

Children Services Committee
August 8, 2018
Raleigh, North Carolina

Tri Chairs: Heather Skeens, April Snead, Jennie Kristiansen

In attendance: See sign in for attached.

By telephone (counties): Caldwell, Bladen, Robeson, Montgomery, Chatham, Cleveland, Johnson, Catawba, Stanly, Alamance, Macon, Guilford, Currituck, Nash, Lincoln, Dare, Gaston, Rockingham, Cabarrus, Brunswick, Burke, DHHS, Pender, Randolph, Durham, Rowan, Chowan, Forsyth, Henderson, Davidson,

Heather Skeens recognized the Tri Chairs and apprentice. She thanked Tracie Murphy for all the work she has done as a chair.

The June 13, 2018 minutes were reviewed. Tracie Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes and Karen Pritchard seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Supervisor Academy - Arlette Lambert, CFSR coordinator, presented an update on the Supervisor Academy. There is a handout coming which explains the vision of the academy. The academy will be set up as a three tier model. Tier one is an introduction to supervision. Tier two is about using data to improve practice. Tier three is about critical thinking and fostering connections. The Supervisor Academy originated from Child Welfare Supervisor Committee. They polled the supervisors who completed the academy, and the supervisors don't see the benefit of a certificate unless it leads to additional benefits like pay. The academy was part of the PIP recommendations. It was also three parts: nuts and bolts; using data to improve practice and performance and CQI model; and using data data and CQI at a macro level.

As of July 31, 45 supervisors graduated and they need 80 for the Children's Bureau. We need to hit that number by December 2018. They started the fifth and final cohort for PIP. They cannot accept any more. The attrition is high. Lisa Cauley recommends that if people are in the cohort, keep them in it. One supervisor was promoted within a county and was allowed to continue. Another was allowed to complete the academy after moving to a non PIP county.

April Snead asked about the certificate. Arlette Lambert says that supervisors do get a certificate of training, not one saying completed supervisors academy. Heather Skeens recommended they look at something for the future especially if it's included in the criteria for directors. Arlette Lambert stated that supervisors didn't see the benefit of a certificate. April Snead added that as directors we do see the value of the certificate as we look into the future. Lisa Cauley said they are looking at a certificate with the supervisor academy. The target for participation moving forward will be supervisors, program managers, and program administrators. For the supervisor academy, there will be an entire catalogue of courses available to supervisors. Expanding to program managers and program administrators, the system doesn't offer lot. They would like for the cohort to move from tier 1 to tier 2 as a cohort. Due to attrition, the cohort hasn't been able to move together as one. Moving

forward, once the cohort completes Introduction to Supervision, they will then move to Nuts and Bolts. There are two data courses, one with data and CQI and the other focuses on data. From the feedback received, there was lots of overlap and recommendations to streamline. This course could be an elective and voluntary because in a larger agency with data people, supervisors don't see the benefit of reports and data. Those interested in data are getting the most out of it. Lisa Cauley mentioned that they are looking at the alignment of the Introduction to Supervision class and what needs to be there, and what parts are covered somewhere else. If there is a new practice model, we need to look at training. In October there will be a DCDL with what to expect in 2019. They will begin to calendar courses in November for 2019.

Update on other PIP - Arlette Lambert stated that the modified policies will be implemented on September 1. The PIP ends on December 31, 2018. Measurement continues beyond that. September 1 aligns with the PIP letter that was sent last week regarding refining and restructuring the Technical Assistance model no later than December 31. She thanked the Director's Association for their support. The plan is to also do three more court convening sessions before the end of the year, complete permanency support profiles by November 1, and provide promotional information about the Guardianship Assistance Program through three more public input sessions. Lisa Cauley said there was a handout in the back of the room. She said the timeline for the PIP wasn't kept in front of the directors as much as we should have. Over the next few months they will make sure we meet every requirement because we receive a financial penalty if we don't. Next month we need to talk about baseline measures for each outcome and where do we need to be by March 2020. Arlette Lambert said everything in the PIP was to improve ratings and outcomes.

Human Trafficking - Kristin O'Connor talked about the statutory changes for human trafficking. There will be more information next month. Gail Correlli from the Attorney General's office explained that to make a finding of abuse or neglect it has to be caused by a parent or caretaker. When talking about human trafficking under CAPTA, a finding of abuse or neglect can be made regardless of a parent or caretaker connection to the child. In a unique way the house and senate drafted separate similar laws and the governor signed both parts. The first one goes into effect on October 1 and the other on December 1. The house and senate used the law changes for different reasons. There is a group of people called revisers at the General Assembly who make sure this doesn't happen. They will be working to clarify. The takeaway is that with an allegation of human trafficking, screen in regardless of the relationship between the child and the perpetrator.

