



PARTNERS
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

Partnerships and collaboration enhance the quality of outcomes.

OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN

Table of Contents

From OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – 2/5/16.....	1
Private Agency Implementation – Phase II.....	2
Private Agency Implementation Timeline.....	2
Webinar Series.....	3
SACWIS 2016: Build Release Plans.....	3
SACWIS: Major Upcoming System Enhancements.....	3
Save the Date: 2016 Opiate Conference.....	4
Highlight: Help Desk Team.....	4
SACWIS: Reporting Update.....	5
Meet OHIO YAB's Leaders.....	6
OHIO YAB Mission Statement..	6
Time to Start Budget Planning..	7
Want to Learn More?.....	7
Save the Date: Caseload Management Course.....	7
Senate Hears Testimony from Jennifer Justice.....	8
Supreme Court Highlights Permanency Roundtables.....	8
COI Corner.....	9
Rule Review Update.....	9
Global Emails.....	10

From OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – 2/5/16

Does it feel like all the meetings that didn't happen during the holidays got moved to January and February? It's a busy time but well worth the tricky calendar. On Jan. 14, I attended Human Trafficking Awareness Day at the Ohio Statehouse. I always try to attend this annual event, and I've enjoyed watching it grow in size as more individuals become aware of, and engaged in, this issue.

OFC has been doing a lot of work to combat human trafficking. We've enhanced SACWIS, awarded community prevention grants, developed training opportunities and supported children's advocacy centers. Human trafficking of minors is becoming a federal priority, and I encourage you to visit [Ohio's human trafficking website](#) and sign up to receive regular news about the various activities that are happening for both adults and minors.

Also in January, I attended an executive retreat for the Ohio Job and Family Services Directors' Association. They asked me to provide child welfare updates, so I discussed the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Round 3 process and the Roe v. Staples needs assessment. I thought the discussion was productive and appreciated the opportunity to receive county input on OFC activities.

We finished the needs assessment and submitted it for review on Jan.

29. Expect many opportunities this spring to hear about what we found. Regardless of the outcome with Roe v. Staples, we know the report will have lots of interesting data that can tell us where efforts should be focused. Many thanks to all of you who contributed to our final product. I am proud of our accomplishment together.

On the subject of the CFSR: The first quarter of the new visitation data collection has concluded, and I want to thank everyone who worked to make sure that required visits to parents and children were completed and recorded. Although of course we want to meet federal performance measures, the real reason to continue this push is because more interaction and engagement with parents and children will result in better outcomes, whether that be reunification or more timely permanency.

OFC hosted 2016's first Ohio Youth Advisory Board meeting, and the room was packed with youth full of ideas for how to improve the system. I appreciate each county that supports a local youth advisory board and the adult supporters who make it possible for youth to participate at the state level by providing transportation. It is not an easy task, but I believe it yields high return.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

On a side note, I saw an agency director reading a copy of First Friday at a recent meeting. That was great! I want to thank each of you who take

the time to read this update, comment on articles, send in suggestions or highlight your own program. My staff spend quite a bit of time pulling this together each month, and we want to make sure that we are meeting

your needs and covering topics that you find useful. Please feel free to share your thoughts by emailing First_Friday@jfs.ohio.gov. We always are open to improving! And please... keep reading.

Private Agency Implementation – Phase II

As discussed in the [February](#) and [September](#) 2015 editions of First Friday, Phase II of the private agency SACWIS implementation is in full swing. Over the last year, 24 private agencies — and more than 300 private agency users — have begun using SACWIS to enter inquiries, homestudies, recommendations for certification/approval for foster and adoptive homes, alleged perpetrator search requests, rule violations, waivers, maintenance of provider household members, and recruitment plans.

The following steps occur with each wave of the rollout:

- The private agencies included in the wave are notified and invited to a planning meeting via email and/or phone.
- The SACWIS Private Agency Team holds a planning meeting to explain the pre-implementation process and the preparation tasks the agency must complete.
- Each agency selects at least two “super-users” to be

the agency’s points of contact with the SACWIS team.

