

CONNECTIONS

Q2-09 Quarterly Improvements

Job Aid

CONNECTIONS
Q2-09 Job Aid
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Introduction

This Job Aid provides a detailed overview of the CONNECTIONS system changes and enhancements introduced for Quarter 2, 2009 (Q2-09). This Build is being implemented on Saturday June 27, 2009. The Job Aid is intended for CONNECTIONS users on different levels, and assumes familiarity with the CONNECTIONS System. As is true for all CONNECTIONS implementation reference materials, this Job Aid is available online on the CONNECTIONS intranet site:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides.asp>.

Improvements to CONNECTIONS that are implemented periodically through SIRs and Change Requests are referred to as "Builds." Since these improvements are implemented on a quarterly basis, they are also being called Quarterly Improvement Plans and are referred to this year as Q1-09, Q2-09, Q3-09 and Q4-09. The Q1, 2, 3, or 4 indicates the quarter of the year beginning in January and "09" represents 2009.

With the implementation of Q2-09, several changes will be introduced aimed at improving the worker satisfaction and system ease of use. It should be noted that many of the enhancements included in this Build originated from user requests, and issues identified through the CONNECTIONS Triage Unit 'app help' mailbox and the Helpdesk.

Specifically, this Job Aid contains information about enhancements in the areas below. Please note that any visible identifying data in this Job Aid is simulated.

I. Update Placement Information (Location Detail Window) (SIR 9158)

Q2-09 includes system enhancements to assist workers in reviewing and updating placement information in CONNECTIONS. A new window, Location Detail, has been added, navigation has been improved, and improvements have been made in system messaging.

Prior to Q2-09, child placement information, retrieved from CCRS and displayed in CONNECTIONS, could only be updated and saved in the FASP. Placement details carried over to CONNECTIONS from CCRS for display only in Tracked Child Detail on the Placement Information tab. From the FASP Location of Child tab, CCRS information could be saved as is within the FASP or edited. However, information updated in the FASP would not display in Tracked Child Detail on the Placement Information tab.

The Location Detail window has been created to allow workers to view CCRS and CONNECTIONS information side by side and modify placement details in CONNECTIONS, from both Tracked Child Detail and the FASP, as needed. It is very important to note that if any such change is made in CONNECTIONS it must also be made in CCRS movement activities, as CCRS remains the system of record for placement of foster children and CONNECTIONS changes do not carry over to CCRS.

Accessing Location Detail from Tracked Child Detail

To view or update placement information on the Placement Information tab on Tracked Child Detail, the user selects a child from the grid. CCRS/CONNECTIONS placement information will display and the View/Edit push button will enable. The worker may see a message “Alternate Information Exists in CONNECTIONS” next to the push button. This message alerts workers when placement information, other than that which is obtained from CCRS, is available. This information may have been from a previous FASP, an In-Process FASP, or has been recorded through Tracked Child Detail on the Location Detail window. Clicking on the View/Edit push button will open the Location Detail Window.

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Tracked Children Detail - Release, June - S:25748851/C:23380868". The window has a menu bar with "File" and "Help". Below the menu bar are four tabs: "Program Choice/PPG", "Placement Information" (which is selected), "Associate Worker", and "Removal Information".

Under the "Placement Information" tab, there is a "Select Child:" label and a table with the following data:

Child	Age	F/C	CaseWorker
Release, Sally	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Release, Bob	8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Below the table, there is a section titled "CCRS/Connections Placement Data as of 5/12/2009 1:48:21 PM" with several input fields: Agency Name, Placement Date, Facility Name, Facility ID, Facility Address, Facility Type, and Most Recent Activity.

To the right of these fields is a section titled "AFCARS Foster Care Information" with the following options:

- Child Placed in Congregate Care:
- Foster Family Structure: * [Dropdown menu]
- Has the child been previously adopted? * Yes No Unable To Determine
- Was the child adopted internationally? Yes No
- How old was the child when the previous adoption was finalized? * [Dropdown menu]

At the bottom of the placement data section, there is a message: "Alternate Information Exists in CONNECTIONS" followed by a "View / Edit" button. The "View / Edit" button is circled in red. Below this message is a "Name of Discharge Resource:" input field and a checkbox for "Completely Freed for Adoption: (Creates Child Case Record)".

At the bottom right of the window are "Save", "Cancel", and "Close" buttons.

The Location Detail window has a split screen presentation. On one side is CCRS information, and the other side is labeled “CONNECTIONS Information.” On the CCRS side, the “Most Recent Activity.” field will display the most recently recorded CCRS placement (movement) activity such as: Child Ends Absence, Intra-Agency Transfer, etc. to further clarify the child’s placement status. The child’s location can be updated on the CONNECTIONS Information side of the screen.

The screenshot shows the 'Location Detail' window with a split-screen layout. The left pane is titled 'CCRS Information' and contains fields for Agency Name, Facility Name, Placement Date, Facility ID, Facility Address, Facility Type, and Most Recent Activity. The right pane is titled 'CONNECTIONS Information' and contains fields for Facility Name (St Michael's Institute), Facility Type (Institution), and an Address section with fields for Street (67 N PEARL ST), PO Box/Apt, City (ALBANY), State (New York), and Zip (12207-2711). Below the address section are fields for Placement Date (5/11/2009), Reason for Transfer (Child's Condition Deteriorated), and checkboxes for Out of County and Out of State. A 'Validate' button is located at the bottom right of the address section. At the bottom of the window are 'Save', 'Cancel', and 'Close' buttons. A note at the bottom left states: 'Entering data in the 'CONNECTIONS Information' section will not update CCRS'. Two arrows point from the text above to the respective sections of the window.

