

Major Planning Area: Communications and Outreach

In order to inform and gain the support of, and input from, families, staff, policymakers, advocates, providers, sister agencies, and mandated reporters for DRS, a communications plan must be developed and followed. To the extent DRS is linked to existing networks and resources, assuring those relationships are well defined and nurtured is indispensable to success. Further, DRS is not just a “new way of doing business” - it represents a new approach to interacting with families and communities and a new opportunity to fundamentally shift resource allocation and re-orient the work in a more comprehensive and culturally competent manner.

Key Activities

- Develop, revise and implement Communications Plan
- Select individuals and organizations to conduct special outreach to, especially sister agencies and policymakers.
- Develop communication materials in support of DRS--for both the planning and implementation phases.
- Develop Communication Teams consisting of DCF staff, family members or advocates and representatives from the provider community to help promote DRS.
- Develop DRS Family Brochure to be used for general education and awareness.

Leadership

- 1) DCF DRS Internal Workgroup-in consultation with the Commissioner will assist in the development and execution of the communications plan.

Status

Communications Plan issued—contains two phases and proposed key audiences and messages.

An overview Power Point has been established and presented in a number of settings.

Proactively identify community leaders and organizations to conduct outreach.

Sample brochures from other jurisdictions are being requested through the National Resource Center.

Communication teams have been selected and training was conducted on 6/23/08 with a second session held on 7/3/08.

All communication materials have been developed and centralized calendar of DRS events and activities has been established.

Several public forums for DRS have been held throughout the state and DCF presented at the Child Poverty Council in September 2008.

Held RFI Forum on 10/29/08 to solicit final feedback from public.

Next Steps

Update Communications Plan--key meetings for early 2009 include:

Department of Social Services
Office of Policy and Management
Key Legislative Leaders

Longer term consideration should be given to the development of a DRS Family Brochure that outlines the parents' rights and responsibilities under the DRS model. Should be distributed for input to the family advocacy community and DRS Steering Committee.