



FIS Fact and Findings

By Christie Harper

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We are Live!

On Thursday, Jan. 5, the **Collabor8 Call Center** went live in *Sandusky County* and an additional three counties in the group, **Hancock, Marion and Morrow. Wood and Knox** went live in December and **Delaware** will join the group in February. At 8 am we had a call center agent on the phone ready to take a customer service call and three eligibility workers ready to interview customers who called the toll-free number. By the time the day was over, the call center had taken nearly **1000 calls** from residents across the six county region. Our eligibility workers averaged **5** interviews in their four hour shift.

As with any new system, there were some issues to be resolved and we didn't have access to *WorkFlow*, part of the new *OnBase* system, until later in the day, but overall, the day went smoothly. State employees, Northwoods employees and Kristin Campos, a worker from Wood County, were all here to assist. Most valuable, was our own **Marti Cummings**, as she had been in Knox County for their **Go Live day**, so she was prepared and knew what to expect. On Friday, we were on our own and we are now settling in and getting used to this method of interviewing and handling our case documentation.

Workflow, which is part of the project, is an electronic filing system and will replace a worker's pendaflex. Workers no longer have to keep track of applications by due date and follow up date. Rather, the applications are electronically tracked and move through the folders, telling workers each day what follow up is due and which

cases need to be processed. We think this will be very useful after we learn all the details of the system. We like the Virtual Print feature, which allows documents to be placed easily into *OnBase* without the cumbersome importing process.

In part, due to this project, **FIS** is doing some slight reorganization. **Janet Ramirez** and **Bethany Wilburn** have both accepted new positions as **FIS Aides**. We are pleased to have them in these positions. Soon, Janet and Bethany, along with Kira Pollock and Perla Monreal, our current aides, will be handling the incoming phone calls for the call center, as well as working our reception desk. They will answer customer inquiries and pass on information to the eligibility workers who will process the case changes. Those workers who are assigned to interviewing will be available on the phones for four hour shifts and the remainder of the day will be allocated to case processing.

Our methods may be changing, but our end job is still the same. **FIS** is still determining initial and ongoing eligibility for public assistance programs for our customers, although we now reach farther across the state, as we serve not only the customers of *Sandusky County*, but the entire **Collabor8** region.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DEVELOPINGS

By Janet Quaintance

It depends on whom you ask if there are places hiring or not. Some places are, some places are not according to different people. If you search on www.ohiomeansjobs.com, the *State's website* for job postings, you can find **717** jobs within a 20 mile radius of Fremont, Ohio. Some people disagree with that statement as they state those are not good paying jobs or those numbers are skewed. Well, that may be true. Good paying jobs are defined as what? The answer to that questions is different to many people. Some people see a good paying job as \$20+ per hour or a job that offers vacation pay or a 401K match. However, with the past few years of the economic trend, many Job Store customers see a good paying job as being able to get a job. Some of these folks have worked at their same job for 20 years making \$20+ per hour and were told, "sorry, we are closing the company". They have then sought employment making minimum wage or maybe \$10 per hour if they are lucky. So, when you ask if there are companies hiring today, maybe think twice before you blurt out that answer... because remember, it does depend on whom you are asking that question.

Some people are still seeking training after they have been displaced from their former employer. With all of the budget constraints and issues, short-term training is the focus. Short-term training is defined as training for a skill, credential or degree that will take less than 9 months for the candidate to

complete. There are a multitude of trainings that can be completed in such time; HVAC technicians, STNA's, LPN's, Truck Drivers, etc.

Some customers take less time as they previously started training and will finish now that they are no longer employed. Unless you are seeking a specialized degree such as a Physician, Attorney, Principal, etc., your focus on short-term training may be your best option at this time.

The Sandusky County Job Store has had the most customers complete the Customer Satisfaction Survey for the past several months! This survey is a chance for all customers who use the Job Store services to let us know what they think of their visits to the Job Store, customer service, and anything else in between. All counties that are under Area 7, the Workforce Investment Board for us, are tracked by the number of surveys completed. Congratulations to the Job Store and its Partners!

