
CHAPTER 10

TRAINING 101

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Ongoing professional learning is essential to the successful performance of everyone involved with child welfare. Adequate, timely training—or the lack thereof—can also affect whether people stay involved with the child welfare system, something that can have a huge impact on everyone, especially children and their families. This section of the guide describes North Carolina’s training requirements for licensing professionals and foster parents. It also offers information about various resources you can use to fulfill those training requirements.

Requirements for Licensing Professionals

1. Public Agency Licensing Staff

Prior to direct client contact, licensing professionals with North Carolina County departments of social services must complete a minimum of 72 hours of pre-service training. In most cases this is accomplished by attending *Child Welfare in North Carolina* and completing that course’s Transfer of Learning packet.

Public agency licensing professionals must also complete an additional 66 hours of training in the first year of employment. This must include the following courses:

- *Legal Aspects of Child Welfare in North Carolina* (12 hours)
- *Medical Aspects of Child Welfare in North Carolina* (12 hours)
- *Child Development in Families at Risk* (12 hours)
- *The Effects of Separation and Loss on Attachment* (12 hours)
- *Foster Family Home Licensing in Child Welfare Services* (18 hours)

Every year after their first year of employment, public agency licensing professionals must complete 24 hours of continuing education.

Because their jobs involve recruiting, training, and supporting foster parents, public agency licensing professionals will also want to consider becoming certified in *Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting: Group Preparation and Selection*, North Carolina's preferred foster parent training curriculum. During the eight days of this foster parent training course (also called MAPP/GPS), social workers learn to use the group preparation and selection program and to help prospective foster and adoptive parents identify their strengths and needs in relation to fostering and adopting. MAPP/GPS requires 52 contact training hours and can be credited toward the 24-hour continuing education requirement. After attending this course workers are officially MAPP-certified. (Candidates must have a Bachelors or Masters degree in social work or related field from a college or university listed in the most current edition of the Higher Education Directory and at least two years social work experience; foster parents who co-lead MAPP/GPS are exempt from this requirement.) The following MAPP-related courses are also available, once a person has become MAPP-certified:

- *Deciding Together: A Program to Prepare Families for Foster Care and Adoption on an Individual Basis* (16 hours)
- *Fostering and Adopting the Child Who Has Been Sexually Abused* (26 hours)
- *Shared Parenting* (18 hours)

DSS workers who move from another child welfare position to assume a licensing position and who have already met the pre-service training requirements at the time of their employment are not required to attend *Child Welfare in North Carolina*.

However, these individuals are required to attend job-specific training (*Foster Family Home Licensing in Child Welfare Services*) within three months of assuming licensing responsibilities.



To learn about the courses available, find training dates and locations, and register for the courses, go to <<http://www.ncswtrain.org>>.

The NC Division of Social Services provides training for DSS licensing professionals through its Family Support and Child Welfare Services Statewide Training Partnership. To learn more about the courses available, to find training dates and locations, and to apply for registration for these courses, consult your agency's copy of the current NCDSS Family Support and Child Welfare Services Training Calendar or go to <<http://www.ncswtrain.org>>.

2. Private Agency Licensing Staff

The training requirements and resources available to licensing professionals from North Carolina's private child-placing agencies and mental health/therapeutic foster care facilities vary a great deal. The state's licensing rules say only that governing bodies of private agencies must establish and use personnel practices for selection

and retention of staff which are sufficient to operate the agency (10A NCAC 70F .0202) and that they maintain a log of each employee's training in his or her personnel file (10A NCAC 70F .0206).

Staff from private organizations licensed as child-placing agencies in North Carolina are eligible to attend certain courses offered through the NC Division of Social Services' Family Support and Child Welfare Services Statewide Training Partnership. For example, licensing professionals from private agencies may attend *Foster Family Home Licensing in Child Welfare Services* (a three-day, 18 credit hour course) and adoption workers from private agencies may attend *Adoptions in Child Welfare Services* (a three-day, 18 credit hour course).

