

ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICE REPORT

June 30, 2007

Revised October 25, 2007

**Submitted to
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
By
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Division of Children and Family Services
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Table of Contents

Child Welfare Services (Strategic Work Plans).....	4
Service Descriptions	43
Collaboration.....	45
Program Support	48
Tribal Consultation	69
Consultation with Physicians or Appropriate Medical Professionals.....	69
Disaster Plans.....	69
Monthly Caseworker Visit Data and State Plan Requirements	70
CAPTA State Grant	74
Chafee Independent Living Services	79
Education and Training Voucher	90
Financial and Statistical Information Reporting.....	92
Juvenile Justice Transfer.....	92
Inter-Country Adoptions.....	92
Child Welfare Demonstration Projects	93
Foster and Adoptive Parents Recruitment Plans.....	94
Adoption Incentive Payments	108
Payment Limitations	110
Certificates and Assurances	

1. SERVICE DESCRIPTIONS

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

STRATEGIC WORK PLANS

Adoption Services

Foster Care Services

Independent Living Services

In-Home Services (Social Service Aides)

Protective Services

Staffing

Supportive Services

ADOPTION SERVICES

OUTCOMES

Belief: Every child matters.

Specific belief: Children deserve a forever family.

- Outcome: Children that cannot be reunited with their families are successfully placed in adoptive families.

Source of information: National Standard – A state meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who exited foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, 32% or more children exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from the home.

Status: Statewide average for the period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 30.55%

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Increase the number of approved adoptive families.

Objective 1 – Recruit and retain the number of families willing to adopt children nine years of age and older by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task1: Tasks are identified in the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Task 2: Implement Adoption Recruitment Response Team (RRT). Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005 and ongoing.

Task 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of Response Team. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005 and ongoing.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006---annually thereafter

Status

A statewide adoption recruitment plan has been developed for the period FFY 2005 – 2009. The plan is based upon three recruitment strategies: general recruitment, targeted recruitment, and child specific. Refer to the report on the adoption recruitment plan.

The Adoption Response Team (RRT) for Arkansas remains effective. It was implemented in February 2005. The Children’s Bureau, The Collaboration to AdoptUSKids, continues to administer the program. The contract remains with One Church, One Child in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Twenty-nine new inquiries from families in Arkansas have been referred directly from the RRT during January 2007 – March 2007. Adoption Specialists and Adoption Supervisors receive inquiries directly from the RRT. DCFS staff met with One Church, One Child staff on March 1, 2007 to review and to identify successes

and challenges. As a result of the meeting, the decision was made to have RRT staff complete the on line inquiry form on the DHHS/DCFS website rather than contacting the Adoption Specialist and Adoption Supervisor by email. This change was implemented to provide families a more prompt invitation (letter) from the Adoption Specialist to attend an orientation meeting. RRT staff will evaluate this change and advise us about its effectiveness. The letter is generated from CHRIS. RRT staff recommended the invitation (letter) to attend an orientation meeting also be available in Spanish. The Adoption Services Unit Manager will initiate a recommendation with appropriate DCFS staff during the next quarter to address the request. RRT staff reported in the meeting that DHHS/DCFS management staff is answering RRT staff's questions for families in a timely manner. RRT staff makes contact with the family every two weeks until pre-service training and the adoption home study are completed. Afterwards, they contact the family every six months until placement occurs. Primary media contacts in Arkansas were provided to RRT staff during the March meeting, and they plan to contact more media outlets to air and print information prepared by AdoptUSKids to recruit foster and adoptive families. RRT staff was asked to forward their quarterly reports to adoption management staff. The reports are being received.

CHRIS Net Reports developed in SFY 2006 for monitoring the inquiries and approval of families willing to adopt children nine years of age and older are in CHRIS. They are not yet available for SFY 2007. Contact will be made with CHRIS staff during this next quarter to request the same reports for SFY 2007 and for it to be ongoing.

The Adoption Services Unit in Central Office processed 381 inquiries from the DCFS web site of waiting children from January 2007 – March 2007.

The general adoption brochure has been translated into Spanish, but not printed. A determination must be made about what other adoption brochures need to be translated. This task will be completed during the next quarter and estimates of printing costs will be secured.

An adoption recruitment planning committee was not formed by March 31, 2007. This committee will be formed and an initial meeting will be held prior to June 30, 2007. An Adoption Services Unit staff continues to be a member of the foster parent recruitment committee.

Request was made to CHRIS staff to add "AdoptUSKids" and Adoption.com to the section on the DHHS/DCFS inquiry screen in CHRIS as a reason for what prompted a family to seek information about adoption and/or foster parenting.

Objective 2 – Recruit and retain the number of families willing to adopt African American children by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Tasks are identified in the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Task 2: Implement the Foster/Adoption Inquiry Process. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2005.

Task 3: Track and determine outcome of inquiries. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed by 2005 and ongoing.

Task 4: Develop a report that compares inquiries with approved homes (CHRIS). Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in 2006 and utilized for all four quarters.

Task 5: Identify effectiveness of the inquiry process and develop corrective action plan if necessary. Completion date by September 30, 2006. Completed in January 2006.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 3, Action Step 3.5, Implement and monitor the statewide adoption recruitment plan in order to increase homes for African American children waiting for an adoptive home and for other waiting children.

Completion of task by September 30, 2006 – annually thereafter.

Status

Refer to the report on the adoption recruitment plan.

CHRIS Net Reports developed for SFY 2006 for monitoring the inquiries and approval of families willing to adopt African American children are available. They are not yet available in CHRIS for SFY 2007. Contact will be made with CHRIS staff during this next quarter to request the same reports for SFY 2007 and for the reports to be ongoing.

Goal 2 – Reduce the length of time from TPR to finalization or adoption.

Objective 1 – Reduce the length of time from TPR to pre-adoptive placement by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Identify time for TPR to placement into pre-adoptive home in a report from CHRIS and develop a baseline. Completion date September 30, 2006.

Task 2: Reduce by 2% a year. Completion date September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Expand opportunities by implementation of the following: Adoption Recruitment Plan, Adoption Opportunities Grant, Foster Care Recruitment Plan, AdoptUSKids. Completion by September 30, 2006. Completed implementation of the plans and programs prior to September 30, 2006, annually thereafter.

Completion of task – ongoing, annual results of reports produced from these efforts currently in place all tasks due by June 30, 2009.

Source of information: CHRIS reports.

Status

The report that was initially requested for a baseline and received in January 2006 needed revisions. Data was insufficient because it did not capture all the pre-adoptive placements for foster parent adoptions in 2005. This was due to non-entry of these pre-adoptive placement dates in CHRIS. Another revised report has been requested from CHRIS after Adoption Specialists re-entered data on foster parent adoptions. It has not been received. Another request will be made during this next quarter. Recommend date of completion of Task 1 and 2 be extended to August 31, 2007.

A workgroup will proceed with assessing the barriers to reducing the time from TPR to pre-adoptive placement. The initial meeting will occur prior to June 30, 2007.

Task 3

Refer to reports that address the foster care and adoption recruitment plans.

The Adoption Opportunities Grant, Adoption Coalition Project, has 12 fully functional Coalitions in nine of the ten DCFS management Areas. The Program Manager for the project reported that the Coalitions spent most of their time from January – March 2007 recruiting new members. The following recruitment activities occurred:

- Heart Gallery events---Garland County Adoption Coalition in January, February, and March, Area III.
- Area newspaper article ---Garland County Adoption Coalition, Area III.
- Newspaper article in Craighead and White County, Area VIII, featuring a waiting teenage boy.

Refer to comments about the Recruitment Response Team (RRT) under Goal 1, Objective 1.

In addition DCFS adoption staff is involved in the following recruitment activities:

- The C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime) was established as a result of the Fellowship Summit held during the previous quarter (new faith based initiative in Pulaski County, Area VI). Approximately, seventeen churches are involved to recruit foster and adoptive families. Meetings have occurred with DCFS and key members of the project. Plans include: recruiting foster and adoptive families within the involved churches, providing pre-service training to adoptive applicants, conducting home studies, and providing supportive services to families after placement such as respite. Individuals with appropriate credentials within the churches are being recruited to provide the pre-service training (Foster Adopt Pride) and conduct home studies. Members of the project have produced a video of waiting DHHS/DCFS children, and it is being shown to the church members during special meetings that focus on foster parenting and adoption.
- DHHS/DCFS was awarded a \$65,000.00 grant from the Dave Thomas Foundation, Wendy's Wonderful Kids to serve Pulaski County, Area VI. Two adoption managers attended the orientation for the grant in February. Procedures are being implemented to hire a recruiter for the project.
- Information booth about adoption and foster parenting at the Black Expo event in Pulaski County, Area VI.

- Newspaper article in Faulkner and Pope Counties, Area V, in February and March.

Task

Objective 2 – Reduce the length of time from pre-adoptive placement to finalization by 10% June 30, 2009.

Task 1: Identify time for finalization of foster parent adoptions. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 2: Assess the barriers of the foster parent adoption process. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Merge the current foster home study and adoption home study into one process/format. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Task 4: Make necessary changes to policy and practice based on the above. Completion date by September 30, 2006.

Source of information: CHRIS reports

Status

Efforts continue to secure more accurate data to complete Task 1 for SFY 2005. A report is now ongoing in CHRIS Net Reports. It does not show all the foster parent adoptions for SFY 2005. Insufficient data entry described in Goal 2, Objective 1, Task 1 and 2, impact on this task as well. For the last quarter, the report for SFY 2005 provided an average time between pre-adoptive placement to finalization to be 3 months. The report conveys 4 months at this time for SFY 2005. CHRIS staff will be contacted during the next quarter to determine if the report for SFY 2005 has been refreshed to reflect additional data. For SFY 2006, the average length of time from pre-adoptive placement to finalization is 3 months.

Tasks 2, 3, and 4 are not completed. The workgroup for Task 3 to merge the foster and adoption home study processes/formats had its initial meeting during the last quarter (November 29, 2006). Four workgroup meetings were held from January 2007 – March 2007. In February, the workgroup began meeting twice a month, and in March, hours for the meetings were extended from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. The process is very labor intensive. Much discussion has occurred about the two processes. Policy/procedures, licensing requirements, and various publications have been assessed and discussed. Workgroup members completed the review of most of the forms and made recommendations for merging them. The remaining forms will be reviewed and merged during the next quarter. The two home study formats have been distributed to workgroup members and plans to merge them will begin in April 2007. The separate workgroup for assessing Task 2, barriers to the foster parent adoption, will be initiated prior to June 30, 2007. Recommend completion for Task 2 and 3 be extended to August 31, 2007. Recommend completion for Task 4 be extended to October 31, 2007. [

Objective 3 – Increase permanency for children waiting to be adopted by 10% by June 30, 2009.
Task 1: Monitor the results of the Adoption Recruitment Plan. Completion dates from 2005 – 2009.

Completion of tasks: Refer to dates in strategic plan.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 3, Action Step 3.5, Implement and monitor the statewide adoption recruitment plan in order to increase homes for African American children waiting for an adoptive home and for other waiting children.

Source of information: CHRIS reports.

Status

Refer to the report for the adoption recruitment plan.

Foster Care

Belief: Every Child Matters.

- Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First
 - Outcome: Preventing abuse and neglect in out of home placements by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children in foster care in the State during the period under review, the percentage of children who were the subject of report of child maltreatment determined to be true by a foster parent or facility staff is 0.57% or less.

Status: Statewide average for the period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 0.58%

- Specific belief: Children deserve to thrive not just survive
 - Outcome: Children in care move less and meet the national standard or above by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who have been in foster care less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal, 86.7% or more children had no more than two placement settings.

Status: Statewide average of period under review (06/01/06-5/31/07) is 67.16%

- Outcome: Physical, medical, and emotional health needs are met (immunizations up to date, medication management maintained, check ups, weight/eye, and dental, grooming)
 - Physical Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 90% or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 92% or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 93% or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 94% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 22 Physical Health of child

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-5/31/07) is 88.18%

- Mental Health Needs of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 80% or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 83% or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 85% or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 90% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 23 Mental Health of Child

Status: Statewide average of period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 95.38%

- Outcome: Children in care have improved educational performance
Educational Services will be substantially achieved by
 - 1st year 85%, or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 88%, or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 91%, or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 93% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 21

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-5/31/07) is 86.23%

- Specific Belief: Children deserve a forever family
 - Outcome: Children are successfully reunited with their family to meet or exceed national standard by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information: National Standard: - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 76.2% or more children were reunified in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-5/31/07) is 87.95%

- Outcome: Siblings are placed together, unless it is clinically inappropriate to do so.
Placement with siblings will be substantially achieved by
 - 1st year 85%, or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 87%, or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 90%, or by June 30th, 2007
 - 4th year 92.5% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information – QSPR Item 12

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 79.55%

- ❖ Belief: Strong Communities Build Strong Families
 - Specific Belief: People belong in healthy community
 - Outcome: Children are placed in the least restrictive placement, in close proximity to their familiar environment.

Proximity of placement of child will be substantially achieved by

- 1st year 81%, or by June 30, 2005
- 2nd year 85%, or by June 30, 2006
- 3rd year 90%, or by June 30, 2007
- 4th year 92% or by June 30, 2008
- 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 11

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 95.14%

❖ Belief: Our Job is To Empower people To Help Themselves

➤ Specific Belief: Our services should promote self-worth, dignity and respect.

- Outcome: Parents and age appropriate child are involved in the development of the case plan

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be substantially achieved by

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005

77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006

84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007

91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008

95% 5th year. or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 18

2nd source will be the Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 53.09%.

Foster Care Goals and Objectives

Goal # I - Recruit, train and retain foster families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs.

Objective #1 - Implement statewide coordinated recruitment plan

- Task # 1 - PIP tasks for action step 3.1 increases by 10% the number of foster parents recruited who are willing to accept children that enter foster care and meet their special needs. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The agency continues to address the need to raise the level of awareness of the need for more foster homes and to promote the Division's recruitment efforts. There were 354 new foster homes recruited during SFY 2006. This was 34 more than the goal of 320 homes for the state fiscal year. This number resulted in a compliance rate of 111 percent, thirty-eight percentage points higher than SFY 2005.

- Task # 2 – Evaluate the effectiveness of the statewide recruitment plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

The agency foster parent recruitment committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the statewide recruitment plan by August 2007.

- Task # 3 - Analyze the Foster Family Needs Assessment grid results with CHRIS approval of foster homes. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The Family Needs Assessment tool was redesigned to better assist specific county recruitment and it is in current use. Since that time, the tool was deemed ineffective by some DCFS staff. Also, the Division will explore other assessment tools as well as utilize data that is available in CHRIS.

- Task # 4 – Evaluate the Areas’ recruitment plans and retention of foster homes. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

Each area has developed a foster parent recruitment and retention plan, and has submitted to the foster care recruitment committee. The foster parent recruitment committee will evaluate the Area’ plans to ensure that they were effective and if necessary, make recommendation to the Community Services Section on how to improve the plans.

Completion of tasks by: September 30, 2007

Objective #2 - Provide pre-service and in-service training for foster parents in a timely and flexible manner.

- Task # 1 – Continue to conduct the quarterly meetings, regional meetings and PDT meetings regarding homes. Completion by: September 30, 2006
- Task # 2 – Provide status reports on the results of the meetings. Completion by: September 30, 2006
- Task # 3 – If issues are discussed and recommendations are needed, develop and implement as necessary. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

DCFS continues to have quarterly meetings that involve Midsouth, LARP staff, Community Support staff and Community Service Staff. The meetings are set up to identify issues and problems with pre-service and in-service trainings for foster parents. Midsouth prepares minutes of the meetings. Also, new policies and/or procedures have been developed based on the recommendations made by DCFS and Midsouth.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006 – on-going

Objective #3 - Formal Kinship Care Program will be developed.

- Task # 1 – Identify options for developing a Kinship Care program and include informal and the out of home placements for RT children. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

The provisional Relative foster home policy has been in place for almost two years (July 2005). In SFY 2006, there were 134 children placed in relative care. During the first two quarters of SFY 2007, there have already been 223 children placed in relative care thus the new Provision Relative policy appears to be working well.

- Task # 2 – Develop recommendations for subsidizing guardianship. Completion by September 30, 2008

Status

The Arkansas Subsidized Guardianship Act was established in 2007 legislative session. A child is eligible for a guardianship subsidy if the Department of Health and Human Services determines the following: 1. A child has been removed from the parent(s) as a result of a judicial determination/contrary to the welfare of the child 2. DHHS is responsible for the placement and care of the child. 3. Reunification or adoptions are not the appropriate permanency options. 4. The child has special needs. 5. A bond exists between the child and perspective guardian is committee to caring for the child. 6. The amount will be on a case by case basis. 7. Contingent upon funding.

- Task # 3 – Develop recommendations for a kinship care program in DCFS for executive staff approval. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: Provisional Foster Home policy has been established as the Division's Formal Kinship Care program. The policy allows placing a child in a provisional relative Foster Home if a relative is identified and it is in the best interest of the child. A child may be placed in the home of a relative on a provision basis for up to six (6) months pending the relative's home being opened as a regular foster home. If the relative opts to have his or her home opened as a provisional Foster Home, the relative shall not be paid a board payment until the relative meets all of the foster home requirements and it's opened as a regular foster home.

- Task # 4 – Implement the recommendations approved by executive staff. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: This policy has been in implementation for almost two years.

Objective # 4 – Ensure adequate placement options for children in other placements.

- Task # 1 – Identify demographics about children placed in other settings. Completion by September 30, 2007

The DCFS 1st Quarterly performance Report Card for SFY 2007 was reviewed and more foster children (2,088) were placed in DCFS foster home (59%) at the end of the first quarter than in any other type of foster care placement. Children between the ages of 2 to 5 (641) represented the largest age group in foster care. Thirteen percent (13%) of children were placed in residential facility and children between the ages of 12 to 18 represented the largest age group of children (295) in this placement. Eight percent (8%) of the children (268) were placed in therapeutic foster home and children between the ages of 6-11 represented the largest group. The Foster Care Committee will continue to review CHRIS reports that demographics about children placed in other settings.

- Task # 2 – Identify the kinds of services that are effective. Completion by September 30, 2007

The Division created a workgroup to assess appropriate placement for foster children. The workgroup assessed and outlined the current placement procedures. Specifically the perspective of the process as viewed by a family service worker, placement specialist, area manager, and central office-Behavioral Treatment Unit. The following recommendation was made:

- a. Increase the number of placement available for sibling groups
- b. Create shelters specifically designed to serve teens
- c. Increase the number of Therapeutic Foster Home beds and Emergency Shelter beds
- d. Hire staff psychiatrist to assess foster children

- e. Create Specialized foster home (there is a DCFS workgroup currently exploring this issue)
 - f. More Adoption specialist is needed to expedite the adoption process and free space in foster homes for other foster children. A problem noted was the inability to timely prepare and to process Disclosure packets.
- Task # 3 – Identify other placement options currently not available in Arkansas i.e. receiver homes, assessment facilities and develop recommendations for consideration. Completion by September 30, 2008

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Status: None

Goal # II - Ensure health and safety of child is maintained while in foster care.

Objective #1 - Children's needs including basic placement needs are assessed upon entry into foster care.

- Task # 1 – Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - Revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Completion by: September 30, 2007

Status

The new DCFS risk and family assessments were implemented October 2006

- Task # 2 – Implement risk assessment and family assessment process according to the PIP work plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: The new DCFS risk and family assessments were implemented October 2006

- Task # 3 – Completion Action Step 2.6. of the PIP - Increase the percentage of children in foster care who receive initial, comprehensive and ongoing mental health services that are documented in CHRIS and hard copy files. Completion by September 30, 2006

Status

DCFS continues to work with UAMS and area mental health agencies to identify and correct problems that have not met the correct percentage for initial health screens, comprehensive exams, and mental health needs. DCFS has increased it health staff around the state and the quarterly training for health Service Workers was re-established. Compliance with the 24 hour screenings, 72 hours screenings, and the comprehensive health screens improved dramatically in several DCFS areas.

- Task # 4– Utilize results of QSPR reports to monitor task 2. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Status:

The new DCFS risk and family assessment were implemented in October 2006 and it is early to utilize the QSPR. A request to change the completion date may be needed in order to monitor task2.

Objective # 2 - Children are placed in the least restrictive most family like setting – (close proximity to siblings)

- Task # 1 – Establish baseline of children placed in their home county. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

None

- Task # 2 – Establish baseline of children placed together with their siblings. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

The DCFS Planning Unit performed research on keeping siblings together and connected while in foster care. The paper included a literature review, DCFS policy citations, and available DCFS reports. DCFS understand the importance of keeping siblings together. The policy and practice of DCFS supports siblings being placed together. The data also shows that the majority of our siblings are placed with at least one of their siblings. DCFS will be forming a committee to explore the options mention in the research that could have a positive impact on DCFS strengthening sibling connections.

- Task # 3 – Address steps to get siblings placed together when they are not initially placed together. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status:

DCFS has formed a committee to explore the options mention in the research on keeping siblings together and connected while in foster care. The options could have a positive impact on DCFS strengthening sibling connections.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2008

Objective # 3 - Children are placed with siblings, unless it is inappropriate to do so.

- Task # 1 – Completion of Action Step 3.1 of the PIP and monitor foster care recruitment plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status:

All of the benchmarks for action step 3.1 of the PIP were completed. The foster parent recruitment committee will monitor the effectiveness of the foster parent recruitment plan.

Goal # III - Ensure DCFS capacity to provide services focused on reunification or other permanency goals in a timely manner.

Objective # 1 - Develop sufficient services to support families.

- Task # 1 – Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - Revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and

monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status

All of the benchmarks for action step 1.2 of the PIP were completed. The new DCFS risk and family assessment were implemented in October 2006.

- Task # 2 – Completion of Action Step 2.2 in the PIP - Expand the current array of services and address service gaps, especially in rural areas, to meet the needs of children and families served by DCFS in order to protect children and prevent removal. Completion by September 30, 2007

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status:

All of the benchmarks for action step 2.2 of the PIP were completed. DCFS continues to explore ways to expand services to meet the needs of children and families. Children are referred to the Child and Adolescence Services System program (CASSP) when they require intensive mental health services and inter-agency involvement on service plans. The P-card has allowed for more services to be purchased and a more immediate action can be taken to prevent removal (such as being able to pay for rent, bills, or food). State legislation was passed to add more Human Service Workers in the schools.

Objective # 2 - Provide opportunities for foster families to be involved with biological families.

