Hello Baby: Supporting New Parents in the Mon Valley

There is a new program on the horizon, called Hello Baby Priority, to support families who live in the Mon Valley. Hello Baby Priority offers one-on-one coaching and case management, resources and supplies, and service coordination for families of newborns along their path of parenthood. There is no question that raising children is no simple task and involves daily learning that requires patience, understanding, and growth. Hello Baby Priority aims to lend a helping hand to families with tools to support families’ basic needs, enhance parenting skills, and maximize child and family well-being, safety, and security.

So... what is Hello Baby Priority? Hello Baby Priority, a collaborative between Healthy Start and the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, is a voluntary program intended to engage and support parents of new babies with a focus on families with the most complex needs. Services are comprehensive and provided in the community and in-home. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the planned spring 2020 launch of the program was delayed; however, in the meantime, Healthy Start shifted gears quickly to provide diaper boxes and phone support to parents of newborns.

As Allegheny County continues to move forward in the green phase, Healthy Start has the “green light” to officially launch Hello Baby Priority later this summer. Preparing for launch will include a community-partnered communications strategy roll-out, where we will engage with Mon Valley residents and community based organizations to determine how to shape a program that best meets the unique needs of Mon Valley families. More information on these meetings will be posted in July on Healthy Start’s website and social media pages (www.healthystartpittsburgh.org).

Want to join our effort? We are hiring additional team members to fill the positions of two Moving Beyond Depression Clinicians, a Nurse, a Fatherhood Coordinator, a Family Engagement Specialist. We are also looking for a Mon Valley Community Champion. This is a unique community-based paid position whose role is to inspire, inform and encourage the community to welcome and support families with new babies. Champions are trained to be leaders in their local area. They take action to improve the conditions of their community, with a focus building safe, supported, and healthy communities, families, and children. The Champion also rallies fellow community members to challenge systems that create poor health outcomes within their own communities. For more information and how to apply to any of these open positions, visit: https://healthystartpittsburgh.org/employment-2/.

The Communicator is the official newsletter of the Mon Valley Providers Council (MVPC), an alliance of over 70 human service agencies serving more than 37 communities in the Mon Valley of Allegheny County. The MVPC is a program of the Human Services Center, a United Way Agency. To learn more about the MVPC, our member agencies, and their services, read this edition and visit our website at www.hscc-mvpc.org.

A copy of the official registration and financial information of the Human Services Center Corp. can be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.
Employment Assistance Available Virtually through PA CareerLink

Pennsylvania CareerLink® offices provide free employment and training services to the community. The recent health concerns caused the PA CareerLink® office of Allegheny East to temporarily close their physical doors to the public in March 2020, however, services remain available to those who can connect virtually! Connect with the PA CareerLink® by phone, email or through the website to access these virtual services.

Please note: we offer Priority of Service to veterans and eligible spouses. The first step is to identify yourself as a veteran or a spouse to a team member. Priority service means first opportunity to register for events and individual appointments to discuss employment needs, as well as respectful and friendly services from our team when discussing your personal information. Additionally, we have staff dedicated to assisting veterans and eligible spouses by offering case management and referral services.

Job seekers can learn about opportunities across all industries and gain access to assistance to connect with employers. Career Advisors are available to help job seekers navigate the current market. Speaking directly with a career advisor provides an opportunity to learn about training programs or other educational opportunities tailored to specific career goals.

Training opportunities are a great way to increase a job seeker’s chance of obtaining the job they want. Participate in digital workshops and webinars to assist with resume writing or practicing interview skills. While some workshops occur in real time, many have been pre-recorded, so they are accessible at any time for further learning.

Business Services are available to local employers who require assistance growing their workforce. Find qualified candidates for open positions or find out about funding opportunities to help train new hires. Connecting with an Account Manager will provide a business with access to a candidate who can help grow an efficient workforce.

Keeping customers connected to updates and new information is made easier with a new Bi-Weekly Newsletter “Link by Link.” Job seekers can stay informed and up to date regarding the CareerLink office status, new job opportunities, upcoming events, links to resources and more. The staff at PA CareerLink® Allegheny East is also available to connect individuals with other essential resources such as food access, housing assistance, childcare services, translation services for non-English speaking individuals and more. An updated list of available resources is included in each issue of the “Link by Link” newsletter.

