



OCF seeks and supports strategies to strengthen
the voices of youth and families for its work.

OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN

A Message from OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – April 5, 2013

People ask me all the time, “Do you like your job?” In case you’re wondering, too, the answer is yes, as long as I feel I am being helpful and making a difference. My best barometers are the stakeholders and staff with whom I get to engage. Most are pretty willing to let me know their assessment, and I appreciate the opportunity to hear others’ thoughts. My goal is for all of us to have more exchanges along the lines of “How are you doing? How am I doing? How can we support each other?”

We work with such complex issues, reflective of the families and children we serve. Yet, our communities, constituents and accountability systems demand simple resolution. It is easy to get caught up with day-to-day matters and forget that each of us is part of a bigger picture. For me, an open exchange of ideas with colleagues shifts my vantage point. Not only do I get a clearer picture of how policies and programs play out at the practice level, but I am able to share state-level thinking and rationale with caseworkers and supervisors. I hope that these First Fridays spark your interest to join the conversation, as well.

I recently read a cautionary blog post about how systems tend to rely on the same contributors. The author noted that at the heart of every project are a few people who do an enormous amount of work. Because these individuals have established themselves as reliable and knowledgeable, supervisors return to them again and again. But when organizations do this, they miss the talented and hard-working people on the fringe who haven’t been given access, aren’t aware of the opportunity, or really haven’t considered the personal or systemic benefits of contributing. We talk a lot about change and the flaws in our system, but significant change requires people who care enough to make it happen and are willing to have conversations about what it will take. Thank you to all of you who take the time to make these dialogues a priority.

ODJFS Director Michael Colbert and I recently had the pleasure of personally thanking the 16 rule review team cochairs for bringing the difficult, time-consuming comprehensive rule review to fruition. Thanks also to the more than 100 members of the eight teams and the stakeholder directors who supported their staffs’ participation. The final report, *Findings from the Rule Review Team Members: Survey and Rule Review Coordination Board Focus Groups*, identifies the greatest impact of this process as the opportunity for county and private agencies to engage with state partners to discuss rules. I am eager to hear their recommendations for how we can continue this collaborative rule review process in the future.

Last month, OFC’s transitional youth coordinators presented the findings from the regional information sessions held earlier this year. I’m so thrilled that 75 people from across Ohio came together to talk about the challenges facing older youth in foster care. This is how change begins.

I also appreciate those of you who took the time to attend the regional team meetings in March. Every good partnership begins with an introduction, and these meetings got us off to an excellent start. We have been providing technical assistance to local agencies in a particular way for quite a while. Now, we are trying something new, and even though it sounds easy, it’s going to take some time for us to get everything in place. Still, I believe that the result will be a positive change for the better.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all the good work happening every day in Ohio. Last month, the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth and the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCAI) came together to discuss proposals to improve foster care and adoption in the U.S. and around the world. Director Colbert was invited to talk about Ohio's Title IV-E waiver and our work with Wendy's Wonderful Kids. When introducing him, CCAI Executive Director Kathleen Strottman noted that legislators have been impressed with Ohio's implementation of Differential Response and with the relationship between ODJFS and the Supreme Court of Ohio. It's nice to see that others are noticing our good work, too!

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

The Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF) is the state's sole public funding source dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect. Housed within ODJFS, it works with its 88 county partners to serve all Ohio communities.

This month, OCTF is spreading the word about April being Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, a time for everyone in Ohio to "pause for a child" and take an active role in making their communities a better place for families and children. OCTF kicked off the observance with a pinwheel planting ceremony on March 28 at Columbus' COSI science museum. The pinwheels celebrate individuals in communities across Ohio who helped prevent child abuse and neglect by strengthening families. (See story below.)

Other communities throughout Ohio also have organized proclamations, ceremonies, educational forums, vigils and other activities to recognize the observance. For more information, visit the OCTF Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/OhioChildrensTrustFund>. Many communities use this opportunity to call attention to known risk factors and to build prevention skills within the community.

In collaboration with 17 county Child Abuse and Child Neglect Prevention Advisory Boards, OCTF is supporting a number of training and awareness events this month. These include Erie County's "Choose Your Partner Carefully" campaign and Lucas County's "Stewards of Children" child sexual abuse prevention trainings.

