

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

From the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF)
Department of Human Services

OCYF Staff Update

Alicia Tyler has accepted a promotion with the Division of Policy, Well-being Unit. Alicia has worked as a counselor for adjudicated youth at the Abraxas Leadership Development Program and as a general caseworker at Fulton County Services for Children. In 2016, she joined the Office of Children, Youth and Families as a human services program specialist in the Division of Policy. In her new role, she will supervise and manage the planning, development, implementation and technical assistance for child welfare policy as it relates to adoption services, permanent legal custodianship, foster care, kinship care, medical foster care, medical and behavioral health services, good cause appeals, and education services. Alicia can be reached at altyler@pa.gov.

Child Protective Services Law Update

Governor Wolf signed Senate Bill 235, now known as Act 47, on July 2, 2019 which made several updates, including changes to the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) as it pertains to provisional employees for limited periods. This change to the CPSL will take effect December 31, 2019 stating that employers, administrators, supervisors or other persons responsible for employment decisions may not employ applicants on a provisional hire basis. Waivers of this provision will only be considered for child daycare centers, group daycare homes, or family childcare homes. This portion of Act 47 making the amendment to the CPSL originated from the federal Family First Preventions Services Act.

Bulletin Updates

The OCYF Bulletin #00-19-02, entitled Notification Protocol for Formal Licensing Actions and Incidents was released August 2, 2019. The purpose of this bulletin is to outline the updated procedures of the Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families for sending notification of critical events that have occurred in a child residential or day treatment facility, approved foster and pre-adoptive home, Youth Development Center or Youth Forestry Camp that may represent a risk of harm to the children and youth placed in those settings.

OCYF released a Special Transmittal entitled School Vaccination Requirements on July 15, 2019. The purpose of this transmittal is to inform county and private children and youth social service agencies of the school immunization requirements issued in March 2017 by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Act 54/Plans of Safe Care

The Pennsylvania Departments of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Health, and Human Services have issued the Pennsylvania Plan of Safe Care Guidance to provide practice considerations related to identification of infants and caregivers affected by substance use and substance use disorders, parameters related to development of plans of safe care including plan elements, development, and monitoring. To assist county children and youth agencies considering the potential practice and fiscal impacts related to serving infants and their families impacted by substance use and substance use disorders, the Governor's Institute is hosting five regional, in-person, two-day work sessions for county planning teams responsible for implementing plans of safe care for infants affected by prenatal substance exposure, including alcohol, and their families. If you have questions related to Act 54 or Plans of Safe Care, please contact Eric Walters at eriwalters@pa.gov.

Child and Family Service Reviews

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) was established by the federal Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau to ensure states' conformity with federal child welfare requirements, to determine what is experienced by children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services and to assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. The CFSR focuses on the assessment of safety, permanency and well-being outcomes, as well as seven systemic factors. Pennsylvania conducted CFSR case reviews in 2017 and has developed a program improvement plan to address outcomes where Pennsylvania did not meet federal performance standards. Pennsylvania has completed all case reviews in Butler, Mercer, and Centre, Lycoming, Northampton, Philadelphia and Lehigh counties as part of the program improvement plan monitoring phase of the federal CFSR process. The findings are categorized by the outcomes of Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being and reported from a statewide perspective. Based on a preliminary review of findings from the 2019 reviews, Pennsylvania did not meet all the federally required targets for improvement, therefore, Pennsylvania will be conducting reviews in 2020.

Waiting Child Segments

SWAN's media contractor funds three waiting child segments across the state designed to find adoptive families for older youth in need of families. *Waiting Child* is aired on KDKA-TV, channel 2, a Pittsburgh CBS affiliate; *Val's Kids* is aired on abc27 WHTM in the Harrisburg area; and *A Little Love* is aired on WBRE-TV, channel 28, a Wilkes-Barre NBC affiliate. Waiting child segments have proven to be successful over the years in helping find permanent homes for the children of PA.

If you have a child you would like featured on KDKA's *Waiting Child*, please contact Nikita Lewis at nlewis@diakon-swan.org.

If you have a waiting child you would like featured on WHTM's *Val's Kids*, please contact Alfredo Gonzales at agonzales@diakon-swan.org.

If you have a waiting child you would like featured on WBRE's *A Little Love*, please contact Crissy Crawford at ccrawford@diakon-swan.org.