When the window is saved, the worker is given a choice whether to save the changes to the current In Process FASP. If the worker selects “Yes”, changes will be saved to the current FASP, Appropriateness of Placement, “Location of Child” tab or Plan Amendment, “Location of Child” tab. If “No” is selected, the FASP or Plan Amendment will not be updated.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled 'Location Detail' with a question mark icon. The text inside the dialog box reads: 'An in-process FASP exists. Do you wish to over-write the placement address for this child within the FASP?'. At the bottom of the dialog box are three buttons: 'Yes', 'No', and 'Cancel'.

Delete Information Push Button

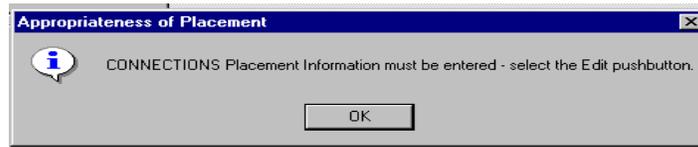
When the Location Detail window is accessed via the Tracked Child Detail path, a “Delete Info” push button will be available on the window. Selection of this button will remove all CONNECTIONS placement information that has been entered on that window only. CONNECTIONS information on the Location Detail window of the FASP or Plan

Amendment will not be deleted. The windows in the FASP or Plan Amendment are accessed separately to change information, as necessary.

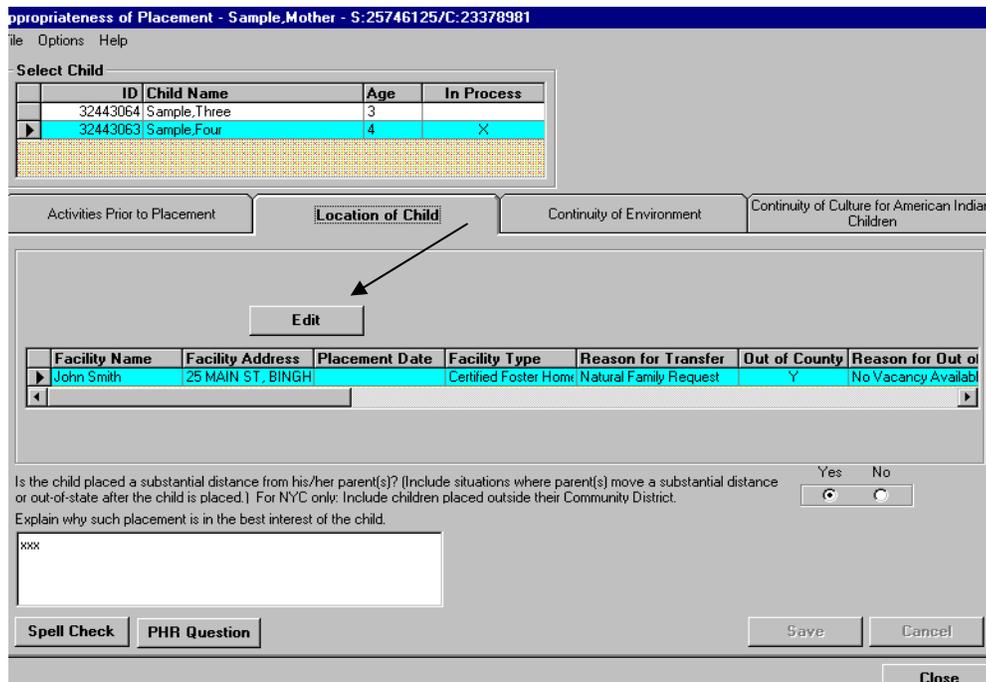
Accessing Location Detail from the FASP

To view or update placement information from the Location of Child tab in the FASP, or a Plan Amendment, select a child from the grid. If placement information exists in either CCRS or CONNECTIONS grid. Radio buttons will allow the worker to select either CCRS Placement Data or CONNECTIONS Placement Data to be utilized in the FASP, or alternatively, selecting Edit will bring up the Location Detail window where CONNECTIONS information can be added/updated.

If the worker clicks on the Radio Buttons when no data exists in the grids, the following message will display:



Once the worker selects either the CCRS or CONNECTIONS data and saves it, only that data will display on the Location of Child tab, with appropriate questions to be answered displayed in boxes below. If, at a later time, additional location updates are necessary, the Location Detail window can be accessed via the “Edit” push button. Please note that changes made in this manner update location information in the FASP or Plan Amendment only, and do not carry over to Tracked Child Detail.



Regardless of whether location detail is saved to the FASP, changes made on the Location Detail window will not overwrite information in CCRS. CCRS information must be updated separately.

II. Family Assessment and Service Plan

Modify Original Reason for Case Opening (SIR 9152)

Workers and supervisors have requested improvements in the manner in which case opening information is initially recorded, and updated, in the FASP. In Q2-09, for the first FASP in the FSS Stage, the Original Reason for Case Opening tab will be recorded as one continuous narrative. After the initial information is approved, addendums can be added on subsequent

FASPs (Comprehensive and Reassessments) by the Case Manager or Case Planner. All addendums will include a date and signature stamp.

