

Office of Families and Children
M.S. Teams Event
July 14, 2021 11:00 A.M.
PCSA, Private Agencies and IV-E Courts

Welcome-Jeffery Van Deusen, Deputy Director

Good morning and welcome to July's Touch Point call.

As a reminder, if you have questions during the call today, feel free to include them in the question section on the screen.

The items discussed or presented today, including the questions and answers will be included in the notes we send out later this week. I encourage you to share the notes with all appropriate staff within your agency to ensure they also receive the information.

Before jumping into the agenda, you have heard me mention that we want to ensure we are providing you with the most up to date information in the correct format.

As you know, we try to communicate through various means, but one of which is this monthly call.

The call began at the onset of the pandemic as a way to get information to you quickly, however, because we received positive feedback, we have maintained the calls to provide other updates.

We recently conducted an analysis of the last few months of calls and noticed that we are not getting the participation like we once did.

We are evaluating the format of the calls to ensure they are useful.

The calls will continue, but feel free to forward the link to appropriate staff to attend the monthly calls.

This call is one of the main ways to receive updates status information from our Office.

Budget updates – Jeff

We are excited that we have a signed budget. The Governor signed the Executive Budget HB 110 on June 30, 2021. In his budget again, the Governor prioritizes children and families. Our office has been working on areas that will require us to establish new rules, procedures and/or guidance.

As always, we will continue to work with our external stakeholders and partners.

I will give some highlights of funding that was included in the budget:

- The unprecedented investment in children services was maintained from the previous biennium AND
 - o This budget added an additional \$10 million per year to the State Child Protection Allocation

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- Includes more than \$60 million in financial assistance to kinship caregivers while they work toward foster care licensure.
- \$50 million to prevent the custody relinquishment of youth with very complex needs who require care from multiple systems.
- Up to \$24 million to help find permanent homes for children in foster care through Wendy's Wonderful Kids.
- \$20 million for Ohio START
- \$10 million for evidence-based prevention services to prevent children from entering the children services system and, if children must enter foster care, to ensure appropriate settings are used.
- \$10 million to provide financial support to caregivers through KGAP.
- \$10 million for foster parent recruitment.
- \$10 million to promote best practices.
- As many of you know, House Bill 4, which has passed through the House establishes a Children Services Ombudsman but does not address funding.
 - o The budget has funding of \$1 million dollars to establish a state-level ombudsman to independently investigate and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of children and families involved with children services.
 - o Legislators are currently on Summer Break, so we do not anticipate HB4 moving until the fall.

Some of the language authorizing language in the budget included:

- Sibling Notification
- Youth & Resource Family Bill of Rights
- Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) evaluation and transition.
- Family Service Plan and Permanency language to strengthen timelines for the courts
- Transition of Ohio Family Children First Council to ODJFS

Now, on to another important area the office has been diligently working on, is the lifting of the state of emergency due to the pandemic.

Gina Speaks-Eshler will provide updates on this work.

State of Emergency – Gina Speaks-Eshler

As we all know, on June 17, 2021, Governor DeWine announced that he was lifting the COVID-19 Pandemic State of Emergency Order, effective June 18, 2021, which rescinded the Procedure Letters issued during the SOE providing guidance.

On June 21, 2021, OFC issued Procedure Letter 371 allowing agencies the opportunity to transition practices back to pre-pandemic requirements. We have and will continue providing technical assistance and flexibility through July 31, 2021. We want to encourage agencies to continue communicating with their Technical Assistance Specialists, Foster Care Licensing Specialists, and

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other contacts within OFC for assistance and support during this transition. Guidance specific to ratios, training, and capacity limits will be issued next week.

Ohio KAN- Angie

OhioKAN is excited to announce its support in bringing the nationally recognized, evidenced-based Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) program to Ohio. TAC is an accredited training curriculum through the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.) designed to provide clinicians the skills necessary to deliver adoption-competent mental health services. The first cohort will begin in July for twelve clinical staff from OhioKAN sites and partners who serve adopted children and their families. OhioKAN is looking forward to having more providers available to meet the needs of children and families across the state.

FFPSA – Angie

As you have heard through various communications, the state of Ohio entered into a contract with Case Western Reserve University for the Center of Excellence (COE) in March 2021. Since that time, the COE has been working with state partner agencies to support the contract deliverables including addition and/or expansion of services, implementation, sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation of service deliverables.