Chafee Education and Training Grant Programs

The Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG) application for the 2019 – 2020 academic year is available on PHEAA's website. The application and directions for applying can be found online at: www.pheaa.org/funding-opportunities/other-educational-aid/chafee-program.shtml. The ETG award amount cannot exceed the students cost of attendance.

All current ETG award recipients will automatically be enrolled for the next academic year and do not need to complete the ETG application.

Please contact the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency at 1-800-831-0797 with questions about current Chafee applications or a youth's status. If youth have questions regarding the ETG program, contact Teresa Musser at temusser@pa.gov or at 717-214-7385.

Tuition Waiver Program

On June 28, 2019, Governor Wolf signed House Bill 1615, known as Act 16 of 2019, which amends the School Code bill establishing a tuition and fee waiver program for youth who are or were in foster care who are Pennsylvania residents and eligible for the federal Chafee Education and Training Grant program under the Federal Foster Care Independence Act of 1999. Tuition waivers apply to both public (state) colleges and universities, community colleges, private post-secondary schools and other schools and waivers are good for five years, which need not be consecutive, or until age 26. This tuition waiver and fee program will begin with the fall 2020 semester. Additional information will be forthcoming.

National Youth in Transition Database

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) implementation is ongoing with the Baseline Population (every youth in foster care who reaches age 17), Served Population (any youth receiving independent living services regardless of age) and Follow-up Population (youth surveys at age 19 and 21 depending on Cohort period). PA just wrapped up Cohort 3 with 19-year old Follow-up Surveys that were due September 30, 2019. As of October 1, 2019, PA entered Cohort 4 for Baseline Surveys for all 17-year-old youth in foster care. Counties can log onto www.getnytdpa.org to enter their survey data. NYTD questions can be directed to Teresa Musser, Office of Children, Youth and Families, at temusser@pa.gov or at 717-214-7385.

New NYTD Website

GetNYTD site was de-activated on Friday, August 9, 2019. The new domain www.getnytdpa.org launched on August 12, 2019. The old domain (www.getnytd.org) is still active, and will remain active for at least one year, but instead of showing a login page, it shows a page referencing that the application has moved.

Two changes were made to the underlying application with the site to the new domain:

- The implemented an in-system “password reset” functionality – previously users who forget their password or were unable to log in had to contact us for a manual reset; and
- Everyone’s passwords were cleared out, forcing them to do a “password reset” in order to log in to the new site for the first time. This was done because the old site did not have any password complexity requirements, while the new one site domain does.

If you have any problems initiating or completing a password reset, or you don’t remember what your username is (or have any other questions about NYTD), please contact the NYTD Help Desk at evalsupport@pcqus.com.

Mandated Reporter Training

Mandated Reporter Training (MRT) is supported by the Office of Children, Youth and Families who holds contracts with:

- Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance (PSFA) who provides in-person training to school personnel, law enforcement, social service professionals, etc. They can be contacted at 800-448-4906 or www.pa-fsa.org.

Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics who provides in-person training to physicians, school nurses, hospital staff and Emergency Medical Service providers. You can schedule trainings at phone number 866-823-7226 or www.pascan.org.

The University of Pittsburgh’s Child Welfare Resource Center who has a free, web-based training for mandated and permissive reporters. For more information about this training, visit www.pacwrc.pitt.edu.

For further information on these programs go to www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov and if you suspect child abuse or neglect call Childline at 800-932-0313.

Quality Service Reviews

The Quality Service Review (QSR) is one critical component of Pennsylvania’s child welfare Continuous Quality Improvement system. The QSR involves a team of certified QSR reviewers gathering information directly from families, children and service team members so that they can assess the current safety, permanency and well-being of a child/youth while also evaluating the system’s ability to implement Pennsylvania’s Practice Model, which provides a basis for promoting and strengthening best practice. QSRs will occur during the fall of 2019 in Mifflin, Blair, and Cumberland counties. Information on QSR training and onsite dates, as well as information on how to sign up to volunteer as a reviewer can be found on the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center website at:

<http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/CQI.htm>.