Scales/Risk Pre-Fill to Service Plan O&A Blocks (SIR 9137)

With Q2-09, the CONNECTIONS system will support the ability to pre-fill the “Problem/Concern” component of the Service Plan O&A blocks from Family, Child or Parent/Caretaker scales, and from Risk Assessment-Elevated Risk questions in an in-process FASP. To accomplish this, a new column “Create O&A Block for Scale” has been added to the Scales and the Elevated Risk window.

On the Family, Child, or Parent/Caretaker Scale window, clicking in the “Create O&A Block for Scale” column will display a drop down arrow. Selecting “Yes” from the drop down will result in a “Yes” appearing in the first section of the scale response. When the scale is saved, a “Temp” O&A block will be created. O&A blocks created in this manner will include ratings for all individuals recorded in the scales.

Scale	Ratings	Create O&A Block for Scale	All	June Age: 39 PC	Bob Age: 37 Optional
	c. Coping skills are not consistently used or effective in managing stress		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. Coping skills are very limited or ineffective in managing stress		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	e. Insufficient information		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Motivation/Readiness To Change	a. Accepts responsibility for problematic behaviors/conditions and has taken steps to initiate change	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b. Recognizes problematic behaviors/conditions and demonstrates willingness to change		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	c. Limited recognition of problematic behaviors/conditions and is resistant to change		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. Denies responsibility for problematic behaviors/conditions; no willingness to change		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	e. Insufficient information		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Parent/Caretaker Expectations of Children	a. Has and applies realistic expectations of all children		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On the Elevated Risk Elements window, an O&A block can be created by selecting the Create O& A Block checkbox and selecting “OK”. A “Temp” O&A block will be created for each applicable elevated risk element when the Risk Assessment is saved.

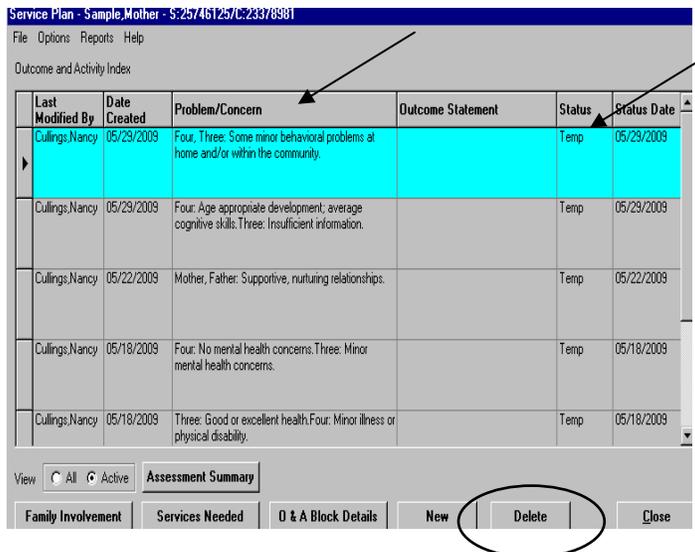
Elevated Risk Elements	Response	Create O&A Block
Death of a child as a result of abuse or maltreatment by caretaker(s)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caretaker(s) has a previous TPR	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Siblings removed from the home, prior to current report, due to abuse or neglect and remain with the substitute caregivers or foster parent	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repeated incidents of sexual abuse or severe physical abuse by caretaker(s)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexual abuse of a child and perpetrator is likely to have current access to child	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical injury to a child under one year old as a result of abuse or maltreatment by caretaker(s)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serious physical injury to a child requiring hospitalization/emergency care within the last 6 months, as a result of abuse or maltreatment by caretaker(s)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newborn child has a positive toxicology for alcohol or drugs	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain the Elevated Risks:

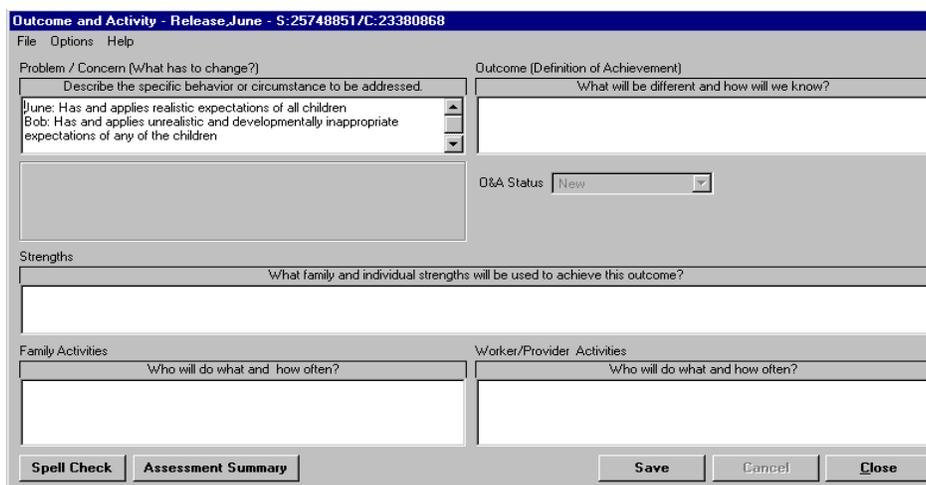
xxx

On the O&A block index, a “Problems/Concerns” column has been added to the grid. The first 100 characters from the identified scales response or elevated risk question will pre-fill to this column. The identified issue and language that is carried over from the scales can be used as a starting point for developing the problem/concern statement that reflects a family’s specific needs and circumstances. All O&A blocks created in this manner will have a temporary (“Temp”) status.