Kristin O'Connor talked about the other policy changes and timeline. A report of human trafficking is accepted as abuse and neglect as of October 1, and assigned as an investigation with a 24 response. Certain checks need to be completed within 24 hrs. If there is no parent or caretaker, then the response is immediate. In the policy issuance with a June 15, 2018 effective date, a report alleging human trafficking regardless of the relationship between the child and perpetrator, we are to provide information and resource services to the reporter and within 24 hrs check the National Center for Missing Children, the NC Center for Missing Persons, and with local law enforcement for any missing or runaway or child foreign national under 18. Case decisions assessing the parent/caretaker role in trafficking where a parent is not a perpetrator, then nothing is reported on the 5094. There is no Central Registry. There is no RIL. Policy does not allow you to name a perpetrator without a parent/caretaker relationship and put the individual on the RIL. For In and Out of Home requirements,

you need to connect to individuals to resources. The new modified manual will not include human trafficking changes. To avoid confusion about human trafficking changes, the draft work will be done by this Friday, August 10 and pushing back the policy on Human Trafficking to the 15th. The draft policy will go out on August 20 with a week for feedback and returned by August 24. The following week there will be webinars around the Human Trafficking policy. Gail Correlli explained that an responsible individual who is not a caretaker or parent cannot go on RIL. She added that no one thought to change RIL statute. They will be talking about the RIL statute and changes. A question was asked about the list of resources. Kristin O'Connor will provide guidance and list of resources. They are also assessing the impact of these changes on NCFast.

Policy changes - Susan Thigpen (Sanderson) provided an update on policies being revised. Updating the IVE state plan. Looking at the federal regulations to see what is not covered in our policy. For the FFPSA, looking at what documentation is provided to older youth to prove they were in foster care. Currently, they rely on evidence in the transitional living plan. There will be a new checklist for emancipated youth and a new form letter that will tell when they were in foster care.

The Adoption Assistance policy has not been updated in a while. It will be published this week. A lot of the stuff in red is rewording to be consistent with other manuals and the new format provides additional guidance on federal policy clarifying what was said and not put in writing. A change to the county responsibility for adoption assistance. For children in private agency adoptions, the county where child is located is responsible for adoption assistance. This change to the residence for adoptive parents should level out requests. Medicaid comes from that county.

There are some changes retroactive to January 1 for adoption assistance. As of Oct 1 2017, every child who met the criteria as an eligible child was eligible for adoption assistance. On January 1, this changed to every child who is or will be two as of January 1 in the fiscal year up to 2022 is eligible. The 5012 and 5013 have been changed to reflect this. The three part special needs requiring the same approval are grouped together. Background checks for adoptions requires a check of the NC RIL. The Central Registry is not appropriate. A fingerprint criminal check is required. The policy added guidance for youth adopted at 16 or 17 to qualify for benefits to 21 even if they were adopted before that age. They continue to be eligible as long as one of criteria for extended foster care is met. The adoption assistance paperwork must be signed before finalization of the adoption. There are exciting changes with federal guidance. For a single parent who adopts a child and for a mom and dad who divorce and then there is a step parent. They can update the existing adoption assistance agreement and add the new parent. It prevents them from losing benefits if something happens to the adoptive parent even if the adoptive parent passes away. We can get the signature of the stepparent and a criminal record check is required. This prevents a lapse in benefits. Yearly notices are sent to adoptive families asking parents to notify the state of any changes. It added language for what happens when an agency contacts the adoptive parent every year and asks if child enrolled in school. We don't have authority to terminate benefits if the child is not enrolled in school, even if they aren't we don't have grounds to terminate the agreement. We can assist in getting the child enrolled or signed up in an alternative program. The switch from IVE to IVB if the adoption assistance agreement is not signed prior to final adoption. We have to obtain criminal record checks. There is no payment until they are obtained. The new forms and policy will be out at the end of the week.

Modified Manual- Lisa Cauley talked about the work on the modified manual. Handouts were provided. Lisa thanked everyone for their feedback. The manual is not a finished product. She has been talking about how they are writing is not a consistent message. From the OSRI review, repeat maltreatment had to do with the issues of the quality and frequency of contacts. We did not do well on the OSRI. Sufficient interviews make for safe decisions. The manual was not well organized and is not consistent with other parts of manual. The work group looked for inconsistencies, got into it and realized there was more work to be done. She asked, what is enough? They took into consideration the concerns from directors and delayed implementation. There is a process to gather feedback and take changes into consideration. They are considering alignment with NCFast and hope that in 4 years, the manual will be different. It will not talk about forms, but processes. They want to get the manual to point where we can talk about NCFast. We need to make processes to streamline policy changes. There are discussions with the Tri chairs of how we work together, where do we need to put this out, and where do we get feedback from. This was too big of a change to put out at one time.

Lisa talked about what has not changed. The plan of safe care meets the federal requirements. With CPS followups and ongoing contacts, we need to see people if the case is open, twice month at least 7 days apart. We kept in the requirement of seeing the child after three days in placement. We need to affirm what the youth and families told us. They want to see someone the next day. This comes from the Say So board members. Youth are being placed with families. They need to see the worker. We know it's a burden to counties.