- Staff from each agency are scheduled to attend one of three weeks of training. Agency staff participate in a two-day end-user training, and super-users attend a third day of training.
- Finally, the agencies work closely with their SACWIS team contact to reconcile their SACWIS data, authorize access for new users and determine security levels for those users.

During the “go-live” week, users can bring their files to a computer learning lab, where the SACWIS Private Agency Team can provide one-on-one assistance as users begin entering work into the system.

Overall, the feedback from the expansion has been overwhelmingly positive. Agencies seem to appreciate the additional reporting capacity.

Private Agency Implementation Timeline

Feb. – Ohio public agencies go live with Phase I functionality. They can enter foster and adoptive trainings in SACWIS, claim reimbursement for trainings, and enter provider characteristics and acceptance criteria.

Jan. – The first round of pilot agencies begins Phase II Training.
June – The second round of pilot agencies go live.

Oct. – Central Region Wave II agencies go live.
Jan. – Planning begins for agencies in the Southeast and Southwest regions.

March – Southeast and Southwest Wave I agencies go live.



Jan. – The Private Agency Council reconvenes for Phase II of the Private Agency Rollout. The council includes representatives from private agencies and OFC. It provides policy and practice guidance and oversight.

March – The first round of pilot agencies go live in SACWIS.

Dec. – Central Region Wave III agencies go live.

Aug. – Central Region Wave I agencies go live.

Feb. – Southeast and Southwest Wave I agencies begin Phase II Training.

Webinar Series

All county SACWIS points of contact should be on the lookout for an invitation to attend monthly webinars highlighting SACWIS functionality and upcoming enhancements. The webinars will explain how to navigate the system more easily and also how to troubleshoot error messages.

Each webinar will be available on the SACWIS Knowledge Base, along with a question-and-answer document, for users not able to participate on the scheduled dates. For best results, view the webinars in Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome.

Past Webinars:

- Provider Match Overview (Dec. 15, 2015) — Explained the Provider Directory/Match and Provider Report functionalities, with a focus on searching for providers and knowing where to access and generate reports.
- Court Calendar and Creating Legal Actions (Jan. 13) — Explained the Court Calendar functionality.
- Rapback Overview (Jan. 14) — Explained Rapback 2.0 functionality and the Attorney General's web portal.

Upcoming Webinars:

- Placement and Living Arrangement (February) — Will focus on providers who are not returned in searches and explain how to troubleshoot characteristics and service descriptions.
- Case Review Functionality (March) — Will focus on case reviews and semiannual administrative reviews.
- Homestudy (April) — Will focus on the steps for completing a provider homestudy and licensure.
- Post Adoptive/Finalization Information (May) — Will focus on the steps to finalize an adoption.

If you have suggestions for webinar topics, please email cathy.ghering@jfs.ohio.gov.

SACWIS: Major Upcoming System Enhancements

Following the successful completion of SACWIS Build 3.00 (see above), the SACWIS Project Team has been busy with a range of projects to give users a more reliable, consistent and effective experience.

Look for the following enhancements in 2016.

ICWA Maintenance Screens

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) functionality, implemented in 2015 to provide sufficient support and tracking for ICWA cases, will be further enhanced to create new tribal maintenance screens, including a list page, detail page and possibly a third page to add "also known as" detail. This will eliminate the need for

SACWIS 2016: Build Release Plans

SACWIS Build 3.00, which included an infrastructure upgrade, was completed on Nov. 7, 2015. This means that the enhancement freeze described in the [September 2015 First Friday](#) has been lifted, and the system should run more smoothly.

In addition, SACWIS Build 3.01, which fixed more than 100 functional defects, was completed on Jan. 7, and regular build releases again are being scheduled. The next major build will contain a responsive design element to allow easier access to SACWIS from a tablet. The look of the existing SACWIS screens, including the desktop screens, will change slightly to adjust to the device size. The deployment cycles are being expanded beyond four weeks to incorporate mobile devices into testing.

Did you know that you can help with testing? Iroabuchi Arum, SACWIS manager of application support and testing, invites county staff to help validate and certify each build. In addition to helping identify issues in the system, participants get a sneak preview of the enhancements.

