Meet Our Staff

Michaela Smith – Director
Michaela Smith has been working with Access Services for 19 years, since 1998, after graduating from Penn State University. She has worked in various mental health youth and young adult serving systems throughout the years and currently oversees the family support programs at Access Services, since 2014. When Michaela is not running young ones between baseball games and school functions throughout Bucks County, her family spends their down time camping and visiting with friends and family who are scattered around the East Coast.

Chris Sandy – Certified Peer Specialist
Chris Sandy was born in Florida and subsequently grew up within the Warminster area and graduated from William Tennent High School. Some of Chris’ family members struggled with mental health, and having his own difficulties, motivated him to guide others toward their own wellness through his own lived experience. Chris has been mentoring young people within the mental health field for over ten years through various initiatives including Ending the Silence and My LIFE. Outside of his certified peer specialist role, Chris spends his time rooting for the Phillies, and My LIFE. Throughout Bucks County, her family spends their free time playing board games and listening to music.

Pam Keddie – Administrative Case Manager
Pam joined Bucks County LIFE over two years ago after spending time working in the educational and case management field. Pam loves being part of a team of individuals who all have the same goal of making sure the youth and families we work with receive appropriate services and information. During her off time she enjoys spending time with her middle daughters. During her off time she enjoys spending time with her middle daughters.

Denise Hooper – Family Support Specialist
Denise has worked for the Bucks County LIFE Program for almost 12 years. She loves working with communities,” notes Barbara J. Miller, Children’s Services Director at Bucks County Department of Mental Health/Developmental Programs. “Most people know how to recognize and appropriately react to medical emergencies, but there is little knowledge in the general public about what to do in a mental health crisis. We are hoping to reach a broad audience by offering tailored trainings to specific groups and organizations throughout the County.”

Mental Health First Aid™ is an 8-hour training course designed to give members of the public key skills to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The new instructors are certified to teach the 8-hour program to a variety of audiences, ranging from parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens. The goal is to provide clear guidelines as to how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. The instructor certification training was conducted by the National Council for Behavioral Health, who manages the program across the US along with the states of Maryland and Missouri.

Included on SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence Based Programs and Practices, studies show that training in Mental Health First Aid™ builds confidence in helping an individual experiencing a mental health challenge, reduces negative or distancing attitudes towards individuals with mental illnesses, and increases mental health literacy – being able to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders.

The trainings are made possible by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and there is no cost to attend a training. The County is working with Access Services, Inc. to schedule YMHFA trainings. To learn more regarding YMHFA and register for a training or find a course near you, go to www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org, and select the tab, ‘find a course.’ To learn more about local trainings, you can also contact:

Michaela Smith: 215-450-7511
Pamela Keddie: 215-407-8594

Text “Food”
If you have a school-aged student in need of breakfast and lunch this summer, simply text “FOOD” to 877877 and receive a message back with a location closest to where they can get free summer meals. This is a nationwide program for children who are struggling to get enough food. Even if you aren’t in need, someone else’s kids are. No child deserves to go hungry, ever.

Bucks LIFE On Social Media
Twitter: @AccessServicesPA
Facebook: www.facebook.com/accessservices
Instagram: @accesservespa

Check out our website www.lifeinbucks.org and join our email list to receive updates on monthly parent/professional workshop trainings, youth events, and family community events.
Grab Your Card and Go

It’s easier than ever for Pennsylvania ACCESS Cardholders to visit museums with their family and friends. Simply show your ACCESS/EBT Card paired with a valid form of photo identification when purchasing your general admission ticket, pay the discounted rate of $2, and enjoy your visit!

Share Your Experience

Share stories and photos about your museum trips on social media, and hear what other art-loving ACCESS Cardholders are up to!

The Nitty Gritty Details

Visitors must present a valid ACCESS/EBT Card along with a photo ID to receive the discount. One (1) ACCESS Card admits up to four (4) family members—including the cardholder—at a rate of $2 per person, at the participating venues listed below.

Admission is to be paid by the visitor, not through their EBT card. The ACCESS admission discount is not valid on special exhibitions or features, or with any other offers or group rates. For more information, please visit www.art-reach.org.

Participating Museums

Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University  
American Swedish Historical Museum  
Barnes Foundation  
Betsy Ross House  
Brandywine River Museum  
Christ Church and Christ Church Burial Ground  
Eastern State Penitentiary  
FringeArts  
Grumblethorpe  
Independence Seaport Museum  
Insectarium & Butterfly Pavilion  
James A. Michener Art Museum  
Longwood Gardens  
Magellan Healthcare  
Mutter Museum  
National Constitution Center  
National Liberty Museum  
National Museum of American Jewish History  
Penn Museum  
Philadelphia Academy of the Fine Arts  
Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Philadelphia's Magic Gardens  
Physick House  
Powel House  
Shofuso Japanese House and Garden  
The Franklin Institute  
Tyler Arboretum  
Waynesborough  
Wharton Esherick Museum  
Woodmere Art Museum

How We Can Help:

- Parent and mentorship support
- Helpful resources for you and your child
- Referral to other services as needed
- Training and information
- Specialized care

Bucks County Life:
Courtyard at Ivyland
882 Jacksonville Road, Suite 203
Ivyland, PA 18974
1.888.442.1590 (toll free)
215.259.1974 (fax)
BucksLife@accessservices.org
www.accessservices.org
www.LifeInBucks.org

Upcoming Events

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)
Whose Invited: Parents, Guardians, and Professionals
Date/Time: August 16, 2017, 9:00am-5:00pm
Location: Bucks County LIFE Office
882 Jacksonville Rd, Suite 203
Ivyland, PA 18974

Open House and Networking Event
Whose Invited: Parents, Guardians, and Professionals
Date/Time: August 29, 2017, 1:00pm-4:00pm
Location: Bucks County LIFE Office
882 Jacksonville Rd, Suite 203
Ivyland, PA 18974

My Fest, 7th Annual Event
Whose Invited: Youth, Young Adults, and Families
Date/Time: September 23, 2017, 12:00pm – 4:00pm
Location: Rose Tree Park
1671 N. Providence Road
Media, PA 19063

*Please contact the Bucks LIFE Office for additional information or to register for a training. Additional information will be sent closer to the event.
1-888-442-1590

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