The "Choose Your Partner Carefully" campaign is aimed at reducing the number of children at risk of abuse or neglect by a parent's partner. The Ohio Department of Health reports that a mother's partner is cited in approximately 28 percent of all cases in which a child dies because of abuse or neglect. The campaign provides tools to help women evaluate the likelihood that their partner could abuse their children, teaching women to recognize potential signs of abuse, and increasing community awareness of the problem.

In Lucas County, two "Stewards of Children" trainings were provided to local youth-serving organizations in April. The trainings have been shown to increase knowledge, improve attitudes and change behaviors for the better, so that fewer children become victims of sexual abuse.

Child Abuse Prevention Month Kicked Off

More than 80 Avondale Elementary School students helped plant 3,000 pinwheels on the lawn of the COSI science museum on March 28, to kick off Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month in Ohio. Each pinwheel represents an adult who helped prevent child abuse and neglect by providing support to a child or family.

"There is no more important task before us than the protection of our children," said ODJFS Director Michael Colbert at a ceremony before the planting. "We need to protect their physical safety, and we need to protect their emotional safety - because emotional scars can last a lifetime, even after physical wounds heal."

OCTF, COSI and Franklin County Children Services (FCCS) organized the event, which was hosted by 10TV News Anchor Jerry Revish. Other speakers included OCTF Executive Director Kristen Rost, COSI President and CEO David Chesebrough, State Senator and OCTF Board Member Kevin Bacon, FCCS Executive Director Chip Spinning, and "The Amazing" Tei Street, a motivational speaker.

Rost reviewed the six protective factors that can help prevent child abuse and neglect: nurturing and attachment, knowledge of parenting and child development, parental resilience, social connections, concrete support for parents, and social and emotional competence of children.

Director Colbert presented a proclamation from Governor Kasich recognizing April as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, and Senator Bacon presented a Senate proclamation. The senator noted that OCTF's

annual \$4 million budget funds programs and activities around the state that prevent child abuse and neglect. He said the board is fortunate to have it, but he added that he wishes even more funding were available.

Street entertained the crowd with a story about learning to skydive and told the students in the audience that they can be anything they “work” to be. She also shared her experience of adopting a relative’s child and thanked Director Colbert, ODJFS and FCCS staff for their work, saying they are “doing amazing things to transform the lives of kids.”



Top-left photo, left to right: OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice, ODJFS Director Michael Colbert, State Senator Kevin Bacon, OCTF Executive Director Kristen Rost and Crystal Ward Allen, executive director of the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO).

Top-right photo, left to right: Michael McCreight, ODJFS assistant director of Health and Human Services; OFC Deputy Director Justice; ODJFS Director Colbert; OCTF Executive Director Rost; State Senator Bacon; and PCSAO Executive Director Allen.

Bottom photos: Avondale Elementary students plant pinwheels on COSI’s front lawn.

Ohio Differential Response Practice Profiles

Ohio now has 59 counties with operational Differential Response systems. Another 11 will implement systems by July, and every county in the state will be on board by mid-2014. Differential Response gives caseworkers the freedom to use an alternative approach when assessing some reports of child abuse and neglect. That freedom helps keep families together without compromising child safety.

When describing Differential Response, we often use words such as “engaging,” “partnering” and “collaborating.” Although we may assume everyone understands what these terms mean, that’s not necessarily true. Exactly what activities demonstrate “partnering”? Which of these activities is essential for the successful implementation of Differential Response?

To provide more detailed, constructive guidance for counties, the Ohio Differential Response Statewide Implementation Team and Leadership Council have completed work on a new tool called the “Ohio

Differential Response Practice Profiles.” The profiles describe 10 essential skill areas: engaging, assessing, partnering, planning, implementing, evaluating, communicating, advocating, demonstrating cultural and diversity competence, and collaborating with the community. The profiles were developed by county and state partners, in collaboration with experts from the National Implementation Research Network and our Ohio Differential Response consultant team, based on best practices and field experience.

“The practice profiles are an invaluable and user-friendly tool that will help agencies focus on key practitioner activities that contribute to quality implementation of a Differential Response system,” said Stacy Cox, social services administrator for the Champaign County Department of Job and Family Services and cochair of the implementation team. “Having this tool available will help agencies with timely identification of the necessary supports needed to move the practice forward in their respective counties, and ultimately [will help agencies provide] quality and consistent practice across the state.”