Lisa talked about what has changed. In intake the legal residence statute was added. A caretaker is defined as anyone who lives in the home. There was a court case of in re: RRN. Human Trafficking is currently in the manual and will be updated on October 1 based on guidance from the Attorney Generals office. In the assessment section, we added language to initiation based on safety considerations. For home visiting protocol and home visits, you have to go to the home to do a safety plan guidance. How you document is about writing up what you did and it has to make sense. We changed the requirement to tour the property. Now it is where the child lives, eats, sleeps, and plays. The social worker has to be safe at the home and it clearly says that the parent has to give permission. There is now guidance on the use of decision making tools. You do not complete them on the non-offending parent because no allegations were made on them. There should not be any discussion about substantiating and closing a case prior to case closure. There needs to be a conversation between the worker and the supervisor, "this is what I'm thinking." A question was asked about completing the risk assessment and strength and needs assessment for each case. Lis Cauley said yes, it needs to be a global assessment.

Lisa Cauley talked about the challenges with In-home. The policy needs a county look. For the most part, it stays very similar. Contacts are twice a month for moderate cases and three times for high risk cases. The monthly contact records needs some adjustments. Non-resident and non offending parents need be seen once a month. In the permanency planning section, we need to align process of the CFT and permanency planning meetings with the form in NCFast and have a discussion on how we train. This is a stand alone document. It's a team that put it together. We still have to do permanency planning review meetings. We have to do these things. In the previous manual, contacts were confusing. It had seven days and three days. The intent is not to disrupt placements trying to see the secondary caretaker. Maybe there should be quarterly contact with the secondary contact. If both

foster parents/caretakers are making decisions, both should be there. If not, document why Program monitors want to see the documentation about why. The first contact with the child can be at a doctor's visit. Ongoing contacts with the parent need to occur three out of six months where the child could be returned. This helps to sort out the people who aren't living anywhere, then the child is not going home. This provides clarity. If it's not safe for social workers, it's not safe for children. The OSRI found that we don't make quality contacts. We need to do more than just see parents at visits.

There is still work that remains. We need to get a county lens on what we have written. We cannot align the policy with NCFast before we push it out. We have to do so as more counties come online with NCFast. We have limited resources at state; where does this document live and who edits it? There are some issues with Temporary Safety Providers. There are little changes in it. It clarifies those rare cases where the worker has to drive the child to get to a Temporary Safety Providers. It needs to be clear that it's the parent's plan and not the agency. For the Permanency Planning Review we need to clarify some things. How do we prepare parents for CFTs? How do we provide training to staff for this?

This is a big ticket items. Currently we have two manuals. We have to decide what material in the older manual has to move. There is a question regarding the In Home Services Case Plan 5239. In the manual the wording is not consistent that it is completed in the CFT. We haven't done any modifications to the forms. Permanency Planning Reviews will occur every 90 days. They need guidance from the NCFast counties in redesigning the sequence of an event and what it looks like and how we want to see it in NCFast. For example, the service history can be seen in NCFast. There is an administrative rule that we can't consult the central registry when screening a report. NCFast doesn't pull from the central registry. You can only see cases in NCFast. Lisa Cauley asked for thoughts on the ongoing process for feedback on the policy.

There was a question about page 5 about the monthly face to face contact with a parent who is incarcerated with a life sentence and has no contact with the child. Lisa responded that there needs to be contact with this individual to determine if they have family that would take care of the child, their level of commitment, and what they could do for the benefit of the child. She added that part of our work is to re-establish the relationship. A question was asked about the benefit of doing the face to face contact monthly. Lisa replied that it is for reunification or to move the child to someone else who would be a family member. There was a question about a discrepancy between the section on contact with the incarcerated parent and the monthly contact sections. A question regarding a recent letter sent out by Wayne about guidance on caretakers living in the home. This is a discrepancy from what is in the policy. A question about the strength and needs assessment. Workers complete the Strength and Needs Assessment even though there is a safe Safety Assessment. We were completing the tool when we were making findings. Why are we completing it again. Lisa says that it is part of the assessment. It's part of the structured decision making tools. They have not been validated in years and we are currently writing a proposal for doing so. Contact with the parent during reunification needs to be face to face monthly. There needs to be contact until the TPR. Gail Correlli added that if we aren't making those contact then we are going to do less for reunification. If we aren't maintaining contact and the parents show up at the TPR showing pictures of a new house and certificates from programs, how are we going to respond? We need to maintain contact with the parent who is incarcerated.

Heather Skeens closed out the meeting. She asked Lisa about receiving feedback from the counties. Lisa stated that she needs this information by the 15th so they can come up with a plan to train on and how to word it. We will need to develop some workgroups and get experts at the county level to talk about it.

