NYS Office of Children and Family Services

on the **road** to

transforming the Child Welfare Information System

..CONNECTIONS NEWS..
for the week of January 23 - 30, 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

UPDATED - Q4-08 Improvement Plan - Saturday, 1/24/09

Please note that the information below was sent on Wednesday, January 21st, to local district and voluntary agency CONNECTIONS Implementation, Security and Back-up Security Coordinators, Directors of Service, Resource Users and other key staff.

On Saturday, January 24, 2009, OCFS will implement the fourth Quarterly Improvement Plan, Q4-08. In order to migrate the new functionality to production, the

CONNECTIONS application will not be available **from 7:00 AM Saturday, 1/24/09, through 12:00 PM (noon) on Saturday, 1/24/09; an application downtime of five hours.**

Q4-08 will include important enhancements to the CONNECTIONS application that support programmatic changes, some ease of use enhancements, and several system improvements. The major ease of use enhancements included in Q4-08 are recommendations from the Child Welfare System Transformation Business Team. The enhancements come from collaboration between OCFS, local district and voluntary agency casework and supervisory staff. The following list highlights the enhancement areas: Family Services Stage, Approvals, Permanency Hearing Report (PHR), Progress Notes, Investigation Stage, Foster and Adoptive Home Development (FAD), as well as System Messaging.

A high level overview of the Ease of Use enhancements included in Q4-08 are:
- FASP improvements to reduce navigation steps for the Caseworker. These include reordering of components to be consistent across areas, opening windows with expanded information immediately available and combining multiple messages into one display.

- Upgraded display of FASP Due Dates and "FASP is Overdue" messages will be implemented.

- Navigation requirements in the FASP Case Planner Summary and draft areas, created to facilitate collaboration across multiple workers contributing to a FASP, will be streamlined when cases have only a Case Planner and a Case Manager and no other workers assigned.

- Progress Notes 'Sort' button to be changed to support 'New Using' functionality for easier and more readily identified use. Enhance the sorting features on the Progress Notes List grid.

- Elimination of pop-up messages that slow a workers flow through entry of Progress Notes, Risk and Safety Narratives.

- <u>ACS Only Impact</u> - Elimination of redundancy in the existing Child Protective Recording Transmittal (CPRT) -- the ACS Local Protocol and Progress Notes. This item will significantly reduce the CPRT recording requirements for ACS Child Protective Workers.

- Add a method to identify an "Amended Hearing Date," when a rescheduled permanency hearing date is entered on the Court Information window.

- Lift the restriction for entering Education information prior to the start of the academic year.

- A new FAD Closure Reason has been added to support implementation of the federal Adam Walsh Child Protection Act of 2006. Effective October 1, 2008, this legislation requires the mandatory disqualification of prospective foster/adoptive parents who were convicted of certain categories of felonies. Also, if a current foster/adoptive parent is convicted of a crime in this category beginning October

1, 2008, their certification/approval must be terminated. To support recording this in CONNECTIONS, a new code, "Criminal History - Mandatory Disqualifier", has been added to the drop-down closure reasons on the FAD Close Home window.

Q4-08 Tools To Use

- ## Q4-08 Highlights

The *Q4-08 Highlights* document presents a high-level overview of programmatic and application modifications and enhancements. It is one in a series of tools that define and describe in detail the system changes and enhancements that will be included in this Quarterly Improvement Plan. The *Q4-08 Highlights* are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site and can be accessed via the following link:
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q4_08_Highlights_1.pdf

- ## Q4-08 Improvement Plan Release Notes

The *Q4-08 Improvement Plan Release Notes* provide an in-depth description of the improvements, modifications, enhancements (SIRS), and impacts that are included in this Quarterly Improvement Plan. It is one in a series of tools that define and describe in detail the system changes and enhancements that will be included in this Quarterly Improvement Plan. The *Q4- 08 Improvement Plan Release Notes* are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site and can be accessed via the following link:
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q4_08%20Release%20Notes%20_Final.pdf

- ## Q4-08 Quarterly Improvement Plan Impact Analysis - *Allowing the Investigative Actions Task to be Optional*

The *Q4-08 Quarterly Improvement Plan Impact Analysis - Allowing the Investigative Actions Task to be Optional* is intended for local management staff to provide an overview of the key elements in the upcoming Quarterly Improvement Plan, and outlines the anticipated impacts on local practice and procedure, with suggested actions the local district might want to consider in implementing these improvements. The *Q4-08 Quarterly Improvement Plan Impact Analysis - Allowing the Investigative Actions Task to be Optional* is posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet and can be accessed via the following link:.
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q4%20IA%20Invetigation%20Actions%201-09-09-final.pdf

