

## **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 child 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**

Chunda Longino, Regional Network Coordinator, Hinds and Warren County (601) 855-5853

# 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

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

# PARENTING SKILLS

## Time Frames

**SEPTEMBER**

**Compulsory School Attendance**

**AUGUST**

**Child Support Enforcement**

**JULY**

**YOUTH SPORTS CAMP**

**JUNE**

**Fatherhood Initiative**

**MAY**

**Teenage Pregnancy**

**APRIL**

**Child Abuse Prevention**

**MARCH**

**Anger Management**

**OCTOBER**

**Domestic Violence**

**NOVEMBER**

**River City Family Festiva**

**DECEMBER**

**Beyond Christmas**

**JANUARY**

**Parenting Resolutions**

**FEBRUARY**

**Dating Guidelines**



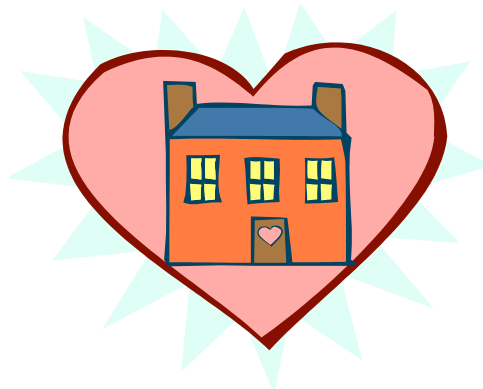
**ACTION STEP**

**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**

## BENCHMARKS

- 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 12<sup>th</sup> regarding Youth and the Internet (as it relates to child abuse awareness). The Mississippi Attorney General’s office staff will produce the program information.