- Task # 1 – Ensure foster parent and biological parent are involved in planning for services and developing the case plan. Completion by September 30, 2007

DCFS explored the possibility of Family Team meeting (FTM) or Family Group Conferencing for several years and have explored several models. In the spring of 2006, DCFS conducts a FTM Pilot in Sebastian County. A procedure was developed for what was to happen before the FTM, during the meetings and after the meeting. Four teams on 12 cases conducted FTM. Initial projections were that more could be conducted. The results showed the cases selected were opened between February 1993 to October 2005 and most of the response indicated the criteria for selection of cases for the FTM should have been cases opened more recently in order to establish a better relationship with the worker and the family at the beginning and to hopefully see more expedient progress toward the goal. The appropriate participants were invited and for the most part, all attended. Reviewers felt that caseload size was a factor in the Family Service Worker ability to complete necessary information and casework with the families. Reviewers saw merit in the FTM facilitator not being the caseworker, which was a change in attitude for someone on the FTM Pilot Team. This was due to the time required to set the FTM up and the objectivity and facilitation skills needed to manage the process.

- Task # 2 – Explore feasibility of visits taking place in the foster home. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: None

- Task # 3 – Train staff to inform both the biological parent and foster parent of the importance of visits between child and parent. Completion by September 30, 2007

Status: A sub committee of the Foster Care Group reviewed the DCFS policy and practice regarding the training staff on the importance of visits between child and parents.

- (1) Staff is trained on the importance of this during the CORE training and are updated annually during Grief and Loss training
- (2) When a child enters foster care the worker informs the biological parents of the importance of child/parent visits. A visitation plan is put in place during the first staffing and may be updated at all subsequent staffing as needed
- (3) Upon placement of a child in a foster home the foster parent are information of the importance of child/parent visits and visits will take place according to policy
- (4) The importance of parent/child visits is reviewed during all inquiry meetings
- (5) The importance of parent/child visits are reviewed in depth at all orientation Trainings

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Independent Living

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Children deserve to thrive not just survive

Belief: Our job is to empower people to help themselves

- **Outcome:** Children will graduate from high school or get GED by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: Of the children leaving foster care at majority, receive a High School Diploma, GED, employed or in an educational vocational program.

Status: Report to be developed in CHRIS

- **Outcome:** Children receive Independent Living services in Foster Care
Permanency Goal of other planned arrangements will be substantially achieved in:
 - 1st year 60%, or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 65% or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 75% or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 85% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: Report to be developed

- **Outcome:** Needs and Services of child, parents and foster parents will be substantially achieved by:

1st year 70% or by June 30, 2005
2nd year 75% or by June 30, 2006
3rd year 80% or by June 30, 2007
4th year 85% or by June 30, 2008
5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR Item 17

❖ Belief: People Need Family

- **Outcome:** Children will maintain healthy family connections, while in foster care and after leaving foster care by June 30, 2009

❖ Belief: Our job is to empower people to help themselves

- **Outcome:** After foster care, youth is safe and self-sufficient (3 months, 6 months, 1 year) by June 30, 2009

*After care services will be provided to youth leaving Foster Care

*Please Note: COA G9.8 The organization identifies when aftercare services are needed or desired, formulates a plan with the person or family to meet their needs, and follows up, as appropriate. This applies to all of the services not just IL children. G9.8 further states “The organization follows up on the aftercare plan as appropriate, when possible and with the permission of the person served.”

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Strategic Plan Goals, Objectives, Tasks, Measurements

GOAL 1

Independent Living services will enhance foster children being safe and self-sufficient.

Objective: Develop formal job descriptions and duties for Independent Living (IL) Coordinator positions

Task 1

Review current job descriptions of IL Coordinators and define roles and responsibilities of the IL Coordinator. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Social Service Aide position information was reviewed and compared to actual job requirements of IL Coordinators in September 2005. Other information and suggestions were gathered from ILP Coordinators during September and October 2005 to further define expected roles and functions of IL Coordinators. Completed 12-31-05 This information was submitted to the new DCFS Director 1-17-07

Task 2

Identify job specifications needed for the IL Coordinators – Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Job specifications for IL Coordinators in all 10 DCFS service areas were condensed into a single recommended position description. Completed 12- 31-05 This information was submitted to the new DCFS Director 1-17-07

Task 3

Based on the identification, make recommendations regarding the appropriate job specifications and submit for approval from Executive Staff. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Job specifications for Independent Living Coordinator I and II were written and submitted to Executive Staff. Recommendations regarding IL position Levels I (Grade 15) and II (Grade 17), Supervisory Levels, as well as, workloads/caseloads were originally submitted for consideration in November 2005.

Completed 12-31-05 This information was submitted to the new DCFS Director 11-17-07

Task 4

Identify IL competencies and specific training needs of this position. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: Training needs of IL Coordinators have been discussed and identified. Training is needed in the use of the CHRIS system in both input and output, in resource development for growth in the availability of life-skills training resources and in effective ways to communicate and coordinate with juvenile courts to achieve case-plan goals. Completed 12-31-05. However, additional competencies are being sought by Midsouth Training Academy to ensure that training provided to IL Coordinators meet the skill acquisition needs they will need to provide necessary services to eligible youth. Inquiries are being made to other states to determine how they identify, use and train staff to provide Chafee and other Independent Living Services. The National Resource Center in Tulsa is also being asked to identify relevant

competency and training information they may be aware of. So far, there are no states with a curriculum specifically designed for IL Coordinators. Since the January, 2007 IL Coordinators have been provided training on organizational skills, resource development, case planning and mentoring.

Task 5

Explore supervisory needs of this position and develop recommendations. Completion by 9-30-06

STATUS: A recommendation that supervisory levels for the IL Coordinator position be the same staff positions area to area to promote better supervisory communications between areas and to reduce or eliminate information lags and caseload assignments when clients move from area to area. Supervisory staff at the same levels will know and work with each other, have the same organizational responsibilities and any protocol problems will be reduced or eliminated. This recommendation was forwarded with the recommendations package in December 2005. Completed 12-31-05

Objective 2

All eligible foster youth will receive independent living services

Task 1

Ensure that all eligible IL youth are assessed. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: CHRIS reports indicate that 72.7% of eligible teens have been assessed for needed life-skills training and have had this added to their case plans. This is up from the previously report 53.8%.

Task 2

Either a CHRIS tickler be developed or a monthly report generated that alerts IL, FSW and supervisors when children turn 14 while in care or enter care and are 14 or older. Completion 9-30-07 . The report exists now.

STATUS: The 14th birthday is flagged to alert staff that a referral and an IL assessment need to be completed for youth becoming eligible. In addition, the system generates a report that flags and lists youth who have been in the system for 30 days or more without any selection of life skills training being made. Life skills training needs can only be identified by assessment, and an assessment can only occur after a referral is made.

Objective 3

Independent Living Program services curriculum (life-skills training) will be developed based on levels (age, acquisition of skills/training) and ability of the individual youth

Task 1

Review all cases identified as needing life-skills training. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: A higher proportion of youth are being referred for IL services after becoming eligible. Reports indicate that 80.7% of eligible teens are now being referred for IL services. The need for life-skills training is being correlated with case planning to help ensure that life-skills are addressed in the case plan/transitional plan.

Task 2

Develop a statewide curriculum detailing the 15 categories of training for youth in the Independent Living Program. Completion by 9-30-07

STATUS: Still in progress. Limited by availability of Area life-skills training resources and Coordinators lack of training to find, recruit, utilize and maintain curriculum resources. As resources grow, curriculum standardization will also improve.

Objective 4

All necessary parties who will be included in case planning and service delivery for the youth will be provided a copy of the IL plan

Task 1

FSW will notify affected parties in advance of regularly planned staffing and the 17-17 ½ staffing and will include the youth, IL Coordinator, other secondary workers and foster parent(s). Others may include attorney-ad-litem, OCC personnel, supervisor and birth parents. Completion by 9-30-06. **Done.**

STATUS: Notices are being sent to all affected parties prior to staffing.

Task 2

Attendees and interested parties will be provided with copies of assessment results and case and life-skills plans, updates and changes. Completion by 9-30-06. **Done.**

STATUS: All parties are being provided with copies of new, updated and changed client goals and plans.

Objective 5

Independent Living Program Services will be coordinated with other services e.g. Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, Job Corps, WIA, and Education

Task 1

Individual Services will be developed for each youth i.e., mentoring, on-the-job training, internship, volunteering. Completion by 6-30-09

STATUS: Youth are being included in planning their own case services and having input into services they can both receive and provide. In addition, collaboration is underway with Workforce Investment (DOL), Employment Security, Higher Education (DOE), 2-Year Colleges, Job Corps, DHHS/DYS/DCFS, County Extension Services, Department of Justice, Social Security Administration, Department of Commerce, Youth Services, Rehabilitation Services, Centers for Youth and others to identify and fill service gaps for

eligible IL youth and former foster youth. This collaboration is working both at the federal and state level to encompass all agencies that provide services to these clients and to identify, gaps, overlaps, resources and personnel to establish a statewide infrastructure to improve service delivery. A national “Solutions Desk” is now in place in Tulsa so that the 16 states doing the collaborative work and applications will have a “clearinghouse” to present ideas and search for solutions to barriers such as funding and reporting dissimilarities and limitations at the federal level which impact service systems and delivery at the state levels. An Arkansas “Solutions Desk” is also being developed for the collaborative agencies to use to share information, needs, activities and solutions with each other. Arkansas now has a youth-friendly website available on-line at www.avdc.arkansas.gov which can now begin to serve as a resource for our youth to access and find out about services that are available through the various agencies and how to be involved in planning for and receiving services for themselves. DCFS/ILP has provided several links and information to the website so that youth in search of educational assistance, life-skills training needs and other transitional services and assistance can more easily find help. The site will be updated on a regular basis to facilitate the amount of information available.

Youth Advisory Board members are being exposed to trainings and information concerning mentoring, internships, volunteering, the legislative process and other activities that they can take back to their representative areas and share with youth. They and the ILP Coordinators are being encouraged to also arrange for local resources to present to them and become involved in these processes and part of life-skills trainings. Local Youth Advisory Board meetings are being held, documented and reported to ensure that information is being shared in both hierarchical directions and that their issues and suggestions are making it to the state level.

The Arkansas Youth Development Collaboration continues to meet, plan, recruit, coordinate, define, design and track activities and information concerning the collaborative efforts and has included both the private and political sectors in the base-building efforts of the infrastructure hierarchy. The ‘Vision Team’ (12 members) is meeting regularly to define and re-define the short and long-term goals of the larger collaboration and to provide oversight and assistance to the rest of the team concerning assignments, strategies, project management, interfaces, tracking and infrastructure implementation progress. An application for funding has been submitted to the Department of Labor to provide some assistance with the hierarchical and organizational rollout of the collaborative structure at the local level.

Efforts are also being made to determine the feasibility of combining the organizational information sharing that was becoming prevalent with the Arkansas Transition To Adulthood Conference in a different format that will include more of the collaborative entities.

Task 2

Educational plans and services will be based on the youth’s interests and abilities. Completion by 6-30-09

STATUS: Youth are included in secondary and post-secondary educational planning. IL Youth Advisory Board members advocate for area youth to request to be involved in case planning and to remain in care so that they may receive services.

In-Home Support (by Social Service Aides)

- ❖ Belief: Every Child Matters
 - Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.
- Outcome: Children served are safe. No true reports of maltreatment received after supportive services (SS) given.

Reduction in the percent of children who are abused or neglected within one year of receiving supportive services. Current performance is 5%. Target performance is 3% by June 30, 2006

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 10.08%

- Outcome: Children do not enter foster care.

% of children receiving SS services who entered foster care within one year of initiation of services performance is currently at 2%. The % of children entering foster care after receipt of these services will be reduced by 1% by June 30, 2006.

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 2.19%

- ❖ Belief: We have a responsibility to provide services that work.
 - Specific Belief: Family Centered services are most effective
- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family.

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18
2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 53.09%

In-Home Support Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - The Division will develop a clear, consistent job description for the Social Service Aides (SSA's) and provide training and certification for improved skills to work with families.

Objective 1: Explore development of a career ladder for SSA's.

- Task 1: Develop proposal of a career ladder for SSA's. Completion by 07/01/07
- Task 2: Identify job specifications for the each recommended level of SSA's. Completion by 09/01/07
- Task 3: Submit changes to DCFS Executive staff and if necessary to DHS then OPM for changes. Completion by 12/30/07

Completion of tasks by June 30, 2008

Status: The Arkansas Legislature directed Office of Personnel Management to conduct a pay plan study which includes a review of all classification and positions in State Government. This was completed in October of 2006 year and presented to Legislators during session that begins in January of 2007. There was not any decision was made to take any action with the recommendations although it is still on the table. The committee met on March of 2007 and decided to proceed with developing a proposal that could be reviewed and presented to executive staff for approval.

Objective 2: Establish a training and certification program for SSA's, which includes substance abuse training and include a plan for continuing education.

- Task 1: Identify areas of training needed for SSA's based on the career ladder. Completion by 09/01/07
- Task 2: Develop listing of competencies for SSAs. Completion by 09/01/07
- Task 3: Develop a training and certification program based on competencies for SSAs. Completion by 09/01/07
- Task 4: Implement and monitor tasks above. Completion by 09/01/07

Completion of tasks by October 30, 2007

Status

The agency has certified designated SSA's to teach Active Parenting Education to families in group settings or one-on-one in the family's home. Training has been provided to Aides on Anger Management and continues to provide on an ongoing basis as needed. Aides are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities planned by Staff Development and Mid-South Training Academy.

Objective 3: Explore with university partners options for SSA's to receive support to work on a Bachelor's level Social Work degree.

- Task 1: Develop program and policy for providing educational (BSW w/IV-E tuition currently UAF will provide) services for SSA's. Completion by 1/30/08

- Task 2: Implement an educational program for SSA's. Completion by 1/30/08
- Task 3: Monitor and report the numbers of staff completing the program. Completion by 1/30/08

Status

BSW/SSA policy has been written. There are some barriers with implementation and must be presented to Executive staff before moving forward. UAF has developed some courses for on line classes which are pending approval from the Department of Education. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on line production.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Goal 2 - Produce better timely, individualized services to clients and customers.

Objective 1 – Develop a screen in CHRIS for SSA's to document casework activity for monitoring purposes.

- Task 1: Ensure that there is a process in CHRIS for workers to document the referral of a case to an SSA staff person. Completion by 8/30/07
- Task 2: Referrals must be approved by the supervisor and incorporated into the case plan. Completion by 8/30/07
- Task 3: Review and update referral and CFS 322 Homemaker Referral form. Completion by 8/30/07

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2007

Status: To be initiated for planning after September 2006 and completed by September 2007.

Protective Services

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Child is safe, no repeat true reports – during and 6 months after services provided and case closed Goal date: 95% by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information:

National Standard - A State meets the national standard for this indicator if, of all children who were victims of a report of child maltreatment determined true during the first six months of the period under review, 6.1% or fewer children had another report determined within six months.

QSPR – item 2 – Repeat Child Maltreatment – 95% by June 30, 2009 to substantially achieve this target.

**Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 6.29%
With 93.71 with no Repeat maltreatment**

Outcome: Six month after case closed, no removal required; safety and risk assessment indicates child is safe. Goal Date: June 30, 2009

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/07-05/31/07) is 1.41%

➤ Specific Belief: Children deserve to thrive, not just survive.

- Outcome: Physical, medical and emotional health needs are met (immunizations up to date, medication management is maintained, checkups, weight/eye and dental, grooming etc)---Physical Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:
 - 1st year 90%, or by June 30, 2005
 - 2nd year 92%, or by June 30, 2006
 - 3rd year 93%, or by June 30, 2007
 - 4th year 94% or by June 30, 2008
 - 5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR – Item 22

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 88.18%

Mental Health of Child target will be substantially achieved by:

- 1st year 80%, or by June 30, 2005
- 2nd year 83%, or by June 30, 2006

3rd year 85% or by June 30, 2007
4th year 90% or by June 30, 2008
5th year 95% or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information: QSPR – Item 23

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 95.38%

❖ Belief: People Need Family

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be
70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005
77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006
84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007
91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008
95% 5th year. Or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-/05/31/07) is 53.09%

Protective Services

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Maintain family unit safely

Objective 1: On-going assessment of risk is completed throughout the life of the case

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.
- Task 2: Evaluation of the new risk assessment process will be conducted 1 year after implementation
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the evaluation.

Status: The new risk assessment instrument has been implemented effective 10-1-06. Staff have been trained and are using the instrument on all new cases. The evaluation will be conducted beginning October 1, 2007, to give a full year to review. Task #3 is deferred until after the evaluation is completed.

Objective 2: Family needs and strengths assessed and identified.

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.2 in the PIP - In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.
- Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and family involvement in the process.
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the evaluation.

Status: The family assessment and case plan format through CHRIS has been implemented effective 10-1-06. Staff are currently comparing the training with policy to ensure that all needed policy has been written. After the assessment and case plan has been in effect for one year, our Quality Assurance Unit will evaluate the results. Recommendations will be implemented upon receipt of the evaluation.

Completion of tasks by September 30, 2006

Objective 3: Parents and children are involved in the development of the case plan

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.3 of the PIP - Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal.
- Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the findings from the evaluation.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 1, Action Step 1.2 In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case. Action Step 1.3 Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal

STATUS: The agency has implemented the supervisory review tool, with one third of the caseload being reviewed every month. This review is tracked automatically in our CHRIS system. Our Quality Assurance Unit will evaluate the use and usefulness of the tool and recommendations will be implemented.

While the agency did not receive the grant for Family Team Meetings, these Meetings are being held by staff in some areas of the state.

Between July 2006 and January 2007, the Division visited 14 Community Mental Health sites to review accessibility to communication with mental health service providers. The Division has also been very involved with a System of Care effort to transform the behavioral system in Arkansas to one that is family driven and promotes evidence-based practice.

Goal 2 - Determine effectiveness of services

Objective 1: Case plan is framed to meet the needs of the specific child and family members (including the physical, medical and emotional needs)

- Task 1: Completion of Action Step 1.3 of the PIP - Revise the case planning process, policies, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools to assure appropriate providers and family members are involved, including non-custodial parents where appropriate, and that case plans are developed to keep children safe and prevent removal.
- Task 2: Utilizing the results of the QSPR, evaluate the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.
- Task 3: Implement recommendations based on the findings from the evaluation.

STATUS: All staff have now been trained in the new case plan. This plan will be evaluated one year after implementation and recommendations reviewed and incorporated into our practice.

The Protective Services committee met on April 19. Due to turnover, there are new members and co-chairs. The committee reconfirmed our commitment to the plan and to greater involvement of stakeholders. We will meet again in six months.

Supportive Services

❖ Belief: Every Child Matters

➤ Specific Belief: Child Safety Comes First.

- Outcome: Children served are safe. No true reports of maltreatment received after supportive services (SS) given.

Reduction in the percent of children who are abused or neglected within one year of receiving supportive services. Current performance is 5%. Target performance is 3% by June 30, 2009

Source of Information – The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 10.08%

- Outcome: Children do not enter foster care.

% of children receiving SS services who entered foster care within one year of initiation of services performance is currently at 2%. The % of children entering foster care after receipt of these services will be reduced by is 1% by June 30, 2009.

Source of Information – DCFS Annual Report Card

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is .219%

❖ Belief: We have a responsibility to provide services that work.

➤ Specific Belief: Family Centered services are most effective

- Outcome: The plan and services are developed by and include the family.

Child and family involvement in case planning, family involvement will be

70% 1st year or by June 30, 2005

77% 2nd year or by June 30, 2006

84% 3rd year or by June 30, 2007

91.5% 4th year or by June 30, 2008

95% 5th year or by June 30, 2009

Source of Information is the Quality Service Peer Review (QSPR) item 18

2nd source - Supervisory Review Tool – Case plan developed with full participation of person(s) served.

Status: Statewide average for period under review (06/01/06-05/31/07) is 53.09%

Supportive Services Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - Clearly identify supportive services

Objective 1: Develop services to Families in Need of Services (FINS) as a separate service, differentiated from Supportive Services. Clearly define which families and services are appropriate for supportive services.

- Task 1: Define supportive services. Completion by 12/30/06

Status: The following definition was discussed with executive staff on 1/8/07. The Committee has not received any feedback from executive staff.

Definition

Supportive Services are services offered to and accepted by the family on a voluntary basis to assist appropriate families with children experiencing problems associated with child development, child rearing and family functioning. The services will be offered as a prevention of any harm to children. This service may be requested by the family or someone who is familiar with the family. The family must agree to accept the services, if the service is requested by someone other than the family. The services are community-based and are designed to increase the strength and stability of families; 2). increase parent's confidence and competence in their parenting abilities; 3). afford children a stable and supportive family environment and to enhance child development. Supportive Services are not offered based on a founded report of child maltreatment and are time limited for a period of three (3) months. Each case opened should be staffed after the three (3) month period to assess the need to remain open or to be closed. The Supportive Services case will be opened to ensure the health, safety and promote the best interest of the child. Typical services include family resource centers, human services worker in the school, counseling, parenting classes and assistance in accessing other support programs (TEA). These services are generally time limited. Supportive Services cases should not be opened for the sole purpose of providing childcare.

Note: There is no need to open a Supportive Services case on families seeking only information and/or referral.

- Task 2: Determine policy based on completion of tasks 1.
Supportive Services Definition (draft) was completed 1/8/07.

Status: The committee will now submit the draft definition to the Mock Review Committee.

- Task 3: policy circulated for approval, finalized and promulgated:

Status : The policy can not be circulated for approval until the definition is reviewed by the Mock Review Committee.

- Task 4: Implement the changes to policy, procedure and practice. Completion by 08/31/07

Status: The Supportive Services Committee has not received any feedback from executive staff. Current draft definition will be sent to the Mock Review Committee for review.

Objective 2 – Train staff, providers, and key stakeholders on Supportive Services

- Task 1: Develop training plan and train staff, providers and key stakeholders on Supportive services. Completion by 3/30/08
- Task 2: Implement training plan. Completion by June 30, 2008

Objective 3: Educate the community and courts on Supportive Services

- Task 1: Review current brochure on DCFS services. Completion by 6/30/07

Completed 4/19/07

Status: The current DCFS brochure was reviewed on 4/19/07. The Committee stated the brochure needed to be modified by adding information regarding supportive services.

- Task 2-Revise the brochure to include Supportive Services
- Task 3; make brochure available to courts and the public

Status: once the brochure is completed, the committee will submit the brochure to executive staff or it's designee to make brochure available to the courts and to the public.

Completion by **March 30, 2008**

Objective 4–increase documentation of short term supportive services through CHRIS enhancements

- Task 1: Identify and recommend changes needed in CHRIS to reflect Supportive Services based on definitional changes Completion by 3/30/2008

Status: the committee will identify data needed from CHRIS based upon definitional changes to Supportive Services.

- Task 2: CHRIS enhancements made and reports developed. Completion by 6/30/08

Status: The committee will identify changes needed in CHRIS for Supportive Services.

- Task 3: Monitor the completion of the tasks. Completion by 6/30/08

Status: The committee will monitor the completion of tasks.

Goal 2 – Assess the outcome of services of Supportive Services

Objective 1 – Families who have maltreatment episodes or whose children enter foster care after receiving supportive services will have those cases reviewed to determine why services did not prevent maltreatment and out-of-home placement. Utilize Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process to address findings.

Status: Supportive Services Committee will utilize Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process to address findings.