- ## Q4-08 Job Aid

The *Q4-08 Job Aid* is intended for CONNECTIONS users on different levels. It provides a detailed overview of the CONNECTIONS system changes and ease of use enhancements introduced in Q4-08. Specifically, this job aid contains information about enhancements in the following functional areas:
- Family Services Stage
- Approvals
- Permanency Hearing Report
- Progress Notes
- Investigation Stage
- System Messaging
- Foster and Adoptive Home Development

The *Q4-08 Job Aid* is posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet and can be accessed via the following link: http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Q4-08%20JAFinal.pdf

- **An update to On-line HELP (within the CONNECTIONS application)**

INF *A NEW Informational Letter   09-OCFS-INF-01*

Health Care Coordination for Children in Foster Care: Approaches and Benefits

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The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has just issued the following new Informational Letter number: 09-OCFS-INF-01, titled: Health Care Coordination for Children in Foster Care: Approaches and Benefits.

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to transmit to social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies a practice guidance paper, "Health Care Coordination for Children in Foster Care: Approaches and Benefits." This paper, developed by the OCFS in conjunction with Welfare Research Incorporated (WRI), describes the lessons learned during a four-year pilot project and provides social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies with useful information regarding health care coordination for children in foster care.

You can access this and other OCFS policies on the OCFS intranet website with this link: http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/.

Two NEW CONNECTIONS Tip Sheets: Recording AFCARS Data and Progress Notes: Successfully Documenting Casework Contacts with Children in Foster Care

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

Two **NEW** CONNECTIONS Tip Sheets have been developed by members of the CONNECTIONS Implementation Team!!!

- **Recording AFCARS Data**
  AFCARS is the federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System. New York, like all states, is required to report adoption and foster care information to the federal government every 6 months. CONNECTIONS and other legacy systems, principally the Child Care Review Service (CCRS), are the data sources that meet federal reporting requirements. CONNECTIONS has been enhanced to capture additional AFCARS information on the **Removal Information, Placement Information,** and **Health** tabs and on the **Finalize Adoption** window. It is important that this data is accurately collected and entered as it is used to identify trends, plan for needed services, establish funding priorities, conduct research

and evaluation, maintain/update regulations and respond to requests for data. The Tip Sheet walks you through the various tabs that record AFCARS data. The Tip Sheet is posted to the CONENCTIONS intranet on the Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips page and can be accessed via the following link:
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/Recording%20AFCARS%20Data%20v2.pdf

- **Progress Notes: Successfully Documenting Casework Contact with Children in Foster Care**
  The federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-288), which was signed into law on September 28, 2006, includes requirements for caseworker visits with children in foster care. The law requires that a casework contact be made with each child in foster care, at least once in every calendar month, for each whole month the child is in foster care - including any trial discharge periods and AWOL periods. Partial months of foster care are not counted. The majority of these contacts must occur where the child resides. The requirements pertain to children placed in-state, as well as out-of-state. All such contacts must be documented in CONNECTIONS progress notes and it is essential that entries be made contemporaneously with the event. The Progress Notes: Successfully Documenting Casework Contact with Children in Foster Care tip sheet illustrates and describes how to document a casework contact.

  The Tip Sheet is posted to the CONENCTIONS intranet on the Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips page and can be accessed via the following link:
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/Progress%20notes-%20Documenting%20Successful%20Casework%20Contact%20v4%201-09.pdf

OCFS Data Warehouse News

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

- **Casework Contact and Track Child Roster Reports Available**
  The OCFS Data Warehouse Casework Contact Reports and Tracked Child Roster are once again available to all users. We have corrected several data issues that affected the accuracy of these reports. Thank you for your patience.

- **OCFS Data Warehouse News and Notes**
  The December 2008 edition of the *OCFS Data Warehouse News and Notes* is now available and posted to the OCFS Data Warehouse page of the CONNECTIONS intranet!

  This edition of the *News and Notes* presents articles on recent report enhancements, the status of the Cognos 8 migration, resource links, info about

banner alerts, tips for troubleshooting and much, much more…check out the latest edition!
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/Data%20Warehouse%20Newsletter%20-%20Dec%202008.pdf

- AFCARS Reminder
  The data for the Children Served with Missing Clinical Diagnosis (LDSS and Voluntary) Cognos reports have been updated as of 12/31/08.

General "Info to Know"

NEW YORK STATE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

CIO OFT
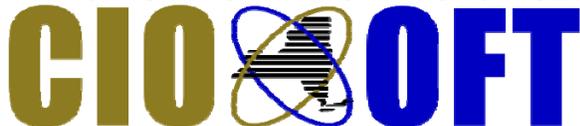
NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR TECHNOLOGY

CUSTOMER NOTIFICATION—(CUSTOMER NETWORKING SOLUTIONS)

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS PERTINENT TO AGENCY LAN ADMINISTRATORS.

