

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

April 1, 2008

## MEMORANDUM

**What's Inside:**

- Results of Worker Visit with Children Case Review
- Documentation and data entry
- Improvement Expected

**TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS AND ALL CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF**

**FROM: PAULA NEESE, DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: WORKER VISITS WITH CHILDREN**

**DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this memo is to report the results of the recent worker visit with child case review, address data entry of worker visits with children in FACES and provide a review of division policy on worker visits with children in foster care.

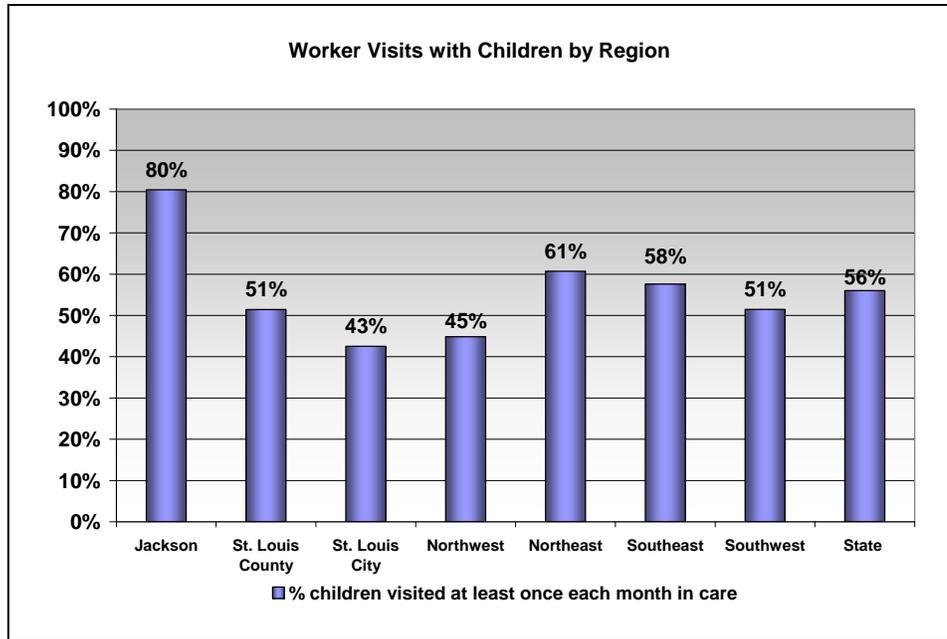
The first round of the federal CFSRs, conducted between 2001 and 2004, indicated the importance of caseworker visits with children in obtaining positive outcomes in the areas of child safety, permanency and well being. States which performed better on the quality and frequency of worker visits with children were better able to assess risk of harm, identify needed services and to engage children in planning for their future. Likewise, insufficient face-to-face contacts with children resulted in an inconsistent focus on issues regarding case plans and goals during visits.

The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, P.L. 109-288, made numerous changes to Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, including caseworker visits with children. Briefly, each state was required to submit Federal Fiscal Year 2007 baseline data regarding caseworker visitation, set targets for improvement and meet the goal of at least 90 percent of children in foster care visited by their workers on a monthly basis and the majority of these visits occur in the child's placement. The 90 percent target must be achieved by October 1, 2011.

Between July and December 2007, the Children's Division Quality Assurance Unit conducted a review of 375 alternative care cases to determine if each child was seen at least once during each calendar month in care and if the visits were in the child's residence. In order to be found in conformity in the review, at least one visit between the worker and child must have occurred during **each and every** month the child was in care. If one month was missed, that case was found to be totally out of compliance.

This chart illustrates the case review results by region. Statewide, 56% of children reviewed were seen monthly while in care. *This is substantially below the 90% standard set by the federal government.* Of all the visits which did occur, 90% occurred in the child's placement.

The baseline data which was gathered indicated a number of concerning trends in worker visits with children. These trends provide some guidance on where the division can begin to develop plans for improvement.

