



DCFS

Connections Summer 2013 Care * Commit * Connect



DCFS Connections
Spring/Summer 2013

Danielle House-Barlow- Editor

Director's Note...from Cecile Blucker

Happy Spring!

When I think of Spring I think of things coming alive that were dormant over the winter months. However, in child welfare, we have not been "dormant" over the winter. We have had a lot of things going on and we have continued to add new initiatives as well. I will give you a heads up - we have more coming! We are excited about having Differential Response statewide by August - I really think this will allow us to serve our families in a more positive way. We are rolling out Learning Circles across the state. This will give staff a tool and a process to address issues at the local level. When I say we have more coming - we have some changes coming as a result of legislation. In addition, we have several new interventions we will be rolling out as part of the IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project. So you need to watch for this information that will be coming your way very soon!



I know that we are all tired - I ask that you keep hanging on! The IV-E waiver will allow us the flexibility we need to address many of our issues. The interventions we are proposing will really assist us in how we serve our children and families. Child welfare is changing! Arkansas is one of the 9 states being highlighted in our efforts to change the child welfare system. Our IV-E waiver project is called: Bringing our "A" game: Arkansas's Ambitious Aim at Transforming Child Welfare. You are a major player in this game. You should feel proud of what we have accomplished and be excited about all the new things to come!

Thanks again for all you do each day!

Thank you, Muchas Gracias, Danke Schön

DCFS Fund Raisers	
Pop Corn Sale	\$ 362.78
Bake Sale	\$ 455.00
Potato Bar	\$ 524.00
Caramel Apple	\$ 276.30
Walking Tacos	\$ 360.10
Ice Cream Sale	\$ 377.87
Pie & Coffee Sale	\$ 478.25
Ornaments	\$ 687.00
Silent Auction	\$2,114.00
Arts/Crafts	\$1,774.00
Hot Dog/Chili	<u>\$ 763.00</u>
Total	\$8,173.30

With the help of DHS employees in the Donaghey Complex and our Northrup Grumman partners, the Division of Children and Family Services was able to raise more than \$8,000 in 2012 through the various fundraising activities it held over the year and the weeks leading up to December to bring Christmas to children in foster care. Donations for silent auction and other items were part of the fundraising effort and each of the counties put together and donated baskets for the bazaar and auction.

Thank you to everyone who donated items to any of the several food sales and to the bazaar and silent auction. And thanks to everyone who came and purchased items each time there was an event. Your support was amazing - you never let DCFS down! In addition, employees provided gifts for 189 foster children adopted from the division's Gingerbread tree.

Talking with Children About Tragic Events

The explosions at the finish line of the 2013 Boston Marathon have brought back memories of other frightening events of recent years, and the feelings of vulnerability and sadness that follow such tragedies. Many of us are left wondering how we can help our children make sense of these traumatic events.

The following are resources that may offer information and assistance for people coping with traumatic events, either directly, or indirectly, by way of intensive news media coverage.

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." To this day especially in times of disaster, I remember my mother's words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in this world."

-Mr. Rogers

Helping your child cope with media coverage of disasters: A fact sheet for parents. Overviews how media coverage of a disaster may affect children and suggests strategies that parents can use to address these effects.

http://www.oumedicine.com/docs/ad-psychiatry-workfiles/parent_disaster_media_factsheet_2011.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Tips for talking with and helping children and youth cope after a disaster or traumatic event: A guide for parents, caregivers, and teachers. Helps parents, caregivers, and teachers recognize and address stress responses in children and youth affected by traumatic events such as automobile accidents and disasters. It describes stress reactions that are commonly seen in young trauma survivors from various age groups and offers tips and resources.

<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/KEN01-0093R/KEN01-0093R.pdf>

For more info on coping with violence and traumatic events. This HHS/SAMHSA website provides many resources for first responders, schools, adults, and families for coping with violence and traumatic events.

<http://www.samhsa.gov/trauma/index.aspx>

Connecting the Work Central Office Meetings

by Jo Thompson

With the start of "Connecting the Work" central office meetings, not knowing what's going on within DCFS and with co-workers outside of your work area, may be a thing of the past. The purpose of these meetings is to inform staff about each other's work and to identify how our work is attached (how it connects). They also will provide a regular forum for management to share information about current happenings within the Division both at the state and local levels. The expected overall outcome of the meetings will be that central office staff will provide better support to county office staff and thereby improve services to the children and families that we serve.

