Child Welfare in NC

PRESENTED BY: BARBARA YOUNG
What is your role today as part of this webinar?

- Family Partner/Family Advocate: 43%
- Behavioral Health: 8%
- Juvenile Justice: 16%
- DSS: 14%
- School System: 8%
- Other: 11%
Do you have personal experience with Child Welfare?

- Biological Parent: 10%
- Foster/Adoptive Parent: 14%
- Kinship/Relative Caregiver: 17%
- Former Foster Youth: 2%
- I was adopted: 2%
- No personal experience: 55%
State-Supervised, County-Administered

Social Services includes a wide range of programs

- Medicaid
- Food and Nutrition Services
- Work First
- Adult Protective Services
- Child Welfare Services

Federally mandated

State Supervised

County Administered

COUNTY: County Department of Social Services (DSS)

County Department of Human Services (DHS) Consolidated Agency

STATE: North Carolina Division of Social Services (NC DSS)

*from Child Welfare 101 training*


Policy
- Formal, brief statement of requirements that tie directly to federal law and NC statute and rules

Protocol
- Mandatory actions to meet policy requirements; what you must do

Guidance
- Practice or process guidelines, includes preferred practice and recommended practice guidance; how you should do it

Scope of the Child Welfare System

All child welfare agencies in the U.S. have four core mandates from federal laws and regulations:

1. Respond to reports of child maltreatment
2. Serve families in their homes and help them overcome difficulties and keep their children safe
3. Provide alternative, safe living environments when children cannot be maintained safely in their homes
4. Provide a safe, permanent home for children as quickly as possible

*from Child Welfare 101 training*
Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being

**Safety** – children are protected from abuse and neglect and remain safely in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

**Permanency** – children have permanency and stability in their living situations and that family relationships and connections are preserved.

**Well-Being** – families have the capacity to provide for their children’s needs and that children receive needed educational, physical, dental, and mental health services.

*from Child Welfare 101 training*
Purpose and Vision

Principles of Partnership
- Everyone desires respect
- Everyone needs to be heard
- Everyone has strengths
- Judgements can wait
- Partners share power
- Partnership is a process

System of Care Values
- Interagency Collaboration
- Accountability to Results
- Individualized Strength-based Approach
- Child and Family Partnership at all Levels
- Cultural Competence
- Community Based Services & Supports

*from Child Welfare 101 training*
**Child Maltreatment Prevention**

**Primary Prevention**
- Preventing children from being abused or neglected
- Addressing systemic factors that place children/families at-risk

**Secondary Prevention**
- Identifying & working with those at-risk for maltreatment

**Tertiary Prevention**
- Helping victims of child maltreatment
  - Stop maltreatment
  - Treatment & services

*Source: Jones, Jones, Perry, & Bercy (2008)*
Who is a Mandated Reporter?

North Carolina requires “any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent... or has died as a result of maltreatment” to make a report to the county department of social services where the child resides or is found.
Child Protective Services (CPS) Phases

Four Levels of Involvement with DSS:
1. CPS Intake (Screening)
2. CPS Assessment (Investigation)
3. CPS In Home Services
4. Permanency Planning (Foster Care)
Flow of Child Welfare Services

- Maltreatment Report
- Child Protective Services (CPS) Assessment
- CPS In-Home Services
- Case Management & Ongoing Safety Assessments
  - Permanency Planning
    - Reunification
    - Adoption
    - Guardianship or Custody
  - Safety Concern Resolved & Case Closed
Supporting Children

- **Triple P Online** – free to everyone in NC. The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program is backed by hundreds of trials and studies, and gives you proven parenting strategies to make life easier and calmer at home, and help your kids grow up to be happy, confident and successful. [https://www.triplep-parenting.com/nc-en/find-help/triplep-online/](https://www.triplep-parenting.com/nc-en/find-help/triplep-online/)

- **NC Infant Toddler Program** provides supports and services for families and their children, birth to three who have special needs. [https://beearly.nc.gov/](https://beearly.nc.gov/)

- **National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)** – Our mission is to raise the standard of care and improve access to services for traumatized children, their families and communities throughout the United States. [https://www.nctsn.org/](https://www.nctsn.org/)
Supporting Youth

- **NC LINKS** — The Independent Living Program is a program which assists current and former foster youth between the ages of 16 and 21 achieve self sufficiency prior to, and after, exiting the foster care system. Contact your county DSS for the LINKS social worker. [https://www.orangecountync.gov/435/Independent-Living-Program-for-Foster-Ch](https://www.orangecountync.gov/435/Independent-Living-Program-for-Foster-Ch)

- **Foster Care 18-21** — This program allows youth to stay in foster care until age 21. Services and benefits include Medicaid coverage and educational grants/scholarships for attending a NC public community college or university. [https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/permanency-planning_manual.pdf#page=176](https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/permanency-planning_manual.pdf#page=176)

- **SAYSO** - Strong Able Youth Speaking Out, is a statewide, North Carolina-based association of youth aged 14 to 24 who are or have been in out-of-home care. This includes all types of substitute care, including foster care, group homes, and mental health placements. [https://www.saysoinc.org/](https://www.saysoinc.org/)

