

## Division of Family Services Monthly Update May 2010

### Training

April marked the beginning of full day assessments of each of the five Area Training Centers. Two consultants from IHS visited each ATC in order to evaluate capacity regarding competency based training for child welfare, basic operations, and ATC's ability to assess local agency training needs. The assessments were very informative and will result in a summary of findings/recommendations that will be shared with the Virginia Child Welfare Training Program Steering Committee.

Since April is a historically busy month of assessment and negotiation of the Department's six training contracts, a lot of discussion has taken place over the last few weeks regarding how to maximize resources and do more with less. A major step forward toward becoming a competency based training system was the decision for the Area Training Centers to take on the responsibility for scheduling classes based on the assessed need of their regions. This decision was made collectively at the April 28<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting. The Department continues to work on the FH2011 MOA's with VCU-VISSTA as they make changes to large amounts of curriculum in order to accommodate the shift back to the utilization of part-time trainers by January 1, 2011.

In addition, approval was given to move forward with the development of a subcommittee to proceed with vetting of supervisor competencies as a first step to the development of Supervisor Core curriculum for child welfare supervisors. Vernon and Hayley have had preliminary conversations with consultants from IHS in order to determine the most efficient way to move forward.

### Managing by Data

In April, the Outcome Based Reporting and Analysis Unit (OBRA) and Mickey Groomes conducted the Applied SafeMeasures training in the Central and Piedmont Regions. In addition, OBRA conducted SafeMeasures trainings for King and Queen County as well as training in Williamsburg for staff from James City County, the City of Williamsburg, and York Poquoson. In regards to reporting, OBRA staff published CPS reports in the Virginia Child Welfare Outcomes Reporting tool (VCWOR) which is available for download at <http://spark.dss.virginia.gov/divisions/dis/oasis/software.cgi#vcwor>. The final version of the DFS Diversion Study is complete and available at [http://www.vafamilyconnections.com/kinship\\_care.shtml](http://www.vafamilyconnections.com/kinship_care.shtml).

In addition, OBRA staff met with Protect (National Association to Protect Children) staff and will be revamping the Virginia Child Protection Accountability System website in the coming months: <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/geninfo/reports/children/cps/accountability.cgi>. Several things are scheduled to take place during the month of May: the Child Welfare Managing by Data Workgroup meets on May 13<sup>th</sup>, the Adult Services Managing by Data Workgroup meets on May 20<sup>th</sup>, the Family Services OASIS Operations Group meets on May 19<sup>th</sup>, OBRA staff will be meeting with staff from the Supreme Court of Virginia to discuss a possible interface with OASIS on May 14<sup>th</sup>. In addition, Applied SafeMeasures training will be held in the Western Region on May 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

### Family Engagement

The Requests for Funding Assistance Review Committee selected Chesterfield-Colonial Heights DSS, Chesapeake DSS, Hampton DSS, Henrico DSS and Franklin County to participate in the pilot project between VDSS and the Court Improvement Program (CIP). Training will take place for all five localities and will be facilitated by Dan Cowan, a consultant for the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Education continues around the direction of family partnership meeting. In an effort to communicate regularly about family engagement, Tamara Temoney presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Chesapeake Prevention Conference. Paul McWhinney, Director of the Division of Family Services at VDSS, presented during a session about family engagement to 94 juvenile court judges. A session about family engagement will be held during the Virginia League of Social Services Executives conference in May.

### **Resource Families**

In April, Regional Peer Cooperatives (RPCs) continued featuring RPC 3 offerings (Supporting Resource Families: First Placement, Working with Birth Families, Grief and Loss) in Piedmont and Western, as well as RPC 4 sessions (Supporting Resource Families: Birth Family Connections, Customer Service, Using Data, Strengthening Connections across Agency Programs) in the Northern and Eastern regions. RPCs continue and move into the final chapter, on recruitment, with sessions 5 and 6. The RPCs began with a focus on development, so that agencies have had 6+ months to work on training, orientations, and intake, as well as examine supports for their foster families. Agencies will utilize data to create strategic recruitment plans for new families as well as very intentional support and retention plans for their existing resource families, so as to minimize resource parent turnover. As always, guests are welcomed. If you would like to attend part of all of an RPC, please contact Susan Taylor so she can coordinate with her staff.