January 9, 2013, marked the first Connecting the Work Central Office Staff Meeting and it included presentations from Greg Moore, who works with Hornby Zeller Associates, the contracted agency that provides child welfare data analysis and reporting for DCFS, and Chanel Moore, who works with the DCFS Adoptions Unit. In everyday terms, Greg explained specifics about the Quality Services Peer Review (QSPR) process. There was engaging dialogue among staff about the implications of the results of the reviews. Chanel provided enlightening facts about the Mutual Consent Voluntary Adoption Registry. Particulars were explained about the allowable parameters for the release of information. Hardly a dry eye was in the room as she shared accounts of the warm reunions that frequently take place between birth and adoptive families. The first meeting was a huge success.

Upcoming Connecting the Work Central Office Staff Meetings will focus on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Transitional Youth Services, and the partnership between DCFS and the C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime). If you have a topic to be considered for these monthly staff meetings, please contact Mona Davis, DCFS Planning Manager (mona.davis@arkansas.gov or 501-682-6812).

AR C.I.R.C.L.E.S Project Continues to Strengthen Supervision in the State



The change management tool, **Learning Circles**, continues to be introduced (through defined phases) to select county teams across the state. In Phases I & II, supervisors in the following counties have been trained to facilitate Learning Circles:

- Pulaski-Jacksonville
- Pulaski North
- Randolph
- Bradley
- Calhoun
- Lawrence
- Washington
- Franklin
- Lincoln/Cleveland

- Garland
- Saline
- White
- Little River
- Drew
- Hempstead

In addition to the above county offices, one of the two Area 5 Investigative Supervisors and Area Directors have been trained.

Learning Circle participants have explored and/or implemented solutions to address topic areas such as these:

- Improved Client Services
- Teamwork/Communication
- Caseload Management
- Worker & Foster Parent Appreciation

While Learning Circles were taking root and growing across the state, three (3) Strategic Planning workgroups, comprised of DCFS staff serving in a variety of positions from all over the state, rolled up their sleeves and successfully completed the development of a **Supervisor Strategic Plan**.

The Strategic Plan, focused on the continued development of strong leadership capacity and supports, is based on feedback provided by field staff and supervisors doing the work. Using the Division's motto of Care * Commit * Connect the plan targets the following areas:

- Hiring & Retention
- Supervisor & Worker Support
- Supervisor Practices & Policy
- Internal Agency Communication

Using the steps outlined in the Strategic Plan, five (5) of eight (8) **Implementation Workgroups** (workgroup participants represent field, Central Office, Project Team members & Technical Consultants) began the work of converting a plan into actual practice. Here's an update on their progress.

Hiring Workgroup: This workgroup is focused on ways to streamline the DCFS hiring process for the Family Service Worker position. Using the belief *"If we are more thoughtful and deliberate about the way we select our workers, the better the chances we have of retaining them."*

Activities completed by this workgroup so far include but are not limited to:

- Exploring/researching child welfare hiring practices in other states.
- Compiling and reviewing interview questions used in all 10 DCFS Areas.
- Reviewing samples of functional job descriptions for the FSW position.
- Creating a list of hiring competencies.
- Updating Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KAS) information while remaining in compliance with OPM standards.

Next steps include developing an interview question toolkit for hiring supervisors to use, updating the functional job description to better reflect practice model principles, and exploring the development of a realistic job preview video.

When you factor in the complexity of a Statewide Personnel system, this group has dug in and remained focused on what we can influence and improve. Thank you so much taking the lead on this!

Staff Appreciation & Recognition Workgroup: Guided by a strong desire to develop a fair and consistent (no matter what the office size, staffing issues, or caseloads) Appreciation and Recognition program, this workgroup has begun to compile information which can be used to develop an Appreciation Resource Packet for supervisors.

As a part of this initial work, the group concluded a shift focus from the resource packet as their first priority to a shift on developing guiding principles for a recognition program would help support their goal of a fair and consistent program much better.

Jon Rubin, a consultant with American Public Human Services Association, joins the workgroup in February to help facilitate the development of an Appreciation Program that best meets the group's desire for a fair and consistent program.

We want to thank this workgroup for remaining committed to the development of a program that all of us can benefit from. They could have kept pushing forward with the first plan to finish more quickly. Instead, they decided to back up and explore ways to achieve stronger, sustainable outcomes. They are true role models of implementation science!

Supervisor Practice Model Workgroup: Facilitated by Jon Rubin, this workgroup has completed the development of the first ever DCFS Supervisory Practice Model! The Supervisory Practice Model aligns with the Division's Practice Model Goals and Principles by targeting all levels of supervision and supporting the development of consistent quality in supervisory practices. Its introduction to Division Leadership has been both positive and energizing!

