WARREN COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
Improving the Service Array in Child Welfare: Strategy That Can Be Used in Rural Jurisdictions
Tuesday, April 26, 2005, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EASTERN

Topic
The Service Array in Child Welfare: A Process for Assessment & Resource Development

Rationale for the Project
Jurisdictions (states, state regions, counties, cities, neighborhoods) are required to have a continuum of services to meet the individual needs of children and families served by their child welfare system.

Mississippi Involvement
The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Division of Family and Children’s Services was preparing for the Child and Family Service Review. One area of concern was the state’s development of a plan to expand accessibility and improve the quality of the services provided to children and families in the child welfare system. Henceforth, the Service Array in Child Welfare project was implemented prior to the review.

Project Homestead Model
Project Homestead is a statewide initiative funded through the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children’s Service Prevention Unit. The goal of the project is to form community partnerships (county task forces) to help identify resources for at risk families and children.

Project Homestead Role
Since many counties had existing Project Homestead task forces in place, MDHS, Division of Family and Children’s Services decided it would be beneficial and less time consuming to utilize the Project Homestead Coordinators and their (active) task forces to help identify participants, organize, and assist with implementing the service array process.

Mississippi Counties Identified by MDHS, Division of Family and Children’s Services
Adams, Hinds, and Warren County

Service Array County Highlight: Warren County, Mississippi
WARREN COUNTY
(Mississippi)
Community Service Inventory

✓ Key Participants
✓ Resource Plan
✓ Time Frames
✓ Action Step
✓ Benchmarks

Project Homestead of Warren County
Chunda Longino, Regional Network Coordinator (601) 855-5853
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS
Key Participants in the Process

Represented in process:

- Public and private sector providers of child welfare services
- Providers of mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence services
- Educators
- Court, legal, and law enforcement officials, including CASA volunteers
- Representatives of the business, faith, and labor communities

Not represented in process:

- Health care providers
- Consumers (clients, former clients, foster parents, birth parents)
- Other key providers (housing, food resources, transportation, etc.)
## RESOURCE PLAN

**Utilize Existing Community Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>SPONSOR</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER</td>
<td>Compulsory School Attendance</td>
<td>Vicksburg/Warren School Attendance</td>
<td>Warren County Court House</td>
<td>Joyce Edmunds</td>
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<td>(601) 634-4812</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER</td>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>Haven House</td>
<td>Haven House</td>
<td>Lark Johnson</td>
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<td>(601) 638-0555</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOVEMBER</td>
<td>River City Family Festival</td>
<td>City of Vicksburg Project Homestead</td>
<td>Vicksburg City Auditorium</td>
<td>Diane Smith</td>
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<td>(601) 631-3769</td>
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<tr>
<td>DECEMBER</td>
<td>Christmas and Beyond</td>
<td>City of Vicksburg</td>
<td>To Be Announced</td>
<td>Diane Smith</td>
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<td>(601) 631-3769</td>
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<tr>
<td>JANUARY</td>
<td>Effective Parenting Skills</td>
<td>Vicksburg/Warren School District</td>
<td>Grove Street Parent Center</td>
<td>Lois Brown</td>
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<td>(601) 631-2887</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEBRUARY</td>
<td>Date Rape</td>
<td>Vicksburg Police Dept. Warren Co. Sheriff’s</td>
<td>Vicksburg High School</td>
<td>Chief Tommy Moffett</td>
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<td>(601) 636-4512</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARCH</td>
<td>Anger Management</td>
<td>City of Vicksburg Youth Services</td>
<td>King’s Community Center</td>
<td>Tyrone Caldwell</td>
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<td>(601) 634-4546</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL</td>
<td>Child Abuse Prevention</td>
<td>Child Abuse Prevention Center</td>
<td>Child Abuse Prevention Center</td>
<td>Shaheena Haque</td>
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<td>(601) 634-0557</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY</td>
<td>Teen Pregnancy</td>
<td>Vicksburg/Warren School District</td>
<td>To Be Announced</td>
<td>Shaheena Haque</td>
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<td>(601) 634-0557</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNE</td>
<td>Fatherhood Initiative</td>
<td>Vicksburg Family Development</td>
<td>Vicksburg Family Development Center</td>
<td>Rev. Troy Truly</td>
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<td>(601) 638-1336</td>
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<td>JULY</td>
<td>Guiding Youth Potential</td>
<td>Jackson Street Community Project</td>
<td>Jackson Street Community Center</td>
<td>Vickie Bailey</td>
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<td>(601) 631-3723</td>
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<td>AUGUST</td>
<td>Child Support Enforcement</td>
<td>MS Department of Human Services</td>
<td>To Be Announced</td>
<td>Patricia Oluade</td>
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<td>(601) 359-4875</td>
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</table>
PARENTING SKILLS
Time Frames