National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise

Last year, OCYF partnered with the American Public Human Services Association to begin using the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) for the electronic transmission of Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) documents. NEICE successfully went live on November 5, 2018 and allows the Division of Operations, Interstate Compact Unit to electronically send and receive ICPC documents with participating states. NEICE streamlines and improves ICPC processes, timeliness, and approvals. OCYF is committed to ensuring children’s safety in foster care, guardianship, or adoption placements. This automated transfer assists in the timely placement of children across state boundaries with near real-time communication among local child welfare caseworkers and state ICPC administrators in both sending and receiving states. Additionally, to streamline the ICPC and Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) document submission processes, the DocuShare Solution allows county Children and Youth Agencies to submit and receive ICPC and ICAMA documents electronically with OCYF. The DocuShare Solution uses an in-box and an out-box approach for sending and receiving electronic documents.

In February 2019, PA counties began a planned twelve-month phased implementation of the DocuShare Solution process. As of August 2019, 36 county children and youth agencies have successfully transitioned to DocuShare for sending and receiving Interstate documents. Another 14 county children and youth agencies are in the implementation phase for August, September and October 2019.

Accurint

Accurint is an online search tool available to every county throughout the state. It's able to assist with family finding efforts, contact information, criminal checks and identifying individuals for any type of family engagement meeting. Please be aware that only county employees may be Accurint administrators for your county's account. If you or your staff would like training in the Accurint software, please contact Bill News, Accurint Education Consultant, at William.news@lexisnexisrisk.com or 215-285-7108.

If you have any questions about Accurint, the number of Accurint users your county has, who your users are, etc., please contact W. Donald Dickinson at wildickins@pa.gov or 717-787-2726.

SWAN/IL Google Groups

There are over 700 members of the SWAN/IL ListServ through Google Groups. This is a great way to share confidential information across the network to seek colleagues' advice and announce upcoming events. Anyone wishing to join the group must be an employee of a county children and youth agency, SWAN affiliate agency or IL provider. If interested, please contact Bobbi Whary by email at bwhary@diakon-swan.org or 717-558-1223.

Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF)

P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675
717-787-3984
www.dhs.pa.gov

From the SWAN Prime Contract
Diakon-SWAN, LLC/Family Design Resources, Inc.

Updated Child Preparation Recipes for Success Released

The SWAN prime contractor is excited to announce the release of the updated *Child Preparation Recipes for Success* consisting of 33 original activities and 30 brand new activities. The *Recipes* can be accessed via the SWAN Permanency Toolkit (swantoolkit.org) located under SWAN Benchmarks and Templates/Child Preparation Forms. We are also beginning the process to add 40+ new activities submitted by the network.

New activities for the *Recipes* can be submitted at any time, and we want to hear from you! The submission form can be found in the SWAN Toolkit as indicated above. Email all submission forms to Dianne Ott, SWAN program technical assistant at dott@diakon-swan.org.

SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet: A Comprehensive Search Tool

The prime contractor recently updated the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* to reflect current practices and information. SWAN LSI defines diligent search as a search conducted to locate parents, relatives or other potential permanency resources or connections for a child who is receiving services from or in the custody of a county agency. First released to the network in 2005, the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* is the go-to resource for anyone wishing to conduct a thorough and comprehensive search.

The *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* contains vital information and forms to help paralegals and agency staff search for permanent resources for children in the Pennsylvania child welfare system, as well as comply with federal and state mandates in their diligent search efforts. The packet also includes a guide to international searches and a link to Family Design Resources' *Indian Child Welfare Search Guide*.

The diligent search packet can be downloaded at diakon-swan.org/diligent-search. Questions about your search or the packet may be forwarded to the SWAN LSI Warmline at lsiwarmline@diakon-swan.org. Counties seeking training or assistance with diligent search should contact their assigned SWAN LSI coordinator. Affiliate agencies seeking training or assistance with diligent search should contact their assigned SWAN regional technical assistant.

Incarceration Resource Manual Tool for Case Planning

Working with incarcerated parents who are involved in the child welfare system can be challenging due to differences among county prisons' policies, procedures and services available. The *SWAN LSI Incarceration Resource Manual* (IRM) compiles each Pennsylvania county's prison policies and procedures into a single, comprehensive document.

This tool can assist caseworkers and supervisors in their case planning with incarcerated parents, as well as be a resource to support the counties' efforts to engage with these parties. Links to additional resources, such as state and federal facilities, are included in the current edition.

Recently, we updated the IRM to reflect current policies. The newest version of the manual can be downloaded from the Incarceration Resource Manual page at diakon-swan.org/irm. Updates about county prison policies and procedures or questions may be forwarded to lsi-irmupdates@diakon-swan.org.