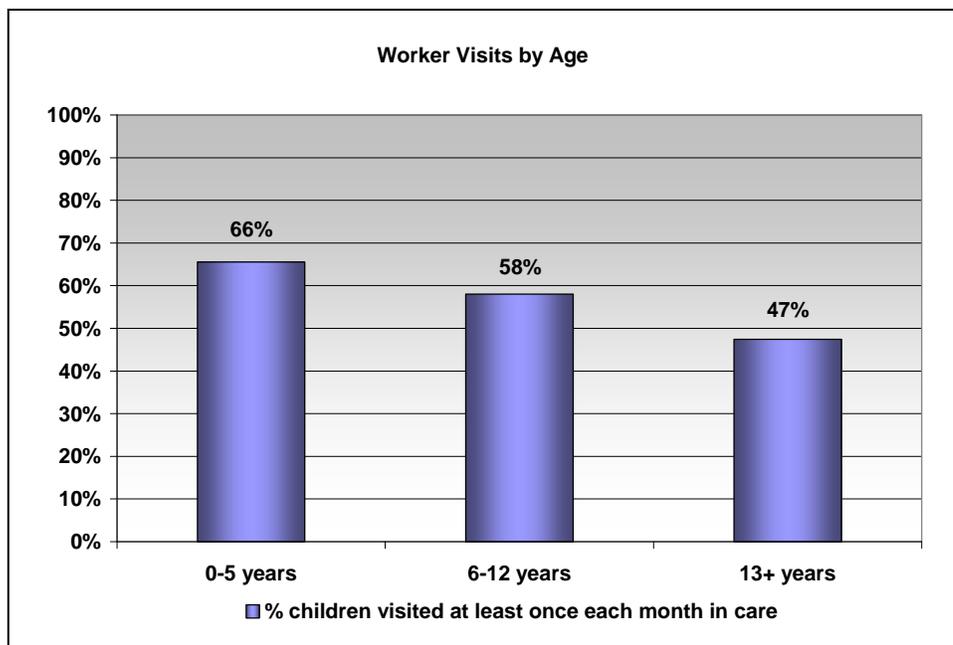


### Age of Children

The chart on the right indicates older children received monthly worker visits less frequently than younger children. 66% of children aged 0-5 years received monthly visits while only 47% of children aged 13 years or more received a monthly worker visit.

### Service County

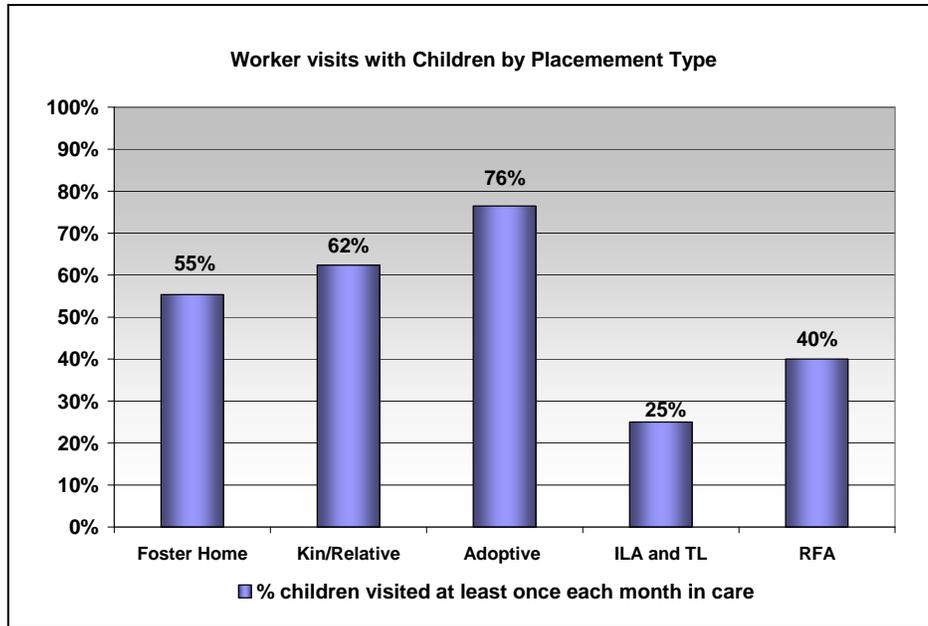
There were a number of instances in which worker/child visits did not take place in a timely manner due to the case being transferred to a service county.



Per division policy, children placed in a foster, relative or kinship homes in a county other than the case manager county should be seen by the service worker the next business day after confirmation of child's placement in the home by the case manager county. This confirmation may be given by phone, email or IOC and should be sent within two business days of the child's placement. For children placed in residential facilities, the child should be contacted by the case manager or service worker the next business day. This contact may be by phone but the child must be seen in person at the facility within 14 calendar days of the date of placement.

