

LOCAL DISTRICT SELF-ASSESSMENT  
CONNECTIONS BUILD 16

**SAMPLE – For Illustration Purposes Only**

**Background**

Build 16 consists of enhancements to tabs on the Child Protective Record Summary (CPRS) and Investigation Conclusion window as well as new functionality that pertain to Safety Assessment, Risk Assessment Profile and Progress Notes. Build 16 is the first component of the Case and Financial Management functionality that will be continued into Builds 18-19.

This self-assessment is designed to focus the attention of local districts on planning to implement Build 16 as well as on early readiness activities to prepare for future changes. Each self-assessment item listed below is stated as a benchmark. The district should assess its current state of readiness in comparison to each benchmark. The “gap” between current readiness and the benchmark should be noted in the space provided under each item. The action steps to be taken to eliminate the “gap” should be noted in the space provided at the end of each section.

The district’s Implementation Coordinator and Implementation Team should conduct this self-assessment. The team should consist of a cross section of staff that are affected by Build 16 functionality Child Protective staff as well as staff that provide ongoing services in order to familiarize these staff with the planning steps they will take to prepare for future builds. This work team should meet at least bi-weekly to monitor progress toward achieving the action items as well as to update the self-assessment as needed.

CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation staff are available to facilitate and support work team meetings as well as help arrange for training or technical support in any area where the agency’s self assessment determines a need for such assistance. Local Districts are encouraged to contact regional implementation coordinators, listed at the end of this assessment to request such assistance.

**Section I – Organizing the Implementation of Build 16 and Future Builds**

1. The district has designated an Implementation Coordinator and afforded that person the responsibility and authority necessary to prepare the district for implementation. (See Role of Implementation Coordinator in the Implementation section of the OCFS\CONNECTIONS web page).

Gap:

**The previous Implementation Coordinator retired; need to designate a replacement and consider the guidelines for role of the Implementation Coordinator**

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2. The district has formed an Implementation Team to support the Implementation Coordinator. At a minimum, the team consists of representatives of the following:

- Child Protective Services
- Foster Care
- Preventive Services
- Adoption
- Staff Development
- LAN/Security Coordination

Gap:

**Current team includes services staff from CPS unit only; need to include Foster care Preventive and Adoption staff**

3. The district has identified staff to serve as “helpers” to support other staff through the implementation of Build 16. The district has plans to reduce the routine workload of “helpers” to enable them to assist other staff.

Gap:

**For Build 16, the district does not believe they need to assign staff as formal Helpers, due to the small number of staff and the natural tendencies of some workers to assume the role of helpers; this position will need to be re-evaluated for Builds 18 and 19**

<b>Section I Action Items</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due</b>
Designate a replacement and consider the guidelines for role of the Implementation Coordinator.	Executive staff	2 weeks
Ensure that the Implementation team includes staff from the Foster Care Preventive and Adoption units.	Implementation Coordinator	1 month

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**Section II – General Readiness Issues**

1. Key staff responsible for Child Protective Services have a basic understanding of the enhancements and new functionality introduced with Build 16 through one or more of the following:

- Attendance at Regional Forums, NYPWA presentations
- Review of material posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet Site
- Participation in the RAP pilot
- Meeting with Connections regional implementation staff

Gap:

**District staff will not attend NYPWA conference due to budget constraints**

**Staff do not routinely review the CONNECTIONS web site**

**Staff will attend the WEB RAP training, but the administrative staff have not set a date for the implementation of the new practice**

2. Planning to implement Build 16 takes into account the impact of other changes that are affecting the district, such as:

- Agency reorganization
- Budget constraints
- Staff turnover
- Changes in caseloads or service demand
- Concurrent major initiatives

Gap:

**30% of CPS positions are vacant with an anticipated additional loss of 10% in the Fall. Managers are concerned that the vacancies combined with the impacts of the implementation of Build 16 will create overdue determinations**

3. District Administrators have explained changes to CPS documentation and processes to key external stakeholders, such as

- Courts, attorneys
- Funding bodies, financial management agencies
- Agency partners, community groups, advocacy groups
- Voluntary Agencies, Preventive Services providers
- Labor organizations, professional organizations
- Families, clients

Gap:

**The district has not shared any information about the changes in Build 16 with any external stakeholders.**

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4. The district has a plan to assure that all CPS staff (and support staff, if appropriate) receives CONNECTIONS Build 16 regional lab training.

