~The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY~
February 10 ~ 17, 2006

The CONNECTIONS Program Improvement Plan...

Over the past two months, members of CONNECTIONS project management have been meeting with several local district Commissioners throughout the State seeking feedback regarding the implementation of Build 18. It is clear that there are concerns related to the performance of the CONNECTIONS system. Therefore, in response to these concerns, we have initiated a *CONNECTIONS Performance Improvement Project,* and we are partnering with staff from OFT, OCFS, as well as vendors, to analyze all aspects of the infrastructure design (i.e. servers, network, database, etc.) and application design, to determine the root cause of these performance issues. It should be noted that testing will begin next week, and it is possible that users may see occasional slowness in the system due to this in-depth analysis process. Your cooperation is certainly appreciated, and we would like to collectively thank all of the staff at the local districts that provided many valuable suggestions.

The New Look of the CONNECTIONS Intranet Site...

The look of the CONNECTIONS intranet site is changing! Over the last several months we have been working on a new look for the intranet. In light of the many new system users, we have taken on the task of redesigning the intranet site to showcase a fresh face! The content of the site will be similar to the current content with several enhancements. A sneak peak at the site reveals a more robust search feature as well as more links to other important information such as links to both STARS and CDHS trainings. "Look for the new look" in late February!

WMS Discrepancy Report...

The WMS Discrepancy Report is a production report generated monthly from the OCFS Data Warehouse. The report is displayed in the Reports Folder, and reflects a "point in time" when CONNECTIONS and WMS are out of synch. This report will be made available to staff at **local districts only**. It will be sent to the Report List window of each user designated to receive the report.

The report lists 3 different types of discrepancies in data in the two systems:

1. Any case in CONNECTIONS when the corresponding WMS case does not exist, or is incomplete (the case is still in "APP REG" status in WMS).
2. Any case in which the Family Services Stage is closed in CONNECTIONS but the corresponding WMS case is still open.
3. Individuals in an active case who have different demographic data in the two systems – Case Manager ID, Individual Name, Date of Birth, Sex, Social Security Number, and/or Case Address (address of primary caretaker in CONNECTIONS to Case Address in WMS).

It should be noted that the WMS Discrepancy Report is being prepared for distribution in March 2006 and your Regional Implementation Field Support Lead will be contacting you to discuss this report.

**Please note: In order to either initially identify or change the report recipients we ask that you complete the Management Report Update Form, located on the CONNECTIONS intranet, on the Implementation page, and submit the form to Marie Wiley, via e-mail at Marie.Wiley@ocfs.state.ny.us.

Preview Environment...
This note is just a reminder that a communication was sent earlier on Friday to notify users that they would no longer be able to access the Preview environment.

As is customary when a Build implementation is completed and all users are operating in the Production environment, access to the Preview environment is withdrawn, as the Preview environment is a Build readiness tool. We thank users for the success of this environment.

CONNECTIONS Questions and Answers...
Question: What makes up the case composition?
Answer: Case composition may include non-household family members who are being served; all known children's parent(s) must be included.
Just a tip... Please remember that whenever you add a person to a case you should perform a Person Search and relate known persons.

Question: Will Voluntary Agencies be able to complete a Person Search if they are entering an FSI?
Answer: Yes, workers have the ability to perform various case maintenance activities within the FSI. These include a Person Search, relating and un-relating persons to the case composition and linking the FSI to an existing CONNECTIONS case.

Consolidated Business Function Guidelines for Local Districts and Voluntary Agencies...

Two updated business function guideline documents have been posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website on the Security page. The *Business Functions Guidelines for Local Districts* and the *Business Functions Guidelines for Voluntary Agencies*. It should be noted that the content of these documents consolidates the content of the following documents that were previously posted to the intranet site: *Build 18 Business Functions Memo, Build 18 Business Functions for Local Districts, Build 18 Business Functions for Voluntary Agencies* and the *CONNECTIONS Build 17 Business Functions Guidelines*.

When CONNECTIONS Will Be Unavailable...

- *Friday, 2/10/06* from 5:00AM - 7:00AM
- *Wednesday, 2/15/06* from 5:00AM – 7:00AM
- *Friday, 2/17/06* from 5:00AM - 7:00AM