- Task 1: The committee will utilize the CQI process to review cases by 9/30/08
- Task 2 to The Supportive Services Committee will recommend changes to address issues. Completion by 6/30/09

Objective 2: Conduct a special study on families who received Supportive Services and the impact of those services 1/31/09

Task 1: The committee will report the impact of Supportive Services on families 1/31/09

Objective 3: Utilize CQI process to address finding from the special study by March 30, 2009.

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 1, Action Step 1.2 In order to protect children and prevent removal, we will revise the risk assessment and family assessment policy, procedures, tools, systems, training and supervisory and monitoring tools and processes to assure that risks are identified and addressed throughout the life of the case.

Goal 3 – Assure that client needs are matched to services

Objective 1: Assure resource directory (on line and printable) meets needs of staff.

Task 1: Review current E-Sources capability, including a review of validity of information

Task 2: Recommend changes needed in Esources if any to meet DCFS field staff needs

Objective 1 – Provide resource directory for staff (online and ability to print)

- Task 1: Devise services log to record in-house and provider of services. Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 2: DCFS work on validating and updating eSources website. Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 3: Determine if eSources website meets needs of the field staff, make recommendations for changes. Completion by 6/30/09

Status: Supportive Services Committee reviewed eSources on 4/19/07 and discovered that the information needed to be updated and relevant to the area. eSources is currently available to staff in the field. Supportive Services Committee will schedule a meeting with the eSources directory staff.

Objective 2 - Utilizing changes to assessment and case planning made through the Program Improvement Plan, document that client's needs are matched to the services.

- Task 1: PIP implementation of action step 1.2.2 and 1.3.1 is documenting client's needs are met. Completion by 6/30/09
- Task 2: QSPR and supervisory review tool results will be reviewed to determine that the needs of families are met. Completion by 6/30/09

Program Improvement Plan: Strategy 2: Action Step 2.1 Review and prioritize service needs and contracts to existing budget allocations. Action Step 2.2 Expand current array of services and address service gaps, especially in rural areas, to meet the needs of children and families served by DCFS in order to protect children and prevent removal

Staffing

Goal# 1

Have sufficient qualified staff to insure child safety and families are served.

Objective # 1

Determine the number of staff that would be sufficient for the Division's county operations by June 30, 2007.

Task #1

COA/CWLA standards for staff ratio will be adopted by September 30, 2005.

Status: DHHS and DCFS finalized recommendations; currently a monthly report is produced that provides an analysis of caseloads of workers by county, area and statewide numbers.

Task # 2

All cases including primary Assignments and Secondary Assignments in all service areas will be designated a weight for purposes of determining caseload sizes by December 30, 2006.

Note: This needs to be revised to include caseloads of Resource Workers inquiries and provider files. A preliminary meeting was held in November 2006 to discuss a workload for Resource Workers. Discussed in this meeting were identified key functions and activities and what might be pulled from CHRIS. Once this has been completed, the results will be reflected in a draft report from CHRIS and the team will meet again to discuss weights.

Status: Current monthly report provides by area, county and worker the number of investigations, protective services, foster care children, supportive services and includes primary and secondary assignments.

Roundtable conducted and included Resource Workers and Area Managers; this group developed draft job description and suggested weights for these particular staff position.

Community Services has submitted recommendations regarding the Resource Workers to Director for review and approval.

Task # 3

Determine current caseloads and projections of staff needed by county, area, and statewide totals by June 30, 2006.

Status: Current monthly report provides by area, county and worker the number of investigations, protective services, foster care children, supportive services and includes primary and secondary assignments.

Roundtable conducted and included Resource Workers and Area Managers and this group developed draft job description and suggested weights for these particular staff.

Recommendations for caseload and weights of Resource Workers cases have been developed. Committee met in December and put together an outline of training needs which has been submitted to the Director for DCFS.

A report has been produced that provides an analysis of current case and projections needed by area and for the state for consideration in the next develop of the Division's budget.

Task # 4

Evaluate outcomes of the previous three tasks and use that information to assist in developing budget preparations and reports for management of staff by September 30, 2006

Status: Need to identify methodology for evaluating the tasks.

Task # 5

Request funding and positions for sufficient number of staff to adequately provide services to children and families served by November 30, 2006.

Note: A request for Transition Worker positions Family Service Worker Specialist (20) were submitted and were approved by the Deputy Director of DHHS.

A DHHS committee has been established to review and identify staffing needs, staffing status, caseloads, recruitment activities and hiring issues. This committee meets bimonthly in the Directors office. A report has been produced that provides an analysis of current case and projections needed by area and for the state for consideration in the next development of the Division's budget.

Objective # 2

Recruit Staff by June 30, 2007 and annually thereafter.

Task # 1

Review and modify the recruitment activities (Professional Development, Personnel, DCFS, and DHHS) by January, 2006.

Status: Meet and seek input on recruitment activities from the DHHS Personnel Unit. Several meetings and conference calls have been conducted to discuss recruitment events and coordinate activities. A calendar of college and career fairs has been established and includes the name, date of event and who from DCFS will be assisting in the event (see attachment for a listing of some of these). Feedback is provided from DCFS field staff who attend these discussing the efforts of the event and outcomes. Staff from DHHS personnel unit along with DCFS Community Services staff attend to assist in this event.

Task # 2

Identify areas where recruitment is an issue and develop specific recruitment needs, i.e. Spanish speaking workers, by June 30, 2006.

Status: Special television ads were developed for Northwest Arkansas, a special entry rate was created for this area to entice interested applicants. The Division created diverse job opportunities that will provide options to assist in staffing a county office i.e. internship, co op positions and job share positions. Functional job duties for these positions were developed. Ten (10) Internship positions have been identified, ten (10) co op positions have been identified and two (2) job share positions for Area 1 have been identified. Area Managers are currently interviewing possible candidates for the items and Co op positions.

Community Services staff attend various universities, colleges, education institutions and job fairs. Periodic reports are generated and provided to the DHSS Committee which details the results of the recent recruitment efforts. Staff are currently attending job fairs, career fairs, and information sessions with schools to interview spring graduates at John Brown university. University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, University of Central Arkansas, Arkansas State university and Arkansas Tech. See attached spreadsheet with all of these represented.

Task # 3

Schedule and attend university and college career days and job fairs to advertise, recruit and provide information about various job openings.

Status: DHHS Humans resources provides the calendar, Community Services Assistant Director schedules field staff to attend these. Conference calls and a meeting were conducted to outline roles and responsibilities, identify staff attending the information sessions and identify staff who will be conducting the interviews with the students planning to graduate. Procedures were outlined and shared with field staff and Executive staff.

Task # 4

Schedule and attend university and college classes, social work classes of those graduating to talk about the agency's mission, the various job openings and tasks, stipend student information, etc.

Status: See attachment of Career Day events for Spring of 2006 at the end of this work plan. There were many events attended by our field staff.

Task # 5 previously #3

Implement the plan (Personnel and Professional Development) by December 30, 2006.

Task #6 – previously #4

Implement the plan (Personnel and Professional Development) by December 30, 2006.

Status: Evaluate the plan to see if it meets DCFS needs and modify based on the results of the evaluation (Community Services and Community Support) by June 30, 2007.

Objective # 3

Address family service worker on-call issues by June 30, 2007.

Task # 1

Identify on-call options (Pulaski County On-Call work group) by December 1, 2005.

Status: Roundtable conference call was conducted November, 2005 with participation by Williams Toles, Rosemary White, Kim Alexander, Debbie Shiell, Megon Bush. Recommendations were submitted to the DCFS Director and some of the suggestions and enhancements to practice are being implemented at Pulaski.

After hours or a second shift was identified by Executive Summary of Assessment of Best Case Practice published in November 2006. As a result, research was conducted by surveying states with “shift work” staff, forming a committee of field staff for input and reviewing personnel policies for developing this type of position. The proposal was submitted to Executive Staff December 2006.

Task # 2

Compile information and make recommendation by June, 2006.

Status: Ongoing. Development policies and procedures to test out these in a large area, medium area and rural area.

Task # 3

Implement recommendations by December, 2006.

Status: Need to determine if tasks need to be included in agency policy.

Task # 4

Evaluate the implementation of recommendations and modify based on the results of the evaluation by June 30, 2007.

Objective 5:

Develop and implement BSW (SSA), MSW program for providing services to children and families by June 30, 2008.

Task# 1

Identify options and incentives to allow staff to complete course work for BSW and/or MSW (Professional Development) by April, 2006. This task is completed.

- BSW/SSA Policy has been written.
- UAF has developed HBSE I & II as on-line classes. They are now with DOE for their approval. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on-line production.
- DCFS has had an MSW Educational leave Program implemented for over ten years.

Task# 2

Collaborate with the universities to develop policies and procedures for the above (Professional Development) by December, 2006.

- BSW/SSA Policy has been written.
- UAF has developed HBSE I & II as on-line classes. They are now with DOE for their approval. The Human Diversity class has also been taped for on-line production.

Status: Task complete

Task # 3

Implement the above and evaluate the tasks (Professional Development) by June 30, 2008.

Objective 6

Review and revise Supervisor Training Curriculum by June 30, 2009.

Task #1

Review the current supervisor's curriculum and identify needed topics that will cover evidence based on practice and clinical aspects of the job by June 30, 2006.

Status: Review current supervisor competencies, formal and functional job descriptions of unit and county supervisor positions. Several competencies were reworded, added competencies on CQI, MIS (report utilization) and Ethics.

Task #2

Review activities and learning materials from the Mentoring Supervisors project that should be a part of the supervisor training and staff development by June 30, 2006.

Task# 3

Review the revised supervisor job description to be developed through the Classification and Competency Study identify competencies related to job functions by October 31, 2006.

Status: Several additional competencies were added, revised others and ranked according to mission critical, timeliness, and immediacy for a supervisors need to know that competency. The next step will be to seek final approval from DCFS Executive staff regarding the new competencies, what will be covered in the 1st year, update training in the 2nd and 3rd year and any training after that.

Task# 4

Develop a multi-tiered supervisor training plan and present to DCFS Executive Staff for approval by June 30, 2007. Status: Completed in task one. Need to submit recommendations to Executive staff for review and approval. MidSouth will develop the curriculum for the new competencies.

Task# 5

Implement approved training plan by October 1, 2007.

Task# 6

Evaluate the training plan and modify the plan based on the results of the evaluation by June 30, 2009.

Objective 7: Development of a comprehensive and inclusive retention plan by January 30, 2008

Task# 1:

Identification of key retention activities by December, 2006

Status: The Worker Recruitment and Retention Task Force will meet in July to review the status of their November, 2002 and determine what has been completed and what needs to be carried into the CFSP.

Task# 2:

Development of an ongoing personnel satisfaction survey that is separate from the existing exit interview in current policy. January 30, 2007

Status: A survey was developed in 2004. It has been resubmitted for review, consideration and approval to the new Planning Unit Manager. The Planning Unit will implement a personnel survey by the end of the calendar year 2007.

Task# 3:

Focus group sessions conducted periodically in the different DCFS areas to identify strengths and ideas for improvement.

Status: Completed in Area VI – “short term Area VI – Pulaski Plan” was developed and recommendations completed as a result of this plan.

Completed in Area VII and report submitted January, 2006. Recommendations will be developed by March, 2006.

The Department of Health and Human Services conducted focus groups with all Divisions and Offices. A random selection of 473 names was pulled and 293 staff participated in 12 focus groups. Questions posed included; a) identify positive characteristics that should be evident in our culture if we want to be a high performance and high quality state agency; b)when you think about all levels of leaders/managers/supervisors in a high performance agency, what should our leaders start doing, stop doing, continue doing to build a high performance agency; c)identify a list of common problems or barriers that you have experienced at work that if changed, would make your job easier and; d)if you were the director of your division or DHHS and you could change one thing, what would you change. A survey has been developed which every employee has been asked to complete.

Task# 4:

Development of a Family Service Worker advisory group.

Status: A Worker Advisory Group facilitated by MidSOUTH Academy has been established in Area VI. This group meets monthly Thursday morning at 8:30

Area VI has developed an Employee Advisory Council made up of staff from Area VI to include aides, family services workers, supervisors-anyone interested in attending and participating in their group. The Area place “possibility boxes” in each of the five(5) area boxes allowing staff to provide suggestions, comments, or concerns about the Area’s operation. The Council meets monthly to review these and make recommendations, discuss in their CQI meetings or talk about in weekly supervisor meetings.

Also note that following has been completed:

The DHHS High Performance Culture Leadership Summit is being conducted and attended by all Area Managers, many County Supervisor, and Unit supervisor are completing Division wide projects. One of these was the development of an Employee Advisory Council in Pulaski-this has been formed and is currently in the process of

developing mission and vision of the group. In addition, employee suggestion boxes were placed in all of the Pulaski locations.

A second group developed a plan entitled the Employee Recognition and Empowerment Program designed to assist in retaining staff by providing recognition for a job well done, as well as motivating staff to improve their performance and service to clients. This plan has been submitted to the DCFS Executive staff for review, approval, and then to proceed with implementation.

A third group proposal was submitted entitled “DCFS In the Know” designed to develop a “celebrations” event, problem solve teams, orientation and job shadowing, updating the DCFS web site, central office staff visits and meet the field in their Areas. The work of this committee is ongoing with the Celebration scheduled for September 2007.

Task 5: Development of incentives separate from financial incentives. January 30, 2008

Status: Review the Worker Recruitment and Retention Task Force Recommendations submitted November, 2002 and determine what was completed and what needs to be carried into the CFSP. Establish a committee to identify incentives. The committee is scheduled to meet March 28, 2007 to review the previous recommendations.

Service Descriptions: Status for 2007

The Division delivers services directly and purchases services from private and public agencies, universities and individuals, using state and federal funds. Programs and services of other Divisions within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) are also available to clients of DCFS. Delivery of services is coordinated with other Divisions administering TEA/TANF Medicaid, Food Stamps, Social Services Block Grant and other federal entitlement programs.

DCFS continues to work with the state Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP) State Lead Agency funded under Title II of CAPTA to develop child abuse prevention programs, in addition to the ones DCFS purchases.

DCFS staff provides child maltreatment investigations, assessment, case planning, referral and case management services. If a child cannot be maintained safely in their own home, DCFS will petition the court for custody and place the child in an approved foster home or licensed residential facility. The Division approves and supervises foster homes.

Direct services include the following:

Child Welfare Services is a broad category of services to children and their families and includes a variety of services described below, including Supportive Services, Child Protective Services, In-Home Support, Foster Care/Kinship Care Services, Independent Living services, and Adoption Promotion and Support.

Supportive Services - Voluntary services to families in need.

Child Protective Services - Child maltreatment investigations and protective interventions for children whose parents or legal guardians do not provide the care and protection needed for normal physical and emotional development and assistance to the parents or legal guardians to help them fulfill their parental roles.

In-Home Support – Social Service Aides provide support services to persons or families in their homes. Services are designed to provide children or adults with personal care needed to enable them to remain home and to prevent institutionalization or another form of out-of-home care. Social Service Aides also provide parent education.

Independent Living Services (direct service) - Each child in DHS custody, age fourteen or older, for whom the goal is not reunification shall be provided with instruction for development of basic life skills. Each child, age sixteen or older, shall be assessed every six (6) months to determine the progress in acquiring basic life skills. Services identified in the assessment to help the child achieve independence will be provided either directly or through contract. Each foster parent caring for, or interested in caring for, a child age fourteen or older, and each Family Service Worker responsible for any children, age fourteen or older, shall receive training in helping children acquire basic life skills.

The Independent Living grant program provides service to youth in foster care that are normally unavailable through other program funds such as Title IV-E-Foster Care. Services provided are primarily educational and are intended to keep youth in school while they obtain life skills that will assist them in transitioning to adulthood. The program coordinates age-appropriate life skills training for eligible youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18. It assists

with services and purchases that enable the youth to fulfill educational goals that may include high school graduation and post-secondary education. This includes college or university training, vocational training, and assistance in finding career and job opportunities. In addition, the program may assist emancipated youth that choose not to continue their education past high school to establish a residence. (Youth can be emancipated by court order only.) There are many levels of assistance and instruction available to youth who choose to participate in the program. All assistance and instruction should be provided in accordance with the child's case plan.

Foster / Kinship Care Services - The Division provides services to children whose biological parents cannot care for them, by providing a planned period of care by approved foster parents, including relatives who are approved as foster parents, and by planning for reunification or placement in another permanent living arrangement. Time-Limited Family Reunification services (described below) are part of the services delivered to children in foster care and their families.

Child Abuse Neglect/Prevention – The Division distributes materials throughout the State to field offices, schools, Family Resource Centers and medical facilities. These materials target the reduction/awareness of child abuse and neglect. Materials have the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline number printed on it.

DCFS Child Protective Services staff provides and facilitates training on Substance Abuse, Anger Management and Effective Parenting. Training is geared toward staff working directly with families, staff from Family Resource Centers and schools. The DCFS Director serves on the Arkansas Child Abuse Prevention Commission (ACAPC) which provides for increased coordination of efforts between the agencies, Executive Director of ACAPC, and also serves on the DCFS Advisory Committee.

The Family Resource Centers and our Human Service Workers in Schools are considered preventive programs due to the fact that families can receive assistance and not have a case in DCFS. In fact, the primary reason for these two services is to prevent the necessity of opening a case.

Intervention and Treatment - The Division offers several services to children and families. Intensive Family Services, Anger Management, Parenting Education, Interpreter Services, Psychological Evaluations, Drug Screenings, Assessments and Treatment (limited), Respite Care and Counseling are services offered to families to resolve issues that could cause removal of the child.

Purchased Services include the following:

- Statewide comprehensive medical examinations for foster children through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Department of Pediatrics.
- Assessment, diagnosis and therapy services for adolescent sexual offenders through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Department of Pediatrics
- Individual, family, and group therapy and various individual and group counseling services from private agencies, mental health associations, or private practitioners throughout the state.
- Professional language interpreters statewide when serving families that do not speak English.

- Sign Language Interpreter services
- Services to disabled children.
- Emergency shelters for children and teens.
- Purchased services to children in the custody and care of DCFS include therapeutic foster home programs, psychiatric residential treatment, comprehensive residential treatment, residential treatment, respite care, health services, independent living
- Respite care
- Therapeutic groups for foster and adopted teens
- Adoption and foster care recruitment activities
- Training for DCFS staff, adoptive parents, foster parents and adopted children
- Adoption support groups
- Life books for children in foster care
- Adoption resource libraries

Additional Adoption Promotion and Support Services

- In-home consultation visits with prospective adoptive families
- Adoption home studies
- Adoption summaries on waiting children
- Non-identifying summaries on adoptees
- Adoption subsidies
- Adoption Registry services

2. Collaboration

The Foster Parent Recruitment Committee - The purpose of the committee is to develop the state foster care plan and assess its effectiveness. The committee is comprised of Resource Workers, the Planning Unit and the Central Office Adoption Unit.

The Foster Care Committee - The purpose of the committee is to develop a clear outline and timeframe for completion for the tasks involved in meeting the goals and objectives for the foster care section of the state plan. The committee is comprised of Community Service Staff and Central Office.

Foster Care Board Rate/Specialized Home Committee -The purpose of the committee is to look at the foster care board rate for foster parents. The committee is comprised of Central Office Staff, Community Service staff and foster parents.

Workgroup for Appropriate Placement for Foster Children - The purpose of the group is to assess current placement procedures and to make recommendations for improvements. The committee is comprised of Central Office Staff, Community Service staff and Contract Providers.

AYDC Vision Team - The purpose of the team is to ensure the future employability of at risk youth that are being served by various agencies. The committee is comprised of DCFS Community Support Staff, DYS and the Department of Workforce. Collaborative agencies within the state include DYS, DCFS, Workforce Investment, Job Corps, Dept. of Education, Behavioral Health, Arkansas Transitional Employment and Employment Security and other agencies are being recruited to provide additional input and to assist with the federally funded roll-out of a communications network and hierarchy that assists the involved agencies to meet the needs of the youth we serve. The network, when in place all the way to the grass roots level should provide a structure for service agencies to identify youth in need of services, available services, service gaps, service overlaps, available funding sources, manpower commitments, shared responsibilities, local, regional and statewide links and many other ways of sharing information and resources to assist youth to get information, assistance and training to get them employed and integrated into the mainstream of jobs and industries currently in the state and those evolving in the next ten years.

Child Abuse Committee--In collaboration with the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence, the Child Abuse Committee works with state partners to prevent child abuse and neglect. The committee members consist of agencies and groups representing Law Enforcement, Multidisciplinary Teams, Education, Mental Health, Judicial and other professional groups.

Citizen Review Panels-The Citizen Review Panels operate in Carroll, Jefferson and Ouachita Counties, reviews child maltreatment cases and the State plan. The Panels make recommendations and works with the County Offices.

Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Works with ADAP staff to help Arkansas citizen's live productive lives, free from the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Strategic Prevention Framework- (SPF) State Incentive Grant (SIG)— Advocates for prevention, intervention and education regarding the use of alcohol and drugs. Provides education and other prevention services in schools and community programs throughout the state.

Strengthening Families Initiative- A collaboration with Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education to promote the prevention of child abuse and neglect in early care and education.

Parent Involvement Task Force group headed by Dr. Nic Long, Ark Children's Hospital. Our goal is to identify and address the needs of parenting education and parent involvement in Arkansas.

Governor's Interagency Council on Early Intervention (ICC) - CPS Unit Program Manager serves as proxy for the DCFS Director. Membership of this committee consist of other DHHS agencies, the Dept. of Education, Parents, Provider Vendors, a Legislator, Dept. of Insurance, and a physician from Ark Children's Hospital.

Collaboration with TEA, the Department of Education and local School Boards regarding the Human Services Workers in the Schools.

The Homeless Outreach Event is a collaborative effort between state, federal and community providers and partners to provide a one day event where needed services are provided to homeless individuals and families. Participating agencies include: Arkansas Cares, Division of Health, Division of County Operations, Arkansas Military Department, City of North Little Rock, Salvation Army, Arkansas Supportive Housing Network, Centers for Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development, Black Community Developers, U.S. Department of Veterans Administration, U.S. Department of Social Security Administration, City of Little Rock, Arkansas Department of Labor, local businesses, faith based and community based organizations. Services include: legal advocacy, mental health evaluations, dental examinations, haircuts, showers, information and referrals, health screenings (cholesterol, blood pressure, blood glucose, etc.), school supplies, employment information, hygiene care kits, immunizations and clothing. Services provided may be a catalyst for homeless individuals and families to get back into mainstream society.

Court Improvement:

DCFS has a good partnership with the Court Improvement staff in the Administrative Office of the Courts, and have participated in meetings, training, and planning retreats based on the recommendations for the CIP survey conducted by CIP. DCFS partnered with CIP as team members and reviewers in their Court Reassessment Reviews. The division plans to continue this collaboration in the future by ensuring that they are invited and participate in the Child and Family Services Reviews, program improvement plan follow ups. They continue to be invited to participate and give input on the DCFS Advisory Board. The AOC has plans to involve DCFS in their plans and implementation of the training and data technology grants.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is partnering with DCFS in regards to recruitment of foster and adoptive homes. They have provided promotional items such as posters and billboards, covered television ads, as well as temporary staff for statewide inquiry calls.

