

Guidance from the Children's Alliance of Kansas during COVID-19 Public Health Crisis Regarding TIPS-MAPP, TIPS-Deciding Together & Caring for Our Own Programs in North Carolina

The Children's Alliance of Kansas owns exclusive rights to all the TIPS-MAPP programs (TIPS-MAPP, TIPS-Deciding Together, and Caring For Our Own) and have provided the following guidance to North Carolina Division of Social Services regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of their programs. The TIPS-MAPP program and the Caring For Our Own program cannot be delivered virtually.

The Children's Alliance has approved the use of virtual TIPS-Deciding Together for prospective foster parents. Since TIPS-Deciding Together is designed to be delivered one-on-one and provides bookwork instead of in-person activities, it is better suited to be completed virtually. Permission to do TIPS-Deciding Together virtually is only allowed during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

The following are guidelines and guidance from NCDSS on how to implement virtual TIPS-Deciding Together with families:

TIPS-Deciding Together Leader Qualifications:

- Leaders must be certified in both TIPS-MAPP and TIPS-Deciding Together to use the program with families. Certification in TIPS-MAPP includes those who completed the 8-day certification (June 2013- Present) and those who completed the TIPS-MAPP 3-day Update (June 2013- December 2015).
- Those who are certified in TIPS-Deciding Together can begin virtual delivery of TIPS-Deciding Together with families immediately.
- TIPS-Deciding Together certification does not require an update regardless of how long ago the course was taken.
- For those who were previously certified in GPS-MAPP prior to June 2013, and who did not complete the TIPS-MAPP 3-day Update that was offered by the Division from June 2013-February 2014, you must complete the 3-day update to be eligible to do TIPS-Deciding Together with families.

Guidelines for TIPS-Deciding Together Virtual Delivery with Prospective Foster Parents

- A minimum of 30 hours of preservice training are required for foster home licensure.
- Leaders must be able to see the prospective foster parents via FaceTime, Zoom, GoToMeeting, WebEx, Skype, Facebook Messenger, etc. Phone calls alone do not meet the requirements.
- TIPS-MAPP parent groups that were already in progress prior COVID-19 can switch to virtual TIPS-Deciding Together as long as the leader is certified in TIPS-Deciding Together. Leaders will need to review the TIPS-Deciding Together books and assess which pages correspond with the meeting and material that needs to be covered with each family.

- It is acceptable to use some material from TIPS-MAPP when delivering TIPS-Deciding Together virtually.
- The Children’s Alliance has approved TIPS-Deciding Together consultations to be temporarily used with small virtual groups with the following parameters:
 - No more than three families in a virtual group.
 - Two leaders are required and must be present during the entire training.
 - Leaders will review all six books with the families during the group consultations and families will not be doing the workbooks independently.
 - During each consultation, it is acceptable for the TIPS-Deciding Together leaders to use the workbook as their leader's guide, presenting the information and leading the families in a discussion as they complete the workbook or take notes.
 - Families attend group meetings virtually without having completed their workbook activities and may work through the homework as a group.
- Although virtual TIPS-Deciding Together with more than one family is allowed by the Children’s Alliance, NC DSS recommends that virtual TIPS-Deciding Together be delivered as designed, with one family and one leader. This recommendation is based on the above-mentioned group parameters. Specifically,
 - The one-on-one option allows for trainers to optimize their training time while meeting the 30-hour requirement.
 - Just like in-person TIPS-Deciding Together, when it is delivered with one leader and one family, the leader will spend approximately 15 hours in consultation with the family while the remainder of the 30 hours are credited when the family completes the workbooks independently.
 - Two leaders could complete TIPS-Deciding Together training with *four* families (two each) in 60 hours of staff time, with the added benefit of one-on-one relationship building.
 - In contrast, given the requirements for virtual TIPS-Deciding Together with groups, two leaders would complete TIPS-Deciding Together with *three* families in the same 60 hours of staff time.
 - With TIPS-Deciding Together one-on-one, the family spends more individual time with the leader, which improves relationship-building and promotes the mutual assessment process.
 - One trainer could work with multiple families at the same time.

TIPS-Deciding Together Leader Certification Trainings Offered by the Division

TIPS-MAPP train-the-trainer certifications offered by the Division will not be offered virtually and are postponed until after the crisis has passed.

To increase the capacity of agencies to move forward with doing virtual TIPS-Deciding Together with families during this time, the North Carolina Division of Social Services has obtained special permission from the Children’s Alliance to offer the TIPS-Deciding Together Leader Certification virtually for a temporary period. The Division will offer several 2-day virtual TIPS-Deciding Together Leader Certification trainings for those who are currently TIPS-MAPP certified (June 2013- Present). Participants must have a

working headset or microphone and must have a webcam that will be utilized periodically during the training.

The Division is also assessing the statewide need for the TIPS-MAPP 3-day certification update that is required of those who were certified in GPS-MAPP (prior to June 2013) and who did not receive the 3-day TIPS-MAPP update between June 2013 and December 2015.

To evaluate and meet these needs, it is requested that all public and private licensing agencies conduct an internal staffing assessment and respond to a survey via the links below. Those agencies with locations in more than one city will complete a separate survey for each location. Only one response per agency location. Please respond by May 13, 2020.

DSS Agencies beginning with A – I- Please use this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RLTPPVF>

Private Agencies beginning with A – F- Please use this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RLWHPBD>

DSS Agencies beginning with J – Y- Please use this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RLCSZ55>

Private Agencies beginning with G – Z- Please use this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R8BSTT8>

If you are unable to access your assigned link above, please use this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RL9R727>

Please remember that TIPS-Deciding Together is only one part of the licensing process. Questions about licensing requirements amid Covid-19 should be directed to the Regulatory and Licensing office at 828-232-3160. If you have questions about the TIPS-Deciding Together training, please contact Tammy Shook at tammy.shook@dhhs.nc.gov.