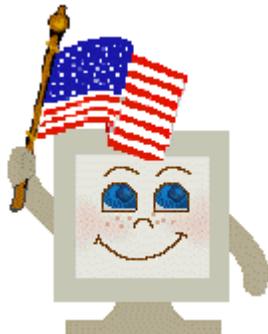
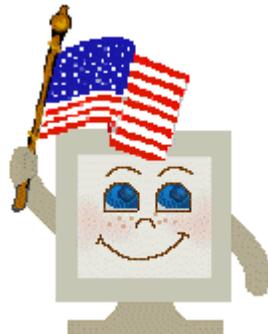


CONNECTIONS WEEKLY

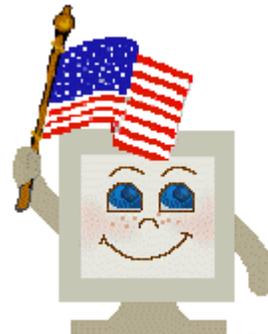
May 20-27, 2005



Armed Forces Day



Armed Forces Day



Armed Forces Day

Waves 5 and 6 West Were Successfully Implemented!

On Monday, May 16th users in the Departments of Social Services of Erie, Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming, as well as users in twenty-two voluntary agencies, began to use the Build 18 functionality.

Build 18.2 Was Also Successfully Implemented!

The weekend of May 13th was a very busy one as Build 18.2 was also successfully implemented on *Friday, May 13, 2005*. There were however, three issues that were not able to be resolved at the time of implementation. These issues were forwarded in a communication on Monday, May 16th and are also on the Home and Implementation pages (under the sub-heading of Build 18.2) of the CONNECTIONS Intranet.

A Preview Reminder...

Preview will not be available on *Friday, May 20th* as the Preview environment will be refreshed for Waves 6 East and 7. On *Monday, May 23rd* Preview will be available for use by Waves 8, 9 and 10 and a refreshed Preview environment will be available for Waves 6 East and 7.

In addition, information on Preview was forwarded to the participants (Commissioners, Executive Directors, Implementation Coordinators, Directors of Services) of Waves 8, 9 and 10 earlier this week. The Preview documents are also posted on the CONNECTIONS intranet on the Implementation page under the sub-heading of Preview Info.

CONNECTIONS Build 18 Implementation Issues ~ Version 3 Is Here!

In an effort to communicate the outstanding implementation issues and their associated workarounds directly with users, we have created the CONNECTIONS Build 18 Implementation Issues document. Version 3 (which is an update to

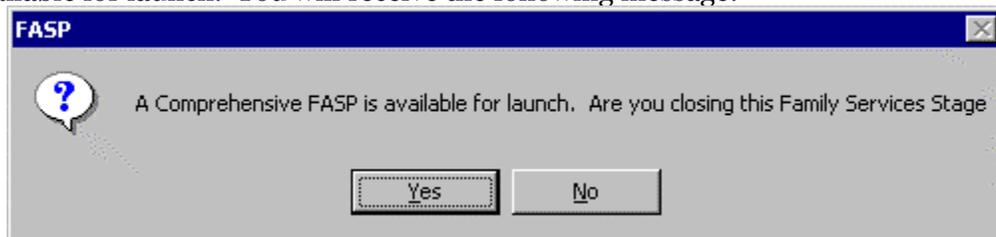
Version 2/dated May 2nd) was forwarded on Monday, May 16th. A copy of this document is posted on the Implementation page of the CONNECTIONS Intranet under the sub-title, Build 18 Implementation Issues.

“Quick Tips...Helpful Hints...How To’s”...

As users questions arise, in the spirit of providing information in as timely a manner as we can, we have decided to add a section to the Weekly called “Quick Tips...Helpful Hints...How To’s”. The following is a “How To” to respond to a recently asked user question.

Scenario...“A child, turning 18 is being discharged from foster care. The child is refusing aftercare, so the case is to be closed. The FASP is due in 3 weeks. Will the system allow access to the Discharge Protocol Plan Amendment to close the case during the launch window for the Reassessment FASP or, do I need to complete the entire FASP for the closing case so that I have appropriate documentation?”

Resolution... You can launch a Plan Amendment when there was another FASP available for launch. You will receive the following message:



Upon responding "Yes" to this question, the Plan Amendment is launched and the user must choose one of the following. The following are Plan Amendment Ending or Discharge types:

- Preventive Services Ended
- Child Discharged to Home, Relative, Other Caretaker
- Adolescent Discharged to Independent Living
- Child Discharged to Adult Residential Care
- Child Discharged to Adoption
- Child Returned Home from Non-LDSS Placement
- Case Closed to CPS

Once the Plan Amendment is completed, the user can proceed with closing the stage.

In addition, note that prior to case closing the system checks to see if a Plan Amendment with an "ending or discharge" type exists for this stage or if a FASP for this stage is currently in a pending status, or was approved within the last 30 days. If one of these exists then the system will allow stage closure.