- **Youth M.O.V.E** - North Carolina Families United, the statewide chapter of Youth M.O.V.E, (Motivating Others through Voices of Experience) is a nationally recognized, youth-driven organization devoted to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development. The organization unites the voices of individuals who have had experiences in various systems including mental health, juvenile justice, education, and child welfare. [https://www.ncfamiliesunited.org/m-o-v-e/](https://www.ncfamiliesunited.org/m-o-v-e/)

- **Youth Villages’ LifeSet program** — One of the largest programs in the U.S. helping former foster and transition-age youth become successful, independent adults. [https://www.youthvillages.org/services/lifese/](https://www.youthvillages.org/services/lifese/)
Supporting Parents/Caregivers of Youth

► **NC REACH** — The NC Reach program provides college funding and support services to young people adopted from North Carolina DSS foster care after the age of 12, exited from foster care to a permanent home through the Guardianship Assistance Program, and those who age out of the system at 18.  [http://www.ncreach.org/](http://www.ncreach.org/)

► **Triple P Teen** — You may already be in the thick of the teen years or have a tween who's hurtling towards adolescence. Either way, the strategies in this toolkit can set you up to handle (or prevent) the stress, drama and unpredictability of this different and difficult stage.  [https://www.triplep-parenting.com/nc-en/find-help/triple-p-online/pre-teens-and-teens/](https://www.triplep-parenting.com/nc-en/find-help/triple-p-online/pre-teens-and-teens/)

► **SOARNC.org** — A great resource for parenting youth with ADHD and Learning Disabilities. They provide free webinars:  [https://soarnc.org/webinars/](https://soarnc.org/webinars/)

► **FosteringNC.org** — They have lots of training links to support parents & caregivers of youth:  Promoting Normalcy, Suicide Prevention, Transition to Adulthood, On Their Way, Dealing with Grief, Transition to Adult Health Care  [https://fosteringnc.org/on-demand-courses/](https://fosteringnc.org/on-demand-courses/)
Training Resources

- **FosteringNC.org** – Free trainings, podcasts, resources, and links to other websites to support children and youth and their parents and caregivers. *Subscribe for monthly updates.*

- Child Welfare 101 – CW101 (20 minute overview)
- KinGap/Guardianship resources:
  - [https://fosteringnc.org/files/2019/03/KinGAP-Comparison-Chart-for-Caregivers.pdf](https://fosteringnc.org/files/2019/03/KinGAP-Comparison-Chart-for-Caregivers.pdf)
  - [https://fosteringnc.org/files/2019/03/KinGAP-Informational-Flyer-for-Caregivers.pdf](https://fosteringnc.org/files/2019/03/KinGAP-Informational-Flyer-for-Caregivers.pdf)
- Supporting Successful Visit Series
- Recognizing and Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment
  - [https://www.preventchildabusenc.org/recognizing-responding-online-course/](https://www.preventchildabusenc.org/recognizing-responding-online-course/)
Get Involved...

- **Community Child Protection Team (CCPT)**
  Every county has a local CCPT which is a group of community representatives who promote a community-wide approach to the problem of child abuse and neglect. Local teams, review cases, identify and respond to gaps in the county’s prevention/protection response, maximizing the use of limited resources.

- **Family Engagement Committee (FEC)**
  To mirror the state’s Child Welfare Family Advisory Council, counties are encouraged to get regular feedback from families with child welfare experience. Currently active in Richmond, Durham, and Forsyth Counties. If your county doesn’t have one, ask to start one. Contact NC State’s Center for Family & Community Engagement for guidance.

- **Child Welfare Family Advisory Council (CWFAC)**
  The CWFAC promotes and supports the involvement of families at case practice, policy, and system levels. It will be comprised of 6 biological parents, 2 former foster youth, 2 kinship parents, 1 foster parent and 1 adoptive parent. Interested?
Get Involved...Part 2

 Become a Foster (or Adoptive Parent):
https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/state-guardianship/foster-care

There are thousands of children in NC in need of a temporary safe, loving home. To become a foster parent in North Carolina, you must be at least 21 years old, have a stable home and income, maintain a drug free environment, be willing to be fingerprinted and have a criminal records check, complete all required training and be licensed by the state of North Carolina. You can be licensed through a county DSS or private agency.

 Become a Guardian ad Litem (GAL):
www.volunteerforgal.org

The GAL program seeks to serve the best interests of thousands of children who find themselves the subjects of court cases by assigning them Guardian ad Litem volunteers. Be a voice for the children in our community.

 Support Local Foster Closets:
Charlotte, NC: Foster Village
Durham, NC: Urban Ministries of Durham
Gastonia, NC: Closet of Hope & Least of These
Gaston County Foster Care Closet
Madison, NC: In All Things, Love
Piedmont Triad region, NC: Mom's Clothes Closet
Stokes County, NC: Stokes County Foster Closet
Wilmington, NC: Foster Pantry
DSS Resource Information

- Rylan’s Law (NC) and Family First (FED) Overview


- DHHS County Staff Information (Dear County Director Letters) including Covid19 Updates by Division
  https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/county-staff-information

- Child Welfare Family Leadership Model
Additional Resources

- FosteringPerspectives.org – Bi-annual newsletter supporting child welfare families.
- PracticeNotes.org – a newsletter for NC’s child welfare workers.
- FosteringHealthNC.org
- Foster Family Alliance of NC (https://www.ffas-nc.org/)
## When to Celebrate?

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Questions?

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