



Administrative Update

2014 FALL QUARTERLY MEETINGS

SWAN's New Website is Here!

Diakon/Family Design Resources released a new and updated Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) prime contractor website, www.diakon-swam.org. The look of the site is updated, navigation is more intuitive, and new features are added.

Among the new features, a NEWS tab is featured. The NEWS tab highlights recent happenings and shares information about special events throughout the network.

The new FAMILIES tab is a first for the SWAN prime contractor website. The FAMILIES tab is geared to existing and potential resource families and provides quick access to information about permanency resources such as Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE), the Resource Family Registry (RFR) and Pennsylvania Adoption Information Registry (PAIR). And that's just the start! Families can also learn more about the SWAN Helpline and matching opportunities through the Seamless System of Support. Post permanency services, mental health resources and adoption search features are all

offered to support our permanency resource families.

Many of the website's existing features are enhanced. The SWAN NETWORK tab contains current contact information and is streamlined for more efficient access. Network agency resources under the LINKS tab are revised, each with a brief description of the resource and an active link to each agency's website. Additionally, the LINKS tab lets you access

essential resources, including the online units of service training and Act 101 Overview training.

Agencies may still register online for network events and meetings, find a network map offering quick access to agencies within each county, locate the updated benchmark templates, the SWAN Legal Services Initiative Warmline and Diligent Search Package and explore a myriad of other permanency resources.

As ever, Diakon/FDR's goal is to continue to offer tools to support your permanency services. Please check out our new and improved website!



Special Points of Interest:

- Website redesigned
- New website features added
- Contact info updated
- Agency resources listed
- County by county contacts

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More Online Trainings Coming!

More free, web-based, interactive trainings will soon be available for the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN)! In cooperation with Spaulding for Children, the SWAN prime contractor, Diakon/Family Design Resources, is in the process of adding more online unit of service trainings to augment the ones already in use.

The Family Profile unit of service is nearing completion and should be ready for Office of Children Youth and Families review within the next few weeks. Another project is for the Child Specific Recruitment unit of service, which should

be ready for release by spring of 2015.

Also, the SWAN prime contractor is creating a new SWAN Toolkit that will compile information about all the different components of the SWAN network, which will replace the SWAN Adoption Library, created in 1999.

The new toolkit is interactive and will cover a wide variety of topics including articles about foundational issues in permanency, the history of SWAN, the permanency process and individual segments of the SWAN prime contract. Covered in detail are the workings and history of the Pennsylvania Adoption

Exchange, Legal Service Initiative, Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association and the SWAN Helpline. This library will also include a resource section as well as some interactive features. The SWAN Toolkit is currently being reviewed and may be ready for release by spring.

These new SWAN units of service trainings and the SWAN Toolkit will join Child Profile, Child Preparation and Post-Permanency units in the Spaulding online series. All current trainings are available free to both counties and affiliates in the SWAN network and are accessed at www.swan-online.org.

Please visit our new website at

www.diakon-swan.org

Registering Finalized Children with PAIR

Every child finalized should be registered with the Pennsylvania Adoption Information Registry (PAIR). This only needs to be done once.

All of a child's documents should be scanned into as many files as size dictates and then uploaded. If you are uploading more

than one attachment, you will need more than one upload, as only one attachment can be uploaded per registration.

If more than one upload is needed for a child, the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange data analyst will make the adjustments.

If two agencies are working with a child, agencies should work together to determine which should upload the information. If the affiliate agency does the uploading, the county should request a copy of the upload confirmation for their files to verify that the upload is complete for this particular child.

Finalizations 2010-2014

For the past four years from July 2010 through September 2014, 4,692 finalization units of service were completed through the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) prime contract.

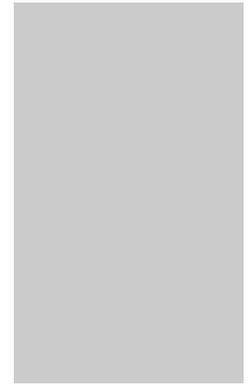
Each year about 1,100 children received finalization services. In each year the number of children ages zero to four represented about 48% of all children receiving the service, while the number of children 13 and older represented about 6% of all children finalized.

