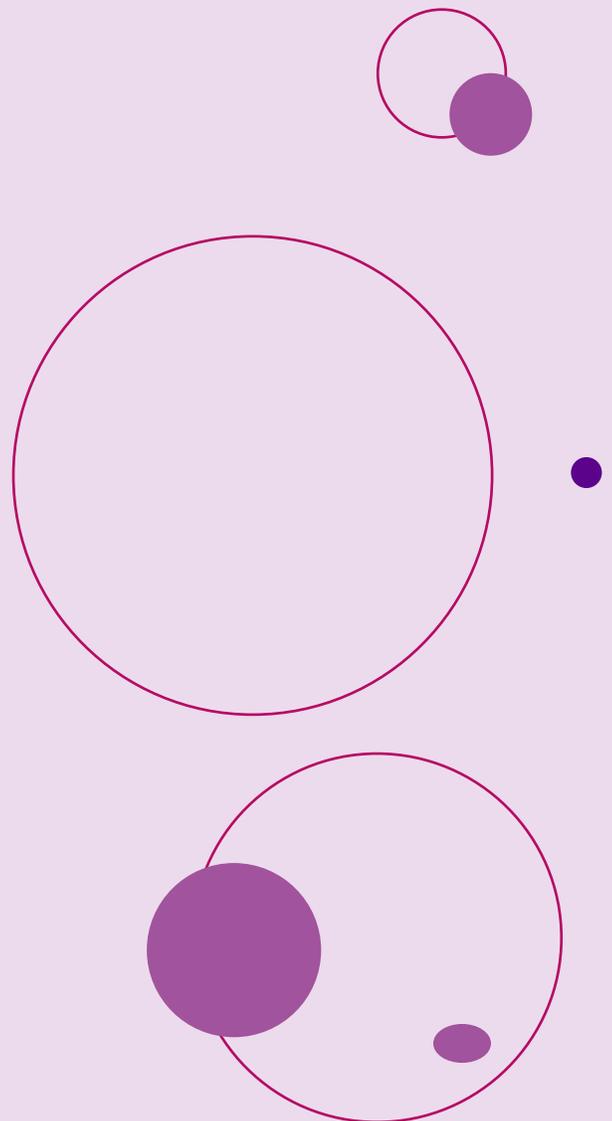
Adelphoi Village’s In-Home Prevention, Treatment and Aftercare Program works with youth and their families based on the referral reason, assessed need, and identified treatment plan goals. Youth referred to the program are adjudicated delinquent or have an open case with Children and Youth Services. The program coordinates and executes multiples services and interventions to meet the needs of youth and their families while maintaining continuity of care throughout. Some of our services include preventative or post placement care for youth with sexual issues, trauma services, preventative or post placement care for delinquent and dependent youth and family preservation services.

At Adelphoi, we understand that at-risk youth need support and tools to overcome their negative circumstances and achieve a better future. Without help, they often feel hopeless and stuck in a life of neglect, abuse, or delinquency. For over 50 years, we've been one of Pennsylvania's leading providers of youth and family services.

Adelphoi boasts a 75% program completion rate in 2021. In addition, 86% of percent of youth who successfully completed an Adelphoi program remained out of placement for at least one-year post-discharge, compared to the national average of 45%.

In 2022, Adelphoi was named Employer of the Year by the local, district and statewide Business and Professional Women's Organization. Adelphoi was also awarded Residential Program of the Year in 2022 by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission. This is the 10th time the agency has been named JCJC Program of the Year, more than any other child services provider in Pennsylvania. Further, Adelphoi has been named one of the Top 100 large-size companies for Best Leadership Team by workplace culture site Comparably. Adelphoi was selected out of 70,000 companies across the U.S. for this award, alongside companies such as Google, Microsoft, and LinkedIn.

Adelphoi offers the opportunity for youth to receive post-secondary education free of charge through the Adelphoi Promise Scholarship Program. Through this program, youth who successfully complete an Adelphoi program can receive up to two years of tuition-free education at one of the ten affiliated community colleges the agency partners with, spanning a 23-county area of Pennsylvania. The Promise program also provides financial assistance for books as well as guidance and support throughout the process provided by Adelphoi's Promise administrator.



Parent Alliance

Guest Columnist Information provided by Melissa Fawley

Do you need someone in your corner? The Parent Alliance is here for you.

Are you having trouble relating to the other moms and dads at the bus stop? Do you search aimlessly online for ways to motivate your teen to get out of bed in the morning? Are you thinking to yourself that you are the only parent dealing with the depression, anxiety, OCD, etc. that your child is struggling with? Do you feel like none of your friends get this many calls from school about their child? If any of these scenarios resonate with you we can assure you that you are far from alone.



Not only are you not alone, but the Parent Alliance is just one phone call away from being on your side, and in your corner as you navigate some of your hardest parenting journeys right here in Washington County. **By calling 570-664-8615 or visiting us [here](#) you will be connected to a Family Support Partner (FSP) who will help you help your child thrive.** There are many ways an FSP can help so we sat down with two of our incredible FSPs, Tracy and Melissa to have a discussion about the most common challenges they help parents with. *Below are the top 4 ways they shared with us on how the Parent Alliance help parents.*

1. We let you in on the ins and outs

"I hear from parents all the time who are told that their child doesn't qualify for this support or that and I'm the one who explains that that's because they need to have a medical assistance card and there's a way they can get it based on their child's diagnosis not their family's income - it's called PH95. Providers don't always take the time to explain that though. Some parents have heard about it but don't know how to apply. Some parents have started the application process but need some guidance. Everyone is on their own journey." said Tracy.