Here are a few of the positive comments from supervisors and managers across the state

- As a new supervisor this gives me a road map to do what I need to do.
- It keeps you anchored and focused.
- It's ground breaking.
- This helps bring different county offices together and on the same page with supervision.

Many thanks to this workgroup for their awesome work!

Click this link [Supervisory Practice Model](#) if you would like to see the fine work product of this group!

Networking Support and Online Resources Workgroup (NOW): Focused on the development of a responsive online community networking/resource tool that also connects DCFS staff with community providers in a meaningful way, this workgroup has been reviewing available options to help them begin to determine what tools/tools may already be available.

As a part of the group's ongoing assessment, the workgroup recently completed an application development evaluation to help better determine the needs for a responsive community networking tool.

The members of this workgroup are true pioneers! Wading into the territory of technology, they are forging the way for the rest of us to shed any resistance we might have about technological options designed to help us all be more efficient and successful as we serve on families!

AR CIRCLES Communication Workgroup: This workgroup has successfully completed the development of an AR C.I.R.C.L.E.S communication plan. This plan provides guidance to Project Team members and Executive Staff for creating a feedback loop between the field and Central Office about Project accomplishments and progress based on feedback from you!

Based on the fine work of this group, Cecile has asked this workgroup to continue working, shifting their focus and expertise to helping the division develop communication strategies related to the IVE Waiver efforts.

Thumbs up to you Communication Workgroup! Thank you for a job well done!

DCFS WHO'S WHO- Lindsay McCoy



DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 1/22/78, Little Rock, Arkansas

LAST BOOK I READ: Below the Surface by Karen Harper

ON THE WEEKEND YOU CAN FIND ME: Playing with my son and spending time with my family.

THE BEST ADVICE I EVER RECEIVED WAS: From my grandmother – "Never let pride stand in the way of what you want."

FAVORITE JUNK FOOD: Cheddar cheese and Pistachio nuts

IF I COULD DO IT OVER AGAIN, I: would have studied harder in college.

ONE THING PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME: I love to cook and use local organic ingredients whenever possible.

FAVORITE CHILDHOOD MEMORY: Camping at Greers Ferry Lake with my family every summer.

ONE WORD TO SUM ME UP: Outgoing!

Lindsay is a graduate from University of Central Arkansas, where she received a Bachelors in Sociology and History. She joined the DCFS family in 2000 when she was hired in Conway County as an investigator. In 2005 she started supervising Area V investigations, and as a supervisor she has supervised Resource and Health Units. In April 2012 Lindsay was hired as the Differential Response Coordinator. She screens referrals from the abuse hotline to ensure they meet the DR criteria. She also trains the DR staff and provides technical support to the field.

Websites and Resources



www.childwelfare.gov
www.fosterparentcollege.com/info/connections
www.midsouth.ualr.edu
www.americanhumane.org/protecting-children
www.arkansas.gov/reportARchildabuse
www.fosterarkansas.org
www.dhsshare.arkansas.gov/pages/default.aspx
www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly

www.nctsnet.org
www.fema.gov/kids
www.childrendefense.org
www.pregnancythroughtoddler.com
www.fosterclub.com
www.ppcwg.org/communications-overview.html
www.fosteringconnections.org
www.arhomevisiting.org/
www.childrengrieve.org/
www.ar.mandatedreporter.org
www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/tollfree.cfm
www.livingwithfasd.com/

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RECIPE CORNER

KEY LIME PIE VII

"Along with a bit of grated lime rind swirled in, sour cream is blended with condensed milk and lime juice for this pie 's very rich and creamy key lime filling."



Prep Time: 15 Minutes
Cook Time: 8 Minutes
Ready In: 55 Minutes
Servings: 8

Ingredients:

1 (9 inch) prepared graham cracker crust
3 cups sweetened condensed milk
1/2 cup sour cream 3/4 cup key lime juice
1 tablespoon grated lime zest

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. In a medium bowl, combine condensed milk, sour cream, lime juice, and lime rind. Mix well and pour into graham cracker crust.
3. Bake in preheated oven for 5 to 8 minutes, until tiny pinhole bubbles burst on the surface of pie. DO NOT BROWN! Chill pie thoroughly before serving. Garnish with lime slices and whipped cream if desired.

Courtesy of Allrecipes.com

Questions, comment, suggestions? Please contact: Mona Davis, mona.davis@arkansas.gov
