

*~ The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY ~*  
*September 21 - 28, 2007*



***Preview...***

On Monday, September 24, 2007, Build 18.9.3 will be available in Preview to those individuals who have requested access. The Preview database is a “snapshot” of each designated user’s workload in the CONNECTIONS database as of Friday, September 21, 2007.

***Build 18.9.3...***

As you are aware, Build 18.9.3 is scheduled to be deployed the evening of September 28<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 PM – midnight. Please note that the CONNECTIONS application will be unavailable for this six hour window while the Build is being deployed. The Build content will be described in a Build Highlights/Build Release Notes document that will be communicated the week of September 24<sup>th</sup>. For further information on the content of the Build please refer to the teleconference materials that were distributed to conference participants on Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>.

***TrainingSpace Distance Learning Announcement...***

**Access to CPS Investigation Stages by Voluntary/Contract Agencies  
September 12<sup>th</sup> Teleconference...**

Provided by the SUNY Distance Learning Project this TrainingSpace Course is a recording of a teleconference previously broadcast on 9/12/07.

The Office of Children and Family Services presented a teleconference for Local Department of Social Services (LDSS), Voluntary Authorized Foster Care Agency and Contract Preventive Agency (Agency) supervisory and casework staff on the new functionality in CONNECTIONS that will support the ability for Agency staff to access Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigation Stage information. The teleconference included:

- a presentation by OCFS Legal and Policy staff on the history, statutory authority to access of information in CPS cases, confidentiality standards, appropriate case recording, roles and responsibilities of both LDSS and Agency staff during the investigation process, and benefits of sharing CPS information.
- a walkthrough by CONNECTIONS staff on how to navigate to and access CPS Investigation stages via Implied Role
- and a panel discussion that included LDSS, ACS and Voluntary Agency staff.

Topics included current practices on sharing information; maintaining the integrity of the investigation process; maintaining the therapeutic relationship with the client and the service provider; expectations; and training/orientation needs.

**Pre-registration is required.** The training schedule for this course is posted in the Statewide Training Automated Registration System (STARS). The Internet address for the STARS website is: <http://stars.bsc-cdhs.org>.

Contact your local district staff development coordinator for registration.

### ***Update: Foster Care Case Recording Training...***

This full-day, instructor-led training is intended for new foster care caseworkers and focuses on case recording requirements in CONNECTIONS for Foster Care workers. Training covers the components in CONNECTIONS that are specifically required for Foster Care workers and includes discussion on programmatic and policy aspects of Foster Care Issues in the Family Assessment and Service Plan, Health Services, Education and Permanency Hearing Reports. Discussion is accompanied by hands-on demonstrations and practice exercises using CONNECTIONS.

This course is intended for new foster care caseworkers. Prior to attending this course, it is highly recommended that all participants attend either the *CONNECTIONS Case Management for Child Welfare Workers Training*, or *CORE*. If you have previously completed Build 18.9 training, you do not have to attend this training.

The training schedule for this course is posted in the Statewide Training Automated Registration System (STARS). The Internet address for the STARS website is: <http://stars.bsc-cdhs.org>. Pre-registration for all courses is required.

### ***Info That You Need to Know About the Health Component of the CONNECTIONS Application and the FDA Approved Medication Listings...***

As you may be aware, the CONNECTIONS application uses the same list of approved medications that the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) uses. The FDA updates the approved medication list on an on-going basis, therefore, changes to the listing of medications that are identified in CONNECTIONS will occur under the following parameters:

- The medications list within the CONNECTIONS application will be updated *once* a month, on the first Wednesday of the month.
- **The first update to the medications list is scheduled for October 3rd.**

**\*\* Please note:** The FDA's list will generally remove as well as add medications to the selection. The medications that were removed will no longer be available for selection in the CONNECTIONS application. However, if the user selected the medication when it was available, and they did not end-date it, they will be allowed to do so.

### ***Zip Code Requirements in Services Case Processing... GIS (General Information System) Message - #07-008***

***\*\*Please note that the following is specific to local districts only.***

A new GIS message (#07-008) was communicated to Directors of Service on September 7, 2007, about the zip code requirements in services case processing.

The following details the contents of the communication:

“Effective Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, Services Case processing edits are modified such that deletion of the Zip Code from the Case Address will no longer be allowed.

Users have long had the capacity to modify Case Address information, including the Zip Code, in Under Care and Recert transactions (WSUWK1). This change simply imposes, when updating WSUWK1, the same edits as are in place for new case openings. Specifically, Zip Code cannot be spaces. Pertinent error is as follows:

105: A Residence Zip Code not equal to 5 numeric digits was entered.

Comparable edits have also been imposed regarding Mailing Address Zip Code; IE Associated Zip Code is required if Mailing Address has been input (error 107).

Please note that for systems questions, please contact OCFS-IT-Customer Support at 1-800-342-3727.

For your reference, GIS messages are available in Public Folders at the following path:

*All Public Folders/dfa.state.ny.us/OCFS/TSU/ \*\*\*Services systems  
Reference Documents/ GIS (system change notices)*

### ***Did You Know...***

If there are more than 5 digits in the telephone extension number for a FAD home, it may cause errors in the stage and the FAD worker won't be able to complete work in the stage. It is recommended that for extension numbers that are longer than 5 digits, you either record them in the comments box on the phone window or add the extension number as an additional business phone.

### ***New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...***

The following document(s) were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:

- TrainingSpace Announcement: Voluntary Agency Access to CPS

September 12<sup>th</sup> Teleconference

- The CONNECTIONS Weekly
- OCFS Data Warehouse Predefined User Reports List in Cognos 8
- The Build 18.9.1 Updated Implementation Issues

### ***A Note About the Training Database...***

The training database will be unavailable on Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup> as well as Thursday and Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Weekly System Maintenance...***

#### ***CONNECTIONS Application Downtime...***

***\*\*Please Note the additional downtime for deployment of Build 18.9.3 from 6:00 PM – Midnight.***

- ***Wednesday, 9/26/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- ***Friday, 9/28/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- ***\*\*Friday 9/28/07*** from 6:00 PM – Midnight
- ***Wednesday, 10/3/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM