

## Tracking of Adopted Children after finalization

Statewide Automated System: Florida Safe Family's Network, FSFN, will allow post adoption service cases to be opened beginning with a new release in this summer, August or September. The post adoption services case will document:

- Adopted child for whom services is requested
- Adoptive parent(s) who request and identified the service needs
- Services provided
- How case management services are provided
- Some costs related to service provision will be documented

Disruptions: (prior to finalization) Florida Administrative Rule, 65C-16.010(4)(d), requires that the counselor document a disruption summary within 10 days of the disruption. The summary must include a comprehensive assessment of the reasons for the disruption, service needs of child and family and the specific strengths that will be needed in a subsequent adoptive family.

Dissolutions: (after finalization) Only the families who continue to reside in Florida and only the children who return to foster care will be known to the Department.

Can the Department track all dissolutions?

1. An adoption may dissolve in another state and the Department may or may not be notified by the other state.
2. An adoption may dissolve and the child is adopted by a relative, neighbor, or friend without intervention by the Department.
3. An adoption may dissolve after a child returns to foster care child and these will be known to the Department.

### Questions

1. Does tracking disruptions describe performance?
2. Does tracking dissolutions describe performance (only dissolutions known to department can be included in tracking)?
3. Should the Department strive for zero disruptions and dissolutions?

National research has shown that there are three valid reasons for disruptions and dissolutions:

1. Something about the child was not known prior to the adoption that caused this match to not be successful.
2. Something about the family was not known prior to the adoption that caused this match to not be successful.
3. An act of God—child dies, parent becomes terminally ill, parent dies, etc.

Considerations: Child welfare adoption experts agree that if caseworkers strive for zero disruptions and dissolutions, no risks will be taken. Every adoptive placement has a degree of risk. A qualitative review of disruptions and dissolutions may be more informative than just tracking numbers.

Although these two groups would benefit from a “healthy” post adoption services program, thousands of families are struggling, hanging by a thread and remain committed to their children. These families need our focus regarding a statewide comprehensive approach for post adoption services.