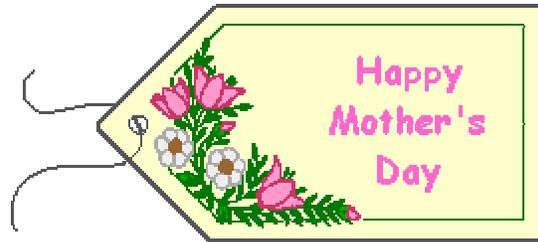


CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE



To: CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators
From: CONNECTIONS Communications
CC: LAN Administrators/Security Coordinators, Keyusers,
OCFS~Directors of Services, CONNECTIONS Project
Team
Date: May 6, 2004
Re: Activities for the week of 5/7/04-5/14/04

1. **Build 17.1 Schedule**

CONNECTIONS Build 17.1 is scheduled for release Saturday, May 8, 2004. The CONNECTIONS Application will be brought down Saturday morning, May 8 beginning at 4:00 AM. In advance of the Build, we recommend that CONNECTIONS users be logged off the CONNECTIONS Application by 3:45 AM. Staff will not be able to access the CONNECTIONS Application between 4:00 AM and 7:00 AM on Saturday May 8th. During this time frame, CONNECTIONS downtime procedures will be implemented for the transmission of CPS reports between the SCR, ECS and local districts. Network Exchange/Outlook e-mail will be available during this time period. We anticipate the CONNECTIONS Build 17.1 Application will be available at approximately 7:00 AM on Saturday, May 8th. CONNECTIONS Build 17.1 is primarily a technical build (code and database upgrade) and has no relevant Application related changes. The modifications will not be visible to the user.

As has been reported previously, the production implementation of CONNECTIONS Build 17.1 was postponed due to a re-evaluation of the downtime schedule for the Build as requested by users. The project is evaluating downtimes for all future Builds, making efforts to accommodate after hours system operations.

2. **Update ~ Citrix Connectivity Issue**

The CONNECTIONS Technical and Implementation teams have been collaboratively engaged, since the latter part of March 2004, in attempting to isolate and analyze the user identified issue of reports of Citrix connectivity problems. In order to capture the issue immediately, as users were experiencing the problem, the Technical team established and manned a toll-free telephone number for users to call when they experienced a Citrix connectivity issue. In an effort to reach out to users who may have been experiencing this issue, the Implementation team also

conducted numerous field visits to various sites across the state in order to capture the immediacy and intensity of the issue.

Of the forty-three calls that were logged during the month long toll-free telephone number initiative only three of the calls were found to be related to possible connectivity problems. Of the remaining calls seventeen related to Application issues and twenty-three calls related to Network performance. In addition, of the approximate two hundred hours of time CONNECTIONS staff spent in the field, three instances of connectivity-related problems were encountered. The origins of these connectivity-related problems that were discovered could not be determined.

Upon analysis of the data collected during the field visits, as well as an analysis, by the Technical team of the telephone log kept during the duration of this initiative, no substantive evidence of widespread Citrix connectivity problems was found. However, moving forward, we will continue to monitor and assess future situations of reported connectivity issues.

It should be noted that as of Friday, May 7th close of business, the CONNECTIONS Citrix connectivity toll-free telephone number will no longer be available. Users are once again instructed to call the NYS OFT Enterprise Help Desk (1-800-NYS-1323) to report any CONNECTIONS related problems.

3. New Training Course for CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services, in conjunction with the SUNY Training Strategies Group, is pleased to announce a *new* CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinator course. For further information on the course as well as a registration form please see the attachment below.



Implementation
Coord announcem...

4. Noisy Alert System Upgrade and Date Change

This is to notify you that the server that supports the Noisy Alert process will be replaced effective *Wednesday, May 12, 2004*. The system will continue to operate in the same manner as it has, however the server replacement will result in a more reliable operation. Within the few next weeks, we will be forwarding communication related to each district's current Noisy Alert telephone numbers and time frames for verification and/or update.

5. CentraPort Information

Effective April 19, 2004, CentraPort users saw significant changes to the CentraPort application as well as a change of address for the application itself. This information was communicated to users by the HSM team on April 16, 2004. The two attachments below describe the changes to the application as well as identify the new CentraPort address.



CentraPort
Bulletin-Application C



CentraPort Address
Change 4-19-04.doc

6. Update – Best Practice Guidelines

PC Best Practice Guideline

As a best practice guideline, please alert staff to leave their CONNECTIONS workstations “powered on” so the workstations can receive any Network WinInstall packages, *including any security patches*. **Do not “power off” or shut down your workstation.** Users should “log off” with the “ctrl+alt+delete” message visible on the monitor.

HSEN Password Best Practice Guideline

It should be noted that the HSEN ID’s maximum age is ninety (90) days. Fourteen days prior to expiration, the user will be reminded to change their password. If you receive an error message regarding your user ID/password when logging onto HSEN you should first call your Security Administrator, if he/she cannot help you should then call the NYS OFT Enterprise Help Desk for a technical staff person to assist.

PC’s That Have Been Disconnected from the Network

It should be noted that any machine registered in a domain that has not been connected to the network in more than sixty (60) days is removed from the domain list (network). Each week there are numerous PC’s that are disconnected from the network due to lack of activity. A machine only needs to be connected, through either RAZ (Remote Access Server), VPN or, directly to the network for a period of at least 15 minutes (every sixty (60) days) for it to be registered and continue to remain connected to the network.

7. Security Information Related to Build 17

In light of the implementation of Build 17 and the modifications and enhancements to Security functionality, a communication was forwarded to Implementation Coordinators, Security and Back-up Security Coordinators on Monday, March 15, 2004. This communication requested that local districts and voluntary agencies identify a person(s), in the district or agency who should have the Maintain Agency Access or Maintain Organizational Hierarchy security functionality. A form was attached to this communication This form should be completed by the Implementation Coordinator for your district or agency. Upon completion, the form should then be e-mailed to either Donna Cramer or Nancy O’Hara of the CONNECTIONS Communication Unit. A copy of the form is posted below this notice and can also be found on the Security page of the CONNECTIONS Intranet.

If you have any questions regarding this document you may contact either Paula Ainspan (518) 486-3743 (paula.ainspan@dfa.state.ny.us) or Jo Shrader (518) 473-9254 (jo.shrader@dfa.state.ny.us).



Add or Remove
Maintain Agency ...

8. **CONNECTIONS System Down Time**

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 5/7/04 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

*****Saturday, 5/8/04 from 4:00 AM – 7:00AM***

Wednesday, 5/12/04 from 5:45 AM - 6:30 AM

Friday, 5/14/04 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

***** Please note additional downtime for the implementation of Build 17.1***

9. **Microsoft Exchange Mail Servers**

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance on MS Exchange E-mail 5.0 servers, all Exchange E-mail 5.0 servers will be unavailable on:

Sunday, 5/9/04 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM

Sunday, 5/16/04 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM