NYS Office of Children and Family Services
on the **road** to
transforming the Child Welfare Information System

..CONNECTIONS NEWS..
for the week of July 3 - 10, 2009

Developing a more caseworker centric system
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CONNECTIONS Intranet site: http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/
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FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

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"Info to Know" for Caseworkers

Update to the CONNECTIONS Training Database

The CONNECTIONS training database is due for its' quarterly update! This means that the training database will not be available on **Thursday, July 9th or Friday, July 10th**.   It will again be available for use on Monday, July 13th!

Improvements to the Batch OCI Monthly Management Report Series - Effective 7/6/09

The current OCI Monthly Management report series has incorrectly included work completed between the end of the month and the date the report is run. Beginning with

the June 2009 report, the OCI Monthly Management Reports will accurately cut off at the end of the month. The stages listed and all totals will be a snapshot of the work completed as of the end of the month.

An ** will now display in the Status field for Safety Assessments and Investigation Conclusions approved in the time frame between the end of the month and the date on which the OCI Monthly Management Report is generated. A new line has been added to the text field in the bottom portion of the report to explain this designation -" ** Indicates the task was approved in the time period between the end of the month and the date the OCI report was generated." Tasks marked with the ** will be counted in overdue totals if they were overdue at the end of the month. If the approval was overdue as of the end of the month, an 'X' will still display in the "Overdue" field.

A "Y" will now display in the "FAM" column to indicate stages that have been designated as Family Assessment Response.

The date displayed on the OCI report as the Safety Assessment approval date will now be the approval date instead of the date entered on the Safety Assessment Detail window.

When the status of a 7 Day Safety Assessment or the Investigation Conclusion is rejected, the report will now display a status of REJT.   Prior to this fix the status field was blank for rejected Safety Assessments and Investigation Conclusions.

The Investigation Conclusion Due Date will now display on the report for all stages. Prior to this fix if the Investigation Conclusion was approved in the time period between the end of the month and the date the report was generated AND the Investigation Conclusion Event Date (as recorded by the worker on the Investigation Conclusion window) was not within the same month as the approval (Approve CPS Investigation Event/Tx date), the Investigation Conclusion Due Date field was blank.

A new confidentiality banner will now display in the header of the report:

**************WARNING***********
CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

The Quarterly Improvement Plan – Q2-09

Q2-09 was implemented on Saturday, June 27, 2009. A communication was sent to local district and voluntary agency key CONNECTIONS users, Directors of Service, CONNECTIONS Implementation, Security and Back-up Security Coordinators, on Tuesday, 6/23, detailing the content of the Quarterly Improvement. The document also described the tools that are available to use post-implementation. For a summary of that information please see the information below.

<u>*What Was Changed?*</u>
The following are the key areas of the application that will be enhanced:

- **FASP improvements** – modifications to the Strength Needs and Risk scales, Safety Assessment (*an optional comment box will be available from the* <u>*Safety Factors*</u> *window when "No Safety Factors Present" is selected*), Needed Improvements/Changes tab, Strength Needs and Risk Scales - O and A Blocks and the Original Reason for Case Opening.
- **FAD improvements** – modifications to New Homes - SCR Database Check Dates.
- **Permanency Hearing Report improvements** – PHR mapping, pre-fills from a pending or in-process FASP, as well as additional pre-fill changes.
- **Other improvements** - placement information will be able to be updated in CONNECTIONS separately from CCRS, the Case Summary window will display CPS determinations, modifications to Progress Notes, To Do's and Person/Merge/Split.

<u>*Other Documents that Describe the Changes in More Detail*</u>

- *CONNECTIONS Q2-09 Quarterly Improvements Job Aid*
  This document is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet and can be accessed by clicking on the link below:
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Q2%2009JobAid%20final%206%2019%2009.pdf

- *The Q2-09 Impact Analysis - Changes to the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP)*
  This document is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet and can be accessed by clicking on the link below:
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q2-09%20Impact%20Analysis%20(3).pdf

- *The Highlights Document for the Quarterly Improvement Plan - Q2-09*
  This document is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet and can be accessed by clicking on the link below:
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q2_09_Highlights_final.pdf.

- *Q2-09 Quarterly Improvement Plan Release Notes*
  This document is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site and can be accessed via the following link:
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q2-09%20Release%20Notes_Final.pdf

*****ALERT** CONNECTIONS - Case List Window***

Since Q2-09 was implemented on 6/27/09, displays on the Case List Window that facilitate CPS Intake assignment decision making are not always present. The problem is apparent only to the State Central Register (SCR), and may result in some instances making a report an "Initial" when it should be a "Subsequent" to an open case. The SCR has implemented changes in procedure to minimize the effect on local districts.

Additionally, the Case List Window displays the incorrect value for Case Type for FAD cases statewide. The Case Type shows SVC instead of FAD. The correct Stage Type *is* displayed on the Case Summary window.

We are pleased to report that this issue is slated to be corrected on Friday, July 3rd, during the scheduled CONNECTIONS maintenance window.

SCR Database Checks

This piece was also in the last edition of the CONENCTIONS NEWS.

Please note that the piece below pertains only to those local districts that complete their own level 1 SCR database checks.

With implementation of CONNECTIONS Q2-09 on June 27, 2009, an edit will be added on the FRS Household Member Detail window in FAD to support regulation by requiring the recording of information regarding the In-State SCR Database Check for new foster homes in the process of being certified or approved.

The edit will check for completion of "Sent Date" "Received Date" and "Results" for foster parents, and will prevent submitting for supervisory approval a new FAD home, unless these fields have been completed. This new edit will also apply for a home that is worker or system closed, if (or whenever) that home is being reopened. In order to reopen such home the worker will need to record the SCR database check fields.

For those local districts that have an MOU with the SCR to conduct their own first level SCR data base checks, *Q2-09 will not change any existing policy or current practice. Those local districts are to record the date of the local district's inquiry of CONNECTIONS, if no match is found, in the "sent date" field. In addition, the "received date" and the "No Record Found" results can be recorded based on that inquiry.*

If any matches are found, the 3370 must be immediately submitted to the SCR. The date that the 3370 is sent to the SCR becomes the "sent date", and the SCR "received date" and the category of results are to be recorded when received by the local district from the SCR.

If a home system closes, and programmatically it was intended to remain open, the local district can rely on documentation in the Foster Home File to record the necessary data base check information, and re-open the home.

For all such administrative re-openings, if the SCR data base check documentation is not available in the local record, the local district must conduct a new database check as they did in the first instance, that is, through local district inquiry and/or submission of the 3370 to the SCR.

Please note *that prior clearance results can only be used for administrative re-openings. In all other circumstances, a home that is re-opened must be treated as a new request*

for certification or approval, and all certification or approval requirements must be met, including a new SCR data base check.

Documentation of first level data base checks are also to be documented in FRS Contacts using Method of "Correspondence Sent" and "Correspondence Received", and a brief narrative and/or locally developed form to document the local district's first level SCR data base check. Such form at a minimum is to include the person's name, DOB, case number, date of inquiry and results of "no record found."

General "Info to Know"

NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet

The following documents were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:
- ...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, 7/8/09 from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- Friday, 7/10/09 from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM

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