Use the website www.careerlinkpittsburgh.org to search for local job opportunities, see upcoming events, access our newsletter and get updates about the reopening of the PA CareerLink® Allegheny East office. Reach the PA CareerLink® by phone or email to take advantage of all these resources (412-436-2225 or info.allegheny@careerlinkpittsburgh.org).

TCV Community Services Update

TCV Community Services is still open for business! If you or someone you know is experiencing anxiety, isolation, or other issues, call us.

We have changed from an office-based service to telehealth (phone and video counseling) as a result of the Governor’s order. We are using precautions during the “green” phase to ensure we can conduct business practicing social distancing – thus continuing to provide primary telehealth services, with plans to safely open. So, we are still here for you. Our Mental health, drug and alcohol, case management, and many other services are available. Please call us with concerns and to schedule intake or reschedule with any of our staff at 412-351-0222.

-Thank you, Management of TCV Community Services
Help in Stressful Times

Many people are experiencing extremely high levels of stress, anxiety, trauma, and loss because of COVID-19 and the ongoing struggles around racial injustice. Auberle is here to support you during this time. Services currently being offered include outpatient mental health and outpatient drug and alcohol services for children, adolescents, adults, and families. Please contact Auberle’s Behavioral Health Program at 412-673-5856 ext. 1214 to receive help for yourself or to make a referral.

Environmental Job Training Program

Are you interested in becoming a leader and being part of environmental change in Allegheny County? If so, consider applying for Auberle’s Environmental Jobs Program. Designed for individuals 18 and older with a High School Diploma/GED living in Allegheny County, the Auberle Employment Institute’s Environmental Jobs Program prepares participants for careers in environmental remediation and hazardous waste removal. Participants receive certifications in OSHA 40 HAZWOPER, 32 Hour Asbestos Abatement Worker, Lead Awareness, Confined Space Entry, OSHA 10, and First Aid/CPR. Throughout the program, participants have access to case management and the Employment Institute’s supportive services including job application assistance and soft skill development, to ensure they are workplace ready for employment at one of our environmental remediation employer partners.

If you, or someone you know is interested in participating in our August 2020 cohort, contact Abby Wolensky at 412-673-5856 ext 1317 or abbyw@auberle.org. For information on additional employment training programs, please visit https://www.auberle.org/employment-institute.

Foster Care Families Needed

Is there room in your heart and family for a child in need? There is a growing need for individuals, couples, or families willing to open their hearts and homes to children and teenagers through foster care. These children need someone who will welcome them into a safe and loving home. Auberle’s Foster Care program is the largest non-kinship Foster Care program in Allegheny County. The children vary in age from newborns to 21 years old. Auberle believes all children deserve families and we work with our families to address any unique medical, development, or behavior issues a child might have. Additionally, Auberle teaches Foster Parents everything they will need to know to care for a foster child.

If you are interested in helping a child in need, please contact Auberle’s Foster Care Recruiter, Jeanne, at 412-779-0322.

AIDS Free Pittsburgh Community Survey

AIDS Free Pittsburgh is currently seeking community input about how we can work together to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The information collected in this anonymous online survey will be used to inform the project’s strategic direction over the next five years (2021-2025). All Allegheny County residents are encouraged to participate. The survey can be taken at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AFP2020survey.

New Online GED Classes at Goodwill

Goodwill of SWPA

Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania is now offering free online GED classes to help students improve their education from the comfort and safety of their own home. Goodwill’s classes prepare students to take a high school equivalency test (GED® or HiSET) so they can earn their Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma.

All classes incorporate reading comprehension and math computation, help students build and master academic language and reasoning within the subject areas on the Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies tests.

To find out how to get started, call 1-877-499-3526 or visit www.goodwillswpa.org/education.

Now Recruiting, Spaces Limited!

Rainbow Kitchen

Rainbow Kitchen Community Services Personal Paths Program is NOW RECRUITING!

Individuals who want to improve their overall quality of life!

We help participants with: Developing and carrying out an individualized goal plan, connecting with appropriate community resources, submitting SNAP, TANF, and Medical Assistance applications, creating a monthly budget, obtaining a credit score and/or credit report, finding employment or better employment opportunities AND provide the support and guidance needed for you to reach your goals.

Space is limited so call Renee TODAY at (412)464-1892 or email renee.conte@rainbowkitchen.org to talk about enrolling!
Allegheny County Health Department

The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is partnering with local and national partners to address differences in health for African-American communities as part of the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) Program. This program is funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The program works with many partners to improve nutrition, increase breastfeeding, increase physical activity and connect people to health services. Services are available in the Mon Valley.

