



Division of Children and Family Services

Connecting our plans, policy, practice, and people

Words of Support From Our New Director, Pat Page

I am excited to be able to contribute to the DCFS Newsletter as DCFS Director. I am honored to work with such a wonderful group of people.

Spring is upon us! Spring is a time of renewal. We can seize this time to renew our sense of mission which is:

- Protect children;
- Maintain families, if this is appropriate, with the child's health and safety always consider paramount;
- Provide quality services within available resources which enable families to maximize their potential and increase their abilities;
- Preserve and enhance human dignity and worth;
- Prevent or reduce the need for services.

This has been our mission since the Division began. We can take this time of renewal to ask if all parts of the organization are focused on and effective at accomplishing this mission. We can challenge each other to get better and better.

And are we involving others outside the agency in an effective way to accomplish this mission? It is a broad mission. We cannot do it by ourselves. And the stakes are too high not to involve anyone willing to work with us to help us improve services to children and families.

I appreciate all you do every day to accomplish this mission. Arkansas' children and families are better off because of you.

Sincerely,

Pat Page

You must be the change you want to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi

If I can stop one
heart from
breaking,
I shall not live in
vain.

If I can ease one
life the aching, or
cool one pain, or
help one fainting
robin unto his
nest again,
I shall not live in
vain.

Emily
Dickinson

INSIDE

COA

Belief-Based

Mission Statement

Notice to FP's

C F S Review

FYP – Work Groups

Siblings

April News

May News

Recruiting FP's

Parenting Lessons

Strengthening

Families

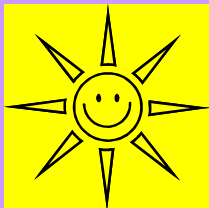
Training News

Resources

I find the great thing in
this world
is not so much
where we stand
as what direction
we are moving.



The essence of
leadership is vision.



Reach high
For stars lie hidden in you
soul
Dream deep
for every dream precedes
the goal



Council on Accreditation

The Division of Children and Family Services received accreditation from the Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services (COA) in August 2004. We will begin the re-accreditation process in 2007. DCFS was accredited under COA's 7th Edition Standards for Public Agencies. The 8th Edition Standards will apply to our re-accreditation and offers a new strategy for strengthening, measuring, and validating an organization's effectiveness. The new standards use concise, clear, and non-regulatory language. COA refers to this new strategy as "Contextual Accreditation". The new standards set forth a range of appropriate best practices and retain COA's unwavering commitment to client rights and essential life and safety practices. COA will make on-site visits to determine DCFS' continuous compliance with COA's standards of best practice. The COA Standards can be accessed at www.COAstandards.org.

Belief-Based Performance Management

Belief-Based Performance Management is an approach to leading an agency. It drives changes in policy, practice and organizational structure that lead to outcomes that are based on the values and beliefs of the organization. Beliefs clarify the right outcomes and are a good place to start. Beliefs form the foundation for understanding good performance.

Our General Beliefs

Every person matters.

Our job is to empower people to help themselves.

Our focus is on clients' success.

People and their communities deserve good health and a clean and safe environment.

We have a responsibility to provide knowledge and services that work. Partnering with communities is essential to the health and well-being of Arkansans.

On Growing Up

We are growing up
We are many colors of skin
We are many languages
We are many ages and sizes
We are many countries....
But we are one with the earth.
We each have one heart
We each have one life
We are growing up, together,
So we must live as one family.
Mattie Stepanek (1990 - 2004)

Notice to DCFS Foster Parents

We have sent a notification to our DCFS Foster Parents that the supplemental board runs will cease effective April 1, 2007. Supplemental board funds were paid around the 10th of the month. The Division will make every attempt to see that information on children is entered in a timely manner to ensure accurate and timely payments.