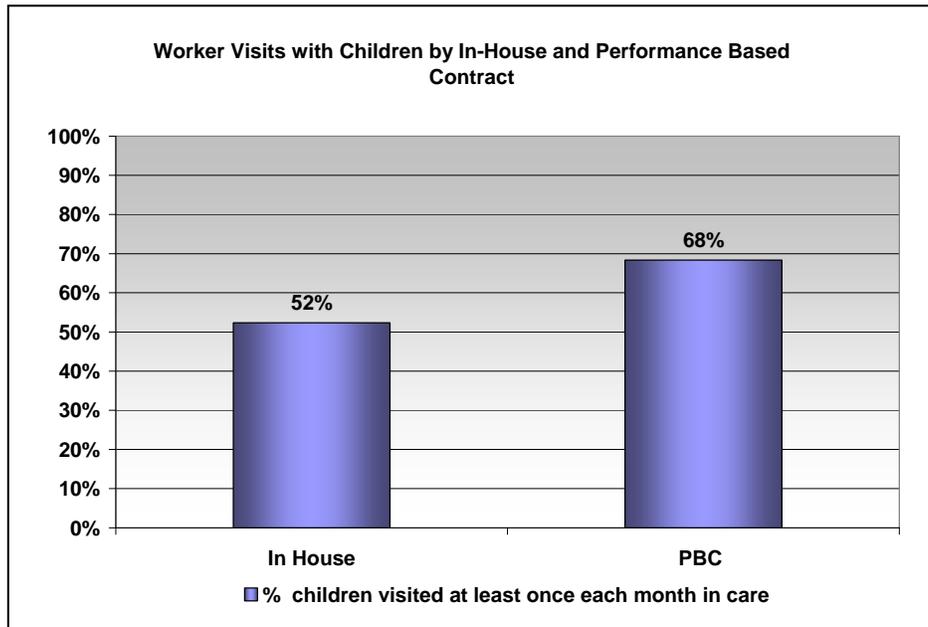
### Placement Type

The chart on the right indicates children placed in independent living arrangements and residential facilities are less likely to receive monthly worker visits than children placed in other placement types. The worker/child visitation requirements for children in these types of placements are the same as for children in foster and relative placements. Children are to be seen twice a month *regardless* of their placement type.



### Performance Based Contracts

The case review also revealed some differences between cases which were case managed in-house versus cases which were assigned to a performance based foster care contractor (PBC). This chart indicates children case managed by a PBC were more likely to be seen at least once monthly than those children who were case managed by in-house Children’s Division staff. Both the PBC cases and in-house cases were substantially below the 90% standard set by the federal government.



### Uncovered Cases

In some instances, worker visits with children did not take place due to a caseload being uncovered. If a worker is out sick or on leave, the expectation is that those cases will be covered by another worker or the supervisor and visits with children in that caseload will take place according to policy and documented in the record appropriately.

## Documentation and FACES Data Entry

The case review revealed a number of records which contained **no** documentation of worker visits. In these cases, reviewers were unable to determine if visits had taken place and could not give credit. Per policy, visitation form CD-82 should be completed for every child visit. Additionally, the worker/child visit should be entered into FACES.

Now that worker visit information is being captured by the FACES system, circuit level monthly reports are being developed to issue to the circuits so monthly performance can be monitored on this measure. The data for these reports is drawn from specific fields in the FACES system. In order for the system to properly calculate worker visits, visit information must be entered into FACES according to the following guidelines:

- **Enter Visits in Child Contact Screens**

When calculating worker visits, the system will pull data from the child's information. In order to properly capture worker visits with children, visit information must be entered into the **child's** contact list as shown below.

Missouri Department of Social Services  
Children's Division  
Contact List

References: [Child Welfare Manual](#) [CD Forms](#)  
Links: [FACES Home Page](#) [I/A Home Page](#) [Case Management Home Page](#)  
[Individual](#) [Case Member](#) [Participant Characteristics](#)