NUMBER: 09-CNS-01
TITLE: DNS and WINS Configuration Updates for Locally-Managed Devices
DATE ISSUED: January 20, 2009

Overview
CIO/OFT's Customer Networking Solutions (CNS) upgraded the servers for Domain Name Systems (DNS) & Windows Internet Name System (WINS). New servers have been added to the environment and some old servers have been removed to improve the quality of this service.   There are IP address changes associated with these server migrations (see the "Details" portion of this Notification).   Network and server administrators who configure devices to point to CIO/OFT managed DNS & WINS services will need to update their device configurations in order to utilize the appropriate DNS & WINS servers.

Services Impacted *
Any device manually configured for CNS managed DNS & WINS services are potentially affected by these changes. Devices that obtain DNS and WINS server information via DHCP are **unaffected** and can disregard this Notification.

Some of the old servers that provide DNS & WINS services were replaced with new servers on new IP addresses. Network and server administrators who configure their devices manually to point to DNS & WINS may not be aware that the IP addresses have changed and should follow the directions in the "Details" portion of this Notification.

Please note that CNS printers do not use DNS or WINS and should not be configured to use these services.

Audience
CNS customers who configure their own devices for DNS and WINS resolution

Assistance
For local districts:
If you have any questions or concerns related to this Notification, please contact the Coordination Center at 1-800-603-0877 or send an email to: oft.sm.cns.coordination.center@oft.state.ny.us

For voluntary agencies:
Questions regarding this notification should be directed to either mailbox:
- Internal: ocfs.sm.deployment
- External: ocfs.sm.deployment@ocfs.state.ny.us

Customer Action Required: Yes
Network and server administrators who configure devices to point to CIO/OFT managed DNS & WINS services will need to update their device configurations in order to utilize the appropriate DNS & WINS servers. Please see the "Details" portion of this notification for those servers that need to be removed and the new ones that should be added.

Details
Customer Networking Solutions upgraded the DNS & WINS servers. This upgrade requires IP address changes associated with these server migrations (summarized below). Network and server administrators who configure devices to point to CIO/OFT managed DNS & WINS services will need to update their device configurations in order to utilize the appropriate DNS & WINS servers.

Please remove servers listed under the "Remove" heading below, and add the servers listed under the "Add" heading below.

<u>Remove</u>
<u>Old CNS DNS</u> servers that will need to be removed include the following servers:
172.17.148.21
172.17.148.22
170.123.217.9
170.123.213.9

<u>Old CNS WINS </u>servers that will need to be removed include:
172.17.148.13
170.123.217.13
170.123.213.13

<u>Add</u>
<u>Active CNS core DNS</u> servers:
172.16.96.22
172.16.96.23
172.16.8.22
172.16.9.22

<u>Active CNS core WINS</u> servers:
 172.16.96.110
 172.16.100.24
 172.16.96.99
 172.16.8.110
 172.16.8.109
 172.16.9.20

<u>If there is a local CNS domain controller</u>, it should include the following:
172.16.96.22, 172.16.96.23, 172.16.8.22 and 172.16.9.22, "The IP address of your local domain controller."

Portable Information Technology

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

We are pleased to announce that OCFS has teamed up with OFT installations to facilitate the deployment for Portable Technology 08 - 09. Participating Local Districts have been contacted via an email from Dave Kislowski, and were forwarded an equipment inventory document for their site with specific serial numbers identified.

Instructions to Facilitate Deployment
On the equipment inventory document, begin with the oldest equipment first (IBM 6579's), place an X next to the equipment you will be replacing and complete the field location / floor / room. When completed, please submit the excel document to ocfs.sm.deployment. Our hope is that this information will minimize the onsite reliance of the LAN administrators. With this completed document LAN Administrators can continue to support the users while we are completing the installation.

We would also like to remind LAN Administrators that all data needs to be removed and saved out to the users H drive. Once the old equipment is de-installed the information will no longer be retrievable.

Client VPN Request Form
Also, attached to the communication was the Client VPN request form to take a proactive attempt at ensuring each user has the permissions prior to the deployment to access HSEN from the field using the new laptops. This request needs to be submitted to ocfs.sm.comctrup by the LSA of your District. For your convenience, a copy of the request form is posted below.

VPN Request Form
Instructions....

<u>Questions</u>
If you have questions or concerns, please contact Dave Kislowski at either (work) 518-486-9522, or (cell) 518-506-1264.

<u>Please Note</u>: a deployment schedule will be created when the all of the completed excel documents are received. Your cooperation is appreciated.

NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet

The following document(s) was recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:
- ...CONNECTIONS NEWS...
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/
- **Q4-08 Release Notes**
  http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Q4_08%20Release%20Notes%20_Final.pdf

Weekly System Maintenance

Due to regularly scheduled system maintenance, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on…
**Please note the downtime for Saturday 1/24/09
- ****Saturday, 1/24/09** from 7:00AM – 12:00PM (noon) for the implementation of Q4-08
- **Wednesday, 1/28/09** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- **Friday, 1/30/09** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM

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