



PARTNERS  
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

It is OFC's responsibility to provide leadership and maintain organizational and professional competence.

## OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN

### Table of Contents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| This Month's First Friday .....                      | 1 |
| Update: Foster to 21 .....                           | 1 |
| Meet the Bureau of Young Adults and the Courts ..... | 3 |
| Focus Groups: 'Nothing about Us without Us' .....    | 3 |
| Foster to 21: From the Mailbox ...                   | 4 |
| SACWIS Independent Living Enhancements .....         | 4 |
| SACWIS Intake Usability Enhancements .....           | 5 |
| Children in Custody Moving to Managed Care .....     | 5 |
| Congratulations, Jenni Watson! .....                 | 5 |
| SACWIS Webinars: Coming Soon.....                    | 6 |
| We Need YOU to Complete a SACWIS Survey! .....       | 6 |
| Addiction Treatment Program Expanded .....           | 6 |
| Rule Review Update .....                             | 6 |
| Congratulations, Jennifer Justice.....               | 7 |
| Mark Your Calendars! .....                           | 7 |
| Early Thanksgiving Events Near You!.....             | 7 |
| Global Emails .....                                  | 8 |
| CFPSR Update.....                                    | 8 |

### This Month's First Friday: Foster to 21, SACWIS

This edition of First Friday highlights two very active program areas: Foster to 21 and SACWIS. Foster to 21 is such a big undertaking that we had to create a new bureau to hold it: the Bureau of Young Adults and the Courts. Although it's not yet fully staffed, members have been hard at work soliciting input and planning for this important new program, which will help us transform outcomes for youth who turn 18 while in care.

SACWIS has a continuous need for updates to stay aligned with ever-changing federal and state rules and laws. We're also committed to streamlining its processes to better support caseworkers. This month, we explain two big changes made recently, in an effort to make it more intuitive and user-friendly:

intake usability and independent living enhancements. A special thank you to all the users who contributed their time and expertise to help the SACWIS team build the improvements you needed.

This issue also includes two notices about upcoming events: regional Thanksgiving dinners for current and former foster youth and quarterly Overcoming Hurdles in Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OHIO YAB) meetings. Whether you work directly with youth or not, we hope you can find some way to support their participation. Helping them attend events like these can give them a sense of community, purpose and confidence – a powerful experience from which we all benefit.

### Update: Foster to 21

September's First Friday talked a bit about Substitute House Bill (HB) 50 and the opportunity it gives Ohio to extend care options to eligible youth who are in PCSA custody at age 18. The Dec. 11, 2017, implementation date means we have to hit the ground running. This is a mammoth undertaking, but it also is a fabulous opportunity to positively transform outcomes for youth. Here are a few of the activities under way:

- **Researched what other states have done.**

The federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act of 2008 made it possible for states to offer extended support to youth who age out of foster care, and some states have already done so. However, Ohio is the only state with county-administered child welfare services that has

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chosen to make this program state-administered. This will be something new for us, and there are many nuances to consider. Special thanks to Mainspring Consulting, Jim Casey Youth Alternatives, and our federal and national colleagues who have been so helpful in providing materials.

Substitute HB 50 permits ODJFS to contract some responsibilities, and this option is under consideration. Ohio has many public and private agencies with experience in, and strong networks for, providing support to current and former foster youth. If the decision is made to seek a vendor(s), a request for proposals will be released in early 2017.

- **Formed an internal work group.**

A passionate group of volunteer advocates from across OFC has been meeting biweekly since July 20 to plan our next steps and desired outcomes. Among other things, they're process-mapping each benchmark and decision point to ensure a clear vision of how youth might potentially enter and proceed through the program. During each session they compile a list of questions, with the goal of answering each one before implementation.

- **Looked for ways to involve stakeholders.**

A broad range of perspectives is necessary to develop an effective program. To overcome time and space limitations, we created a number of opportunities for those interested in having a voice to get involved:

- o **Advisory Council**

Substitute HB 50 requires ODJFS to establish an advisory council to evaluate our options and make recommendations.