National Adoption Month Preparation

Each November, SWAN looks forward to celebratory events hosted by county and affiliate agencies in observance of National Adoption Month. Over the years, these events have raised awareness about the need for adoptive families for children in out-of-home care who cannot be safely reunified, celebrated the creation of forever families through adoption and matched waiting children with their forever families.

The SWAN prime contractor will celebrate National Adoption Month with the release of two resources designed to help counties and affiliate agencies plan future events; *Adoption Day Events: A Planner's Guide* and *Adoption Awareness and Matching Events: Planning for Success* will soon be available on the SWAN Toolkit at swantoolkit.org.

"Pennsylvania's Top Twenty Resources for Families" to be Offered at SWAN/IL Winter Statewide Meeting

At this past Permanency Conference, SWAN Helpline staff partnered with SWAN Post-permanency staff to create a workshop that teaches participants about resources available to Pennsylvania families through a fun and competitive game of Jenga: "Pennsylvania's Top Twenty Resources for Families." Because of the session's popularity, we are pleased to offer it again at the upcoming SWAN/IL Winter Statewide Meeting.

If you would like information on "Pennsylvania's Top Twenty Resources for Families," please call or email the SWAN Helpline 800-585-7926, swanhelpline@diakon-swan.org.

Assessment Tools Trainings to be Offered in November

As part of the assessment process, SWAN Post-permanency services require completion of either the Juvenile Inventory for Functioning (JIFF) or the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS). If the JIFF cannot be completed, then workers must complete the CAFAS.

These tools are provided for the network at app.fasoutcomes.com. The JIFF can be completed by the youth and the caregiver. The CAFAS **must** be completed only by a worker after completing reliability training at www.youtube.com/playlistlist=PLRDR6vne4ABNlnX_3m64QYHYvZLxYpXJx and taking the quiz at www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=cafes-online-reliability-training-quiz.

Post-permanency technical assistants will discuss these tools in-depth at the "Assessment Tools" training in November. This training will take place in Harrisburg on Nov. 6 at the office of the prime contractor and in Pittsburgh on Nov. 8 at the Children's Home of Pittsburgh. Both trainings will be from 9:00am to 4:00pm. If you would like to attend, please watch your email for registration.

CORE Teen Curriculum Coming Soon

The CORE (Critical On-going Resource Family Education) Teen Curriculum is expected to be released in January. This state-of-the-art training program was specifically designed for those families who are interested in fostering or adopting older youth with behavioral health issues by Spaulding for Children in partnership with the ChildTrauma Academy, the Center for Adoption Support and Education, the North American Council on Adoptable Children, and the University of Washington as a result of a three-year Foster/Adoptive Parent Preparation, Training and Development Initiative grant from the Children's Bureau at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The three components of this curriculum—self-assessment, classroom instruction and right time training—are designed to develop and equip resource parents with "real-life" tips and skills necessary to meet the needs of youth in their home. Keep an eye on upcoming announcements for details about additional trainings on this curriculum for the network.

New Features in the SWAN Portal

The SWAN Prime Contractor is excited to announce two new features currently being incorporated into the SWAN Portal.

Agencies will be able to make a Previous Agency Affiliation (PAA) request within the SWAN Portal. Rather than having to email PAA requests to SWAN and receive request results in the mail, agencies will now be able to submit requests and view results right from the family record through the portal. This feature not only streamlines exchange of information, but also maintains request results within the family record for immediate and future access when needed.

Additionally, agencies will be granted access to run child and family matches within the SWAN Portal. Currently, agencies must submit the CY130 (child) or CY131 (family) forms to the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) in order to request a child or family match. With this change, agencies will be able to run a match from the comfort of their own work stations. While this feature does not eliminate the need to register children and families with PAE, it will permit agencies, when needed, to simply search the child or family and select the option to “run a match.” Like the PAA, all matches run will be maintained within the SWAN Portal for easy access when needed.

Please stay tuned for further updates. Access to these new features is anticipated to be available in early 2020.