Among the services that Ohio has requested approval in its Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan include, Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), Healthy Families America, Parents as Teachers, and OhioSTART. Current efforts are underway to build capacity for Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy in the Family First pilot counties through the Center of Excellence. In addition to targeted overviews and technical assistance to sites, the COE is implementing a number of incentives to support provider agency uptake of these evidence-based services.

These incentives include:

1. Utilizing COE funds to offset the first-year training and consultation fees for 5 new FFT teams and 5 new MST teams.
2. Implementation grants to offset initial agency startup costs (FY22).
3. Payment for MST and FFT services for youth with open cases and who are not eligible for Medicaid.
4. Paying for MST Therapist Adherence Measure (TAM-R) reporting through the MST Institute.

These efforts have resulted in significant agency interest for both FFT and MST where these services do not currently exist: Lucas (FFT), Fairfield (MST, FFT), Licking (MST; FFT), Knox (MST), Butler (MST; FFT), and Stark (FFT).

The process to become a fully functioning team does take time (three to four months) and includes site readiness assessment by the FFT or MST; hiring and training staff (licensed or license-eligible), establishing referral flows, building community awareness, and other implementation

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and readiness activities. Additionally, Ohio is working with the COE to address statewide expansion as we move toward full implementation in October 2021.

Speaking of the Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan, Ohio received feedback from the Children's Bureau at the end of May. Since that time, we had a call with the Children's Bureau on June 21st and have worked closely with our state partners and internal team to solidify revisions. We are happy to announce that the revised plan was submitted to the Children's Bureau on July 13th.

In other implementation news, Ohio SACWIS will be deploying Prevention Services updates over the course of the next four releases. Ohio SACWIS Build Release 4.13 will contain the Evidence-based Practice Service Referral and ongoing Prevention Services Eligibility records. The releases after Build 4.13 will contain Prevention Services Reimbursability, new reimbursement logic, and updates to payment processing and federal reporting.

These changes will be discussed in future meeting/presentations/webinars. Prevention Services Pilot County Biweekly Meetings will be held to review the funding flows in addition to a recent Ohio START presentation, focused on Prevention Services flows/changes and discussion on the START funding flow. An overview of Healthy Families America and Parents as Teachers is also scheduled for later this month for pilot counties.

QRTP – Colleen

Today I want to address some questions I have received in the past few weeks.

A few agencies have voiced concern that ODJFS is delaying reviews. This is not the case and after investigating these concerns, the issue is that some accrediting bodies are unable to conduct accreditation surveys for some of these agencies in time to ensure the agency is reviewed for QRTP compliance by October 1st. As a reminder, ODJFS certified Group Homes and CRCs that feel that they are QRTP Compliant should be submitting their documentation to their licensing specialist through an OCALM study as soon as possible.

In the last week, we have also heard from a few Group Homes that PCSAs they contract with have informed them that if they are not identified as QRTP Compliant by October 1, 2021, the PCSA will remove any youth they have placed there. This may be a miscommunication between the Group Homes and PCSAs but I just wanted to remind all the Title IV-E agencies on the call that any IV-E eligible youth placed in a facility prior to October 1, 2021, will maintain IV-E reimbursability while the youth maintains in that placement setting.

We have also received many questions about the discharge planning and after-care supports. Please save the date as we will be hosting a Lunch and Learn on July 30th from 12-1:30 to address these requirements and answer agency's questions. An invite will be sent out later this week.

New Rule for FFPSA Implementation– QRTP Case Plan & Review - Christine

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We are continuing our work toward finalizing policy and rule requirements related to QRTP implementation, and we've been working with our IV-E Team as they prepare the Title IV-E State Plan Amendment to be submitted for federal approval. I have a new rule updates to provide:

- 5101:2-38-05.1-PCSA requirements for completing a family case plan and review when a child is placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP). New Rule in Clearance and Original filed on 7/9. Outline the PCSA requirements when completing a family case plan and review when a child is placed in a QRTP. These documentation requirements are already in SACWIS functionality, but they are being added to rule to meet federal oversight requirements for Title IV-E reimbursement for QRTP placement.

Foster Care Extension (language from HB 110) - Christine

House Bill 110, signed by Governor Mike DeWine on June 30, 2021, includes statutory changes providing for extension of the foster care certification process due to the pandemic. OFC will be issuing written guidance regarding the changes, but we wanted to provide an update to today to ensure that agencies are aware of the changes.