Added Darleen Shope, supervisor of Alternative Response and Investigations for Trumbull County Children Services and cochair of the leadership council: “The exciting part of this process for me is the opportunity to provide something that is tangible, meaningful and measurable to develop our practitioners for this work. The dedication of our team in developing these profiles will guide and sustain our practice well into the future.”

The profiles will be available later this month in an electronic, interactive PDF. If you have questions or would like to receive a copy, please email Carla.Carpenter@jfs.ohio.gov.

Ohio’s Alternative Response Evaluation

Before legislators authorized the expansion of Differential Response statewide, Ohio participated in an 18-month “Alternative Response Pilot Project.” This was designed to measure the effectiveness of giving caseworkers two options when responding to reports of child abuse and neglect: a traditional response or an alternative response. Ohio has continued to follow the families involved with the pilot project.

By the end of this year, Ohio will have five years of research on these families. The Institute for Applied Research recently shared *interim* results from this extended study. Some of the significant findings emerging from this ongoing research project are:

- **Alternative Response has effectively reduced the number of new reports to the child protection system.** Families served through Alternative Response had more than a 12 percent reduction in the rate of new reports as compared to the study’s control group.
- **Alternative Response has been particularly impactful for families with no previous child protective services history.** First-time families served through Alternative Response experienced significantly lower rates of return than first-time families served through Traditional Response.
- **Caseworkers continue to support Alternative Response as an effective child protection approach.** In a January 2013 follow-up survey, caseworkers reported that Alternative Response leads to greater family cooperation and participation in decision-making.

A full, final report will be available this fall. Ohio also continues to participate in the federal Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response (QIC-DR) research project. Six Ohio counties have participated in the national QIC-DR cross-site Differential Response evaluation. Those results also are scheduled to be completed later this year.

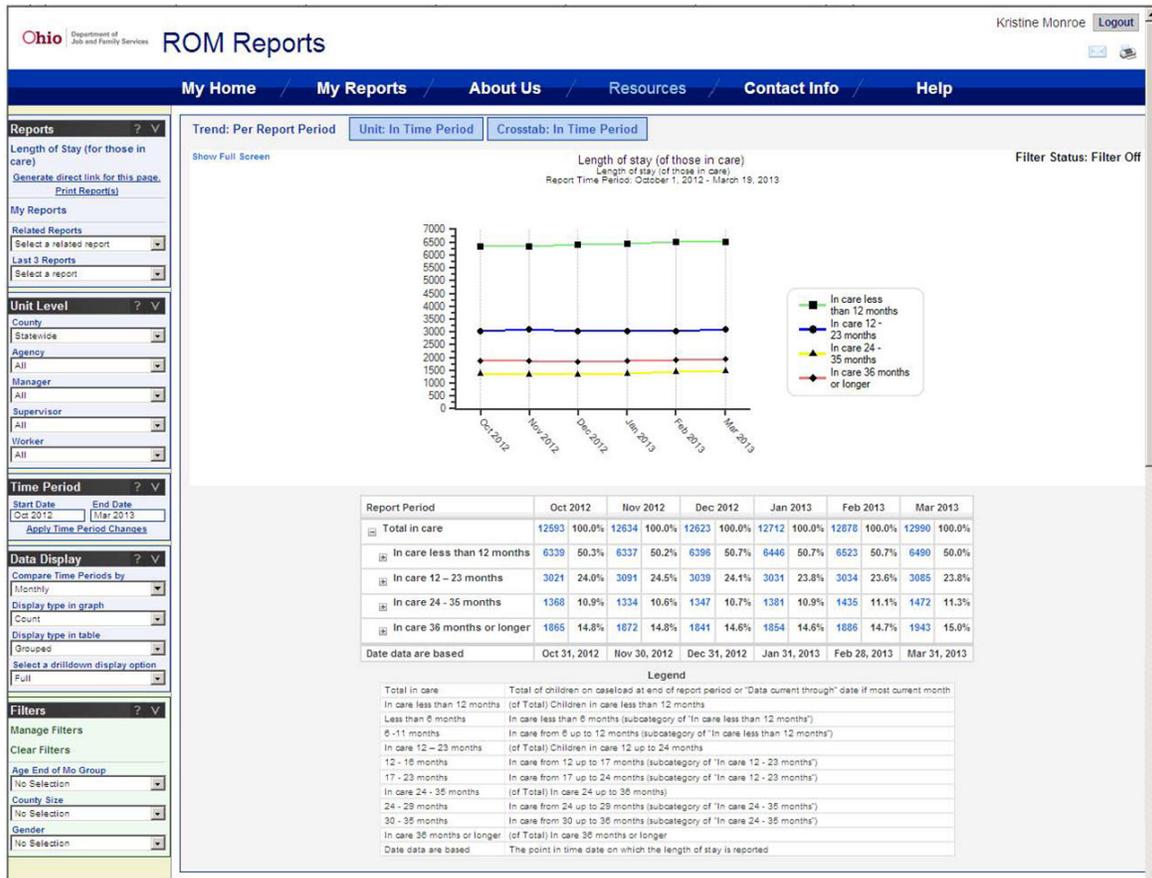
Ohio Differential Response Quarterly: Back by Popular Demand!