In addition, all private agency staff in the area of foster care and adoption may attend the train-the-trainer for *Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting: Group Preparation and Selection*. During the eight days of this foster parent training course (also called MAPP/GPS), social workers learn to use the group preparation and selection program and to help prospective foster and adoptive parents identify their strengths and needs in relation to fostering and adopting. In order to be eligible to attend this training, staff must be working for a private agency that has been approved by the state. Candidates must have a Bachelors or Masters degree in social work or related field from a college or university listed in the most current edition of the Higher Education Directory and at least two years social work experience (foster parents who co-lead MAPP/GPS are exempt from this requirement).

After attending *Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting: Group Preparation and Selection* workers are officially MAPP-certified, and so become eligible to attend the following MAPP-related courses:

- *Deciding Together: A Program to Prepare Families for Foster Care and Adoption on an Individual Basis* (16 hours)
- *Fostering and Adopting the Child Who Has Been Sexually Abused* (26 hours)

Private agency staff members who are not MAPP-certified may attend *Shared Parenting*, a three-day course that explores the philosophy, rationale, and strategies for developing positive relationships and communication between the agency, birth parents, and foster and adoptive parents. Staff members who are MAPP-certified will receive information about shared parenting as part of their MAPP/GPS materials.

Private agency workers who are contracted by a county DSS to provide public child welfare services must fulfill the same training requirements as county DSS child welfare workers. For more on this, see the preceding section on training for public agency licensing professionals.

To learn more about the courses available through the NC Division of Social Services Family Support and Child Welfare Services Statewide Training Partnership, to find training dates and locations, and to register for courses, consult your agency's copy of the current NCDSS Family Support and Child Welfare Services Training Calendar or go to <<http://www.ncswtrain.org>>.

3. Training Resources for Licensing Professionals

In addition to the courses offered by the NC Division of Social Services, licensing professionals seeking to further their professional development may wish to consult the following resources.

- **Children's Services Practice Notes.** Each issue of this practice-oriented child welfare publication is dedicated to a specific topic such as separation and attachment, juvenile sex offenders, and promoting resiliency in families and children. To receive notification when new issues appear online, send a message with "Subscribe Practice Notes" in the subject line to johnmcmahon@mindspring.com. *Practice Notes* can be found online at <http://www.practicenotes.org>
- **Training Matters.** Each issue of this publication provides information about where to find training on specific topics (e.g., posttraumatic stress disorder, working with American Indian families) and updates on North Carolina's child welfare training system. To receive notification when new issues appear online, send a message with "Subscribe Training Matters" in the subject line to johnmcmahon@mindspring.com. *Training Matters* can be found online at <http://www.trainingmatters-nc.org>
- **Child Trauma Academy.** Online courses on human development, childhood trauma, and the impact of working with high-risk children and families. Child Trauma Academy can be found online at www.childtraumaacademy.com
- **The University of Michigan's "Training Program for Child Welfare Supervisors."** This free online course offers a wide variety of modules that will help supervisors and frontline workers deepen their understanding of child welfare issues. www.ssw.umich.edu/tpcws/outcomeOrientedServices/
- **"Out-of-Home Placements due to Parent Chemical Abuse: Connections to Methamphetamine Addiction."** A free course from the University of Minnesota. http://ssw.che.umn.edu/CASCW/meth_cm_summary.html
- **National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning.** A training, technical assistance, and information services organization dedicated to strengthening the capacity of child welfare agencies to institutionalize a safety-focused, family-centered, and community-based approach to meet the needs of children, youth, and families. <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/>
- **National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information.** The Clearinghouse connects professionals to practical, timely, and essential information on programs, research, legislation, and statistics to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. <http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/>

Requirements for Family Foster Care Parents

1. Pre-service Training Required for Initial Licensure

The health, safety, and well-being of children in foster care depend on the ability of their foster families to care for them in a nurturing, supportive way. Most children who enter foster care have had life experiences that have been traumatic and hurtful. As a result, their ability to trust adults is impaired. Foster families need to have a broad range of knowledge, strong parenting skills, self-awareness, and patience to care for the children in their home. To help families broaden their knowledge and skills, supervising agencies must provide foster parent applicants with 30 hours of pre-service training prior to licensure. Pre-service training must address:

- General orientation to foster care
- Communication skills
- Understanding the dynamics of the foster care and adoption process
- Separation and loss
- Attachment and trust
- Child development
- Behavior management
- Working with birth families and maintaining connections
- Lifebook preparation
- Planned moves and the impact of disruptions
- The impact of placement on foster and adoptive families
- Teamwork to achieve permanence
- Cultural sensitivity
- Confidentiality
- Health and safety

Advice from a foster parent

Try to understand you can't teach a foster parent all she needs to know in such a short time. Every day we will learn something new that we were not trained to do.

2. CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions Training

Before a foster child is placed with the foster family, Supervising Agencies must provide foster parents with training in First Aid, CPR, and Universal Precautions. Training shall be specific to the population of children served by the foster parents and updated as required. Training in these areas must be such as those provided by the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or equivalent organizations. Training must be updated as required by these organizations.

3. Training in Medication Administration

Child-placing agencies must also ensure that foster parents are trained in medication administration before a child is placed in their homes (10A NCAC 70E .1117, item 4).

4. In-service Training Required for Relicensure

Supervising Agencies must provide or otherwise ensure that foster parents receive 10 hours of in-service training every year. Foster parents must have 20 hours of in-service training in order to be relicensed. This in-service training may be child-specific or it may concern issues relevant to the general population of children in foster care. In general, in-service training must be on topics that enhance the skills of foster parents and promote stability for children. Licensing rules state that a foster parent may complete relevant training provided by a community college, a licensed child placing agency, or other departments of state or county governments and that, upon approval by the Supervising Agency, such training can count toward meeting the annual 10-hour in-service training requirement.



In-service training must be on topics that enhance the skills of foster parents and promote stability for children.

County departments of social services and private child-placing agencies are urged to develop their own curricula for in-service training so that training may be available throughout the year for foster parents. The following is a list of possible alternatives agencies may choose to use to meet the in-service training requirement:

- Relevant video tapes with a questionnaire to document that the family has viewed the videotape.
- Training provided by the therapist of a foster child. Documentation by the therapist should be obtained for the case record.
- Families may read newsletters, books, manuals, etc. that directly relate to foster parenting and the needs of children in their home.
- Attendance at state, regional, and national foster parent conferences.
- Attendance at local foster parent association meetings as long as the meetings contain information related to the needs of children in foster care.

Supervising Agencies are responsible for documenting in the foster parent record the type of activity the foster parent has completed to fulfill the annual in-service training requirement.

5. HIV Training

To receive the HIV supplemental payment, families caring for children with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) or AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) must attend six hours of advanced medical training annually. This training, which must cover topics relevant to HIV or AIDS, counts toward the foster parents' annual 10-hour in-service training requirement.

6. Physical Restraint Holds Training

Before they can use physical restraint holds, foster parents must complete at least 16 hours of training by a certified/approved trainer in behavior management. The

training must include techniques for de-escalating problem behavior, the appropriate use of physical restraint holds recognized by the Licensing Authority as approved physical restraint holds, monitoring of vital indicators, and debriefing children and foster parents involved in physical restraint holds. To remain certified to use physical restraint holds, every year foster parents must complete at least eight hours of behavior management training by a certified/approved trainer, including techniques for de-escalating problem behavior. This training counts toward the foster parents' annual in-service training requirement. For a listing of NC child-placing agencies that have approved physical restraint hold training curricula go to <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/mhddsas/training/rscurricula/agencylist10-18-06web.pdf>.

7. Child-Specific Training

The out-of-home family services agreement may specify training family foster parents shall receive while caring for a family foster child. This training counts toward the foster parents' annual in-service training requirement.

Requirements for Therapeutic Foster Parents

1. Pre-service Training Required for Initial Licensure

Supervising Agencies must provide therapeutic foster parents with the same pre-service training provided to family foster care parents, which is described above. In addition, they must also provide therapeutic foster parents with an additional 10 hours of specific training in behavioral mental health treatment services, which is not limited to but must include the following:

- Role of the therapeutic foster parent;
- Safety planning; and
- Managing behaviors.

