



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for  
Human Services

June 2, 2022

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,  
SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

**SUBJECT: *June is National Reunification Month***

**REQUIRED ACTION:**  Information Only  Time Sensitive  Immediate

In June 2010, the American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law and other stakeholders designated June as National Reunification Month. Reunification is the most desirable and positive legal permanency option for children. This year's theme is "***Shifting Power and Reconnecting Families All Year Long.***"

In the spirit of Reunification Month, North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) would like to take time to celebrate reunification efforts for children and families who experience foster care. Father's Day also falls during the month of June. NCDSS would also like to recognize the importance of fathers in their children's lives, and the commitment to engaging fathers who experience child welfare involvement.

NCDSS is committed to providing resources that can be accessed by county DSS staff and private licensing agency staff in supporting reunification efforts and actively engaging fathers.

**Reunification Resources:**

**Foster Care Appreciation Event and Reunification Celebration:** A [DCDL](#) was issued on May 17, 2022, notifying county agencies and private licensing agencies of an event being held on June 17, 2022. This event will highlight reunification as the most desirable legal permanency option for children. The event will have guest speakers, music, and provide free food and drinks. Please share this event [flyer](#) with friends, colleagues, and family members. This event is open to the public.

**ABA National Reunification Month Website:** This [website](#) provides an abundance of resources for reunification services, and includes articles, webinars, podcasts, videos, etc. ABA will be holding a webinar "*Supporting Families through Reunification and Beyond*" on June 9, 2022, at 2:00pm. You can register for the webinar [here](#). Below are some highlighted resources from this website:

- ["Icebreakers: Tapping into the Power of Families Supporting Families"](#)
- ["Resource Family Tip Sheet for Supporting Reunification"](#)
- ["Partnering with Birth Families to Support Reunification"](#)

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603  
MAILING ADDRESS: 2410 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2410  
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6340 • FAX: 919-334-1123

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

- [“On the Road to Reunification: Experiencing Foster Care with My Sister by My Side”](#)

**Child Welfare Information Gateway:** This Children’s Bureau [website](#) provides an array of practices and strategies that support family reunification efforts in child welfare. Below are some highlighted resources from this website:

- [“Partnering with Birth Parents to Promote Reunification Fact Sheet”](#)
- [“Partnering with Relatives to Promote Reunification Fact Sheet”](#)

**Permanency Roundtables:** The Permanency Roundtable Program seeks to achieve permanency for youth in foster care by addressing the youth’s immediate, critical need for permanency as they approach the age of 18. Achieving permanency through reunification, adoption, guardianship, or another lifelong supportive relationship is one way to mitigate the negative outcomes that are probable for youth who would otherwise “age out” without permanent families or positive connections. By offering a structured, targeted approach, the Roundtables can help restore hope for these youth and increase the probability of their achieving permanency, even under difficult circumstances.

There are several counties currently participating in Permanency Roundtables with Cindy Hamilton of Linear Consulting, LLC. The participating counties have provided positive feedback regarding their experience and the permanency outcomes from these roundtables. County DSS agencies who would like to schedule a meeting with Ms. Hamilton to learn more about the Permanency Value’s Training for DSS staff, stakeholders, and partners in your county, should submit requests to [nc.kids@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:nc.kids@dhhs.nc.gov) or reach out to your NC Kids Consultant.

**Additional Resources:**

- AdoptUSKids: [“Equipping Foster Parents to Actively Support Reunification”](#)
- The North American Council on Adoptable Children: [“Permanence Can Mean Going Home”](#)

**Resources to Promote Engaging and Celebrating Fathers:**

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFH): This [website](#) provides beneficial information for fathers and professionals. NRFH will be holding a virtual event, *“Leading the DRIVE: A Fatherhood Summit on Diversity, Reentry, Inclusion, Vision, and Employment”* on June 15<sup>th</sup> and June 16<sup>th</sup>. More details and registration information for this event can be found [here](#).

**National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI):** The NFI [website](#) has links to data, programs, trainings, and free resources to support engaging fathers in programs and social services.

**Additional Resources:**

- NC DSS June 2021 Permanency Matters Webinar: [“Father Engagement Services”](#)
- Children’s Bureau video, [“Dads Rock! Nurturing Father Engagement”](#)

Please see the June 2022 calendar attachment. This calendar contains simple but impactful ways to support reunification and engage fathers.

Thank you for your commitment to supporting and engaging with children and families in North

Carolina's child welfare system. Should you have questions, please contact Jessica Frisina at [Jessica.Frisina@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Jessica.Frisina@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

*Carla McNeill*

Carla McNeill, MSW  
Section Chief for Permanency  
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human  
Services

Attachment: Reunification and Fatherhood Calendar

Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations  
Lisa Tucker Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services  
Adrian Daye, Deputy Director of Child Welfare Practice  
Tammy Shook, Interim Deputy Director for County Operations  
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services  
Kimaree Sanders, Interim Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing

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