A “Delete” push button has also been added to the O&A block index window. This will allow the worker to delete any O&A block with at “Temp” or “New” Status. The “Delete” button will enable when the O&A block is selected. Deleting an O& A block will clear the corresponding “Yes” indicator on the FASP scale or Elevated Risk window.



In order to carry over an O&A block upon approval of the FASP, the status must be changed from “Temp” to “New.” This is accomplished by accessing the O&A Block Detail window, adding information necessary to complete the O&A block, and saving the window. To support this process, when a FASP is submitted that contains “Temp” O&A blocks, a message will display on Check FASP Detail: *O&A Blocks of Temp status exist. These blocks will not be carried forward to subsequent FASPs unless changed to ‘New’ status.*



Upon approval of the FASP, any “Temp” O&A blocks and “Create O&A Block” checkboxes will be deleted and not carried forward to the next FASP. If a FASP is rejected by supervisor (i.e. not approved) any Temp O&A blocks will be viewable to the worker. O & A blocks in “Temp” status will not display on the FASP Component Report, O&A Block Report or the Full FASP Report.

Assessment Scales (SIR 9143/9171)

Q2-09 includes two changes in the FASP assessment scales. The first modification will allow local districts to opt out of completing some assessment scales. Secondly, workers will be able to utilize a multi-select option when answering age-based questions in the FASP, even if all children listed do not fall within specified age limits.

1. Optional Scales

Full and thorough assessments of family strengths and needs continue to be an important casework requirement and should be completed with every family. If a district elects to lift the edits requiring the completion of the scales, the caseworker will record only information that is a particular strength or need for the family or individual. For example, if one child is assessed as having a 'debilitating illness', but three other siblings have no medical issues, the caseworker can choose to only record information about that one child on the scales.

If a district decides to make FASP scales optional, all scales will be presented in the FASP, but for cases with a protective program choice, the system will only require completion of the assessment scales that are mapped to the RAP. It becomes a district option to require that scales be completed in given circumstances. The following assessment scales will remain required, and others may be completed optionally.

- Family Scales: Questions # 1, 2 and 4
- Parent/Caretaker Scales: Questions # 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 18

An identifier "*Mapped to RAP*" has been added to the end of each required/mapped scale question to distinguish it from other questions. This indicator will not be displayed in output reports. Districts that do not opt to lift the edit on scales, and consequently require all scales, will see no changes.

Scale	Ratings	Create O&A Block for Scale	Mom Age: 29 PC
1. Support System (Mapped to RAP)	a. Multiple sources of reliable and useful support from extended family, friends or neighbors	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	b. Some reliable and useful support from extended family, friends or neighbors		<input type="checkbox"/>
	c. Some support from extended family, friends or neighbors, but unreliable or of limited usefulness		<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. Effectively isolated		<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Financial Resource Management/Basic Needs (Mapped to RAP)	a. Financial resources are sufficient and adequately managed to meet basic family needs		<input type="checkbox"/>
	b. Financial resources are limited, but are adequately managed to meet basic family needs		<input type="checkbox"/>
	c. Financial resources are limited or not adequately managed to the degree that basic family needs are occasionally unmet		<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. Financial resources are severely limited or mismanaged to the degree that basic family needs are chronically unmet		<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Stability of Housing	a. Housing is currently stable; no risk of loss of residence		<input type="checkbox"/>
	b. Housing is currently stable, but some risk of loss of		<input type="checkbox"/>

Impact on Reports

The FASP Reports will display all available questions and responses, including questions that have not been answered, regardless of whether a district opts to make scales optional, i.e. not system required. When no questions have been addressed for Child Scales, a blank section will be displayed in the Assessment Summary report.

Impact on the FASP Tree

For districts that opt to make scales optional:

- If there is a protective program choice, the “Required” indicator will display until the required Family and Parent/Caretaker scales are completed.
- The 'Required' indicator will be removed from the FASP tree for Child scales for all FASPs.
- The 'Required' indicator will be removed from the FASP tree for Parent/Caretaker Scales for an Initial FASP.

Implementation Considerations

Districts that would like to lift system edits requiring all FASP scales must advise CONNECTION Regional Implementation staff of this request.

2. Multi Select for Age Specific FASP Questions

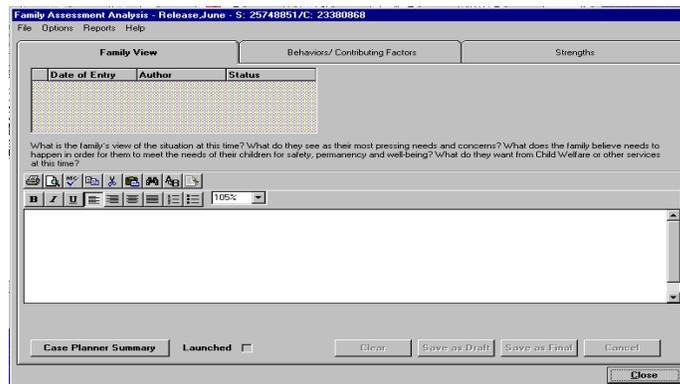
When the "All" column is selected for a scale that has an age restriction (e.g. Academic Performance - Children age 6 or over), the system will now select the checkboxes for children within the specific range, and leave blank those children who are out of range.

