



It is time to generate an Accurate Timeline Report

by Rachael Spanjer

'Round, and 'round, and 'round we go, and where we stop nobody knows. This expresses the dilemma experienced over the past several years by your Technical Assistance Work Group (TAWG) in reaching a decision on how best to measure timelines on the case management continuum. The purpose of looking at timelines is to help identify service gaps in the Child Find system across the state. However, communities differ in the services they provide and also in the way the service providers are networked. There is no "one way" to look at the order in which events may occur. It is difficult even trying to define events in a uniform way statewide. Yet, we need to have some means of measuring the degree to which services are delivered to children with disabilities in a timely and efficient fashion.

TAWG has attempted to delineate specific key events in the child find continuum of services that would be logical points of measurement. They

are referral, screening, screening final result, request for evaluation, evaluation final result, eligibility determination, service planning, and service initiation. On the face of things, the progression through those key events looks fairly logical and simple to define. However, it is not. In attempting to analyze our CHRIS data we find that not only are the events themselves open to a variety of definitions (what point of contact is "referral"?), but also the order in which the events occur may vary, depending on circumstances (evaluations that precede screening, or even referral). Thus we have a collision between our need and desire to document our case coordination and management and our desire to analyze our service system in order to make it more efficient and effective.

The latest, and so far the most workable solution the work group is currently deliberating is one that would measure the lapsed time between paired events on the continuum, with the clock being reset each time there is an event that occurs out of order

in a given sequence. The sequence being considered is the sequence in which the events are ordered in CHRIS. That sequence of events is referral, referral out, screening requested, evaluation requested, ESE staffing, service plan, and inactive. Within each of those events there may be other dates that can be included in the pairing, such as screening final result, evaluation completed, service initiated, and others.

TAWG is currently open to input on which events should be paired, in what order, which interim-events should be included, which points in the continuum that should be better clarified or defined, and any other ideas users of CHRIS data might have that would assist us in coming to a final resolution.

(continued on pg. 3)

Inside this issue

- 2 Technical Notes
- 3 TAWG News
- 4 CHRIS Training



Technical Notes

Do You Need a New Uninterruptible Power Supply?

Every server or stand alone workstation should have an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). An UPS simply put, is a battery backup. It is used to provide "short term" power to your computer in case of a power glitch or short-term outage. The average time an UPS runs is usually between 5 and 15 minutes depending on the size of the battery included in the UPS. Its main function is to give the users enough time to exit the system and shut down properly. Since UPS runs basically on batteries, it does not last forever. The average life expectancy is approximately 3 to 6 years. This expectancy varies depending on how many power outages and brownouts the equipment has suffered. It is important to know if your UPS needs to be replaced, and as some centers would tell you it is much better to know this before you have a malfunction.

How to know if your UPS needs to be replaced:

- Some UPS' have a red "Replace Battery" light, which illuminates when the battery needs replacement.
- Have your site technician check your UPS software for a history of usage
- Test your UPS.

How to test your UPS:

Close all programs on the computer, including turning off FMserver. During testing an UPS, do not have anything plugged into it that would be damaged if not shut down properly.

- Some UPS' have a "Test" button which simulates a power outage and will shut down whatever is plugged into it if it needs to be replaced.
- If your UPS does not have a "Test" button, then the only way to test the battery is by simulating a power outage. Unplug the UPS without turning the computer off. If your computer remains on, then your battery is fine.

If your UPS fails, it is time to change the battery or purchase a new unit. The type of UPS you choose, should be determined by what you are using it for. You will need a more powerful UPS for a server than for a stand alone workstation. The more powerful the UPS is, the longer it will run when the power is out.

If you are not sure what the best UPS is for you, please call the CHRIS Help Desk for assistance 1-800-231-5747.



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TAWG NEWS

*TAWG Schedule for the
Remaining School Year 99/00*
February 4, 2000
April 7, 2000
June 2, 2000 (with Advisory Board)

Our last TAWG meeting took place November 19, 1999 in Tampa. Primary issues covered were Timelines Report, training plans, and site updates. This meeting included the TAWG Advisory Board who welcomed two new members: Alina Diaz and Yvonne Gray.

Alina Diaz

Alina is the coordinator at FDLRS-South. She has been with FDLRS-South since 1981. She started as a psychologist, became a Child Find Specialist and is now a Coordinator. Somehow, in between those years, she also found time to practice law. As one of the original CHRIS users, she is excited to become actively involved again with CHRIS by participating in the TAWG Advisory Board.



Alina Diaz & Yvonne Gray

Yvonne Gray

Yvonne is the ESE Director in Escambia County. Prior to becoming ESE Director in 1994, she was Program Planning Coordinator when the CHRIS System began. From the district perspective, Yvonne has always been very supportive of CHRIS and believes it provides much needed information for program planning. To quote Yvonne, "CHRIS is awesome! Being a member of the CHRIS TAWG Advisory Board allows me the opportunity to have an impact into providing services for exceptional students."

Accurate Timeline Report

(cont. from cover story)

There has been some discussion of developing a small (10 or fewer) task force of CHRIS users to help TAWG reach a decision. Their task would be to represent a broad constituent who could come to a consensus on definitions and order of events. The decisions would be applied statewide to the data entry in CHRIS. Another strategy is having a statewide Child Find meeting and reaching consensus in that forum. If you have a preference for either of these strategies, or would like to propose another strategy, please send your comments prior to the next TAWG meeting to annie@miami.edu or Fax: 305-284-1632.

Q. & A.

REAL QUESTIONS FROM REAL USERS

Q.

What is the difference between FMSERVER and SERVER?

A.

SERVER is a computer to which several users have simultaneous access on a continuous basis. FMSERVER (FileMaker Pro Server) is a software program installed on the server to help increase the network performance in executing the FileMaker Pro files.

Q.

I know that at CHRIS training I learned only to use the CHRIS menu line. When can I use the FileMaker menu line?

A.

The CHRIS program menu line is designed to run essential programs that will ensure data integrity. By using the FileMaker menu line, you bypass these important programs. Therefore, it is **never** recommended to use the FileMaker menu line when using CHRIS.



CHRIS Training: *Coming Soon to a Center Near You!*

We are always looking at new options to make the training as accessible and useful as possible. There have been several requests that we take the training on the road in a more "Regional" fashion. Since many centers now have computer labs and facilities available, we propose the guidelines listed below for selecting the best location in each region.

Any center that is interested in hosting a two-day training session needs to meet the following requirements:

- Have appropriate number of trainees - optimal 8-12, minimum 6.
- Have appropriate number of computers in a laboratory.
- Set up the facility and coordinate among the trainees.
- Select two sessions most needed at location based on the interests of the participants.

Current training sessions available (select any two): New User Training, New/Refresher DBA Training, Reports Review, CHRIS Refresher and Review of New Features.

Training dates available: March 9-10; March 16-17; March 23-24; March 30-31. The March 30-31 session is available only in the southeast region. A form with the details has been sent to each center manager.



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