Partners include the Allegheny County Economic Development Department, Duquesne University School of Pharmacy, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, Healthy Start, Inc., Just Harvest, Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, Pittsburgh Black Breastfeeding Circle, The Food Trust, YMCA, UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, and dozens of community partners.

The REACH partners focus on the following areas: nutrition, physical activity, and access to care. In the area of nutrition, members will work to help small businesses and corner stores buy healthy foods, create nutrition guidelines for organizations, increase EBT/SNAP access at Farmers’ Markets and Farm Stands, and offer breastfeeding support. In the area of physical activity, the coalition will offer exercise classes for African-American residents of all ages, such as partners in the Mon Valley. Women Empowered for Entrepreneurial Excellence is hosting live workouts in the Facebook Group Pathway to Fitness 4x per day. Youth Opportunities Development/Grind Hard are also sharing sessions on their Facebook and YouTube channels.

The coalition will also work to make communities more walking and biking friendly.

The program is expanding the use of pharmacists to refer people to community-based health programs. Residents may participate in health screenings and preventive care programs offered by the Duquesne University School of Pharmacy and the YMCA, all at no cost. Additionally, the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is educating healthcare providers on food insecurity.

If you have questions about your health and medications, Duquesne University Center for Integrative Health is conducting virtual screenings. Meet with a pharmacist and ask about asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. You can also receive help accessing medications. Call 412.396.2155 or email cpu@duq.edu. For more information about virtual smoking cessation classes please call or text 412.342.8276.

For more information please visit www.livewellallegheny.com/
Op-Ed

Brewster: Bolster Recovery, Address Health Risks

Senator Jim Brewster
Since the beginning of Pennsylvania’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a need to protect lives while looking toward the future when the economy could reopen.

It has always been my view that we could aggressively meet the challenge of COVID-19 by following responsible health rules and social distancing while ratcheting up our testing capabilities to address spikes once the disease threat was mitigated.

Gov. Tom Wolf acted decisively early on to protect Pennsylvanians. His actions, in concert with the collective effort of the citizens of Pennsylvania to practice social distancing and follow health guidance, can be credited for getting the pandemic under control and saving lives.

Since then significant progress has been made in controlling the spread. We have moved into a phased reopening that has sought to reengage the economy while monitoring the disease.

At the beginning of the pandemic, I recognized that our workers and businesses would need help to jump start the recovery once the health risk was mitigated. That is why, in mid-March, I offered a detailed 6-point stimulus plan to kick start the economy and bring jobs back. Several of the pieces of this plan have been enacted on the federal and state levels.

The federal government included a form of the unemployment compensation booster that I called for in my stimulus plan. These temporary payments were designed to bridge the transition period between layoffs and a return to work and put dollars into the pockets of workers who lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

In addition, aligned with what was called for in my stimulus plan, the federal government’s CARES Act included billions to help businesses come rapidly up to speed, rehire workers and create new work opportunities. On the state level, we responded with a $225 million infusion of dollars to aid business funded through federal CARES dollars. These funds are designed to help cover costs and expenses and put businesses on a more solid footing as the economy becomes reengaged.

As important, in April, I again offered my specific thoughts on a phased, responsible reopening plan so we could begin a dialogue about how best to reignite the economy while we protect our citizens.

Throughout the pandemic, it was critical that we push to safely reopen while we protect our citizens from the pandemic. To me, these objectives were not mutually exclusive. My belief was, and still is, that we can bring our economy back strong and remain diligent about quickly responding if COVID-19 cases spike.

Our citizens have worked hard to stop the spread of the disease, and now we must work just as hard to ensure that our economy can reopen safely, securely and without imperiling our most vulnerable.

The plans I offered earlier this year to protect our citizens and workers and help our economy rebound were guides for policymakers to follow. Now that we’ve moved forward, we must continue to join together in addressing health risks while our men and women return to the economy.

Program for Incoming High School Seniors

Do you want your teen to have a set plan for after graduation? Do you want your senior to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to move on to a successful life after high school? Then the Human Services Center Corporation’s Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) may be a perfect fit!

