



PARTNERS  
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

**Partners are given voice in a decision-making process.**

**OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN**

### **A Message from OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – February 1, 2013**

I am energized about the many meaningful collaborations I see happening throughout the office, with public children services agencies (PCSAs) and with private agencies. But perhaps most exciting to me is looking at the big picture and seeing how these collaborations complement each other to provide cross-program, systemic improvement, rather than standing alone as multiple initiatives.

The work of the contract standardization public/private work group, cochaired by Don Warner (Oesterlen Services for Youth) and Helen Lehman (South Central PCSA), should reduce the county resources and time needed to review youth placement contracts while increasing the consistency of contract requirements. When completed, the standard contract should cover 90 percent of all requirements regarding youth placement. County-specific requirements will be covered in an addendum to the agreement.

Jeffrey Green (House of New Hope) and Maureen Flynn (Summit County PCSA) are leading a level-of-care work group that should bring statewide consistency in determining the needs of children entering care.

Complementing this initiative, the Office of Families and Children (OFC), the Ohio Department of Youth Services and the Franklin County PCSA are partners in the Public Children Services Association of Ohio's Behavioral Health Leadership Group, which supports the efforts of PCSAs to ensure that youth in care are prescribed psychotropic medications appropriately. A model policy for state and local management of poly-psychopharmacology among youth in the child welfare system will be coming out soon.

With so many new opportunities and initiatives throughout OFC, it is difficult to make sure that each gets the attention it deserves. Starting this month, each First Friday will highlight a bureau and examine the work that bureau is accomplishing in partnership with state and county stakeholders. Read on for the first feature in this series: the Ohio Children's Trust Fund.

### **Spotlight on OFC's Guiding Principles in Action: The Ohio Children's Trust Fund**

The last year has been one of change for the Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF), the state's sole, dedicated public funding source for child abuse and neglect prevention. It became the Ohio chapter for Prevent Child Abuse America, it streamlined application processes, and it provided training and technical assistance to professionals throughout Ohio. On top of all that, OCTF still leads statewide efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect by supporting parents, strengthening families and encouraging effective community-based prevention efforts.

When OCTF achieved chapter status with Prevent Child Abuse America in July 2012, it joined a network of 50 U.S. chapters. (For a full list, visit <http://www.preventchildabuse.org/chapters/index.cfm>.) OCTF and Prevent Child Abuse America have a common mission, and the OCTF board members are excited to share a common identity with other states' chapters, align Ohio's prevention efforts under one entity and support the work of Prevent Child Abuse Ohio.

OCTF board and staff also made a commitment to reduce the administrative burden on counties that provide child abuse prevention programming. For the first time, the state fiscal year 2014 application process is contained within one database, which means no more forms! OCTF worked with a group of stakeholders to streamline the process. Counties now enter their information into a database and export it to OCTF. This format not only will save paper and administrative time, but it also will reduce the amount of time counties spend reporting their progress throughout the year.

Like many others in the child welfare field, OCTF narrowed its focus to programming with demonstrated positive outcomes. To alleviate counties' cost of providing evidence-based programs, OCTF offers a variety of no-cost training and technical assistance opportunities to professionals who work with families and children. Programs include training in the Stewards of Children Sexual Abuse Prevention Program, Keeping Children Safe: A Child Abuse and Neglect Curriculum for Early Childhood Professionals, and Incredible Years, which is aimed at reducing children's aggression and behavior problems and increasing their social competence at home and at school. These programs are established, evidence-based programs that have relevance to a wide range of professionals. Visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OCTF/Trainings.stm> to learn more about them.

Throughout 2013, OCTF will work to increase its name recognition, partner with corporations to provide more programming to communities, and undertake fundraising efforts to support prevention efforts across Ohio. To learn more or to contact OCTF, visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/octf/index.stm>.



The Ohio Children's Trust Fund welcomed new staff and saw existing staff take on new roles. Left to right: David Monder, Eastern Region program manager; Kristen N. Rost, OCTF executive director; Carolyn Brewer, Western Region program manager; and Felicia A. Saunders, program administrator.

## **Foster Care Training to Prevent Human Trafficking**

More than 80 percent of young victims of human trafficking were once in foster care. Because most children in foster care have experienced physical and/or emotional trauma, and because they often lack meaningful connections, these children are particularly vulnerable to the advances of predators. They also present special challenges for foster care placement. Often, they are at risk to run away, and sometimes they try to recruit other children into human trafficking.

Recognizing these challenges, Governor Kasich's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force asked the OFC to make human trafficking prevention training available for foster parents. OFC partnered with the Institute for Human Services to develop an online course for foster caregivers.

The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program's online course "What Caregivers Need to Know About Human Trafficking" is divided into three parts. First, caregivers learn the definitions of sex and labor trafficking, the scope and prevalence of the problem, and how to recognize if children in their homes have been trafficked. Second, they learn why it's important for them to learn about human trafficking and why the young people in their care may be vulnerable to it. Finally, they learn prevention strategies for the youth placed in their home. This includes tips on how they can organize their homes and establish relationships as a family to reduce vulnerabilities, as well as prevention strategies for their community at large.