Every build has three county user test dates at 4020 E. Fifth Ave. in Columbus (on the Air Center campus), usually on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. During the sessions, participants log into a "practice" SACWIS environment with their own login IDs and work through their normal business flow. Email iroabuchi.arum@jfs.ohio.gov if you'd like to be included in county testing communications.

Build release teleconference calls will resume with Build 3.02, which is expected to occur in the next several months. Calls are typically scheduled for Tuesday afternoons at 1 p.m., one week before each build release. Users will receive notifications with teleconference information and pre-release notes. Please review these notes and send back any questions or requests for additional information, along with the associated defect number of any items in your request. Email questions about build release calls to cathy.ghering@jfs.ohio.gov.

data fixes and allow users to quickly update tribe information.

Safety Plan Enhancements

Overall, the safety plan will be further streamlined for clarity and ease of use and to appropriately address safety issues for each child.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

Any time the safety assessment indicates the need for a safety plan, the system will automatically create a pending safety plan with the necessary information filled in from the assessment. This will help eliminate redundant data entry.

Non-Recurring Adoption Assistance

New functionality will enable payment processing for non-recurring Adoption Assistance subsidies. Counties will be able to reimburse adoptive parents for allowable expenses, up to \$1,000 per child.

Child Fatality/Near Fatality

New functionality will address federal requirements to track child fatalities and near-fatalities. In addition to automating the JFS 01987, "Child Fatality Report Face Sheet," this enhancement will add a navigation link to help users document fatalities and collect critical data.

Adoption Assistance Ceilings

An Adoption Assistance ceiling amount of \$1,045 per subsidy will be implemented. Counties seeking subsidies beyond this amount will be required to create requests and route them to OFC for approval.

Person Navigation Issues

New functionality in the "Person" module will warn users when they try to leave a page without saving data, to avoid data loss and to improve efficiency. In addition, a "Person Overview" page will be added to help users obtain critical information quickly.

Accounts Receivable Client Benefits (Trust Funds)

Recent enhancements gave county agencies the ability to track trust fund activity for kids in custody, much like they can track such things as Supplemental Security Income and child support.

Intake Usability Enhancements

A survey, interviews and field observations all informed a redesign of the "Intake" module.

(continued on next page)

Save the Date: 2016 Opiate Conference

The Supreme Court of Ohio and ODJFS are working with the Ohio Association of Behavioral Health Authorities to establish a child welfare tract at the [2016 Opiate Conference](#) on May 3 and to make registrations available to PCSAs and juvenile judges. Watch for details coming soon!

Highlight: Help Desk Team

The OFC Integrated Help Desk Team is staffed by a core group of subject matter experts who stand ready to help anyone with questions about SACWIS or child welfare in Ohio. The team is led by Cathy Ghering and includes both the SACWIS Help Desk and the OFC Help Desk.

The SACWIS Help Desk is the first line of communication for public and private agency and juvenile court employees with questions about SACWIS. It's staffed by five business analysts who are versatile and knowledgeable about all areas of the application: Timyra Wilson, Heather Hinzman, Lucy Gobble, Jennifer Miller and Tequilla Brown. You can reach them by emailing SACWIS_HELP_DESK@jfs.ohio.gov or by calling (800) 686-1580 and pressing option 3, then option 5.

The OFC Help Desk responds to child welfare policy questions from constituents, legislators, stakeholders and the public. It's staffed by program developers Eric Carpenter and Sileshi Dejen. They can be reached at Help-Desk-OFC@jfs.ohio.gov or (866) 886-3537, option 4.

OFC Training Developer Betty Schlabach creates all of the videos in the SACWIS Knowledge Base. If you have an idea for a new Knowledge Base article, please contact the SACWIS Help Desk.



Left to right: Integrated Help Desk Team members Cathy Ghering, Sileshi Dejen, Jennifer Miller, Lucy Gobble, Tequilla Brown, Heather Hinzman and Eric Carpenter.

Not pictured: Timyra Wilson and Betty Schlabach.

(continued from previous page)

The new design will streamline data entry and better support direct entry of referral information.

Address Data Clean-up

New functionality will standardize the documentation of unknown or partial addresses. Search functionality will be enhanced to make it easier for users to find valid addresses, which will help prevent the creation of duplicate or invalid addresses. Finally, existing addresses will be validated and updated via a batch process, and duplicates will be merged.