3. Program Support

Research and Evaluation

Supervisor Review Quarterly Report – A report that provides detailed findings from child welfare case specific reviews conducted by supervisors in every county of the state. A 100% case review is required each quarter. The report provides information statewide, by area and by county. The review serves as a one-on-one training situation on individual cases for the worker and allows the supervisor to work with the worker on practice issues. It allows the supervisor to determine if the FSW knows how to utilize best practice concepts and can work with the FSW on developing those skills.

Family Preservation Services - An evaluation that is conducted annually in accordance with state law. Among its requirements, the annual report must describe the number of families and children receiving services; track the children and pinpoint their placement status at six months and 12 months after receiving services; estimate the cost of services; and provide recommendations on progress and service delivery.

Impact of Welfare Reform on Child Welfare Reports - A report that provides information on trends in welfare reform and its effect on child welfare within the state.

Mentoring Supervisors Project – An evaluation report of the Arkansas Mentoring Supervisors Project, funded by a federal grant through the Southern Regional Quality Improvement Center of the University of Kentucky was submitted on March 31, 2006. The project is testing the impact of mentoring of supervisors and clinical supervision.

Compliance Outcome Report (COR) – A monthly report that measures compliance with 36 established performance indicators that represent a commitment to best practice.

Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) – A quarterly report that provides information on service outcomes, compliance with standards set by DCFS with guidance from the Joint Interim Arkansas legislative Children and Youth Committee and demographics of children served throughout the year.

Annual Report Card (ARC) – A report that replicates the QPR on an annual basis.

Adoption Coalitions Evaluation Report – The adoption grant is a five-year grant designed to build community coalitions throughout the state to help with general, targeted and child-specific recruitment as well as provide adoption support to families. Quarterly adoption data reports are completed that provide information such as number of children placed in pre-adoptive homes, number of finalized adoptions and length of time from TPR to adoptive placement and finalization. The grant also includes a coalition website that is utilized to gather information on things such as memberships and activities of the coalitions. Lastly, an annual evaluation is completed to determine the effectiveness of the grant activities.

Quarterly Services Peer Review Reports – A report that provides detailed findings from comprehensive case specific qualitative reviews conducted by the Quality Assurance staff and agency staff throughout the State. This report is produced monthly with the exception of Area 6,

where twice as many cases are reviewed over a two month period. This review is designed to replicate the Child and Family Service Review conducted by the federal Department of Health and Human Services.

All of the above-listed reports are planned for 2008.

Training Plan – FY 2006 - 2009

Value Statement

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) recognizes and values the dedication of all employees. DCFS goals of child protection and family preservation will only be achieved through the work of highly trained and motivated child welfare staff. We believe that the pursuit of excellence and achievement of Division goals outlined within the Belief Based Performance Management System requires the exposure of workers to new and innovative training material involving best practices in child welfare. The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Purpose

This document is the training plan for all employees and volunteers within DCFS. The purpose of training within DCFS is to give staff and volunteers' skills they need to accomplish the agency mission.

Funding Authority

Authority for establishment of a Title IV-E training program and claiming reimbursement for such a program is cited at 45 FTR 1356.60(b).

DCFS Professional Development Unit (PDU)

The mission of the PDU is to support training activities in DCFS through monitoring of the Academic Partnership training contracts, processing of requests to attend workshops and conferences and reimbursement of training-related expenses of those individuals who serve IV-E children. The PDU is administratively located within the Legislative, Analysis, Research and Planning Unit (LARP) of DCFS.

Who Can Be Trained

Personnel employed in all classes of positions, volunteers and persons preparing for employment by DCFS may be trained and the cost of this training can be claimed for reimbursement under the IV-E program. This includes students preparing for employment in DCFS and DCFS child welfare staff seeking the Masters Degree in Social Work. Training may also be provided to current and prospective foster, kinship and adoptive parents and members of state licensed or approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving IV-E assistance.

Training Resources

Training is provided to DCFS staff and volunteers through contracts with the Academic Partnership, DCFS in-house providers, other state, local and federal resources, and private training providers. Although most training events take place within the state, there may be some critical training only available out of state. Training resources include Internet/Intranet sites, compressed interactive video training events (CIV), and lending resource libraries maintained by the Academic Partnership sites. Depending upon training media selected, training sites may include:

- MidSOUTH Training Center sites in Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Arkadelphia, Monticello, and in Little Rock, AR
- Arkansas Academic Partnership University/College sites (7)
- Seventy-five County Offices housing DCFS staff
- Contracted third-party training sites, such as hotels, conference centers, or municipal or other state facilities

University Partnerships

To optimally utilize IV-E training and administrative funding, the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has developed partnerships resulting in two contracts with institutions of higher education: the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) MidSOUTH Center and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF). The latter subcontracts with the following to form the Arkansas Academic Partnership:

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, University of Arkansas at Monticello, Arkansas State University, Harding University, Arkansas Technical University, Philander Smith College, and Southern Arkansas University. These contractors have been enlisted to educate and train DCFS staff, potential staff, and foster parents and to perform defined administrative activities. The education, training and administrative activities are described in contracts developed between the agencies. Performance indicators contained in those contracts describe specific expectations of the contractors.

Allowable costs to be considered for Title IV-E funding (federal or match) include the following:

- State general revenues that are being used to fund salaries and fringe of faculty and support staff involved in programs that prepare students for employment with the state child welfare agency and directly relate to/support the contract deliverables. For degree programs that are accepted by the state agency as qualifications for Family Service Workers, any course required to get the degree as reflected in the catalog and any elective that specifically relates to IV-E could be included. Those degree programs must include persons preparing for employment with the state agency (i.e., receiving stipends.)
- Other university support departments who jointly support the deliverables of the agency who are excluded from indirect costs are also allowable.

- The university's federally approved indirect cost rate. The university should include a copy of the letter from the appropriate Federal agency that approves their indirect cost rate.

The statewide collaboration among DCFS and nine Arkansas universities focuses on education and training to support and improve child welfare practice. The partnership objectives are to develop a family-centered child welfare curriculum and infuse it into interdisciplinary academic curricula statewide; to recruit and prepare university/college students for employment in the child welfare system administered by DCFS; and to better prepare child welfare workers and supervisory staff through state-of-the-art pre-service training and continuing education.

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock MidSOUTH Center works collaboratively with DCFS and the partnership coordinated by University of Arkansas at Fayetteville to coordinate its training activities. The MidSOUTH Training Academy operates five training centers for the purpose of providing classroom training and education for DCFS staff on a statewide basis. MidSOUTH offers the following unique classroom training and education activities:

- Pre-service training for all newly hired FSW trainees
- Leadership/Supervision training
- Social Service Aide (SSA) training
- Training of Hotline Operators of the Arkansas State Police (ASP)
- Continuing education for DCFS staff, foster parents and closely allied provider staff
- Training in the automated SACWIS database for field staff (**CH**ildren's **R**eporting and **I**nformation **S**ystem – **CHRIS**)

MidSOUTH also provides initial training to all DCFS-referred foster parents and adoptive parents including, but not limited to, Foster PRIDE / Adopt PRIDE (**P**arent's **R**esource for **I**nformation, **D**evelopment, and **E**ducation), developed by Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), as approved by DCFS Executive Staff.

MidSOUTH continuing education events are published on-line monthly and held at sites determined by required technology and targeted trainee population. Training topics are based on specific needs determined by DCFS Executive Staff and the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tool.

The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) works cooperatively with DCFS and the UALR to coordinate its training activities. UAF subcontracts with seven (7) other universities for the purpose of providing statewide training and education services under overall DCFS contract. Additional responsibilities of the collective Arkansas Academic Partnership include:

- Employing field instructors for the purpose of mentoring new workers during their first year of employment
- Providing advanced practice education when requested. Additional curriculum may be developed and presented at the request of DCFS Area Managers or Executive Staff. Core-training topics are standardized for consistency of presentation throughout the Partnership
- Maintaining a child welfare resource center at each university site to allow DCFS staff the opportunity to review and check out materials and resources. An on-line listing is

provided of all available materials. Developing a cooperative effort to provide training for new Partnership new field education staff and refresher training for incumbent field instructors.

- Recruiting either BSW or selected multi-disciplinary degree candidates in their senior year of college, to accept a two-semester stipend in exchange for a one year work obligation with DCFS upon graduation.

Immediately upon employment, every Family Service Worker Trainee (FSWT) will be assigned a Field Instructor from one of the contracted Universities/Colleges within the Academic Partnership. The Field Instructors will provide further orientation, guidance, mentoring, skill demonstration and a knowledge base to all FSWT's during the first year of their employment to assist the new worker in adapting to their new positions and responsibilities. This mentoring will assist the FSWT in passing their panel review, which is usually held after the first 5 months of employment. The panel review is a process involving a representative body of DCFS Area field administrative staff, appointed by the Area Manager that meets prior to the 6th month of FSWT employment, to review the work and knowledge of the FSWT.

Current Training

With the exception of the available “part-time” DCFS MSW Educational Leave program, all training offered within DCFS is considered “full-time,” in that employees are relieved of all responsibilities for performance of current work when participating in a DCFS-sponsored training event. The IV-E definition of “long-term training” of events eight or more weeks in length, applies to New Worker Training, the MSW Educational Leave Program, and the senior year undergraduate educational assistance program.

Orientation –The purpose of the orientation process is to provide information to the participant concerning the program in which they are involved. Items covered include DCFS policies and procedures, guidelines, timeframes, structure and nature of work and responsibilities, required paperwork and expected behaviors including ethical behavior, confidentiality, legal rights of clients that we work with, and continuous quality improvement processes. Orientations have been developed for all staff within DCFS and for foster parents.

The following orientation processes and forms are available for new employees and volunteers:

- All DCFS Employees (program and non-program employees). Each hiring supervisor must complete and submit to DHHS/DCFS Personnel the following orientation processes within 30 work days of the date of hire:

DHHS 1101-New Employee Orientation Checklist

DCFS CFS-1136 New Employee Orientation Checklist Addendum

Additional program new worker orientation and on-the-job training is included within DCFS New Worker Training (NWT) provided by MidSOUTH Training Academy.

- All foster and kinship parents, upon completion of their mandated pre-service and approval as a foster or kinship home, will be provided with an orientation provided by DCFS staff, using the following approved form:

CFS – 465 DCFS Foster Parent Orientation Checklist

Additional foster/kinship parent orientation is included in the foster/kinship parent pre-service training.

- Provisional Relative Foster Homes may have a child placed before being licensed, but all licensing requirements are to be met within 6 months of placement. This orientation form must be completed and signed by the family before the child is left in the home:

CFS – 474 Provisional Foster Home Orientation Checklists

- Volunteers, not providing foster or adoptive services to the agency, are covered by DHHS Policy 1027.

New Worker Training

All pre-service NWT for program staff has been approved by the DCFS Executive Staff and is provided by UALR MidSOUTH Training Academy. The curriculum is based upon worker competencies developed by the Institute for Human Services (IHS). New FSW trainees are scheduled within the first two weeks of employment. Classes are delivered by university staff through one of five sites throughout the state to allow the new worker closer access to both their office and home. Due to the intensity of the NWT and assigned on-the-job training requirements and responsibilities, the FSWT shall carry a maximum workload of five (5) secondary cases. The overall training event provides classroom lecture, activities, discussion, training strategies involving all learning styles, and on-the-job field training for skill development. Both pre-and post-testing is used for each module and for the course as a whole.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

- **FSWT New Staff Training** is competency-based training for newly hired family service workers consisting of twenty-two days (132 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a ten week period. The training is preceded by a one week in-office orientation phase and interspersed with field instruction and standardized on the job training activities while not in the classroom. Classroom instruction consists of training in *Family Centered Practice* (to include cultural diversity), *Dynamics of Maltreatment*, *Effects of Abuse on Human Development*, *Casework Communications*, *Effects of Separation and Placement*, *Child Maltreatment Assessment*, *Foster Care – Out-of-Home Placements*, and *Case Management – Assessment, Planning, & Coordinating Efforts*. In the past year, fifteen FSW new staff training events were conducted involving 188 participants. This classroom training is provided at one of the five MidSOUTH Training Academy locations throughout the state.

Continuing Education Training-

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Continuing Education training offers a variety of training sessions for foster/adoptive parents and staff based upon information and needs gained through Individual Training Needs Assessments, Council on Accreditation requirements, Program Improvement Plan mandates, Legislative requirements, and DHHS/DCFS Executive Staff directives. Training is developed and scheduled as needed. These classroom training activities may be held at any of the partnership university sites, or other public or private facilities in the state. All field program staff, having or possibly having contact with clients must gain and maintain certification in first aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (infant-child-adult) through either the American Red Cross or American Heart Association.

These events may be directly provided by or through Academic Partnership or DCFS staff, contracted or community providers, and may either be mandated or elective. These classes are open to all DCFS staff, foster / adoptive parents, and childcare agencies receiving IV-E assistance, unless the nature of the training class targets a specific work group within DCFS or is considered inappropriate due to confidentiality issues. Additional training may be provided through third-party vendors, and may be attended through formal application and registration procedures. These formal training events are usually three to six hours in length, but may extend to three days, depending upon topic.

Central Office Staff Training

Each hiring supervisor shall review a new employee's training experience to determine whether specific information may be gained through training events designed to enhance knowledge or performance with the employee's job function. Both incumbent and new employees shall be evaluated through the annual PPES / CLIP process and training issues may be addressed through development of a staff training plan to target job tasks requiring improvement or enhancement. Management position orientation, for those new employees with no prior supervisory experience in DCFS, may include attendance in selected modules of New Worker Training provided by MidSOUTH. These formal training events are usually one to two days in length, depending upon topic. Informal training activities, not held in a scheduled classroom environment may last only a few hours in duration.

DCFS Central Office employees shall be permitted to attend training found applicable to their job performance. Supervisors may use formal training events, as well as media such as videotape, CD, DVD, printed material or through interview/shadowing of a topic expert.

Social Service Aides (SSA) –

- **Social Service Aide Training** is a knowledge/skill based training for Social Service Aides consisting of twelve days (72 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a four week period. Training topics address several skills areas: introduction/overview of DCFS; family centered services; communications; engaging families; child development;

child health issues; substance abuse training; time management; stress management; documentation; team building; physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse; legal issues; including a two-day segment on Active Parenting Leader training. Participants of this training included new SSAII as well as some designated existing SSAII as referred by supervisor. This classroom training is offered only at the Little Rock MidSOUTH Training Academy and provided by MidSouth trainers (contractors).

Additional continuing education training sessions are offered to the Social Service Aide staff as requested or mandated.

Adoptions Staff-Short Term training

Eleven orientation sessions for Adoption Specialists were held during 2005-2006. DCFS Adoptions staff and MidSOUTH Training Academy curriculum development staff are working together to develop a standardized curriculum for the orientation process for Adoption Specialist. This orientation will be curriculum available through classroom and online training. Curriculum is also being developed to provide new workers with information concerning the adoptions process. Adoption Specialists also participated in their Area Foster Parent Conference training sessions. The Adoption Unit also assisted in the planning and coordination of the Statewide Adoptions Conference held November 2005. Adoptions staff will attend continuing education training as identified by supervisory staff.

Independent Living (IL) Coordinators-

Monthly meetings are held for IL Coordinators and used as a forum for providing training in policy and methods. The IL Unit coordinated the statewide Transition to Adulthood Conference, held August 2005. This conference provided training for 217 stakeholders, DCFS staff and judicial participants.

The Independent Living Unit and MidSOUTH have discussed additional training specifically targeted for the IL Coordinators. Independent Living Coordinators will attend continuing education training as identified by supervisory staff. The Independent Living Unit had requested DCFS approval for attendance in a national-level IL conference to increase their level of knowledge of current issues in IL. The Independent Living Coordinator positions are the FSW and/or SSAII and this training is a part of the new worker and SSAII training reported elsewhere in this report. There is a plan for identified independent living to be developed and offered that separate from the CORE training. It would be continuing education exclusively for the Independent Living Coordinator. This was effective 1/1/07.

Training for Foster / Adoptive / Relative Foster / Provisional Relative Foster Homes –These homes include the following: Foster Family Home (Non Relative); Adoptive Home; Relative Foster Home (Kinship Only); Relative Foster Home (Fostering and Kinship); and Provisional Relative Foster Home.

The DCFS training program provides training in best practice for foster/adoptive families, field staff and identified service providers.

Foster/Adopt PRIDE is a competency-based, pre-service training provided for prospective foster/adoptive parents. The Foster/Adopt **PRIDE** (Parents' Resource for Information, Development, and Education) training curriculum was developed by the Child Welfare League of America and consists of nine, three hour modules totaling 27 hours of instruction. In the past year, fifty-five Foster/Adopt PRIDE training events were conducted for 948 persons. This classroom training is offered throughout the state as determined by the geographic concentration of DCFS referrals to MidSOUTH. Sessions may be held in community centers, State Offices, churches, or other public or private facilities.

Prior to final home approval, these volunteers are required to complete the thirty hour DCFS pre-service training curriculum. DCFS staff will provide a formal orientation by completion of the CFS-465 (Foster Parent Orientation Checklist) at the end of the training course. Provisional Relative Foster Homes are required to complete the training required to meet standards within 6 months of the immediate placement of the child in their home.

All foster and adoptive parents (as identified above) are required to attend and be certified in first aid and CPR. All homes are required to complete and maintain certification in first aid, but only foster family (non-relative) homes are required to attend and maintain full certification covering infant-child-adult CPR. Other homes, if only accepting fostering of relatives, will only be required to complete and maintain certification in the age level appropriate CPR as follows: infant (birth through 1 year of age); child (1 year through 8 years of age); and adult (age 8 years of age through adulthood). Acceptable national training providers include the following: American Red Cross (first aid and CPR); American Heart Association (first aid and CPR); or National Safety Council (Standard/Basic First Aid only). Foster parents must maintain certification in CPR and first aid to remain a DCFS foster home. Since various certification time frame durations occur with the acceptable CPR provider group (1 or 2 years), the foster parent must adhere to and be responsible for maintaining their certification requirements. DCFS is responsible for scheduling first aid and CPR training for these homes and foster / adoptive homes will be reimbursed for successful completion of classes scheduled through DCFS using in-house or approved training providers.

Additional training for these homes is available through continuing education classes provided statewide by the University Partnership as well as the Area Foster Parent Conference and the State Annual Foster Parent Conference. Applications to attend training are processed and scheduled through local DCFS foster / adoptive parent liaison. DCFS bears the expense for DHHS foster /adoptive parents in attending classes to meet annual hourly training requirements, as scheduled through DCFS.

Volunteer Training

Training for volunteers, other than foster/kinship/adoptive volunteers, will consist of any additional training required to complete their volunteer responsibility.

Additional Training Opportunities / Media

Additional training opportunities for DCFS employees and foster parents may include attendance in training events offered through third-party vendors and conferences. Regular training conferences include Arkansas Human Services Employees Conference (AHSEA), MidSOUTH Summer School (MSSS), DCFS Area Training Meetings, Regional Training Conferences

provided through the Academic Partnership, Mental Health Institute, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Annual Conference, and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Conference held by the Division of Youth Services. Several of the larger state conferences provide a limited number of scholarships for DCFS staff and foster parents.

Additional available training media may include video or audio based instruction, online training opportunities as well as DCFS or Partnership library instructional materials and books.

Supervisory Training Requirements

All DCFS supervisors are required to attend the following training events provided by the Department of Human Services (DHHS) and DCFS:

- DHHS 3-Day Supervisor Training (with update training every 5 years) includes PPES, Administrative Policy, and EEO Laws. Hiring Procedures and Grievances.
- DHHS Interpersonal Communications (2-day class)
- DHHS Basic Supervision (2-day class)-which includes communication, leadership, delegation, motivation, conflict managements and problem solving.
- DCFS New Supervisor Training (9-day class)

Upon employment as a supervisor, the employee will be contacted by DHHS Staff Development and informed of their required attendance in the mandated supervisor training held in Little Rock. The supervisor training provided through DHHS must precede all DCFS New Supervisor Training provided through UALR. Upon receipt of a copy of the DHHS-1161 form from PDU, MidSOUTH Training Academy will contact the new DCFS supervisor to inform them of the schedule to attend the DCFS New Supervisor Training. Supervisors may also attend the Certified Public Manager course, with approval of the DCFS Executive Staffs. Additional elective or mandated training may be scheduled for the targeted supervisor within DCFS.

DCFS Supervisors with any break in employment or supervisory responsibility must re-attend all seven days of the DHHS Supervisor Training requirements. Re-attendance in DCFS Supervisor Training is only required after one year break of employment, unless DCFS Executive Staff determine otherwise.

DCFS Supervisor/Leadership Training is a competency-based training for new FSW supervisors and program managers consisting of nine days (51 hours) of classroom instruction, conducted over a three week period. The training also includes a series of on-line tutorials to be completed outside the classroom and purposeful interaction with a field instructor/mentor. Classroom instruction is provided in three segments - *Principles of Leadership*, *Working with Others*, and *Nuts and Bolts of Supervision*. In the past year, three Supervisor/Leadership training events were conducted for 36 supervisors/program managers. This classroom training is offered only at the Little Rock MidSOUTH Training Academy.

Training Needs Assessments

The purpose of conducting a staff training needs assessment is to identify the training needs of an employee or volunteer and use this information to develop continuing education training events and county/area/state annual training plans. The assessment is only valuable if it results in training that is relevant, significant and available to the person. DCFS provides three dedicated Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tools, two for program staff (e.g., FSW, FSW supervisor), and one for foster parents.

DCFS Central Office Staff

On an annual basis, as specified in DHHS Policy, each DCFS Supervisor will conduct a performance evaluation, which will include a review of training needs for the work unit employee(s). The resulting training needs may be addressed in the Career Ladder Incentive Program (CLIP) training/education plan or managed apart from this formal process.

DCFS Program Staff

At the time designated for the employee's annual performance evaluation (PPES), DCFS Supervisors will complete an Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) for each Program employee and forward a copy to UALR MidSOUTH who will collect and report to the PDU all ITNA information for DCFS FSWs, and supervisors. ITNA criteria for FSW and supervisor positions are based upon standards provided by the Institutes for Human Services (IHS). A training plan developed by DCFS Supervisory staff with their employees to meet the needs expressed by their ITNA may be applied to the worker's CLIP training/education plan.

Foster / Adoptive Home

At the time of the foster parent's annual evaluation, the foster parent evaluator (i.e., contractor or agency employee) will conduct an ITNA with the foster parents and will forward a copy of the results to UALR MidSOUTH who will collect and report to the PDU all ITNA information relating to foster parents. The foster parent ITNA is based on ten competencies developed by the authors of the mandated preservice curriculum. The DCFS Adoptions Specialist assigned to the adoptive family will meet to determine and address training needs after Foster Pride / Adopt Pride Training, and will continue until the adoptive home is approved.

