



CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet

Progress Notes: Successfully Documenting Casework Contacts with Children in Foster Care rev. July 2009

The federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-288), which was signed into law on September 28, 2006, includes requirements for caseworker visits with children in foster care. The law requires that a casework contact be made with each child in foster care, at least once in every calendar month, for each whole month the child is in foster care – including any trial discharge periods and AWOL periods. Partial months of foster care are not counted. The majority of these contacts must occur where the child resides. The requirements pertain to children placed in-state, as well as out-of-state. All such contacts must be documented in CONNECTIONS progress notes and it is essential that entries be made contemporaneously with the event.

In order to show that you have met the federal requirement for monthly contacts with foster children, the following data fields and values must be used when recording a progress note in CONNECTIONS to document your contacts:

- Type – Casework Contact
- Method – Face-to-Face
- Child as both the Focus and Participant of the contact
- Location as adoptive home, foster home or congregate care facility;
- Location for child on trial discharge as case address, parent's home or relative's home

Only a contact recorded with these values will be counted as "successful" for federal reporting purposes.

DOCUMENTING A CASEWORK CONTACT

1. Access the Progress Notes window within the Family Services Stage.
2. Select the **New Note** button to open the Progress Note Detail window **OR** highlight an existing note that is similar to the note you wish to create and click the **New Using** button.
 - The New Using button opens the Progress Note Detail window, pre-filling the Type, Method of Contact, Location, Other Participant and Purpose fields to match the highlighted note.
 - Any pre-filled fields may be modified.
3. Enter the **Event Date**.
4. If creating a new note, click the drop down arrow to select **Casework Contact** as the Type.

REMINDER: More than one contact Type can be selected. If your casework contact is during a visitation, you can select **BOTH** the Casework Contact and Visitation types.



DO NOT use "Summary" as the type.

Summary notes are not counted as casework contacts for federal reporting purposes.

Event Date	Note Status	Type	Method	Location	Participant	Other Participant	A
10/9/2004	Final	Casework Contact	Face To Face	Case Address	Adams, Jamal, Adams, M		w
10/7/2004	Final	Casework Contact	Phone		Adams, Maggie	School Staff	w
10/7/2004	Final	Casework Contact	Phone		Adams, Maggie	Community Resource	w
10/7/2004	Final	Casework Contact	Phone		Adams, Maggie	Community Resource	w
10/7/2004	Final	Supervisor/Managerial F					w
10/7/2004	Final	Casework Contact	Phone		Adams, Maggie		w

5. Select **Face-to-Face** as the Method of Contact.
6. Select the **Location** where the contact occurred. To qualify for Casework Contact reporting purposes, the location for the majority of contacts must be one of the following:
 - adoptive home
 - foster home
 - congregate care facility
 - case address
 - parent's home
 - relative's home
7. Use the **Family Participant/Focus** checkboxes to indicate who participated in the contact.
 - *To meet casework contact requirements, the child visited must be selected as both focus and participant.*

When a family member is chosen as a family participant (FP) by checking their checkbox, the corresponding Focus checkbox automatically pre-fills.

- If a participant was NOT also a focus of the contact, uncheck the focus box for that participant.

Family Participant/Focus:				
Person ID	Name	Age	FP	Focus
16100646	Adams, Jamal	20	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16100648	Adams, Quincy	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16100647	Adams, Evelyn	11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16100645	Adams, Maggie	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tip: You can click on the **All** button to save time if all stage members were participants.

8. Enter the narrative describing the contact in the narrative field.
9. Save the note by selecting the desired push-button
 - Save as Draft
 - Save as Final
 - Save and Enter New Note.

Notes saved as draft will automatically become final after 20 calendar days.

All fields remain modifiable while the note is in Draft status.

NYS CASE CONTACT REQUIREMENTS



IMPORTANT! New York State regulations differ slightly from the federal requirements.

Pursuant to 18NYCRR Section 441.21 (c), contacts must be made monthly with all foster children by the child's case worker, case planner or case manager. During the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child as often as is necessary to implement the services tasks in the family and children's services plan but must occur at least twice. At least one of the two contacts must be held at the child's placement location. After the first 30 days of placement, casework contacts are to be held with the child at a minimum of once a month. At least two of the monthly contacts every 90 days must be at the child's placement location.

DATA WAREHOUSE REPORTS

A number of Casework Contact reports are available through the Data Warehouse. These can be used to track the number of successful and attempted contacts tracked children and their biological parents. There are separate versions for districts and agencies. Reports are updated on the 15th and the last day of each month.



You must have access to the Data Warehouse to obtain these reports.

The Data Warehouse can be accessed at the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/dwaccess.asp>

Reminder: In all areas of CONNECTIONS, you can press F1 for help

Resources:

CONNECTIONS Step-By-Step Guides:
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/>

CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff:
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/contact.asp>

CONNECTIONS Application questions:
ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.state.ny.us (NOTE: address contains an underline)

CONNECTIONS Communications
CONNECTIONSCommunications@dfa.state.ny.us

NYS OFT Customer
 Care Center #
 1-800-697-1323