



..CONNECTIONS NEWS..

for the week of October 30 - November 6, 2009

Developing a more caseworker centric system

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

FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

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"Info to Know" for Caseworkers



Casework Contacts with Children in Foster Care...

Please note that this piece was in the last edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

A letter was recently sent to local district Commissioners in an effort to update them on the status of New York State's work in relation to the Casework Contacts initiative that is currently being conducted; in keeping with the legislation documented in the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (P.L.) 109-288.

Two changes in requirements were highlighted. The first is that beginning in the second year of reporting, **foster children who are AWOL** must be included in the population about whom states must report. The second change is that the federal government clarified its position regarding foster children placed out-of-state. They indicated that all

such children are subject to the monthly reporting requirements, notwithstanding another federal law that requires less frequent contacts. OCFS is in the process of amending our regulations to reflect the **requirement for monthly contact with children placed out-of-state**.

Importantly, for this reporting year, the date by which all data must be reported has recently been extended by the federal government (for the FFY ending September 30, 2009). All casework contacts must be entered into CONNECTIONS Progress Notes by **Monday, November 30, 2009** in order for OCFS to submit this report. It is essential that if all casework contacts have not as yet been entered that this be done so as soon as possible.

Lastly, as of October 1, 2009, we are already in the third reporting year, having a benchmark of 75%. As I am sure you remember failure to make and/or document a contact **in any one month** of the reporting year puts the case out of compliance for the entire year. We ask that you please remind your staff, and staff of the voluntary agencies with which you contract for foster care services, of the importance of making a casework contact with each foster child at least once every month and recording each contact contemporaneous with the event.

A copy of the letter that was sent is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website and can be accessed via the following link: <http://ocfs.state.nynet/connect/projupdt/Comm%20Letter-CC%20Changes%20in%20Requirements.pdf>

General "Info to Know"



The Citrix Client Upgrade

- When Will This Happen and What Will It Look Like???

When Will This Happen and What Will It Look Like???

Please note that this upgrade will begin **Monday, November 2nd**, for all those machines that access the network via HSEN. Those machines that access the network through SSL/VPN will **not** see the change described below, **however**, you will see a change on the banner page for CONNECTIONS beginning this evening. It will state that the access into CONNECTIONS has changed BUT, please note that you CAN still access CONNECTIONS the same way and that you do not have to upgrade your machines immediately. There will be more information on this update for SSL/VPN users on Monday, November 2nd.

For the machines that access the network via HSEN, a "new" Citrix Xen App Plugin (Formerly known as PN Agent Client) will be deployed to all CONNECTIONS workstations beginning on Monday, November 2nd. Users will access CONNECTIONS

the same way that it is accessed now, with the only exception being that it will be through the Xen App Plugin icon. Please see the icons below for further illustration.

- **Old Icon on Desktop:**



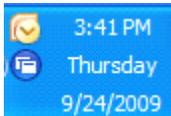
- **Old Icon in System Tray:**



- **New Icon on Desktop:**



- **New Icon in System Tray:**



The upgrade of the Xen App Plugin is part of an ongoing Citrix Infrastructure upgrade. The CONNECTIONS Application will be unaffected by this icon change.



Future CONNECTIONS Scheduled Downtime

We are preparing the groundwork for future CONNECTIONS quarterly improvements!!! In that vein, there are a few planned system downtimes that we would like to let you know about. Please note that the dates and the times are the ones that are currently scheduled. We don't expect them to change; however, we are collaborating with other agencies in planning and conducting these downtimes and have to leave some amount of flexibility in these schedules.

- **Saturday, November 7th - 12 midnight - 6 pm (an 18 hour downtime)**
- **Saturday, November 14th**
- **Saturday, December 19th**
- **Thursday, December 31st**



NEW Link to the CONNECTIONS NEWS

As many of you may have noticed, the past few weeks we have been providing a link to the CONNECTIONS NEWS instead of the actual PDF version of the newsletter. We have changed to this format of sending the NEWS out in the interest of conserving email volume. We have heard from some folks, who access CONNECTIONS via SSL or SSL/VPN, about their inability to access the NEWS this way. We have researched this issue with our tech support team and have been told that you must be logged into either VPN or SSL/VPN before trying to launch the link - you can also cut and paste the link into the internet browser. Remember, if you are having difficulties accessing the NEWS in this way please let us know! You can send an email to: CONNECTIONSCommunications@dfa.state.ny.us.



NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet

- ...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, 11/4/09](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- [Friday, 11/6/09](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM



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