The Division of Social Services has developed a 10-hour, pre-service course for therapeutic foster parents called "Becoming a Therapeutic Foster Parent" that covers these required topics.

2. Additional Training during the First Year of TFC Licensure

- Dynamics of emotionally disturbed and substance abusing youth and families
- Symptoms of substance abuse
- Needs of emotionally disturbed and substance abusing youth in family settings
- Development of the person-centered plan/child and family plan
- Medication administration
- Crisis intervention

3. CPR, First Aid, and Universal Precautions Training

Requirements are the same as for parents providing family foster care.

4. Training in Medication Administration

Requirements are the same as for parents providing family foster care.

5. In-service Training Required for Relicensure

Requirements are the same as for parents providing family foster care. May count training as stated in 2 above.

6. HIV Training

Requirements are the same as for parents providing family foster care.

7. Physical Restraint Holds Training

Requirements are the same as for parents providing family foster care.

8. Child-Specific Training

The person-centered plan may specify training the therapeutic foster parent shall receive while caring for a therapeutic foster child. This training counts toward the foster parents' annual in-service training requirement.



Licensing professionals should work with foster parents to document the training that they attend. This is especially important for transfers.

Training Resources for Foster Parents

To remain licensed, every foster parent in North Carolina must attend 10 hours of in-service training every year. For most foster parents this is not a problem—they are already on the lookout for ways to expand their knowledge and enhance their parenting skills so they can provide the best possible care to the children in their homes. To help them in this ongoing quest, the following list describes potential training resources.

- **Fostering Perspectives.** A newsletter by and for North Carolina's foster and adoptive parents, and child welfare professionals. Foster parents who read an issue cover to cover and take the quiz on that issue can present their answers to their licensing professional for 30 minutes credit toward relicensure. To receive notification when new issues appear online, send a message with "Subscribe FP" in the subject line to johnmcmahon@mindspring.com. *Fostering Perspectives* is online at <http://www.fosteringperspectives.org>.
- **NC Foster and Adoptive Parent Association.** For information about annual conferences and other NCFAPA training opportunities go to www.ncfapa.org.

- **Local Foster Parent Associations.** Contact the association nearest you (it may be in a neighboring county) to find out if they have any training events scheduled. To obtain the contact information for foster parent associations in your area, foster parents should call their licensing worker or contact the NC Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (e-mail: ncfapa@uncg.edu).
- **FosterClub.** Offers continuing education credits free at www.fosterclub.com/training. To learn more call 503/717-1552 or e-mail: celeste@fosterclub.com.
- **Foster Parent College.** Online courses available for a fee. To access these you will want to have an Internet connection faster than dial-up. Also available on DVD for personal use by parents and for group use by organizations. To learn more visit www.FosterParentCollege.com, call 800/777-6636, or e-mail fpc@SocialLearning.com.
- **Foster Care and Adoptive Community.** Offers 61 courses. FCAC contracts with states and agencies to provide online training to foster families. The per-course cost for individuals is very low. Go to: www.fosterparents.com
- **Child Trauma Academy.** Online courses on human development, childhood trauma, and the impact of working with high-risk children and families. At www.childtraumaacademy.com

Licensing workers should strongly advise foster parents to check in with them before spending money on training to make sure that the training they have selected is considered valid and appropriate by the Supervising Agency.

Suggestions from Foster Parents

- Foster parents need to know how to better handle the grief process children go through both at removal from the home and then again when the child is to be adopted and they realize that, indeed, they are not ever going back home.
- At each age group we should know what's available for children. The more we keep them busy on positive things the less time they have for negative things.
- Find out what foster parents would like to have training in that is meaningful to help foster a child.
- Aid arrangement of childcare or provide childcare during training and meetings.
- Provide an agenda or synopsis of training to help parents pick training that will benefit them. (For example, not all "cultural issues" classes are the same.)
- Provide information on alternative training options, i.e., books, tapes, correspondence courses.
- Let foster parents know about trainings other agencies are doing.
- If a worker is knowledgeable, valuable training can take place at visits.
- Use knowledgeable families to train other families.