DCFS Supervisory staff and Foster Parent Liaisons are to review identified needs through the respective ITNAs and schedule attendance in needed training activities.

DCFS Financial Assistance for Education

Two programs are available under DCFS Policy XI-A, DCFS Educational Leave and Educational Assistance, to encourage and assist employees in achievement of an academic degree benefiting the Division. The policy addresses the types of leave and assistance available, the application and selection processes and criteria, related personnel and contract processes, and participant benefits and responsibilities under the program. In administering the DCFS Educational Leave and Educational Assistance Program, DCFS will comply with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act. The program will be administered without regard to age, religion, disability, political affiliation,

veteran status, sex, race, color, or national origin. The DCFS PDU conducts monitoring of the programs.

Recipients of financial support for either program are contractually obligated to commit to employment in a direct service position for a specified period of time within DCFS. Should the participant default on the repayment of field service to DCFS through either refusal to maintain state employment or inability to remain otherwise employable during the contract repayment period, the participant shall repay the full or prorated expense within the originally established repayment timeframe.

Master of Social Work (MSW) Educational Leave Program

The purpose of the DCFS MSW Education Leave Program is to enable the Division to employ an increased number of persons who possess the MSW degree to work in programs throughout the state that serve Title IV-E children. DCFS Policy No. XI-B establishes guidelines for administering the DCFS MSW Educational Leave Program, and addresses both full and part-time agreements. Candidates must first gain acceptance from an Arkansas MSW Graduate Program before the application is considered within DCFS and the applicant must be a current employee for two years immediately prior to the initiation of the application process. Policy and the agreement mandate a 2-for-1-employment repayment.

Senior Year Stipend Program

The purpose of the DCFS Child Welfare Student Stipend Program is to hire more employees with degrees in social work and limited social work-related degrees on a statewide basis to work in DCFS programs serving Title IV-E eligible children. DCFS Policy No. XI-C establishes guidelines for administering the DCFS Child Welfare Student Stipend Program.

University student stipend applicants follow their respective university application process and undergo the interview process with the University IV-E Coordinator for acceptance into the university stipend program. Applications and other related paperwork are submitted to the DCFS PDU for review and processing. Upon timely submission and completion of all policy-mandated forms, drug testing, and histories (i.e., criminal background, driving record, Central Registry, drug tests) are returned, the application packet is forwarded to the Division Director for disposition. If approved, stipends are awarded for two semesters of the applicant's senior year. Upon graduation, the student is employed by the Division and must remain employed for a minimum of one year, as a condition of the stipend agreement.

Acceptable degrees for stipend applicants are identical to the minimum qualifications for employment as a DCFS Family Service Worker, which are the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in social work, sociology, psychology or a related field. Related fields are identified as:

- ✓ Child and Family Development
- ✓ Child Development
- ✓ Counseling (any field of Counseling)
- ✓ Family Development
- ✓ Family Services

- ✓ Human Development and Family Studies
- ✓ Human Services
- ✓ Rehabilitation Science
- ✓ Social Welfare
- ✓ Behavior Science
- ✓ Criminal Justice
- ✓ Education (Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, and Special Education)
- ✓ Home Economics/Family and Consumer Science

Training Requirements for Licensure or Certification

Employees possessing national or state certification or licensure determined by the DCFS Executive Staff to be essential for the mission of the agency shall be permitted time to obtain training credit hours to maintain such certification. These licenses or certifications may include, but are not limited to, Licensed Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Nursing. These licenses are regulated by State licensing boards, and employees must be using their license in a job-related capacity. Holders of these or other approved licenses/certifications will be permitted to apply and attend classes/training events for the purpose of gaining sufficient knowledge and training hours to maintain their license/certification. Approvals by Executive Staff of the status of the employee's need for certification will allow future training applications to be processed through normal channels of approval. All attendance will be subject to availability and budget restrictions. These targeted training events will be considered a priority in scheduling training for the employee and would be scheduled before other non-credentialing training attendance.

Credit/Exemption for Prior Training

Employees are required to attend classes for which it has been determined that their attendance is mandatory. If the employee or supervisor believes an exemption from training is justifiable, based on completion of previous training and demonstrated competency, then a memorandum requesting exemption is passed through the supervisory chain to the DCFS Executive Staff. Either the employee or the supervisor may generate the request. Exemption will not be granted solely on the basis of academic degree.

For the request to be considered, the employee's supervisor must also approve the request, and attach details of the previous attendance, date and time of the training, examples of superior knowledge, documentation of demonstrated skills within the workplace, copies of the training material from the attended training, and verifiable copy of the training certificate or letter of attendance. After review of the documents, the DCFS Executive Staff will notify the supervisor of their decision.

Actual credit hours will not be awarded to an employee who is exempted from a mandated training topic. If, after granting an exemption for a class, the employee's skills are viewed as unacceptable in the knowledge/performance area, the employee will be required to attend the class for which exemption was awarded to ensure that the knowledge base is present. Credit hours would then be awarded for completion of the attended training event.

Training Topics and Resources

Training topics are determined by federal mandates, Council on Accreditation (COA) requirements, Program Improvement Plan (PIP) mandates, Arkansas legislation, DHHS and DCFS policy/procedure, individual supervisory-administered needs assessments and performance reviews, and approved employee-expressed need gained through the ITNA or written / verbal requests. Additional needs may be identified by the DCFS Executive Staff or through the use of general Division-wide assessment instrument on an annual basis. All training topics are reviewed and approved by the DCFS Executive Staff on an annual basis.

Training Records and Attendance Documentation

All participation by DCFS staff and volunteers in Academic Partnership-sponsored training events will be recorded within a training database maintained by the sponsoring institution. UAF is responsible for gathering attendance information from their seven subcontracted university training providers and for maintaining a centralized training records database. All Partnership training records will be exported monthly to the DCFS **CH**ildren's **R**eporting and **I**nformation **S**ystem (CHRIS). DCFS staff with a "supervisor" level of security may view and print employee training records from the CHRIS system.

Central Office supervisory staff and Area Managers (or designees) will initiate and maintain a CFS-381 Employee Training Record for all employees. Supervisors will enter all attended training on the form and include copies of attendance verification within the folder. Area Managers (or designee) will enter all non-Partnership training attendance into CHRIS through the Training Toolbar function. Central Office supervisors (or designee) will likewise enter their employee's non-Partnership training into the CHRIS training database.

Both MidSOUTH Center and the Academic Partnership will provide documentation of training attendance to participants in the form of certificate, copy of sign-in sheet or letter of attendance. Information contained in these proofs of attendance shall have information concerning the training event identical to information areas found on the CFS-476 DCFS Training Certificate. In submitting forms for travel/expense reimbursement, DCFS participants shall attach verification of training attendance to the DHS TR1 Form. Attendance in training events, other than the University Partnership providers, participants shall obtain some form of attendance verification for their training records and expense reimbursement. Training provided in-house may be recorded on the CFS-476 and given to participants for their use.

Training Reports

Both MidSOUTH and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, representing the Arkansas Academic Partnership, will submit reports of compliance with training contract performance indicators required monthly to the IV-E Training Coordinator in the DCFS PDU for compliance review.

Training Announcements and Registration

Training announcements and schedules provided by the Academic Partnership are found on their respective websites:

UALR MidSOUTH – <http://www.midsouth.ualr.edu/>

UAF Partnership - <http://www.uark.edu/depts/scwk/partnership/index.html>

Additional training notifications will be made through intranet announcements to targeted DCFS employees.

All DCFS staff must complete a CFS-360 Request for Conference/Training application to attend an “elective” training event whether or not an expense is involved, but if the training is deemed mandatory, staff are not required to submit a CFS-360. Registration forms required by the sponsoring training event will also be completed and attached to the CFS-360.

Annual Review of the Training Plan

The Professional Development Team (PDT) will review this training plan on an annual basis (SFY) and a report of recommendations will be submitted to the DCFS Executive Staff for review. Upon receipt of comments from DCFS Executive Staff, the PDT will incorporate all recommendations and directives and modify the DCFS Training Plan for publication to DCFS staff by July 15th of each year.

Required Training Hours

Employees of DCFS are mandated to attend a minimum number of annual training contact hours each year as set forth in these guidelines:

- Program staff (field staff, direct client contact and caseloads), Family Service Worker (FSW) classification, Area Managers - Twenty-four (24) annual hours required; FSW Specialist – Thirty (30) hours required.
- Program Support staff (direct client contact, secondary or no caseload), Nurses, Health Services Workers, Health Services Specialists, SSAII, ILC - Fifteen (15) annual hours required.
- Non-program staff (administrative support, office personnel, administration having no direct client contact [DCFS Central Office] including DCFS Executive Staff) - Fifteen (15) annual hours required.
- Volunteers include persons serving in a foster or adoptive care capacity for DCFS - Thirty (30) hours pre-approval and fifteen (15) annual hours required after approval. Training hour requirement for adoptive homes will cease upon the completion of the adoptive process. Volunteers who are not serving in a foster or

adoptive capacity, such as community volunteers or interns, are required to attend five (5) hours per year.

Required training hours will be completed based on the time frame connected with the employee's annual training performance evaluation (PPES), unless specific training mandates require credit prior to the completion of the PPES.

Additional Training Development Teams and Groups

The Professional Development Team (PDT), hosted by UALR, shall meet quarterly to discuss agenda items submitted by UALR, UAF, and DCFS participants. Agenda items shall address training issues, including, but not limited to, curricula development, training scheduling, problems encountered in coordinating training and reports of training delivered. A report of the minutes shall be delivered to DCFS within two weeks after the meeting. The PDT process will undergo evaluation to determine if the process requires enhancement or further development to ensure the effectiveness of the process.

The Partnership Steering Committee ("Partnership Meeting") is hosted by UAF and meets quarterly with the DCFS Executive Staff and other designated participants to discuss partnership progress, monitor compliance and resolve problems identified by DCFS and UAF.

DCFS Responsibilities in Curriculum Development with MidSOUTH Center. In order to accomplish the effective transfer of information to MidSOUTH Center for their curriculum development, it is necessary for a curriculum pre-development group to meet to determine core issues and information needing to be included in the mandated training, along with the applicable promulgated policy. Participants in this group will include Executive Staff (or assigned designees) with knowledge with knowledge and interest in the development of critical topics to be included in the curriculum, MidSOUTH Center staff responsible for curriculum development and the DCFS PDU Manager. Upon determination of the core issues by the group, MidSOUTH will begin development of a draft curriculum and return the draft to the group and Executive Staff for review within six weeks. Upon final review and approval, MidSOUTH will begin implementation of the training as outlined in their contracted performance indicators.

Financial Reimbursement for Training Attendance

Employees and foster parents approved to attend training events and who require reimbursement shall submit their Travel Reimbursement (TR-1), through their supervisory chain. All state fiscal policy and guidelines must be adhered to in order to receive reimbursement. The DCFS Professional Development Unit will monitor and process valid reimbursement claims. Certificates or other documentation of attendance must also be submitted with CFS-360 forms (for elective training sessions) to receive reimbursement.

Funding Sources

Funding sources for training include federal funding (i.e., Title IV-E Foster Care, Title IV-E Adoption, Title IV-B part 1 and part 2, and TANF), state general revenues sources and grant

funding, when available. (includes CAPTA although this is specifically used for training providers in the specific area of service delivery that they are providing). The IV-E Chafee ILP funding is used for the Annual Teen Conference training workshops.

Cost Allocation Methodology

DCFS uses the approved allocations process approved by the Federal and State plan. Listed below are the cost centers used in the cost allocation method.

- DCFS PRE-SERVICE TRAINING-FIELD 250-04-07-02-G1:
This cost center includes new worker training for DCFS field staff.
- DCFS IN-SERVICE TRAINING-FIELD 250-04-07-04-G1:
This cost center includes in-service training (excludes pre-service) for DCFS field staff.
- DCFS FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENTS 250-04-07-07 G1:
This cost center is used for Character 10 contracts and purchase orders to pay for training of foster/adoptive parents and other related training costs.
- DCFS EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT 250-04-07-08-G1:
This cost center is for salary and fringe for DCFS staff that are on full-time educational leave.
- DCFS TRAINING 250-04-07-15-G1:
This cost center includes training for staff which is not covered by DCFS pre-service-field or DCFS in-service training-field.
- DCFS PRE-SERVICE TRAINING-SUPERVISION 250-04-07-16-G1:
This cost center is used for new supervisor/manager training (field or central office.)
- DCFS IN-SERVICE TRAINING-SUPERVISION 250-04-07-17-G1:
This cost center is used for in-service training (excludes pre-service) for DCFS field and central office supervisors and managers.
- DCFS CONTRACTING 250-04-07-18-G1:
This cost center is for Character 10 contracts and purchase orders to pay for trainers for staff and/or foster/adoptive parents.

Child Welfare Staff and Foster Parent Training	
IV-E Penetration Rate	70%
IV-E Fed Training Match	75%
UALR Fed-Approved Indirect Cost Rate	39%
UAF Fed-Approved Indirect Cost Rate	45%
UALR / UAF Indirect Cost Rate Billed to DCFS	8%

Total Estimated Cost of DCFS Training Contracts

The estimated total expenditure for IV-E training is \$8,628,992 for the 2007-2008 SFY fiscal year (UALR \$5,476,883 and UAF \$3,152,109.)

Compensation Training: \$5,364,603
Reimbursable Training: \$1,523,094

Administrative Cost: \$1,741,295

This methodology includes training for all DCFS staff and includes foster parents and adoptive parents (resources).

Division of Children and Family Services Training Goals

DCFS will review and determine changes/enhancements to ensure the effectiveness and consistency of application of current guidelines and publish a standardized method for conducting the panel process within DCFS. **Due date: June 30, 2009.**

Status: None

2. DCFS will review current practice within the Division and develop and publish a standardized volunteer orientation packet for use in all Areas. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

Status: None

3. The Division will explore the possibility of developing job task competency clusters to better identify training needs of Central Office staff. **Due Date: June 30, 2009**

Status: None

4. The Division will review various media that may be used in independent training events such as DVDs, CDs or Internet courses to expand the list of training resources used by the foster parents. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

A review was made of PRIDE Digital Curriculum but was found to be inappropriate for independent study by foster parents in their home. It is being used as adjunct training material within training PRIDE sessions provided by MidSOUTH Training Academy.

5. DCFS will review the possibility of allowing foster parents with the skills to offer life skills training to identify foster children in their home. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

Status: None

6. The agency will review and evaluate the process and criteria for the ITNA, to determine effectiveness of application in identification of actual training needs and impact on attendance in needed training activities. The ITNA process will also be reviewed to determine whether it will fit an intranet application so that the forms and computation could be completed online. Due date: **June 30, 2009**

Status: None

7. DCFS will review the process of approval of pre-service training successfully completed by foster parents prior to entering service within Arkansas. If this process is approved, foster parents from states providing pre-service training acceptable to DCFS will be allowed to be reviewed for approval upon entry into the state. A method of providing information to these foster parents concerning legislation and mandates impacting foster parenting in Arkansas must be determined. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

Status: None

8. With the recent development of entry and retrieval ability of worker training attendance records in CHRIS, DCFS will have need to determine the appropriate format for reports to be

constructed by the CHRIS staff. DCFS Executive Staff and Area Managers will be contacted for input in the development of the needed information to be viewed multiple report formats needed to monitor employee training records. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

DCFS has been informed by CHRIS staff that ad hoc reports will be made available to DCFS staff in the future. This goal is still under review.

9. The Division will explore the development of a multi-tiered supervisor-training program to provide advanced training for supervisors. DCFS will also determine attendance criteria to allow non-supervisor staff to attend the Leadership portion of the DCFS New Supervisor Training event. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

A Supervisor Training Curriculum Review Group has met and determined recommendations to be made to the current competency based curriculum previously approved by the DCFS Executive Staff. The Chair of this group met and discussed the group recommendations with the DCFS Executive Staff on May 29, 2007. The goal of determining attendance criteria to allow non-supervisor staff to attend the leadership portion of the DCFS Supervisor Training has been re-submitted to the Executive Staff for further review.

10. DCFS is evaluating the possibility of developing a Social Service Aid Educational Assistance program to allow selected SSA staff to return to school at the beginning of their junior year for the purpose of obtaining a BSW or other degree acceptable to DHHS. **Due date: June 30, 2009**

A draft policy encompassing the Social Service Aid Educational Assistance Program has been developed and is being reviewed by the DCFS Executive Staff.

DCFS TRAINING PLAN STATUS REPORT 2006-2007

The Professional Development Team (PDT), identified as the annual collaborative reviewing body of the DCFS Training Plan, was provided a copy of the document in May 2006. A workgroup was developed and met prior to the next meeting. Although the document has been approved, reformatting of the document to include estimated costs must be completed by Central Office staff before the PDT committee meets again to further discuss the plan.

The 2006-2009 Training Plan was updated to include training hours required for the FSW Specialist position. They are now required to have 30 hours per year.

Goal #9 – This goal addressed exploration of the development of a multi-tiered supervisor training program to provide advanced training for supervisors. The DCFS Supervisor Training Curriculum Review Committee was organized and began meeting in October 2005. The collaborative effort was between DCFS Central Office staff, field supervisors and the MidSOUTH Training Academy. Recommendations concerning modifications to the Supervisor Training curriculum have been developed and were presented to the DCFS Executive Staff on May 29, 2007. The Executive Staff will review the submitted recommendations as soon as possible.

An additional item was listed under this goal and it was one concerned with DCFS non-supervisory staff being allowed to attend Leadership training provided through MidSOUTH Training Academy. Recommendations have been offered, but no decisions have been made by DCFS Executive Staff. This goal is still under review by Executive Staff.

Goal # 11 – This goal addressed the need to evaluate a plan to provide a DCFS Social Service Aid Educational Assistance Program to allow Social Service Aids to obtain a BSW or other acceptable degree. A policy has been developed concerning this program, and is currently in the final stages of comment and approval. This will be a part time program with an initial cohort of three participants.

The Foster Care IVE Penetration Rate was updated in the Training Plan to the correct rate of 70%.

A New Worker Training (NWT) Curriculum Review Group has been established to review the training model, use of competencies and need to develop tiered training for advanced competencies within the new worker's first year of employment. The group is a collaborative effort between Central Office Staff, field program staff, and the overall University Partnership. Two subgroups have been developed to review the curriculum in current use and to determine systemic barriers to an effective training model. A status report has been submitted to the DCFS Executive Staff detailing discussions from the NWT Curriculum Review Group and recommendations to date. A full set of recommendations should be available to the Executive Staff by August 2007.

ICPC Training information was distributed to participants of the PDT meeting on October 23, 2006, detailing availability of a three-hour training module for ICPC staff. Development of this training material was through a collaborative effort between DCFS staff and the UALR partnership. Training has been held and requests for additional training dates will be scheduled when needed.

Program Improvement Plan (PIP) training was completed in 2005, but these PIP topics were available to be presented upon request during 2006:

- PIP 1.2.5 and 1.3.5 0- Assessment and Case Planning
- PIP 1.5.2 – Services to youth participating in the Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program (currently available online)
- PIP 1.6.3 – Improving practice in visitation
- PIP 1.7.2 – Visitation with Siblings and Relatives after TPR – Web based training
- 2.6.2 – Meeting the mental health needs of children
- PIP 3.1.6 – Foster parent recruitment and retention – Web based and classroom training (currently available online).

First aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation certification requirements for field program staff were added to the training plan. All program staff having or possibly having client contact must gain and maintain certification in CPR (infant-child-adult levels) and first aid, through either the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association.

4. Tribal Consultation

Status for 2007

CHRIS reports that of the 3,723 children currently in foster care, eight (8) children have been identified as American Indian/Native American/Alaskan Native. To ensure that DCFS is in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, Policy Procedure VI-AI directs the Family Service Worker to contact the Office of Chief Counsel immediately if there is any indication that the child is a member of an Indian tribe.

The five major components of ICWA that the Arkansas Plan addresses:

Identification of Indian children by the State Child Welfare Agency

Arkansas DCFS Field staff are required to ask questions to determine if a client is of Native American heritage when completing the CFS-6009 (Family Strengths and Needs Assessment). Workers are required to complete client information screens in CHRIS that identify the ethnicity of a child and family which includes a pick-list to specify an individual Indian tribe. The screen that is completed in CHRIS and the pick-list that identifies all recognized tribes in the U.S. is attached for your review.

In the new Family Strengths and Needs Assessment tool draft that was developed as part of the PIP (Action Step 1.2) there is a “Cultural Factors Section” which requires workers to describe any pertinent cultural influences or traditions of the household members. Do any household members speak a foreign language and need an interpreter? Is there a cultural practice that might appear to be abuse. Does the culture endorse physical punishment?

Does any household member claim Native American heritage (Yes or No)? If yes, what is the tribal affiliation and is the person on the tribal rolls? Could the children in this family fall under the scope of the Indian Child Welfare Act?

Notification of Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene

OCC attorneys have been trained on numerous occasions on ICWA. All new OCC attorneys are trained on ICWA prior to taking over a dependency neglect caseload. OCC attorneys provide notification to Indian parents and tribes of proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene. An ICWA checklist has been developed and distributed to the OCC attorneys in May of 2006 and to other attorney and judges at the Child and Law Conference in 2006.

Special placement preferences for Indian children

OCC has assisted CFS when the tribe identifies an Indian foster home in ensuring that Indian children are placed in accordance with the preferences outlined in ICWA. The Arkansas Juvenile Judges have also been trained on ICWA and the judges know that the agency must make active efforts to prevent removal of Indian children from their homes. The Administrative Office of the Courts provided all of the OCC Attorneys and Juvenile Judges with a copy of the

Indian Child Welfare Act Checklists from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family

DCFS Staff with the assistance of the Arkansas Juvenile Judges and OCC make active efforts to prevent the removal of Indian children from their homes. There must be clear documentation during court hearings of the to prevent the removal of a child be the court grants custody to the Division. Each Arkansas Juvenile Judge uses the Indian Child Welfare Act Checklist in making decisions concerning cases where the child is of Native American heritage.

Use of Tribal courts in child welfare matters; Tribal right to intervene in State proceedings or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the Tribe.

DCFS staff with assistance from OCC work with Tribal courts in child welfare matters when requested by the Tribal courts. Once a Tribal organization is notified of a Native American child's involvement in the child welfare system, field staff along with OCC work with the Tribal organizations, courts or appropriate representatives to implement services that are the best interest of the child and that are recommended by the Tribal courts. If the Tribe takes jurisdiction of the case DCFS staff work with the Tribal courts to facilitate the transfer of the case and the child.

Native American children age 14 or older are eligible for Chafee services just as any youth in foster care in Arkansas would be. Any youth assigned to an IL Coordinator's workload is provided an assessment and Chafee services in accordance with their case plan. These youth are neither discriminated against nor provided preferential treatment with regard to IL/Chafee/ETV services.

