

NCACDSS
Children's Services Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2023/ 12 - 2pm (Virtual)

Welcome from CSC Chairs: Jennie Kristiansen, Chatham Co. DSS; Katie Swanson, Cleveland Co. DSS; April Snead, Scotland Co. DSS; Kathy Ford, Pasquotank Co. DSS

Katie Swanson welcomed everyone and facilitated the meeting.

Katie made note of a typo from the agenda - we will be approving January's minutes - not December.

A motion for approval of the January CSC meeting minutes was made by Melanie Corprew (Beaufort DSS) and Sekema Chasten seconded the motion. No further objections - minutes accepted.

Intake Design Tool

Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services/ NCDSS

(Jennifer Oshnock per the agenda was unable to be present for this meeting due to a conflict. Natalie Brayboy will be presenting on her behalf.)

Powerpoint - 'New SDM Intake and CWS Draft Design'

The reason behind the need for a new intake screening and response tool:

- Statewide concerns about inconsistent and inaccurate screening decisions;
- Legislative mandate to improve consistency and accuracy of intake decisions
- 16 different decision tools, 23 pages when printed out;
- Time consuming to complete and challenging for Supervisor's to review

The new tool will improve:

1/ Accuracy; 2/ Consistency; 3/ Equitable Screening; 4/ User utility

This will promote easier usability; clarify maltreatment definitions; improve consistency in screening, response time and type. Overall, this will allow for an easier collection of data.

Implementation considerations -

Readiness and training materials that align with both system and policy....

What will be different -

Allegations listed on a single tool. All in one place. Desk guide to provide targeted questions to support the intake worker in gathering quality information needed from the reporter. This allows you to NOT switch to policy manual as the decision matrix is built into the tool.

This new tool will be an electronic and there will be NO paper version. Paper version only available when there is an emergency.

Clarification of allegations during screening in gathering information. Use of term between improper and inappropriate - clarifies vs. unsafe. Streamlines response times/type to build consistency, equity and efficiency.

This is an efficient tool to utilize in a CQI process and will allow for the gathering of information and data.

Will be able to carry over data into the Assessment system upon implementation.

Suggestions for Early Preparation Activities for Intake Practitioners

- Practice documenting reported maltreatment information by typing
- Allows for practice typing while engaging/interviewing/listening to reporters;
- Consider moving away from taking notes longhand and move toward note taking on the computer.
- Get used to doing this as it takes different brain activity.
- Improves efficiency and accuracy.

This is necessary for time efficiency; accuracy of documentation; and safety.

Engagement Planning

Feedback from partnerships are taken seriously; have not had any feedback suggesting that this is 'not efficient'; and will include a narrative box to type what the reporter is saying as they are talking vs. writing. Has met with multiple groups (local, state, and including Evident Change) and external stakeholder groups for feedback. Based on feedback, suggested improvements underway - ie., COI can be screened by another county after reported; rewording the organization of 'button's and what each does; spellcheck/suggested correct spellings underway.

Will engage with counties with electronic systems. Goal is to start the development of the tool in March 2023; Intake by Mid 2024. Intake then Assessment. They will engage with counties with electronic systems.

Desk Guide Demonstration of the intake tool that allows for the worker to view a 'desk guide' while going through questions with the reporter and demonstrates the narrative box which remains on the screen for the entire process of the intake. The desk guide prevents the worker from having to have a desk paper version or from having to go to the web-based manual to locate the policy. Easily accessible for the worker. Additional screens demonstrated and reviewed by Natalie Brayboy. To further enhance user preference, there will be hyperlinks on the screen to access the definitions throughout the intake process and screening - maltreatment definitions. Workers preference to use 2 computer monitors to allow for browsing/using/accessing definitions, etc..

"Intake then Assessment (Hybrid)" Implementation

This refers to:

- Design and build new Intake Screening and Response Tool in CWIS and deploy to all 100 counties;
- When the Improved Assessment Module is ready (with new features and capabilities), begin training and deployment of Improved Assessment statewide;
- When the New Ongoing Case Management platform is ready, begin training and deployment of Improved Ongoing module.

"READY" means tested and validated by all counties. (when all have agreed it's ready)

County input to the design of the user experience is important

Training self-paced, in person and hybrid options. Plan is to learn policy and system concurrently.

All counties in Intake by mid 2024. Rollout based on readiness; 100 counties to be divided into 5 intake groups beginning with the CWIS counties and then 4 other groups. This will allow for personalized readiness and training support will be provided based on groups.

Inquiry raised about whether this new screening tool is a step toward Centralized Intake - This proposal of the New Tool is for consistency and ease of use - not a step toward centralized intake.

Kathy Stone explained that the legislature funded a feasibility study about centralized intake and involved county directors - Public Knowledge is under contract to evaluate the feasibility of such. Report back to the legislature is under final review and will make the ultimate decision.

Provisions when there are disasters and power outages - exception (not the rule) to handwrite will have this in place before it rolls out. There will have to be ways to complete intake tools during such.

Intakes will be taken in one state system - working on a transition plan and everyone in the CWIS by mid 2024. If you're in a different document system - you'll be able to pull that document over from the Intake to your county doc system.

Foster Family Alliance Gaile Osborne, Executive Director

Powerpoint - FFA of NC: Who are we and what do we do in NC?

