



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor

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TO: PCSA Directors and SACWIS Super Users
FROM: Jennifer R. Justice, Acting Deputy Director
Office of Families and Children
SUBJECT: SACWIS Update

A Productive Year in Collaborating to Ensure SACWIS Supports Child Welfare

Practice ~ So many critical milestones were achieved this year: Ohio's financial roll out, Alternative Response enhancements, improved local flexibility/decreased data fixes, the start of a report foundation (data mart/Results Oriented Management "ROM"), better coordination of monitoring/policy/SACWIS assistance through the Midwest Child Welfare Implementation Center "MCWIC" initiative and the implementation of the youth emancipation survey data (National Youth Transition Database or NYTD). We often take our accomplishments for granted but it is important to reflect on why SACWIS matters to child welfare: caseworkers can routinely view statewide (rather than county only) child welfare investigation and case histories every day as they assess child safety and risk, caseworkers can assess the placement status of multiple youth in various settings when making placement decisions, agencies can ensure revenues are reimbursed for services delivered and identify discrepancies prior to losing revenues, caseworkers can search significant statewide historical data files to discover potential permanency resources/homes to care for children, managers can quickly ascertain whether children in foster care are visited regularly, caseworkers can access critical data 24 hours a day from multiple locations and youth who emancipate from foster care can provide critical outcome data to inform policy makers/improve services. ***These accomplishments could not be achieved without your ongoing support ~ Happy Holidays to all of you!***

FFY 2011 Monthly Visitation Compliance ~ Results were recently submitted to ACF. We achieved 87% compliance for ensuring foster youth are visited monthly, up from the 2007 baseline of 27%. While statewide we fell 3 percentage points below the 90% FFY 2011 target goal, approximately 69 PCSAs and 20 IV-E courts achieved the goal. We will be working with ACF to determine financial implications for falling short of the FY2011 goal and understanding how compliance calculation formulas for the current FFY will change. ***Thank you to those who have set high standards for ensuring visits occur AND are entered timely into SACWIS.***

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SACWIS Upgrade ~ Significant work continues on the SACWIS Upgrade project (development completion due May 2012/production targeted for August 2012). ***Should the team experience unexpected barriers/risks, other project priorities/schedules could be impacted. If this occurs, counties will be notified via updates and/or Statewide User Group Meetings.***

The Upgrade effort involves replacing servers, upgrading system middleware (Websphere Application Server "WAS" and Oracle), and eventually replacing Optimal J (model driven architecture tool). Advanced technologies (Active Data Guard and Real Time Compression tools) will eliminate the need for current Oracle Recovery Manager backup processes. The plan requires data conversion and performance tuning/load balancing to ensure system performance is sustained and/or improved. Testing of environments are planned in the following order: Development, System Testing, User Acceptance Testing, Staging, Production, Validation, Adhoc Reporting, Implementation Prep, Training, Business Continuity & OFC Cube Report Development. Testing is underway and will continue throughout the Spring. ***Counties are encouraged to identify an Upgrade Point of Contact who can work with the team as testing activities continue, this is especially true of counties who heavily rely on staging and/or replicated environments. If you are interested in additional information and/or participating in testing/planning efforts, please contact Iroabuchi Arum and/or Joan Denman.***

Stellar Change Agents ~ The SACWIS team thanks ProtectOHIO and Alternative Response Counties for working together to standardize practice interventions in a county administered state ***while simultaneously embracing SACWIS development and data entry (especially within the services module)***! You are leading the way in demonstrating why prevention services matter and transforming SACWIS along the way. We also thank PCSAO and Crystal Ward Allen for helping all of us, counties and the state, overcome shared problems and for believing the benefits of SACWIS outweigh the considerable effort. Finally, special thanks to Michael Colbert for advocating for SACWIS funding/staff and supporting/recognizing the importance of making SACWIS a tool to support child welfare practice.