5. Consultations with Physicians or Appropriate Medical Professionals

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) policy requires that all necessary medical services be provided to children receiving out-of-home placement services. DCFS is dedicated to ensuring that all foster children receive a full range of health care services, including mental health services. An initial health screen is completed on each child within 24 hours, if the reason for removal is an allegation of severe child maltreatment or evidence of serious injury/illness. All other children receive the screening within 72 hours of removal from the home. School aged children in need of mental health services are referred to a Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) within (5) five days of entry into foster care. Within sixty days (60) from the removal of the home, a comprehensive health assessment is completed on each child. DCFS ensures that all health and mental health services are provided periodically and conducted by qualified providers.

DCFS works with Primary Care Physicians, University of Arkansas Medical Sciences (UAMS) Project for Adolescent and Child Evaluations (PACE) Project and area mental health agencies in

meeting the health and well being of foster children. In addition, DCFS has increased the health staff around the state and re-established the quarterly training for Health Service Workers. DCFS works with the medical profession, to ensure that all foster children's medical and mental health needs are met: 1) collects sufficient history and medical data from appropriate sources to assess the child and formulate the problem, 2) ensures that a mental health examination and physical examination is conducted as necessary, 3) ensures that a diagnosis is established, and 4) initiates a treatment plan. Children are referred to the Child and Adolescence Service System Program (CASSP), when they require intensive mental health services and inter-agency involvement on service plans. Compliance with the 24-hour & 72-hour health screenings and the comprehensive health screen has improved dramatically in several DCFS areas.

6. Disaster Planning

Strategic Plan for Arkansas Disaster Planning for the Division of Children and Family Services: Timeline for completion is September 15, 2007.

Ensure that each County has an Action Plan for Natural Disasters and/or Emergencies:

- Each County Supervisor will coordinate with the County Administrator and ensure a plan for locating foster parents/foster children and ensuring their safety is in place.
- Each County will establish a critical staff list with alternates named and responsibilities listed
- Each County will provide a written plan to Central Office Planning Unit
- Training will be developed and provided on a yearly basis in each area
- Each County will coordinate with County Administrators to have emergency kits and to determine that each kit should have included

Establish a Protocol for Contacts and Centralized Information:

- Each employee will complete an Emergency Contact form to ensure the Agency has a way to follow up and ensure the safety and status of employee.
- Each DCFS foster parent will complete an Emergency Contact form to ensure the Agency has a way to follow up and ensure the safety and status of the employee.
- Coordinate with State Management System so that employees, foster parents, adoptive parents, have a way to access support in an emergency and keep agency staff informed.
- Each County will establish a "check in" protocol in case of Emergency

Update Current Contingency Plan for Access to Records as needed:

- Executive staff will have access to the contingency plan for access to records
- CFO Cecile Blucker will maintain the original copy and update as needed

Establish a Plan to Continue Case Management:

- The division will establish a checklist for continued case management in the field
- Each Area will have a plan for continuing to respond to critical child maltreatment reports and priority cases with each county

Establish a Plan of Support from Central Office and/or County Offices to Central Office:

- Area managers will coordinate and establish a plan of support for counties that border other areas
- A plan will be developed on a statewide basis to respond to the physical and emotional needs of staff in ensuring their own family well being is in place

- The division will establish a de-briefing protocol to review outcomes and needed changes on plans

Establish a Plan to manage Volunteers:

- Each Area Manager/Supervisor needs to coordinate with County Administrator and ensure there are plans to identify volunteers who can assist
- Establish a list of tasks/activities that could be handled by volunteers
- Develop time sheets/assignment sheets/ and protocol
- Provide training to volunteers on a yearly basis

Other information:

DHHS Policy 1017.4.0

COA

After hours Emergency and Disaster Plan

SFY07 Business Continuity and Contingency Plan

AdoptUSKIDS

7. Monthly Caseworker Visit Data and State Plan Requirements

PIP Closeout Narrative regarding DCFS plans to meet standards for worker visit with child:

Arkansas has struggled with meeting the standard for worker visits with foster children for a variety of issues/barriers including lack of staff; time management; and training.

DCFS has assessed the barrier and has determined that the following task took away time to conduct and document meaningful worker visits: placement issues with hard to place youth; lack of clerical support; lack of adequate supervisory oversight; lack of staff; and to some extent lack of experience/skill.

A plan will be developed in each area to conduct meaningful worker visits with children.

We understand from the findings of the Child and Family Services reviews show evidence that one of the most important ways to promote positive outcomes for children and their families is to ensure the quality and frequency of caseworker’s visits with the children and families in the agency’s care.

We understand that for caseworker visits to be successful, the focus should shift from examining only the performance of families (for example, did the parent attend substance abuse treatment) to assessing the performance of the agency and caseworker, (for example, did the agency ensure that the treatment matched the needs, age, and gender of the client and was available at a time and location appropriate to their schedule) and how well the family is functioning relative to the support and services provided by the agency.

We also understand that for caseworker visits to be successful, the caseworker must have the skills to engage the family and develop a relationship that supports and motivates the family to make the changes necessary to be successful with achieving their case plan goal and have healthy and nurturing family relationships.

This shift promotes caseworker engagement in continuous quality improvement. The goals of the visits with a family are caseworker goals and goals related to the family's progress.

DCFS has or is planning to develop resources and change protocols and practices to assist in ensuring worker visits occur by:

Retention:

- Develop retention incentives for staff and/or areas that are successful in meeting the standard for worker visits with children in a meaningful way that impacts in a positive way the outcomes of children and families

Recruitment:

- Improving our recruitment efforts by attending university job fairs; partnering with the Department's Human Resource Office; and utilizing interns as well as stipends to increase hiring and fill job vacancies

Training:

- Ensure staff receive training on Best Practice in worker visits with children and quality documentation of visits that occur as well as training on engagement of youth and families; time management; and conducting supervisory case reviews; to include an assessment of current curriculum on worker visits with families to ensure that skills are taught on how to engage the family and develop a relationship with the family that supports and motivates them to change.

Supervisory Review Tool:

- Changes have been made on the Supervisory review tool to include a review and discussion of the worker visit with child

Centralized Placement Unit:

- Developing a centralized placement unit to assist with clinical assessment and development of appropriate resources for the placement of hard to place youth. This may include Master level staff to assist with youth who are diagnosed with developmental disabilities, sex offenders, and youth that meet criteria for therapeutic. By developing and implementing this unit and expanding resources, this outcome we hope to see if less time on locating placement for children and more time spent in direct services which include worker visits with youth.

Resource Workers:

- Specialized staff known as Resource staff who are responsible for recruitment, monitoring of foster homes, and retention to increase the number of placement options for children entering foster care and the intended outcome is less time on locating placement and more time on direct services including worker visits with youth

Data:

- CHRIS/SACWIS enhancement to better monitor and track worker visit with child by worker

Other:

- Pursue the possibility of additional clerical support and transportation services to allow case worker to spend more time in direct services including worker visits

Plan for Collecting Data and Reporting:

- **Provide FY 2007 data on caseworker visits including the % 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 child, and the % of the visits that occurred in the residence of the child (DO NOT HAVE)**
- **Requirement:** Describe the procedure the State has developed to track and report caseworker visit data to HHS; and, describe what information collection method/process will be used to arrive at reported percentages:
 - **Data:**
 - **Aggregate Number of Children Served in Foster Care** – to identify the children reported in 2007A (and what’s currently being captured in B) who were in care during a full month;
 - **Example – 3000 children**
 - **Number of Children Visited Each and Every Calendar Month** – using the above children (and excluding the months when child was on Runaway), we will review their Contact screen (when the client is identified as Participant) to capture the ‘visit’ by selecting the appropriate Type/Location:
 - Type/Location pick list:
 - Face to Face (Court)
 - Face to Face (Day Care)
 - Face to Face (DHS Office)
 - Face to Face (Home)
 - Face to Face (Hospital)
 - Face to Face (Observed, Too Young)
 - Face to Face (Other)
 - Face to Face (Placement Provider)
 - Face to Face (School)
 - **Example** – from the 3000 children, only **1000 children** had a visit **each and every month**
 - **Total Number of Visit Months** – using the above children who received a visit each and every month, we would multiply the number of children by the number of monthly visits (only one visit per month) to get the total;
 - **Example** – from the above 1000 children, there were a total of **8250 visit months** :
 - 500 children who had a visit each and every month were in care
12 months = 6000
 - 250 children who had a visit each and every month were in care
6 months = 1500
 - 250 children who had a visit each and every month were in care
3 months = 750
 - **Total Number of Placement Visit Months** – using the 8250 visit months, pull only those that have Face to Face (Placement Provider) or Face to Face (Home) on children placed in Trial Home Visit;
 - **Example** – from the 8250 visit months, **6120 visits** occurred in the child’s residence.
 - **Calculations:**
 - **Percentage of Children in Foster Care who were visited during each and every calendar month** – dividing the number of children visited by the number of children served in foster care:
 - **Example – 33%:**
 - 1000 children who had a visit each and every month divided by 3000 children
 - **Percentage of Visits occurred in the residence of the child** – dividing the number of visit months that occurred in the child residences by the total number of visit months:

- **Example – 74%:**
 - 6120 child's residence monthly visits divided by 8250 total visit months
- **The state will establish an outline of the steps it will take to ensure that the state meets the 90 % goal of children in foster care under the responsibility of the state being visited by their caseworkers monthly with a majority of the visits occurring in the residence of the child (Partially have)**
- **The outline must include target percentages to be reached each fiscal year, and a description of how the steps will be implemented. The steps may include activities designed to improve caseworker retention, recruitment Must contain information describing the procedure the state has developed to track and report monthly caseworker visit data , as well as the state's standards for the content and frequency of caseworker visits for children in foster care which assure the children are visited on a monthly basis (one visit per calendar month) (?)**

DCFS is aware that beginning in FY 2008, states cannot use more than the amount of non-federal funds it spent in FY 2005 on foster care maintenance as match for the title IV-B subpart 1 program.

DCFS is aware that Arkansas must submit FY 2007 baseline data regarding current caseworker visitation, set targets for improvement, and meet the goal of 90% are visited by their caseworker on a monthly basis and the majority of visits occur in the child's residence by October 1, 2011; FY 2008, title IV-B, subpart 1 funds will not be awarded until such time as the baseline data is submitted to ACF. If a state fails to achieve its progress goals, a reduced amount of federal funds will be awarded; continuation of subpart 2 funding for caseworker visits.

8. CAPTA State Grant

Accomplishments

DCFS certified staff teaching parenting education in all seventy-five counties. Instruction is presented in-home and in groups. All participants are given a pre-test and post-test to measure mastery. Lessons and presentations focusing on child development and child care, anger control, and self esteem are taught through a combination of Active Parenting Curriculum and group exercises. Staff offers positive re-enforcement and motivation to group members. A total of eight hundred and ten (810) parents received parenting education. A total of forty seven (47) Social Service Aides were certified during the reporting period. The services for this program are offered statewide.

Goal: The goal is to continue to provide and certify Social Service Aides in Parenting Education and to reach out to adolescent parents who need a more age appropriate curriculum.

DCFS will continue to provide information to parents and will focus on adolescent mothers in the care and development of their children. Staff will teach behavior management, anger control and self-esteem through a combination of curriculum and group exercises, including opportunities for feedback from the participants. Participants will receive pre and post test to measure the program's effectiveness. Evaluations of the program will be on-going. Participants will demonstrate an enhanced knowledge of child development and appropriate parenting skills.

The Family Resource Centers, located in nine (9) areas across the state, have requested Parent Education training in an effort to combat Child Abuse and Neglect. DCFS will work with Mid-South Training Academy to schedule the training for the upcoming fiscal year. Child Abuse and Neglect materials will be distributed to all Family Resource Centers for community awareness campaigns.

Child abuse prevention materials and promotional items were distributed to Human Service Workers in the Schools in an effort to promote child abuse and neglect in the schools across the state.

Goal: To utilize CAPTA funds to certify all Family Resource Center staff to teach Parent Education. We will continue to distribute child abuse prevention materials and promotional items to Family Resource Centers and Human Service Workers in an effort to educate the community.

Two (2) Fatherhood Programs provided resources and services to fathers to help them develop meaningful relationships with their children, obtain employment, and contribute to the support of their families. Fathers received an assessment and a service plan was developed to identify strengths and weaknesses. A total of one hundred sixty-six (166) fathers completed the Fatherhood Curriculum. A pre and post test was administered to all participants in the program.

Partnerships with DCFS workers, educational, job training and parenting programs, were instrumental in engaging fathers and involving fathers in their children's lives. A total of four hundred eight (480) fathers were served by the program. One hundred ninety (190) fathers were assisted with employment, forty-one (41) fathers received a GED, giving them the capacity to contribute financially to the support of their children and strengthening father/family bonds. One hundred and ninety-five (195) children in foster care were reunited with their fathers.

All Fatherhood Initiative providers received training on child abuse and neglect. The Fatherhood Initiative services are provided statewide.

Goal: Child Abuse and Neglect materials will be distributed to all Fatherhood Programs for community awareness campaigns. For the upcoming fiscal year, DCFS will provide training for the Fatherhood Programs to include recruitment, networking and program evaluation to assess the strengths of the program and to identify any areas needing improvement

DCFS did not RFP the two (2) additional programs that were proposed in the 2007 CAPTA budget for Areas 5 and 7.

DCFS distributed Child Abuse Prevention materials, including flyers, brochures, flashlights, key chains, clips, pens and other materials to Family Resource Centers, Human Service Workers in the Schools, Arkansas State Police, Field Staff, community agencies, schools and medical facilities. Many of the county offices held community awareness events with members of the community attending the various functions. Requests for child abuse material from the community are on-going.

Arkansas Interpreter services provide interpreter services for county staff statewide with families who are not proficient in English. This service also assists workers in the translation of documents. Arkansas Interpreter services are provided statewide.

DCFS will continue to purchase the services of Arkansas Interpreter services. There are no planned changes to the program as the service provides support to the families who are not proficient in English. The services assist the staff in the translation of documents, and provides effective communication with families. DCFS will continue to provide interpreter services for all languages to county office staff and families who are not proficient in English. The services are available in all seventy-five (75) counties.

Goal: DCFS will maintain a contract with Arkansas Interpreter Services statewide for all county office staff to assist families who are not proficient in English.

DCFS maintains an agreement with the Arkansas Chapter of Pediatrics for the availability of a Physician to assist in responding to “Baby Doe” reports. The Division has a policy that outlines procedures to be taken in the event a “Baby Doe” report comes is received. DCFS did not receive any “Baby Doe” reports during the reporting period. “Baby Doe” services are provided statewide.

Goal: DCFS will continue our agreement with the Arkansas Chapter of Pediatrics to assist staff in assessing these reports and will respond in accordance with CAPTA guidelines. There are no planned changes to the program.

The Family Treatment Program provides treatment to parents and caregivers of sexually abused children. Participants receive an assessment, a diagnostic interview, a psychiatric review and individual and/or group psychotherapy. Twenty-three (23) family members received the services during the reporting period. The Family Treatment Program services are provided statewide.

Goal: DCFS will continue to provide Family Treatment Services. There are no planned changes to the program.

The Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence provided Child Abuse and Neglect training to professionals, including social workers, psychologists, schools, child care centers, and the community. During the reporting period, twenty eight (28) trainings were completed and over one thousand sixty one (1,061) participants were trained. The Child Abuse and Neglect training is provided statewide. There are no planned changes to the program.

The State Liaison Officer attended the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Portland, Oregon.

Goal: The Division of Children and Family Services will continue to improve the skills of individuals working with families and children. DCFS will continue to raise the qualification requirements of our purchased service providers, and to strengthen the performance indicators to provide more accountability. DCFS will continue to mandate continuing education for our contracted providers and staff. Our clients receive services from licensed and or certified providers.

Citizen Review Panels Annual Report and Response

The purpose of the Citizen Review Panels is to meet the requirements of the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) grant. The 1996 amendment to CAPTA requires states to develop and establish Citizen Review Panels in order to evaluate Child Protective Services.

CAPTA funds are used to support the required Citizen Review Panels. DCFS administers three (3) Citizen Review Panels in Arkansas. Contracts for Citizen Review Panels in Ouachita and Jefferson counties were effective December 2006.

The Annual Report for FY '07 from Jefferson, Ouachita and Carroll counties and the State's responses are attached. The Panels continue to review policy, procedures and practices of the State. The Panels meet quarterly as well as monthly as needed. The Panels convene more frequently than the required quarterly schedule to review case records, including deaths and near deaths. Monthly reports are submitted including recommendations for improvements to the child welfare system.

During the reporting period, the Citizen Review Panels continued efforts to improve the State's response to children in need of protective services. The Panels held fourteen (14) formal meetings, resulting in the review of more than twenty-six (26) cases, including 5 deaths and two (2) near deaths.

In December 2006, the State met with the Jefferson County Citizen Review Panel Coordinator and the local DCFS Area Manager. Many of the issues raised were related to the staff retention, maintenance of files, lack of clerical support and training. The Area Manager will work with the staff on the case files and the areas of concern will be addressed under the supervisory review tools. Staff are mandated to conduct quarterly case reviews. The new Family Needs and Risk Assessments and case plans will be helpful to this process. To assist with the staffing issues, the state legislature, during the recent session, authorized the hiring of additional DCFS caseworkers. In addition, three (3) graduate students from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff are now working with the caseworkers in the local office. The Area Manager is working with the staff in an effort to increase training in the areas of court presentations. Concerns raised by the Citizen Review Panel Coordinator regarding the lack of local foster homes, transportation to assist caseworkers and appropriate office space are issues that the agency is addressing. DCFS is reviewing new proposed Foster Home Recruitment Performance Indicators to increase the number of foster homes in Arkansas, The new contractor based recruitment will provide for a central point of contact for recruitment, with the contractor having the responsibility of facilitating targeted foster home recruitment in the community. The contractor will work with

faith based leaders, community organizations and the local media in an effort to bring awareness to the public of the lack of foster care homes in Arkansas.

Many of the recommendations in the 2007 Citizen Review Panel Annual Report for Jefferson County related to the maintenance of files, training, clerical assistance and a request for additional transportation staff. The Panel recommended increased Relative Placement of children with behavior problems and more local homes and a residential facility in Jefferson County. (See attached State responses).

The Panel in Ouachita County has identified the issues of testing for all newborn children, tracking client/family members from state to state, tracking client information in CHRIS and training for caseworkers on relative foster parent program. (See attached State responses).

The Panel in Carroll County has identified clerical issues as well as additional local foster care homes. The members have suggested additional training for caseworkers on relative foster parent programs as well as training in the automated system CHRIS. Training in child fatalities for panel members is recommended. DCFS will work with the Citizen Review Panels to identify training opportunities. (See attached State responses).

To facilitate the review of records, DCFS provides to the Citizen Review Panels a quarterly Compliance Outcome Reports (COR) containing child maltreatment assessments, child protective services cases, foster care cases and DCFS family foster care homes. This enables the Coordinators to obtain necessary information to conduct reviews from the automated CHRIS system in a more efficient and timely manner.

Area Selected for Improvement

The Division of Children and Family Services continues to comply with its selected program area. Provisions and procedures are in policy for the referral of children under the age of 3 who are involved in substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect. All children will be referred to the Division of Developmental Disabilities for early intervention services. CHRIS reports currently track the number of children referred.

Update of Activities To Be Implemented

There are no planned changes or additions in services or program design.

Criminal Background Checks

DCFS has implemented the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act that outlines procedures for conducting criminal background checks of prospective foster care and adoptive parents. DCFS policy outlines new procedures for child abuse neglect registry for prospective foster and adoptive parents as well as adult members of their household.

9. Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Services

The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

SUMMARY UPDATE FOR FY2007

The Program

The Title IV-E Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) continued to operate in unison with the Foster Care Program during FY2006 to improve information dissemination about the CFCIP Program in the ten Children and Family Services areas in Arkansas. This was done to assist in the recruitment and training of foster parents and the recruitment of teens into the program and to provide the public with knowledge of what the program can do for foster teens. Information was shared with private facilities that house foster teens in an effort to further develop a working partnership so that a broader spectrum of basic life-skills training could be provided to teens prior to their reaching the age of emancipation. The effort was continued to search out professionals and academics that can assist the program in providing basic life-skills training to the grant program on an in-kind basis or for a reasonable cost. In order to provide a statewide curriculum so that youth moving between Service Areas can continue their life-skills training without interruption, similar resources are being sought and developed in the 10 service areas. These resources can provide real world information to the teens about short and long-term situations that will affect them now and later as well as offering advice and support as a mentor would. Information is being researched and developed concerning permanent connections for Arkansas IL youth and the best practices for providing that continuum for transitioning youth.

Categories of clients

The Division's Chafee Foster Care Independence Program provides services to youth between the ages of 14 to 21 to three (3) categories of clients:

1. Foster care youth and former foster care youth (including youth adopted at age 16 or older), IV-E eligible and non IV-E eligible, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one (16-21) participating in high school, secondary school or an equivalent technical program.
2. Former foster care youth up to the age of twenty-one (21) are eligible for post-discharge services (After-care) if the youth was in foster care on his or her eighteenth (18th) birthday. Post-discharge services may include additional life-skills training. Also job search assistance, housing search assistance, community involvement, and board assistance may be provided, as funds are available.
3. Foster teens age 14-15 are provided appropriate life skills training and other services based on evaluations and assessments. These services have been provided for the past 8 years.

Policies of the Program

The Division of Children and Family Services continues to implement policy revisions regarding the Chafee legislation and to continually evaluate and revise existing policy to conform to changes in program goals, activities and services. **Publication (Pub) 404, the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Handbook, has been revised and edited to include policy changes, additions and updates since the January 2003 publication. The Pub is currently awaiting review and promulgation.**

Accomplishments

The specific accomplishments and progress made in the past fiscal year toward helping youth make the transition to self-sufficiency; helping youth receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment; helping youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions; providing youth personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults; and meeting each of the program purposes included training and life skills workshops in the following:

Finance/Money Management,
Vocational Planning,
Parenting Health and Hygiene,
Personal Appearance,
Nutrition,
Housing,
Team Building,
Self-Esteem,
Legal Issues,
Job Search/Vocational Planning,
College Preparation,
Drugs and Addictions,
STD's/Sexual Awareness,
Conflict Resolution and
Community Resources

1738 youth (duplicated count because youth attended more than one of the workshops presented) and **231** staff attended these workshops. In addition, 328 foster parent attended life-skills workshops with youth to monitor and assist in the training sessions.

Life-skills workshops	250	
Youth initially assessed during the year	287	
Youth reassessed	531	
Youth 14 –15 provided CFCIP services	205	
Total number of video presentations	84	
Persons attending video presentations	771	(duplicated count)
After-care services for aged-out youth	74	
Amount recorded in CHRIS for After-care	Not Available	

Financial Assistance – After Care Services

Provided financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age.