In Tribute: Tonya Hottenstein

We are profoundly saddened by the death of SWAN Helpline Lead Coordinator Tonya Hottenstein, who passed away on September 12 in Hershey, Pennsylvania. A 20-year employee of the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, Tonya’s impact on adoptive families was widespread and fueled by her passion for serving others, her personal advocacy on behalf of woman and children, and her deep reserve of love and caring for SWAN Helpline callers and colleagues. Tonya’s presence, often felt through a smile, a giggle or a kind word, will be tremendously missed. Jan Scherer, SWAN Helpline specialist, has been designated as interim SWAN Helpline coordinator.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2020 SWAN/IL Winter Statewide Meeting

January 22-23, 2020

Penn Stater Conference Center
215 Innovation Blvd.
State College, Pennsylvania 16803

2020 Spring Quarterly Meetings

Scranton — March 25, 2020

Clarion — April 1, 2020

Monroeville — April 2, 2020

Philadelphia — April 15, 2020

Lansdale — April 16, 2020

Harrisburg — April 21, 2020

www.diakon-swan.org/swan/events/upcoming/



www.adoptpakids.org

SWAN Prime Contract

P.O. Box 4560
471 JPL Wick Drive
Harrisburg, PA 17111-0560
Ph: 717-236-8490 | Fax: 717-236-8510
www.diakon-swan.org

**From the PA Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC)
Independent Living Project
University of Pittsburgh**

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Waivers

Fee waivers for both the SAT Reasoning test and the SAT Subject test are available for *current high school students* who cannot afford to pay the test fees. Please be sure to indicate on the SAT Waiver Request Form which test your youth wishes to take. SAT Waivers are available for students who are *currently* in high school. If a youth already graduated or did not graduate, but received their GED, the College Board will not accept the fee waiver. There are also a limited number of college application fee waivers. Eligible students can receive a total of 4 SAT fee waivers during their academic career – 2 for the SAT Reasoning Test and 2 for the SAT Subject Tests. Fee waivers for the SAT Reasoning Test are available for *juniors and seniors only*. Fee waivers for the SAT Subject Test are available for *freshmen, sophomore, junior, or senior years*. A fee waiver can cover as many as 3 Subject tests on one test day. Students who are not yet in ninth grade may not use the subject test fee waivers.

If you need to obtain either waiver, please contact Frank Revesz frevesz@pitt.edu at the Child Welfare Resource Center. To learn more about SAT test day requirements and general SAT questions, please visit: <http://www.sat.org/test-day>.

Youth Advisory Board Consultants

The PA Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is comprised of a statewide board, 6 regional boards as well as local boards. Currently we are looking to fill YAB consultant positions for the Northwest and North Central regions of the state. These are paid positions that provide support to the regional boards including coordinating meetings, offering technical assistance and administrative tasks. If you are interested in learning more about these positions, please contact Cindy Gore lcg7@pitt.edu at the Child Welfare Resource Center. Also, if you have youth interested in joining a local or regional YAB, please contact Marvin Butts mdb122@pitt.edu and he will connect you to the appropriate coordinator.

PA Youth Advisory Board Projects

Over the past year, the Statewide Youth Advisory Board has created several resources that are now available. These resources include:

- *Foster Parent Recruitment Flyer*: A resource for agencies and resource parents that are looking at becoming a permanency option for older youth.

- *Introductory Questionnaire*: Assists youth in the introduction process with new families. The goal is for youth to share relevant information with families beyond what they receive from the agency or casefile.
- *Go Animate Video*: Assists youth, staff and families in conversations with youth who identify as LGBTQ.

IL Trainings (available on-line and in-person)

The Child Welfare Resource Center recently revised the Independent Living training series. Two of the three modules are now available online through the Resource Center's E-Learn site www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/ELEARN.htm. The third module, Engaging Older Youth, is an in-person training that involves application of theories learned in modules one and two, through simulation-based training. If you have questions regarding how to register for these trainings, please contact Rachael Ickes at cwtpreg@pitt.edu.

Independent Living (IL) Services: Module 1: Purpose and Policy (online)

Independent Living (IL) Services: Module 2: Adolescent Issues: Risk and Resiliency (online)

Independent Living (IL) Services: Module 3: Engaging Older Youth (in-person simulation)

Youth Ambassador

CWRC would like to welcome **Haundray Muir**, our new Youth Ambassador. Haundray has been highly involved with both the regional and statewide YAB as well as in other resource center events including panels and the youth retreat. He also has out-of-home placement experience in the child welfare system. His role will include assisting in youth engagement training and technical assistance efforts across Pennsylvania, in collaboration with our Youth Quality Improvement Specialist Marvin Butts and our practice improvement specialists working in the counties. Haundray will also continue to support the Youth Advisory Board and internal Resource Center operations, including reviewing curriculum and participating on workgroups.

PA Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC)
403 E. Winding Hill Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717-795-9048
www.payab.pitt.edu