Gap:

**District staff must cover their own expenses when they travel to Albany for training (lunch and parking) and the district has concerns about the personal expenses incurred by the caseworkers**

<b>Section II Action Items</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due</b>
Arrange for OCFS Regional Office staff to present a demonstration of Build16 functionality to casework and administrative staff. Conduct a training session on using the OCFS/CONNECTIONS Web site. Conduct meeting within one week after completion of the WEB RAP training to set a date for implementation of the new procedures.	Services Director  Staff Development Coordinator Service Director and CPS supervisors	September 30, 2003  July 31, 2003 August 31, 2003
Assess the impact that Build 16 activities have on the overdue rate. Propose alternatives to manage workload, such as: reassigning staff, requesting overtime, requesting approval to fill vacancies.	CPS Supervisor  Services Director	September 15, 2003 September 30, 2003
Meet with attorney to explain Build 16 changes and decide when to inform the judge.	Services Director	August 31, 2003
Assist staff with organizing carpooling for Albany training sessions and explore the feasibility of attending trainings held in alternate locations. Contact CONNECTIONS training team to be considered for mobile lab training for future builds.	Staff Development Coordinator  Staff Development Coordinator	July 31, 2003  August 31, 2003

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**Section III – Staff Computer Literacy**

Build 16 most directly affects CPS staff who are already familiar with CONNECTIONS functionality. The requirement to produce safety assessment and progress note narratives into CONNECTIONS, however, may necessitate the enhancement of computer literacy skills of some CPS staff. In addition, since this skill will be required of preventive services, foster care and adoption staff in the not too distant future, it is recommended that the local district assess the computer literacy of all casework staff. A more detailed tool to that districts may wish to use to assess staff's computer literacy is attached to this self-assessment.

1. The district has communicated the expectation that staff, including workers that perform foster care preventive services, and adoption, perform/document work using available functionality within CONNECTIONS.

Gap:

**No requirement to document work on the computer exists.**

2. Staff are familiar with word processing functionality and take advantage of such tools as cut and paste, spell check, formatting, etc.

Gap:

**Many, but not all staff, have keyboarding and word processing skills.**

3. CPS workers utilize the Notes tab in the current CPRS to record progress notes. Workers that perform on-going case management services utilize State or local templates for the Uniform Case Record and progress notes. Staff file these documents in the system using standard filing conventions to enable access by authorized staff.

Gap:

**About 75% of the staff routinely use the CPRS Notes tab. Less than 50% are using the electronic UCR**

4. Staff are familiar with how to access On-line Help and will be able to take advantage of new context sensitive Help embedded on all CPRS Tabs. Staff know where to direct technical questions.

Gap:

**Very few staff use either of these features**

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5. Where deemed necessary, the district has developed a procedure governing the entry of safety assessment and progress notes narratives by support staff utilizing new the new business function available in Build 16.

Gap:

**No procedure exists for this practice**

<b>Section III Action Items</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due</b>
Develop a policy requiring all staff to perform and document their work on the computer.	Services Director	Sept. 1, 2003
Arrange for basic keyboarding and word processing tutorials and classes for staff who need this.	Staff Development	July 1, 2003
Monitor the use of the computer for work once the new policy is implemented.	Supervisors	Post Sept 1, 2003
Arrange training for staff on the Help features.	Staff Development	July 15, 2003
Evaluate the need for support staff to have the new business function.	Services Director	Nov. 15, 2003

**Section IV – Data Clean-up**

Build 16 will be implemented statewide on a single date. Familial investigations assigned as of that date will employ the “new” functionality while those in process as of that date will continue with the “old” functionality. To minimize the confusion inherent in working in “two worlds,” districts should work to minimize the number of open stages on the date of implementation by cleaning up any overdue stages. Districts should also take this opportunity to minimize the number of duplicate persons that exist on the database.

