

Message from the Director on

April 29, 2011

This month marks the end of my third year as the Children and Youth Director. The agency has been through significant changes in response to new legislation as well as the Performance Improvement Plan submitted by the Department of Public Welfare to the federal oversight agency. Some highlights of the year include:

- ✚ Hired our second full-time paralegal
- ✚ Streamlined our 3-month review process
- ✚ Developed an Early Intervention Conference as a diversion for court involvement
- ✚ Implemented newly required Shared Case Responsibility with Juvenile Court Services
- ✚ Joined the American Bar Association Barriers to Permanency Project

The most significant event this past year was the completion of the first Quality Service Review. This review consisted of 15 teams of two individuals, one familiar with child welfare, and the other a community representative. These teams received two full days of training and spent an additional three days intensely reviewing one case per team. The review consisted of reading the file and interviewing the families and agencies involved. A standardized tool was used to capture the data. The information will be analyzed and reported back to the county later this summer with notations of our strengths and recommendations for improvements. With this information, the agency will begin a continuous quality improvement process. A committee will be formed to review the report and recommendations and decide on quality improvement activities.

My goals for year four include:

- ✚ Starting the continuous quality improvement activities (to be determined)
- ✚ Expand Family Group Decision Making
- ✚ Implement the newly required out-of-home safety assessment
- ✚ Implement the newly required educational screening
- ✚ Continue to meet the goals of the ABA project and work with our Local Roundtable committees

All of the staff has been working tirelessly to meet our mission of ensuring the safety, permanence and well-being of our children and families in Butler County. The program data demonstrates the success we have had:

- ✚ Butler County is 16 points above the state average for percentage of children reunified with their parents within 12 months.
- ✚ Butler County is 26 points above the state average for percentage of children in care for 17 months or longer whose adoption was finalized within 12 months.
- ✚ Butler County is 5 points above the state average for percentage of children in care for 24 months or longer who achieved permanency within 12 months.

✚ Butler County is 4 points above the state average for percentage of children in care whose placement history is stable (2 or less placements)

For more information, please contact our office.