

<h1 style="margin: 0;">ACF</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Administration for Children and Families</p>	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Administration on Children, Youth and Families	
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	<b>3. Originating Office:</b> Children’s Bureau	
	<b>4. Key Words:</b> Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems (SACWIS); National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)	

### PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

**TO:** State SACWIS Project Managers, State Information Technology Executives, Independent Living Coordinators, and Other Interested Parties

**SUBJECT:** National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) reporting in a statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS) environment

**LEGAL & RELATED REFERENCES:** Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-66); Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-169); Title IV-E of the Social Security Act (the Act) at Section 474(a)(3) and Section 477; 45 CFR 1355.20; 45 CFR 1355.52-53; 45 CFR 1356.80-86; 45 CFR Part 95 – Subpart F; Action Transmittal ACF-OISM-001 (issued February 24, 1995); Program Instruction (PI) ACYF-CB-PI-08-05 (issued October 23, 2008); PI ACYF-CB-PI-09-01 (issued January 9, 2009)

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Program Instruction (PI) is to provide guidance on Federal requirements when implementing and reporting NYTD data collection with a SACWIS. It provides guidance on the NYTD requirements a SACWIS must support and outlines funding considerations when enhancing a SACWIS to meet NYTD requirements.

**BACKGROUND:** The regulation implementing NYTD requires that States engage in two data collection and reporting activities that will allow ACF to track independent living services and to assess the collective outcomes of youth. First, States must report biannually to ACF certain demographic data on each youth who receives independent living services paid for, or provided by the State agency that administers the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), regardless of the youth’s foster care status. Second, States must also collect demographic and outcomes information on youth in foster care at age 17, and follow up with these youth to collect additional outcomes information at ages 19 and 21.

**DISCUSSION:**

The PI contains four sections titled:

Section I: SACWIS and the collection and reporting of NYTD data on youth and the independent living services they receive

Section II: SACWIS and the collection and reporting of NYTD outcomes data

Section III: SACWIS enhancements

Section IV: Funding guidance

**Section I: SACWIS and the collection and reporting of NYTD data on youth and the independent living services they receive**

NYTD requires that States engage in two separate but related data collection activities. The first includes collecting and reporting information on youth and the independent living services they receive that are paid for or provided by the State CFCIP agency. States that have elected to build a SACWIS must incorporate NYTD data collection and reporting activities related to youth in foster care<sup>1</sup> into their SACWIS system.<sup>2</sup> The regulatory definition of foster care at 45 CFR 1355.20 includes children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility. This may include youth in foster and kinship care arrangements, and those in group and residential facilities.

A State's SACWIS must be enhanced to collect and manage all required NYTD case management data for youth in foster care including the following:

- case level demographic and other related information on youth specified in 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(1)—(19); and
- information on the independent living services specified in 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(20)—(33) that are provided by the State CFCIP agency, or purchased by the agency from contract providers, or provided by an agent of the State such as a foster parent.

Case management data for youth in foster care must be collected and maintained through the SACWIS.

NYTD data collection and reporting requirements apply not only to youth in foster care, but also to youth formerly in foster care and to other youth who receive independent living services but who have not been in foster care. States may enhance their SACWIS to support NYTD case management data collection and reporting for youth who are not currently in foster care or States may develop data collection strategies and

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<sup>1</sup> Foster care is defined at 45 CFR 1355.20(a)

<sup>2</sup> 45 CFR 1355.53(b)(3) and (4), and Action Transmittal ACF–OISM–001 (part IV) direct States to incorporate all case management and service functions for children in foster care into SACWIS.

instruments independent of SACWIS for these youth.

If a State collects NYTD data from multiple sources, the NYTD regulation requires that all applicable data be reported in a single record<sup>3</sup> and in a format that meets the specifications of the Children's Bureau (CB).<sup>4</sup> NYTD Technical Bulletin #1, issued February 19, 2010, outlines CB's specifications for data file format, including that each State must submit one NYTD data file that includes all required case-level data on every youth reported to NYTD<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, if a State uses multiple independent systems for NYTD data collection efforts, all information must be merged into one data file prior to transmission to ACF.

## **Section II: SACWIS and the collection and reporting of NYTD outcomes data**

For collection of NYTD *outcomes data* specified in 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(34)–(58) it is acceptable to use a data collection method external to the SACWIS, such as a web tool to collect survey responses from youth. States may also choose to enhance their SACWIS to collect *outcomes data* for youth in foster care. Outcomes survey data for youth who are not currently in foster care also may be captured in a SACWIS or an external survey tool.

It is important to distinguish between case management data, which must be collected and managed through the SACWIS and NYTD outcomes data collected through surveys that are part of or external to SACWIS. While the SACWIS must generate the case management-related NYTD data for youth in foster care, the State may combine the data collected and managed in their SACWIS with outcomes information collected outside of their SACWIS system to produce the NYTD report. The associated data merge may occur within or external to the SACWIS.