Agencies continue to make and report a good deal of progress towards a better system of recruiting and retaining resource families. One key achievement includes Patrick County, who has increased their foster families by 500% since joining the RPC process! If you would like other or more detailed progress reports, please contact Susan Taylor or the regional Resource Family Consultants.

### **Community Based Care**

Pool Fund Carve out documents and applications are on the CSA website for locality consideration. This process is intended to allow those localities that are able to develop a business plan for a new community-based service and implement it within their base allocation. The plan must be approved by the Office of Comprehensive Services. Family engagement guidance documents were reviewed by SLAT May 6, and will be posted as soon as Secretary Hazel has a chance to review them. The new Casey engagement will focus on three aspects of family engagement – family partnership meetings, family support and family finding – and OCS will be working closely with this project and local partners to move integrated family engagement policy forward.

### **Child Protective Services**

In April, CPS staff convened the Review committee in reference to the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Grant RFP #SVC 10-037. Thirty nine proposals were reviewed, first by the 7 review teams

and then by the 21 member committee. Twenty- seven proposals were recommended for full or partial funding by the committee.

Rita Katzman, CPS Program Manager, made a presentation to the State Board of Social Services on CPS Intake, Safety and Risk Assessment tools – current policy and Structured Decision Making tools. Several CPS staff presented workshops at the Prevention Conference on April 22, 2010 on The Impact of Trauma on Child Development and Attachment and on Preventing Child Fatalities. In addition, CPS staff presented SFY09 Annual Child Fatality Report to the Children’s Justice Act/Court Appointed Special Advocate (CJA/CASA) Advisory Committee on April 16, 2010. This committee serves as a CPS Citizen Review Panel.

CPS staff met with Division of General Services staff regarding the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Funding Grants which will be posted in May 2010. The source for these grants is \$900,000 in general funds appropriated by the 2010 Virginia General Assembly to sustain statewide services provided through the CACs. The contract period will begin July 1, 2010. An additional \$85,000 from the General Fund, to be divided equally among all of the CACs, funded through this RFP has been designated to support training opportunities towards accreditation as well as for staff training in forensic interviews for funded centers.

In addition, CPS staff sent out email to Healthy Families program directors notifying them of renewal and modification process for FY 2011 and explaining the funding that is currently available. They also reviewed deadlines for submitting invoices and reports for FY 2010. The formula for distributing funds to Healthy Families programs FY 2011 funding reduction was completed in April and the Budget Solicitation Form was submitted for approval for the 2011 grant year.

Staff also participated in a meeting of the Home Visiting Consortium (HVC) at the Virginia Department of Health on April 1, 2010. One focus was the funding for home visiting programs included as part of the Health Care Reform Legislation. The grant program is established as a new section of the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) block grant program. This provision provides \$1.5 billion to states over 5 years for maternal, infant and early childhood visitation programs. Grantees are required to use an evidence-based program model with a benchmark component measuring items such as childhood injury prevention. The funding breakdown is: \$100 million for FY2010; \$250 million for FY2011; \$350 million for FY2012; \$400 million for FY2013; \$400 million for FY2014. States must complete a needs assessment within the next six months to identify communities that have few quality home visitation programs and are at risk for poor maternal and child health as a precondition for receiving the home visiting funds. The Virginia Department of Health is the lead agency.

A monitoring visit of Newport News Office on Children, Youth and Families was conducted on April 7<sup>th</sup>. CPS staff conducted two Healthy Families monitoring visits to Virginia Beach Health Department and Newport News DSS.

CPS staff submitted the Decision Memo requesting the Governor to again designate VDSS as the lead agency to apply for and administer the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Grant. The application will be due to the federal Office on Child Abuse and Neglect (OCAN) in early June. The Program Instructions for submission are to be released by OCAN shortly. The designation letter and assurances are requested for return to VDSS by May 14, 2010 for inclusion in the application.

CPS staff continue to collaborate with Family Services Policy Team on updates to guidance across program areas and completed the draft policy updates to the guidance manual. This information was shared with the CPS regional specialists during a statewide meeting on April 19-21. CPS staff continue to work with IT on OASIS enhancements for “CPS change track” service request participating in an extensive review of proposed elements.

### Foster Care

The Subsidized Custody (SC) guidance committee continues to meet, along with the policy subgroup, to draft guidance and procedures for implementation. In April, significant issues in implementing SC are being addressed with additional stakeholders (e.g., Court Improvement Program; Finance; the Office of the Attorney General) whose input is required in order to make decision around legal and fiscal matters affecting moving forward.

Foster Care staff charged with implementing the statewide roll-out of the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) are on target to implement by October 1, 2010. NYTD is a result of federal requirements for States to collect information on each youth who receives independent living services paid for or provided by the State. It focuses on outcome information on certain youth in foster care whom the State will follow over time to collect additional outcome information. This information will allow the Administration of Children and Families to track which independent living services States provide and assess the collective outcomes for youth.

Current status of implementation includes:

- OASIS staff are completing new OASIS screen designs and an initial walk-through of these changes is scheduled for early May.
- Public Affairs is updating their marketing plan designed to inform and entice youth to participate in completing the NYTD survey.
- DSS Research staff are seeking comments from youth on the survey to ensure it is “youth friendly.”
- The request to contract with an external consultant to conduct regionally based training for LDSS child welfare staff was submitted and final work is in progress to engage in a sole source contract. The trainer will help build Virginia’s on-going capacity to deliver this training through curriculum development for NYTD which can then be rolled into VISSTA courses.

Overall, implementation of NYTD is on-track for implementing on October 1, 2010. OASIS development and access to training for LDSS are currently the most critical elements to meeting this deadline.

The Educational Advisory Committee and the Health Plan Advisory Committee continue to work on data sharing across child-serving systems to better track educational and health care outputs and outcomes for children in foster care. Both groups have data subcommittees currently meeting to determine the data variables to be shared and the process for sharing (education) or, in the case of the health care subcommittee, begin the process of data file transmission. Recommendations for targeted improvement in educational and health care outcomes for youth in foster care can be made once such data linkages are made.

## Adoption

As the Division moves forward with revising adoption contracts through the Adoption Initiative 2011: Achieving Permanency Through Adoption, two specific subsets of identified children awaiting adoptive placement will be addressed. These subsets include 1) youth who have had parental rights for both parents terminated, have a goal of adoption, are not in a pre-adoptive home and who have the potential to be adopted prior to the 24 month standard set by the federal government; and 2) youth who have been identified as being at high-risk of aging out of care. These youth had parental rights for both parents terminated, have a goal of adoption, are not in a pre-adoptive placement, and generally may be over the age of 12, male and/or are African American, and will, in most cases, have surpassed the 24 months to achieve adoption since their entry in foster care.

In April, local departments of social services were sent a list of children to verify the adoption placement and goal status for 768 children as of January 2010 and to update OASIS to indicate the current status of the children. Most local agencies met the challenge and returned the list with the status of the children with the following results: 1) indicating that the goal for the child had changed from adoption; 2) deleting children who had achieved finalized adoption status; 3) indicating children who are now in non-finalized adoptive home placements; or 4) adding new names should be added to the list with the goal of adoption since January 2010. The revised list now includes 697 children with the goal of adoption at the end of April. Regional meetings will take place in June to provide an overview to both LDSS and adoption contractors regarding the purpose of the Adoption Initiative 2011. Meetings will be held from 10:00 – 1:00 pm at the following locations:

- June 14<sup>th</sup> – Western Region (Western Regional Office)
- June 17<sup>th</sup> – Eastern Region (United Methodist Family Service – Virginia Beach)
- June 28<sup>th</sup> – Piedmont Region (Piedmont Regional Office)
- June 29<sup>th</sup> – Northern Region (Northern Regional Office)
- June 30<sup>th</sup> – Central Region (Petersburg DSS)

In addition to the Adoption Initiative 2011, revisions are currently underway regarding processes and procedures for the Adoption Resource Exchange of Virginia (AREVA). Adoption Policy for the use of Virginia Enhance Maintenance Tool and adoption assistance were also reviewed this month. Guidance will be finalized by October 2010. In addition, open adoption training is currently being planned to take place in the fall of 2010.