Would you like to stay informed about the latest developments in Ohio’s Differential Response expansion? Then you’re in luck, because the Ohio Differential Response Quarterly newsletter is returning! Each issue will include articles on practice, supervision, policy and research issues related to Differential Response. Look for the first edition later this month, when it will be sent to agency directors and all Differential Response county leads. Please remember to share it with your staff and stakeholders.

Using Data to Self-Assess: ROM's 'Length of Stay' Snapshot

The "Length of Stay" report gives Results-Oriented Management (ROM) users a point-in-time look at the length of time a child has been in the care of an agency. The report divides children into four groups based on length of time in care: less than 12 months, 12 to 23 months, 24 to 36 months, and 36 months or longer.

The view below shows the "Length of Stay" report for children statewide. Agencies also can filter the data by county name and agency name. While the image below presents a snapshot of the data, users can view individual child details by clicking on any of the blue numbers on the graph.



This data can be used to assist agencies in permanency planning by identifying children who are approaching a specified length of time in care. For ROM questions, please email Kristine.monroe@jfs.ohio.gov or tim.doyle-wenger@jfs.ohio.gov. Unfortunately, ROM is available only to public agency Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) users at this time.

Independent Living and Transitional Youth Update

Last month, OFC's transitional youth coordinators had the opportunity to meet with adult supporters of older youth in care to talk about the information gathered during regional meetings and to discuss what comes next. There was no shortage of ideas. Already the coordinators are thinking about how best to review future independent living enhancements with the SACWIS team; promote and attend the independent living trainings through the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program's regional training centers; and work with other state agencies, such as the Ohio Department of Development Disabilities, to better coordinate services.

First up, the transitional youth coordinators are working with the Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OYAB) to update the handbook for older youth in care. The handbook is a great resource, developed a number of years ago by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio. The plan is to work with OYAB to make sure the handbook is comprehensive but user-friendly, and then to make it available free of charge to all interested youth.

A critical component of successfully transitioning from foster care to independence is finding a safe, affordable and stable place to live. Making housing accessible to youth aging out of foster care is the focus of the Transitional Youth Housing Task Force, which is comprised of almost 30 representatives of state agencies, public and private associations and agencies, membership organizations, and foster care youth and alumni. The task force's first efforts are aimed at better understanding existing housing resources. The group has approached its work by forming three subcommittees focused on related but different concerns: helping young people avoid homelessness, creating housing options, and policies, procedures and rules. At April's meeting, members will discuss building a youth housing model for Ohio.

Don't forget to register for the Ohio Reach Summit at <http://ohioreach.wikispaces.com/>. This free event will be held on Monday, May 13, at the Crowne Plaza Columbus North. It will be packed with information for a wide audience, including professionals from both higher education and high schools, child welfare professionals, legal services professionals, and court-appointed special advocates. You can browse the day's agenda by clicking on the "Registration is Open" link. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about how to promote and support Ohio foster youth's successful enrollment and completion of higher education.

Rule Review Teams Thanked for their Contribution

ODJFS Director Colbert and OFC Deputy Director Justice recently presented appreciation certificates to the 17 state and local agency staff who participated in a 22-month-long review of Ohio's child welfare rules.

"The fact that you went through some 270 rules to eliminate redundancy is just amazing," Director Colbert told the group, which gathered March 14 at the Franklin County Children Services facility at 855 W. Mound St., Columbus. "(Now) somebody can look at a rule and basically understand what it means. It's just a common-sense approach."

David Thomas, a human services developer in OFC's Child and Adult Protection Bureau, led the eight teams. Each team had two cochairs: one from ODJFS and someone from a local public or private agency.

