

# ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

From the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF)  
Department of Human Services

## Personnel Updates

The Division of Operations announces the promotions of Kelsey Kehoe, Dana Eaton and Megan Naylor, recognizing their extensive experience and leadership within ChildLine and the broader human services field.

Kelsey Kehoe, promoted to Human Services Analyst Supervisor effective April 11, 2026, brings a background in ChildLine supervision, foster care casework, and supporting youth with sexualized behaviors.

Dana Eaton, promoted to Human Services Analyst Supervisor effective October 25, 2025, has served the Commonwealth since 2016 in roles spanning ChildLine casework and supervision, in-home services across two counties and mental health support.

Megan Naylor, promoted to ChildLine Manager effective September 13, 2025, has advanced through multiple ChildLine roles and previously led crisis response and residential services at YWCA-York, contributing to cross-agency initiatives and service-delivery improvements.

Collectively, they bring deep expertise in child welfare, staff development, crisis response and collaborative systems work.

## OCYF Trauma Team

The OCYF Trauma Team is collaborating with the Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC) to promote trauma-informed approaches. As this work progresses, we remind all OCYF-licensed providers of the many free trauma-informed care courses available through the CWRC. To view the full list of training courses, visit the E-learn site ([www.e-learn.pitt.edu](http://www.e-learn.pitt.edu)). The Trauma Team remains committed to advancing trauma-informed care and education. To share updated guidance on trauma-informed approaches, the Trauma Team issues a newsletter through the OCYF listserv, the SWAN Google Group and IL listserv, and uploads a copy to [OCYF Trauma-Informed Care \(TIC\) | Department of Human Services | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#) each month with new topics.

## Citizen Review Panels (CRPs)

The CRP Annual Report was submitted for final review and is anticipated to be released by the summer of 2026. The CRPs have begun exploring new focus areas, which will require information gathering from Federal, State and County departments. Information was shared with panel members during the Spring All-Panel meeting held on April 30, 2026. These efforts will support informed decision-making regarding the panels' priorities for the upcoming year.

The CRPs, OCYF and the CWRC collaborated on a presentation at the National Citizen Review Panel Conference in San Diego on June 2nd. This presentation was designed to inform other state CRPs of Pennsylvania's CRP procedures, efforts to increase collaboration with OCYF and make meaningful recommendations for the child welfare system.

## Human Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Resources

OCYF is supporting efforts to raise awareness of human trafficking and promote prevention strategies across Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) recently released a Human Trafficking Social Media Toolkit designed to help organizations share educational information and increase public awareness through coordinated messaging.

The toolkit includes ready-to-use social media content, graphics, awareness messaging, and resources focused on recognizing signs of trafficking, prevention efforts, and available sources for support. Counties, providers, and community partners are encouraged to utilize these materials to help amplify awareness and outreach efforts within their local communities. Visit the [Human Trafficking Social Media Toolkit](#).

Additionally, OCYF has established a resource account to provide Human Trafficking support and technical assistance. Questions or requests for assistance may be directed to [RA-HSOCYFHumanTraff@pa.gov](mailto:RA-HSOCYFHumanTraff@pa.gov).

Additional information and resources related to human trafficking prevention, awareness, and child safety can be found through the Department of Human Services' [Keep Kids Safe Human Trafficking Webpage](#).

### **Educational Stability**

*Pennsylvania School Code Update: Update to the Procedure When a Child is Truant*

The [Pennsylvania School Code, § 1333](#), has been updated by [Act 47 of 2025](#) to include new provisions regarding the procedure for when a child is truant. The update includes new language requiring that LEAs:

- (2.1) shall include notice to the person in parental relation that a child who is habitually truant may not transfer, during the school year, to a cyber charter school unless a judge determines that the transfer is in the best interest of the child;
- (2.2) shall include resources available to assist the child and the person in parental relation with returning the child to compliant compulsory school attendance and opportunities for further academic recovery in response to the truant behavior.

*Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) new Data Point*

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Center for Schools and Communities (CSC) have issued [guidance](#) on the new "Foster Student" data point within the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

### **Final Rule, Separate Licensing Standards for Relative or Kinship Foster Family Homes**

On September 28, 2023, the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) issued a final rule amending regulations to allow Title IV-E agencies to claim Title IV-E federal financial participation for the cost of foster care maintenance payments on behalf of an otherwise eligible child who is placed in a relative or kinship licensed or approved foster family home when the agency uses different licensing standards for relative or kinship foster family homes and non-relative/non-kinship foster family homes. Prior to the publication of this new rule, federal regulations required Title IV-E agencies to use the same licensing standards for both kin and non-kin caregivers, disregarding the unique needs of kinship homes.

This new rule encourages Title IV-E agencies to develop separate kinship-specific licensing standards that place as few burdens on relative and kinship families as possible, limited to federal requirements only, such as the safety requirements in sections 471(a)(10)(A) and (a)(20) of the Social Security Act. In addition, the new rule requires Title IV-E agencies to provide all licensed or approved relative or kinship foster family homes with the same amount of Foster Care Maintenance Payments that would have been made if the child

was placed in a licensed or approved unrelated foster family home.

According to the federal rule, states may elect to establish separate kinship-specific licensing standards that are in accord with recommended standards of national organizations for foster family homes related to:

- Admission policies, safety, sanitation and protection of civil rights,
- Use of the reasonable and prudent parenting standard; and,
- Procedures for criminal records checks, including fingerprint-based checks of national crime information databases.

OCYF consulted with DHS Executive Offices, including the Office of General Counsel, Office of Legislative Affairs, and the DHS Executive Policy Office on the process to implement separate kinship-specific licensing standards. Upon consultation, it was determined that a legislative amendment would be required to allow for implementation of separate kinship-specific licensing standards.

