

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

June 29, 2007

**What's Inside:**

- Case Review of Worker Visits with Children

**MEMORANDUM**

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

**FROM: PAULA NEESE**

**SUBJECT: CASE REVIEW OF WORKER VISITS WITH CHILD**

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform all Children's Division staff about the upcoming case review of worker visits with children.

**Rationale for Case Review**

On September 6, 2006 the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-288 passing) was signed into law. In passing this act, Congress noted that "Child and Family Service Reviews found a strong correlation between frequent caseworker visits with children and positive outcomes for these children, such as timely adherence of permanency and other indicators of child well-being." This act included requirements for funding caseworker visits. Under the act, a state cannot receive FY 2008 Title IV-B funds unless it has provided fiscal year 2007 data which shows:

- The percentage of children in foster care under the responsibility of the state who were visited on a monthly basis by the caseworker handling the case of the children; and
- The percentage of visits that occurred in the residence of the child.

In order to comply with the above requirements, the division must establish a baseline for worker visits and then report ongoing. Since the current data system does not allow for tracking of caseworker visits with children, the division will conduct a manual count via a case review process beginning July 2, 2007 through September 28, 2007.

The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit, and others designated by Regional Managers, will oversee this review of 379 randomly selected cases from across the state to determine the frequency of worker visits as well as if the visits occurred in the placement setting. Once the review is conducted, the data will be analyzed and reported to the Children's Bureau as per federal requirements. The QA Specialists/designees will contact each Circuit Manager in advance of reviewing a sampled case so the record may be properly prepared prior to the case read.

**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 the next business day and at least one visit per month thereafter must occur in the placement setting.

Children's Services 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.

Worker visits with children in care are essential to assuring child safety and moving children towards permanency. The frequency and quality of these interactions make a difference in the lives of those whom we serve.

**NECESSARY ACTION:**

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division staff.
2. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:

**QA UNIT MANAGER CONTACT:**

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