Upon presenting team members with the certificates, Director Colbert thanked them for their commitment to strengthening Ohio's child welfare system.

"I want to commend you for your work, I want to thank you for everything you did, and I want to let you know that I'm committed to the recommendations," he said. "The investment that we are making now in our children across the state is second to none."

Thank you to these individuals for their leadership and commitment to the rule review process.

Coordinator, Partners for Ohio's Families Rule Review

David Thomas (OFC)

Cochairs, Adult Protective Services & Title XX

Lisa Wodkowski (Tuscarawas County
Department of Job and Family Services)
Shelly Boyd (OFC)

Cochairs, Monitoring & Miscellaneous Administration

Jennifer Marple (Lorain PCSA)
Warne Edwards (OFC)

Cochairs, Case Planning & Semi-Annual Review

Toni Gillette (Ross PCSA)
Susan Shafer (OFC)

Cochairs, Program Eligibility and Reimbursement

Cathy Hill (Hocking PCSA)
Carole Fisher (OFC)

Cochairs, Substitute Care

Amy Reinhart (Sandusky PCSA)
David Beck (OFC)

Cochairs, Protective Services

Angela M. Hughes (Delaware PCSA)
Leslie McGee (OFC)

Cochairs, Resource Home Certification & Approval

Tracy Roberts (Pathways Caring for Children)
Anna Wyss-Zilles (OFC)

Cochairs, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children & Interstate Compact on Adoptions and Medical Assistance

Karen McGormley (Franklin PCSA)
Tara Unger (OFC)

Rule Review Update

The hard-working Protective Services Rule Review Team was assigned 38 rules relating to the Ohio Central Registry on Child Abuse and Neglect; child protection intake, screening and assessment; and the Indian Child Welfare Act. The team was co-led by Angie Hughes (Delaware PCSA) and Leslie McGee (OFC). Their many hours of dedicated review and diligent effort to finish on time have paid off.

Thanks to members of the Protective Services Rule Review Team for their commitment to the process and their strong knowledge base. We also appreciate the agency directors, supervisors and coworkers who made members' participation possible.

Angie Hughes (Delaware PCSA), cochair
Leslie McGee (OFC), cochair
Elaine Early-Hall (OFC)
Lynette Way (OFC)
Denielle Ell-Rittinger (OFC)
Kristen Fox Berki (Lorain PCSA)

Lara LaRoche (Franklin PCSA)
Carrie Mitchell (Columbiana PCSA)
Dorothy Richie (Sandusky PCSA)
Debbie Sandlin (Miami PCSA)
Cynthia Scanland (Allen PCSA)
Sue Wasiniak (Licking PCSA)

The 19 child protection intake, screening and assessment rules – found in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) chapters 36, 37 and 39 – moved to the external clearance process on March 27. (For details about the rule review process, see the February First Friday.) These rules have been posted online for comments at <http://list.em.ohio.gov/t/227353/1333703/656/0/>. The deadline for comments is midnight on April 10.

The team has completed its review of the 11 Indian Child Welfare Act rules, which have been moved to the promulgation stage.

Of the eight rules that remained, several related to the Central Registry were rescinded, and the rest were reassigned to the Case Planning and Semiannual Reviews Team.

Congratulations to this team for completing its work while encouraging full participation of all members. Below is a summary of the team's proposed changes to the Chapters 36, 37 and 39 child protection rules currently in clearance.

Chapter 36

OAC rule 5101:2-36-01, Intake and screening procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and family in need of services reports; and information and/or referral intakes. This outlines PCSA requirements for gathering information from a referent, including the PCSA's responsibilities in recording and categorizing referral information, completing a screening decision with referral information in SACWIS, and assigning a report to a pathway. Screening requirements previously addressed in other rules were collapsed into this rule for clarity and simplicity. The involvement of an out-of-state children services agency (CSA) was addressed. The criteria for traditional pathway assignment were revised to synchronize with the Ohio Revised Code.

OAC 5101:2-36-03, PCSA requirements for intra-familial child abuse and/or neglect assessment/investigations. This outlines PCSA requirements for responding to accepted reports of intra-familial child abuse and neglect. Criteria for determining when to conduct an intra-familial assessment/investigation were revised. Revisions were made regarding interviewing children without parental consent, and the criteria for notifying a parent were clarified. The time frames to complete the assessment/investigation, the assessment tools and disposition were extended to 45 days. Criteria establishing the lead agency were revised. Requirements addressing the completion of the safety assessment were condensed and streamlined. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding were revised throughout the rule.