To meet SACWIS requirements regarding information collection and reporting of *case management data*, including information on services paid for or provided to youth in foster care, the NYTD user interface must be tightly integrated with SACWIS so that NYTD data is collected, maintained, managed and reported from the SACWIS application. While *outcomes survey data for youth in foster care* may reside in an external web tool, if the State elects to enhance the SACWIS to capture the outcomes survey data for *youth in foster care*, this data must also be collected, maintained, managed and reported from the SACWIS application.

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<sup>3</sup> 45 CFR 1356.83(f)

<sup>4</sup> 45 CFR 1356.82(a)(2)

<sup>5</sup> *NYTD Technical Bulletin #1: File Structure* can be obtained on the Children's Bureau website here: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/systems/nytd/resources.htm>

### Section III: SACWIS enhancements

SACWIS enhancements to support NYTD case management requirements should support State business practices and policies regarding the State's independent living program and provide appropriate automation to meet the requirements for "efficient, economical, and effective [program] administration."<sup>6</sup> Some examples of enhanced SACWIS support for NYTD include, but are not limited to:

- methods for foster care providers and other providers to report independent living services delivered to youth;<sup>7</sup>
- alerts/notifications to clients and staff to promote survey completion on/by youth in foster care according to the timeframes required by the NYTD regulation;
- processes to eliminate duplicate data entry of NYTD data;
- edit checks to support complete and accurate NYTD data;
- data quality reports to supplement the NYTD data compliance and the quality of information provided by the NYTD system portal or other tools provided by CB; and
- management reports that case workers, supervisors and administrators can use to monitor the information collected for NYTD purposes.

The examples listed above are illustrative, not prescriptive.

CB does not define specific strategies States must follow to satisfy the NYTD requirements for collecting and managing data while providing efficient, economical and effective program administration. States may implement a wide variety of approaches to collect and manage NYTD data within the confines of these general requirements.

It is acceptable for States to provide NYTD automation support, for example, by implementing a user interface (e.g., a web portal) to permit foster parents and other service providers to log the delivery of independent living services or to collect outcomes survey data for youth in foster care. To meet SACWIS requirements regarding information collection and reporting of *case management and service data* for youth in foster care, a NYTD user interface must be tightly integrated with SACWIS so that NYTD case management data is collected, maintained, managed and reported from the SACWIS application.

Please note that it is permissible to establish temporary staging tables associated to the SACWIS database for purposes of processing NYTD data prior to integration with SACWIS. Several States are designing web

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<sup>6</sup> 45 CFR 1355.52(a)(4) and Section 474(a)(3)(C)(iv) of the Act.

<sup>7</sup> Per 45 CFR 1356.81(a), States are to report all independent living services paid for or provided by the State Chafee Foster Care Independence Program agency.

portals that employ web services to integrate NYTD-related operations into SACWIS.

States with an open Advance Planning Document (APD) must describe their proposed NYTD solutions to CB via the APD. States with a closed APD contemplating NYTD enhancements whose cost will not exceed APD thresholds<sup>8</sup> are *encouraged* to provide a written description of plans to CB so they can be reviewed for compliance with SACWIS requirements.

#### **Section IV: Funding guidance**

If a State does have or is in the process of building a SACWIS:

- NYTD system *development* costs for enhancements to the SACWIS to support youth in foster care, up to the State’s established maximum age for title IV-E foster care payments as specified in their IV-E plan<sup>9</sup> (regardless of whether youth are title IV-E eligible), may be charged to title IV-E SACWIS.
- SACWIS *operational* costs for NYTD-related activities for youth in foster care up to the maximum State-defined age for title IV-E foster care payments (regardless of whether youth are title IV-E eligible) may be charged to title IV-E SACWIS.
- NYTD system *development and operational* costs to support youth not in foster care or in foster care but older than the State’s maximum age for title IV-E foster care payments are charged to Chafee funds, State-only funds, other applicable non-Federal funding source, or a combination of these funds.

If States develop title IV-E funded enhancements in their SACWIS to support NYTD data collection requirements for youth in foster care, and these enhancements will also meet NYTD requirements for youth not in foster care, only the *operational* costs to support youth not in foster care must be charged to Chafee, State-only funds, or another applicable non-Federal funding source.

Costs associated with developing and/or operating a data collection tool outside of SACWIS, such as an external web portal to capture and upload outcomes survey data, are not eligible for title IV-E funding.

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<sup>8</sup> 45 CFR 95.611(a)

<sup>9</sup> Public Law 110-351 The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 creates an option to extend eligibility to title IV-E foster care to age 21 when youth meet prescribed conditions for continued payments. Therefore the “maximum age for title IV-E foster care payments” in a State depends on whether or not the State elects to exercise this option. See Program Instruction ACYF-CB-PI-08-05 located at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws\\_policies/policy/pi/2008/pi0805.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/pi/2008/pi0805.htm)

If a State collects NYTD data from multiple sources, all information must be merged into one data file. The costs of developing a merge capability to combine data from SACWIS and non-SACWIS sources into a single data file are not claimable title IV-E expenditures. Such costs must be charged to Chafee, State-only funds or another non-Federal funding source.

**INQUIRIES:**

HHS – ACF/ACYF/CB/Division of State Systems

/s/

Bryan Samuels  
Commissioner  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families