

# In Focus



Quarterly Newsletter for Continuous Quality Improvement

July 2008 Issue



**From the Director's Desk:** We have received confirmation from the Children's Bureau that the second round Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) is scheduled to take place the week of June 7-11, 2010. This may seem a long way off, but activities are already underway to ensure Missouri will be as prepared as possible. We must strive to visit every single child in our care in-person according to policy, without exception. Visits are our best opportunity to oversee the safety and well-being of the child, and to achieve permanency. We must also focus our attention on assuring data in FACES is accurate and entered timely. *Give yourselves credit for the work you do!* Take time in your CQI meetings to review how worker visits with children apply to the mission of the Children's Division and to discuss the importance of accurate data for measuring performance.

— Paula Neese

## CQI Activities Calendar

### July 2008

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

### August 2008

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

### September 2008

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

1<sup>st</sup> Level CQI

2<sup>nd</sup> Level CQI

3<sup>rd</sup> Level CQI

State Level CQI

Peer Record Reviews

Click on this link, [State Level CQI Minutes](#), to see what was discussed during the 2nd Quarter State Level CQI Team Meeting on June 19th.

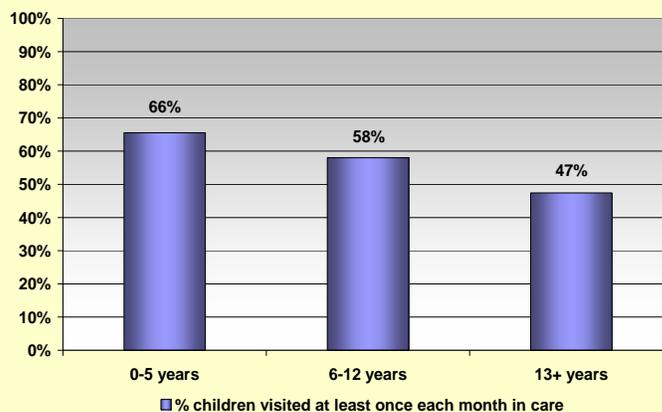
## Visits With Children Are Important!

As stated in her latest video teleconference, Paula Neese considers worker visits with children a top priority of the Children's Division. Worker visits with children are essential for demonstrating our concern for children in our care. Visits are important for achieving positive outcomes for children in the areas of child safety, permanency and well being. They provide the worker the opportunity to assess the child's safety in their placement and the child's reaction to the separation from his/her family, to learn what the child's perception of the problem is and to learn what the child would like to see happen, and to monitor the child's level of adjustment to the placement. Visits allow an opportunity for the worker to observe the child, talk with the child, and build a relationship with the child. This allows trust to be established, leading to the child's involvement in case planning and the obtainment of permanency. Any of the federal CFSR outcome measures can be directly linked to worker visits with children.

Current CD policy is very specific about requirements for worker visits with children. Workers must meet face to face with children in foster care the next business day following placement when possible and 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.

Worker Visits by Age



*During the last six months of CY07, 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.*

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.

## Uncovered Cases

There must be no "uncovered caseloads", visits must still occur. For example, there will be times that a worker is out sick or on leave. In these instances, the

Regional Managers are developing a strategic plan for improving performance in the area of worker visits with children. Recognizing trends (some of which were discussed in [Memorandum CD08-18](#)) provides an opportunity to develop strategies and put those strategies into action. Your input and involvement in improving this activity is critical for children and to our success in achieving the 90% Federal standard by October 1, 2011.

**Capturing the visit in FACES**

FACES is the electronic case record, and should accurately reflect that children are being seen. This requires workers not only complete the CD-82, but also enter the data into FACES *accurately* and *timely*. Workers should be sure to document contact with all persons involved in the visit, including siblings. Give yourselves credit for the work that you do! To assure the visit is “counted” in all performance reports, it should be entered into FACES within 2 business days following the visit, and must be entered into FACES in the precise manner as explained in [Memorandum CD08-18](#).

**The Formula for “Counting” Worker Visits:**

One FACES Child Contact Screen:

- + “Actual Communication”
  - + “In-Person - Initiated by CD” (type)
  - + “Worker with Child” (purpose)
  - + “In Child’s Placement” (point of contact)
- 
- = One worker visit with child

Please see [Memorandum CD08-18](#) for full explanation of policy and procedures regarding worker visits with children.

\*\*\* CQI Successes \*\*\* CQI Successes \*\*\* CQI Successes \*\*\*

Jackson County

- 4 staff from Cole County came to Jackson County to answer FACES questions.
- Clarification on the CS-20 and CS-20A was provided at the request of Family Development Staff.
- Access to the FAMIS system was provided to staff in need.
- Caller-ID is being provided to all supervisors and above as well as worker-level staff whose phones have Caller ID capability.