Arkansas Child and Family Service Review

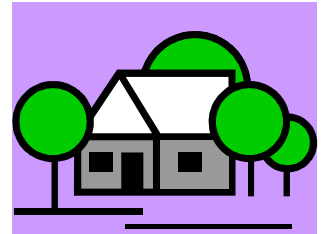
The Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services will participate in a Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that will be conducted by the Federal government. States will be assessed for compliance with federal requirements for child protective services, foster care, adoption, and family preservation and support services under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The process is to improve outcomes for abused and neglected children, children in foster care, and children awaiting adoption. The process will initiate again with a statewide assessment in November, 2007. The on site review will be conducted in January, 2008. This on site review will include federal, state, and Arkansas stakeholders as reviewers. Once the on site review is completed, the states are required to develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The plan is to address any outcomes of systemic factors determined not to be in substantial conformity in the CFSR report. In future issues of our newsletter, we will cover the Outcomes and the Systemic Factors to be assessed and changes planned for the CFSR process. Many of you participated in the CFSR process in 2001 and we will call on our troops to assist us again. For information about the 2001 CFSR results and planning in Arkansas, go to www.arkansas.gov/dhhs/chilnfam/cfsfr.htm

CPR and First Aid Training

The Council on Accreditation (COA) mandates that all program staff is required to gain and maintain certification in CPR and First Aid. "Program Staff" are identified as those DCFS field staff that have or may potentially have contact with clients during their work time. The training should be set up by your DCFS Area Administrative Staff with either the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association. The CPR course includes training and participant skill demonstrations in infant, child, and adult methods of CPR. CPR certification through the American Red Cross is for one (1) year and the American Heart Association is for two (2) years. First Aid certification for both the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association is for three (3) years. All costs related to certification will be paid by the DCFS Professional Development Unit (PDU) in Central Office. Your Area Office should set up the billing relationship (purchase order) in advance of the provision of services. Any approved participant travel costs will be submitted to PDU via a TR-1. Carolyn Reynolds is the DCFS PDU contact person in Central Office concerning setting up the financial relationship and payment to the training provider (phone: 501-682-8574).

Professional Development

There are 20 Bachelor of Arts (BA) stipend students who will be graduating and going to work for the Division of Children and Family Services in May. Announcement about the educational leave MSW program was sent out to all DCFS staff. The deadline was **April 1**. Beki Nance, Professional Development can be contacted at (501) 682-8759 or by email at beki.nance@arkansas.gov for questions. For additional information about the Educational Leave programs see Policy Section XI.



Although the world is full of suffering, it is full of the overcoming of it



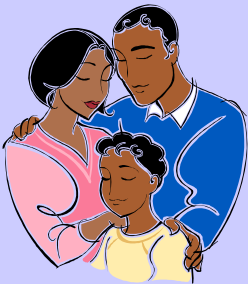
Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right things.



Make of yourself a Light



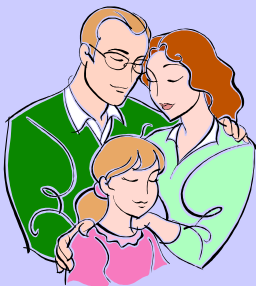
**People
Need Family**



Those Who Have Hope
Have Everything



It is only with the
heart
that one can see
rightly



**Every Child
Matters**

Siblings in Foster Care

The Division is exploring how well we are doing to keep siblings together in foster care and what can we do to improve the statistics if needed. We have researched the literature and we know that it's a good thing if we keep sibs together.. Siblings placed together often minimize the trauma of sibs being separated from their parents, they support each other, they often have stronger ties to their siblings than to their parents, and the children usually prefer it. One foster child shared that losing her siblings was the toughest thing she ever endured while in foster care. We are organizing a work group to explore our options in policy, training, and practice. Our goal is to ensure that we are supporting siblings being together in all that we do. Contact the Sibling Connection workgroup at (501) 683-2044.

**The best way to keep siblings connected
is to keep them together.**

April Is Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

Lots of things have been planned for April. Promotional items have been ordered and distributed to our county offices. Some items will be sent as they are received. Banners proclaiming "April is Child Abuse Prevention Month" are being printed and will soon be available. Additional information and tools for Child Abuse Prevention Month can be obtained at www.preventchildabuse.org

May Is Foster Care Month

DCFS will be celebrating Foster Care Month in May by sending a letter of appreciation to all of our foster parents. We encourage our County and Area partners to acknowledge their foster parents also by sending them a letter of appreciation for the care they have provided to our foster children.