- HB 110 includes changes to Ohio Revised Code Section 751.20 to allow for foster care applicants, who began their training between 2019 and 2021, to extend their time to be initially certified until December 31, 2021 due to the pandemic. Any items completed after January 2019, which are necessary for initial certification, may be used toward certification, with the exception of background checks and safety audits. Background checks and safety audits must be timely in accordance with rule 5101:2-5-20 at the time of initial certification.
- Additionally, HB 110 includes changes to Ohio Revised Code Section 751.20 to allow foster caregivers, who have not completed their recertification requirements during the pandemic, to complete those requirements by December 31, 2021, unless otherwise specified. Below is a chart to assist in the understanding of the language in HB 110 as it relates to foster care certification extensions:

Study Type	Guidance
Initial Certification	Any homes that started pre-service training on or before 12/31/2018 are not covered by the HB110 extension.
Initial Certification	Any homes that started pre-service training on or after 01/01/2019, have until 12/31/2021 to complete certification and/or training requirements. The 18- month training

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	timeframe in rule 5101:2-5-20 (K)(8) is re-instituted January 1, 2022.
Homes that expire from 04/02/2021-09/29/2021	Homes with certifications that expired between 04/02/2021 (when HB404 expired) and 09/29/2021 are not covered by the HB110 extension.
Homes that expire from 09/30/2021-12/31/2021 (Recertifications)	Homes with certifications set to expire from 09/30/2021 – 12/31/2021 have until 12/31/2021 to complete recertification requirements or must be closed 1/1/2022 and start again as an initial applicant.

CST Updates –Karen

Hopefully all of you have heard about the initial CST Update meeting on July 20, 2021 from 2:00 to 3:30. Jeff sent an email to all agency directors about a month ago regarding the meeting. These meetings that bring back together the CST Advisory Council will occur about every four months. Topics covered in the meeting on the 20th include the SFY22/23 Budget, Project Management, OFC Leadership, Implementation Activities and Connections to other work. Registration is not needed, if you need a copy of the flyer, please contact me at Karen.McGormley@jfs.ohio.gov.

I also want to mention that our office is excited to be further partnering with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption to expand the Wendy’s Wonderful Kids program statewide. We will be reaching out individually with every PCSA via an email to share with data regarding your population of youth that fall into the WWK population. This includes many of your older permanent custody youth, siblings and PPLA youth 17 years of age or younger. The Governor’s goal is that every youth in need of a WWK recruiter will have access to one. Recruiters can be housed within PCSAs, shared with other PCSAs as well as provided by a private agency. The Foundation is looking at ways to further support agencies that employ WWK recruiters including travel costs as well as partial up to full support of WWK supervisors. After you look at your data, please reach out to the Foundation or ODJFS to discuss your options. Any private agencies on the call can also reach out to the Foundation to discuss employing recruiters and supervisors to recruit for children and youth at PCSAs.

CFSR PIP Update – Vince

Child and Family Services Review Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Update- Although the CFSR PIP case reviews of 164 cases continue through September 30, 2021, the activities associated with the PIP Goals, Strategies and Action Steps officially ended on June 30, 2021. At present, OFC is working on the Q7 and Q8 PIP report due to HHS on August 14, 2021. Following

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submission of the final report, OFC, the CFSR counties and the Children's Bureau team will meet on September 15, 2021 to review the report and discuss if all activities were successfully achieved. In mid-October Ohio will be informed if all the case review Improvement Goals have been achieved. If some Items have not been achieved Ohio will have the opportunity to conduct another case review during the period of October 2021-September 2022 in order to achieve the identified Improvement Goals. Currently Ohio is meeting its 10 Improvement Goals.

Children Services Forum: As you know we have so many different new initiatives and projects moving that will be implemented over the next year or two. We understand this a great deal of work to stand up the various programs such as FFPSA, the CST Recommendations, and new budget items. The question has been raised as to how all of these programs fit together. Therefore, we are finalizing a Children Services Forum for the end of August, to discuss the various children services work and how they fit into the big picture.

Be on the lookout for a save the date for a Children Services Forum in the next couple weeks. When you receive the link in a follow up email, feel free to forward to anyone else that may not be on our email list.

Questions and Answers

- 1) Can you speak to how ODJFS plans to address workforce shortages in child welfare? Specifically, the requirement for private agencies to hire LSWs for assessor and case management duties given the language was removed from the budget to loosen the requirements?