We think this is a great idea! Twenty-five individuals have been invited to participate, including former foster youth and representatives from PCSAs, private agencies, state membership associations, other state agencies, the Supreme Court of Ohio (SCO) and the Ohio State Bar Association. The council will continue to meet periodically after the program is developed and implemented.

- o **Judicial Workgroup**

While both Substitute HB 50 and Title IV-E regulations require court action regarding eligible youth, there is ambiguity in the process. At OFC's request, SCO is establishing a workgroup of judicial officers to make recommendations regarding legal proceedings, procedures and other court-related aspects of the program. We appreciate the busy judicial officers who have agreed to participate: Magistrate Marla Barrick (Franklin County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court), Judge Denise Navarre Cubbon (Lucas County Juvenile Court), Magistrate Michelle Edgar (Fairfield County Probate and Juvenile Court), Judge Jim D. James (Stark County Juvenile Court) and Judge Matthew P. Puskarich (Harrison County Probate and Juvenile Court).

- o **Youth Focus Groups**

OFC will continue to work with the Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OYAB) throughout the program's design and implementation. We also are scheduling focus groups (see page 3) of current and former foster youth. If you're interested in hosting, please let us know.

- o **Educational Sessions**

We've been doing a lot of workshops and presentations, and our audiences have been terrific sounding boards. Whenever possible, we ask: "How do you think we best can achieve our goal?" "What's important to keep in mind?" "What do you see as the program's biggest barrier and most valuable strength/resource?"

- o **Fosterto21@jfs.ohio.gov**

Please use our mailbox to share your questions, comments, concerns and suggestions. We monitor it frequently and share what we learn with the internal workgroup. Feel free to share this address far and wide.

- **Thought about semantics.**

We know that language matters. This program will not simply be an extension of foster care as we know it; we need to use language that makes this clear. The internal work group is considering several possibilities. Stay tuned!

- **Established an infrastructure.**

A solid infrastructure will be crucial to this program's success so we established a new home for it: the Bureau of Young Adults and the Courts (see page 3). We've been busy finding staff who are excited about the prospect of creating new opportunities for youth in foster care.

- **Created visibility.**

We're working hard to spread the word about this program, through presentations and articles like this one. We also added a "Foster to 21" button to our [website](#). You can go there to read an overview of the bill and to watch a video of Gov. Kasich and former foster youth voicing their support for it.

## Meet the Bureau of Young Adults and the Courts

When looking for a home for OFC's newest initiative – extending care options for youth ages 18 to 21—we looked internally to two staff with experience in project development and implementation science. Project Manager Kristin Gilbert and Program Coordinator Colleen Tucker Buck will lead the newly established Bureau of Young Adults and the Courts, a small group with big plans!

In addition to overseeing the statewide development, implementation and oversight of Ohio's Foster to 21 program, this bureau will work with the Supreme Court of Ohio and various judicial organizations to support programming and policies specific to the families and children who come to the attention of Ohio's courts. It also will administer a range of federal and state discretionary grants.



Kristin Gilbert

Kristin has almost 30 years' experience in management and supervisory positions. Most recently, she was administrator of OFC Justice Services, where

she served as the office's court liaison and managed a range of initiatives involving system reform and interdisciplinary collaboration. She also oversaw the design, implementation and evaluation of Ohio's Differential Response system and the development and ongoing implementation of OFC's Partners for Ohio's Families initiative.

Kristin has served as a federal grant reviewer for the departments of Health and Human Services and Justice. She also has served on the executive boards of many state-level organizations, including the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, Ohio CASA/GAL Association, Ohio Community Corrections Organization, Ohio Community Justice Alliance, Trauma Treatment State Initiative and Ohio Association of Drug Court Professionals. She is married with three grown children and one brand new, extraordinarily handsome grandson.

Prior to joining OFC in 2006 as a SACWIS business analyst, Colleen worked as an intake caseworker and a community support specialist for Butler County Children Services. As a SACWIS business analyst, she spent five years co-leading the Provider Management Team



Colleen Tucker Buck

and two years co-leading the Intake and Person Team. Two years ago, she was promoted to a management position. Since then, she has managed the integration of Primary

Parent Partners within child welfare practice, co-chaired the statewide CQI Community subcommittee, represented ODJFS in the administration of the Youth At-Risk of Homelessness Grant, and been involved in many other projects and programs. She has had the opportunity to work closely with current and former foster youth in Southwest Ohio, as well as with adult supporters who work closely with transition-age youth.