If there is no Plan Amendment with an "ending or discharge" type or there is no FASP currently in a Pending status or approved within the last 30 days then the following message will appear: **"There is no Plan Amendment or Pending FASP for this stage. Closing and or discharge information is required by regulation. Do you wish to do one now? Yes or No"** . If the user responds "Yes", the system will stop the closing action and return the user to the Case Summary tab. The user may then select the Assessment and Service Plan tab and complete the required work. If the user

responds "No" then the following is displayed as a comments box: **Describe the level of achievement of outcomes essential to the child(ren)'s safety, permanency and well being.**" and must be responded to. This narrative is required and displayed on the following page.

Stage Closure Question
File Options Help

There is no Plan Amendment or Pending FASP for this stage. Closing and or discharge information is required by regulation. Do you wish to do one now?

Yes No

If No....

Describe the level of achievement for outcomes essential to the Child(ren)'s Safety, Permanency and Well-Being.

Enter comments.

Spell Check OK Cancel

The NYS OCFS Virtual Private Network (VPN) Access to the HSEN for CONNECTIONS In A Box Personal Computers (CIAB) or NYS Laptop Computers

Information related to VPN access is posted on the OCFS Internet website. The direct address to this information follows.

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/vpn/default.asp>.

In summary, the objective of this initiative is to allow agency staff access to the CONNECTIONS application from state CIABs and state laptop computers via the use of a VPN solution.

Increase in SPAM Messages

A new variant of the W32.Sober is responsible for a substantial increase in spam over the past few days. This variant can randomly generate several different email messages, either in English or German depending on the version of Windows running on infected computers. The content of the messages contains, or points to, political statements and, in some instances, may refer to the bombings by the allies during World War II. Several NYS agencies and one other state have reported receiving large number of emails from outside their networks as a result

of the virus. In some cases the volume of email has caused response issues with email systems. The systems that are affected are Microsoft Windows 2000/95/98/ME/NT/XP. The identified risk is to large and medium Government entities as well as small, medium and large business entities.

DESCRIPTION

This variant is similar to previous Sober worms. It appears to produce email addresses from various files on the system and then sends out email messages with the following characteristics:

- *CSCIC has observed Spoofed To addresses
- *Spoofed From address
- *A Subject line that may be in either English or German and is selected from a predetermined list.
- * Body text that may be in either English or German and is selected from a predetermined list. The body of the message may contain a URL.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although this particular variant does not have any associated attachments, CSCIC recommends the following general actions be taken:

- * Configure email gateway to block .bat, .cmd, .com, .exe, .pif, .scr, or .zip extension. Although zip files are utilized for normal business, consider blocking or quarantining zip files temporarily.
- * Proper egress firewall filtering should allow outbound SMTP (port 25) from legitimate email servers and block all other outbound attempts. (Failed outbound attempts to this port from non email server hosts could be a sign of infection.)
- * Update your anti-virus software signatures on all desktops, laptops and servers as soon as possible.
- * Apply filters (e.g. Subject Line filters) to email servers.
- * Remind staff of the dangers of opening suspicious and unsolicited emails.
- * Remind staff not to follow links (URL's) or open attachments contained in SPAM or other suspicious email notes since they may lead to malicious sites resulting in downloading additional viruses, worms and Trojans.

A Note About the Availability of the NYS OFT Enterprise Help Desk...

We would like to remind those users who are in local districts and voluntary agencies that have been implemented, of the availability of the Help Desk if they experience any issues with the application, after the on-site support is no longer available. The number of the Help Desk is: 1.800.NYS(697).1323.

An Update on the Conversion Planning Report

As we reported in the Weekly last week, the Conversion Planning Report is a report that documents what would happen in conversion with your services cases, will be run on a bi-weekly basis, beginning Thursday, May 19th, to be available to local district designees on Friday, May 20th. The report will be run every other week (on a Thursday) from the date of first issuance (May 19th), and will be available on the Friday after the report is run.

Please note that the report that was run on Thursday, May 5th may not have reported the field of Case Planner correctly. This issue is currently being addressed and will be remedied shortly.

It should be noted that this report will only be run for those local districts that are not yet implemented in Waves 6 East through 14.

Save the Date...

Monday, June 6th is Day 1 implementation for Waves 6 East and 7. The Departments of Social Services that are included in these waves are: Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, St. Lawrence, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, St. Regis, Albany, Fulton, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington. There are twenty-nine voluntary agencies included in these waves.

CONNECTIONS System Down Time

- Friday, 5/20/05 from 4:00 AM - 7:00 AM*
 ****Please note the additional 1 hour of downtime***
- Wednesday, 5/25/05 from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- Friday, 5/27/05 from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM

In addition, please note that the Preview environment will not be available on Friday, May 20th.