



PARTNERS
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

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

OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN

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From OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – 7/3/15

One of the most important aspects of my job is probably the one I enjoy most: talking with people. It's easy to get caught up in the meetings and paper, and I sometimes have to remind myself that the time spent simply engaging in conversation with colleagues is the most effective way to really understand the nuances of our work. Last month brought three especially valuable opportunities.

I attended the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) and Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association joint executive membership meeting, where I heard Dr. Rhonda Reagh speak about courageous leadership and emotional intelligence. If you ever have the opportunity to hear her speak, I encourage you to treat yourself. I also attended the PCSAO Legislative Briefing regarding the needs of multisystem youth. There, and during the Judicial Symposium on Addiction and Child Welfare, I was so moved by the personal stories that were shared. These stories can help us better see not only where we fail, but also where we succeed. When we do, we change lives.

If you were one of the 270 individuals who attended the judicial symposium, you know there was a lot of energy and conversation in the room. I found the speakers very thought-provoking, and it seems they helped spark much productive

team discussion. We already are beginning to review the team action plans to find common strategies that we can help with on a state level. Special thanks to Casey Family Programs for providing financial support for implementation; we'll email more information about these funds to the child welfare representatives who attended.

I wasn't on the road all of June, however. As usual, there was lots of action back in OFC. As you will read in this First Friday, we have made some changes in our organizational structure to better serve you (see page 2). Foster Care Licensing is now its own bureau. We also moved the Child Protection Oversight Evaluation (CPOE) section to the Bureau of Federal and State Initiatives. We believe these changes will help us better integrate CPOE into our statewide continuous quality improvement efforts. As with any change, it may take us a bit of a time to fully settle into the new way of doing things; we ask for your patience in the meantime.

Historically, June involves a lot of reading, and this June was no different. In addition to the state budget, many federal reports must be finalized by June 30. I just finished reading our Annual Progress and Services Report (see page 3).

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As usual, I am tremendously impressed with the scale, scope and thoughtfulness of the innovations we have accomplished and continue to work on.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the retirement of Barbara Manuel, even though I would like to pretend we have not lost her many years of experience and expertise (see page 8). I hope you all had a chance to say goodbye before her final day, June 30.

And finally, heads up: First Friday gets a summer vacation too! The update is taking August off and will return to your mailbox September 4.

Bureau Changes

Welcome to the Bureau of Foster Care Licensing, formerly known as the Bureau of Child and Adult Technical Assistance! Under OFC's new configuration, this renamed bureau will have responsibility for all of OFC's licensing functions. Licensing supervisors and the licensing specialists at OFC field offices will be housed within this bureau, as well.

Other functions of the former Bureau of Child and Adult Technical Assistance have been moved to other bureaus within OFC. The Child Protection Oversight and Evaluation Section, which houses OFC's technical assistance managers and technical assistance specialists, has moved to the Bureau of State and Federal Initiatives under the management of Carla Carpenter.

We believe these changes will help us more effectively support our state and county partners, and also help us make more progress toward our Child and Family Services Review and continuous quality improvement goals. A similar name change is in store for the Bureau of Federal and State Initiatives, so watch for a future announcement.

Symposium Addressed Addiction and Child Welfare

More than 270 judges, child welfare professionals and stakeholders from 56 counties came together on June 23 in Columbus to craft local strategies to the problem of substance abuse in child welfare.



JUDICIAL SYMPOSIUM on Addiction & Child Welfare

The 2015 Judicial Symposium on Addiction and Child Welfare was held at the Embassy Suites in Dublin. Although it featured state and national speakers, the main focus of the event was team discussion and planning.

Administrative judges in each county's juvenile court were asked to assemble teams that included the county child welfare director; Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board director; and one additional community member. The additional community member could be a treatment provider, guardian ad litem, court-appointed special advocate (CASA) volunteer, family caregiver, family attorney or other local stakeholder.

"I think it is a testament to each of the individuals who carved out the day from their schedules to gather with their colleagues, hear different perspectives about families who have experienced substance abuse disorder, and most importantly, strategize new ways to improve outcomes for these families," OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice said about the symposium. "I have been so impressed as I look around during the team planning sessions. Individuals are engaged and working hard. That always results in good things."

