

BEST PRACTICES SUBMITTAL FORM
OCDA Fall Conference 2007

County: Union
Submitted By: Jill Ward
Best Practice: CSEA/Family Support Buddy System

Please Explain Your “Best Practice Procedure” And Summarize The Results Which Have Been Achieved Through This Process:

Please E-Mail Your Submittal Summary to Rob Pierson, Stark County CSEA via GroupWise or piersr01@odjfs.state.oh.us

The CSEA has implemented the “Buddy System” with the Family Support Unit (IM, CCN, and ERC). The “Buddy System” was set up as such: each employee in CSEA was matched up with an employee in the Family Support unit (a couple CSEA employees have two). Once paired, it was each worker’s responsibility to get in touch with their buddy to set up times they would meet and then report these times to the supervisor of their unit. They had to spend an entire day together, where the CSEA worker would spend ½ day in the Family Support unit and the Family Support worker would spend ½ day in the CSEA unit.

The CSEA worker was able to experience first hand the daily challenges of the Family Support unit. So many times we sit through trainings that tell us what the functions of the Family Support unit are, but never get to experience it first hand, hence a lot of the misconceptions and lack of communication between the different departments.

After they spent time in the other unit, workers were to submit to their supervisor three things that they learned and three questions that they still had about the work of the other unit. The supervisor of CSEA compiled the things learned from each CSEA employee and distributed to the entire unit to review. The CSEA supervisor then compiled the list of three questions from each CSEA employee and submitted to the supervisor of the Family Support unit to answer and vice versa. The list of questions from the Family Support unit was distributed to all CSEA staff and each CSEA employee was assigned several questions to answer for the Family Support unit. After the CSEA employees answered their assigned questions they reported their answers to the CSEA supervisor to compile all answers to give to the Family Support unit supervisor. Questions and answers were then disseminated to the workers as future reference. We have found that what one person learned may have been another person’s question, so the sharing of this information has been very helpful.

The person that you are teamed up with in the other unit is also the same person that you will contact throughout the year if you ever have any questions that involve that unit. This has created an environment of team work in the two units. So the “Buddy System” is more than a job shadowing experience it is an on-going process with the units on a daily basis.

This process is repeated two times per year. We have just finished our first round (so this is still new) but already we can see the results. Each unit is more aware of what the other does on a daily basis and there is more respect and understanding of the uniqueness of each unit. Communication between departments has increased as well as the sharing of information.