Needed Improvements/Changes Tab (SIR 9154)

In response to users’ requests to streamline the FASP, the “Needed Improvements/Changes” tab on the Family Assessment/Analysis dialogue has been removed. Users have stated that information recorded on this tab duplicates information recorded in the Outcome and Activity Blocks in the Service Plan.

Prior to Q2-09, the "Needed Improvements/Changes" tab in the FASP was used to record the conclusion reached from the analysis of all the assessment information gathered. Now, this information about what needs to improve or change will be recorded in the Service Plan.

By retaining the other tabs in the FASP, workers are still able to record information regarding the Family View, Behaviors/Contributing Factors, and Strengths that are intended to supplement the assessment information captured in the Scales, Safety Assessment and RAP.

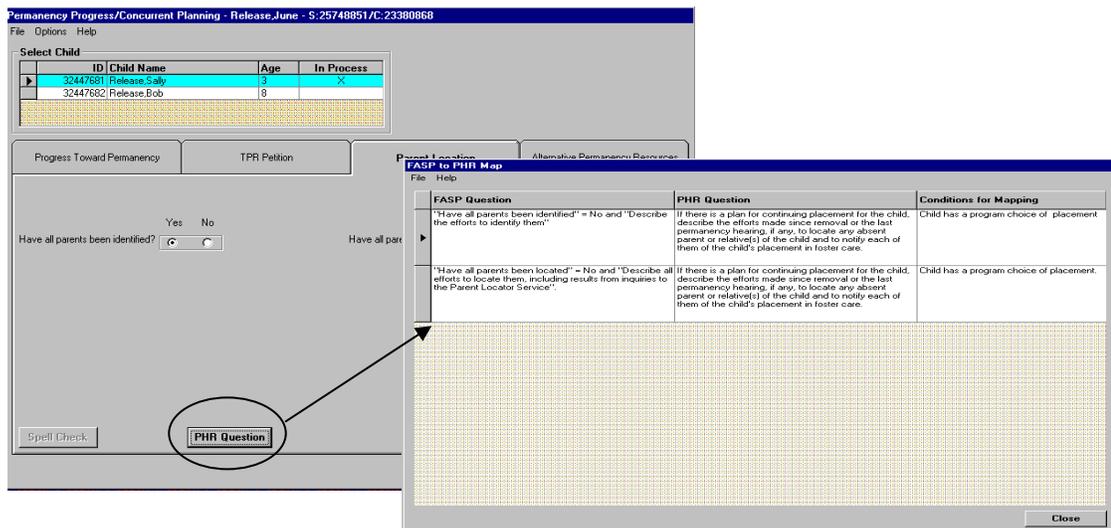


Please note that for FASPs that have data entered in the Needed Improvements and Changes tab prior to Q2-09, the tab will continue to display. Information will also continue to print on FASP reports.

FASP/PHR Mapping (SIR 9646)

Caseworkers completing both the FASP and PHR are required to answer similar questions with very similar statements. This enhancement will assist workers to develop answers to PHR questions that are consistent with the corresponding/mapped FASP question when pre-filling from the FASP to the PHR.

A pushbutton, PHR Question, has been added to tabs on the FASP that include questions that carry over to the PHR. Clicking on the push button will open a window that displays the FASP question, associated PHR question, and any conditions associated with a pre-fill from FASP to PHR.



III. Permanency Hearing Report

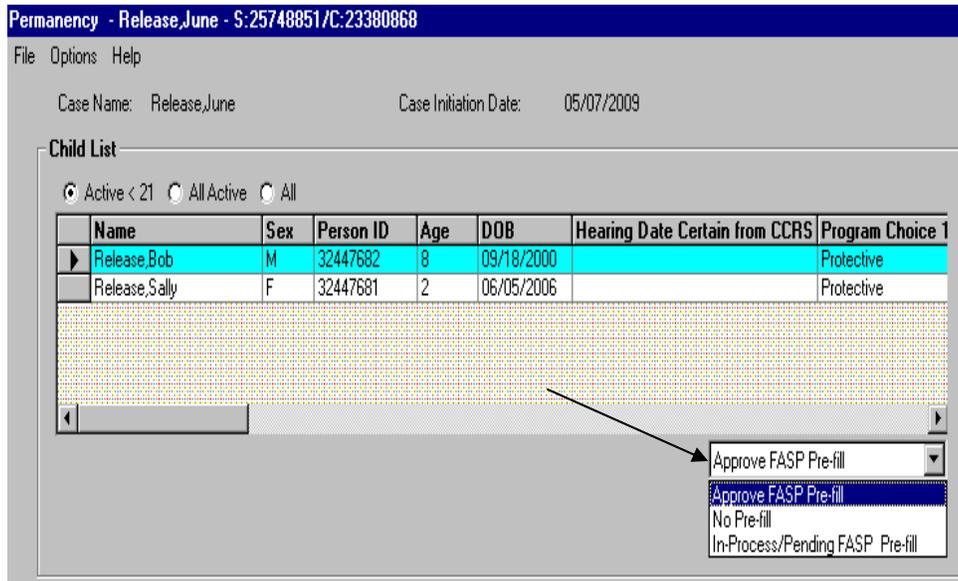
Remove Well-Child Diagnosis Pre-fill (SIR 9647)

With implementation Q2-09 diagnosis of "well-child" will no longer pre-fill from the Health Module in CONNECTIONS to the Permanency Hearing Report. This pre-fill to questions #21 and 23 of the Individual Child Report or Multiple Child Report and questions #23 and 25 of the Freed Child Report was identified as being misleading in the context of the PHR.

