



..CONNECTIONS NEWS..

for the week of August 28 - September 4, 2009

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 Caseworkers



AFCARS and Casework Contacts for Children in Care

Timeframes for reporting AFCARS data and Casework Contacts to the federal government are coming due! It is critical that local district and voluntary agency staff make timely updates to the AFCARS information and Casework Contacts for children in care.

AFCARS information includes the following:

AFCARS information from the Placement Information Tab, the Removal Information Tab and the Diagnosis on the Clinical Appointment window.

For CCR cases-

The AFCARS Adoption Information window accessed from the Adoption Finalization window.

The tip sheet for Recording AFCARS data can be found on the CONNECTIONS Intranet or via the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/Recording%20AFCARS%20Data%20v3.pdf>

A Casework Contact with each child in foster care is required in *every* calendar month that the child is in placement. In order to show that you have met the federal requirement for monthly contacts with foster children, the following data fields and values must be used when recording a progress not in CONNECTIONS:

- Type - Casework Contact;
- Method - Face-to-Face;
- Child as both the Focus and Participant of the contact;
- Location as adoptive home, foster home or congregate care facility;
- Location for child on trial discharge as case address, parent's home or relative's home

The tip sheet for Casework Contacts is located on the CONNECTIONS Intranet or via the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/CONNECTIONS%20Tip%20Sheet%20-%20Progress%20notes-%20Documenting%20Successful%20Casework%20Contact%20FINAL%20REV%207-8-09.2.pdf>

Reminder! There are reports in Data Warehouse that will help identify foster children that are missing information in both Clinical Diagnosis as well as Casework Contacts. You can access Data Warehouse via:

<http://cognos.dfa.state.nyenet/cognos8> or <http://10.64.152.9/cognos8>.



Two NEW Tip Sheets...

- CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Removal Updates
- CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Plan Amendments

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

Two **NEW** tip sheets have been developed! They are:

- *CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Removal Updates, and*
- *CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Plan Amendments*

The first **NEW** tip sheet on the topic of Removal Updates includes the answer to the question: "When should I use a removal update?" It also includes info on the removal update process, approving a removal update and printing a removal update.

The second **NEW** tip sheet on the topic of Plan Amendments defines what a plan amendment is, when a change should be documented, pre-launch preparation, how to launch a plan amendment, info on outcome and activity blocks and how to complete a plan amendment.

For your reference, tip sheets are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet on the Job Aids and Tip Sheets page <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp>.



-- CONNECTIONS Transformation Update – (The Summer 2009 NYPWA PowerPoint Presentation)

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

During the NYPWA summer conference a workshop titled: *CONNECTIONS Transformation Update*, was presented by Sheila Poole, Associate Commissioner of the Division of Child Welfare and Community Services and William Travis, Deputy Director of the Division of Information Technology. The agenda of the presentation is highlighted below.

CONNECTIONS Transformation Update - AGENDA

- 2009 Transformation Updates / Accomplishments
 - Production Deliveries
 - Business Team
 - Technical Team
- 2009-10 Transformation Activities
 - Enhanced Reporting Capability -Albany County Pilot
 - PHR (Short Term and Long Term Improvements)
 - Casework Contacts
 - Training and Implementation Planning
- 2009 Security Update

Is your interest piqued? For more details about the status of the transformation, the complete PowerPoint presentation is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet and can be accessed via the following link:

http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/projupdt/2009%20NYPWA%20Conference_Summer_FINAL.pdf



“Did You Know?” ... **REVISED**

“Did You Know?”...

Closing a case in CONNECTIONS does NOT automatically close the associated WMS case. The WMS case must be closed manually after the CONNECTIONS case has been closed. Therefore, you can close the case in CONNECTIONS when services end but keep the WMS case open long enough for outstanding bills to be paid without

additional FASPs becoming due! If the case remains open and the child still appears to be in placement, there will be a requirement for a casework contact for that child as well as AFCARS information.

Similarly, recording the child's discharge (M990) and closing the track in CCRS (M999) when services end will not affect the ability to pay outstanding bills and will increase the accuracy of time-in-care statistics.

General "Info to Know"



OCFS Data Warehouse Reminder

OCFS Data Warehouse Reminder

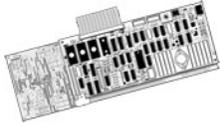
Make sure you access the predefined reports through the OCFS Data Warehouse tab, not the Public Folders area. The OCFS Data Warehouse tab is easy to add and takes you directly to all of the reports. As an added bonus, a banner will display at the top of this tab to notify you when there are data refresh issues that can affect the reports you are trying to run. (Note: The banner will not appear on the Public Folders or My Folders tabs.) If you have any questions, contact the OCFS Data Warehouse team at data.warehouse@ocfs.state.ny.us.

If you do not see the OCFS Data Warehouse tab when you login to Cognos, add it by following these simple steps:

- 1 From the Cognos Connection screen, click on the **Tab Menu** button located to the left of the Public Folders tab.
- 2 Select **Add portal tabs...** from the resulting list.
- 3 Click on **Public Folders**.
- 4 Click on **Global Reports**. (Hint: It's a yellow folder.)
- 5 Click on **Portal Pages**.
- 6 Click in the box to the left of **OCFS Data Warehouse**.
- 7 Click on the green arrow in the center of the window to move this item to the right side of the screen.
- 8 Click on the **OK** button, and wait for the screen to refresh. You should now see the OCFS Data Warehouse tab next to the Public Folders and My Folders tabs.
- 9 Click on the **OCFS Data Warehouse tab**, and you're ready to run reports!

[Optional] To make the OCFS Data Warehouse tab the first tab you see:

- 10 Click on the Tab Menu from Step 1 above, and select **Modify the sequence...**
- 11 Click once on **OCFS Data Warehouse** to highlight it.
- 12 Click on the **To top** link to move OCFS Data Warehouse to the top of the list.
- 13 Click on the **OK** button, and wait for the screen to refresh. From now on, the contents of the OCFS Data Warehouse tab will display by default when you login.



System Maintenance by NYS OGS - Involves ALL OCFS Computer Application, Including CONNECTIONS

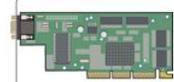
*****Please note that this piece was in the last edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.***

OCFS has been informed by the NYS Office of General Services (OGS) via the Office for Technology (OFT) that a required maintenance of electrical equipment in the building hosting OCFS computer systems will be occurring over the **October 2 - 4, 2009 weekend**. This will require an extended outage (24-32 hours) of **all** OCFS computer applications, **including CONNECTIONS**. Initial estimates indicate the downtime for CONNECTIONS will begin during the evening of Friday, October 2nd (between 8pm-12 midnight). It is expected that CONNECTIONS will be again available on Sunday morning, October 4th. More details will be shared as they become available.



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, 9/2/09** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- **Friday, 9/7/09** from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM



Office of
Children & Family
Services
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