ELP is a very successful workforce development and college readiness program for seniors attending East Allegheny, McKeesport Area, Penn Hills, West Mifflin Area, and Woodland Hills High Schools that is incorporated into the students’ school day. Participants attend a weekly session during the school day where they are instructed in a curriculum specifically created for seniors to prepare them for success after high school. A variety of professionals present to the class throughout the year on their career fields and personal development as well as students are matched to job shadowing opportunities. Outside of the classroom, participants work one-on-one with a staff person to receive highly individualized attention and support in their pursuit of their goals. They create goal plans and refer to the plans throughout the year to stay on track. Plus, participants will have the chance to earn money periodically based on participation and goal completion throughout the school year and post-graduation.

There will be limited spots available and your family must meet the designated requirements to participate. If you or your teen would like to hear more details about the program and/or apply, please call 412-829-7112 or visit our website at www.hscc-mvpc.org to download an application. You can also email Loreilly@hscc-mvpc.org for more information or to receive an application. Spots fill up very quickly! Apply as soon as possible!
Services at the Human Services Center
The Westinghouse Valley Human Services Center, located at 519 Penn Avenue in Turtle Creek, provides a variety of services to residents in eastern Allegheny County communities and the Westinghouse/Turtle Creek Valley.

- The Braddock Carnegie Library – Turtle Creek Extension is open to the public and has full access to the Carnegie Library system. Call 412-829-7112 for hours of operation.
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate Applications, PACE/PACENET, ACCESS applications, Senior Bus Pass Applications, PennDOT forms and assistance with state related issues: State Senator Jim Brewster’s office can complete state related forms and provide assistance on the first Thursday of each month from 1:00pm – 4:00pm. Call 412-829-7112 for more information.
- Turtle Creek Development Corporation meets on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 5:30pm at the Human Services Center (519 Penn Avenue). Call 412-484-4000 for more information.
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): AA has a support group at the Center every Friday at 7:00pm. Call 412-824-1958.
- Youth LIFE After-School Program begins in September. Youth LIFE After-School Program serves 100 youth going into first through fifth grade. For more information, contact 412-829-7112.
- KOOL Summer Program serves 150 youth going into first through fifth grade in the Fall. For more information, contact 412-829-7112.
- The Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) is a workforce development and college readiness program for seniors in the East Allegheny, McKeesport Area, West Mifflin Area, Woodland Hills, and Penn Hills High Schools. For more information, contact 412-829-7112.
- Supports for Success helps individuals seeking to achieve self-sufficiency through employment and/or education by providing referrals and guidance. For more information, call 412-829-7112.
- Free Tax Preparation is available for individuals with low income. For more information, call 412-829-7112.

Tenant Agencies at the Human Services Center
Adagio Health
412-349-4156
Allegheny County Health Dept. – W.I.C. Program
412-829-1333
Allegheny Intermediate Unit – Community School
East
412-464-4043
Braddock Carnegie Library – Turtle Creek Extension
412-829-7112
Early Learning Resource Center
412-350-3577
Eastern Area Adult Services
412-824-6880
Healthy Start
412-247-4009
Human Services Center Corporation
412-829-7112
Learn “N” Play Development Center
412-829-0240
Literacy Pittsburgh
412-369-8486
Mon Valley Providers Council
412-829-7112
Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs
412-824-0006
TCV Community Services
412-824-8510

About the Mon Valley Providers Council
Our Mission: The Mon Valley Providers Council (MVPC), in collaboration with individuals, families, and groups in the Mon Valley communities, will define and address mutual issues and needs. Building upon the providers and communities, the MVPC will promote agendas and develop resources for collective action.

Who We Are: The MVPC, a program of the Human Services Center, is an alliance of human service and related organizations, which are based in or have a substantial service presence in the Mon Valley. The MVPC serves as a formal network for information and resource exchange among human service providers in the Mon Valley. The MVPC involves its member organizations in Working Groups which address crucial issues in the Mon Valley in the areas of Employment and Training, Health, Housing, and Youth. These four Working Groups involve the participation of over 70 dues-paying members and over 250 staff members of those organizations. Through these standing Working Groups, the MVPC promotes cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among member and participating organizations in an effort to fill gaps in human services in the Mon Valley communities.

Staff: The MVPC is staffed through the Human Services Center. Current MVPC staff are: Dave Coplan, Director Elizabeth Fries, Outreach Coordinator

Leadership in the MVPC: Steering Committee
Laura Zinski, Chairperson, Mon Valley Initiative • Darla Poole, Vice Chairperson, Auberle • Keelleigh Bolland, Jefferson Regional Foundation • Eric Ewell, Penn State Greater Allegheny • Devon Goetz, Auberle • Christine Zelzafrow, Mon Young Community Services • Tiffanie Heywood, Goodwill of Southwestern PA • Shari Holland, UPMC McKeesport/Letterman Health Clinic • Dean Join, CCAC South • Elli Latterman, McKeesport Hospital Foundation • Paula McWilliams, Heritage Community Initiatives • Charlene Newkirk, CCAC Southeast Campuses • James Phillips, TCV Community Services • Lisa Scales, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank • Bob Sukolsky, AHN • Forbes Family Medicine • Lynn Tatala, AIU Project ELECT • Nancy Osterhuis, Ex-Officio Member

Communities Served by the MVPC
- Braddock
- Braddock Hills
- Clairton
- Dravosburg
- Duquesne
- East McKeesport
- East Pittsburgh
- Elizabeth Borough
- Elizabeth Township
- Forest Hills
- Forward Township
- Glassport
- Homestead
- Jefferson Hills
- Liberty
- Lincoln
- McKeesport
- Monroeville
- Munhall
- North Braddock
- North Versailles
- Penn Hills
- Ptitcairn
- Port Vue
- Rankin
- South Versailles
- Swissvale
- Turtle Creek
- Versailles
- Wall
- West Elizabeth
- West Homestead
- West Mifflin
- Whitaker
- White Oak
- Wilkins
- Wilmerding

- Adagio Health
- AHN - Forbes Family Medicine
- Allegheny County Health Department
- Allegheny County Juvenile Probation
- Allegheny Family Network
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Community School East
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Head Start
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Project ELECT
- Allons for Health + Wellbeing
- AmeriCorps
- CCAC - Boyce Campus
- CCAC - South Campus
- Center for Victims
- Century Heritage Federal Credit Union
- Clairton Family Center
- Communities in Schools of Pittsburgh & Allegheny County
- Discovery House
- Duquesne Family Center
- Duquesne Family Support Center
- East Allegheny Family Center
- Eastern Area Adult Services
- Economic Development South
- Every Child, Inc.
- Family Resources
- Forbes Hospital
- Fund My Future
- Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
- Gwen’s Girls
- Healthy Start, Inc.
- Heritage Community Initiatives
- Highlands Family Center
- Human Services Center Corporation
- Jefferson Hospital
- Jefferson Regional Foundation
- Just Harvest
- Latino Family Center
- Lincoln Park Family Center
- Literacy Pittsburgh
- Macedonia FAJE, Inc.
- McKeesport Family Center
- McKeesport Hospital Foundation
- Mental Health America of Southwest PA
- Methodist Union of Social Agencies (MUSA)
- Mon Valley Initiative
- Mon Young Area Chamber of Commerce
- Mon Young Community Services, Inc.
- PA CareerLink at Allegheny East
- Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs
- Penn State Greater Allegheny
- Rainbow Kitchen Community Services
- Rankin Christian Center
- Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh
- State Senator Jay Costa
- State Senator Jim Brewster
- Steel Valley Family Center
- Sto-Rox Family Center
- TCV Community Services
- Touching Families, Inc.
- University of Pittsburgh – School of Social Work
- UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh Family Care Connection in Braddock/Rankin
- UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh Family Care Connection in Turtle Creek
- UPMC McKeesport
- Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania
- Wesley Family Services
- Wilkinsburg Family Center
- Women for a Healthy Environment
- YWCA Greater Pittsburgh

Tenants served by the MVPC: Steering Committee
Adagio Health
Allegheny County Health Dept.
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Early Learning Resource Center
Eastern Area Adult Services
Healthy Start
Human Services Center Corp
Learn “N” Play Development Center
Literacy Pittsburgh
Mon Valley Providers Council
Pantry Network of Eastern Suburbs
TCV Community Services

2020 Membership Listing for the MVPC
- Adagio Health
- AHN - Forbes Family Medicine
- Allegheny County Health Department
- Allegheny County Juvenile Probation
- Allegheny Family Network
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Community School East
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Head Start
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit - Project ELECT
- Allons for Health + Wellbeing
- AmeriCorps
- CCAC - Boyce Campus
- CCAC - South Campus
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- Century Heritage Federal Credit Union
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