OAC 5101:2-36-04, PCSA requirements for conducting a specialized assessment/investigation. This sets forth PCSA requirements for conducting a specialized assessment/investigation of abuse or neglect. Qualifying criteria for a specialized assessment/investigation of abuse and neglect were clarified and incorporated into this rule. Revisions were made regarding interviewing children without parental consent, and the criteria for notifying a parent were clarified. The time frames to complete the assessment/investigation, assessment tools and disposition were extended to 45 days. Criteria establishing the lead agency were revised. The

activities required to complete a specialized assessment/investigation were revised. Notification requirements to out-of-home administrators and licensing authorities were clarified. Rule references were corrected. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-05, **PCSA requirements for conducting stranger danger investigations**. This sets forth PCSA requirements for conducting a stranger danger investigation. Qualifying criteria for a stranger danger investigation were clarified and incorporated into this rule. Revisions were made regarding interviewing children without parental consent, and the criteria for notifying a parent were clarified. The time frames to complete the assessment/investigation, assessment tools and disposition were extended to 45 days. Criteria establishing the lead agency were revised. Requirements addressing the completion of the safety assessment were condensed and streamlined. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-06, **PCSA requirements for a deserted child assessment/investigation**. This sets forth PCSA requirements for conducting a deserted child assessment/investigation. The time frame to complete the assessment/investigation was extended to 45 days. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-07, **PCSA requirement for conducting an assessment/investigation of the alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant with life-threatening conditions**. This sets forth PCSA requirements for conducting an assessment/investigation regarding the medical neglect of a disabled infant with life-threatening conditions. The time frames to complete the assessment/investigation and report disposition were extended to 45 days. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-08, **PCSA requirements for involving a third party in the assessment/investigation of a child abuse or neglect report**. This addresses when a PCSA shall involve a third party in a child abuse or neglect assessment/investigation. Criteria identifying conflicts of interest were clarified and incorporated. Additional procedures were clarified regarding who may serve as a third party, third-party involvement, third-party notifications and leading assessment/investigations. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-09, **Requirements for dependent child assessments**. This sets forth PCSA requirements for conducting a dependent child assessment. Revisions were made regarding interviewing children without parental consent, and the criteria for notifying a parent were clarified. Time frames to complete the assessment and assessment tools were extended to 45 days. Criteria establishing the lead agency were revised. Requirements for the completion of the safety assessment were condensed and streamlined. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-10, **PCSA requirements for responding to family in need of services reports**. This sets forth PCSA requirements for responding to a family in need of services reports. OAC chapter references were updated.

OAC 5101:2-36-11, **Justification to extend time frames for completion or waive completion of assessment/investigation activities**. This outlines the process to extend the time frame in which a PCSA must complete assessment/investigation activities and outlines which assessment/investigation activities may be waived. The title was revised to clarify the purpose of the rule. This rule was amended to include allowable time frame extensions of assessment/investigative activities specific to Alternative Response and Traditional Response pathways. Criteria were established to address waiving a signature on a safety plan. Further criteria were established regarding waiving certain assessment/investigative activities if the report has been previously assessed or investigated. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-12, **PCSA requirement for cross-referring reports of child abuse and/or neglect**. This outlines PCSA requirements to refer child abuse and/or neglect reports to entities that need such information to carry out their respective duties. The requirement to notify the superintendent of public instruction was removed. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-13, **Intrastate and interstate referral procedures for children's protective services**. This addresses when and how a PCSA shall make intrastate and interstate referrals. Intrastate referral

requirements were revised to address information that will be shared and recorded in SACWIS. Criteria were established addressing post-initiation and post-determination intrastate referral of a family to protective services. The required assessment tools for an intrastate referral were revised to include the Alternative Response Family Assessment. Requirements addressing interstate referrals from a PCSA to a CSA were clarified. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-14, Protective service alert. This addresses when a PCSA shall issue a protective service alert (PSA). This rule was amended to clarify criteria for a PCSA to issue a PSA. The expiration and extension of a PSA were clarified. Language and requirements were revised to incorporate SACWIS information. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-36-20, Public children services agencies assessment requirements for child abuse and neglect reports in alternative response. This outlines PCSA requirements for responding to accepted reports of child abuse and neglect using the Alternative Response pathway. Revisions were made regarding interviewing children without parental consent, and the criteria for notifying a parent were clarified. Criteria establishing the lead agency were revised. Requirements addressing the completion of the safety assessment were condensed and streamlined. Notification requirements for when the assessment is completed were revised. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