Information about National Foster Care Month can be obtained at www.fostercaremonth.org

Recruiting and Retaining Foster Parents

Arkansas has fewer than 1000 foster parents to provide care and shelter to our foster children in our state. We need all our staff to help in our recruitment efforts and to help us to keep the foster parents we have. We need to ensure that the coming in process is a positive one and that the staying on process is also positive. First of all, we need to respond to foster parent inquiries in a timely manner and respond to inquiries with the provision of information that explains the application process, training process, and our expectations. Go to our website at www.arkansas.gov/dhhs/chilnfam to learn about requirements to become a foster parent and share that knowledge with others.

Lessons On Being a Parent

Lesson 1 – Punishment is very popular with parents, but it doesn't work in the long run.

Lesson 2 – Life in the family goes better when family members treat each other like they do their friends.

Lesson 3 – There is no such thing as constructive criticism.

Lesson 4 – A parent usually has very little success in trying to force a child to do something he or she doesn't want to do.

Lesson 5 – Anger destroys family relationships.

Strengthening Families Arkansas

Arkansas was one of seven states selected through a nationwide Request For Proposals process to pilot this approach. There are approximately 20 high quality child care centers and family homes participating in the *Strengthening Families Arkansas* learning network. This innovative, cost-effective, proven strategy to keep children safe is a breakthrough because it is based in the early education system and focuses on building protection for children within their homes and community. It is an initiative that involves early childhood centers working with families to build protective factors around children in order to reduce abuse and neglect.

Strengthening Families in Arkansas is looking forward to future partnerships between early care and education professionals and child welfare caseworkers. Plans are currently underway for several collaborative projects between DHHS, Division of Childhood and Early Childhood Education and the Division of Children and Family Services. The purpose of these projects will be to continue to make a positive difference for kids and families who are in the child welfare system or at risk of entering it.

Additional information can be obtained at www.childwelfare.gov/preventing in regard to Promoting Healthy Families in Your Community.

Five Year Plan – Work Groups

Did you know that DCFS developed a 5 year plan in 2005? Well we did and we have 7 work groups that meet periodically to work on various issues that concern our clients and staff. Each year we prepare an annual report that shows the progress we have made. The groups are as follows:

Adoptions – Alden Roller and Lillie Owens

Foster Care – Ed Wallace and Angela Moses

In-home Services (Social Service Aides) – Mickey Wilson

Independent Living Services – James Dennis & Varnaria VickersSmith

Protective Services – Billye Burke and Brenda Atkins

Staffing – Debbie Shiell

Supportive Services – Linda Robinson and Cathy Gardner-Core

Contact a work group chair if you are interested in more information.

Every Child Matters



Some people see things as they are and ask why. I dream of things that never were and ask why not.



Everyone of us gets through the tough times because somebody is there standing in the gap to close it for us.

People Need Family

Division of Children and Family Services

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CONNECTIONS

is produced quarterly
by the DCFS
Legislative Analysis
Research and
Planning Section

Comments and
suggestions can be
directed to
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Thanks to all who
contributed to this issue
of **Connections**

Suggestions and ideas for
future issues are
welcome.

Resources and References

National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice & Permanency Planning
www.nrcfcppp.org

Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute
www.adoptioninstitute.org

AdoptUSKids
www.adoptuskids.org

Fostering Perspectives
www.fosteringperspectives.org

National Foster Care Month
www.fostercaremonth.org

Child Abuse Prevention Month
www.preventchildabuse.org

Center for Effective Parenting
www.parenting-ed.org

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
www.DaveThomasFoundationforAdoption.org

Happiness is as a butterfly
which when pursued is always beyond our grasp,
but which if you sit down quietly,
may alight upon you.



DHHS