The course is being piloted across Ohio, and the response has been very positive. Foster caregivers say it is clear, concise and easy to navigate, and that they are learning a great deal. Starting in early February, it will be available to all foster caregivers in Ohio, at [www.ocwtp.net](http://www.ocwtp.net). For more information, email [Leroy.Crozier@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Leroy.Crozier@jfs.ohio.gov).

## **Dave Thomas Foundation Partnership Update**

In May 2012, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director Michael Colbert announced a partnership between the agency and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption to help identify permanent homes for children waiting to be adopted.

Since the partnership's July launch, the foundation has issued contracts for 32 Wendy's Wonderful Kids program grants to implement its [evidence-based, child-focused recruitment model](#). The grants were issued to 16 public and private adoption organizations. Already, 182 children are being served. Nine have been matched with families, and five are in pre-adoptive placements. New Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiters will join the seven who already are working in Ohio to connect children waiting in foster care with forever families.

"Our partnership with ODJFS is paving the way for more conversations across the country about child-focused recruitment," said Rita Soronen, president and CEO of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. "The leadership and forward thinking of Director Colbert and his staff is truly making a difference in the lives of the longest-waiting children in foster care."

To request an adoption recruiter to work with a child in your county, contact the foundation grantee in your area (see attachment) or email [angela\\_marshall@davethomasfoundation.org](mailto:angela_marshall@davethomasfoundation.org).

## **Independent Living and Transitional Youth Update**

The five regional independent living/transitional youth meetings across the state described in the December First Friday have been completed. In addition to reviewing the Ohio Administrative Code rules related to independent living, the meetings featured much discussion regarding life skills assessment tool(s) and their barriers, the availability of services, barriers to services, and the concept of "normalization" for youth in care.

Hear feedback and recommendations about the forums from those who work with foster care youth ages 16 and older:

February 27, 2013, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
Ohio Department of Transportation Auditorium  
1980 W. Broad Street, Columbus, OH

Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. For additional information, contact OFC's transitional youth coordinators, Susan Halter and Laurie Valentine, by email at [Susan.Halter@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Susan.Halter@jfs.ohio.gov) and [Laurie.Valentine@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Laurie.Valentine@jfs.ohio.gov), or by phone at (614) 752-0088 (Susan) (614) 752-1122 (Laurie).

## **Rule Revision Processes Q&A**

The PFOF rule review is a wide-reaching effort that assigned each of OFC's 290-plus Ohio Administrative Code rules to a review team comprised of public and private agency partners. Each of the eight rule review teams is cochaired by an OFC staff representative and a stakeholder. The 16 cochairs comprise the Rule Review Coordination Board, which reviews and approves each team's rule change recommendations. But what happens to the newly minted rules after the recommended changes are approved by the coordination board?

The purpose of the PFOF review process is not to replace the rule circulation process established by the Ohio General Assembly's Joint Commission on Agency Rule Review (JCARR). It is to ensure that stakeholders have the opportunity to actively participate in the development of the rules and provide comment *before* the legislative process starts. We believe that true stakeholder engagement will help develop a superior product.

### **What process does OFC use to revise the Ohio Administrative Code rules?**

OFC policy staff revise the rules using a software package provided by the Ohio Legislative Service Commission. After the internal process is complete, the legally prescribed JCARR process, called "promulgation," begins. This is an eight-step process that has time frames attached:

1. **Pre-Clearance** – Rules must be requested in the Register of Ohio 30 days before work begins.
2. **Internal Review** – Rules undergo a one-week, internal OFC review to ensure that all affected areas have the chance to comment before the external clearance process begins.
3. **Clearance** – This gives all external stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the proposed rules. After the clearance period, OFC staff review all comments from stakeholders, determine how they affect the rules, and develop and issue responses to each. Further revisions may be needed as a result of the clearance comments. Historically, clearance brings lots of comments and the need for revisions. We are hoping that the PFOF process, which engages partners alongside OFC staff in rule development, will greatly reduce the need for revision at this stage.
4. **Original Filing** – OFC staff create a rule "package" and upload the rules and any appendices to the Register of Ohio's electronic rule-filing website. The Common Sense Business Regulation Checklist is completed. If the checklist identifies the rules as adversely impacting Ohio businesses, they undergo analysis by [the Governor's Common Sense Initiative Office](#) to determine if the regulatory intent of the rule justifies its impact to businesses. Rules then undergo legal review and a public hearing notice is developed.
5. **Public Hearing** – Responses to testimony presented in the public hearing must be sent within five to seven business days of the hearing.
6. **JCARR Hearing** – This meeting gives JCARR committee members the opportunity to ask questions of the rule-making agency (in this case, OFC) to ensure that the rule and any changes do not exceed the agency's statutory authority.
7. **Final Filing** – The effective date for rules is set at this time. OFC gives counties 30 days' notice before rules become effective, so if the rules are final-filed in May, the effective date is June.
8. **Publication** – Once the effective date is set, the rules package is sent to the ODJFS Electronic Publications/Forms Section to be published electronically and updated in the ODJFS eManual.