Thank you for your question. Workforce is a huge challenge for our public and private partners. Director Damschroder, Kara Wente and I met with agency Directors at the PCSAO Executive Member's meeting a few weeks ago to share some of the work going on within the office. Almost all agree with the initiatives and opportunities to better serve children and families, however, there were concerns about implementation and due to workforce challenges. We continue to meet with a workforce group through PCSAO. We continue to collaborate in an effort to address this, but as you know all too well, there isn't one magic fix. We want you to know we are alongside and partnering with you in an attempt to help address these challenges. Some of the things to come out of the workgroup have been the onboarding and virtual reality headsets. Again, these alone will not fix the issues, but they are tools you can use to assist.

Regarding the language removed from HB 110 and currently included in HB 4, our office supports the need to increase the pool of applicants for these positions through expansion of degree requirements while still demonstrating prior work experience with children and/or families. More information to come.

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- 2) Just to be clear, only those services in the States FFPSA Plan are eligible for federal \$ participation, right?

Yes, that is correct. Services on the approved Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan are eligible for federal IV-E reimbursement. Additionally, the way we structured prevention services, we started out with 5 and we will work to add more in the phase 2 plan.

- 3) That was said quickly...did Colleen say that any child placed in a facility that is not QRTP compliant on October 1, will remain IV-E eligible even after October 1.

Yes, any youth who is IV-E eligible and placed in a residential (that has an IV-E Rate) prior to October 1, 2021, will maintain IV-E reimbursability while the youth maintains in that placement setting.

Also, please save the date as we will be hosting a Discharge Planning and Aftercare Lunch and Learn on July 30th from 12 – 1:30 pm to address these requirements and answer agency's questions. An invitation will be sent out to public and private agencies later this week.

- 4) To clarify, a family that expires on 7/14/2021 cannot be extended and will expire on 7/14/2021.

Yes, the home will expire if not recertified/reapproved on or before 7/14/2021.

- 5) Two questions if I may.

- 1) What is the status of the grant to provide assessors to public and private child placing agencies?

The RFP proposals have been scored. The next stage of the process is developing agreements and securing controlling board approval. Work is underway, and we will plan to provide a comprehensive update once we are able to share more.

- 2) Can you comment on ODJFS' plan to formally implement formal concurrent plans in children services cases?

HB 110 changes R.C. 2151.412 to provide that until 1/1/23, a PCSA or PCPA may include a concurrent permanency plan with a case plan, but on or after 1/1/23, the concurrent permanency plan will be required. OAC rules will be amended to address these requirements. Additionally, as part of the concept, in order to be effective, it is important to work collaboratively with the parent and to be transparent with all parties to make sure there is permanency with the child in the new timeframes to make sure kids are not lingering in care. We will continue to work to see what that will look like in Ohio and we will need to get additional feedback from the Stakeholder group in advance of the 2023 date.

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- 6) Since the Best Practice and Foster Recruitment has been preserved in the budget, will counties be getting allocations? We received allocation letters then were advised they were issued erroneously. Will we be getting that funding locally?

Great question. The ODJFS Office of Fiscal and Monitoring Services erroneously sent the allocation last week and subsequent letters were sent retracting those funds. The State intends to hold back those allocations to stand up initiatives around best practices. We will be meeting with the associations and agencies soon. We apologize for the confusion.

- 7) Good morning. I am aware that this may not be the best place to ask this question, however, my name is LaDiamond Edmonds and I am the new Executive Director at Seeds 4 Life. I would like to know who I can reach out to with my contact information so that I can be added to all listserv's with information coming from the Department of Job and Family Services. There are several communications that were mentioned in this live that I have not received. Thank you.

Welcome LaDiamond! We will add you to future Listserv.

- 8) In regard to the "grandfathering" of IV-E rates for placements that are in existence as of October 1, 2021, will there be requirements for Juvenile Court review of those placements as required in FFPSA or will some sort of grandfathering apply to that provision as well?

If the child is placed prior to 10/1/21 then the court does not have to complete the 60-day FFPSA review.

- 9) Are there any updates on the Tiered Foster Care System?

We are working to expand the existing model of foster care (family foster homes/treatment foster homes) with the goal of creating a tiered level of foster care. It would be based upon child characteristics and needs, and caregiver skill and preparation, to ensure that training, support, and payment align with the expectations of care. This would ensure training and supports are provided so that caregivers can meet the needs and challenges of the children in their care. Currently we have an internal OFC team working to develop a framework and will be reaching out to external stakeholders soon for input and collaboration. The goal for this to be completed is October 2022.