Added Options when launching a prefilled PHR (SIR 9650)

Prior to Q2-09, the ability to pre-fill from a FASP to the PHR was limited to approved FASP's only. CONNECTIONS users have requested more flexibility in the pre-fill options, so now workers will be able to select from an Approved FASP or an In-Process/Pending FASP. This will allow the most recently recorded case information to be pre-filled from FASP to PHR. If no in-process or pending FASP exists, the system will display a message stating that the PHR

will pre-fill from the last approved FASP. Workers also continue to have the option of selecting No Pre-fill.

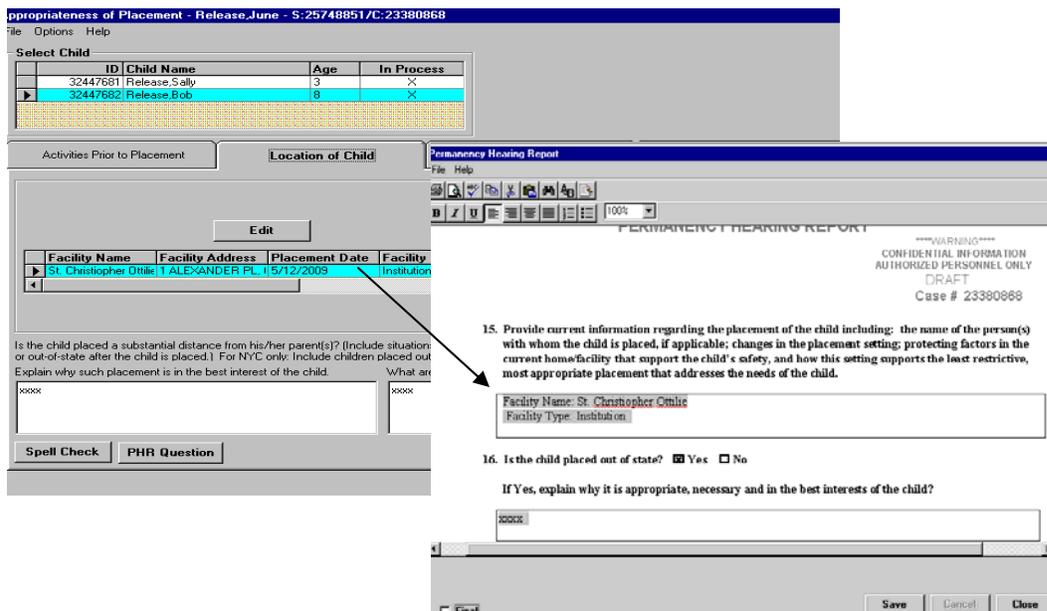


PHR Placement Information Pre-Fill (SIR 9671)

Placement information is displayed in a FASP from an interface with CCRS. Prior to Q2-09, however, that placement information has not been used to pre-fill the placement location question in PHR. Now, placement information stored in the latest approved, pending or in-process FASP will be used to pre-fill this PHR question. Facility Name and Type will be retrieved once saved in the FASP, Location Detail in Appropriateness of Placement to populate the following PHR questions:

- Individual Child PHR – Question #15
- Multiple Child PHR – Question #15
- Freed Child PHR – Question #17

If no information has been saved in the FASP, the corresponding fields in the PHR will be blank, and must be manually entered by the worker.



IV. Safety Assessment

Safety Factors Comment Box (SIR 9539)

CONNECTIONS Build 18.10, implemented on 10/10/2008, included modifications in the Safety Assessment to improve and streamline the assessment tool. As part of this effort, the narrative comment boxes were redesigned and no narrative was able to be entered if “No Safety Factors Present” was chosen. Some local districts have since requested that, in order to support local supervisory practices and procedures, this narrative be reintroduced. In response, Q2-09 will include an optional comment box that will be available from the Safety Factors window when “No Safety Factors Present” is selected.

The screenshot shows the 'Safety Assessment - Release, June - S:25748845/C:23380868' window. The 'Safety Factors' tab is active. The 'Assess for the presence of each of the following safety factors. Check all factors that apply.' section contains a list of four safety factors, each with an unchecked checkbox. Below this list is a checked checkbox for 'No Safety Factors present at this time.' To the right of this section is a large text area labeled 'Additional Comments - optional'. An arrow points to this text area. At the bottom of the window, there are buttons for 'Complete?' (with 'NO' next to it), a lightbulb icon, 'Save', 'Save and Submit', and 'Cancel'.

V. Time Limit To-Do Display (SIR 9136)

With Q2-09, Alert, Reminder, and non-navigable Task To-Do's will no longer be displayed by the system after a specified period of time, as indicated in the list below. This change will address the situation in which To-Do's were remaining on the worker's To-Do List for extended periods, making the To-Do list cumbersome and difficult to manage. Alerts or Reminders will remain on the Case To-Do List and Staff To-Do List for specified time periods as follows:

Display To-Dos for 30 Days:

- INT Stages
- INV Stages (including IAB)
- ARI Stages
- To-Do's not associated with a Stage

Display To-Dos for 90 Days:

- FSI
- FSS stages

Display To-Dos for 180 Days:

- FAD stages

Please note that no change has been made to navigable Task and Approval To-Do's. These To-Do's will remain on the To-Do list until completion of the associated task.