"Documentation is everything - if you didn't document it, it didn't happen. I help a lot of the parents that I work with revamp their documentation process. I explain to them that verbally asking for something from a provider isn't always not enough. You need follow up with an email so there is documentation of that request with a time stamp. I just worked with a mom who is a nurse. Every nurse knows that documentation is everything but she was so utterly overwhelmed and exhausted by the things happening at home that she didn't think she would need to carry that over to her personal life when she advocates for her child." said Tracy.

"A lot of the parents that I work with have been mistreated, misguided, and disregarded by different providers. The complaint process is not always super transparent so I help them gather together everything and properly file that complaint," said Melissa.

"A lot of my calls are about PA's Mental Health Consent Law. Act 65 of 2020 has been misinterpreted across the state and the outcome has been an absolute nightmare for parents. If you are having trouble getting your child that is over 14 mental health services please give us a call. We can help you navigate this incredibly stressful situation," said Tracy.

2. In school supports are vital

"Kids spend so much of their waking time at school. It is where they learn, where they start to figure themselves out, and where they get to interact with their peers. It is so important that your child feels supported at school." said Melissa.

"A really common thing that the Parent Alliance helps parents with is making sure that their child with a mental health challenge is appropriately supported at school. If the child has an IEP or 504 plan we can help the parent go over it. We will look for areas that may need accommodations, make sure they are actually giving the child what they need, and generally make sure the IEP is written with the child in mind. We see a lot of schools copy and paste IEPs from one student to the other and sometimes we even notice the wrong child's name is listed - that is not right. These are individual plans and we can help you make sure of that. We also have helped parents brainstorm different ideas about what is needed to help a child make progress." explained Tracy.

"I have worked with many parents on the evaluation process and have explained how, when, and why we would want to get a child evaluated. Parents may be unfamiliar with this process so it can be helpful to have someone explain what to expect and what to do to ensure that your child is getting evaluated properly." explained Melissa.

"My own child has benefited from the Student Assistance Program (SAP) at their school so I always make a note to educate parents on this resource. Every school should have a SAP program (some are named different things) and while some are better than others it could be a big help to families. A lot of parents don't know that it isn't just teachers and other students who can make a referral to SAP, they can refer their child if they feel like their child would benefit from that support.

[For more information on SAP and to read parent testimonies click here.](#)

3. We meet you where you're at - you run the show.

"Our support is 100% based on what parent's need to help their child," explained Tracy one of our Family Support Partners. "I make it a point to mention that I can work around their schedule. If a call must be bumped, I understand that. I am a parent; I know things come up last minute. Giving them that wiggle room takes some pressure off them. We are not another obligation for you - we know parents don't need another obligation." said Melissa.

Sometimes it's about taking just one thing off of a parent's mile long to-do list. "I talked to a single parent just last night. Her child is in crisis and she has a full-time job and 2 other kids to take care of. I asked her; 'Can I do some of the initial research for you? I can call places and get preliminary information. I can call the CAASP Coordinator and speak to some treatment facilities.' I am not doing it for her just taking one thing off her list. Maybe after that's off her list she will feel less overwhelmed and catch her footing." said Melissa.



"Parents are smart and resourceful - it comes with the parenting territory. A lot of parents I work with already know all these resources are available, they may be having trouble thinking

clearly. When you're under a lot of stress it's hard to think creatively or take in new complicated information. I offer a non-judgmental sounding board to reflect back their needs, concerns, etc. Often parents figure out what they need to do by just talking things through with me. They just need that safe place to think and speak freely without the fear of judgement." said Tracy.

4. You need support too

Both Tracy and Melissa agreed that judgement-free support and connection is what a lot of parents didn't even know they needed so badly when they reached out to us. "They may be calling for help with their child's behavior but when they start talking to a parent who understands that overwhelmed feeling they have - we can hear their relief in their voice. Being heard is a great feeling and I love that we can provide that kind of support to the parents we work with," said Melissa.

"We really connect through those same experiences that we have gone through. Waiting in the emergency room is not a fun at all but when you have someone who knows what it feels like to experience that and you two can make fun of the crappy hospital coffee, for a moment that helps to ease some of the tension that this parent is enduring." explained Tracy.

"Parents often do not realize that they have isolated themselves. They walk around feeling different than all the parents they see. The parents at school pick up line are no longer relatable to them because they feel like nobody else is dealing with the challenges that they are. They feel like they can't relate to their friends and family either - I have been there and it is a horrible feeling that I try to address as early as possible with parents." explained Melissa when asked how she supports the parents she works with.

"Like I mentioned, feeling isolated only makes things worse. That's why I try to let the parents I work with know about our support groups. These weekly meetings allow parents dealing with similar struggles to come together and support each other, and brainstorm together." explained Tracy. "Parents have joined the support group in tears in search of the support and understanding that they so desperately needed. Other parents join not planning on sharing but then they resonate with something and open up. It is a really wonderful, non-judgmental community of parents who just get it." said Melissa.

This is only the start of the ways the Parent Alliance can help you today. If you'd like to talk to an FSP call us at 570-664-8615, (if you prefer an 800 number you can also reach us at 888-273-2361) or visit [here](#).

This service is free and confidential for parents/primary caregivers in Washington County and there are no qualifying conditions (as well as across the state of PA).