St. Louis County

- A pilot project began at Page on 3/1/08 enabling CM’s to initiate the kinship referral process by submitting only the referral form (FCS-24a) to licensing unit rather than the entire packet.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> level 7 Hills CQI team identified a concern which led to a plan of action designed to keep their downstairs conference room properly maintained.
- An inquiry from CA/N unit staff about receiving CA/N emergency referrals late in the day (at 3:00 PM) led to a successful use of data. The CA/N data review revealed that assignments made at 3:00 PM are justified, since most emergency referrals are received during the day shift and that the # of emergency referrals increases as this shift advances.
- Program managers discovered a method of conducting confidential administrative reviews on the local share drive by protecting their documents using passwords.

St. Louis City

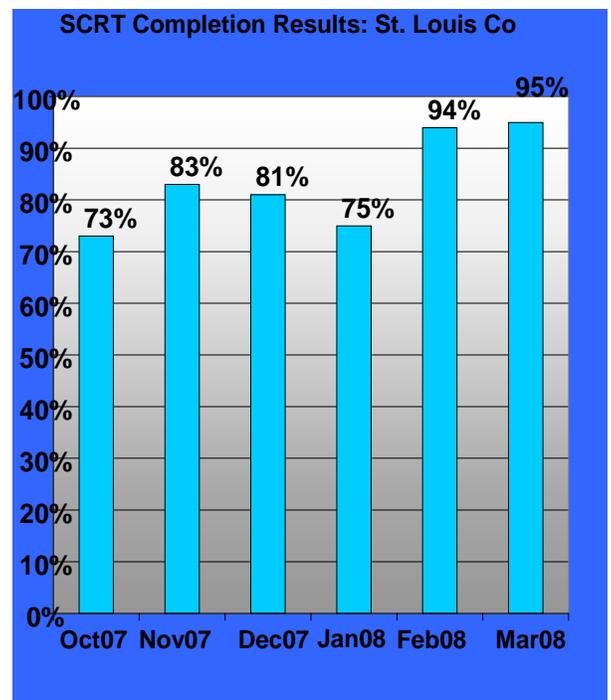
- St. Louis City has continued to reduce overdue hotlines and currently has the lowest number of overdues in the state.
- Flash drives were obtained for every worker and supervisor. This enable the employees to download forms and other important materials.

State Level

- New Family Development Plan (pending CQI issue from December 2007) was distributed with [CD08-32](#), dated 5/23/08.
- Practice point went out on 3/13/08 on [Opening FCS Cases on Both Custodial and Non-custodial Parents](#).
- The new CTS supplemental contract has included language allowing for non payment when a vendor misses a visit.



to St. Louis County for making a huge improvement in their SCRT completion %. Supervisors have become more conscientious in completing these reviews as a result of receiving regular (2x/Mo) feedback on the list of reviews still needing to be completed. **Way to Go!**



# Ready, Set, Go!



The second round Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) has been scheduled to occur the week of June 7-11, 2010. While this may seem far off, there is a lot of work to do between now and then to prepare. As noted in the CFSR events timeline below, activities to prepare are beginning now and will involve all levels of staff throughout the state.

Following local CFSR kickoff activities in June, first wave circuits will begin their CFSR readiness assessments in September. Second wave circuits will begin their readiness assessment in October, and third wave circuits will begin in November. The readiness assessment should be evaluative, using SCRT data and outcomes reports to analyze circuit performance and to assess level of readiness for the federal review. Five or Six circuits will then be chosen (from the 1<sup>st</sup> wave circuits) to participate in mock reviews, which will mirror the Federal CFSR. Following the mock reviews, our State will prepare a Statewide Assessment for submission to the Children's Bureau followed by the selection of the three sites for the CFSR. [Memorandum CD08-38](#) elaborates further on the CFSR process.

There is special emphasis for this 2<sup>nd</sup> round review on collaborative partnerships with youth, families, courts, tribes and others stakeholders. Particular attention will be paid to involving stakeholders in the provision of services.

## Your Role in the CFSR Process

Frontline workers and supervisors are the change agents of the Children's Division. The work you do, and how well you document your case activities, is directly reflected in the State's performance during the CFSR. Private contractors will also be included in the CFSR process. Cases managed by private contractors will likely be included in the sample pulled for the review.

## The Importance of Data Entry and Case Documentation

CFSR preparation activities also include improving data entry efforts. Accurate, complete and timely entry of data will better reflect true case practice and will result in more accurate accounting of performance. Data entry errors (or omissions) complicate our ability to demonstrate compliance with federal standards. This may lead to activities being required in a program improvement plan which otherwise may have been averted, impacting all levels of staff across the state. In summary, if we get it right the first time, a federally required corrective action can be avoided.

