#

# COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE**

 **Statewide Adoption and Permanency**

 **Network and Independent Living**

 **2011 Spring Quarterly Meeting**

 **Office of Children, Youth and Family Updates**

**April is Child Abuse Prevention Month**

For the fourth year, PA Family Support Alliance (PFSA) will sponsor “Painting for Child Abuse Prevention” events. The project is designed to build public awareness of child abuse and the important role of family support programs in prevention. PFSA will collaborate with local organizations to create three murals, and artists from Heart to Art (a Scranton-based arts education organization) will design the murals and oversee their creation. Each mural is painted by members of the community, families, children and teens.

This year’s “Painting for Prevention” events will be held:

* April 2, in Indiana, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Indiana Mall
* April 9, in York, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at the Central Market
* April 14 at State Correctional Institution, Muncy

The public is invited to the Indiana and York events. In each location, resources for families and blue ribbon pins will be distributed free of charge. Pins are also available to anyone at a cost of $1.00 per pin by contacting PFSA at

(800) 448-4906 or visiting [www.pa-fsa.org](http://www.pa-fsa.org).

In addition to the “Painting for Prevention” events, a special kickoff of Child Abuse Prevention Month will take place at the State Capitol on April 6 at

10:00 a.m. This is the time to hear from our legislators, focus renewed energy on preventing child abuse, and find out about a special new award given by PFSA to media organizations that have highlighted the issue of child abuse over the previous year. Everyone is welcome!

**New Media Campaign for SWAN**

In the fall of 2010 SWAN began production of a new media campaign designed to recruit foster and adoptive families. Three new television commercials and one new radio commercial have been developed. These new commercials build on the “Be a” campaign which was launched in the fall of 2006. Instead of talking about the children’s physical wants, the new “If You Can” campaign focuses on their emotional needs. These are all things that are simple and achievable by anyone who has thought about being a foster or adoptive parent. The new television commercials began airing in March and the radio commercial will air in April.

**2011 SWAN Media Schedule**

From March through June the new SWAN commercials will air on network television and cable in the three largest media markets in Pennsylvania as follows:

* Philadelphia – March 14th – March 27th and May 2nd – May 15th
* Pittsburgh – March 21st – April 3rd and May 16th – May 29th
* Harrisburg – April 4th – April 17th and May 30th – June 12th

From April through June the new SWAN radio commercial will air in four media markets in Pennsylvania as follows:

* Altoona – April 4th – 24th
* Allentown/Bethlehem – April 25th – May 15th
* Erie – May 16th – June 5th
* Williamsport – June 6th – June 26th

During the month of May, National Foster Care Month, print advertisements will run in four newspapers on the following days:

* Philadelphia Gay News – May 6th – 12th and May 20th -26th
* Philadelphia Tribune Review – May 3rd – 5th and May 17th – 19th
* Pittsburgh Courier – May 4th – 10th and May 18th – 24th
* Out In Pittsburgh – Entire month of May

An online campaign is running on Yahoo, Google, MSN and Facebook until

May 30th, 2011.

**Chafee Education and Training Grant Program (ETG)**

The Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG) application for the 2011-2012 school year will be available in April.  Please continue to spread the word about the ETG for youth who are, or were, in out of home placement or adopted after age 16.  Youth ARE NOT required to participate in a formal IL program to be eligible to apply and receive an award.  With potential award amounts of up to $4,000 per year (not to exceed the cost of attendance), this grant opportunity significantly reduces a student’s out of pocket costs or loan burdens.  It also may be the deciding factor as to whether a youth in foster care seeks to further their education.

This is not a student loan and students do not need to repay this amount after their education is complete.  Eligibility requirements, the one page application

and directions on how to apply can be found at:[**http://www.pheaa.org/specialprograms/pa\_chafee\_grant\_program.shtml**](http://www.pheaa.org/specialprograms/pa_chafee_grant_program.shtml) **or**

[**www.independentlivingpa.org**](http://www.independentlivingpa.org/)**.  ETG awards are subject to the availability of funds.  Timely completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the Pennsylvania State Grant and ETG applications is important.**

For questions about current Chafee applications or a youth’s status, please contact PHEAA at 1-800-831-0797.  If you work with youth receiving aftercare services who plan to move to another state and establish residency there, they can find state information on the ETG programsat: [www.statevoucher.org](http://www.statevoucher.org/).  Each state has its own individual application process.

If you have questions regarding the ETG program, contact Carrie Keiser at ckeiser@state.pa.us  or (717) 705-4401.

