



**statewide  
adoption and  
permanency  
network**

**SWAN PRIME CONTRACT MANAGEMENT  
DIAKON LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
FAMILY DESIGN RESOURCES**

# Administrative Update

**2013 WINTER STATEWIDE MEETING**

## SWAN Portal Version 2 Goes Live!

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries, in partnership with Family Design Resources, is excited to announce deployment of the SWAN portal version 2.0.

A long time in the making, this version of the single record system offers a more navigationally-friendly experience for the user. For example, when updating an existing record or when adding a new record, users simply click on the button for the type of form they want to submit.

Affiliate and counties now have access to new child and family summaries that display a comprehensive overview of the child or family’s journey through the SWAN program. The information within this summary page auto-populates when additional forms are submitted to improve efficiency and to avoid duplication.

Additional enhancements of the SWAN portal version 2.0 include improved

contact management of agency names, addresses, phone numbers, emails and caseworker information; elimination of the “draft records” issue that was disrupting agencies’ ability to submit forms efficiently, and a new child and family search scoring that helps agencies ensure they have located the correct child or family.

Diakon/FDR is pleased to provide this resource to you. It is our goal to continue to equip you with solutions that will enhance the permanency services that you and your agencies provide. Your feedback is both valued and welcome. Please, as you interface with the SWAN portal, let us know what is working and what could be improved. If you have questions, please contact your SWAN regional technical assistants, RTA. The RTA’s will be able to guide you through this new version and are here to receive your vital and appreciated suggestions.

### Special Points of Interest:

- Portal rollout a success!
- Many enhancements ease data entry and review
- Work continues on more enhancements

## Updated Benchmarks Submitted for Review

Two and a half years in the making, the revisions to the Child Preparation, Child Profile, Child Specific Recruitment, Family Profile, Placement and Finalization benchmarks have been submitted to OCYF for final review!

Once the benchmarks are approved by the state, prime contractor Diakon/FDR will introduce the revised benchmarks to county and affiliate agencies. The post-permanency benchmarks are still being revised but should shortly be with OCYF.

The prime contractor and OCYF would like to thank all the counties and affiliates that participated in the revision process. Because of all the network participation, the new benchmarks more adequately reflect current practice in the state of Pennsylvania and are a wonderful tool for those new to SWAN. We are excited to share the final versions with the network and appreciate your diligence in making sure these benchmarks are ready to present!

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### SWAN Resources to Aid Your Work

SWAN has many resources available online to help guide you in your work to find permanency for children in out-of-home care. Listed here are just a few examples of what you can find online.

#### Act 101 Overview

The E-Learn—Act 101 Overview is a two-hour Act 101 overview course that is free. You may learn about any or all three sections of the act that covers the Pennsylvania Adoption Information Registry, access to records and voluntary post-adoption contact agreements.

From [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org), click on Links and then scroll to the Pennsylvania specific links, where the Act 101 Overview is listed first.

#### How to find your RTA

Visit [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org) and click on SWAN Network and then Agency Contacts. You may further select from a list of affiliates or county agencies. Click on your own agency name, and the information listed will include the name of your regional technical assistant.

#### Adoption Events Planner

Click on Publications at the [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org) website. Under Past Publications, the Adoption Awareness and Matching Event Planner was released on March 25, 2008 and provides a wealth of information and templates to help you plan an effective event.

#### Legal FAQs

From the website, click on Legal Services Initiative and then FAQ to find information on sibling rights, subsidies, same sex couple adoptions and more.

### CAFAS Training Available Online

After reviewing several options, SWAN has decided to move forward and provide the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale, CAFAS, training, which is used as an assessment tool in post-permanency, through a web-based platform.

Affiliates will soon have access to the CAFAS training and

forms on the web. Affiliates will access both the training link to the training and forms either through SWAN website or an email address, which will be sent to every affiliate that provides post-permanency services.

Affiliates will receive official notification when this service is ready to be delivered. CAFAS

training on the website will be free to all affiliates and can be accessed at any time, making it much less costly and time-consuming for affiliates, as they will no longer need to travel for the training. In addition, all post-permanency affiliate staff will now be able to receive direct training on the CAFAS.

### Finalizations and CSR Referrals Higher in FY '12-13

So far this fiscal year 632 Finalization units of service have been referred, an increase over the 542 units referred through the

same time in the previous fiscal year.

Child Specific Recruitment referrals are also higher than at this

same time last year, with 441 units referred so far. Last year through January, 379 units were referred.

## Good Reasons to Refer for Placement and Finalization

Don't forget to refer Placement and Finalization services for our children and families! Together, these units of service provide continuous, supportive services to families and children throughout pre-placement, placement and adoption finalization, including individualized planning for a family's post-permanency needs.

If you need some more reasons to refer these services, read on.

### Placement

Placement enables an agency to dedicate a worker to the planning and decision-making that occurs before and during the time a child is placed with a family, assuring that all those involved in the placement process are being supported.

The unit is critical to building a strong and supportive foundation as a family is built through adoption. Placement also supports child

specific recruitment efforts for older youth, as well as kinship adoption.

Some of the activities associated with placement are:

- Interacting monthly with the waiting family, encouraging attendance at matching events and to keep them updated about potential matches;
- Ongoing contact with county agencies to get information about waiting children to match with families;
- Thoroughly discussing potential matches with the family to further communicate a child's strengths and needs, as well as the family's ability to meet those needs; and
- Coordinating and participating in and following up after pre-placement visits.

### Finalization

The finalization unit includes all the services that are provided to the child, family and county agency upon placement and before the court issues an adoption decree. Like placement, referring this unit lets an agency dedicate a

worker to assist and support a family as they transition toward permanency. The unit is crucial in assuring that a family has the necessary tools, supports and resources to work through issues and remain intact.

Some of the activities associated with the finalization unit are:

- Conduct home visits at least monthly to assess, support and prepare the family for permanency, with a focus on the family dynamic and integrating a child into the family;
- Suggest additional therapeutic services to promote positive family relationships;
- Provide services to support the move towards legal finalization of the adoption, including completing and submitting the legal documents; and
- Continue to develop and implement the Individual Permanency Service Plan to identify the needs of the family in anticipation of and through post-permanency.



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