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## Illinois DCFS joins program to expedite adoptions for children moving across state lines

SPRINGFIELD, Ill – The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) today announced that it has been selected to participate in an interstate program that will reduce the amount of time children spend in foster care and help them find permanent, loving homes with families living in other states.

The National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) project uses a web-based system to improve efficiency in the administration of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), the state-by-state agreement that governs foster care and adoption placements when a child is placed in the care of a family in another state.

“I often remind our staff that we need to operate with a sense of urgency, using ‘kid time’ instead of ‘adult time’, but sometimes we are hampered by out-of-date technologies and procedures,” said George H. Sheldon, Acting Director of Illinois DCFS. “Occasionally a child’s permanent home will be found across state lines, but the current, antiquated process can drag the child’s final move on for months. Using an electronic system to instantly transfer data from one state agency to another, instead of the current fax and mail methods, will increase efficiencies, remove barriers and speed up placements for kids when their forever family is in another state.”

Illinois is the first state to be selected for the implementation phase of NEICE, joining pilot program participants Florida, Indiana, Nevada, South Carolina, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia. Preliminary data analysis suggests that information is processed more quickly and efficiently, which is improving outcomes for children and saving taxpayer dollars.

Other program partners include the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC), American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), Children’s Bureau, Tetrus and Walter R. McDonald & Associates (WRMA), Inc.

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DCFS receives, investigates and acts upon a report of child abuse or neglect every five minutes. Tens of thousands of children are safer thanks to those who call our Child Abuse hotline, 1-800-25-ABUSE (252-2873) each year. Working together, we can ensure a safe, loving home and brighter future for every child.

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