### How long does the revision and publishing process take?

Without any revisions or comments, a rule may be finalized in approximately seven months. Comments or revisions in multiple areas can extend the timeframe to as long as 18 months. The following factors influence how long it takes a rule package to move through the process:

- Comments through the internal clearance processes
- Comments through the external clearance processes
- Legal issues or new language suggestions that may be raised
- Issues or comments raised by JCARR and/or the Legislative Services Commission
- Public comment

Like any legislative process, the rule promulgation process can be lengthy and labor-intensive. For those awaiting the results of the PFOF rule review, the time lapse between team work and effective date can be daunting. Each step is important, however. The process allows for public comment and prevents overreaching or unrealistic regulations from being implemented.

### Rule Review Update: Program Eligibility and Reimbursement Rule Review Team

Co-led by Carole Fisher (OFC) and Cathy Hill (Athens County PCSA), the Program Eligibility and Reimbursement Rule Review Team is responsible for approximately 84 rules that make up chapters 44, 47 and 49 of the Ohio Administrative Code. These rules establish criteria related to eligibility and reimbursement for Foster Care Maintenance, Adoption Assistance, State Adoption Subsidy and the Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy programs. As of February 1, 2013, the team's many hours, thoughtful insight and conscientious effort have paid off. As a result of the team's hard work, the following results have been achieved.

- Five rules now *are effective* (June 1, 2012):
  - 5101:2-47-03.1
  - 5101:2-47-04
  - 5101:2-47-07
  - 5101:2-47-08
  - 5101:2-47-15
- Nine rules *are scheduled for a public hearing* (February 27, 2013) *and JCARR hearing* (March 26, 2013):
  - 5101:2-47-05
  - 5101:2-47-09
  - 5101:2-47-12
  - 5101:2-47-13
  - 5101:2-47-14
  - 5101:2-47-14.1
  - 5101:2-47-20
  - 5101:2-47-22
  - 5101:2-47-23
- One entire chapter's rules *have completed the PFOF rule review and will begin the JCARR process*:
  - Chapter 44 rules, which cover the State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy and Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy
- Multiple rules *have been reviewed by the review team and are scheduled for review by the Rule Review Coordination Board* (February 14, 2013):
  - 5101:2-47-01
  - 5101:2-33-29
  - Chapter 49 Adoption Assistance Rules
- Nine rules *are being sent to the review team for review* of revisions made by the cost report and rate setting groups:
  - 5101:2-47-11
  - 5101:2-47-16
  - 5101:2-47-17
  - 5101:2-47-18
  - 5101:2-47-19
  - 5101:2-23.1
  - 5101:2-47-26
  - 5101:2-47-26.1
  - 5101:2-47-26.2

Thanks to members of the review team for their commitment to the process and their strong knowledge base. Thanks also to the team members' agency directors, supervisors and coworkers, who made their participation possible, and to cochairs for the pre-meeting preparation and leadership:

Carole Fisher (OFC), co-chair  
Cathy Hill (Athens County PCSA), co-chair  
Jessica Basinski (Lorain County PCSA)  
Alicia Beynon (United Methodist Children's Home)  
Kara Edwards (Morrow County PCSA)  
Dot Erickson (Ohio Family Care Association)  
Hope Foster (Franklin County PCSA)

Ann Kackley (OFC)  
Theresa Pancoe (Mahoning County PCSA)  
Joan Radcliffe (Franklin County PCSA)  
Jane Robertson (Lorain County PCSA)  
Chante Slacum (OFC)  
Jane Wusik (NECCO)

### **PRINCIPLE OF THE MONTH:**

Partners are given voice in a decision-making process.

#### **January 2013 Global Emails**

The following emails were sent in January from Jennifer Justice to PCSA directors and/or private agency directors. They are organized below by mailing date and key word.

**1/17/13** - SACWIS Update

**1/18/13** - Title IV-E Foster Care Maintenance Second Preliminary Review/New Federal Title IV-E Eligibility Review Instrument Webinar

**1/24/13** - Statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Directory

**1/28/13** - Child Welfare Confidential, Research and Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) Access for PCSA Prosecutors

#### **Don't Save It. Share It!**

If you know an older youth in care, or an adult supporter of an older youth in care, make sure they know about this important date.



**2013 Connecting the Dots Conference For Foster Care Teens and Young Adults**

*July 25, 2013*

Crowne Plaza Columbus North  
6500 Doubletree Avenue, Columbus

Watch for updates at <http://fosterconnection.wikispaces.com/>.

If you want to subscribe to First Friday, have comments or ideas about content, or would like to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email [First\\_Friday@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:First_Friday@jfs.ohio.gov). For additions to or removals from the list, be sure to include your name, organization and email address.



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