Colleen has a bachelor's degree in child and adolescent behaviors and a master's degree in business administration. She jokes that she doesn't have free time, but when she's not at work, she spends time with her two children, Caitlin and Jackson, and their goldendoodle, Sam.

## Focus Groups: 'Nothing about Us without Us'

OFC understands how important it is to consider the voices of current and former foster youth during each stage of new program development, and Foster to 21 is no exception. But we need your help to do so.

If your agency is interested in hosting a focus group of current or former

foster youth, please let us know. We'd like to have conversations with current and former foster youth across the state to learn more about how they envision the program best working. To learn more or to schedule an event, please contact Chynna Kelley at [Chynna.Kelley@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Chynna.Kelley@jfs.ohio.gov) or (614) 466-3128. Thank you!

## Foster to 21: From the Mailbox

Thanks to everyone who has sent questions, comments and suggestions to [fosterto21@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:fosterto21@jfs.ohio.gov). Keep them coming; they help us better understand points that need clarification and give us insight into others' perspectives. We plan to share one or two questions and answers in each month's First Friday, as we suspect many of you are likely to have similar concerns. Here is a question we received last month:

**Q:** I know the planning process is in the very early stages. One thing that I heard which caused great concern was that this program and the case management aspect of it may not be handled by the counties themselves. I find this disappointing and not keeping with best practice if it is all accurate. I hope that counties are

given the opportunity to continue to work with and guide youth who have been involved in our system, sometimes even from birth. Part of the idea of providing services till 21 is to ensure a better sense of stability, and allow young people to be able to have more functionality heading into adulthood. Building in another loss for them, the loss of caseworkers, supervisors, drivers, etc., is not healthy. I hope that counties are somehow given the opportunity to bid on or be involved as the primary case managers for our youth.

**A:** You are correct that we are in the early stages of development. We are trying to be trauma-informed and cognizant of young adult development and needs, while being mindful of federal and state requirements.

Substitute HB 50 specifically says that youth participants will be in the care and placement of ODJFS. PCSAs still have the opportunity and responsibility to provide post-emancipation services to emancipated youth who do not volunteer and/or are not eligible for the extended care program. However, PCSAs also will be required to educate youth in their custody about the extended care program and the eligibility requirements.

ODJFS will be responsible for developing and implementing all components of the program. This could include contracting out selected activities through a request for proposal. This would allow private and public entities to apply.

## SACWIS Independent Living Enhancements

Stakeholders, user groups and OFC staff have been in universal agreement that the SACWIS independent living functionality needed to be more streamlined and intuitive and less tedious. The system has not incorporated the Emancipated Youth and the Final Transition plans required by the Ohio Administrative Code. Some workers haven't been able to access the case or semi-annual reviews needed to provide youth with credit reports. And there has been no place to record outcomes for youth who didn't complete the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) survey.

To address these issues, the SACWIS Project Team has put the finishing touches on several upgrades that are expected to be ready for use later this month. Here are some of the new features:

- Final Transition Plan (new): A plan for youth who are within 90 days of emancipation from agency custody.

- Emancipated Youth Plan (new): A plan for post-emancipated youth who are between their 18th and 21st birthdays and are no longer in agency custody, but who have requested services and/or supports.
- Credit Reporting (new access point): This information will be documented within the application's Independent Living Area. The credit records will automatically display when completing case or semi-annual reviews covering the last 18 months.
- NYTD outcome responses will now be captured in the NYTD survey area.

Several other minor changes to the Independent Living Plan include the following :

- Minimal information can be recorded for pending Independent Living Plans.

- Adjustments were made to both Goals and Contacts.
- A signature page area, a youth version of the report and a Youth Support Contact Report were added.
- Narratives can now be documented when recording credit information for youth, and only minimal information is required to save the record in the system.