## ICPC

Planning has begun for a follow up meeting to the May 2009 Summit of the staff and judges who participated in the development of the Virginia/Tennessee Border Agreement. This meeting will be held to address needs for revising the process that is currently being used and to celebrate our successes and correct our challenges. In addition, ongoing clean up of the ARRIS system continues.

For ICPC, there were 188 new cases and 9 cases were close. Placement statistics for the month of April are listed below:

- Adoption – 36
- Foster Care – 49
- Parents – 29
- Relative – 26
- Residential – 48

For ICAMA, work continues around development to add ICAMA to the ARRIS system. This is a major collaborative project between the ICAMA staff person, Rita White; ICPC/ICAMA support staff, Laura Cooper; the Data Management Group and Information Technology. This addition to the ARRIS system will eliminate the current manual records management system. There are a total of 2,637 cases – 35 of which are new as of April.

### **Continuous Quality Improvement**

Planning has begun for the implementation of Quality Service Reviews in VA. Paul Vincent, Director of Child Welfare Policy and Practice visited Virginia at the end of April for a planning meeting with VDSS staff and then an information meeting was held for stakeholders and representatives of local departments of social services. A design meeting will be held in September to develop a protocol review instrument that is linked to the VA Practice Model. Planning is taking place for recruitment of reviewers, planning of pilots and training for reviewers. Our projection is that by the end of the summer, QSR information will be on the VA Family Connections web site.

Child Welfare Quality Reviews continue with reviews in Portsmouth, Accomack and Northampton scheduled for May. System Improvement Plans were submitted by Lynchburg Department of Social Services after completion of their Child Welfare quality Review.

### **Program Improvement Plan**

The Child Welfare Advisory Committee reviewed the comments made by our federal partners around the PIP. Program staff and building block leads are providing written responses to comments and incorporating revisions into the PIP. The most frequent comment is that we need to provide more detail and include action steps that detail the process.

The Division of Family Services will submit another draft of the PIP to our federal partners in May. In addition, we will re-submit previous AFCARS submissions. This will enable us to have an updated data profile. Once we have that profile, we can set our baseline and determine the level of improvement we need in order to satisfy the PIP measurement.

### **Legislation and Regulation**

DFS programs have completed implementation plans for legislation that passed this year's General Assembly and sign-off by the Governor. Key legislation impacting DFS includes: HB411 requiring VDSS to provide or make available, information on shaken baby syndrome to all child welfare programs, foster

and adoptive parents, child day programs and residential facilities; HB443, a rewrite of the adoption assistance code; HB718, requiring a plan for reducing the number of children in foster care; HB921 requiring a longer record retention time for certain CPS records; and hb736 which expands the reports related to child abuse that are posted by VDSS on the public site. Contact Phyl Parrish if you are interested in more detail about the new legislation.

The Permanency regulation is now in the final stage and will go to the June State Board meeting. The Auxiliary Grant regulation just finished its public comment period and the final will go to the August Board meeting. The Rate Structuring regulation is still sitting at the proposed stage in the Secretary's Office waiting for approval to go out for public comment.

We have not yet received instructions on the submission of suggested legislation for the 2011 session, but it is generally requested by the end of May. The Division needs to begin identifying potential legislation during the month of May.

### **Casey Reengagement**

The primary Casey Team to work with Virginia over the next 7 months includes Lisa Paine-Wells, Lori Ryan, Dan Cowan, Fred Harris and Mary Bissel. The primary focus of this team will be planning to fully roll-out and embed Family Engagement (FE) principles and practices. Additionally, there will be work on Prevention/Kinship care. Other Transformation work already begun on training, data management, etc, will continue.

Content, scheduling and methods for continued FE roll-out need will be discussed with all regional staff, including Project LIFE & CRAFFT on May 14th. A major focus of the work will be strengthening the DSS Regional Consultants and CSA Technical Assistants so they can fully implement and support the FE principles and practices at the local level.