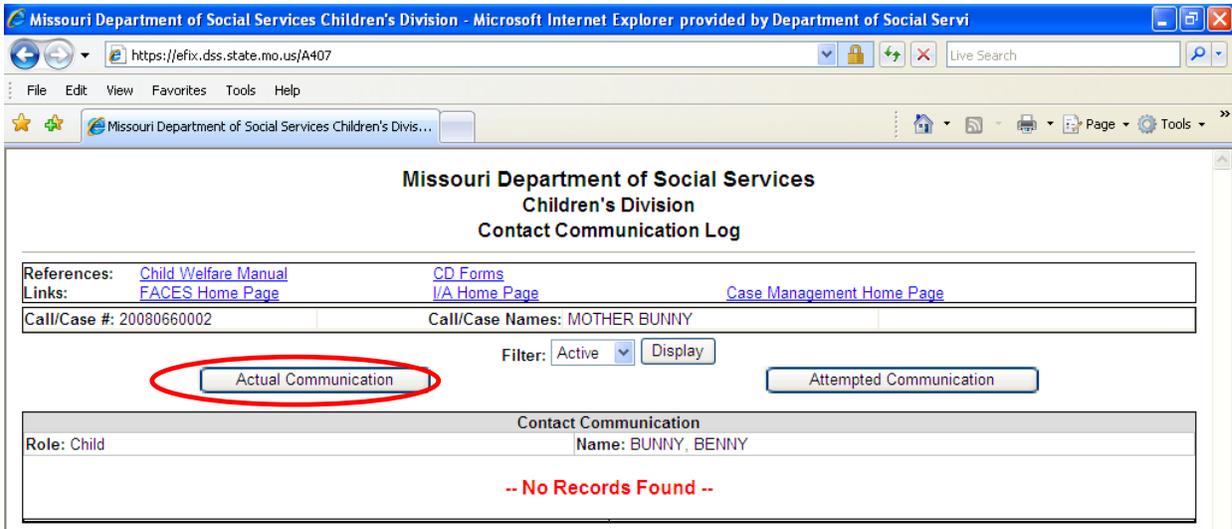
\* Call/Case #: 20080660002 \* Business Area: Case Management Go  
Call/Case Names: MOTHER BUNNY

Filter By: All Active Filter Individual List  
List of Call/Case Associated Individuals: BUNNY, BENNY (Child) Display  
Add Individual

Role(s) : Child Name : **BUNNY, BENNY**  
Title : Current Address: 12 McGregor Patch  
Home #: 555-555-5555 (Primary) Jefferson City, MO 65101  
Cole County USA Update  
Comments:

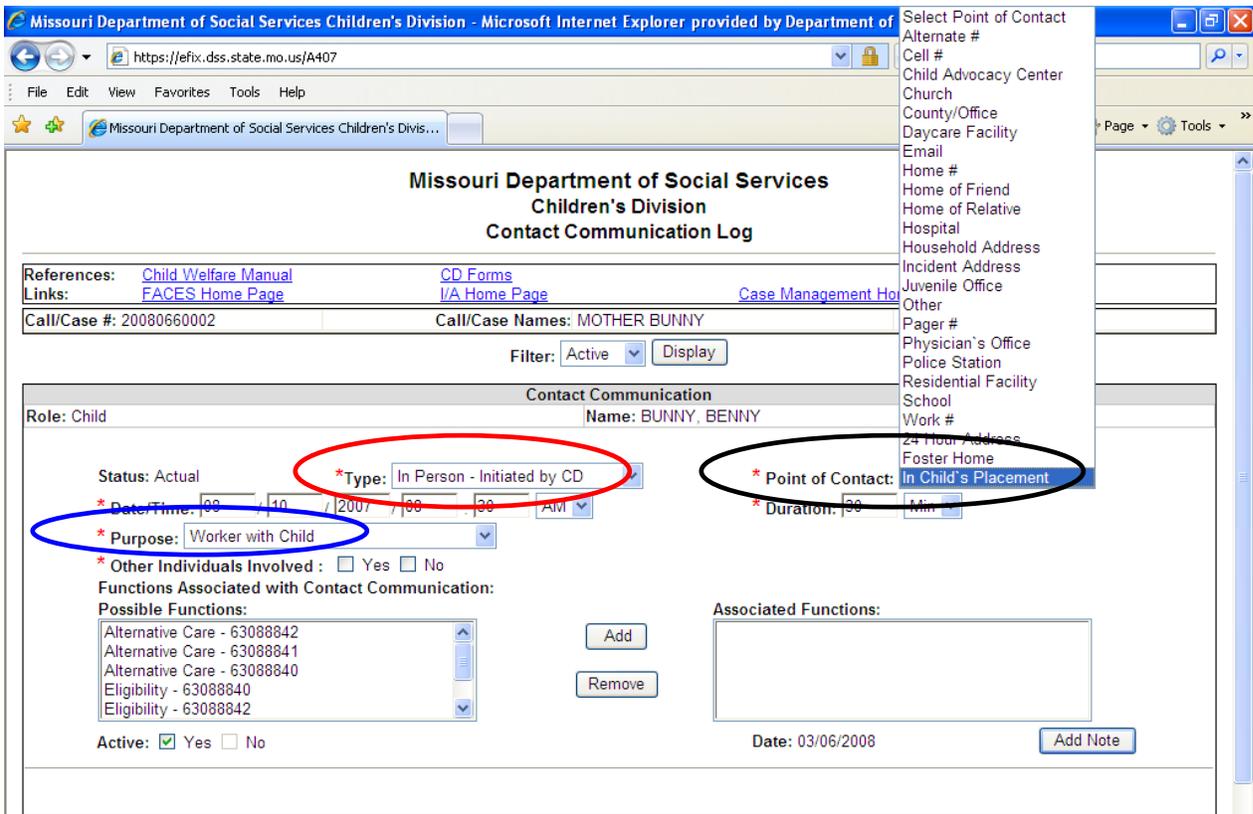
- **Actual vs Attempted Communication**

When calculating worker visits, only actual visits can be counted. Although attempted visits should be documented in FACES, only actual visits and communications will count towards compliance on worker visits with children. Be sure to select "**Actual Communication**" as indicated below when entering worker visit information.