Independent Living

The “Independent Living” functionality will become more streamlined and user-friendly. The “Final Transition” and “Emancipated Youth” plans will be moved to this module, and new screens will be added to record National Youth in Transition Database information. “Credit Reporting” also will be moved here, which will make it easier for independent living workers to access this information during semiannual administrative reviews. In addition, three new reports will be added: one for a youth version of the Independent Living Plan, one for the Final Transition Plan and one for the Emancipated Youth Plan.

Phone Number Standardization

This update will bring consistency to phone number entry and storage throughout the application.

Left to right: SACWIS Reporting Team members David Hubble, Tim Wenger, Kristine Monroe, Maquel Scites and Lindsay Williams.

Not pictured: Jennifer Watson.

SACWIS: Reporting Update

The SACWIS Reporting Team has been hard at work to develop new administrative reports that can provide useful information for local agencies. The following reports were released in the last SACWIS build:

- Case Reopening Report — Allows users to select a time period and then see cases that were closed during that time but later reopened.
- Medication Detail Report — Shows all children in an agency’s custody, along with the medications they are prescribed and whether those medications are psychotropic.
- Screening Decision Timeliness Report — Shows intakes recorded during a specified time period and whether screening decisions were made in a timely manner; includes statistical information on a second tab.
- Safety Hazard Report — Shows all cases with safety hazards associated with an active case member or a case member’s address; for intakes that are screened in but not yet linked to a case, shows safety hazards associated with intake participants.

The SACWIS Reporting Team also recently developed ROM data reports to support CFSR Round 3, including eight supplemental CFSR reports. Over the next six months, the following reports will be available, as well:

- Child Fatality and Near-Fatality Report — Will support new functionality related to recording child fatalities and near-fatalities (see page 4).
- Protective Supervision Legal Status Report — Will identify children under court-ordered protective supervision.
- Agency Safety Plan Contacts Report — Will identify active safety plans and display when contact occurred with the responsible parties and the children.
- Case Conference Note Summary Report — Will list all of a case’s conference notes.

The SACWIS Reporting Team creates and enhances SACWIS reports, maintains Business Intelligence Channel and Results Oriented Management child welfare reports, and ensures that federal reporting requirements are met.

Questions or report suggestions can be sent to kristine.monroe@jfs.ohio.gov.



Meet OHIO YAB's Leaders

Overcoming Hurdles In Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OHIOYAB) provides an open and constructive venue for youth to connect with others who share the experience of foster care, express their ideas and opinions, and positively affect Ohio's child welfare system.

OHIO YAB's officers are committed to furthering the organization's mission. They are elected by their peers annually at the fall OHIO YAB meeting and take office the following January. To help First Friday readers get to know these young leaders a little better, we talked to 2015 OHIO YAB President Allissa Mitchell and 2016 President Gabriel Young.

Allissa has been a great leader for OHIO YAB, and we thank her for her efforts to make sure that youth voice is considered during any policy conversations regarding child welfare.



Allissa Mitchell



Gabriel Young

Congratulations on your successful two years as president. When you look back, what will you be most proud of?

I am most proud to say I was part of the change in moving forward to respond to and act on youth concerns, when it comes to policy and practice. So many people talk about how there needs to be improvement but don't follow through with how to solve the problem.

As president of OHIO YAB, you represented the needs of many diverse youth and found yourself speaking with influential people. What skills did you need to develop to do this?

To develop good people and communications skills, you need to understand your purpose and the connection between you and

the person you're talking to. It is the same whether you are trying to befriend someone or to pass a bill with congressmen: The overall level of comfort between you is determined by how you present yourself, your level of confidence and an awareness of the type of connection you have with them.

Any advice for youth who are considering joining or starting a local youth advisory board?

Always remember who you are representing. Know that you are not just advocating for yourself and about your own life experiences, but for all those in Ohio's foster care system. To be a leader is to recognize the weaknesses and strengths in the people you work with and to respond accordingly in order to work as a

team. When you can become part of the music instead of seeing yourself as the composer, you'll make a beautiful harmony!

What's next for you?