A webinar highlighting this functionality was conducted on Sept. 13. Both the webinar and SACWIS Knowledge Base articles will be posted before the enhancements go live.

For questions or additional information, please email [SACWIS\\_HELP\\_DESK@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:SACWIS_HELP_DESK@jfs.ohio.gov) or call (800) 686-1580.

## SACWIS Intake Usability Enhancements

The SACWIS intake module will get a new look soon! The enhancements will allow users to access the intake narrative throughout the module, prevent data loss through an auto-save feature, and streamline pages for easier data entry.

The need for a redesign was especially evident when a federal review found that referral information wasn't consistently entered directly into the system. Users would first record information in other formats and then re-enter it in SACWIS later. Why the double process? Users cited several barriers: redundant data entry, fear of data loss, and frustration with the complexity and inflexibility of the workflow. In addition, users weren't able to see the intake narrative while conducting person searches

and completing other parts of the module.

In response, the SACWIS Team conducted a usability study and redesign. During the first two weeks in September, they hosted learning labs to introduce users to the new functionality and provide an opportunity for hands-on practice. A few minor improvement suggestions were offered, but preliminary feedback from more than 80 agencies indicated overwhelming support for the module's new look and feel.

Thanks to all of our county partners who provided input. For more information about the intake redesign, [click here](#). If you have questions or need support, call the SACWIS Help Desk at (800) 686-1580.

## Children in Custody Moving to Managed Care

Ohio Administrative Code rule 5160-26-02 requires nearly all children in the custody of Title IV-E agencies to enroll in Medicaid managed care no later than Jan. 1, 2017. Managed care plans work with hospitals, doctors and other health care providers to provide health care services and coordinate care.

Currently, agencies can enroll children into managed care plans by calling the Ohio Medicaid Consumer Hotline at 1-800-324-8680. Starting on Nov. 1, however, agencies will be able to enter managed care enrollment and disenrollment information directly into SACWIS and have it transmitted electronically to the Managed Care Enrollment Center.

Future SACWIS enhancements will allow users to establish Medicaid eligibility for all children in out-of-home care, regardless of their Title IV-E eligibility status, as well as children receiving State Adoption Maintenance Subsidies. This change will eliminate the need for agencies to contact their county job and family services agency to establish Medicaid eligibility for non-Title-IV-E eligible children. In addition, agencies will receive updates when a child's eligibility status changes from IV-E to non-IV-E and vice versa. These enhancements are scheduled to be available by Jan. 1, 2017.

If you have questions about enrolling children in Medicaid managed care, please email [Alicia.Allen@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Alicia.Allen@jfs.ohio.gov).

## Congratulations, Jenni Watson!

Join the Bureau of Automated Systems in congratulating Jenni



Jenni Watson

Watson on her new position as SACWIS reporting manager. The SACWIS reporting manager is responsible for overseeing all reports in SACWIS, ROM

and BIC, including the creation of new reports as a result of business needs. Jenni and other members of the reporting team monitor our compliance with federal NYTD, AFCARS, NCANDS and CFRS requirements and ensure that data is submitted timely. The reporting manager also works closely with our federal technical assistants to ensure that Ohio follows the federal AFCARS Corrective Action Plan.

This work is not new to Jenni. She has been a SACWIS business analyst and key member of the SACWIS Reporting Team since joining OFC in 2013. Prior to that, she worked in child welfare in South Carolina and also at the Delaware County PCSA.

Jenni was born and raised in Belmont County. She has a bachelor's degree from Wheeling Jesuit University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. When not at work, she enjoys playing volleyball, listening to music and spending time with her daughter, Jacy, her pug, Chocco, and her partner, John, and his children.

## SACWIS Webinars: Coming Soon

Thanks to everyone who submitted suggestions for SACWIS webinars. Watch for the following three topics in November and December:

- National Youth in Transition Database
- Activity Stream
- Managed Care Enrollment and Medicaid Eligibility

Information will be distributed by email to SACWIS points of contact and also posted on the OFC event calendar. If you have suggestions for future topics, email [Cathy.Ghering@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Cathy.Ghering@jfs.ohio.gov).