1. The district utilizes OCI reports to closely monitor the timely completion of CPS investigations. The district has a plan to complete any overdue stages.

Gap:

**The Services Director monitors the timely completion of CPS investigations but has not developed specific goals and timeframes to eliminate overdue determinations.**

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2. The district has organized a clean up of duplicate persons in the database using data available in the Data warehouse to identify potential duplicate persons. The district has communicated a clear expectation to look for and merge duplicate persons upon case assignment.

Gap:

**The district is not using data available in the Data Warehouse to identify potential duplicate persons but caseworkers look for and merge duplicate persons upon case assignment.**

<b>Section IV Action Items</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due</b>
Develop goals and milestones for monitoring overdue determinations.	Services Director	July 15, 2003
Request technical assistance from the CONNECTIONS Regional Office on how to get the needed Data Warehouse reports.	Staff Development Coordinator	July 5, 2003

**Section V – Program and Operational Considerations**

1. The district has reviewed, and as appropriate revised local procedures to reflect changes to safety and risk assessments, including:
- More refined safety decisions
  - The approval of the risk assessment relative to the approval of the investigation
  - The review of a decision to close a case where risk has been assessed as “high” or “very high”

Gap:

**The Services Director and CPS supervisors have begun discussions on these items but have not yet developed formal policies and procedures.**

2. The district has a plan to use risk ratings to prioritize which families receive services and to identify service gaps.

Gap:

**The Services Director and CPS supervisors have begun discussions on these items but have not yet developed formal policies and procedures.**

3. The district has developed a procedure to support the entry of case information into the CPRS by staff with no role in the investigation, such as case aides.

Gap:

**No procedure exists for this practice**

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4. The district has defined a procedure governing the completion of addendums to frozen progress notes that addresses criteria for when addendums are completed (as opposed to a new note).

Gap:

**The Services Director and CPS supervisors have not begun discussions on this item.**

5. The district has defined a procedure for reviewing draft progress notes within 15 day time period.

Gap:

**No procedure exists for this practice**

6. The district has developed procedures that govern the labeling of an investigation as a Duplicate of an existing investigation, in accordance with OCFS guidelines (pending).

Gap:

**No procedure exists for this practice**

7. The district has defined a procedure to identify and verify the existence of an open Services case and the entry of the WMS number on the Investigation Conclusion, if the district opts to do so.

Gap:

**No procedure exists for this practice**

8. With the exception material provided by collateral sources, it is now possible to maintain CPS records in an electronic form. The district may wish to consider defining the circumstances under which a hard copy of the CPS record will be produced.

Gap:

**The Services Director and CPS supervisors have not begun discussions on this item.**

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<b>Section IV Action Items</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Due</b>
Ensure that staff understand and use the new safety decision appropriately.	CPS Supervisors	Day 1 B16 Implementation
Develop a policy and procedure on when risk assessments will be completed and submitted for supervisory approval and on the review of the decision to close a case with “high” or “very high” risk.	Services Director and CPS Supervisors	Day 1 WEB Rap Implementation
Assess how the provision of services will be related to the risk rating and schedule a meeting with CPS supervisors to discuss.	Services Director and CPS Supervisors	1-3 months after Day 1 WEB Rap Implementation
Identify a procedure to ensure that the notes of all workers with no role in the case will be entered into the CPRS.	Services Director	2 weeks following B16 training
Develop a policy that identifies under what conditions an addendum will be added to a case note and when.	Services Director	2 weeks following B16 training
Develop a policy that identifies when an investigative stage can be consolidated and under what circumstances. Request additional assistance from Regional Office county lead if necessary.	Services Director	1 month following B16 training
Review conversion reports made available by Regional CONNECTIONS staff in Fall of 2003. Will attend Regional Implementation Support Teams meeting to discuss benefits or issues regarding conversion of WMS cases to CONNECTIONS.	Services Director	Fall 2003
At this time the district is not interested in discontinuing it’s practice of maintaining a hard copy of the CPS case. The option will be reviewed after implementation of Build 16.		