VI. Progress Notes

Attempted Collateral Contact (SIR 9147)

In order to more easily record and retrieve information in Progress Notes regarding attempted Contacts, Local Districts have requested a new progress note type “Attempted Collateral Contact.” This value has been added.

Age Added to Participant/Focus Grid (SIR 9537)

The Family Participant/Focus grid on the Progress Notes Detail window lists the name and PID for all individuals in the Stage. If two (or more) family members have the same name, however, there has been no way for caseworkers to easily differentiate between individuals. An additional column has now been added to the grid to display current age.

The screenshot shows the 'Progress Notes Detail' window for 'Release, June - S:25748845/C:23380868'. The window includes a menu bar (File, Options, Help), an 'Event Date' field set to 5/8/2009, and a 'Family Participant/Focus' dropdown menu. Below these is a table with the following data:

Person ID	Name	Age	FP	Focus
32447681	Release, Sally	2		
32447682	Release, Bob	8		
32447683	Release, Bob	37		
32447680	Release, June	39		

An arrow points to the 'Age' column header. A dropdown menu is open, showing a list of contact types with checkboxes, including 'Attempted Collateral Contact'. Other fields include 'Author: Carmichael, Gail G', 'Entered By: Carmichael, Gail G', 'Dist./Agt: A20', 'Entry Date: 5/8/2009', and 'Purpose:'. At the bottom are buttons for 'Copy Note', 'New Note', 'View Existing Notes', 'Save as Draft', 'Save as Final', 'Cancel', and 'Save and Enter New Note'.

VII. Case List Sort Order (SIR 9141)

This modification will make it easier for users to review search results in CONNECTIONS when a Person search is done based on Person ID. Prior to Q2-09, search results were not displayed in a predictable order. Now, the Case List will be sorted in descending order by case ID when the search is executed through either a person search or a person list path.

VIII. Person Merge on Finalized Adoption PIDS (SIR 7636)

When the Adoption Finalization window is completed in CONNECTIONS a new PID is system generated for the adopted child. After this post-adoption PID is created, it may be necessary to complete a person merge if yet another PID is inadvertently created for the adopted child. Prior to Q2-09, the system would disallow this merge.

With Q2-09, a person merge can be performed on post-finalized adoption PIDs. Edits will require the “person forward” be the PID that was initially assigned when the Adoption Finalization window was completed in CONNECTIONS. Please note that system edits will continue to prevent a pre-finalization PID from being merged with a post-finalization PID.

IX. Service Plan Review BF Access (SIR 7066)

A special Business Function (BF) “ACC SERPLAN REV” exists for staff who only need to create or modify a Service Plan Review (SPR) without accessing the rest of the case. Users with the “ACC SERPLAN REV” Business Function have reported that they have been unable to access the SPR via the navigation path associated with the Business Function (case search>case list>case summary> options>service plan review.) This navigation problem has now been corrected.

X. Foster and Adoptive Home (FAD) SCR Database Check (SIRS 9132/9150)

New York State regulations require SCR database checks for all persons age 18 years or older in a foster boarding home or adoptive home before the home can be fully certified or approved. An edit has been added on the FRS Household Member Detail window in CONNECTIONS in support of this regulation by requiring the recording of information regarding the In-State SCR Database Check. The edit will check for completion of “Sent Date” “Received Date” and “Results” for foster/adoptive parents, and will prevent opening of a new FAD home unless these fields have been completed. Similar edits were implemented in March 2008 to support requirements for out-of-state child abuse and maltreatment checks.

Foster and Adoptive Home Record Summary

File Options Help

Resource Name: Release,June Auth From Date: Auth To Date: Vendor ID:
Resource ID: 20523439 Agency Name/Resource ID: Hamilton County Dss / 185

Home Demo. Licensing Information **Household Member Detail** Home History Events Agy./Worker Information Home Study Narrative Annual Result Narrative FAD Checklist Contacts

Name	Sex	DOB	Age	Language	Religion	Marital Status	Ethnicity	Race	Rel/Int
Release,Bob	M	5/3/1972	37	English	Other Protesta	Married	Non-Hispanic	Multiple	Foster Parent
Release,June	F	1/1/1969	40	English	Other Protesta	Married	Non-Hispanic	White	Foster Parent

Safety Asmnt Dt	SCR DB Check Sent	SCR DB Check Recd	SCR Results
	05/11/2009	05/11/2009	
	05/11/2009		No Record Found

Save Cancel

A.K.A. Names Case List Training Details
Person ID Person Detail FA Safety Asses Template

O/O/S SCR Check Training Comments Med/CHRC and SCR Comments Employment Comments

Submit Help on Narratives Generate Report Close

Please note that the new edit will also apply for homes that are worker or system-closed and are being reopened. In order to reopen such homes the worker will need to record the SCR database check fields. The following are acceptable sources of documentation to confirm the sent and received dates and results:

1. Correspondence from the NYS SCR containing the actual dates and results. (If the worker cannot find the sent date, they may use the received date for both.)
2. If the worker is not able to find correspondence from the NYS SCR, it is permissible to obtain the dates and results if recorded in progress notes or the initial home study.

3. If there is reference made in a progress note or the initial home study that the check was completed and what the results were but no exact date sent and received, then it is permissible for the worker to use the entry date of the progress note or the approval date of the initial home study for both the sent and received dates and then record the actual result.