OCYF continues to work closely with these offices on the process to introduce a legislative amendment. OCYF intends to share the proposed standards for comment and feedback from community partners. More information will be forthcoming in the next several months.

### **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)**

NYTD collects information in the following areas: Baseline Population (surveys every youth who reaches age 17 while in foster care or enters foster care within 45 days of their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday), Follow-up Population (surveys a random sample of Baseline youth at age 19 and 21, depending on Cohort period), and Served Population (any youth or young adult receiving independent living services paid for or provided by the county regardless of age). October 1, 2025, marked the beginning of Cohort 6 for the Baseline Population. All youth who reach age 17 while in care **must** be registered and provided with an opportunity to complete a survey within the required 45-day window of their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. OCYF encourages youth to be compensated for completing their baseline survey.

A compliant file for the 2026A period was submitted, and PA will not receive a penalty. The 2026B period began on April 1, 2026 and runs through September 30, 2026, with all data being due on October 15, 2026. Counties can log onto [www.getnytdpa.org](http://www.getnytdpa.org) to enter their served and survey data. NYTD questions can be directed to Lindsey Glezen at [lglezen@pa.gov](mailto:lglezen@pa.gov) or 717-787-7056.

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If you have new staff, need assistance with resetting your password, forgot your username, or have other technical assistance questions related to NYTD, please contact the NYTD Help Desk at 800-436-4105 or [getnytd@pcgus.com](mailto:getnytd@pcgus.com).

### **Chafee Education and Training Grant Programs**

The Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG) application and instructions for the 2026-2027 academic year are available on PHEAA's website at [Chafee Education and Training Grant \(Chafee ETG\) Program](#). The deadline to apply is March 31, 2027.

As a reminder, current ETG award recipients will automatically be enrolled for the next academic year and do not need to complete another ETG application. The ETG award amount cannot exceed the student's cost of attendance.

Questions regarding the ETG program can be directed to Lindsey Glezen at [linglezen@pa.gov](mailto:linglezen@pa.gov) or at 717-787-7056. Youth who have questions related to their ETG application can contact PHEAA at 1-800-831-0797.

### **Fostering Independence Tuition Waiver Program**

The Fostering Independence through Education Program, known as FosterEd, requires Pennsylvania post-secondary institutions to award a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees for Pennsylvania resident youth who meet Chafee ETG eligibility requirements and have applied for all available federal and state grants. Tuition and mandatory fee waivers apply to public (state) colleges and universities, community colleges, private post-secondary institutions and other eligible schools. Youth are eligible to receive waivers for 10 semesters, which need not be consecutive, or until age 26. All youth who apply for Chafee ETG are automatically evaluated for FosterEd.

In addition to the waivers, each post-secondary institution must appoint a Point of Contact (POC) to assist youth with eligibility, technical assistance, and other resources that may be available to them on and off campus. County and private provider IL Caseworkers/Coordinators may be contacted by the POC to verify a youth's eligibility. This is a critical step in assisting youth when entering post-secondary education and financial aid packages are being awarded.

Each post-secondary education institution is required to have their identified POC listed on their website. A list of POCs can be found on the Center for Schools and Communities website at [Foster Care Contact Directory](#).

Additional information about the tuition waiver can be found at [PA Fostering Independence Tuition Waiver Program](#). Questions regarding FosterEd can be directed to Lindsey Glezen at [linglezen@pa.gov](mailto:linglezen@pa.gov) or at 717-787-7056.

Additional information about the tuition waiver can be found at [PA Fostering Independence Tuition Waiver \(FosterEd\) Program](#). Questions regarding FosterEd can be directed to Lindsey Glezen at [linglezen@pa.gov](mailto:linglezen@pa.gov) or at 717-787-7056.

### **Credit Reports**

The Social Security Act §475 requires that CCYAs perform credit checks for all youth in foster care at age 14 and older by **all three** credit bureaus on a **yearly** basis. Each Credit Bureau has a specific contact person and a process to ensure foster care youths' credit history checks are completed appropriately. If you have questions regarding credit reporting requirements or need assistance obtaining a credit history from one of the Credit Bureaus, please contact Lindsey Glezen at [linglezen@pa.gov](mailto:linglezen@pa.gov) or at 717-787-7056.

### **Pennsylvania Permanency Barriers Initiatives – American Bar Association (ABA)**

The ABA Pennsylvania Permanency Barriers Project and Education Barriers Project are actively seeking new projects or technical assistance counties. These projects work collaboratively with key county stakeholders from the child welfare agency, court, education system, private providers and community by providing intensive on-site assistance to counties for two to three years, depending on needs.

Technical assistance can range from one training to a few months of engagement. Please reach out if you would like to discuss the ways in which we may be of assistance.

Areas in which the ABA is available to help include:

- Improving collaboration and communication between CYS, court, attorneys, and local providers
- Integrating a kin-first culture
- Providing hands-on court skills and testifying training for case workers
- Incorporating a race equity lens in child welfare
- Implementing trauma-informed court practices
- Meeting the educational needs of youth in foster care
- Improving school stability and education decision making
- Special education advocacy

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- Engaging parents in educational advocacy

For more information on Permanency Barriers technical assistance visit [PA Permanency Project](#) or contact Heidi Redlich Epstein at [heidi.epstein@americanbar.org](mailto:heidi.epstein@americanbar.org).

For more information on the Education Barriers to Permanency Project please see: [Education Barriers to Permanency Project PA Permanency Project](#) or contact Kathleen McNaught at [kathleen.mcnaught@americanbar.org](mailto:kathleen.mcnaught@americanbar.org).