Think of them as the foster kinship and adoptive association for the state. FFA has a contract with the state and is getting in on the ground with resource families. They have staff members across the state. State support group for Foster parents offers coaching and support to foster parents and kinship providers and provides feedback. They serve as a resource in 'that moment' and connect them to agencies within their area.

Foster Family Alliance of North Carolina is a FAMILY-LED (all in a position with the agency are either foster parents, adoptive or kinship providers), non-profit organization supporting children and youth served through the foster care system and the dedicated families and professionals that care for them

How can FFA-NC help?

Recruitment/Retention—let us support you in the entire walk to be able to keep you as a foster parent. Reach out to FFA in a time of need for additional supports. Join us on an advisory committee and give your feedback. Peer to peer supports and small group trainings to give you the skills to be successful in your foster care/kinship journey. Recruitment and retention - often lose 50% after 2 years

Advocacy – Learn more about policy changes on the state level. FFA also does direct advocacy around educational services for foster children, concerns/grievances involving DSS and private agencies, and general advocacy needs.

Support – Concerned about a placement? Want another viewpoint or referral for help? unique challenge to address? FFA connects families to resources and one-on-one coaching.

Training – Gain knowledge, make friends, and get the most out of being a foster parent. Quarterly summits surrounding special needs of fostering/adopting teenagers.

Upcoming Trainings

Training Events Teaming with Teens- February 4th 10am-1pm

Watch Me Rise Webinar with Trent Taylor- February 28th 6-7pm

Webinar Series in Partnership with NC Stop Human Trafficking- TBA

Resource Parent Curriculum

- 6 trainers all of whom are current foster parents
- Community Resiliency Model (CRM)
- FASD, in-utero exposure training

- Research-based curriculum online support groups in every region across NC

#1 reason foster parents stay in the system.....

Support Groups - 67% stated that the support group was the actual help they needed to make it through. It's peer to peer support and coaching is more effective and families are more receptive. They are planning more to support those caring for medically fragile foster children, kinship providers, Grandparents Raising Grandkids, regional traditional support group, FASD, etc.

Current Projects

Multiple projects underway that includes working with NC and UNC; needs assessment to drive training, advocacy and support; retention and recruitment partnerships; resource parent organizations connection; resource parent focused training; facebook support group; community events; IEP support to help with training of resource parents and appropriate education for foster children (grant from Healthy Blue to support EIP training); foster closets; streamline communication; statewide resource directory and finding additional resources. Projecting a regional Foster Family Alliance of NC employee in each of 7 regions by August 2023

Resource parents are sharing ...

Resource parents see the stress in the county-level social workers; receive different information about kinship licensure; limited resources; timelines not followed; Foster Parent Bill of Rights not implemented by all; private agencies offer many different amounts of monies on stipends; cost of fostering a child has risen to the economy; professional parenting vs fostering; difficult to be single and a professional parent while holding a full-time job; and barriers to licensure.

Foster Family Alliance of NC wants to.....

1. Partner with your agency to share your training and events.
2. Collaborate with trainings (ie., Mapp trainers on staff could train together)
3. Help get the word out about yours and ours models offered.
4. Walk alongside your resource parents to help support.
5. Offer support in terms of gift cards and swag to love on your families.
6. Support your families when a child has an IEP if things aren't going well.
7. Invite your families to regional events; ball games, thrift sales, restaurant nights, large events, etc.
8. Collaborate in any way that will help with retention.
9. Get to know you and your agency!

For more information - contact

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Child Abuse Prevention Month

Krist Demers and Loumecia Staton

Powerpoint

- Statewide theme - Nurturing positive childhoods
- National campaign - 'Building Together'

NC plans to combine themes. time line of events is includes in the powerpoint and a reference to the Prevent Child Abuse toolkit.

Public awareness campaigns are important and per Community-based child abuse prevention - is required year round in addition to April/Child Abuse Preventio month.
NCDSS contracts with NC Prevent Child Abuse to plan and implement statewide multi-media public awareness campaigns in coordination with PCANC.

March 31 is National Wear Blue Day. There are other events planned - see ppt. The presenters also reviewed several coordinated strategies for DHHS, DSS, DPH, and DCFW that includes submitting a proclamation; press release; blog posts, newsletters; social media campaign; distribution of the toolkit; participation in awareness events; pinwheel planting events; and forwarding information to county DSS agencies. Suggestions were provided of events everyone may opt to participate or could replicate in their local communities.

CFSR Moment

Tracy Turner, NCDSS Child Family Services Plan Coordinator

(not Tammy Shook - per PPT)

Powerpoint - CFSR Moment

CFSR - Child & Family Services Review

(CFSP here to talk about the CFSR)

Joint Planning session to be held on March 1, 2023 from 8:30am - 3:30pm in Raleigh (see ppt/flyer).

This meeting is for NCDSS partner county DSS agencies, courts, persons with lived experiences, providers, tribes and additional CW stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting is to host an event where everyone comes together to provide information, input and feedback that will be used in preparing the state's **Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)**.

- The APSR is submitted by June 30th annually and is a report to the federal Children's Bureau on NC's performance and progress towards:
 - Federal CW outcome benchmarks and systemic factor measures (36 total)
 - CFSP;s 4 strategic goals, related objectives and strategies
 - Use of federal funding towards the above

The joint planning event is important as it values stakeholder input and partnership; is required by Children's Bureau for the preparation of the APSR; is an activity reported in APSR as an example of stakeholder engagement; and is a process model for CFSR.

Questions and Future Agenda items - none presented.

Adjourn