- *Room and board is for rent, utilities, deposits and food for foster teens that are age 18 or older and have emancipated from care and custody of the state. Basic housekeeping items are also included in this definition as “start-up” items to insure that needed items to begin basic housekeeping are available.*
- Room and board payments for eligible youth who have aged out of foster care and request assistance will be limited in policy to up to \$500 per month for a maximum of three months, consecutive or not, and start-up assistance will be limited to a maximum of up to \$500. Start-up assistance will be limited to purchase of basic furniture and housekeeping items such as towels, sheets, cooking utensils, cleaning supplies and tools and safety items. Total assistance of up to \$2000 will be allowed for start-up and room and board. After-Care services were provided to 74 aged-out youth who requested assistance and were referred in FY 2006.
- Outreach for after-care services is being provided in the search for "former foster youth" in need of “After-care Services" by continuing to inform staff, foster parents, attorneys ad-litem, Youth Advisory Board members etc. of the "After-care" benefits, policies and procedures.

Training

Information on specific training that was conducted during federal fiscal year (FY) 2006, and is ongoing in FY 2007, in support of the goals and objectives include the following:

- Individual and group training for foster parents and teen sponsors is being provided, developed further and expanded to increase the knowledge and skills of this population in dealing with foster teens and assisting with life-skills development and reinforcement. **Three hundred sixty-nine (369)** foster parents attended the various trainings and workshops. In addition, CFCIP/ETV workshops were provided for foster parents at Area and State foster parent trainings and conferences.
- Independent Living Coordinators were provided additional training on **resource development**, life-skills assessments, documentation of contacts and services, **mentoring and long-term connections, record keeping** and recruitment for and provision of ETV assistance. Independent Living Coordinators, Family Service Workers and supervisors were provided training on the policy that incorporated

Chafee, **ETV and After-care services regulations and procedures.** That training is ongoing and will continue for new workers as they are hired.

- All life-skills training continues to be available to teens (up to age 21) that have aged out of foster care. In addition, they are still eligible for one-on-one counseling and staff assistance in the areas of housing, employment, financial management and transportation. If they choose to voluntarily remain in care after age 18 and continue their educational pursuits, they are also eligible for financial assistance with tuition, fees, books and room and board expenses through foster care, CFCIP and ETV. Teens that opt to leave care at age 18 or before age 21 will remain eligible for financial assistance with start-up items and room and board on an as-requested, funds-available basis and will remain eligible for ETV assistance based on educational progress. Policy and procedure to comply with the CFCIP legislation is being revised concerning the eligibility and limitations of financial support for former foster care clients. Services are also available to adoptees that were formerly in foster care.

Life-skills training sessions are recorded as to the date, time and type of training. Sign-in sheets are kept and documentation is provided to case managers, supervisors and Central Office concerning youth attendance and participation in the life-skills sessions.

Support Services

Provided personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults by conducting the following:

- Youth Advisory Board - Youth representatives on the board are **involved in the CFSR process and are becoming** more involved in the agency and political processes that will assist the board in being effective as an advocacy group that will be listened to. Their focus is on understanding the system and assisting with the development of new ideas, policy and methods that will enhance services for themselves and other foster youth. **The youth were successful in recruiting political assistance in the presenting and passing of legislation that eases restrictions that Arkansas foster youth have encountered in obtaining a driver's license. The Board is now taking an active role in dealing with other youth issues such as tuition/fee waivers, bill of rights, appeal processes, services and service delivery systems, case planning with youth involvement and satisfaction surveys.**

The youth are being provided with training and indoctrination

Teen Conference - **The Sixteenth Annual Teen Conference was held June 1-3, 2006.** Arkansas' CFCIP coordinated and presented the conference instead of using CFCIP funds to contract for this service. There were **128** youth, IL Coordinators, Family Service

Workers plus guests and presenters for this conference. The cost of the conference was **\$19,885**. Youth are immersed in activities that promote team building, decision making, self esteem, social interaction and other interpersonal skills in a very positive atmosphere

Arkansas Transition to Adulthood Conference – **The third ATTA conference was held August 22-24, 2006 in Little Rock.** There were 217 attendees that included foster teens, foster parents, Youth Advisory Board members, Family Service Workers, IL Coordinators, Area and State program Supervisors and managers, Office of Chief Counsel staff, DYS (Youth Services) staff, managers, case trackers and facility personnel, CASA volunteers, attorneys-ad litem, juvenile justice representatives, service providers and **Shared Youth Vision (SYV) collaborative members WIA, Education, Job Corps, 2-year Colleges and Court Improvement (juvenile court judges)** . The cost of the conference was **\$105,429** and included general sessions and workshops conducted by individuals nationally known for their experience and involvement in transitional and independent living programs and issues and SYV Collaboration members. The conference was set up and conducted with the assistance of the National Resource Center for Youth Services from the University of Oklahoma.

In federal fiscal year 2006, the total unduplicated number of youth served was 909. This includes youth for which direct paid-for services were provided as well as youth who were provided services such as life-skills training for which no direct cost was attached.

***The annual salary/match for the thirteen (13) employees paid out of the Independent Living Grant during FY2005 is \$207,668.64. Fringe at 30% is \$62,300.59. Total salary + fringe = \$269,969.23. This figure will increase for FFY 2005 as additional Area Coordinators are added to the grant.**

Trust Fund Incentive Program

A trust fund is a treasury account budget in the Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System that provides youth with financial and other appropriate support and services designed to help them transition to adulthood. For Arkansas, the trust fund program for youth receiving independent living services or transition assistance is described as the Educational Incentive Trust Fund for Post-Secondary Students. The fund provides an incentive savings account for students pursuing post-secondary educational goals to that upon completion of the course, aging out of the CFCIP system or being unable to continue or completed the course; there will be funds available to the student. Funds will also help with start-up expenses, housing expenses and other expenses required to complete the transition into adulthood and productivity.

It is estimated that the AR-CFCIP program will expend approximately **\$41,500 on 28** former foster youth through the Arkansas Trust Fund Incentive Program during FFY **2007**. This will include youth who were enrolled in 4-year colleges, 2-year colleges, vocational-technical schools and trade schools and who successfully completed college

semesters or courses of study in other accredited schools prior to their cases being closed or aging out of care.

The Division of Children and Family Services, with approval from Region VI office of the Administration for Children and Families, established educational incentive trust funds on June 21, 2002, for youth leaving foster care.

The incentive program is totally encumbered and there are no new funds that will be put into the program for additional youth. The actual figures of encumbrance and balance will vary over time due to updates on semesters, grades and dropouts who do or do not qualify for payments.

Youth Served FFY 2006-2007 —78 (Incentive accounts maintained or paid out)

Beginning Balance Available - \$153,487

Committed to Date - \$152,000

Current Available Funds- \$1,487

Expended to date--\$79,250

Projected expenditures FFY 2007/2008--\$41,500

A description of and the agreement for funding, accumulation and disbursement of funds in this incentive account follow on the next seven (7) pages.

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM

EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVE TRUST FUND FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT

Written notification was received from the Region VI office of the Administration for Children and Families on May 26, 1994 indicating the amendments to the Arkansas Chafee Foster Care Independence Program grant application establishing educational incentive trust funds for youth leaving foster care were acceptable. The notification indicated that the request had been reviewed and been found to comply with requirements provided in ACYF-PI-93-16 and that the information concerning Arkansas' Independent Living Trust Funds was permanent and would remain in effect unless it is rescinded, after notification in writing, to the Commissioner of ACYF.

SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR THE CFCIP TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

The sole source of funding for the Educational Incentive Trust Fund account will be any unencumbered, unexpended funds remaining in any Independent Living grant account on

September 30 of the second year that a particular grant award covers. Independent Living grants are awarded for each Federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) and are allowed to be expended during two federal fiscal years. e.g. The grant award for the Federal fiscal year October 1, 1996 through September 30, 1997 (FFY1997) may be expended until September 30, 1998. Any funds remaining on September 30, 1998 would be transferred to the Incentive Trust Fund Account. At the point the Educational Incentive Trust Fund is depleted, the program will cease operation and close any and all associated active accounts. No further incentives will accumulate or be credited to any student's account for payment.

Any funds that remain in the Educational Incentive Trust Fund account for a period of six (6) months and are not anticipated to be paid out during that state fiscal year may be placed with the Investment Section of the State Treasurer's Office for deposit to an interest bearing Certificate of Deposit for a period of (not to exceed) three (3) months.

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE CFCIP TRUST FUND ACCOUNT

To provide an incentive savings account for students pursuing post-secondary educational goals so that upon completion of the course, aging out of the CFCIP system or being unable to continue or complete the planned course, there will be funds available to the student to utilize for additional educational expenses, graduation expenses, start-up expenses, housing expenses or other expenses required to complete the transition into adulthood and productivity.

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Youth who choose to remain in foster care after graduating from high school and enroll in post-secondary educational pursuits such as college, junior college, vocational-technical school or trade school and who sign a post-secondary education participation agreement will be eligible to accrue incentive credits in a ledger account established under their name.

Eligibility will continue for as long as the student is enrolled and incentives will accrue until (1) the educational pursuit is completed (2) the student withdraws from the educational program or, (3) their 21st birthday occurs. At that time, their eligibility will cease and any funds accrued in their account will be paid to them.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND CRITERIA

Youth who participate in post-secondary educational programs will only be eligible for incentive credits for as long as a signed contract following the guidelines below is in force.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

Contract

For _____
Youth Name

- The youth must be enrolled as a full time student in an accredited institution or he/she will be dismissed from foster care. Youth will apply for and keep active Federal Pell Grant and other available grants and scholarships.
- The youth will maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0.
- The youth will provide a copy of each semester's grades to the FSW. Youth will agree to sign a release for Worker to obtain information from the institute regarding youth's class schedule, grades, attendance records, and financial aid status.
- The youth will attend all scheduled classes. The youth will contact their Sponsor or CFCIP Coordinator, if they have already acquired 2 absences, for written permission to miss any additional classes.
- The youth will attend a minimum of 10 scheduled Basic Life-Skills Training workshops and/or activities annually.
- The youth will attend DCFS staffings in order to actively participate in establishing, updating, and following their case plan.
- The youth may attain and maintain a job that does not interfere with academic endeavors to assist with support.
- The youth will maintain contact with their sponsor and FSW Worker at least twice monthly totaling 4 monthly visits, unless a waiver has been approved.
- The youth will notify caseworker of any changes in school, work and/or living arrangements within two (2) days of said change.
- The youth will not partake of alcohol, drugs or substances that are not prescribed. Any positive urine analysis may result in immediate dismissal from the IL Program. Youth agrees to submit to random UA when requested.
- The youth may be dismissed from the IL Program if he/she is found guilty of any illegal activity.
- If teen exhibits inappropriate behavior that demonstrates his/her inability to work with Worker, Sponsor, and CFCIP Coordinator; he/she will be dismissed from the IL Program.
- Failure to comply with all contract statements will result in a 'Determination Staffing'.

Outline of Responsibilities:

Freshmen

- Youth will live in a foster home, with their CFCIP Sponsor or if Worker allows, in dorm housing.
- Youth must maintain and pass 15 credit hours each freshmen semester (12 credit hours of basic courses + 3 credit hours of electives).

Upper Classmen

- Youth may live in own residence if the residence is in compliance with Independent Youth's Residence Checklist (CFS – 370).
- No roommates will be allowed for upperclassmen residing in their own residence.
- Youth will comply with all rules and regulations set forth by the landlord. This includes all signed rental and lease agreements.

Sponsor

- Sponsor will attend all staffings and make sure the youth is abiding with the terms of the established case plan.
- Sponsor will assist the youth in maintaining a budget of monthly income and expenses.
- Sponsor will visit the youth twice monthly and will notify Worker of any problems detected during the visit.
- Sponsor will receive and disburse monthly board payment to youth based on the current budget plan.

Family Service Worker

- Worker will initiate an appropriate board payment for youth based on the current budget needs while the youth is in foster care.
- Worker will notify youth and Sponsor, and IL Coordinator of staffings.
- Worker will visit youth weekly, unless a waiver is approved.
- Worker will maintain monthly contacts with Sponsor (can be telephone or e-mail contacts).
- Worker will provide CFCIP Coordinator with a copy of youth's class schedule at the beginning of each semester.
- Worker will provide CFCIP Coordinator with youth's grades, attendance records and financial aid status within seven (7) days of each semester's end.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Coordinator

- Coordinator will request CFCIP funding for youth if he/she qualifies.
- Coordinator will notify FSW Supervisors, Youth and Sponsor of all workshops, trainings and activities.
- Coordinator will assist youth in finding resources to prepare him/her for independence.

Participation in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program will end when the youth has:

- Reached 21st birthday
- Achieved independence to the extent that financial support and social services are no longer needed.
- Made a voluntary decision to no longer participate in the IL Program, therefore leaving Foster Care.

OR

- Demonstrated unwillingness or the inability to meet the requirements of the IL Program and the terms of the agreement established in the case plan.

I join in an agreement as to the specified conditions of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. I have read, understand and voluntarily agree to abide with the contract terms.

Youth's Signature Date
Date

Sponsor's Signature

Family Service Worker Date

CFCIP Coordinator Date



ACCUMULATION OF INCENTIVE CREDITS:

For Four-year School Attendance:

A credit of \$500 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each full, spring or fall, semester that is completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement concerning grade point and hours completed.

A maximum credit of \$250 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each completion of six (6) hours or more of courses during summer terms between freshman and sophomore terms, sophomore and junior terms and junior and senior terms. The total allowable incentive to be posted under this category is \$4750.

For Two-year or Junior College Attendance:

A credit of \$500 will be posted to the student's ledger account for each full, spring or fall, semester that is completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement concerning grade point and hours completed.

A maximum credit of \$250 will be posted to the student's ledger account for completion of six (6) hours or more of course completion during summer terms between first and second years.

For Vocational-Technical School Attendance:

For each six (6) months of study/course time required to complete a vocational-educational study plan in accordance with the student's contract/agreement, a maximum of \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account.

For Specialty and Trade School Attendance:

For a training/course period lasting 3-6 months, a maximum of \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account if completed in accordance with the student's contract/agreement. If the course/training lasts more than 6 months, an additional \$500 will be credited to the student's ledger account for each additional 6-month period or portion thereof after the initial 6-months are completed.

For GED Training:

For attending GED courses, completing and passing the final GED examination and receiving the GED Certificate according to the terms of the student's contract/agreement, a maximum of \$750 will be credited to the student's ledger account.

Under no circumstance will the total credited to any student's incentive ledger account exceed \$4750.

PAYMENT OF ACCUMULATED INCENTIVE CREDITS:

A payment of the accumulated incentive credits may occur at one of the three following times:

1. The educational course is completed.
2. The student's 21st birthday occurs.
3. The student withdraws from the educational course. Credit will be given up to the last full semester or course completed.

The student's case must be closed and notification forwarded to the Independent Living Unit Manager. The Unit Manager will confirm and verify the total accumulated incentive as recorded in the ledger account for that student and notify, in writing, the Chief Financial Officer for the Division of Children and Family Services of the client name, case number, address and the amount of the state warrant to be issued in payment.

Once an incentive accumulation has been verified and paid and the case closed, no other educational incentives may be accumulated for and paid to the student. If a student continues in a post-secondary educational plan after receiving their GED, they may continue to accumulate credit until one of the above three occurrences takes place.

10. Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV)

We have continued to work to expand utilization of the ETV program by using various avenues to inform eligible youth of its availability. Efforts have included working with colleges and other institutions of post secondary education to include information about ETV on their web sites, working with Workforce Education representatives, holding workshops on ETV at our annual youth and Arkansas Transition to Adulthood Conferences, and insuring that our independent Living Coordinators are knowledgeable about the program. We have been so successful that our allotment of ETV money was exhausted and we are seeking redistribution of funds underutilized by other states. Arkansas ETV funded 81 youth in post-secondary pursuits in 2006 at a total cost of \$263,647 and an average of \$3,254 per student.

APSR STATS - May 23, 2007

Chafee Expenditures FFY 2004/2005 (end 9-30-05)	\$764,776.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2004/2005 10.5%	\$80,872.00
Chafee Expenditures FFY 2005/2006 (end 9-30-06)	\$771,514.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2005/2006	N/A
Chafee Expenditures FFY 2006/2007 (end 9-30-07)	\$796,126.00
*Room and Board for FFY 2006/2007	N/A
ETV Expenditures FFY 2004/2005 (end 9-30-05)	\$249,575.00
ETV Expenditures FFY 2005/2006 (end 9-30-06)	\$263,647.00
ETV Expenditures FFY 2006/2007 (end 9-30-07)	\$272,077.00
ETV Applications in FFY 2004/2005	96
ETV Approved Applications 2004/2005	91
ETV Funded applications 2004/2005**	85

New Applications 2004/2005	46
ETV Applications in FFY 2005/2006	108
ETV Approved Applications 2005/2006	96
ETV Funded applications 2005/2006**	81
New Applications 2005/2006	23
ETV Applications in FFY 2006/2007	158
ETV Approved Applications 2006/2007	146
ETV Funded applications 2006/2007**	69
New Applications 2006/2007	31

FFY 2007/2008 Applications Expected to be Funded	90
FFY 2007/2008 Expected ETV Funds	\$285,903.00
FFY 2007/2008 Requested Additional Funds	\$130,000.00

* Room and board expenditures include funds spent for rent, rental deposits, utilities, utility deposits, food and housekeeping start-up items for youth who have aged out of care but have not yet reached the age of 21. No data is available for FFY2006 and 2007

** The per student average funding for Arkansas ETV is much less than the \$5000 cost-of-attendance maximum allowable each year.

2004/2005 = \$2936

2005/2006 = \$3255

2006/2007 = \$3943 (Low count - all apps not funded yet)

11. Financial and Statistical Information Reporting

Status:

Family Support-29%

Family Preservation-41%

Time Limited Family Reunification—15.4%

Adoption Promotion and Support-4.5%

Administration-10%

The Division intends to spend 20% for at least two categories: Family Support and Family Preservation. The agency utilizes the Adoption Coalition and the Social Service Block Grant funding as an alternate funding source which impacts the % of dollars used for other services such as counseling, Time Limited Family Reunification and Adoption Promotion and Support.

D. Supporting Information

Juvenile Justice Transfers

Currently there are thirty-nine (39) youth who began in DCFS custody and are now in the Division of Youth Services custody (Juvenile Justice System). Twenty-one days after the child is committed, a multi-disciplinary staffing is convened to determine the child's comprehensive treatment plan that includes community reintegration. The system works well and allows youth to retain their DCFS caseworker with a Division of Youth Services tracker. The Division of Youth Services reports on the status of DCFS children in their custody. The report of thirty-nine (39) youth reflects the period July 1, 2006 through May 31, 2007.

Inter-Country Adoptions

Federal Requirement: a description of the activities that the State has undertaken for children adopted from other countries, including the provision of adoption and post adoption services. This will include the number of children who are adopted from other countries and who enter State custody as a result of the disruption of an adoption or the dissolution of an adoption, the agencies who handled the placement or the adoption, the plans for the child, and reasons for the disruption or dissolution.

Status

Enhancements to CHRIS have been made and allow the division to track this information.

Three children met the criteria for a disrupted or dissolved inter-country adoption for state fiscal year 2007 (July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007). The reasons for the disruptions or dissolutions include: abandonment, child's behavior, and alleged physical abuse. The case plan goals include: adoption, return to parent, and another planned permanent living arrangement. All of the services available to any child in foster care are also available to children and families meeting these criteria.

Adoption and post adoption services are also available to families who have adopted internationally.

Child Welfare Demonstration Projects

Child Welfare Demonstration:

Our Mission with Wendy's Wonderful Kid's is a child specific recruitment initiative. All children in Pulaski County who meet the established criteria will have an opportunity to be selected for the Wendy's Wonderful Kids Project. Twenty (20) of these children will be selected at random for the project. Twelve (12) children will be selected initially and within three months the remaining eight will be added to the caseload. The criteria for children on the caseload are as follows:

1. Be Caucasian, nine years of age or older;
2. Be a child of color, two years of age or older;
3. Be members of a sibling group of three or more being placed together;
4. Have severe medical or psychological needs that require ongoing rehabilitation or treatment.

The total amount of the grant award is \$65,000.

Foster and Adoptive Parents Recruitment

ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN

FFYS 2005 –2009

Progress Report

Introduction

In June 2004, Arkansas had a pool of one hundred ninety-six (196) approved families waiting for children. Of that 196, 52 or 27% were African-American and 144 or 73% were White. The percentage of African American families has increased from 22% in the FFYS 2000-2004 recruitment plan.

Arkansas had four hundred ninety-eight (498) children waiting to be adopted at the end of SFY 2004. Seventy-six or 15% of these children are living in preadoptive homes. Four hundred twenty two children with parental rights terminated were not placed in adoptive homes. Twenty six per cent of the children available for adoption were African American. Sixty three per cent were Caucasian

At the end of June 2004, there were 3,241 children in foster care, 58% white, 30% African-American, 7% more than one race, and 4% Hispanic. Ages were 25% between the ages of 6 –11, 23% between the ages of 12 – 15, 21% between the ages of 2 – 5, 18% between the ages of 16 – 18, 10% between the ages of 0 – 1 and 1% 18 or older. 50% of these children are male and 50% are female.

Given the characteristics of children described above and the families available for placement, the Division of Children and Family Services will use the strategies outlined in this plan to locate and develop adoptive home resources to meet the needs of waiting children.

Goal I: To improve DCFS' general adoption recruitment and retention efforts

Objective 1: To increase awareness and education of all DCFS/DCO clerical staff concerning adoption.

Task 1: Feature a waiting child or sibling group in the DHS newsletter.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. The first waiting child was featured in the DHHS newsletter in November 2005 and is ongoing.

Task 2: Develop statewide curriculum and provide training for DCFS/DCO clerical staff on the new web-based adoption inquiry process.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished. Having clerical staff enter an inquiry via the adoption web site is still being considered. The training curriculum developed for

DCFS Field Staff will be utilized to train DCFS/DCO Clerical. Change Lead responsibility to Community Support/Adoption Services and Secondary Responsibility to Adoption Supervisors and County Administrators. Change accomplish date to December 31, 2006.

Status: Efforts are underway, but more time is needed to appropriately accomplish this task. During January – March 2007, MidSouth Training Academy initiated the series of training from Spaulding Special Needs Adoption Curriculum. Adoption Specialists, Adoption Supervisors, and two Adoption Managers attended the initial training on January 17, 2007. MidSouth Training Academy continued to develop a training curriculum for new Adoption Specialists. Two Adoption Managers attended the orientation in February for the grant awarded to DCFS by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Wendy’s Wonderful Kids. One Adoption Manager and Recruiter attended the summit. Planning began for a statewide adoption conference in November 2007 (sponsored by the private sector, DCFS has a representative on the planning committee and is to provide monies for the keynote speaker and some stipends for DCFS adoptive families). One Adoption staff member attended the North American Council on Adoptable Children Conference in July 2006. Two Adoption staff members and one foster staff attended the Regional AdoptUs Kids Roundtable one foster staff and one adoption staff attended the AdoptUs Kids National Adoption and Foster Care Summit in August 2006. Change accomplish date to September 20, 2008.