SEPTEMBER
Compulsory School Attendance

AUGUST
Child Support Enforcement

OCTOBER
Domestic Violence

JULY
YOUTH SPORTS CAMP

NOVEMBER
River City Family Festiva

JUNE
Fatherhood Initiative

DECEMBER
Beyond Christmas

MAY
Teenage Pregnancy

JANUARY
Parenting Resolutions

APRIL
Child Abuse Prevention

FEBRUARY
Dating Guidelines

MARCH
Anger Management
ACTION STEP
Utilize Vicksburg TV 23
Public Broadcast: "PARENT TOOLBOX"

It Doesn’t Take A Lot Of Money

To Form Community Partnerships

To Assist Families and Children
One of the “easiest” discoveries during the review process was that parents were not able to provide safety, permanency, and well being to their children without the help of community resources.

Everyone agreed that there was a “wealth” of community resources available in the community. However, many parents were not aware of them, were not comfortable visiting the locations, or simply did not have (affordable) transportation.

The first objective was to identify critical areas parents needed to improve upon in parenting their children in Warren County, Mississippi. Second, to identify the agency or individual that would be able to provide the services identified. Third, due to the lack of affordable transportation in Warren County, MS, how to make the resource information available to the parent.

It was decided that members of Project Homestead and their existing community partners would identify agencies and individuals to volunteer to help with educating parents on the community resources available in Warren County, Mississippi. [Review Resource Plan]

A schedule was developed to implement resource information on the “critical” issues that were identified. Many of the topics were selected from the basis of national and statewide initiatives already targeted each month. [Review Time Frames]

The program initiative was titled “PARENT TOOLBOX”. There was pre-advertising done by the program sponsor and community partners. An address, contact person, and phone number was provided at the end of each segment. All participants gave a thorough overview of services provided by their organization.

Since affordable transportation was a major issue of concern, the City of Vicksburg TV 23 volunteered to (go onsite) and tape a one hour segment of programming. Each program would air on Vicksburg TV 23 for the full month at various time slots to provide parents the opportunity to view the broadcast. [Review Action Step]

Many agencies reported that they had received an increase in requests from parents/consumers/professionals in the community seeking further assistance. Also, many more individuals began to visit the agencies personally.

The “biggest” benchmark is that this program was implemented in August of 2002, and even though it is not currently called the “Parent Toolbox”, Vicksburg TV 23 continues to broadcast community programs that help to identify resources for at risk families and children.

As a result of a change in county selections for my region, I have not worked in Warren County, MS for some length of time. However, upon my return in October 2004, Project Homestead has partnered to air “Blue Ribbon Campaign” Artwork Contest Recognition Program. Youth from Warren Central Junior High produced artwork for posters, bookmarks, and billboards to assist with child abuse prevention awareness for the month of April. All About Youth (a teen summit on teenage pregnancy, STD’s, substance abuse, etc.) has been video taped for broadcasting. There will be a program taped on April 12th regarding Youth and the Internet (as it relates to child abuse awareness). The Mississippi Attorney General’s office staff will produce the program information.