I plan to get my massage therapy license and continue in the field of neuroscience. I currently work at a therapeutic school, and after the school year ends, I plan on traveling a bit to broaden my horizons.

If you had to leave us with one word, what would it be and why?

That word would be love.

Why are we doing what we do? Why do we wake up every day and drain ourselves for the benefit of others? What makes us want to advocate for our own and others' rights? What keeps us alive?

The answer is love. Love is a spectrum. Love is a part of the trust equation we have with each person we come across. When love becomes our motivation and way of life, magical things truly happen.

(continued on next page)

OHIO YAB Mission Statement

OHIO YAB is a statewide organization of young people ages 14 to 24 who have experienced foster care. OHIO YAB exists to be the knowledgeable voice that influences policies and practices that affect all youth who have or will experience out-of-home care.

(continued from previous page)

As OHIOYAB's new president, Gabriel has big shoes to fill. We look forward to watching him rise to the occasion. We asked him a couple of questions about the year ahead.

Help us get to know you. What would you like to share about yourself?

I absolutely love to talk, and it's often the first thing you'll notice when you meet me. Usually, it is because I am excited about the subject. I love to cook and actually am a chef in training. I have one year left in my program. I also have a wide variety of hobbies. I love hiking and have something of a green thumb. I also am interested in civil law and political science. And I love to sing.

What prompted you to run for president, and what do you think made your peers vote for you?

First and foremost, I would like to thank all children and teens that voted for me. It is an extreme privilege and honor, and words cannot explain my gratitude.

It was actually a last-minute decision. My fellow Mahoning County youth advisory board members said, "Gabe, go up, go up!" And I thought to myself: Why not go up there? I've always wanted to make a change

in the way foster youth are treated, and the fact that their voices often feel stripped away from them. So, I decided to give it a shot and take a stand for foster youth.

As far as what I said to influence my peers, I did something that I personally longed for while in foster care: I told the truth. I shared who I really am, what I try to stand for, and that I am a person who strives to help make a difference in any way he can. I said that the people in our lives who told us that our life is worthless or that we would grow up to be nothing would be proven wrong. I asked them to just look at themselves that day: They were in Columbus, and they were sticking up for what they believe in, and they were making a difference. I said what was in my heart and asked their permission — with their vote — to help thousands of foster kids.

You attended the board retreat in January. What happened there?

We took the oath of office and did strategic planning for the year. We also covered all the day-to-day [duties] like supply orders, etc.

What do you hope to accomplish over the next year?

I would love to give the opportunity to the counties in Ohio that do not

Time to Start Budget Planning

If your local youth advisory board wants to qualify for funding in state fiscal year 2017, you must submit a projected budget to OFC no later than May 31, 2016. It is not too early to begin discussing this project. If OFC does not receive a youth-developed budget by the due date, that board may lose allocated funds. Email dan.shook@jfs.ohio.gov if you have questions.

have youth advisory boards to create one and guide them with that. I would also like to help change rules in group homes involving normalcy and permissions for participation in activities. Watch for more input from OHIO YAB on those subjects in the next year.

First Friday has a wide readership of child welfare professionals and advocates. What would you most like to say to them?

I am more than impressed with their involvement in their communities and would like to be more involved with their program. I am more than honored to have this opportunity.

Want to Learn More?

OHIOYAB believes in the power of youth voice. Members actively work to establish and develop county and regional youth advisory boards. OHIO YAB representatives are available to help interested youth and adult supporters consider the various aspects of establishing a local board, including the infrastructure required to be sustainable and effective. Limited financial resources also may be available through OHIO YAB to support the planning and development of local youth advisory boards. Each year, per [Ohio Administrative Code rule 5101:9-6-39](#), ODJFS allocates funds to operational boards to support leadership training and development, transportation and meeting costs, and youth participation in various board-related activities.

Visit <http://www.pcsao.org/programs/ohio-youth-advisory-board> to learn more about OHIOYAB and its activities around Ohio. If you would like to learn more about starting a local youth advisory board, email lisa@fosteractionohio.org.

Save the Date: Caseflow Management Course

The Supreme Court of Ohio and ODJFS will be hosting four regional sessions of an abuse, neglect and dependency caseflow management course. The one-day course lets communities examine local practices in cases that come to the attention of juvenile courts, including processes that may affect CFSR performance measures.