- **Communication Type, Point of Contact and Purpose**

Once in the contact screen, **"In Person – Initiated by CD"** must be selected as the type of communication. The appropriate point of contact must also be entered. For visiting the child in the home, staff must select **"In Child's Placement"**. A selection of any other category for point of contact will result in documenting a worker visit outside of the home. The purpose entered must be **"Worker with Child"**.



- **Associated Functions and Entering Contact for Others Involved in the Worker/Child Visit**

The associated function should be added as appropriate to the child. For a child in AC this means adding the AC function as shown below in **blue**.

If a sibling group was visited at the same time and place, and the narrative needs to be the same for those children, data entry can be reduced by checking “**Yes**” by Other Individuals Involved and adding the other children as shown in **red** below. This will populate the narrative for all children added. The corresponding associated function must also be added for each child as appropriate.

Missouri Department of Social Services  
Children's Division  
Contact Communication Log

References: [Child Welfare Manual](#) [CD Forms](#)  
Links: [FACES Home Page](#) [IA Home Page](#) [Case Management Home Page](#)

Call/Case #: 20080660002 Call/Case Names: MOTHER BUNNY

Filter: Active Display

Role: Child Name: BUNNY, BENNY

Status: Actual \*Type: In Person - Initiated by CD \*Point of Contact: Select Point of Contact

\*Date/Time: 08 / 10 / 2007 / 08 : 30 AM \*Duration: 30 Min

\*Purpose: Worker with Child

\*Other Individuals Involved:  Yes  No

Possible Individuals Involved:  
BUNNY MOTHER  
BUNNY PETER

Individuals Involved:  
BUNNY BUGS

Functions Associated with Contact Communication:  
Possible Functions:  
Alternative Care - 63088840  
Alternative Care - 63088841  
Eligibility - 63088840  
Eligibility - 63088841  
Eligibility - 63088842

Associated Functions:  
Alternative Care - 63088842

Active:  Yes  No Date: 03/06/2008 Add Note

### Children's Division Policy on Worker Visits with Children

Current CD policy requires workers to meet face-to-face with children in foster care the next business day following placement when possible and a minimum of two visits per month, no less than seven calendar days apart. The visit which is to occur on the next business day following placement and at least one of the two required monthly visits thereafter must occur in the placement setting.

Children's Service Workers (or contracted staff) must continually assess the children, through visits in the placement setting, for the child's:

- Safety in the placement

- Reaction to separation from his/her family
- Perception/understanding of the problem and what they would like to see happen
- Adjustment to the placement

Staff and contractors should utilize the *CD-82 Checklist for Worker/Child Visits* during visits with the child in the placement setting to address, as appropriate, the following issues:

- Child's perception of family needs
- Child's feelings of guilt or blame
- Child's loss and grief issues
- Child's perception of familial and individual strengths
- Child's desire for future placement
- Child's adjustment to current placement and school setting
- Child's participation in and feelings toward treatment and educational services offered
- How child's perception may differ from actual events
- Child's feelings of safety in the placement home
- Case goal and progress toward this goal

### **Strategies for Improvement**

Worker visits with children in care are essential to assuring child safety and moving children towards permanency. These visits are a statement that child safety is a priority in Missouri and that our staff and agency are committed to monitoring each child's circumstances. In order to improve statewide performance on worker visits, strategies for improvement must be developed at all levels. Supervisors are expected to discuss worker visits during the course of their supervision. Likewise, circuit managers, program managers, field support managers and regional managers should be discussing performance on worker visits with the staff they supervise.

Worker visits with children will be monitored on an ongoing basis, as the division will be required to develop an improvement plan with specific strategies to improve performance. The QA unit is working with FACES on producing monthly reports which can provide regional, circuit and worker level data on worker visits with children. A memo on these reports will be forthcoming once these reports are fully developed.

### **Necessary Action:**

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division Staff.
2. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels.

PN/SS