Last—but not least, many of you use the social media website, **Facebook**. Take time to check out *The Sandusky County Job Store* while you are on **Facebook**. We attempt to make posts daily that can benefit yourself or a loved one. We are attempting to get more "Likes" on our **Facebook** page and you can help us by searching and then clicking on "like"!

Child Support Chat

By Becky Bohn

Child Support Web Portal

A Child Support Web Portal was released right before the end of the year which will give our child support clients the ability to obtain case information, i.e. payment history, as well as to report information, i.e., information regarding an absent parent. A soft roll out approach is being utilized with the web portal currently being tested by child support employees who also have a child support case. With this approach, the system can be tweaked prior to making it available to all child support program participants.

Grand Jury

Cases were presented to the Grand Jury in December by *Attorney Dean Ross* which resulted in the indictment of **eight child support obligors**. These individuals owed a combined total of over **\$113,700.00**

Benefit Recovery

An indictment was previously received in August due to a F.I.S. customer's fraudulent receipt of food assistance and Medicaid benefits in the amount of **\$14,981**. The case was pending in court until November. At that time, the defendant pled guilty to the charges and has since agreed to the terms of the Diversion Program.

CSEA at a Glance...

The following statistics reflect information for 2011:

28,613 telephone calls were taken, **7,606** individuals were registered, and **\$304,307.64** was taken in payments at the Child Support front desk

\$122,988.50 was collected under the FIDM procedure

Genetic testing was completed for **322** individuals

Farewell to **Janet Ramirez** who joined the F.I.S. Division effective January 12, 2012



CHILDREN SERVICES By Dawn Ohms

Many of you are already familiar with the “*Choose Your Partners Carefully*” campaign. This campaign helped reach out to many families, organizations, and individuals to provide education on the importance of choosing safe caregivers for your children. After discussion with committee members it was decided to branch out and educate families on other areas of concern within the county. The committee has renamed itself the “*Child Safety Initiative*” in order to accommodate the new issues they will be tackling.

Recently, the committee has come up with information that will be sent in a newsletter to the Fremont Public School students. This information was collected to educate families on the dangers that can arise during the winter months and things to consider when children reach the age of sleepovers. Please take this information to share with your own families and clients.

Winter Safety Tips

- When using space heaters, ensure at least 3 feet of space between the heater and any furniture, curtains, blankets, pets and people.
- Never use an oven or range to heat your home.
- Fireplaces and wood burning stoves should be inspected by a professional each year, as well as the chimney for cracks, blockages and leaks. Make sure any build-up in the chimney is cleaned out that could start a fire.
- In case of a snow emergency, stock up on canned foods, a manual can opener, a battery-operated radio, bottled water, flashlights, batteries and blankets.
- Install at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home and inside or near sleeping areas.
- Install at least one Carbon Monoxide alarm near sleeping areas.
- Teach your children to stay off the ice on any pond, creek, or on the river.
- If the temperature outside is below freezing and your home has no heat, run water at a trickle to help prevent pipes from freezing and bursting.
- Store food outside in the snow if the power goes out.

- Use a flashlight instead of candles to avoid fire hazards.
- Limit the amount of time spent playing outdoors, bring children in periodically to warm up. Dress in layers and remove wet clothing immediately.
- Make sure to cover your child’s head, ears and hands in the cold temperatures.
- Do not permit children to dig snow tunnels or forts as they could collapse and bury them.

