

**INTEGRATING FAMILY SERVICES
Newsletter
April 2015
Vol.1 Number 2**



A Word from the Integrating Family Services Management Team

Spring has arrived and we hope you are enjoying it. Rather than hibernating during the just ending exceptionally long and cold winter, we were very busy moving IFS forward. Many regions of the state are now in discussions about integration in their areas, we have work groups beginning in May to move the 15-month work plan forward, AND our first Learning Community call occurred in March with over 55 people participating. We appreciate the many discussions we are being invited to and we greatly value and appreciate the dedication and commitment to this effort that is in abundance around the state.

Please feel free to reach out to any of us with questions, concerns or to share successes!

Cheryle Bilodeau, IFS Director

Cheryle.bilodeau@state.vt.us

Integrating Family Services Award!

This email message is from the Department of Human Resources Commissioner Spellman and arrived on Friday April 24:



I am pleased to announce that the recipient of the **2015 PSRW Cross-Agency Team new category award** is the **Integrating Family Services (IFS) Implementation Team**.

This award is in addition to the individual/team awards currently given to agencies/departments and recognizes great cooperation, program coordination and service delivery that enables greater success for our customers and enhances government efficiency as detailed in their nomination submission below:

Integrating Family Services (IFS) is perhaps the most ambitious system reform effort in AHS history. The AHS Secretary created an IFS infrastructure, the bedrock of which is the Implementation Team. The Implementation Team has been

charged with translating the IFS goals into practice by guiding changes in state and local delivery systems and state infrastructure. Meeting every other week for over two years, this dedicated team has demonstrated how to successfully integrate complex service systems in ways previously unimagined. This team has consistently displayed effective team work, a clear focus on children's and family's needs, and mutual accountability. This unprecedented effort has recently accomplished the consolidation of four separate departments' forms and processes into a single standardized approach.

Pilot projects implementing payment reform are operating in 2 areas (Franklin/Grand Isle and Addison Counties). Data is demonstrating success through providing more targeted and integrated services resulting in the avoidance of crisis services for children and families.



(IFS Implementation Team members, from left to right: Reba Porter, Jill Evans, Diane Bugbee, Alicia Hanrahan, Heather McLain, Carolyn Hatin, Barb Joyal, Lily Sojourner, Terri Edgerton, Cheryle Bilodeau, Laurel Omland & Susan Coburn)
(Missing members: Jennifer Garabedian, Amy Danielson, Tricia Tyo, Monica Ogelby & Renee Kievit-Kylar)

The **IFS Implementation Team** will join Vermont's celebration ceremony honoring our outstanding state employees and teams on Tuesday, May 5 at Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

The IFS Website has been LAUNCHED!

Check it out - Click [here](#) to find:

- How you can describe IFS if you only have three floors in an elevator with someone,
- Information on accountability measures,
- Links to documents such as the strategic & work plan, the 8 Elements of IFS, PowerPoint presentations and much more!

Guiding Principles

After robust discussion and input from stakeholders across the state (we sent out a survey and over 100 people responded with their thoughts!) we have finalized the Guiding Principles for Integrating Family Services. Please [click here](#) to read them in detail!

Practice Highlights from the Field

Addison - started IFS in their community on September 1, 2011 with IFS grants to CSAC (Counseling Service of Addison County) and the Parent Child Center of Addison County)

Franklin/Grand Isle - started IFS in their community April 1, 2014 with IFS grant to NCSS (Northwestern Counseling and Support Services) **Happy One Year Anniversary!!!!**

I. IFS Early Implementer Practice Highlight from Addison County - By Cheryl Huntley

A primary focus for Addison County in the last year has been the development of interagency/school training on family focused/strength-based care and effective teaming. We feel it is important to explicitly train staff to build and maintain a culture of collaboration. Therefore, we have provided two different all day training's on the values and behavior associated with positive work with families and team meetings, training a total of 80 staff so far with plans to continue this work. The training days have helped us to realize how many times the issues that emerge in integrating services are really about teaming practices. We have identified future training needs around facilitation skills, types of team meetings and use of different teaming structures, the role of advocacy, and the need for direct communication and transparency. Talking to each other and proactively addressing "the space in between us" can help to make Integrating Family Services successful.

II. IFS Early Implementer Practice Highlight from Franklin/Grand Isle - By Todd Bauman

The flexibility of Integrating Family Services funding is allowing Franklin and Grand Isle counties to develop capacity to provide Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training to the community. YMHFA training provides information and intervention strategies to help people be more comfortable talking about mental health issues. It is based in the premise that, like physical health first aid, communities will be stronger if everyone is educated about mental health issues. Northwestern Counseling & Support Services provided two community training's in January and February. These two training's certified a collective of 31 new Youth Mental Health First Aiders. February's training certified 19 community service providers working with youth in Franklin/Grand Isle County, including ten members of the Abenaki community. Feedback from both training's has supported the YMHFA innovative to continue to grow within our community. In the upcoming months three training's are scheduled within the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union which will certify 48 new Youth Mental Health First Aiders in the Enosburg/Richford communities.

Have you been wondering what it means for Children's Integrated Services (CIS) with IFS moving forward?

CIS plays an important role in the early childhood system of care, and CIS will continue to be one of the important foundational elements of IFS. The CIS framework and delivery structure will remain intact, and it will be enhanced with the development of integrated services for children up to age 22 and their families. We know regions have invested a great deal of energy and resources (beginning in 2005) into creating a seamless early childhood system of care—this foundational work is what IFS will continue building on; IFS moving forward does not mean CIS is going away! To understand the relationship between CIS and IFS consider this analogy. A private medical practice shifts to providing supports and services in a larger hospital system. Patients continue to go where they have always gone for primary care. The practice continues to be accountable for care quality, and compliance with the requirements of payers (private and public) and medical practice standards. With the practice's integration with a larger hospital system, doctors/providers have increased access to the full system of care and coordination of care for complex health situations is improved. Just as the private provider practice remains intact within a larger health system, it is important to IFS' success that CIS continue to grow and mature within the IFS structure. Regions around the state have invested a great deal of energy and resources (beginning in 2005) into creating a seamless early childhood system of care—and this foundational work is

what IFS will continue building on. Nearly 40% of families continue to need supports after CIS ends and IFS will build on the foundation CIS has created so services and supports for all children up to age 22 will be integrated and seamless. CIS will continue to be part of the DCF-Child Development Division and IFS is lucky to have the entire team of 12 CIS staff co-located together to increase our collaboration and communication with each other. We are having regular meetings and ensuring areas such as population indicators, performance measures and the IFS and CIS manual are closely linked.

To learn more about CIS please visit their website at: <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cis>

What are the data telling us about early indicators for success for Integrating Family Services?

Click [here](#) to find out!

Learning Community Updates

(Next session)

*** May 26th, 12:00-1:00 - Topic is Payment Reform ***

Please contactCarolynn Hatin if you are interested in joining!

Carolynn.Hatin@state.vt.us

802-871-3101

IFS and the Legislature

During this legislative session we have been invited and presented to the House Human Service Committee, Senate Education Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee. We would like to express our special thanks to Charlie Biss (DMH), Cheryl Huntley (Addison) and Todd Bauman (Franklin/Grand Isle) for their testimony and involvement. It has been great to share with our legislators the work of IFS and the impact this is having on children, youth and families in Vermont. Both Senate committees seemed genuinely impressed with the work our community partners are doing to improve services and outcomes for children, youth and families.

IFS Milestones

Integrating Family Services has been busy since our last newsletter update. We have completed Quality Case Reviews in both of the IFS regions. This was the first integrated quality case review to occur with all of the AHS departments coordinating for the review AND using an integrated tool for the file reviews. The regions have received their reports from the review and we all learned a great deal from this process in how to view continuous quality improvement in a more integrated way!