



Communications Office to Get News out in a Hurry

News Flash, newest communication tool for DHS staff

DHS News Flash is the Department's new, in house news vehicle to close the communications loop. In an agency this large,

Flash will serve as the Communication Office's real-time update tool.

In addition to printed copies, news tidbits from each edition's stories will soon scroll along the bottom of the DHS Central Homepage. Current and past editions will also be available at DHS Central within the forthcoming Communications Page.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of *DHS News Flash* will be the role that employees from every level of the organization can play. Consider yourself a contributing editor and send us a story idea or a news update. Each suggestion will be reviewed, and when appropriate reported in an edition of the paper.

Submitting ideas will be easy, just click on the *News Flash* link on the revised DHS Central homepage (to be launched in January) and fill in the form or send an email to ted.qualli@phila.gov with a subject heading of News Flash.

Annual Treatment Fair Another Success

Providing attendees with an opportunity to talk to operators of treatment facilities, this year's Treatment Fair, held on December 2 had over 15 provider agencies on hand to answer questions, distribute resources and facilitate productive discussions with fellow professionals.



We would like to send a special thank you to Program Administrator, Carla Sanders and Clerk Typist, Jacqueline Drinks for their hard work in coordinating this year's fair.

word of mouth, newsletters and emails don't always get the job done. To help bridge this communications divide, *DHS News Flash*, a bi-weekly news source, to be issued every other Friday—and whenever departmental news breaks—will feature a variety of DHS news topics that affect everyone, at every level of the agency.

As our newsletter *DHS In Motion* implies, this is an agency on the move, and while a new **monthly** printing schedule for 2004 will help to inform DHS staff, other city agencies and our provider community about global projects, *DHS News*

Commissioner's Court Reform Update

The staff of the Department of Human Services (DHS) has a vision for Philadelphia's children in placement. This vision is simple - finding permanent, loving homes - permanency - in a timely manner for our children. As we wind down the final days of this year and reach the midpoint of Mayor Street's administration, DHS' vision continues to crystallize, and with the constant support of an administration focused on children and child welfare, we stand ready to build upon recent successes, look forward to addressing existing challenges and confronting new ones as we embark on the next four years.

This year's Federal Government Child and Family Services Review on

Title IV-E services for children in placement noted our many positive efforts concerning the safety of children while also identifying several areas regarding permanency where improvement is still needed.

As our permanency vision continues to grow, I am confident that through the commitment of our staff and the pace and quality of our permanency reform agenda, we will address these concerns, and continue to raise the bar for child welfare organizations nationwide.

As we near the end of the first year of Performance Based Contracting (PBC) for foster care - a major reform providing financial incentives to the foster care

agencies achieving permanency for children, the statistics are promising.

During the first three months of PBC implementation (March 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003), the number of children achieving permanency nearly doubled when compared to the same timeframe in 2002. In addition, we achieved a record number of finalized adoptions last year, 654, and the numbers this year continue to be encouraging.

We have also implemented Subsidized Permanent Legal Custodianship (SPLC) as a third permanency option for those children who cannot be timely reunified with their parents, where adoption is not appropriate, and where DHS child