During the lunch session, ODJFS Assistant Director Michael McCreight noted that on any given day more than 12,000 Ohio children are in out-of-home care and that most child welfare professionals say 70 to 80 percent of those cases involve substance abuse.

"It's so important that we have opportunities like this to get child welfare professionals, our court leaders and our substance abuse experts all together to talk about these important ways that we can coordinate, collaborate and come up with some important action plans," Michael said.

He also announced that grant opportunities are available to counties to implement the strategies local teams identify, thanks to the support of Casey Family Programs.

"We want to make sure the work you do here is sustainable and has legs," he said. "This is not a one-day effort that ends at the final keynote. It's the beginning of change."

The symposium was sponsored by ODJFS, Casey Family Programs, the Supreme Court of Ohio, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities.

Missed the Symposium?

Symposium materials and a link to the videos are posted [here](#).

Seeking Your Opinion on Ohio's CFSR

The [December 2014 First Friday](#) introduced you to OFC's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Advisory Team, a leadership body dedicated to improving outcomes for the children and families served by Ohio's child welfare system. Working alongside OFC staff, this terrific corps of volunteers represents PCSAs, private child welfare agencies, PCSAO, the Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies, the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program and the Supreme Court of Ohio.

The team's subcommittees meet regularly to develop recommendations on integrating CQI principles in day-to-day child welfare work. One of those subcommittees – the Peer Partnership Work Plan Subcommittee – is studying the possibility of integrating peer reviews into the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Round 3 case reviews and/or the county CPOE process.

Use of peer review in these functions largely depends on the methodology Ohio selects for its CFSR on-site review in 2017. Because this would have widespread impact, subcommittee members would like to hear your opinion!

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has offered states two options for the On-Site Case Record Review for CFSR Round 3:

1. Continue the case review process used in CFSR Rounds 1 and 2. In this approach, HHS staff manage the sample and review 65 cases from three county sites during a scheduled one-week period. Because this case sample size is so limited, states cannot use the results to establish baselines if a performance improvement plan is required.
2. Conduct a self-review. States must develop the methodology for the self-review and submit it to HHS for approval. The review can occur over a period of up to six months and include an expanded number of sites, resulting in a larger sample of cases. This approach would be more representative of statewide practice.

The Peer Partnership Work Plan Subcommittee wants to know what you think! Watch for a survey asking about the on-site record review and any experience your county might have with a peer-review process. The deadline to notify HHS about our preference – July 15, 2016 – seems far away, but we have much to consider and accomplish before then. If Ohio chooses to conduct a self-review, we must submit a detailed methodology with our notice.

To learn more about the Peer Partnership Work Plan Subcommittee or its work, email Lakeisha.Hilton@jfs.ohio.gov.

CFSP Annual Progress and Services Report

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services requires each state to develop a Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) spanning 2015 to 2019 and containing the state's vision and goals to strengthen its child welfare system. After collaboration with state and local partners, Ohio submitted its CFSP on June 30, identifying five goals:

- Goal 1: Ohio will strengthen its statewide child welfare CQI system to drive practice improvement, resulting in better outcomes for the safety, permanency and well-being of Ohio's children and families.
- Goal 2: Abused and neglected children will not experience repeat maltreatment in their own homes or in foster care.
- Goal 3: Families will have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, so children do not enter placement unnecessarily or, when placement is needed to ensure safety, experience prolonged stays in out-of-home care.
- Goal 4: Children placed in out-of-home care will

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News for Title IV-E Courts

Regardless of which methodology Ohio chooses for the CFSR Round 3, the on-site case record review now will include Title IV-E court cases. OFC's technical assistance specialists already have begun reaching out to the Title IV-E courts to familiarize them with the process and content of the review. Courts will have the opportunity for a trial run because OFC's CPOE Stage 10 (2015-2016) review includes Title IV-E court cases for technical assistance purposes.

