



# Administrative Update

2013 SPRING QUARTERLY MEETINGS

## Evidence-Based Research Projects Underway

Since June 2012 two major research projects have been initiated to strengthen the prime contractor's connection to evidence-based practice, EBP. The first project will examine the child preparation unit of service while the second involves the SWAN Legal Services Initiative, LSI. OCYF hopes both projects will help inform the state about their investment in delivering these programs.

The child preparation project is part of our constant striving to improve outcomes across the state and to ensure this unit of service is in line with the most current standards and research on good practice. Using EBP we hope to integrate the best research evidence with network expertise and stakeholder values. We also want to recognize the expertise within this network and include their ideas to make sure there is input from the children and

families we serve. Those who are interested in participating in the research or offering suggestions should contact Mike Kovacevic.

Much of the information for the SWAN LSI research project is likely to come from information already collected in our SWAN LSI database. County agencies may be invited to share ways they have improved timelines, services or both with the addition of SWAN LSI paralegals to their work.

Thank you in advance for helping us establish a consistently high standard of permanency practice across Pennsylvania. Demonstrating the outcomes of our work and proving its efficacy are ways to directly show how these services help our children and older youth as they experience the foster care system.

### Special Points of Interest:

- 2 projects support evidence-based results
- Child Preparation and SWAN LSI research ongoing

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## Finalization Update

During the calendar years of 2012 and 2013, 2,277 children benefited from the SWAN finalization unit of service.

Teens and children over the age of 13 represented nearly 8% or 165 of those children. This 8% are a reminder that families are still seeking and adopting older children.

What do we know about these children? Some of the older children

entered care in the 1990's. Some were in residential treatment facilities, some in foster homes and some in relative placements. Older children were finalized by many counties. Available data indicates it can take from 2 – 10 years to find a permanent family for some of these older children, but permanency is always possible for any child.

## 2013 Spring Quarterly Meetings



statewide  
adoption and  
permanency  
network

### New SWAN LSI Releases Help Agencies Plan, Search

2013 has already started off in a big way for the SWAN Legal Services Initiative, LSI. LSI has two new releases hot off the presses: *The Adoption Day Events: A Planner's Guide* and the 2013 edition of the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet*.

First, the new Adoption Day planner's guide was developed to help SWAN LSI paralegals, courts and county and affiliate workers to plan National Adoption Day events. The guide includes many stories, tips, sample documents, successes and lessons learned along the way. You'll be able to plan an event from start to finish, whether your budget is large, small or nonexistent. We hope this guide will spark your

creativity and inspire you to plan your own event to recognize this very special day! Please visit [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org) and select the LSI Publications page on the Diakon-SWAN website to download and print your copy today!

LSI has also released the much anticipated 2013 edition of the SWAN LSI Diligent Search, DS, Packet. This release marks the fifth edition of the LSI DS Packet since 2005! LSI strives to provide paralegals and agency workers alike with every available resource to assure that each search is completed "diligently."

The new diligent search packet:

- adds the most up to date search information, forms and resources available;
- incorporates information about new legislation that impacts our searches, such as Act 101; and
- with the assistance of Legal Training Specialist Ben Drinen, expands our international searching tools!

An interactive copy of this packet can be found at the Diakon-SWAN website at [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org) by selecting Legal Services Initiative and then Diligent Search. Download your copy today!

### New Spaulding/SWAN Web-Based Training Released!

The third in a series of SWAN / Spaulding units of service trainings—this one on Post-Permanency—has been released.

The new training covers each of the different units within SWAN's Post-Permanency services, including assessment and case advocacy, respite and support group. The training also contains detailed information on the Post-Permanency Family

Support Plan, which is critical to good post-permanency planning and practice, and a detailed examination of the core issues as they relate to the permanency triad and the work of post-permanency.

This training, like the others from our partnership with Spaulding, is web-based, which allows for wider access and individualized scheduling. Also, the internet format is a

"living document" that can be altered to reflect changes in practice and new or modified legislation.

As in the past, this training can be used by supervisors to train new staff and is a wonderful refresher to those who are already working in the field. This new training, available to both county and affiliate agencies, is located online at [www.swan-online.org](http://www.swan-online.org). Please take time to check it out!

## Administrative Update

### CAFAS and JIFF Training to Be Available Online

The SWAN prime contractor recently signed a contract that will allow affiliates to access the Child and Adolescent Functioning Scale, CAFAS, forms and trainings through a web-based application.

Affiliates will be able to access the forms and training link in several ways. A link to the web-based training will be available through the SWAN portal, website and an email address, which will be sent to every affiliate that provides post-permanency services.

Affiliates will be officially notified within the next few weeks that this service is ready. The notice will ask affiliates to provide information to the prime contractor to set up their account. If you are a

post-permanency provider, please complete the information request as soon as possible so we can secure your access to this important system. A reminder: 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.

The prime contractor will also start the pilot project with the Juvenile Inventory Functioning, JIFF, test, a hands-on computerized interview that is self-administered by the client or caregiver. The JIFF is derived from

CAFAS. The prime contractor will select up to 20 affiliates that provide post-permanency services to participate in this project. The agencies chosen will be those that volunteered to be part of this initiative in the December U.S. meeting. Those agencies will receive access to the JIFF test as well as instructions on their role in the pilot project.

We are excited about this more efficient way of offering the CAFAS, as well as the possibility through JIFF of offering our youth a way to participate actively in the post-permanency assessment process. We believe this will increase the network's ability to better serve families and children in their care.

Visit us at

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