## We Need YOU to Complete a SACWIS Survey!

Ever wonder if it's worth the time to complete a survey? If it's a SACWIS survey, the answer is yes! The input you provide through surveys, user group meetings, build release calls, joint application design sessions, testing, problem solving calls, technical assistance and webinars is continually reviewed and used to guide SACWIS improvements.

A SACWIS User Survey will be released this month, and we encourage all users to participate. Your feedback will help us better

understand whether ongoing development efforts are worthwhile and important to you, and also will help us better support you.

The last SACWIS survey was conducted in April 2013; many of the ideas it generated were implemented or are in development. We hope you will invest your time once again so we can ensure that future enhancements meet your needs. If you have questions or suggestions, please email [Cathy.Ghering@jfs.ohio.com](mailto:Cathy.Ghering@jfs.ohio.com).

## Addiction Treatment Program Expanded

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Bureau of Criminal Justice has announced the expansion of the Addiction Treatment Program (ATP) to eight additional counties. A total of 22 counties are now participating in this program, which is designed to decrease drug use and criminal activity and increase stable housing and employment among participants.

The ATP provides addiction treatment services and recovery supports for clients who are enrolled in certified drug courts, have opioid and/or alcohol use disorders, and

are deemed eligible for medication-assisted treatment (MAT). Treatment through the ATP includes both MAT and other clinical services offered by certified treatment providers.

The program started as a pilot project in SFY 2014. By SFY 2016, it had grown to include 14 counties: Allen, Clinton, Cuyahoga, Franklin, Gallia, Hamilton, Hardin, Hocking, Jackson, Marion, Mercer, Montgomery, Summit and Warren. The newest participants are Butler, Clermont, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning, Stark and Trumbull. Visit the [ATP web page](#) for more information.

## Rule Review Update

The following Ohio Administrative Code rules and ODJFS forms have been posted to [ohiorulereview.org](http://ohiorulereview.org) for the times specified below.

From Sept. 9 through Oct. 9:

- 5101:2-42-18, "PCSA and PCPA approval of placements with relative and nonrelative substitute caregivers"

From Sept. 15 through Oct. 15:

- 5101:2-25-01, "Uniform definitions of Title XX services and other definitions of terms used in Chapter 5101:2-25 of the Administrative Code"
- 5101:2-25-02, "Title XX administration"
- 5101:2-25-03, "Title XX county profile"
- 5101:2-25-07, "Title XX reimbursement dependent upon correct determination of recipient eligibility"

From Sept. 22 through Oct. 22:

- 5101:2-1-01, "Children services definitions of terms"
- 5101:2-40-02, "Supportive services for prevention of placement, reunification and life skills"

Please continue to visit the site periodically for new postings. We welcome your input and hope you use this opportunity to share your feedback and experiences.

## Congratulations, Jennifer Justice

Former OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice was recognized by not one, but two state membership associations in September. Both cited many accomplishments that happened under her watch but offered special praise for her sincere belief that all partners bring value to the table.

On Sept. 23, the **Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO)** gave Jennifer the Crystal Ward Allen Child Advocate of the Year award. PCSAO Executive Director Angela Sausser noted such significant legacies as the end of the three-decade-old Roe v. Staples federal consent decree and Ohio's federal Multiethnic Placement Act monitoring. She also lauded Jennifer for "her unflagging willingness to make herself available."

"No other state child welfare director has made such a positive impact or been so willing to partner with county agencies than Jennifer," Angela said. "Even when she didn't agree with us, we always felt that we were being heard. And those values of customer service, responsiveness and consistency were infused throughout her office and staff thanks to the Partners for Ohio's Family process."



Jennifer Justice

On Sept. 30, Ohio CASA gave Jennifer the Mary Ellen Social Worker of the Year award. **Ohio CASA** Executive Director Doug Stephens called Jennifer's award "long overdue."

"Because Jennifer started her career as a social worker, she has a true understanding of the impact CASA programs and volunteers can make in a child's life," he said. "Jennifer has always been a great ambassador of CASA."

### Principle of the Month

It is OFC's responsibility to provide leadership and maintain organizational and professional competence.