The course is open to teams identified by local juvenile court judges. Typically, a team

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

includes court staff responsible for the dependency docket, the child welfare agency director or designee(s), and other court or community representatives who influence how the case comes to and progresses through the court. Each team may include up to five people.

The course covers the fundamentals of caseflow management and differentiated case management, as well as their practical application in abuse, neglect and dependency cases. Ultimately, this should enhance the judiciary's oversight of these cases to ensure that children reach timely, appropriate placement and permanency. Through this course, teams will learn the following:

- How to evaluate the effectiveness of the juvenile court's current caseflow management system, including how to enhance or create a caseflow management system to improve the processing of dependency cases.
- How CSFR, local court performance and caseflow data are gathered and organized.
- How to work with justice partners to assess best practices and proven strategies, and how to apply them to issues confronting juvenile dependency dockets through all stages of the process.

By the end of the course, participants will identify and commit to a plan for improving and assessing practices

while strengthening case oversight.

Additional information regarding logistics and registration soon will be sent to each juvenile court and PCSA, but it's not too early to begin a local discussion about participation. The courses will be held at the following dates and locations:

- April 7 — Hilton Garden Inn, Perrysburg
- April 26 — Hilton Garden Inn, Beavercreek
- May 12 — Quest Conference Center, Columbus
- May 24 — Fairlawn Hilton, Akron

For more information, email ashley.gilbert@sc.ohio.gov.

Senate Hears Testimony from Jennifer Justice

On Jan. 28, OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice traveled to Washington, D.C., to provide testimony to the U.S. Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Jennifer described Ohio's foster care licensing process during a hearing on protecting unaccompanied migrant children from trafficking and other abuses. You can watch the full testimony and read the staff report [here](#).

Supreme Court Highlights Permanency Roundtables

The [December 2015 First Friday highlighted youth-centered permanency roundtables](#), a structured process to help achieve permanency for youth in care. To follow up, please read this article from the Supreme Court of Ohio's widely distributed newsletter, *Court News Ohio*.

Children Active in their Foster Care Placement Plans with New Program

By Jenna Gant | January 13, 2016

It can be hard for older children going through the foster care system to be adopted; they lack the permanent status with a family they so long for. A new program allows the 12-18 year-olds to explore ways to help control their own future.

Six Ohio counties – Athens, Fairfield, Guernsey, Hamilton, Montgomery,

and Summit – participated in the pilot program in 2014, and it has since grown to 11 counties across the state. Fawn Gadel, with the Family and Youth Law Center at Capital University and the pilot program's coordinator, said the Youth-Centered Permanency Roundtables (PRTs) use a model that helps establish permanent connections for foster children and allows the children to be included in the process.

"This initiative was started by Casey Family Programs as a means to reduce the number of children emancipating from foster care without a permanent home and is part of Ohio's larger initiative to reduce the number of children emancipating from Ohio's foster care system without a form of legal permanency," Gadel said.

Led by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and Public Children Services Association of Ohio, the PRTs focus on finding permanency for those older children who have been in foster care for 17 months or longer.

Most PRTs consist of the child, his or her caseworker and supervisor, a facilitator, and someone with experience in helping children establish permanency. A support person identified by the foster care child is also included in the PRTs team that empowers the youth by selecting goals and people who are important to them and creating an action plan to achieve some kind of "permanent support relationship" for the child. The child directs his or her action plan and the adults help guide them through the process.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

"I believe the Youth Centered Permanency Roundtables help youth in foster care by creating a sense of urgency surrounding creating permanency for each youth involved in the initiative," Gadel said.

Tim Beasley, Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services permanency planning coordinator, said there are generally three types of child welfare custody:

- Temporary custody, parental rights haven't been terminated with a goal of reunification with the parent.
- Long-term foster care called "Planned Permanent Living Arrangement," where the child is not available for adoption and generally remains in foster care until he or she turns 18.
- Permanent custody, parental rights have been terminated

and the child can be adopted.

Beasley said the PRTs entrust the children when making important life choices.

