Nancy Thaler retires; Kristin Ahrens named Acting Deputy

From Nancy: “Dear friends and colleagues: I am writing to tell you that I am retiring from state government at the end of August. While it is difficult to walk away, it is time for me to make a change.”

Kristin Ahrens will serve as Acting Deputy Secretary. Kristin is knowledgeable about all of ODP’s programs and is well known to those in the service system. She has been instrumental in developing the Everyday Lives recommendations, the ODP waivers and fee schedule, and has been responsible for training, quality and communications.

Kristin is honored to step into her new role, and will continue to follow the recommendations and strategies outlined in Everyday Lives.

Change Your Future – Choose Work!

With the right planning, the future is bright for youth/young adults with disabilities. It is scary to think about what is next after school ends, but getting a job or continuing your education is exciting! That is why planning early for what you want to do when you graduate is so important.

In special education “transition” refers to a specific process of getting ready for life as an adult. In Pennsylvania, the transition process begins when you turn 14. Let’s face it, this is your future! You need to be involved, you need experiences, you need to explore your interests, and you need to understand your abilities/disabilities.

Your community holds resources for your future. Figuring out what is out there is an ongoing process. The process begins in childhood and continues throughout life. Kids and young adults need multiple opportunities to research and try out various careers. This can occur through experiences such as job shadowing, assessments, career research, volunteering, interning, community-based work experiences and paid jobs.
Change your Future – Choose Work! (Continued)

The transition to an adult life can also involve connecting with agencies that can fund and provide services. Services may include furthering your education, job training and job coaching, supported employment, and customized employment.

Concerned about working and losing benefits – not a problem! Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) is available. It is a statewide service designated to help you understand work incentives available under the SSI and SSDI programs. You can contact a Community Work Incentive Counselor (CWIC) and discuss how working will impact your benefits. 1-866-968-7842

Connecting the DOTS

Rules have changed in 2018 about how some services can be provided. There are more services available to support people in their own homes and to be as independent as possible. Join Dauphin County MH/ID and CMU to learn more about these changes!

(Multiple Providers will be present)

October 18, 2018

Two sessions are available please choose one

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location is CMU, 1100 S. Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104

RSVP by October 12, 2018

Cheryl Pfingstl 717-780-7050