The WHO, WHAT, WHERE, & WHEN of Sleepovers

- #1 Build a relationship with the parents. Invite them to your home with their child. Take things slowly, initially having the children play together for a couple of hours and work up to spending the night.
- #2 Make sure your child is ready to spend the night. Prepare by talking to them about what to do if they need to contact you.
- #3 Develop a plan prior to your child going. Have a code word in the event they are feeling uncomfortable. If the code word is said during a conversation, the parent should be available to pick the child up if needed.
- #4 Communicate with the parent on things your child can or cannot do, or special needs.
- #5 Talk to others whose children have stayed with or know the family. Talk to the child.
- #6 Questions to ask the other child’s parents:
 - WHO is going to be at the home? Other children or friends?
 - Know the parents names, exchange numbers and addresses
 - Who will be transporting?
 - WHAT are the plans for the evening?
 - What should we pack; pillow, blanket? (this can give you an idea of where your child will be sleeping)
 - What kind of pets are in the home?
 - What types of video, computer games, or movies are in the home? Are children allowed on the computer or internet unsupervised?
 - WHERE will they be (is the family going anywhere to eat or shop?)

- WHEN should I bring them or pick them up?
- When is a good time to call and say good-night?
- When is bed-time? - Don’t be hesitant about expressing a desired bedtime for your child if you feel the need to do so. Some children need more sleep than others, and the overnight experience will not be pleasant for you or your child if somebody is tired and cranky the next day.

Other important questions to ask:

- Are there weapons in the home? If so, how are they secured and who has access to them?
- Will an older sibling babysit the children because a parent is working a night shift or leaving the home?
- Are the children allowed to play outside unsupervised?
- Do they have a pool? If so, are children allowed to swim unsupervised?

Other things to consider:

Does your child wet the bed or have night terrors?

Also, don’t be afraid to do criminal checks on those living in the home. It is important to know any criminal history of people living in the home where your child is staying overnight.

****Remember**, different things are appropriate at different ages. Supervision of older children is a little different than younger children. Children ages 10 and under need access to or direct supervision at all times. Children ages 11-12 can be left alone for short periods of time depending on their maturity. Children ages 13 and up mostly do not need a sitter. However, some children may need a supervisor if they have special needs. Parents must cautiously use their discretion and good judgment. It is the agency’s recommendation that no child be left unsupervised for extended amounts of time and definitely not overnight.**



2011 FOURTH QUARTER ANNIVERSARIES

October

Rikki Brown	5 years
Mary Lou Coe	5 years
Jodi Weltin	5 years
Crystal Vail	10 years
Lisa Mullholand	11 years
Deborah McGrath	11 years

November

Jason Pollick	7 years
Lori Hampshire	13 years
Randy Company	14 years
Lori Green	16 years
Nancy Grove	18 years
Mary Zimmerman	20 years
Luci Bowlus	22 years
Judi Simon	23 years

December

Davi Anderson	6 years
Rachel Calvillo	11 years

PERFECT ATTENDANCE FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER 2011

The following 11 employees used no sick leave during the Fourth Quarter of 2011

Melanie Allen
Becky Bohn
Rachel Calvillo
Marti Cummings
Michael Fuller
Nancy Grove
Nancy Haley
Sharon Ochs
Paula Olds
Diana Quintero
Karen Riegel



By The Numbers....

\$12,499,817.30

The amount of Child Support collected in 2011

4519

The number of FIS 7200 Applications that were scanned in 2011.

4630

The number of CSEA Employer Verifications that were scanned in 2011.

1183

The number of Referral- Info calls for PCSA scanned in 2011.

1622

The average daily hits to the website in 2011.

51

The number of cases that were opened for ongoing services in Children Services during 2011

18

The number of children that were taken into custody during 2011

184

The number of children that the ongoing unit worked with on an ongoing basis throughout 2011

3668

The number of Job Store customer visits the First Quarter of 2012

Quote of the Quarter

If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got.



MIS Marti's Megabytes

Our new **video conference equipment** has been installed. There is no login. All you have to do is wake it up and your scheduled video conference should start on its own. It is very easy to use!

The **new phones** are here! They may take a little to get used to, but calls seem much clearer than before. Our customers are slowly adjusting to our auto attendant answering the calls.

Collabor8 has gone Live! We are still adjusting to the changes, but everything seems to be running.

The **State** will be here on January 13, 2012 to check our printer situation since they changed the ratio to 10 users to 1 printer. It looks like ALL networked printers count, so they will be here to look at our setup.