Private Agency Roll Out ~ ***The team continues to prepare for bringing private foster care and adoption agencies on to SACWIS in March/April 2012.*** As most of you know, the plan is to ease into implementation assisting private agencies with view access to their homes/records, starting to use the system to process training reimbursements and automating reports. Some private agencies are hesitant for demographic information on their homes to be "open" to PCSAs based upon their fears of active recruiting of homes amongst other providers and counties. Some have also expressed frustration with activity log comments caseworkers make about homes without openly communicating issues to network providers and/or licensing staff first. A few PCSAs have expressed concerns about limiting access to provider activity logs. As we move forward in collaborating, we ask both private agencies and PCSAs to keep child safety, well being and permanency as the guiding principles for our shared work.

SACWIS implementation will uncover issues we undoubtedly need to work through, but we ask for your continued focus on our mission to get past the bumps in the road. Additional information will be forthcoming as this effort moves forward!

Results Oriented Management “ROM” ~ The team recently installed the latest versions of ROM which are currently in testing. Additional code modifications to improve unit/worker assignment integrity were also achieved. At this time, the team is moving forward to improve visitation and primary removal reason coding. Collaborative efforts with KU are also underway to modify/configure ROM to correct inconsistencies with how “screened out” intakes are handled in the tool and to improve some of the performance issues experienced during recent trainings. Level of effort estimates for remaining issues, as well as additional testing activities, are currently underway. ***Thank you to those counties and staff who are actively working to improve Ohio’s data, reporting tools and SACWIS application. We know this work is critical to county agencies and we greatly appreciate your help and support.***

SACWIS Field Assistant ~ Approximately 19 Counties participated in recent (12/7/11) Joint Application Design Sessions to discuss efforts to create SACWIS Field Assistant/Mobile functionality. While SACWIS can currently be accessed via tablets/notebooks, modified screen displays and data views have not yet been implemented to support smart/mobile phone technologies. Efforts to streamline information supporting only the most critical data elements for caseworkers in the field were discussed/reviewed. Initial caseworker feedback supports the vision for streamlined access to enable quick access to case contacts, demographics, Google maps, investigation summaries/data, safety plans and easy entry of streamlined activity logs/visitations. The team is currently developing a level of effort estimate and will share the proposed first release schedule after the New Year. We are excited to see this effort move forward – thanks to those who are lending their talents to make SACWIS easier for caseworkers to use in the field.

Court Module ~ Work to improve the court module continues. The team is currently finalizing design requirements for both the Living Arrangement and new Agency Legal Status functionality. The Living Arrangement replaces the “Child Legal Status”. More detail on how changes improve recording agency legal status and custody episodes will be forthcoming. Thank you to all of the counties and legal staff who continue to partner with us to improve SACWIS.

CRIS-E Interface ~ Approximately 103 participants and 57 PCSAs participated in the 12/15 webinar to review efforts to complete the mandated SACWIS/CRIS-E interface. We know county staff need easy access to critical data elements and easy ways to exchange information when children move into care and/or family circumstances change impacting eligibility to various programs (food stamps, family assistance etc). At this time, the team is targeting completion of the interface for April 2012 and will be calling upon counties to participate in testing to ensure the design is responsive to local needs.

Online Report and System Performance Follow-Up ~ Based upon feedback from the late summer focus group, follow up onsite meetings are currently being implemented with a sampling of counties to improve communication and documentation of system performance improvement strategies. Additional information will be shared in the coming year.

Integrating SACWIS and Child Welfare Training ~ Special thank you to those counties and OCWTP who are creatively thinking about ways to incorporate SACWIS into ongoing training efforts – more to come on this in the coming year!

Next Statewide User Group ~ Tentative date is set for 1-30-12, once it is finalized, official notice will go out. Thanks again to all of you who participate. Let us know how we can make these meetings more meaningful/useful to you and your staff. If you have suggestions, please share them with Tresa Young @ tresa.young@jfs.ohio.gov.