### **Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association**

The Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association (PSRFA) is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Pennsylvania's foster, adoptive and kinship families. For more than 50 years, PSRFA has provided advocacy, guidance, education, and connection to trusted resources throughout the Commonwealth. Through our eight regions, we identify local needs, support collaboration, and coordinate meaningful training and support opportunities for resource families and professionals.

PSRFA continues to host "1 Village 1 Voice," a virtual monthly training and support group held on the second Thursday of each month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. The first hour (6:30–7:30 p.m.) consists of a free training session open to both resource families and professionals. The final 30 minutes (7:30–8:00 p.m.) provides a confidential peer support space for foster, adoptive, and kinship families. Discussions may extend slightly beyond 8:00 p.m., as needed.

To register or request additional information regarding 1 Village 1 Voice, please email Gretchen Ray at [1village1voice@gmail.com](mailto:1village1voice@gmail.com)

#### *Annual Conference – Save the Date*

PSRFA's Annual Conference will be held October 22–23, 2026, at the Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. The conference provides training, networking opportunities, resource connections and recognition of the important role resource families play across the Commonwealth. Additional conference information and registration details will be released in the coming months.

#### *Membership Opportunities*

Families and professionals are encouraged to become members of PSRFA and join our growing statewide community. Membership supports

advocacy efforts, training opportunities, scholarships for youth connected to resource families, networking opportunities, conference benefits and ongoing support services.

Family Membership: \$25 per year

Agency Membership: \$60 per year

Supporting Membership: \$30 per year

#### *Board Representation Opportunities*

To strengthen regional representation and ensure local voices continue to shape statewide advocacy efforts, PSRFA is currently seeking volunteer Board Members for several regions across Pennsylvania, including:

Region 2: Chester, Montgomery, Bucks and Delaware Counties

Region 4: Lycoming, Union, Snyder, Montour, Columbia, Northumberland, Schuylkill, Berks and Lehigh Counties

Region 7: Erie, Crawford, Warren, McKean, Cameron, Elk, Jefferson, Clarion, Forest and Mercer Counties

Resource parents are strongly encouraged to apply. Professionals are also welcome to serve, in accordance with PSRFA's bylaws requiring that at least two-thirds of the Board be comprised of resource families.

Individuals interested in leadership, collaboration and strengthening support for Pennsylvania families are encouraged to connect with us.

For more information about becoming a member, conference updates, or joining PSRFA's Board of Directors, please visit our website at [Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association | Support For Foster, Adoptive, And Kinship Families](#) or contact Melissa Geesaman, Executive Director, at [mgeesaman@psrfa.org](mailto:mgeesaman@psrfa.org) or 1-800-951-5151.

#### **CWEB and CWEL Programs**

CWEB and CWEL Programs Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) The CWEB program is now present in 19 schools across the state, which provides ample opportunity for senior social work majors to prepare for public child welfare employment. CWEB students complete child welfare coursework, enroll in Foundations training and engage in a child welfare practicum in one of the 67 county child welfare agencies. They are ready to join the workforce immediately following graduation. Students accepted into the program receive tuition and fees at the in-state rate for their senior year, fellowship payments during their internship, a bonus upon graduation and more. Upon graduation, a one-year work commitment in a Pennsylvania public child welfare agency is

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required. During the 2025-2026 academic year (fall and spring terms) 44 students completed their studies. Spring graduates are now in the process of commencing with agency employment. This brings the total number of CWEB graduates to 1,604 since the program began in 2001. For more information, visit [Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates](#).

Child Welfare Education for Leadership (CWEL) The CWEL Program strengthens Pennsylvania public child welfare services by providing graduate-level educational opportunities for current public child welfare professionals at 13 partner graduate schools. Eleven programs offer a fully online course of study. Counties and OCYF approve students for either full-time or part-time participation; all students accepted into the program receive tuition and fees at the in-state rate, reimbursement for books, and other benefits. Full-time students are also granted educational leave from their jobs, and their county employers receive reimbursement for the student's salary and benefits. Upon graduation, a work commitment at their county agency is required. During the fall and spring terms of the 2025-2026 academic year, 51 students completed studies and resumed agency employment. An additional 12 students will complete studies in the summer. This will bring the total number of CWEL grads to 1,847 since the program began in 1995.

Additional information is available at [Child Welfare Education for Leadership](#). The CWEL and CWEB Teams are available to provide presentations to county commissioners, advisory boards, agency leadership teams, agency staff members and independent living programs. For more information and to schedule a presentation, please contact Laura Borish, CWEB/ CWEL Agency Coordinator at [lbb14@pitt.edu](mailto:lbb14@pitt.edu) or 412-648-2371.

### **Pennsylvania Kinship Navigator Program, KinConnector**

The PA KinConnector Program offers kinship caregivers and professionals who work with kinship caregivers support, guidance, training and resources. Please provide kinship caregivers with information about PA KinConnector. The PA KinConnector helpline can be reached at 866-546-2111. The website, [KinConnector.org](http://KinConnector.org), includes a comprehensive, guided search feature of resources in the following topic areas: childcare, clothing, financial assistance, food, legal, medical, school, and support groups. Also available on the website are training opportunities for both professionals and kinship caregivers, printable resources, a podcast series called "Kindred Voices" and a virtual Support Group called "Kindred Spirits." You can also view highlighted stories of kinship families

at [PA KinConnector \(serving Kinship families & Grandparents Raising Grandchildren\) | kinship families](#)

OCYF encourages all county and provider agencies to connect to PA KinConnector and learn more about the services offered, provide new community resource information for website inclusion and to establish partnerships for program growth across the state. Any questions regarding this program can be directed to Diane Michel at [dmichel@pa.gov](mailto:dmichel@pa.gov) or 717-705-2911.

### **Accurint**

Accurint is an online search tool available to every county throughout the state. It is able to assist with family finding efforts, contact information, criminal checks and identifying individuals for any type of family engagement meeting. Each county must have a county employee who is designated as their Accurint administrator. Administrators can be Accurint users or non-users. Non-user administrators do not count toward the county's allotment of users. Counties may have more than one Accurint administrator. If you or your staff would like training on the Accurint software, please contact Accurint Education Consultant, Jessica Kraft, at [Jessica.Kraft@lexisnexisrisk.com](mailto:Jessica.Kraft@lexisnexisrisk.com) or 937-286-7660. Additionally, you can look up trainings on the National Training Calendar [LexisNexis® Risk Solutions Learning Center](#). If you have any questions about Accurint or to set up a non-user administrator account, please contact Jessica Andrews-Slagel at [jandrewssl@pa.gov](mailto:jandrewssl@pa.gov) or 717-787-2726.

### **Mandated Reporter Training Curriculum**

OCYF contracts with three entities to provide free of charge mandated reporter training. These contracts are as follows:

- The Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance (PFSA) which offers mandated reporter training both in-person and through live virtual sessions.
- The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA-AAP) which operates the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) program for physicians and medical personnel
- The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC) which operates a self-paced online curriculum.

All trainings offered through these contracts utilize a child abuse recognition and reporting training curriculum approved by DHS in consultation with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), as well as approved by the Department of State

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(DOS) for persons requiring continuing education credit toward licensure or certification.

### PFSA

PFSA offers virtual and in-person, three-hour Mandated Reporter Trainings (MRT) at no cost to mandated reporters in Pennsylvania. PFSA also offers trainings with Spanish translators, American Sign Language and Certified Deaf Interpreter translations. PFSA also offers MRT for Amish Foster Parents and Amish Mandated Reporters conducted by an Amish instructor.

Trainings include "Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse" which meets all the requirements for training on recognizing and reporting child abuse, as well as "Responding to Disclosures of Child Abuse" and "Recognizing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect" for mandated reporters who have taken Mandated Reporter Training before and need to take it again. The "Responding to Disclosures of Child Abuse" training is designed to help participants respond to disclosures of child abuse in a way that is sensitive and supportive to the child, but without tainting the child's memory. The "Recognizing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect" training helps participants recognize the signs of neglect, determine when and how to make a referral, and increase understanding of General Protective Services and agency procedures.

PFSA also offers a specialized Residential Care Facility Training (RCFT) for individuals who are employed by organizations and agencies licensed under Title 55, Chapter 3800, Child Residential and Day Treatment Facilities. The RCFT Program provides information to appropriately identify recordable, reportable, and suspected child abuse incidents, as well as information about documentation, minimal facts interviewing and development and implementation of plans of supervision for staff who are under investigation of suspected child abuse. Additional information and training dates can be found at [Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance](https://www.pennsylvaniafamily.org). For questions or to schedule a specific session for your organization, please email PFSA at [training@pa-fsa.org](mailto:training@pa-fsa.org).

### PA-AAP

PA-AAP offers Mandated Reporter Trainings, specifically for Primary Care Physicians (and their staff), Hospitals, Emergency Medical Services and School Nurses, through their Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) program. To schedule in-person or virtual training for medical professionals, contact PA-AAP at [scan@paaap.org](mailto:scan@paaap.org) or call 866-823-7226.

### CWRC

CWRC continues to offer a free, virtual, on-demand Mandated Reporter Training. The course is available at [reportabusepa.pitt.edu](https://reportabusepa.pitt.edu).

### **Media Campaigns**

The **#MeetTheKids** media campaign is designed to support recruitment efforts for foster and adoptive families across Pennsylvania. OCYF will continue the previous campaign with a focus on older youth adoptions through the end of July 2026 on network and cable television in all six media markets in Pennsylvania. This will also include radio advertisements. In addition to television and radio, the media campaign includes online media advertisements on Google, Hulu, Facebook, Instagram and Cumulus.

While this media campaign airs, agencies should be prepared to promptly respond to phone calls from prospective foster and adoptive families.

To view #MeetTheKids public campaign materials, visit: [Meet The Kids | Department of Human Services | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](https://www.human-services.pa.gov/MeetTheKids).

The PA **KinConnector** media campaign is designed to create awareness to kinship caregivers about the PA KinConnector program. PA KinConnector is a specialized information and referral program that assists kinship families in finding financial, legal and healthcare related services. PA KinConnector's goal is to help stabilize kinship caregivers so they can provide a permanent, loving home to the children in their care. The media campaign will run through August 2026 and includes online television and radio advertisements.

The **Keep Kids Safe (KKS)** media campaign is designed to educate the public about reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. The campaign runs on an annual basis and includes television, radio and online and print advertisements and directs viewers to the [www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov](https://www.KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov) and to call ChildLine (1-800-932-0313) to report suspected child abuse or neglect. This year, the KKS media campaign will run through August 2026, incorporating online, television, and radio advertising.

For both PA KinConnector and KKS public campaign materials, which include print, online and television advertisements, visit: [Keep Kids Safe Media | Department of Human Services | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](https://www.human-services.pa.gov/KeepKidsSafe).

### **Waiting Child Segments**

The Department of Human Services, Office of Children Youth and Families funds five waiting child segments across the state designed to find

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adoptive families for older youth in need of families. Waiting child segments have proven to be successful over the years in helping find permanent homes for children in foster care and providing the opportunity to enhance child specific recruitment efforts across the Commonwealth.

If you'd like to feature a waiting child, please reach out to the representative listed below.

*Waiting Child, KDKA-TV, Channel 2, CBS, Pittsburgh*

Nikita Lewis at [nlewis@diakon-swan.org](mailto:nlewis@diakon-swan.org)

*Val's Kids, ABC27 WHTM, Harrisburg*

Alfredo Gonzalez at [algonzalez@diakon-swan.org](mailto:algonzalez@diakon-swan.org)

*A Little Love, WBRE-TV, Channel 28, NBC, Wilkes-Barre*

Sarah Reiss at [sreiss@diakon-swan.org](mailto:sreiss@diakon-swan.org)

*Finding Forever, WJAC, Channel 6, Johnstown*

Katie Juliana at [kjuliana@diakon-swan.org](mailto:kjuliana@diakon-swan.org)

*A Family for Life, WSEE, Channel 35, CBS and WICU, Channel 12, NBC, Erie*

Nic Landon at [nlandon@diakon-swan.org](mailto:nlandon@diakon-swan.org)

### SWAN/IL Google Groups

The SWAN/IL Listserv, hosted through Google Groups, serves as an excellent platform for network members to share confidential information, waiting families, waiting children, matching events, and post-permanency resources. It also provides opportunities to seek advice from colleagues and announce upcoming events. Membership is limited to employees of county children and youth agencies, SWAN affiliate agencies or IL providers. If interested, please contact Isabel Madrigal at [imadrigal@diakon-swan.org](mailto:imadrigal@diakon-swan.org) or 717-558-1223.

### Interstate Compact Unit

The PA Interstate Unit does not have the ability to process USPS, FedEx, or UPS "paper mail". When providing any case documents to the Interstate Unit, please use the unit's Resource Accounts, fax, or the Interstate/County DocuShare collection. Case documents include request packets, completed Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) home studies, 100Bs, supervisory reports, Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) documents, etc.

Resource Accounts:

[RA-PA-ICPC@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PA-ICPC@pa.gov) for ICPC cases

[RA-PA-ICAMA@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PA-ICAMA@pa.gov) for ICAMA cases

Interstate Unit Fax Number: 717-425-5562

In a runaway situation, email Amanda Behe at [abehe@pa.gov](mailto:abehe@pa.gov) or Natalie (Primak) Mwaniki at [nmwaniki@pa.gov](mailto:nmwaniki@pa.gov).

### Clearance Verification Unit

Childline's Clearance Verification Unit (CVU) provides eligible individuals with the following three clearances: Child Abuse History Clearance, FBI Fingerprint Clearance and National Sex Offenders Registry (NSOR). The Pennsylvania (PA) Child Abuse History clearance can be submitted and paid for online through the Child Welfare Information Solution (CWIS) self-service portal at Pennsylvania Child Welfare Information Solution. Applicants can view and print their results online.

CVU will also accept PA Child Abuse History Clearance applications in paper format for anyone who may not have access to the internet. Results for paper applications are mailed to the appropriate address noted on the form and within 14 days from the date that application is received in CVU.

The Commonwealth's vendor for digital fingerprinting is IDEMIA (also referred to as Identogo or MorphoTrust). The fingerprint-based background check is a multi-step process. For general questions about FBI clearances, please contact the FBI Background Check Unit at 1-877-371-5422. For IDEMIA registration, processing, or billing questions, please contact IDEMIA/Identogo at 1-844-321-2101. To register online go to [www.Indentogo.com](http://www.Indentogo.com) or call 1-844-321-2101 and listen to the options menu.

CVU is responsible for processing out-of-state clearances for resource parents, including adoptive and foster parents, when a resource parent has resided outside of Pennsylvania within the past five years. Prospective foster and adoptive parents required to obtain an Out-of-State Child Abuse clearance are **no longer required** to submit the clearance to ChildLine for interpretation **IF** the clearance shows *no result (or no record)*. Out-of-State Child Abuse clearances with **ANY** result or record, **are required** to be submitted to ChildLine for interpretation.

Visit [Keep Kids Safe | Department of Human Services | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](http://www.dhs.pa.gov) for additional information regarding the clearance or call us at 877-371-5422.

### Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF)

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717-787-3984

[www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov)

**From the SWAN Prime Contract**  
*Diakon-SWAN, LLC/Voce*

### **State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025-26 Close and SFY 2026-27 Referral Processing**

As we near the end of SFY 2025-26, some SWAN needs-based budget (NBB) dollars are still available. We encourage counties to continue to make referrals for children and families who need services.

As SFY 2025-26 NBB dollars are available, we will continue to accept referrals. To qualify, counties must submit referrals to the SWAN prime contractor by Tuesday, June 30, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. Any referral received after this cut-off time will be held and then processed in SFY 2026-27. Processing of SFY 2026-27 referrals is expected to begin on Thursday, July 9, 2026.

If your county has exhausted its SWAN SFY 2025-26 NBB dollars, do not stop referring. The Department of Human Services has authorized reallocation of funds among counties so that the use of these dollars can be maximized. The SWAN prime contractor will continue to process referrals received for SFY 2025-26 until the NBB dollars are exhausted.

### **New Supervisory Training Track for SWAN Units of Service**

Supervisors play a critical role in delivering SWAN services. They ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and support needed to engage children and families, make sound decisions that prioritize safe, permanent outcomes and implement effective service plans. They also ensure that SWAN services are delivered consistently and in compliance with established standards.

The development of a supervisory training track that includes each SWAN Unit of Service is underway to strengthen supervisors' ability to support high-quality service delivery and effective case practice. The training focuses on critical topics such as quality and timeliness of work, review and oversight of work in progress, referral management, supervisory skills and supportive resources. This training track is ideal for supervisors and administrators who have a working understanding of SWAN Units of Service and are seeking to strengthen and enhance their supervisory skills specific to each unit.

To date, supervisory training for SWAN's Child Profile, Family Matching, and Adoption Finalization Units of Service has been developed and delivered

at SWAN statewide meetings. Supervisory trainings for additional units are currently in the planning process, so stay tuned for future offerings.

If you would like more information on SWAN supervisory training opportunities, contact your SWAN regional technical assistant.

### **The Importance of a Great Photo**

A great recruitment photo can increase engagement, strengthen connections with prospective families and better reflect a youth's personality, strengths, dignity and individuality. In practical terms, this means making sure the youth is well-groomed and dressed appropriately, looks comfortable, and is genuinely smiling. It means paying attention to the background and overall lighting. (We recommend taking photos outdoors, where nature provides a strong backdrop and natural light is flattering.)

It also means avoiding the use of graphics pasted over a child's face to make an image "non-identifying." Instead, review our [examples of strong non-identifying photos](#) and get creative! Approach the AdoptPAKids website like you would social media: always aim to share the most flattering and honoring images.

Learn to use some of the basic tools on your phone, such as "portrait mode" and one-tap filters and adjustments that help photos look their best. Finally, be sure you're sharing a high-resolution image (we recommend 2–3 MB) so it looks good on the website and in print, such as on posters.

If you have any questions about youth photos, reach out to a PAE coordinator.

### **Coming Soon: The 2026 Statewide Virtual Matching Event (VME)**

The 2026 Statewide VME will be live **November 13–20, 2026**. Agencies will receive early access beginning on October 26<sup>th</sup> to update and refresh their booth. This is the time to remove outdated materials and prepare new content that highlights the families and youth you're recruiting for. Save the dates **October 26–November 6, 2026** to set aside time for this "booth remodeling."

Feedback is loud and clear: people want more videos. We are asking agencies to begin planning and creating brief (two to three-minute max) videos that showcase the strengths and personalities of both the youth and the families you're recruiting. (Note: There is a workshop being offered at the SWAN/IL Summer Statewide all about making recruitment videos.)

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In the meantime, identify who at your agency will serve as your booth point person and/or booth designer. If you have any questions, reach out to the PAE team at [pae@diakon-swan.org](mailto:pae@diakon-swan.org).

### **Save the Date: The 2027 Pennsylvania Farm Show**

Milkshakes, baby goats, rodeos, unique food, parking passes and more! Mark your calendars for the Pennsylvania Farm Show, held on January 9-16, 2027, in Harrisburg.

Every year, SWAN hosts a booth at the Farm Show. The Farm Show is a fun opportunity for the network to interact with the public and raise awareness about foster care, adoption and permanency. Please consider volunteering to help staff the SWAN booth. Be on the lookout for additional information in the fall. Questions can be directed to PAE Coordinator Alfredo Gonzalez at [algonzalez@diakon-swan.org](mailto:algonzalez@diakon-swan.org).

### **SWAN LSI Revises Training Resources**

SWAN LSI is pleased to announce the update of two important trainings: *SWAN LSI 101* and *Excavating the Web – The How-to of Diligent Search*.

The *SWAN LSI 101* curriculum provides an overview of the partnership between county children and youth agencies (CCYAs) and LSI. The training provides a historical perspective of the program and addresses key elements of LSI, including how the program expedites permanency and how CCYAs can optimize SWAN LSI paralegal services. This training helps CCYA workers better understand the SWAN LSI program's deliverables and implementation.

*Excavating the Web – The How-to of Diligent Search* is a "hands-on" training that uses the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* as a foundation and explores the use of free, publicly accessible online search engines. Training participants will be able to: illustrate reasons to conduct thorough adoption and other diligent searches; locate tools for these searches; demonstrate the ability to use these tools to achieve significant results; apply critical thinking to evaluate search results; and document their progress and search results. This training is encouraged for anyone interested in building their diligent search skills. It will be offered virtually, allowing participants to actively practice skills from their computers.

(Note: For information on the new training, *Diligent Search*, which provides a foundational overview of diligent search practice, see the update below.)

SWAN LSI has supported CCYAs and the network for nearly 25 years and remains committed to

developing resources to promote understanding of the program and its activities. Reach out to your assigned SWAN LSI coordinator or regional technical assistant ([diakon-swan.org/swan/network-map/](http://diakon-swan.org/swan/network-map/)) for more information or to request a training.

### **Coming Soon: SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet Update and New Training**

SWAN LSI has updated the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* and will be releasing the 10<sup>th</sup> edition this summer! The *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* is a tool developed for the network to support concurrent planning, search and engagement and best practices. It is the go-to resource for anyone conducting a search for missing parents, trying to locate and engage kin in case planning or identifying resources if out-of-home placement is needed.

In conjunction with the updated *Diligent Search Packet*, SWAN LSI will be rolling out a new training titled *Diligent Search*. This training will provide a foundational overview of diligent search practice. Participants will be guided through the comprehensive search packet, which outlines the search process and ensures compliance with the laws and regulations governing search and family finding practice. (Note: For information on the newly updated diligent search training, *Excavating the Web – the How-to of Diligent Search*, which provides hands-on practice of search tools, see the update above.)

The current version of the *Diligent Search Packet* is located on the SWAN Permanency Toolkit ([swantoolkit.org/toolkit/09-lsi-legal-services/diligent-search/](http://swantoolkit.org/toolkit/09-lsi-legal-services/diligent-search/)). If you would like to request training on diligent search, contact your assigned SWAN LSI coordinator (counties) or SWAN regional technical assistant (affiliates).

### **SWAN LSI Incarceration Resource Manual, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Coming Soon**

We are excited to announce that the development of the sixth edition of the SWAN LSI Incarceration Resource Manual (IRM) is underway. The IRM remains a valuable, comprehensive tool for child welfare professionals to use in case planning with incarcerated parents and to support the county agencies' efforts to engage with these parties. The manual provides protocols for each county correctional facility in Pennsylvania, including:

- Guidance on written and telephone communication to support contact between the incarcerated parents and children;
- Visitation schedules or video visitation to support parent-child visitation; and

*Continued on p. 10*

- Services available to the incarcerated parents to support reunification and permanency efforts.

The IRM is focused on sharing information specific to Pennsylvania’s county prison facilities. However, the IRM also includes links to resources available to assist in case planning for parents incarcerated in state or federal facilities.

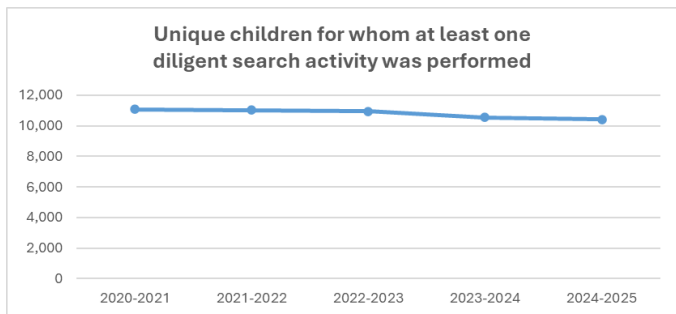
If you have any questions about the IRM or have updates about a facility’s protocols, contact [lsiirmupdates@diakonswan.org](mailto:lsiirmupdates@diakonswan.org). Our target release date for the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the IRM is late 2026. Stay tuned!

### SWAN LSI Diligent Search Remains a Key Component in Achieving Permanency for Children in Care

With the forthcoming release of the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet*, and new and updated diligent search trainings soon to be offered, now is a particularly fitting moment to reflect on the role of LSI paralegals in overcoming barriers to permanency through Diligent Search.

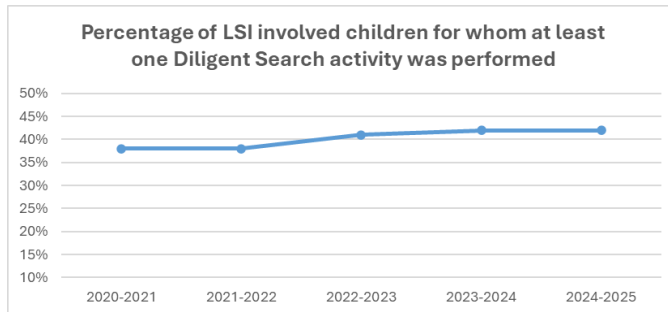
The most recent analysis of internal data performed by the SWAN prime contractor indicates that SWAN LSI paralegals in 63 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties (approximately 98%) currently perform some type of diligent search activity, including but not limited to, searches to locate missing parents. Additionally, in 56 of the 67 counties (approximately 83%) LSI paralegals perform diligent searches specifically for the purposes of family finding.

In state fiscal year (SFY) 2024-2025, LSI paralegals performed a total of 19,014 diligent search activities, as captured in the SWAN Portal, and performed at least one search activity for 10,411 unique children. In fact, LSI paralegals have provided search activity for well over 10,000 children in each of the last five fiscal years, as displayed in the chart below.



These children represent a significant portion of all children who receive LSI services. In SFY 2024-2025, 42% of all LSI-involved children received at least one diligent search activity. This is up from

38% in SFY 2020-2021, as shown in the chart below.



Source: Diakon-SWAN, LLC, May 2026

Resources related to Diligent Search are publicly available, such as the *SWAN LSI Diligent Search Packet* (10th edition forthcoming), *ICWA Search Guide*, and the *Incarceration Resource Manual*. However, LSI staff’s specialized training and expertise enable these tools to be fully optimized, producing meaningful outcomes for children and their families.

SWAN LSI looks forward to continuing to team up with our county partners to maximize the impact of Diligent Search for Pennsylvania children in foster care.

### ACT 101 of 2010 Training Program for Court and Agency-Appointed Authorized Representatives (AR)

The next AR support group meeting will be held virtually on **July 22, 2026, from 10 am – 12:00 pm**. The Zoom link is: <https://zoom.us/j/93427906346>

The next AR training will be held on **January 7, 2027, from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm** at 300 Corporate Center Dr., Camp Hill, PA.

**SWAN Prime Contract**  
 200 Corporate Center Drive Suite 100B  
 PO Box 959  
 Camp Hill, PA 17011  
 Ph: 717-236-8490 | Fax: 717-236-8510  
[www.diacon-swan.org](http://www.diacon-swan.org)  
[www.dhs.pa.gov/AdoptPAkids](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/AdoptPAkids)

 /adoptpakids  /adoptpa

**From the PA Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC)  
Independent Living (IL) Project**  
*University of Pittsburgh*

### 2026 Older Youth Retreat

Registration is open for the 2026 Older Youth Retreat, which will be held July 27 – 31, 2026. Information was sent to all county-identified IL Coordinators. Additional information regarding the event can be found at <https://www.payab.pitt.edu/ILRetreat.htm>.

### Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board (YAB) and Citizen Review Panel (CRP)

The Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board (YAB) continues to serve in a leadership capacity as the Commonwealth's fourth designated Citizen Review Panel (CRP). Through its regional boards, YAB advances youth-driven initiatives that elevate lived experience, inform child welfare practice and strengthen supports for young people transitioning from foster care into adulthood.

Each region has identified priority areas for the 2026–2027 recommendation cycle, focusing on issues that directly impact youth well-being, permanency and long-term success.

### Regional CRP Priorities for 2026–2027

#### Southwest Region – Pregnant and Parenting Youth (Focus on Fathers)

**Goal:** Develop a dedicated section on the YAB website featuring resources specifically for fathers in care. This section will include information on parental rights, available supports, and relevant services. Printed materials will also be distributed to high schools and community organizations to increase awareness and accessibility.

#### Northeast Region – Family Connections

**Goal:** Strengthen sibling and family relationships by supporting youth in maintaining meaningful and consistent connections with their loved ones. This initiative emphasizes the importance of relational permanency and building strong emotional support networks.

#### Southeast Region – What to Expect After Adoption

**Goal:** Create a youth-friendly questionnaire to guide video interviews with adopted youth, highlighting their experiences and sharing adoption success stories. A companion brochure will also be developed, including contact information for adoption networks and crisis support resources to ensure youth and families know where to seek assistance when needed.

### South Central Region – Employment Resources

**Goal:** Develop a comprehensive employment resource packet for youth ages 14–23 in the South-Central region and statewide. The packet will be accessible through both the Valley Youth House and YAB websites and will include job readiness tools, workforce development programs, and employment-related resources to support youth economic stability.

### Speakers Bureau

The Speakers Bureau training was successfully held on April 2, 2026, at CWRC, with seven youth participants in attendance. The event provided a full day of structured learning, leadership development, and opportunities for youth to strengthen their advocacy and public speaking skills.

Participants received an overview of the Speakers Bureau purpose and goals, highlighting the role of youth as leaders who use their lived experience to educate others, raise awareness and promote system improvement. Youth engaged in a Strategic Sharing training, which emphasized how to share personal experiences in a purposeful, safe and impactful way. This session helped participants understand how to connect their stories to broader system issues while maintaining appropriate boundaries.

This was followed by a Child Welfare 101 session, which provided an overview of the child welfare system, including key processes, roles and decision-making structures. This session helped youth better understand the systems they may speak about and advocate within.

Youth received an overview of the Independent Living Project and the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN), highlighting resources and supports available to older youth transitioning from care. Youth participated in an in-depth session on Engagement, Collaboration and Trauma-Informed Care, which emphasized:

- Effective communication strategies;
- Working collaboratively with professionals and peers; and
- Understanding the impact of trauma and applying supportive, respectful approaches.

This session supported youth in developing the skills necessary to engage in professional settings while maintaining authenticity and self-awareness.

With a small group of seven participants, the training allowed meaningful engagement, personalized support, and in-depth discussion, strengthening each youth's readiness to serve as a representative of the Speakers Bureau.

### YAB Consultant Recruitment

The Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board is currently seeking YAB Consultants for the North Central, South Central, and Northwest regions. YAB Consultants play a critical role in supporting regional youth advocacy efforts and advancing initiatives that improve outcomes for older youth in foster care.

*Responsibilities include:*

- Coordinating activities and communication for regional Youth Advisory Boards;
- Organizing quarterly regional meetings and supporting statewide YAB events;
- Assisting with community service projects that empower and engage youth; and
- Supporting legislative and policy efforts that elevate youth voice.

Individuals interested in learning more or applying are encouraged to contact **Carl Butler** at the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center at [CLB379@pitt.edu](mailto:CLB379@pitt.edu).

### Resources

The Statewide Youth Advisory Board website provides a comprehensive collection of permanency resources designed to support both youth and professionals. These materials span a wide range of needs and developmental stages—from practical tips that help foster parents effectively support teenagers, to engaging, age-appropriate tools such as coloring books for children ages 5–7 and 8–10. These resources are thoughtfully developed to help young people better understand the foster care experience in ways that are accessible, meaningful, and developmentally appropriate. <https://www.payab.pitt.edu/Resources-Permanency.htm>.

Additional resources that may support work with older youth can be found at <https://www.payab.pitt.edu>.

### PA Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC)

403 E. Winding Hill Road  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055  
717-795-9048 | [www.payab.pitt.edu](http://www.payab.pitt.edu)



AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Center on Children  
and the Law



# Trial Skills

for Child Welfare Caseworkers

TESTIFY WITH CONFIDENCE!

Bridge case work and law through an **interactive training** conducted by national child welfare experts from the ABA Center on Children and the Law, aimed at building the necessary skills to testify with clarity, professionalism, and confidence.

Available in two formats **designed to meet your jurisdiction's needs**, this training is **offered at no cost** to your county through the ABA Permanency Barriers Project, funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families.

## Format #1

### Full Day Trial Skills Training for Caseworkers

A dynamic, in-person program designed to strengthen courtroom skills through lecture and testimony practice. Each caseworker will participate in exercises based on a child welfare case scenario and receive personalized constructive feedback from experienced attorneys.

## Format #2

### The Art of Trial Advocacy Interactive Training for Caseworkers

This half day training is available in-person or virtually and is designed to strengthen caseworkers' knowledge and skills through lecture, discussion, and practical exercises. Each participant will receive a Pennsylvania resource notebook to assist with future cases.

## + Benefits of Trial Skills for Caseworkers

- **Understand Your Role** – Learn how to navigate each stage of the court process by understanding its purpose, procedures, and potential outcomes.
- **Turn Casework into Impactful Testimony** – Present your documentation and advocate for the agency's position with clarity and credibility.
- **Leave Court-Ready** – Implement effective strategies to prepare for and deliver persuasive testimony under both direct and cross-examination.

ABA staff will collaborate with county agency leadership to assess training needs, align content with county priorities, and develop resource materials to reflect state laws and county-specific procedures.



To bring this training to your county contact Rhonda Serrano at [Rhonda.Serrano@americanbar.org](mailto:Rhonda.Serrano@americanbar.org)