"Those involved in the Montgomery County PRT program credit its success to the fact that the roundtables are youth-driven," Beasley said. "The meeting focuses on what the youth wants for their future – where they want to live – and allows them the opportunity to formulate the plan on how to make that happen. The youth is empowered and sees that oftentimes – for the first time – they are being heard and valued."

Subsequent meetings throughout the year are led by the foster care children to evaluate the progress of their plan and change or add goals if needed until permanency is achieved, Beasley said.

Nearly 40 children have gone through PRTs in Fairfield County, and Juvenile and Probate Judge Terre Vandervoort said a third wave of roundtable sessions soon will include 13 more youth.

"In court, we have seen motions and requests for different alternative permanency planning at either the annual review or oral hearings on those motions," Judge Vandervoort said.

The Fairfield County court receives reports from Child Protective Services that includes what PRTs have happened or will be happening and the result or outcome of the PRTs. Judge Vandervoort said some of the court's staff members have been asked to be the youth's support people during the PRTs sessions.

"The court has noticed an increase in creative permanency outcomes and planning through the use of permanency roundtables by Child Protective Services, which the youth embrace by being involved in decisions for their future," Judge Vandervoort said. "I feel it is a positive step toward permanency for the youth in the system and promotes engagement of the youth in planning for their futures."

Rule Review Update

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

From Jan. 5 through Jan. 19, 2016:

- OAC Rule 5101:2-20-03, "Adult protective services designated agency provisions."
- OAC Rule 5101:2-20-12, "Adult protective services assessment and investigation."
- OAC Rule 5101:2-20-13, "Adult protective services third-party investigation."
- OAC Rule 5101:2-20-16, "Service planning and case review for adult protective services."
Purpose: To align with House Bill 64 statutory requirements.

From Jan. 5 through Feb. 5, 2016:

- OAC Rule 5101:2-48-16, "Adoption preplacement and placement procedures."
Purpose: To respond to Adoption Impacts and Successes Survey comments.

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 1,047 hits during January 2016.

CQI Corner

The CQI Corner is a recurring column featuring examples of continuous quality improvement (CQI) at work in child welfare. In this month's column, Barbara Cline, quality assurance supervisor for Athens County Children Services, shares how her agency improved family visitation and reunification outcomes. Barbara's example perfectly illustrates the CQI process of using data to identify a concern, discussing what the data means, developing and implementing an action plan, and tracking the results of that plan.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

At Athens County, we are fortunate to have a visitation center with specialized support staff and parent mentors who supervise and monitor visits between parents and children in care. We have been collecting data for several years on family visitation timeframes and progress. We begin tracking when the first supervised visit occurs and follow visits to the beginning of the trial home visit. The data showed that, on average, the first visit in the parents' home didn't occur until six months or more into the case. The quality assurance team and management were concerned about the length of time it was taking to have families reunify and felt we could make an impact on this by decreasing

how long it took to begin having visits in less restrictive settings.

The management team met with the visitation and ongoing family services supervisors to discuss concerns. As a result, a formal Visitation Guideline was developed, which established timeframes for when less-restrictive visits should begin with families. Now, our data show that the first home visit is taking place, on average, within three or four months. We also have had an increase in the percentage of children who have reunified. We increased from 33 percent in 2013 to 46 percent in 2014. In 2015, 47 percent of our youth who left care were able to reunify.

The visitation and support staff

also have added unique visitation opportunities for families, including a trip to The Wilds, a Thanksgiving dinner, a Christmas party with horse-drawn wagon rides and a trip to a pumpkin patch. The agency was able to provide these opportunities through flexible funds. These opportunities allow families to connect in different ways than just having visits at our visitation center.

Do you have an example of how your agency has used a CQI process to examine a problem and improve outcomes within your agency? First Friday would love to share your story. If you have an idea or experience, please email carla.carpenter@jfs.ohio.gov.

February 2016 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.

- 1/11/16 - NCMEC Webinar: Reporting Children Missing From Care to NCMEC
- 1/22/16 - Visitation Incentive Information

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](mailto:FirstFriday@jfs.ohio.gov). For additions to or removals from the list, be sure to include your name, organization and email address.

Principle of the Month

Partnerships and collaboration enhance the quality of outcomes.



PARTNERS
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES