

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

February 10, 2011

MEMORANDUM

What's Inside:

Worker Visits with
Children Update

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

FROM: CANDACE A. SHIVELY, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: WORKER VISITS WITH CHILDREN UPDATE

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update of progress made regarding worker visits with children, and to make staff aware of additional strategies including new reports available to assist with monitoring on-going visits.

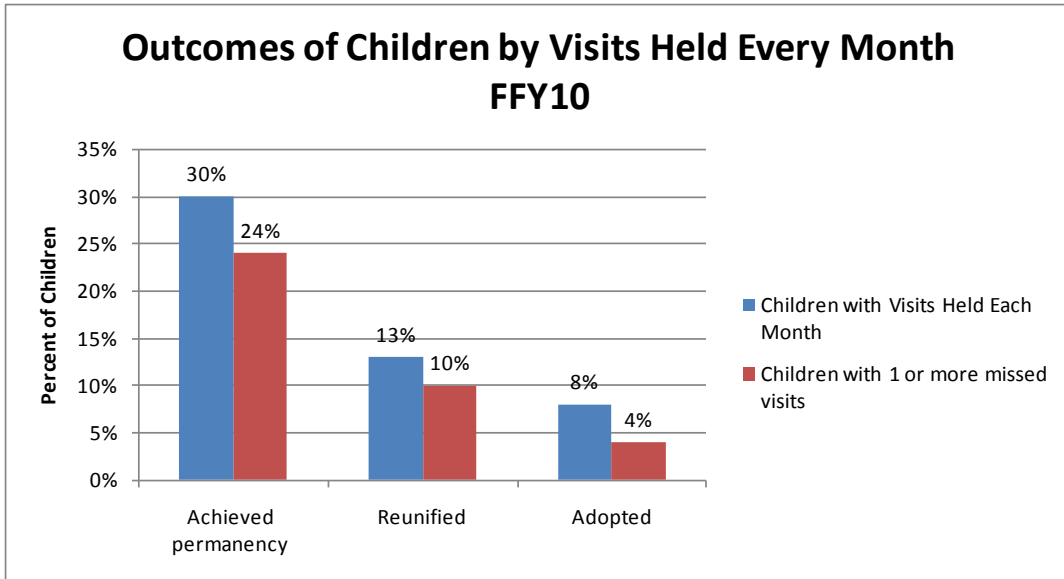
FFY10 Goal Achieved

In FFY10, 82% of Missouri children in foster care received a visit each and every full month the child was in care, surpassing the goal of 76%. Of those visits held, 98% were held in the child's placement. Staff are to be applauded for successfully improving the frequency of visits in FFY10, an increase of 6% from the prior year. [FFY10 results broken down by Region, Circuit, County and Office are attached.](#)

The goal in FFY11, and every year thereafter as required by federal statute, is for 90% of children who are in foster care to have visits each and every full month they are in care. With nearly 8% of our foster care population being on run status or out of state, there is very little leeway for us to miss any visits for children whose whereabouts are known to us. I am confident from your past success in improving the frequency of your visits, we will succeed in achieving at least 90%. This is a tough standard but with good reason.

Better Outcomes when Visits are Held

The Children's Bureau reported better outcomes were found during the Child and Family Services Review Round One for foster children nationwide when visits were held consistently. We put this theory to the test by comparing three outcomes for our children whom during FFY10 received visits each and every month to children who had one or more missed visits. The results proved the theory true for Missouri's children.



The chart above demonstrates better outcomes in the areas of permanency, reunification and adoption during FFY10 for Missouri children who received visits each month compared to children who had one or more missed visits.

Every Child, Every Month Poster Campaign

It is well established that heightened awareness and increased focus on visits have led to improved results. For this purpose, a poster campaign entitled “Every Child, Every Month”, made possible with funding provided by the Children’s Trust Fund, commenced in October 2010. Our older foster youth assisted in the campaign by providing feedback about why visits are so important to them. Their quotes were included on the posters with mock photos and placed in CD and FCCM agency offices to strengthen the awareness and commitment of staff to make visits a priority. The posters should encourage staff and supervisors who regularly hold visits because your hard work and efforts to make visits a priority is not only appreciated by the children, but is also contributing to better outcomes for them. You are to be commended. The posters also serve as a reminder to staff and their supervisors who are not yet conducting visits every month, that a child needs to see you frequently and regularly.

New Reports Available

Service workers assigned to children placed out of county have an equal responsibility for ensuring visits are held. A new report has been created in a pro-active effort to improve oversight and monitoring of visits held (or not) by service workers. In reviewing causes for missed visits in FFY10, it was determined that 28% of the children with missed visits were under the care of a service worker.

In addition, changes in workers assigned to a case and children moving out of the county are also particularly challenging situations. A new monthly report has been produced to identify visits missed during a case transfer month, including between CD offices or staff and/or between CD and the Foster Care Case Management Agencies.

Quality Assurance Specialists receive these two new reports the middle of each month reflecting visits held for past months and through the 15th of the current month. The QA Specialists distribute the information so staff and supervisors can be made aware of children still needing visits before the month ends.

What Next

Staff are encouraged to share ideas and strategies with your local Quality Assurance or Quality Improvement Specialists regarding scheduling, conducting and monitoring visits. This will help provide valuable information to peers who need assistance to improve this important practice.

We must continue to be diligent in our visits with children. For children whose whereabouts are known to us, there should be no exception to visits held every single month.

NECESSARY ACTION:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review this memorandum with all Children’s Division staff. 2. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to: 	
UNIT MANAGER: Meliny Staysa (573) 751-4832 Meliny.J.Staysa@dss.mo.gov	DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Susan Savage (573) 751-4920 Susan.K.Savage@dss.mo.gov
CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS N/A	
FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS N/A	
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES Tips for Ensuring Consistency of Worker/Child Visits The Importance of Frequent and Quality Worker/Child Visits	
RELATED STATUTE The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (CFSIA) P.L. 109-288 Section 7 (a) and (b) Social Security Act, Title IV-B, Section 424 (e)(1) and (2)	
ADMINISTRATIVE RULE N/A	
COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS COA Standard for Worker Contact and Monitoring	
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR) CFSR, Item 19, Caseworker Visits with Child	
<u>PROTECTIVE FACTORS</u> Parental Resilience Social Connections Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development	

Concrete Support in Times of Need
Social and Emotional Competence of Children

FACES REQUIREMENTS

[Memorandum CD08-18](#)