**Enhanced Online Heart Gallery**

Five years after it began, the traveling Pennsylvania Heart Gallery will come to an end. Since the Heart Gallery began, 129 children from 34 counties have been featured and 46 of these children have been adopted or placed in a pre-adoptive home.

In order to serve more waiting children SWAN is building upon the success of the traveling Heart Gallery by using the talents of volunteer photographers from across the state to obtain artistic portraits of all youth registered with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE).

SWAN, along with Neiman Group, has identified professional photographers for all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. These photographers will donate their time and talent to capture the spirit and individuality of Pennsylvania’s waiting children in a single portrait. Participating photographers will submit new portraits electronically to PAE staff for inclusion on the web site.

Please stay tuned for more information regarding the process caseworkers must follow to participate and how to access the list of participating photographers.

**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 2, a Pittsburgh CBS affiliate, *Val’s Kids*

is aired on WHTM abc 27 in the Harrisburg area; and *A Little Love* is aired on WBRE TV 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 Ja-Neen Jones at Three Rivers Adoption Council at jjones@3riversadopt.org.

If you have a waiting child you would like featured on WHTM’s, ***Val’s Kids***, or

***A Little Love***, please contact Karen Lollo at klollo@diakon-swan.org or at

(717) 558-1242.

**PA National Youth In Transition Database (NYTD)**

The PA NYTD online data collection system at [www.getnytd.org](http://www.getnytd.org/) went live October 1, 2010.  Counties are required to collect information on the baseline population of all youth in foster care at any point between age 17 years, 45 days as instructed in the OCYF Bulletin 3130-10-03, Implementation of 45 CFR Part 1356 Chafee National Youth in Transition Database Part 1, released on

August 4, 2010.  A web-based training will be available on the University of Pittsburgh, PA Child Welfare Training Program website, [http://www.pacwcbt.pitt.edu](http://www.pacwcbt.pitt.edu/).  Contact Wendy Unger at (717) 795-9048 or wau2@pitt.edu for log-in information.

We are nearing our federal submission for the first six months of youth surveys.  Statewide, 453 surveys were completed (413 within the required timeframe of 45 days).  193 registered youth have incomplete or never completed surveys and counties must log in to the NYTD system and complete this activity prior to PA’s submission.  More information and instructions will be forwarded to County NYTD Coordinators in the near future.

**Pennsylvania Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Update**

The third quarter of PA’s Program Improvement Plan (PIP) ends on

March 31, 2010 and in April OCYF will be submitting evidence of completion for strategies and action steps accomplished during this quarter.  PA also submitted a semi-annual report to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on February 15, 2011 to show the progress that was made during the first two quarters, and this report is currently under review by ACF.

PIP workgroups are continuing to work on several of the strategies within the PIP including, but not limited to, the phased-in implementation of continuous quality improvement, building a collaborative network of technical assistance providers, developing policy and best practice regarding concurrent planning and enhancing available assessments in order to identify underlying issues and ensure the provision of appropriate services.  We appreciate all of the stakeholders who are currently or previously involved in this process over the past several years and look forward to our continued collaboration to achieve all we set out to accomplish in the PIP.  Anyone interested in joining a PIP workgroup can contact Stephanie Maldonado (smaldonado@state.pa.us) or Jeanne Schott (jls192@pitt.edu) for more information.

**IL Youth Retreat 2011 – SAVE THE DATE**

Mark your calendars for the 2011 IL Youth Retreat: Imagine… No Limits! The retreat will be held in August 8-13, 2011 at the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown. Registration for youth will be coordinated through county children and youth agencies. Stay tuned to the YAB website, <http://www.independentlivingpa.org>, for more information.

**SWAN List Serve**

The SWAN list serve throughGoogle Groups **is comprised of county children and youth agency workers and SWAN affiliate agency workers. The goal of the group is to facilitate special needs adoptions throughout PA.  All**

**information posted on this site is confidential.  Anyone wishing to join this group must be an employee of a county children and youth agency or SWAN affiliate**

**agency. If interested, please contact Desiree Weisser at** dweisser@state.pa.us **or via telephone at (717) 772-7011.**

**SWAN-IL Network Newsletter**

Tell the Network about all of the wonderful things you, your agency, your community, a youth or a colleague is doing to promote permanency for the youth of PA! If you have something exciting, interesting or informative to share with your colleagues, please forward your articles, success stories, matching events or ideas to Karen Lollo at klollo@diakon-swan.org or at (717) 558-1242. Pictures are always a great addition to any article. Under the terms of the current SWAN prime contract, Diakon/FDR is the editor of the Network News, which they will distribute electronically. If want to be sure to receive your copy, please visit the PAE matching table and register for our electronic mailing list.