SWAN finalization services are used for children of all ages, birth through age 18, who are in the care and custody of their county children and youth agency. The following are some of the highlights for last four years:

- Overall, the number of children receiving finalization units of service is evenly split between boys and girls (49.5% vs. 46.6%).
- A significant population of those

receiving finalization units were age nine and older. Children in the nine and older age group accounted for 23.5 (N=1,100) of all children finalized July 2010 through September 2014.

- Children age six to eight also represent a large percentage of those receiving finalization services. During the four years 1,308 children or 27.9% were in this age group.



SWAN Units of Service Report

In fiscal year 2013-2014 a total of 13,292 units of service were assigned by counties through the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network prime contract. The total does not include services that were eventually withdrawn, suspended or voided.

Child Profile continues to be the unit of service that is referred most often with a total of 4,671 units. Child Preparation was slightly behind with 4,534 units.

Child Specific Recruitment referrals are increasing, growing from just under 3.5% of all services in fiscal year 2009-2010 to 8.5% or a total of 1,128 units in fiscal year 2013-2014. So far in fiscal year 2014-2015, the upward trend continues with 9.2% of the total units of service referred.

Family Profile referrals comprised 11.6% of all services in fiscal year 2013-2014 with a total of 1,545 units. So far in fiscal year 2014-2015, this

service represents 15.8% of services referred. This total does not include the Affiliate Referred Family Profiles, ARFPs.

Finalization services remained relatively even over the past five years, at just over 9% of the total units of service, with 1,276 referred in fiscal year 2013-2014.

Out-of-State Families Registered with PAE

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requires the use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptions or permanent placements for waiting children.

In just 18 months, 293 or 24% of the 1,245 registered adoptive families are from out of state.

All children deserve every opportunity to

achieve permanency. State lines should not be a barrier to child permanency. Registration with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) triples the recruitment efforts conducted on behalf of a child, and working with your PAE coordinator can maximize success and promote permanency for Pennsylvania's waiting children.

Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN), Helpline staff and PAE coordinators will follow-up with all families who inquire about a child or share additional information about children who may match the family's criteria.

Portal Guidelines for Caseworker Information

When you are working in the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) portal and discover caseworker information that needs to be changed, please remember these guidelines:

- If a caseworker is not listed, feel free to **add** him or her when a form asks for that that information. Once the new caseworker

is approved, he or she will appear as a choice in the dropdown list.

- If a caseworker is listed but the information about that person needs **updated, deleted or changed**, please contact your regional technical assistant. Those changes are managed internally by SWAN.

Once a caseworker is already in the SWAN portal, attempting to change existing contact information, addresses or telephone numbers results in a duplicate record for that caseworker. SWAN routinely merges and adjusts this information, and we will soon generate reports for agencies to use to update this information.

SWAN LSI “Start to Finish” Model and “Teaming” Approach

This past year the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network Legal Services Initiative (SWAN LSI) Program saw an increase in counties implementing the suggested model of practice, “Start to Finish.” The “Start to Finish” model allows an LSI paralegal to follow a case from dependency to termination of parental rights (TPR).

With this model, paralegals are instrumental in providing ongoing practice support such as diligent search, document and court preparation and participating in critical county meetings. Implementing paralegal services early in the case has proven to

have many advantages, including consistency, efficiency, identifying and remedying delays and removing barriers.

This model streamlines the legal process, assuring a child moves to permanency faster. To date, 45 of the 66 participating LSI counties now incorporate this model into their current structure.

In addition to the “Start to Finish” model, LSI counties are beginning to supplement their work with an evidence-based approach called “teaming,” which was demonstrated in Colorado with proven results. A team consists of a county

caseworker, supervisor, legal secretary and solicitor as well as an SWAN LSI paralegal. All team members collaborate and provide oversight throughout the life of a family’s case. The benefits seen thus far are the continuity of workers and cross-training of team members. Mentoring occurs within teams through an assigned “practice coach,” and if a case closes and reopens, the family is reassigned to the same team.

We hope to share more about the “teaming” approach at next year’s SWAN Summer Conference so stay tuned!



Visit us at

www.diakon-swan.org
