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Announcements: Commissioner's Message - Accountability and Transparency

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Title	Commissioner's Message - Accountability and Transparency
Body	<p>Dear Colleagues,</p> <p>Over the past several years, DCF has made considerable progress to improve our practice with women, children, youth, and families. As part of our efforts, we embarked on a plan to not only be more accountable as an organization, but more transparent, too. In many ways, this has allowed us to tell the DCF story of commitment, change, and success.</p> <p>As we continue our journey, we are making more data available to the public that shows both our strengths and our opportunities for improvement. To advance this effort further, we have "refreshed" the data tab on our website so that information will be presented either through the framework of our strategic plan or in two new categories: the Federal Child and Family Services Review and Other Federal Performance Measures.</p> <p>If you visit the data tab section of our website's home page you will see some sections are under construction. However, links to the Federal Child and Family Services Review, Other Federal Performance Measures, and Continuous Quality Improvement are live.</p> <p>As an important next step in our effort to make more data available to the public, we will begin adding the <i>Commissioner's Dashboard</i> to our website.</p> <p>The <i>Commissioner's Dashboard</i> is a monthly report of selected data points that help us understand who we are serving and how we are doing. The dashboard reflects our work across the department. While much of the information is related to the Modified Settlement Agreement, there is information about our other work, too, including our Superstorm Sandy response efforts.</p> <p>The <i>Commissioner's Dashboard</i> is a point-in-time early snapshot of selected performance measures, and does not contain outcome data at this time. The purpose of tracking these performance measures is to monitor the day-to-day activities across the department. The dashboard will be posted on or about the 15th of every month, although the final data is not truly "settled" for several months. This means some numbers may change over time, and may differ somewhat from other finalized reports that capture a longer-term and more "settled" view of our work.</p> <p>We also plan to post the Monthly Screening and Investigation Report. This report contains seven tables and a chart that describes basic statistics related to Child Protective Services reports and Child Welfare Services</p>

referrals handled during the month by the State Central Registry (SCR). Data for the report comes from three sources: SCR Automatic Call Distribution System, Child Protection and Permanency Service Information System, and New Jersey SPIRIT. The tables include important explanatory notes to aid in understanding the tables.

In the coming weeks and months, we will also post the County Inter-agency Coordinating Council dashboard, which provides a point-in-time snap shot of the work of our Children's System of Care and their partners. We will also begin posting specific programmatic data to the other areas on our website still under development.

I hope you will take time to review the dashboard, understand it's benefits and limitations, ask follow-up questions, and develop a fuller understanding of how we are using data across the department to "track and adjust" our work with women, children, youth, and families.

Warm regards,
Allison

Allison Blake, PhD LSW
Commissioner
NJ Department of Children and Families

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