### Mark Your Calendars!

OHIO YAB is a statewide organization of young people ages 14 to 24 who have experienced foster care. Each quarter OHIO YAB hosts a state-level meeting to bring together members of Ohio's youth advisory boards, current and former foster youth, and representatives from communities interested in forming youth advisory boards. Those who attend discuss policies and practices that impact current and former foster youth. To facilitate youth participation and transportation, the meetings are scheduled in conjunction with the Ohio Independent Living Association's quarterly meetings.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Quest Business and Conference Center, 8405 Pulsar Place, Columbus, Ohio 43230. Set these dates aside now for 2017!

- Thursday, Jan. 19
- Thursday, July 20
- Thursday, April 20
- Thursday, Oct. 20

For more information about OHIOYAB, email [lisa@fosteractionohio.org](mailto:lisa@fosteractionohio.org).

### Early Thanksgiving Events Near You!

For the past nine years, Thanksgiving has been a time for Ohio youth in foster care, alumni and allies/adult supporters to gather and share their voices, insights, talents, abilities and goals for the future. ACTION Ohio again will be hosting events for youth 14 and older in foster care and youth 18 and older who formerly were in care. Registration is free, but required. Youth and alumni are welcome to bring guests but are asked to include them when registering at [thanksgivingtogether.wikispaces.com](http://thanksgivingtogether.wikispaces.com).

Check out the attachment for details regarding times and locations:

Northeast Regional Thanksgiving  
Saturday, Nov. 5  
Cleveland

Southwest Regional Thanksgiving  
Saturday, Nov. 12  
Cincinnati

Southeast Regional Thanksgiving  
Sunday, Nov. 13  
Athens

Central Regional Thanksgiving  
Sunday, Nov. 20  
Reynoldsburg

Questions? Please contact Lisa Dickson, ACTION Ohio Communications Chair, at (614) 787-5257 or [lisa@fosteractionohio.org](mailto:lisa@fosteractionohio.org).

## Global Emails for September 2016

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

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>9/7/2016</b>  | SFY 2017 Adoption Incentive  |
| <b>9/16/2016</b> | NYTD Survey Response Rate  |
| <b>9/20/2016</b> | Managed Care Enrollment Reminder   |
| <b>9/21/2016</b> | Agenda Presentations and Meeting Times for the Upcoming Regional Transitional Youth Meetings |
| <b>9/23/2016</b> | National Youth In Transition Database (NYTD) – Third Cohort Baseline Group                   |
| <b>9/27/2016</b> | Request for Applications for CFSR Peer Review  |
| <b>9/28/2016</b> | Citizen Review Panels (CRPs)   |

## 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.

## CFSR Update

We are excited to announce the counties that will be participating in Ohio's federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) onsite case review in 2017. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has approved Ohio's plan for the following 15 counties to partner with ODJFS for the review: Allen, Athens, Clermont, Fairfield, Franklin, Greene, Guernsey, Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Muskingum, Shelby, Summit, Trumbull and Wood.

Several factors were considered in the county selection. We had to demonstrate to our federal partners that the counties chosen will provide a representative case review sample for the state. They reflect a range of demographics, population sizes and geographic regions. Three counties from each of OFC's five technical assistance regions were chosen, including counties with Title IV-E juvenile courts, ProtectOHIO waiver counties and non-waiver counties. We are so appreciative of these counties for their willingness to be Ohio's CFSR leaders!

At the same time, it's important to remember that every county's data matters! The above counties will participate in onsite case reviews, but **all** counties affect the state's performance. Statewide data determines whether Ohio will meet the seven CFSR national standards and the seven CFSR systemic factors (discussed in prior editions of **First Friday**).

In addition, OFC is seeking CFSR peer reviewers from across the state who are willing to volunteer their time to support other agencies working toward our mutual goals. Reviewers can work at public or private agencies. Assistant Deputy Director Dan Shook sent a communication on Sept. 27 to public and private agency directors and Title IV-E courts providing details about the review commitment and how to apply. We hope this will be the first step toward the establishment of a statewide peer review network. If you or your staff are interested or have questions, please email **Justin.Abel@jfs.ohio.gov**.



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