Objective 2: To promote awareness and education among community organizations

Task 1: Develop a statewide plan for awareness and education on adoption.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. A statewide Adoption Recruitment Plan was developed in January 2005. Lead Responsibility: Adoption Services Unit/Adoption Field Services Manager

Task 2: Develop area plans for awareness and education on adoption.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished in all the Adoption Field Service Areas. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2006.

Task 3: Utilize support groups, speakers bureaus, faith-based groups and other community groups.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2008

Status: This task has been accomplished and will be on going. All adoption Field Area Field Services Areas have created at least one community based Adoption

Coalition to recruit and support adoptive families. The Central Area has initiated the C.A.L.L and other areas are will be following

Objective 3: To explore post-adoption services

Task 1: Mail letters regarding the availability of post-adoption services to subsidized adoptive families and foster families

Accomplish Date: January 1, 2007

Status: Letters and brochures were mailed to subsidized adoptive families in June 2006. The brochures were included in the letter and survey on post adoption services. Brochures have not been mailed to foster families. Recommend accomplish date be changed to June 30, 2007 for brochures to be mailed to foster families.

Task 2: Complete a survey with adoptive families on the need for post-adoption services

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished in June 2006. A post adoption survey was forwarded to subsidized adoptive families.

Task 3: Use results of post-adoption services survey findings to develop and expand post-adoption services.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2006

Status: Approximately, 270 surveys have been returned. The Planning Unit with DHHS/DCFS will be contacted during the next quarter to determine if they can analyze the surveys.

Objective 4: To monitor the progress of the Adoption Recruitment Plan on a quarterly basis

Task 1: Utilize the monitoring tool to monitor progress of recruitment efforts.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was accomplished. A progress report form was developed by the Division of Children and Family Services in order to obtain information. Task was accomplished since a tool for monitoring progress of recruitment efforts was developed during a previous CFSP period.

Goal II: To provide targeted recruitment efforts to find homes for waiting children

Objective 1: Each Adoption Specialist will recruit and retain a minimum of ten (10) African American families per year for the next five (5) years (Exception: If the geographical area of one of the Adoption Specialists has less than 5% African American

population their minimum number may be adjusted accordingly, but the statewide total will supplement the reduced number).

Task 1: Include in Area Recruitment Plan, the plan for recruiting and retaining African American homes to address this objective.

Accomplish Dates: **September 30, 2005 – 10 Families**
September 30, 2006 – 10 Families
September 30, 2007 - 10 Families
September 30, 2008 – 10 Families
September 30, 2009 – 10 Families

Status: Task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005 in each of the five adoptive service areas. There were a total of 53 homes statewide recruited and retained. In FFY, 2006 there were a total of 59 home statewide recruited and retained. In FFY 2007 ending September, 2007, there are currently 47 homes statewide recruited and retained.

Task 2: Coordinate and develop media presentations, written materials, and information packets (to include information related to home study process and agency access) to recruit African American families.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: The Northeast Adoption Field Service Area, the Central Adoption Field Service Area, and the Southwest Adoption Field Service Area and the Southeast Field Service Area have accomplished this task primarily via the Adoption Coalition Grant (federal grant). The Northwest Field Service Area has accomplished portions of this task. They have not coordinated and developed media presentations. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Task 3: Establish working relationships with a minimum of ten (10) local community based groups each year per Area.

Accomplish Dates: **September 30, 2005 - 10 Groups**
September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups
September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups
September 30, 2008 – 10 Groups
September 30, 2009 – 10 Groups

Status: The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area, Central Adoption Field Services Area, and Southwest Adoption Field Services Area accomplished the task by September 30, 2005. The Southeast Adoption Field Services Area has now accomplished this task . These Areas are presently increasing the number of relationships with community-based groups primarily via the Adoption Coalitions (federal grant). The Northwest Adoption Field Services Area has established a working relationship with(8) local community based groups. These groups also are primarily via the Adoption Coalition

Task 4: Develop and maintain at least one adoption support group in each Area.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005**

Status: Task was accomplished in the Northeast Adoption Field Service Area, which currently has five (5) active adoption support groups. The Southwest, Northwest, Southeast, and the Central Adoption Field Service Areas have at least one (1) joint Foster Parent/Adoption Support group.

Objective 2: Recruit and retain adoptive families for teens, children with severe disabilities, and sibling groups of three or more.

Task 1: Coordinate and develop media presentations, written materials, and information packets (to include information related to the home study process and agency access) to recruit adoptive families for teens, children with severe disabilities, and sibling groups of three (3) or more.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: The Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Southwest Adoption Field Service Areas have accomplished this task. The Northwest Adoption Field Service Area has accomplished a portion of the task. They have not coordinated and developed media presentations. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Task 2: Establish working relationships with a minimum of ten (10) local community based groups, for teen recruitment each year per Area.

Accomplish Dates: **September 30, 2005 - 10 Groups**

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2006 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2008 – 10 Groups

September 30, 2009 – 10 Groups

Status: Task was accomplished in the Southeast, Northeast, Southwest, and Central Adoption Field Services Area; however, the Northwest Field Service Area has developed a working relationship with (8) groups.

Task 3: Establish and maintain at least one post adoption service per Area

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2006**

Status: Task has been accomplished. The Northeast Adoption Field Services Area has accomplished this task by establishing parent support groups, lending resource library (each Adoption Specialist's office), and a newsletter. The other four adoption

management areas have established a lending resource library (each Adoption Specialist's office).

Goal III: To identify and recruit appropriate adoptive families for specific waiting children

Objective 1: Complete a web site and photo-listing registration on all waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Identify children with special needs who are legally free for adoption, are not placed with an adoptive family, and are not registered on the DCFS web site and photo-listing.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: All the Adoption Field Services Areas have accomplished this task by identifying the children with special needs who are legally free for adoption, are not placed with an adoptive family, and are not registered on the DCFS web site and photo listing. The areas continue to monitor this on going task.

Task 2: Prepare web site and photo-listing registration packets on the waiting children.

Accomplish Date: **September 30, 2005 and on-going**

Status: Task was not accomplished in the all Adoption Field Service Areas by September 30, 2005, however, registration packets were prepared on twenty-six (26) new profiles of waiting children by September 30, 2005, and twenty (20) new profiles were added by December 30, 2005. From January, 2006 thru May, 2006, thirty-five (35) new profiles of waiting children were added. The task is now completed, and areas are maintaining this on going task.

Task 3: Enter the registration of waiting children onto the web site and photo-listing.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: This task was not accomplished on all waiting children in the Adoption Field Service Areas by September 30, 2005, however, registration packets were forwarded and registrations completed on twenty-six (26) new profiles of waiting children by September 30, 2005 and twenty (20) new profiles were added by December 30, 2005. From January, 2006 thru May, 2006, thirty-five (35) new profiles of waiting children were added. This on going task is being maintained.

Objective 2: Develop placement resources with private and public agencies for waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Develop a network with private and public agencies to increase the resource of approved adoptive applicants for waiting children with special needs.

Accomplish Date: October 1, 2005 and on-going

Status: This task has been accomplished in that the following activities have been initiated: (1) private agencies are participating in some of the Adoption Coalitions; (2) participation with private agencies in providing a statewide biannual adoption conference; (3) participation with private agencies at adoption information fairs; (4) providing consultation to private agency staff and families regarding the adoption subsidy program; and (5) the acceptance of approved adoption home studies from private agencies and other public agencies for registration in the “matching” database. This task has been accomplished and is ongoing. Approved adoption home studies have continued to be accepted from other public and private adoption agencies, particularly as a result of families viewing registrations of waiting children on the DHHS/DCFS adoption web site, AdoptUSKids, and Adoption.com. The private sector continues to be involved in the Adoption Coalitions (Adoption Opportunity Grant) to recruit and support adoptive families. DHHS/DCFS was awarded a \$65,000.00 recruitment grant during February 2007 from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Wendy’s Wonderful Kids, to serve Pulaski County, Area VI. Planning for the bi-annual statewide adoption conference began in January 2007 (sponsored by the private sector, DHHS/DCFS staff serves on the planning committee). DHHS/DCFS participated with various types of public and private agencies in the Black Expo in Pulaski County in February 2007 by hosting an information booth about foster parenting and adoption. The C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime) was established as result of the Fellowship Summit held during the previous quarter (faith based project involving approximately seventeen churches to recruit, train, complete home studies with prospective foster and adoptive families and to provide support after placement).

Task 2: Develop recommendations for purchase of service for the adoption of specific waiting children with special needs.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005

Status: Task was not accomplished by September 30, 2005 but recommendations were completed on June 12, 2006. Task has not completely been accomplished. Recommendations (policy/procedures) were completed in June 2006 and revised that same month. No further actions were taken during the quarter from January – March 2007. The DHHS/DCFS Assistant Director for Finance will be contacted to determine if monies are available for a purchase of service program to pay private adoption agency fees. The recommendations must also be presented to the new DHHS/DCFS Director. Recommend the accomplish date be changed to July 30, 2007.

Objective 3: Implement a child specific recruitment plan

Task 1: Complete a child specific recruitment form on every waiting child.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: Task was not accomplished. All areas are working on this task. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Objective 4: Identify and utilize available community resources to find families for specific waiting children with special needs.

Task 1: Identify during concurrent planning families who have significant ties to a waiting child and determine if it is appropriate to consider the families for adoption placement.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: This task was not accomplished. Change the accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Task 2: Plan and implement at least five activities during the federal fiscal year to recruit adoptive families for specific waiting children per Area.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2005 and on-going

Status: All adoption field service areas exceeded five activities during the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2005 with an exception of the Northwest Adoption Field Service Area. Northwest has established an Adoption Coalition and in the process of planning activities. Change accomplish date to September 30, 2007.

Foster Parent Recruitment Plan

The Foster Parent Recruitment Plan is reported by the Resource Workers in the DCFS 10 Areas:

Goal: Recruit Foster Families in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of children in foster care.

Objective 1: Increase awareness and education of DCFS and DHHS staff concerning foster care needs.

Area 1

- Spoken to County Supervisors regarding foster care needs, foster parent needs, and the care of the children
- Assist with training of new worker orientation, to recruit foster parents, and answer questions.

Area 2

- Inform DCFS staff of inquiry meetings and invited to attend.
- Inform staff of training

Area 4

- Shared awareness of Adoption Coalition in Columbia and Miller Counties.
- Placed “Each One – Tell One” pamphlets in the employee box in the Miller County DHHS office.
- Use flyers in the office hallway and in the break room.
- The Adoption Coalition sponsored the Adoption Celebration in November in Hempstead and staff provided handouts; staff and the community were invited.
- Inform the staff of the need for foster and adoptive parents.
- Used the Adoption Coalitions in Miller and Columbia Counties for help in recruiting DHHS staff.
- The southwest chapter of the Arkansas State Employees Association has been involved with the awareness of the needs of foster care.
- Recruitment of foster parent poster displayed in Miller County.

Area 6

- Through sharing the need of foster parents with our local community centers, clinics and placing brochures and information in areas that can be viewed attendees and patients. We have received several inquiries.

Area 7

- Attend Area VII staff meetings

Area 8

- All staff is aware of the need for additional foster homes in the area. This is an ongoing task for both DCFS and DHHS.
- The need for more foster homes is discussed at Area Meetings.
- Greene, Lawrence, and Fulton Counties have clothes closets to assist foster parents in obtaining clothing for foster children. Sharp County utilizes a Thrift Shop where no cost is charged for clothing for foster children.

Area 9

- Spoke at the DHHS White County staff meeting to discuss the need for foster and adoptive home.
- Informed DHHS staff of flyers of upcoming recruitment meetings

- Inform all staff of events and recruitments being held.
- Mail email flyers to DCFS staff and post in county office about inquiry meetings.
- Inform DCFS staff of Resource Workers assigned for the specific counties and educates the protocol for inquiries.

Objective 2: Enlist the support of DCFS Foster Parents to assist in recruitment efforts.

Area 1

- Foster Parents help with Inquiry Meetings.
- Foster Parent Association members are invited to help with recruitment and the availability of speaking engagements of Resource Workers.

Area 2

- Foster Parents attend Rotary meetings, speaking engagements and church events.

Area 3

- Spoke monthly meeting to discuss ways about retention efforts made about DCFS staff and the ways we could encourage and praise our foster parents for the great work they do.
- Sent a Holiday thank you to all foster parents; sent another personal appreciation card to foster parents from Resource Workers
- All the counties prepared Christmas parties for the foster children and their foster parents.
- Met with area supervisors and staff to inform them of the proper inquiry referral and the appropriate ways to be what said and the proper procedures to follow

Area 4

- In the effort to increase the support, the current foster parents have been invited to attend inquiry meetings; develop a forum on recruitment; develop a team of recruitment; speak to the support group; and develop a speaker's bureau.
- Have provided "Each One - Tell One" pamphlets to foster parents

Area 5

- Foster parents have been given brochures during foster parent association meetings to distribute churches and organizations
- The Foster Parent Association is provided information about family materials and information about the need for foster parents.

Area 6

- The foster parent association members communicate by word of mouth and pass on information for materials.

Area 7

- Foster parents are invited to inquiry meetings to be available for foster and adoptive questions.
- Attended foster parents of the first Lonoke County Foster Parent Association.

Area 8

- Foster parents are encouraged to communicate among other foster parents for the need of additional foster parents.
- A group for Manila foster parents was held to discuss starting up their support group.
- The Craighead County Foster Parent Association has become active again.
- The Lawrence, Sharp, Izard, and Fulton County Foster Parent Associations hold regular meetings.
- The Lawrence County Foster Parent Association distributed promotional materials to recruit foster parents.
- The Sharp, Izard, and Fulton County Foster Parent Associations did a fund raiser in the community to assist foster parents for special outings for foster children. This also increased awareness of the needs of foster children and foster homes.

Area 9

- Foster parents are invited to all recruitment meetings.
- Informational flyers are mailed to foster parents to assist with advertise,
- Brochures are provided to foster parents to distribute to people about information about foster parents.
- Independence County Foster Parent Association assisted the county at Christmas time and helped purchase gifts and to raise community awareness.
- Foster parents are encouraged to invite people to inquiry meetings.
- Foster parents are encouraged to provide flyers to churches.
- Supply pamphlets to others to encourage foster home recruitment.
- Independence and White Counties Foster Parent Associations involved in helping to plan events for the National Foster Care Month.
- The Resource Worker provided information to the Foster Parent Association on the foster parents' role in recruitment, pamphlets, contacts with workers, and information about the process and time frames.

Objective 3: Increase awareness and education of the community concerning foster care needs.

Area 1

- Aired radio public service announcement.
- Continuing ads in local newspaper
- Attended county fairs at Madison and at Carroll Counties
- Has contacted local coffee newsletters

Area 2

- Continuously run ads of newspapers
- Participate in the local Adoption Coalitions
- Provide information for local church bulletins
- Included information about foster parenting for United Way book
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce's
- Participated in the "Cops for Kids Rodeo"
- Use radio Spirit 106.3 radio announcements
- Used a recruitment banner to advertise

Area 3

- Presentations were made at Garland County churches: Black children and of siblings were informed of the need for foster families.
- Howard and Pike counties were informed of flyers about foster parents were distributed through churches and invited to inquiry meetings; results of the inquiry meetings resulted in beginnings of training sessions.
- The Perry County Fair was attended by DCFS staff and distributed foster parent information
- DCFS staff setup a booth and passed out information and invitations to the inquiry meeting at the Garland County Lake Hamilton Kindergarten registration.

Area 4

- Did articles on foster parenting for the newspapers and have radio ads
- Sent information packets to 40 plus different churches and continuing to plan more
- Participated at the Union County Fair booth
- Participated at the Hempstead Health Expo booth
- Spoke about the need for foster parents at the Southwest District Baptist Association
- Participated at the Miller County Wellness Fair
- Participated in the Little River County Domtar health fair
- Distributing information to businesses, schools, and daycare centers
- Inquiry meetings are a major source of community awareness
- Participated in the "Hands" around the courthouse for awareness at the Adoption Coalition
- Distributed pamphlets to medical professionals to Sevier County
- Promoted awareness for the need for foster parents in Hope for the adoption awareness celebration.

Area 5

- Inform local newspapers about scheduling inquiry meetings
- Monthly inquiry meetings about foster care and adoption

Area 6

- Radio public announcements are completed
- Television appearance is scheduled

Area 7

- Monthly inquiry meetings are invited; Powerpoint presentations are provided
- Spoke to local faith-based organizations about recruitment
- Local newspapers provided articles about inquiry meetings and the need for foster parents in the local counties.
- Attend meetings of Adoption Coalition in Lonoke County
- Met with CASA organization to enlist their help in recruitment of foster/adoptive parents.
- Attended mandatory meeting in Lonoke County for all foster parents in Lonoke and Prairie; foster parents received training hours for attendance.
- Provided news articles about recruitment for every newspaper in the Area. Most articles ran the release.
- Annual Booth Fairs were held at the Clay County and Lawrence County; information and handouts were distributed
- Arkansas State University, Journalism Class planned to do recruitment of homes for teens.
- The Adoption Coalition presented on KAIT and DCFS Adoption staff presented.
- Greene County foster parents continued to do radio spots informing the need for more foster homes.
- Staff from Lawrence County appeared on KAIT in an effort to recruit foster homes and increase awareness for the need of foster parents.

Area 9

- Distributed informational flyers out in the community and posted at local businesses.
- Advertise inquiry meetings and events advertised on local radio, in newspapers, and on local cable television stations.
- Recruitment announcements have been placed in more than several newspapers
- Foster care pamphlets were distributed at a job fair at Lyon College
- Foster care pamphlets were distributed at a Kiwanis Club meeting in Batesville
- Met with local informal lunch meeting for several potential foster parents
- Met with local community businesses for foster children and angel tree
- Arranged adoption picnic in White County
- Spoke at Independence County Ministerial Alliance meeting about the need for foster and adoptive homes.
- Local pastors handed out brochures to distribute to members.
- Local church hosted a Christmas event for foster parents and foster children.
- Inquiry meetings for Poinsett, Crittenden, White, Independence, Stone, Jackson, Cross, and Woodruff counties

Objective 4

Support Area and County staff recruitment plans and efforts.

Area 1

- Coordinate with Carroll County with blitz to recruit in this rural county.
- Coordinate with all counties with recruitment of Spanish speaking families.
- Monthly inquiry meetings are held and flyers and business cards are posted.

Area 2

- Recruitment booths at local fairs set up

Area 3

- Garland County hosted a community awareness of foster children and foster parents in the Child Abuse Awareness Month; included county statistics about children; Juvenile Judge spoke at the luncheon about the need for foster parents.
- Resource Worker and Adoption Specialist spoke about recruitment at Lions Club.
- Caseworkers provided training by Resource Workers on provisional foster parenting process.

Area 5

- Contacted newspapers to provide information about foster parents.
- Supervisors in several counties attended community activities and speaking arrangements on foster parenting.

Area 6

- Staff continued to visit neighborhood centers, churches, beauty schools, and doctor offices to recruit foster homes

Area 7

- County staff attends inquiry meetings to inform public of needs of specific counties.

Area 9

- Resource Workers plan inquiry meetings on different days to give different options to make meetings more convenient.
- Resource Workers coordinate functions and duties

Objective 5: Coordinate with Adoption Recruitment.

Area 1

- Adoption Specialists is invited to all inquiry meetings.
- Adoption needs are included in all advertisements and literature.
- Resource worker and adoption specialist has worker together out of Benton County on joint interested applicants.

Area 2

- Adoption Specialist provides information at the inquiry meetings.
- Adoption is included in all foster parent recruitment efforts.

Area 4

- Two adoption coalitions are in the area; foster care and adoption staffs work closely together (Miller and Columbia Counties)
- Adoption information is provided along with the information provided for foster parenting recruitment.
- Miller County worked toward an entry into the Christmas Parade on DCFS needs.
- Miller County worked on adoption awareness day in November.
- Columbia County worked with DCFS staff and the community on booths and fairs.
- “Hands” around the courthouse presented a program for national adoption month and distributed recruitment materials for adoption and foster parenting.

Area 5

- Inquiry meetings are coordinated with Adoption staff.
- Adoption Picnic included recruitment for foster homes.

Area 6

- Resource workers and adoption staff have worked together to expedite the DCFS Alternative Compliance process.
- Efforts made to enhance the recruitment efforts.

Area 7

- Adoption Specialists are invited to speak at inquiry meetings to explain the adoption process and answer questions.

Area 8

- Resource workers coordinate with Adoption Specialists.
- Monthly Adoption Support Group continues in Jonesboro and foster parents are attended invited from surrounding counties.

Area 9

- Adoption Specialists are invited to recruitment meetings; discussed events and planned together.
- Resource staff worked with Adoption picnic.
- Worked together with Resource worker and adoption specialist on inquiry meetings.

Adoption Incentive Payments

According to the February 17, 2004 announcement from ACF, incentives payments will be calculated using three separate baselines: one for the total number of children adopted from the public foster care system; one for special needs adoptions of children under the age of nine; and the other for adoptions of children age nine and older. The incentive numbers are compiled from AFCARS data and are based upon the federal fiscal year.

For the increase in the number of adoptions over the baseline for the State's total number of adoptions, the State will receive a \$4,000 bonus for each child.

For the increase in the number of adoptions over the baseline for children age nine and older, the State will receive an additional \$4,000 bonus for each child.

For each special needs adoption of a child under age nine, the State will receive an additional \$2,000 bonus for each child.

In FY 2003, the baselines for all three groups were FY 2002 adoptions. For subsequent fiscal years, the baseline is set at the highest number of adoptions for each group between FY 2002 and the previous year. The new incentives became effective at the beginning of FY 2004 through FY 2008.

The state of Arkansas has received incentive monies which were used for the following purposes:

- Post adoption services such as respite care, tutoring, training, and resource lending library
- Promotional materials for recruitment and public awareness activities
- Adoption Home Studies
- Adoption Summaries
- Non-identifying summaries
- Support Groups

If placement goals and objectives are met the division will receive incentive awards through FFY2008.

Payment Limitations:

Division of Children and Family Services

Financial information comparing FY 2005 State and local share spending for Subpart 2 programs against the 1992 base year amount as required to meet the non-supplantation requirements in section 432(a) (7) (A) of the Act.

1992 Base Year

	Federal	State
Base Funding	\$ 4,969,308	\$ 1,909,803

(This represents the base funding on \$273,911,000 level and \$141,000,000 level combined)

Fiscal Year 2005

	Federal	State
Funding	\$ 5,435,012	\$ 1,195,703

Division of Children and Family Services
Financial information comparing FY 2006 State expenditures
against State expenditures under Title IV-B in 1979

1979

	Federal	State
Base Funding	\$ 690,213	\$ 370,837

Fiscal Year 2006

	Federal	State
CFS 101 - Column A - Line 6	\$0	\$0
CFS 101 - Column A - Line 7	\$0	\$0
CFS 101 - Column A - Line 13	\$0	\$0