It is also essential supporting documentation including medical, education and mental health records, court orders, safety plans, and other documents which reflect oversight for the child and compliance with policy is maintained in the paper record.

Please refer to [Memorandum CD08-38](#) for more information about CFSR activities. Questions concerning CFSR activities may be directed to Lee Temmen at [Lee.Temmen@dss.mo.gov](mailto:Lee.Temmen@dss.mo.gov).

2008/2009																							
July		August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		April		May		June	
1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-28	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30
Schedule Regional CFSR Kick-off - June 2008																							
Regional CFSR Kick-Offs																							
												11/30/2008 - 1st wave nine circuits complete CFSR Readiness Assessments											
										12/31/08 - 2nd wave 21 circuits complete Readiness Assessments													
														1/31/09 - 3rd wave - 15 circuits complete Readiness Assessments									
																		CD provide training for mock reviewers					
												1/15/09 - 1st wave circuits submit circuit specific PIPS											
														2/15/09 - 2nd wave circuits submit circuit specific PIPS									
																		Complete mock reviews in 5-6 sites					
												03/15/09 - 3rd wave circuits submit circuit specific PIPS											
														Mock review sites adjust PIPs based on results									
																		All circuits begin submitting quarterly PIP updates					
2009/2010																							
July		August		September		October		November		December		January		February		March		April		May		June	
1-15	16-31	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	1-30	16-31	1-15	16-28	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30	1-15	16-31	1-15	16-30
Complete mock reviews in 5-6 sites																							
																		Mock review sites adjust PIPs based on results					
												Initial ACF conference call to begin review planning calls											
														Statewide Assessment writing									
																Draft Statewide Assessment report due							
																		Statewide CFSR Kickoff					
														Discussion begins on site selection									
																Statewide Assessment due							
																		Identify state review team					
																Selection of 3 sites							
																		Children's Bureau provide review team training					
																		On-Site Review week of 6/7-11					

## Collaborative Practice Summit

On February 8, 2008, the Children's Division held a Practice Summit in Jefferson City, Missouri. The purpose of this Summit was to bring together public child welfare staff and private foster care case management providers to share innovative strategies and dialogue on effective child welfare practices. The intent was to focus on *sharing* rather than simply *disseminating* information. Therefore, it was felt the best summit format was roundtable discussions with relevant pre-chosen topics.

In each of the roundtable groups, a facilitator was assigned to guide the discussion and a note taker captured the discussion. The discussion notes were synthesized into a Practice Summit Proceedings Document and its purpose was to capture the essence, spirit and themes of each discussion.

Here are a few practice tips which came from the roundtable discussions:

- Frequent FSTs and visits build good rapport and the case progresses faster
- Build trust by being upfront with parents from the first meeting and share information timely
- Using conference calls to keep everyone on the same page produces good results because everyone hears the same information at the same time
- Always include foster kin as part of the team as they are sometimes excluded in the decision making process
- Use a spreadsheet to track visits and appointments. Some workers suggest making visits during specific weeks of the month
- Be strategic and map out as many visits as you can in one trip
- Multitask when doing an FST and schedule sibling visits if possible
- Develop support groups for foster parents who care for older youth

Since the Practice Summit, participants want to continue sharing practice ideas and discussing practice strategies on a regular basis. The Children's Division hopes to continue to bring the public and private agencies to the table where a synergy can be created as a result of working collaboratively together. Collaboration, as revealed in this summit, means a healthy exchange of ideas, a constructive process for sharing opinions with final consensus reflective of the child and family needs above all else. It is in this spirit the Children's Division intends to proceed with future Practice Summits.

### "Completing the Puzzle of Child Welfare"

Supervisors from across the state attended a Supervisory Summit on May 28-29<sup>th</sup> in Jefferson City. Opening presentations from Deborah Scott and Paula Neese kicked off the summit, after which supervisors participated in three interactive breakout sessions including:

1. Supervisory Role in the Community - "Bringing the Pieces Together"
2. The CFSR and Data-Driven Decision Making - "Connecting the Pieces"
3. Worker Retention - "Supporting the Pieces"

The summit concluded with an interactive session with Foster Care Youth to "Complete the Puzzle".

The Summit was the result of a recommendation from the strategic plan developed by the supervisory workgroup to enhance supervision.



Above: supervisors engaged in discussion during a breakout session at the Supervisor Summit



### CHILDREN'S DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT

*To partner with families, communities and government to protect children from abuse and neglect and assure safety, permanency and well being for Missouri's children.*