Chapter 37

OAC 5101:2-37-01, PCSA requirements for completing the safety assessment. This sets forth PCSA requirements in assessing the safety of children when responding to abuse, neglect and dependency reports. Alternative Response terminology was incorporated throughout the rule. Requirements addressing the completion of the safety assessment were streamlined. Revisions were made regarding assessing the safety of children without parental consent, and the criteria for notifying the parent were included. Time frames to record the JFS 01401 form in SACWIS were developed. Requirements addressing the completion of the JFS 01401 form for multiple reports were included for clarity. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-37-02, PCSA requirements for completing the safety plan. This sets forth PCSA requirements for developing a safety plan for a child who has been determined to be in immediate danger of serious harm. The requirements to implement a safety plan were clarified. Requirements regarding obtaining signatures and monitoring a safety plan were revised for clarity. Requirements addressing verbal authorizations, extension to obtain a signature and waiving a signature were included. Notification time frame requirements regarding the termination of a safety plan were revised. Monitoring requirements were clarified. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding were revised throughout the rule.

OAC 5101:2-37-03, PCSA requirements for completing the family assessment. This sets forth PCSA requirements for assessing safety and risk of families when responding to abuse, neglect and dependency reports. Alternative Response terminology and tools were incorporated. Requirements for completing an assessment of families receiving ongoing protective services were added. Requirements to complete assessments involving shared parenting were included. The time frame requirement to complete the assessment as revised to 45 days. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

OAC 5101:2-37-04, PCSA requirements for completing the reunification assessment. This sets forth PCSA requirements in reassessing safety and risk of children who were determined to be in immediate danger of serious harm. Requirements were revised to clarify when a reunification assessment is required. The criteria that require the completion of a reunification assessment were revised and listed. The time frame for completing a reunification assessment prior to a court hearing was extended to 60 days. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

Chapter 39

OAC 5101:2-39-01, Removal of a child from his or her own home. This sets forth PCSA and private child placing agency requirements upon determination that a child cannot safely stay in his or her own home. Requirements and references to removing a child of Indian heritage or tribal eligibility were revised and clarified. Grammar, paragraph order and requirements for consistent understanding also were revised.

Partners for Ohio's Families Mural Unveiling

Since January, students at Dana Elementary have been working on a mural that will be displayed in the lobby of OFC's main office in downtown Columbus. OFC staff came up with the idea for the mural as part of the Partners for Ohio's Families (PFOF) campaign, which aims to improve the technical assistance the state provides to local agencies and to achieve better outcomes for Ohio's children and families. The mural will serve as a visual reminder of PFOF's work; it is made up of five panels that represent adult protective services, child protective services, foster and kinship care, and adoption. The fifth panel represents Dana Elementary itself.

The mural will be officially unveiled on April 17 at 4 p.m., in the OFC lobby at 50 W. Town St., sixth floor. ODJFS Director Colbert will be present, along with Dana Elementary students and parents, principal Pamela Eberhardt, and art teacher Kerry Hartnett, who supervised the students' work on the mural. Can't make it to Columbus? Make sure you check out next month's First Friday for photos of the unveiling.

Wear Blue to Work Day

OCTF is partnering with the Public Children Services Association of Ohio to encourage all Ohioans to wear blue on **April 10** to support and raise awareness about child abuse and neglect prevention. If you take a picture of yourself, your group or your coworkers wearing blue and email it to Ohio_Childrens_Trust_Fund@jfs.ohio.gov, it will be posted on the OCTF Facebook page!



March 2013 Global Emails

The following email was sent in March from Jennifer Justice to PCSA directors and/or private agency directors. It is organized below by mailing date and key word.

3/11/13 - Annual Foster Care Maintenance and Adoption Assistance Survey

PRINCIPLE OF THE MONTH:

OFC seeks and supports strategies to strengthen the voices of youth and families for its work.

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. For additions to or removals from the list, be sure to include your name, organization and email address.



PARTNERS
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES