North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services
2408 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408
Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director
(919) 733-3055

March 20, 2008

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: Work First Program Administrators and Supervisors
Child Welfare Program Administrators and Supervisors

SUBJECT: Work First/CPS Substance Abuse Initiative

The Division of Social Services continues to work closely with the Division of Mental Health/ Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) to offer a coordinated plan to provide services for the Work First (WF) and Child Protective Services (CPS) populations.

Qualified Professionals in Substance Abuse (QPSA s) have been in the role for many years to help Work First recipients with substance abuse problems overcome this as a barrier to employment based on requirements set forth in General Statues 108A-29.1 and 108A- 25.2. Due to the prevalence of substance abuse in families referred for CPS, both Divisions continue to support the use of the QPSA s with these CPS families, as well as with Work First families. Work First continues to maintain priority for the QPSA s because of the legislative mandate.

The DMH/DD/SAS is providing technical assistance and training to support the Local Management Entities (LME) and County Departments of Social Services (DSS) in their roles in the delivery of services. There are five regional WF/CPS Substance Abuse Initiative Update Meetings statewide, which are scheduled to take place in April 2008. Please see the attached for more information. It is essential that the county DSS staff attend the same meetings as their corresponding LME staff. These training and technical assistance meeting are designed to enhance the partnerships between local DSS s and local LME s.

These meetings are specifically for the DSS staff assigned as the liaison to the WF/CPS Substance Abuse Initiative and the LME staff responsible for the Initiative. These meetings will provide an opportunity to obtain an overview of the Initiative, requirements of stakeholders, and clarification of roles. Work First Representatives, Children Program Representatives, and Local Management Entity Liaisons will be invited to attend, as well.

In DMH/DD/SAS s partnership with the UNC School of Social Work Behavioral Healthcare Resource Program, an electronic registration process will be utilized for attendance at these meetings. **Please register by March 30, 2008. See the attachment for registration instructions. If there are any questions regarding the registration process, please contact Melissa Godwin at 919-966-5464.**

Concerns and questions can also be forwarded to Carla McNeill or Laura Elmore on the Work First/CPS policy team at 919-733-4622. We look forward to forgoing a strong partnership for this Initiative to provide families needed services.

Sincerely,

Charisse S. Johnson

Charisse Johnson, Chief
Family Support and Child Welfare Services

Attachment:
DSS.Invite.Addendum

cc: Sherry Bradsher
Jo Ann Lamm
Children s Program Representatives
Work First Representatives
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Local Business Liaisons

FSCWS-12-08