In the event that the worker is unable to locate any documentation that a SCR database check was sent and received along with the results of the check, the worker will need to obtain new SCR Database Checks on everyone 18 years old or older. System edits in CONNECTIONS will require that this information be recorded for foster/adoptive parents before the home can be progressed to Accepted-Active status.

Operating End Date Field (SIR 9597)

A new field has been added on the FAD Close Home window. This new field will address a limitation that has existed in CONNECTIONS whereby the system would pre-fill the operating “end date” with the date worker records the facility closing in CONNECTIONS. The new “Operating End Date” will better support proper reimbursements to facilities by allowing for the recording of an actual closing date, including a prior date. Even though the “Operating End Date” appears on all Close Home windows, it applies only to congregate care facilities. The “Operating End Date” is entered as a part of the Close Home process.

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Close Home - Release June". It has a menu bar with "File", "Edit", "Options", and "Help". The main area contains several input fields and checkboxes. "Current Status" is a dropdown menu set to "Inquiry". "Change To" is a dropdown menu set to "Closed". "Closure Reason" is a dropdown menu that is highlighted in yellow. "Closure Type" is a dropdown menu. "Recommend Re-Opening" is a dropdown menu. "Date Notification Sent" is a date field containing "11". "Operating End Date" is a date field containing "11", with an arrow pointing to it from the right. There is a checkbox for "Subsidy Indicator" which is unchecked. At the bottom left is a "Closure Report" checkbox, also unchecked. At the bottom right are three buttons: "Save & Submit", "Save", and "Cancel". At the very bottom, a message reads "Required fields must be completed."

Support Tools

Online Help

CONNECTIONS Online Help provides descriptions for various windows, as well as step-by-step instructions for common tasks. You can access Online Help at any time, from any window in CONNECTIONS by clicking on the **Help** menu or pressing the **F1** key on your keyboard. The **Contents**, **Index** and **Search** tabs in Online Help allow you to search for and navigate to the topic(s) on which you need help.

To Access Online Help:

1. Click on the **Help** menu on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
The following list of commands displays:

Contents A table of contents for the help facility with links to major sections.

How Do I? Step-by-step instructions to help you complete tasks using CONNECTIONS.

Window Descriptions Descriptions of windows in CONNECTIONS, along with information on various fields.

DSS Policy Online OCFS policy handbooks (under revision)

Help On This Window Window description help for the window you are on.

Help for Help Instructions on how to use the help functionality.

About CONNECTIONS Information about the current CONNECTIONS version and build.

2. Click on a command from the **Help** menu.
The window related to your selection displays. In some cases, you will need to make another selection in that window to obtain instructions. At the top of each window you will see additional buttons and menus. Use the **Search** button to search for specific information in the Help function and use the **Back** button to return to windows you have just visited in Help. The **Glossary** button opens a list of important CONNECTIONS terms and the **Print** button allows you to print Help information.

3. When you are done reviewing information in Help, close each Help window by clicking on the **Close** button (☒) in the top right corner of the window. The system returns to the window you were using when you accessed Help.

OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

A variety of training-related materials are available from the OCFS CONNECTIONS intranet site (<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>). The intranet site contains a wealth of information related to various aspects of CONNECTIONS, including training schedules, Alerts and Notices, Step-by-Step Guides (including the CONNECTIONS Case Management Step-By-Step Guide), Job Aids and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Release Notes—a complete list of the modifications, enhancements, fixes and impacts in the Build—is also available from the CONNECTIONS intranet site.

Accessing the OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

1. From your local desktop, double-click on the **Internet Explorer** icon.
2. If the browser does not display the OCFS intranet site automatically, enter <http://ocfs.state.nyenet> into the browser's address line and press the **Enter** key on your keyboard.
The OCFS intranet home page displays.
3. Click on the **CONNECTIONS** link.
The CONNECTIONS home page displays.
4. Click on a topic to access information. For access to various Step-by-Step Guides and Job Aids, click on the **Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips** link. For access to Quarterly Improvement Release Notes for Q2-09, click on the **Implementation** link.
5. To close Internet Explorer, click on the **File** menu and select **Close**.

If you are an SSL VPN user, you can connect to the OCFS Intranet through a link on your OFT Welcome page- <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/>

Enterprise Help Desk

The New York State Office for Technology (NYS OFT) Enterprise Help Desk staff is available to answer basic questions related to your equipment or to solve problems you are having with the CONNECTIONS application. If they cannot solve your problem, they will record your information and forward it to others who can.

Your agency may have procedures in place for contacting the Enterprise Help Desk. Check with your supervisor before you call.

The Enterprise Help Desk is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The telephone number is: **1-800-NYS-1323** (1-800-697-1323).

When you call the Enterprise Help Desk with a problem, you will be given a ticket number to use for tracking your issue and its resolution. Keep a record of this number; you will need it for any follow-up conversations with the Enterprise Help Desk.

App Help Mailbox

In addition to calling the Enterprise Help Desk with application issues, district staff can directly contact the NYS CONNECTIONS User Support/Triage staff for help with complex application issues. Questions, problems and concerns can now be emailed to:

ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.state.ny.us

The 'App Help' mailbox is intended to provide an expanded level of support. It is meant for questions that have had an initial review by agency staff who are proficient in CONNECTIONS (e.g., Resource Users). For example, if you have an issue for which you have unsuccessfully sought advice from your supervisor or a Resource User, it would be appropriate to contact the App Help mailbox with the issue. However, your in-agency resources should always be your first contact when trying to resolve an issue.