



..CONNECTIONS NEWS..

for the week of November 14 - 21, 2008

Developing a more caseworker centric system

CONNECTIONS Intranet site: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>

FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

"Info to Know" for Caseworkers

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"Info to Know" for Caseworker



NEW Informational Letter (INF) - Family Assessment Response Cases (FAM) (08-OCFS-INF0-13)

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to inform local departments of social services (LDSSs) and voluntary agencies that are not currently participating in Child Protective Services Family Assessment Response (FAR) how FAR cases will be displayed and treated within CONNECTIONS. Since a non-participating LDSS or agency may at some point possibly encounter some family members or have some responsibility for a case that has been (or is being) served through FAR, it is necessary for such LDSS or

agency staff to have some basic familiarity with how FAR cases are going to be handled within CONNECTIONS. The link to access this INF, which is posted to the OCFS intranet website, is: http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS_2008/INFs/08-OCFS-INF-13%20Family%20Assessment%20Response%20Cases.pdf

The Family Assessment Response initiative is a non-adversarial alternative approach to the traditional investigative response in select CPS report scenarios. No determination of the SCR report is made. Chapter 452 of the Laws of 2007 authorized LDSSs, other than in New York City, to apply to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to use a family assessment and services approach for a subset of families that are reported to the SCR for child maltreatment.

CONNECTIONS' system support allows participating districts to identify CPS Investigations for Family Assessment Response and open a Family Services Intake (FSI) and Services Stage (FAM) to document case activity. The FAM stage includes the following: progress notes, safety assessment, preventive risk assessment and education. Participating districts have their own Job Aid to assist them. The job aid is posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet site on the Step-by-Step/Job Aid/Tips page and is available via the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Family%20Assess%20Resp%20%20Job%20Aid%2010%208%2008.pdf>



***NEW Informational Letter (INF) - 2008
Statutory Amendments Concerning Surrenders and the Provision
of an Adoption Information Registry Birth Parent Registration
Consent Form and the Impact of the Death of a Prospective
Adoptive Parent Before the Completion of the Adoption (08-
OCFS-INF-12)***

The purpose of this INF is to provide information to local departments of social services and voluntary authorized agencies regarding recently enacted legislation approved by the Governor that impacts adoption practice, specifically relating to the taking of surrenders and the completion of an adoption proceeding where one of the prospective adoptive parents dies after the filing of the adoption petition but before the completion of the adoption. The new laws are:

- *Chapter 160 of the Laws of 2008* (effective July 7, 2008) - amended the Domestic Relations Law (DRL) in relation to the continuation of the adoption proceeding when a petition for adoption by married persons is filed but one of the petitioners dies before the adoption is legally complete.
- *Chapter 435 of the Laws of 2008* (effective November 3, 2008) - amended the DRL, the Social Services Law (SSL), and the Public Health Law (PHL), in relation to the provision of an Adoption Information Registry Birth Parent Registration Consent form when a birth parent executes either a consent to the

adoption of his/her child or a surrender of guardianship and custody to an authorized agency.

The link to access this INF, which is posted to the OCFS intranet website is:
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS_2008/INFs/08-OCFS-INF-12%202008%20Statutory%20Amendments.pdf

- **Adoption Information Registry Birth Parent Registration Form link:**
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS_2008/INFs/DOH-4455%20-%20Birth%20Parent%20AIR%20Form.pdf



“Did You Know?” - The Goal of “Independent Living” Has Been Renamed

Although you still see “Independent Living” as a discharge planning goal (in CONNECTIONS), the name of this goal has been renamed “*Another Planned Living Arrangement with a Permanency Resource*” (however, in CONNECTIONS the name of the goal is renamed to: *Place in Another Planned Living Arrangement (Independent Living)*).

Section 430.12 (f), the section of Office regulations which governs services to youth who will be discharged to the community, has officially been amended and replaced the words “Independent Living” with the words “*Another Planned Living Arrangement with a Permanency Resource*” when referring to this discharge planning goal. These regulations also define *Another Planned Living Arrangement with a Permanency Resource* - is a permanency planning goal to assist foster care youth in their transition to self-sufficiency by connecting the youth to an adult permanency resource, equipping the youth with life skills and, upon discharge, connecting the youth with any needed community and/or specialized services. An *adult permanency resource* is also defined in these regulations as a caring committed adult who has been determined by a social services district to be an appropriate and acceptable resource for a youth and is committed to providing emotional support, advice and guidance to the youth and to assist the youth as the youth makes the transition from foster care to responsible adulthood.

Caseworkers should refer to the Adolescent Services and Outcomes Practice Guidance Paper, issued by OCFS, which can be accessed at <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/ddps/adolescent/resources.asp>. This practice guidance paper provides a new OCFS framework for assisting youth in foster care to make a successful transition from foster care to self-sufficiency - the intent of the discharge planning goal “*Another Planned Living Arrangement with a Permanency Resource*”. The practice framework focuses caseworker responsibility in assisting youth to achieve permanency and develop life skills.

Child welfare case practice, requires caseworkers to document efforts made to identify an adult permanency resource for all youth in foster care and to document a youth's progress toward developing a set of life skills when a foster youth is over the age of 14.



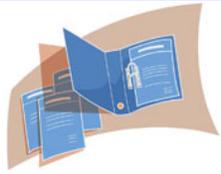
“Did You Know?” About CONNECTIONS Training

Did you know that if you want to view a schedule of the training that the Professional Development Program offers on CONNECTIONS just click on this link: <http://stars.bsc-cdhs.org/>

- You are now in the *STARS web site*. If you are a **local district caseworker** select Local Districts, Online Applications, Local Training Calendar from the menu on the left.
- If you are a **voluntary agency worker** select Voluntary Agencies, Online Applications, Voluntary Training Calendar from the menu on the left.
- Specify the search criteria:
 - a. Select the provider using the drop-down field. (All providers are selected by default.)
 - b. Select the course content using the drop-down field. (All content is selected by default.)
 - c. Select the training type using the drop-down field. (All training types are selected by default.)
 - d. Select the date range by using the From: and To: drop-down calendars or by typing in the dates. (The default date range is the current date to two months after the current date.)
 - e. Enter the training title if you want to include it in the search criteria.
 - f. Select the region(s) by clicking in the corresponding check box(es)
- Click the Submit button. Results are ordered by region, registration deadline date, and training title.
- Click the training name link to view training details. If attachments were created by the training provider, they are also available for viewing by clicking on the attachment links.
- Click the Close Window button and then the Yes button to return to the search results.
 - Click New Search to change the search criteria.
 - Click the STARS Home link to return to the STARS web site.

Need Help?

Should you have questions regarding upcoming events, please contact the training provider who is offering the event. Contact information for the training provider can be found in the training announcement. If you have questions related to the application itself, please call STARS Technical Support at 1-800-413-3210.



UPDATE: The October Monthly Open Case Inquiry and Management Reports

The October OCI monthly reports were available for designated staff, from the Report icon, on *Wednesday, November 12th*. We will post next year's schedule to the CONNECTIONS intranet site when it becomes available.

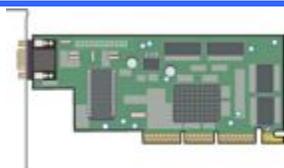
General "Info to Know"



NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet

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

- The CONNECTIONS NEWS <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>



Weekly System Maintenance

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

- [Wednesday, 11/19/08](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- [Friday, 11/21/08](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM



Office of
Children & Family
Services

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Commissioner