



Memorandum

To: All DCF Staff

From: Commissioner Vanessa Dorantes

Date: 8/30/2020

Re: Update on Department Operations and Weekly Video

August is ending and we are entering another month in this seemingly altered state of reality.

Click here for this week's video è [Commissioner's Weekly Video 8-30-20](#)

Tomorrow's edition of "**Spotlight on What's Right**" will highlight our 24/7 operations - Solnit South, Solnit North and The Careline.

Each has been presented with unique challenges during the pandemic. We are grateful of the leadership of **Dr. Frank Gregory, Dr. Brett Rayford** and **Lisa Daymonde** during these incredibly trying times.

Our foster parents play a critical role in the lives of children. To start this atypical school year, the Department is empowering foster parents to make the decisions on how children in their home will receive education. This is consistent with the *Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standards* already afforded to our dedicated foster parents. With 169 towns in CT operating within their own school district plans and School-of-Origin considerations, it is imperative that we play an active role in planning for the children in DCF care. (*This includes getting the School-of-Origin transportation requests in ASAP !*)



Every school-aged child in care must have a documented education plan specific to Fall 2020 in their LINK record.
Click here for the memorandum distributed late last week for further guidance => [2020/2021 Foster Family School Decisions.](#)



Effective 9/1/20, all children in the care and custody of the Department

can be the subject of the in-person visitation triage process. Please remember if all parties cannot reach agreement via the triage discussion, that case decision is to be reviewed by the Assistant Chief of Child Welfare and Director of Foster Care for resolution.

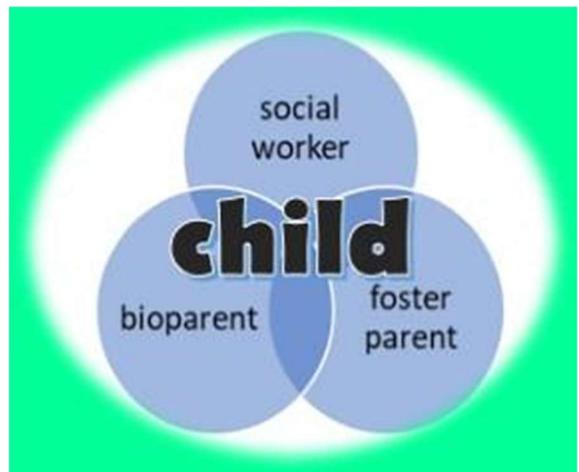
Children need to stay connected to their siblings and parents for optimal emotional stability. Virtual contacts have maintained connections. Having said that, the expectation is that all parties make an effort to approach in-person visitation discussions with detailed attention to public health considerations. Plans need to spell out approved participants, location, transportation, during-visit rules and conflict resolution/problem solving. In-person visitation "drama" should not add additional stress to children's lives. Purposeful planning can avoid most of those issues.

"Those who plan the battle are less likely to battle the plan..." L.Frey

Did you know?

September is also **Child Welfare Workforce Development** month.

It is a time to focus on how to support and recognize our most important asset... **YOU!**



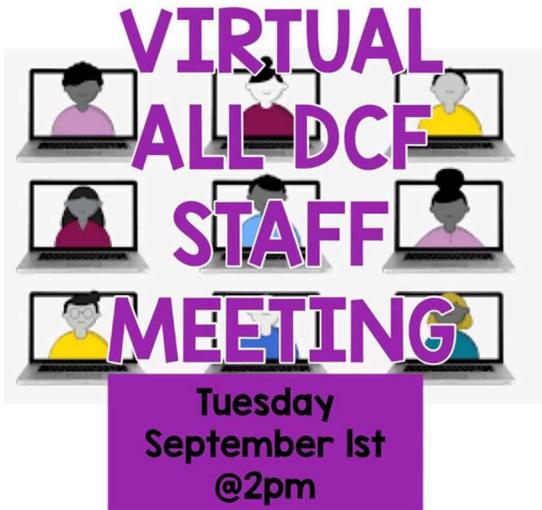
The Academy for Workforce Development has been on fire in the pivot to the virtual world! This month, AWD will be sending out **The WOW Factor**-- a weekly skill development newsletter. Whether you are a manager, supervisor, frontline, direct care, or support staff these tips will help develop new skills or enhance those you have. Investing in your **WOW** factor makes us stronger together!

During our interactions with each other, as well as with families or other stakeholders, personal protective equipment (PPE) is expected to be worn properly. Videos were developed by the AWD and our Health and Wellness division to provide guidance on the use of PPE.

Now, more than ever, our workplace can extend beyond an area office. If you are representing DCF in court, in someone's home or anywhere in the community, masks **must** be worn, at all times while performing functions that involve interaction with another person. Direct any questions about that to Human Resources.



Please take some time to view the PPE videos here=> [Protecting Yourself: How to put on and take off PPE](#) ; [Healthy Working: A Return to the Workplace](#)



Lastly... So excited for our first Virtual ALL STAFF meeting on 9/1/20 at 2:00 pm!

We want as many of our staff members on at the same time.

Please tell all of our co-workers who may not see this note to tune-in Tuesday:

We are also resuming our [Listening Tour](#) -- this time virtually -- picking up where we were interrupted in the spring for our central office divisions, facilities and regional offices.

This will be another opportunity to hear directly from **YOU!!!**

[Stay safe, stay healthy and stay DCF STRONG.](#)

Has one of our coworkers gone the EXTRA mile during this pandemic? Send a note to the DCF.COVID-19@ct.gov mailbox and tell us about them!



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