OFC will hold a statewide Title IV-E court meeting on July 8 to help courts prepare for both activities. The lead contact for each court was emailed information regarding this event on June 24. The meeting will include an overview of the CPOE framework, an introduction to the CFSR On-Site Review Instrument, and the opportunity for regional discussions regarding expectations, logistics and scheduling. Anyone with questions should email Rachael.Rayburn@jfs.ohio.gov.

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have stability in their living situations, continued connections to their families and communities, timely pathways to permanency, and appropriate services and supports as they exit care.

- Goal 5: Partners will jointly design and coordinate policies, practices and services to improve the well-being of children, youth and families.

Each year, Ohio reviews its progress in achieving CFSP

goals, objectives, interventions and benchmarks and submits a CFSP Annual Progress and Services Report to HHS. See below for highlights of collaborations with other state departments and cross-system subcommittees in addressing Goal 5.

The full Annual Progress and Services Report is posted on the OFC website under "[Reports, Plans and Presentations](#)."

Strategies for Well-Being

Although well-being is a fundamental goal of child welfare, it also is one of the most difficult outcomes to clearly define and measure. The strategies included in Goal 5 of Ohio's CFSP are designed to strengthen families and meet children's health, behavioral health and educational needs. For many of these strategies, OFC partners with other agencies and organizations, including the Ohio departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Education, Health, and Medicaid; the American Academy of Pediatrics; PCSAO; and others. Below are five resources that OFC highlighted in the CFSP Annual Progress and Services Report.

1. Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

This is an Ohio Department of Education (ODE) initiative that provides a tiered framework of services to promote positive learning environments for students. Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports are designed to prevent chronic behavioral challenges, provide early intervention for children and youth displaying problem behavior, and support at-risk children and youth who have emotional disturbances.

Through this effort, Ohio seeks to reduce problem behavior, enhance social-emotional development, increase academic performance, improve safety, reduce staff turnover, and improve school climate and culture.

Mark Your Calendar!

Monday, July 13, is the deadline to register for the annual Statewide Adoption Matching Expo, which will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. on Friday, July 17, at 4020 E. Fifth Ave. in Columbus.

The expo brings together public and private adoption workers throughout Ohio in an effort to match waiting families to waiting children, especially sibling groups and older children. Both families and child welfare workers are invited to attend. The event is cosponsored by ODJFS, PCSAO, the Northeast Ohio Adoption Resource Exchange, the Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies and the Ohio Adoption Planning Group.

Registration is required and may be completed [online](#). Workers are asked to bring at least 25 flyers with profiles of waiting children and/or adoptive families, as there will be limited access to make additional copies.

Email questions to Saquetta Moore at Saquetta.Moore@jfs.ohio.gov.

For more information, click [here](#).

2. State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children

Nationally, less than 70 percent of foster youth finish high school before leaving care, and only 2 to 3 percent of former foster youth graduate from college. Contributing factors for these outcomes can include placement instability, school moves, behavioral health issues, higher absenteeism and tardiness, and lower test scores.

To combat these challenges, ODE established the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children to make policy and programming recommendations. The panel is working to promote cross-system collaboration; address the needs of students in foster care; explore

options to ease school enrollment when transfers are necessary; improve educational surrogate notification of service needs; develop training for the child welfare workers, foster parents and educational surrogates regarding special education law and processes; and explore systemic issues associated with monitoring and data sharing.

For more information, email Jennifer.Kobel@jfs.ohio.gov.

3. Bright Futures

Bright Futures is a national initiative led by the American Academy of Pediatrics to support health promotion and disease prevention in children from birth through age 21. The "Bright Futures Guidelines" provide comprehensive evidence-

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driven guidance for all preventive care screenings and well-child visits.

For more information, click [here](#).

4. Surrogate Parents

Surrogate parents are appointed to children who have special educational needs because of a disability. They act in place of a parent to make educational decisions for the child; represent the child in all matters relating to his or her identification, evaluation and educational placement; and ensure the child receives a free, appropriate public education. Courts or school superintendents appoint surrogate parents if no parent can be identified or located, or if the child is a ward of the state

or an unaccompanied homeless youth (as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act). These appointments are made in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Operating Standards for Ohio's Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities.

