

THE CONNECTIONS WEEKLY

February 1 - 8, 2008



The Portable Information Technology Pilot Program - Report to the Governor and Legislature - January 2008...

The interim report (a full report on the demonstration phase of the project will be available during the first week of March 2008), that highlights the success of the pilot program, is available for all to read on the CONNECTIONS intranet website. For your reference, the report is posted to both the CONNECTIONS home page (under the dated heading of January 28, 2008) and the Remote Access page (under the heading, Portable Information Technology Demonstration Project).

A bit of background on the pilot project - the NYS Legislature added funding to the 2006-07 Budget for OCFS to pilot the use of portable technology by child protective caseworkers. Based on positive pilot results, the Legislature funded OCFS to proceed with a demonstration phase of the project in the 2007-08 Budget. During the demonstration phase of the project OCFS included an additional 23 local departments of social services into the project and, based on first year findings, focused primarily on the use of laptop and tablet PCs. The inclusion of the additional local departments of social services enabled OCFS to test the technology in a wide range of organizational, technical, and geographic environments.

General highlights of the report include:

- A report of modest productivity gains achieved during the very early stages of the project
- The positive impact of the deployment of the portable devices have had on staff morale

It should be noted that a letter highlighting the content of the report was forwarded to local district Commissioners on Thursday, January 31st.

Handouts from the NYPWA Conference - Now Available on the CONNECTIONS Website....

As you know OCFS-IT had a booth at NYPWA and at the booth were a number of informational handouts that were made available to conference participants - NOW...we have made the handouts available to YOU!!!! (for a nominal fee (only teasing!)). The handouts are now available, to be either read or reprinted, on the CONNECTIONS intranet Home page. The handouts cover a wide range of topics, among them:

- Overview of Build 18.9.6
- Records Retention Tip Sheet
- SOaR (Security Outreach and Review) flyer
- OCFS Data Warehouse Pre-defined Reports Catalogue
- OCFS Data Warehouse Caseworker Contacts Reports Overview
- Bridges to Health Fact Sheet
- Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) Systems Overview

We invite you to use them as you deem fit!!! And...just in case you were wondering, they have been vetted by the various teams that created them.

*A **NEW** Tip Sheet from the Professional Development Program, Rockefeller College, University at Albany (PDP) ... Using CONNECTIONS Online Help...*

Hot off the presses...a **NEW** tip sheet detailing the use of **Online Help** in the CONNECTIONS application! There may be times when you are working in CONNECTIONS when you will need assistance completing a task, or when you may not be sure what to record in a certain field...it is then that you can turn to the **Online Help** in the CONNECTIONS application. **Online Help** is designed to provide you with the information you need to complete your work within the application. **Online Help** provides topic overviews, window descriptions, field definitions, and step-by-step instructions for common tasks, as well as descriptions of OCFS policies and best casework practice. In order to “help you to use the **Online Help**” feature, PDP has developed the tip sheet titled: Using CONNECTIONS Online Help. The tip sheet is a quick reference guide to the **Online Help** system that includes info on how to access the **Online Help** system, descriptions and images of the **Online Help** windows, info about the Index/Search tabs, how to use the Glossary included in **Online Help**, info about the navigational features and info describing the Search Function in CONNECTIONS **Online Help**. For your reference, the tip sheet is posted to the *Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips* page of the CONNECTIONS intranet. To access the tip sheet just click on the *Job Aids/Tip Sheets* button in the upper right-hand box on the page.

*Another **NEW** Tip Sheet...the Records Retention Tip Sheet...*

Is the Records Retention process confusing to you? Do you scratch your head and just say “I’ll get back to this another time.” Well, if you do, we have a solution...the **NEW** Records Retention Tip Sheet!!! The tip sheet contains EVERYTHING that you EVER wanted, or needed, to know about Records Retention and more! The tip sheet answers questions like:

- Why do we do Records Retention?

- What is the *To-Be Expunged Report*?
- What actions do I have to take after I receive the *To-Be Expunged Report*?
- What is the *Expungement Report*?
- What actions do I have to take after I receive the *Expungement Report*?
- What reports will I see on my 'Report List'?

This handy dandy little document was drafted, developed, produced and vetted through the collaborative efforts of several members of the Implementation, Triage, Security and Application Development teams! Thanks to the efforts of all of those fine folks!!!! For your reference, the *Records Retention Tip Sheet* is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet on both the *Home* and the *Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips* pages. To access the tip sheet from the *Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips* page, just click on the *Job Aids/Tip Sheets* button in the upper right-hand box on the page.

A Note About the Foster and Adoptive Home History Detail Window...

CONNECTIONS staff recently became aware that between January 3, 2008 and January 23, 2008 the Foster and Adoptive Home History detail window was not being displayed correctly in CONNECTIONS. This issue had no impact on placement or payment processing and was remedied on January 23, 2008. Any local districts or voluntary agencies that ran reports utilizing Home History information during this timeframe should regenerate the reports to make certain you have the correct data. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...

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

- *The CONNECTIONS Weekly for the week of January 25, 2008*
- *Overview of Build 18.9.6*
- *Records Retention Tip Sheet*
- *SOaR (Security Outreach and Review) flyer*
- *OCFS Data Warehouse Pre-defined Reports Catalogue*
- *OCFS Data Warehouse Caseworker Contacts Reports Overview*
- *Bridges to Health Fact Sheet*
- *Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) Systems Overview*
- *Using CONNECTIONS Online Help Tip Sheet*
- *The Portable Information Technology Pilot Program - Report to the Governor and Legislature - January 2008*

Weekly System Maintenance...

Due to regularly scheduled system maintenance, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on...

- **Wednesday, 2/6/08** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- **Friday, 2/8/08** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- **Wednesday 2/13/08** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM