

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

MEMORANDUM**What's Inside:**

Introduction of new Handbook for Parents of Children in Foster Care

TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS, AND CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: PAULA NEESE, INTERIM DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION OF HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

REFERENCE: CHILDREN'S DIVISION

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to introduce the new CS-304, Handbook for Parents of Children in Foster Care and policy regarding its use. The Handbook is a replacement for the previous CS-304, Information for Parents of Children in Foster Care brochure. This Handbook is intended to be more comprehensive than the brochure and addresses item WB1.18.3 of the Division's Program Improvement Plan. A group of staff from around the state first met in September 2005 to begin work on this project. The group made its recommendations for the Handbook which was then sent to six circuits across the state to be piloted. Feedback was gathered from staff in these circuits and surveys were provided for parents to complete. The Handbook is a result of these efforts.

The Handbook is a packet of information to be given to parents or guardians when a child is removed from their home. This packet should include the Know Your Rights brochure (CS-132) and the Child/Family Health and Development Assessment (CW-103). Staff may include other information in the packet that is specific to their circuit. It is also recommended that calendars be included in the packets, if possible. Staff is also encouraged to provide parents with a copy of their business card, if available.

The packet should be given to parents at the time of the 24 hour meeting between the FCOOHC worker and family. The worker should explain that the packet is designed to help the family understand what it means to have a child in Division custody and the process for achieving permanency for that child. Staff do not have to go over the packet page by page with the family as this may be too much information to process during the 24 hour meeting for both the parent and worker. It is important that staff show them the information that is contained in the packet and assure that the parent or guardian knows to contact the worker if they have questions about what is in the packet.