Child welfare workers cannot serve as surrogate parents. However, school districts may collaborate with child welfare workers and other individuals and organizations – such as juvenile justice personnel, homeless liaisons and county boards of developmental disabilities – to determine the need for a surrogate parent. Foster parents may serve as surrogate parents if they meet

the criteria and are appointed.

For more information, click [here](#).

5. Medicaid Schools Program

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires public schools to provide services to children with special needs. Ohio's Medicaid Schools Program reimburses enrolled schools for allowable services they provide to Medicaid-eligible children ages 3 to 21 who receive services at school through an Individualized Education Program. Examples of allowable services include targeted case management, certain administrative activities and specialized transportation to and from Medicaid providers.

For more information, click [here](#).

And the Survey Says...

Thank you to the almost 350 individuals, representing 67 counties and four state-level entities, who participated in the survey distributed by the Supreme Court of Ohio's Subcommittee on Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency (CAND).

CAND issued the survey as part of a three-year assessment of issues to focus on in future years. This assessment is a key requirement for Ohio to receive federal Children's Justice Act funding so the survey input was vital. Ohio receives approximately \$560,000 in Children's Justice Act funds each year to support systemic innovation related to child abuse investigation and prosecution.

The survey gathered information about the following:

1. Investigative, administrative and judicial processes related to child abuse and neglect, including child sexual abuse/exploitation.
2. Strategies to improve or enhance those processes.
3. Gaps in services for children and families involved in those processes.

About half the participants reported spending more than half their work time on these cases. Although results were still being compiled when this issue of First Friday was published, early trends were emerging. Here is a summary:

Initial Investigation and Administration of CAND Cases

Most responders rated the timeliness and effectiveness

of investigations highly, but they also noted concerns about the following:

- Inconsistent examination practice and its potential effect on initial investigation assessments (medical, physical, mental health, drug/alcohol)
- Inconsistencies regarding screening practices and pathway assignment among counties
- Effectiveness of initial investigations and assessments in identifying domestic violence
- Caseworker inexperience or lack of training regarding investigations and case planning

Court and Prosecutor Processes Related to CAND Cases

Most responders rated fairness of court proceedings and representation of parents and agencies highly, but they also noted concerns about the following:

- Effectiveness of response to domestic violence
- Effectiveness of response to mental health and substance abuse issues
- Timeliness of court proceedings
- Adequacy of trauma services for child victims
- Guardian ad litem practice

Effectiveness of Laws, Programs and Trainings

When asked about strategies for improving processes, many responders suggested the following:

- More collaboration and better communication
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among agencies, systems and service providers, including:

- » More interdisciplinary training opportunities.
- » Greater effort to help professionals understand each others' roles and their legal and ethical obligations.
- More intense and specific focus on domestic violence, substance abuse, addiction and mental health issues (for parents and children), to be addressed through:
 - » Enhanced training opportunities for all professionals, both at fundamental and advanced levels.
 - » Identification of accessible and effective programming for parents and children.
 - » Legal changes to allow better identification of and

response to domestic violence in CAND cases.

- » Identification of effective and accessible mental health and substance abuse services.
- More focus across all child-serving systems on understanding child and youth brain development and the impact of trauma on children's outcomes. This can be achieved via:
 - » Discipline-specific and interdisciplinary training.
 - » Targeted, trauma-informed programming for both children and parents.
- More consistent, effective assessments of children for mental health and sexual abuse issues.

This summer, CAND will further review the survey results, as well as recommendations from other workgroups and stakeholder groups, and present its findings to the Supreme Court of Ohio's Advisory Committee on Children and Families.

Staff Changes

In addition to some organizational changes, we're also announcing a few staff changes in July. We're excited to announce the following promotions and additions to our OFC family:

Familiar Faces in New Places

Dan Shook, Assistant Deputy Director



Many of you met Dan in his former position as chief of the Bureau of Fiscal Accountability. In his new role, he will continue to manage the office's fiscal functions but also assume administrative responsibility for the Bureau of Automated Systems and the newly configured Bureau of Foster Care Licensing (see page 2).

Lakeisha Hilton, Bureau of Foster Care Licensing Chief



Most recently, Lakeisha was a program administrator in the Bureau of Fiscal Accountability. Her early experience as a foster care licensing supervisor and her 16-plus years of experience in Ohio's government make her a great fit as this new bureau's chief.

Leslie McGee, Adult Protective Services Section Supervisor



June's First Friday reported on the many exciting enhancements to Ohio's adult protective services programming, including organizational changes to better support counties' developing needs. As Leslie transitions from supervisor of the Child and Adult Protection

Section to focus solely on adult protection, OFC will establish a new position to take over her former child protection responsibilities in the new child protective services section.

Cathy Ghering, Integrated Help Desk Supervisor



Cathy joined the Bureau of Automated Systems more than seven years ago as a SACWIS Help Desk business analyst. Many county users will recognize her as the business team lead for questions about the case module. In her new role, Cathy will supervise both the

OFC and SACWIS Help Desks.

Welcome, New Staff!

The Bureau of Automated Systems is pleased to welcome three new business analysts:



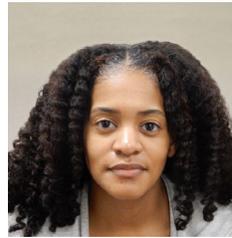
Jana Pearce will work on the SACWIS Intake Module. She comes to OFC from Franklin County Children Services, where she worked for more than three years as a child welfare caseworker and, most recently, as an intake child welfare caseworker. She has a psychology degree from The Ohio State University.

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Kaitlin Ruddy joins the SACWIS Case Management team. She worked for the Delaware County Department of Job and Family Services since 2010 in several capacities, including as a social service worker II, ongoing caseworker, intake investigator and intake screener. Kaitlin graduated from Owens Community College with a bachelor’s degree in criminology and sociology.



Maquel Scites joins the SACWIS Reporting team. Previously, she worked for Franklin County Children Services, where she was a Wendy’s Wonderful Kids recruiter. She also has been a caseworker for the National Youth Advocate Program, and she has experience working for the Permanent Family Solutions Network of the Buckeye Ranch treatment centers. Maquel has a bachelor’s degree in psychology from The Ohio State University.

CFSR Measure of the Month

Each month, First Friday features one CFSR measure in our “Measure of the Month” series. July’s measure is “Recurrence of Maltreatment.” This shows how successful the state and local agencies have been in preventing subsequent maltreatment after a substantiated or indicated report.

Because the CFSR looks back at prior years’ activities, the work we do today will affect Ohio’s performance in the 2017 CFSR. It is critical that stakeholders [fully understand the CFSR process](#) and assess their current performance.

Round 3 has some notable improvements in how this measure is calculated, compared to prior rounds. The diagram below shows how the calculation is made.

First, we identify all the children who are younger than 18 and who had a substantiated or indicated report in a one-year time span.

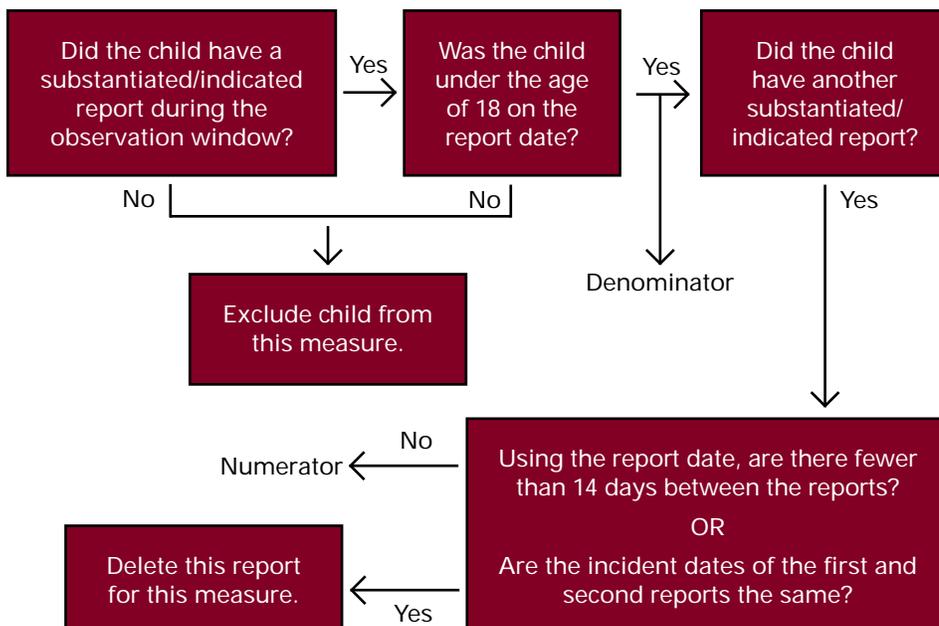
Then, we monitor those children for one year to see if they have another substantiated or indicated report. If a child has a second report, we ask two questions: (1) Is the difference between the two report dates less than 15 calendar days? (2) Is the second report’s incident date the same as that of the first? If the answer is yes to either question, the second report does not count as recurrence. (There were no such allowances in the previous CFSR rounds. In addition, previous rounds looked at a six-month time period, not one year.)

The “Recurrence of Maltreatment” measure has three key points:

- Children are tracked, not cases.
- The report date is used for the calculation, not the date the report was screened in or the date of the report’s disposition.
- The incident date is used to determine whether an incident has multiple reports.

In order to meet the national standard for “Recurrence of Maltreatment,” states must have a recurrence rate of 9.1 percent or less. With a risk-adjusted performance of 13.2 percent, Ohio currently is not meeting the national standard. Cases reviewed during the CPOE Stage 9 process identified several county practices that can make a difference. These include the following:

1. Early assessment and service referral, rather than waiting until the assessment has been completed and the case has been transferred to an ongoing services unit.
2. Use of time-limited and monitored CAPMIS Safety Plans, as appropriate, to engage families in the safety planning process.
3. Notification to a county agency when a family with a potentially at-risk child moves from one county to another.



Good Luck, Barb!

If you know Barb Manuel, our long-time chief of the Bureau of Child and Adult Technical Assistance, you know she's not one to seek the limelight. Retirement has not changed her humility, and it has not been easy to give her the public recognition she deserves. But we will respect her wishes as we say, "Goodbye, we will miss you."



Barb left us on June 30 after 25 years in child welfare. She assured us that she was leaving public service entirely, despite her many achievements, long tenure and educational qualifications. (Did you know that she holds two graduate degrees: a master's degree in social work and a graduate degree in public

health from Tulane University?) She claimed to be considering work as a greeter, but we know that regardless of where she lands, she was right when saying she always will be "a social worker at heart."

July 2015 Global Emails

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

- 6/2/15 - APS Progress Report
- 6/4/15 - Elder Abuse Awareness Proclamation and Flyer
- 6/10/15 - Normalcy Slideshow and Handouts
- 6/11/15 - June Warrant
- 6/22/15 - Information for June 23rd Symposium
- 6/22/15 - Agenda Presentations and Meeting Times for the Upcoming Regional Independent Living/Transitional Youth Meeting

Rule Review Update

The following Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rule was posted to Ohio's Families and Children Rule Review website, www.ohiorulereview.org, for the time specified below.

From June 11 through June 18:

- OAC Rule 5101:2-44-13.1, "Eligibility and application for the post adoption special services subsidy (PASSS) program"
Purpose: Clarifications to the definitions contained within the rule.

Please continue to visit the site periodically for new postings. We welcome your input and hope you use this opportunity to share your experiences. The website received 1,785 hits during May 2014.

Correction

In the [May 2015 First Friday](#) article "Normalcy for Children in Foster Care," we used incorrect terminology. In explaining misconceptions about normalcy, we erroneously stated that foster caregivers must obtain prior written approval from the child's custodial agency before the child can attend a function without adult supervision. That statement should have said "recommending agency," not "custodial agency."

We apologize for any confusion this may have caused. If you have further questions, please email Karen.McGormley@jfs.ohio.gov.

Principle of the Month

Partners are given voice in a decision-making process.

Feedback and Subscriptions

If you want to subscribe to First Friday, have comments or ideas about content, or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email to First.Friday@jfs.ohio.gov. For additions to or removals from the list, be sure to include your name, organization and email address.

