



..CONNECTIONS NEWS..

for the week of November 21- 28, 2008

Developing a more caseworker centric system

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

FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

"Info to Know" for Caseworkers

- *Downtime Scheduled for Saturday, 11/22/08 to Implement **CONNECTIONS Build 18.10.3** ...pg. 1 ...more*
- ***UPDATED CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Implied Role/Cross District Access** ...pg. 2 ...more*
- ***FASP Due Calendar Report from the OCFS Data Warehouse** ...pg. 3 ...more*
- ***NEW Informational Letter (INF) - Parent Advocate Programs (08-OCFS-INF-14)** ...pg. 3 ...more*
- ***Informational Letter (INF) - Family Assessment Response Cases (FAM) (08-OCFS-INF-13)** ...pg.4 ...more*
- ***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)** ...pg. 4 ...more*
- ***"Did You Know?" - The NYSOFT Enterprise Help Desk Is Now the NYSOFT Customer Care Center** ...pg. 5 ...more*
- ***"Did You Know?" - About CONNECTIONS Training** ...pg. 5 ...more*

General "Info to Know"

- ***NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet** ... pg. 6 ...more*
- ***Weekly System Maintenance** ... pg. 7 ...more*

"Info to Know" for Caseworker



*Downtime Scheduled for Saturday, 11/22/08 to Implement **CONNECTIONS Build 18.10.3***

A notification was sent on 11/19 to local district and voluntary agency Directors of Service, CONNECTIONS Implementation, Security and Back-up Security Coordinators, Resource Users and other key agency personnel to apprise you that the CONNECTIONS application will not be available from 7:00 am - 10:00 am (a downtime of three hours) on Saturday, November 22nd.

We have scheduled this downtime in order to implement the following fixes within the application.

- Currently, an error is received when attempting to submit the FASP for approval in FSS/CWS stages with only one person listed, and where a Safety Assessment was created after implementation of Q3-08 on 10/10/08. A fix will be implemented that will correct this issue and you will no longer receive an error when attempting to submit the FASP for approval in the above mentioned circumstances.
- Within *Comprehensive or Reassessment FASPs* that were launched *after* the implementation of Q3-08 (10/10/08), the Risk Score and Ratings on the FASP outputs was, in some instances, inconsistent with the Risk Assessment Profile information as recorded on the CONNECTIONS window. After implementation of the fix, the Risk Score and Ratings on the FASP outputs will be consistent with the Risk Assessment Profile information recorded on the CONNECTIONS window. We are in the process of identifying those cases where the inconsistency in Risk scores exists and will follow-up as soon as we have details to share.
- Since the implementation of Q3-08 (10/10/08), some of you received an unexpected text control error when attempting to re-open a *Permanency Hearing Report (PHR)* after information had been recorded and saved as draft or final. After the implementation of the fix, we will have limited the chances for future corruption in the PHR.
Please note: The fix however, applies only to PHRs that are started *after* 11/22/08 (after the implementation of this Build). Efforts are currently underway to address issues in PHRs that were launched *prior* to 11/22/08. We will provide an update on the remaining PHR issues as soon as possible.
- After implementation of this Build, *On-line Help* will be available through "F1" for the Family Assessment Response check box (Investigation Conclusion window in the INV stage), for districts participating in the Family Assessment Response pilot.



UPDATED - CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Implied Role/Cross District Access

The Implied Role/Cross District Access tip sheet has been updated and posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site at the following link:

[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/Implied%20role%20tip%20sheet%20-%20revised%20\(11-%202008\).pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/Implied%20role%20tip%20sheet%20-%20revised%20(11-%202008).pdf).

If a stage you are working on shares a person in common (has the same PID) with another stage or case, open or closed, in any agency or district, you have an *implied* role in the related stage or case. With an implied role you will have view-only access to stage or case information on the related stage or case. Best casework practice requires that you review all information documented in each stage of a case in which you have a role. It is also important that other cases with persons in common with your assigned cases be reviewed. In addition, the names of other involved workers on the stage or case can be obtained; allowing you to follow-up directly with the worker(s). For more info on how to view a stage in which you have an implied role please refer to the tip sheet.



FASP Due Calendar Report from the OCFS Data Warehouse

During the week of November 24th, the OCFS Data Warehouse is releasing a new version of the FASP Due Calendar Reports. The changes to the Reports involve the *option* to report by Office and Unit Specialization. The report can be run without selecting an Office and Unit Specialization, use of Office and Unit Specialization are entirely optional and can be bypassed. A document that describes the report in further detail is posted to the Data Warehouse page of the CONNECTIONS intranet. Click the following link to access the page:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/>



NEW Informational Letter (INF) - Parent Advocate Programs (08-OCFS-INF-14)

The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to provide information to local departments of social services and voluntary authorized agencies regarding the use of parent advocates. Parent advocates can be part of an agency program or may be additional staff hired to supplement the child welfare services already provided in the agency. Parent advocate programs, whether a formalized program or the addition of parent advocate staff to agency staffing, employ parents who were previously recipients of child welfare services, and who have successfully addressed the issues which brought them to the attention of child welfare or child protective services. They are employed as advocates to assist other families that are involved in the child welfare system. These programs are currently operating in some agencies within New York State, and the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) supports use of these types of parent-to-parent support models. 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-14%20Parent%20Advocate%20Programs.pdf



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

Please note: This piece was in last week's edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

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>



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)

Please note: This piece was in last week's edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

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?” - That the NYSOFT Enterprise Help Desk Is Now the NYSOFT Customer Care Center

Although the contact number remains the same (1.800.697.1323), as well as the reason to phone into the Help Desk, the name and staff are changing. The ‘old’ name of the Help Desk - the NYSOFT Enterprise Help Desk is being changed to: the NYSOFT Customer Care Center. There will be no interruption of service during the transition, and, just as a reminder, for application help you can also contact the Application Help mailbox, which is housed within our project’s Triage Unit. The address for “App Help” is: ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.state.ny.us.



“Did You Know?” About CONNECTIONS Training

Please note: This piece was in last week’s edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

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/> or go to the Training page of the CONNECTIONS intranet and click on the link in the box on the upper-right hand side of the page.

- 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. (PDP, Rockefeller College))
 - b. Select the course content using the drop-down field. (All content is selected by default. (Systems CONNECTIONS))
 - 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.

General "Info to Know"

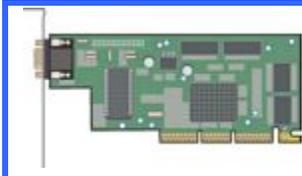


NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet

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

- The CONNECTIONS NEWS <http://ocfs.state.nynet/connect/>
- Build 18.10.3 Communication

- CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Implied Role/Cross District Access



Weekly System Maintenance

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

- [Wednesday, 11/26/08](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- [Friday, 11/28/08](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

And for the implementation of Build 18.10.3 the CONNECTIONS Application will not be available on:

- [Saturday 11/22/08](#) from 7:00 AM - 10:00 AM



Office of
Children & Family
Services
Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner