



**B. J. Walker, Commissioner**

Georgia Department of Human Resources • Division of Family and Children Services • Mark Washington, Assistant Commissioner  
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September 11th, 2009

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: RBWO Child Caring Institutions  
RBWO Child Placing Agencies

FROM: Kathy Herren   
DFCS Deputy Director

RE: Every Child, Every Month (ECEM) Initiative

As you are aware, Georgia is working to meet the new federal mandate requiring more frequent visits to children in care through its "Every Child, Every Month" (ECEM) Initiative. This initiative promotes placement stability and permanency through caseworker/child visits. By October 2011, 90% of children in foster care must be visited by their caseworkers on a monthly basis, with the majority of those visits occurring in the home. Georgia is well on its way in meeting this mandate through new and revised policy, timely data collection and reporting, and training and technical assistance.

Effective October 1, 2009, Private Providers who support us in supplying out-of-home placement for children in care and the associated case support responsibilities will share an equal role in meeting this initiative. **Purposeful Visits will be conducted by contracted agents who are Congregate Care Facilities (CCI) or Child Placing Agencies (CPA).** Each CCI or CPA must conduct at least one purposeful visit each calendar month with each child placed with their agency. These visits must conform to the purposeful visit policy and practice. Overall, this in-home visitation requirement is in line with your current oversight and expertise.

**Documentation of the Visits**

Please ensure that the completed purposeful visit documentation form is completed and received by the child's SSCM via email **within 48 hours of a visit completion, as well as added to the child's file each month.** The documentation must be input into the DFCS SHINES system within 72 hours of the actual visit's completion by the SSCM. It is recommended that an agency set a target to complete a purposeful visit no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> calendar day of each month. This effort will support us all in meeting our visitation and documentation goals each month.

## **Training**

There are five two-day sessions around the state, open to designated trainers from each agency, who will receive preparation and materials necessary to train staff to perform and document purposeful visits. The trainings are limited to one person per agency. These trainings will ensure that all of Georgia's private providers obtain targeted support in the completion of these monthly purposeful visits. There is no cost for the training. Each participant will be given a train-the-trainer manual and a master copy of all the presentation and resource files, and CEUs will be available at no cost. ***A registration form with details is attached and needs to be returned by September 16.***

## **Attachments**

The following supportive documentation has been attached to this communication for your guidance and use:

- The current Social Service policy addressing Purposeful Visitation Requirements and supportive references. See <http://www.odis.dhr.state.ga.us> for this and all policies for the Division of Family and Children Services.
- Case Manager/Child Visit Documentation Form (with embedded practice guidance and requirements notes).
- Completed Example of a Case Manager/Child Visit Documentation Form.
- A summary of DFCS Policy, Practice and Responsibilities for the Every Child Every Month Initiative.
- Revised Provider Monthly Summary report to be completed by each CCI & CPA and returned to each child's SSCM by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

Additional Tools can be located at <http://www.pssfnet.com>. Click on Every Child Every Month (ECEM) Updates and Resources. This initiative will be included as a deliverable in the FY 2010 Room, Board and Watchful Oversight (RBWO) contract, effective October 1, 2009. The report templates and supportive documentation referenced in this communication will also be added to the DFCS RBWO Provider website at <https://www.kidstarga.com/>.

In the meantime, should you have immediate questions or require guidance, please contact your Provider Relations Regional Specialist or call the main number at (404) 657-3572.