



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Social Services

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**JULY 15, 2014**

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: CHILD WELFARE STAFF**

**SUBJECT: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRACTICE MODEL INTRODUCTION**

Beginning in October 2012, a workgroup comprised of county representatives including direct service social workers, child welfare supervisors, program administrators, and North Carolina Division of Social Services (Division) staff has met regularly to provide direction to the Division on the redesign of In-Home Services. The goals of the group have been to:

1. Gather, review, and consider current, successful CPS In-Home Services practice models used across the state & country.
2. Provide recommendations to the Division as to which model should be selected.
3. Guide the implementation process for the chosen model.

During the meetings, the workgroup has engaged in discussions around family engagement, the impact of the IV-E administrative cost review, "stuck" cases, seeking court intervention, documentation, system of care, and the use of support systems. The workgroup has also listened to presentations on integrating trauma-informed services into this work, as well as applying the Strengthening Families – Protective Factors Framework.

One of the products of this workgroup has been the defining of values for In-Home Services. The goal of developing values for IHS was to firmly establish the unique qualities of this phase in the child welfare continuum. These values will also serve as a guide that can help inform the implementation of a practice model.

At this time, the Division and the In-Home Services Redesign Workgroup are pleased to announce the Four Values of In-Home Services. They are:

1. Responsive - utilize a timely and accurate family-specific approach that identifies risk and increases protective factors through skill acquisition in order to prevent further child maltreatment.
2. Capable - recognize the family as the expert and an important stakeholder; capitalizing on family history, strengths, and supports to partner for solutions.
3. Accountable - remain current in our knowledge and implementation of proven practice, and participate in coaching supervision, to remain accountable to our stakeholders.
4. Preventive - exhaust all efforts through modeling, coaching, collaborating, and evaluating as part of the systemic prevention of future child maltreatment and agency custody.

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The Division encourages you & your agency to begin incorporating these values into your practice with families. This includes, but is not limited to, discussing the values with families, listing them on publications about IHS, and incorporating them into your case plans.

Another major revelation of the workgroup has been that the redesign of services to children and families extends beyond in-home services. In response to this, the workgroup has turned its attention to models that can serve the entire child welfare continuum from prevention to permanence.

In September 2013, the workgroup hosted Dr. Dana Christensen, developer of Solution Based Casework (<http://www.solutionbasedcasework.com/>). Solution Based Casework is an evidence-informed casework practice model that prioritizes partnerships with families while focusing on practical solutions to challenging situations, all the while noticing and celebrating the changes made by the family. By providing a common conceptual map for child welfare caseworkers, supervisors, and treatment providers, it helps staff remain focused on three basic tenets 1) creating a partnership based on problem consensus in language the family understands, 2) focusing that partnership on the patterns of everyday family life that directly relate to threats to safety, and 3) targeting solutions specific to the prevention skills needed to create safety and reduce risk in those family situations. The Division believes this practice model can enhance the delivery of child welfare services across the state, which in turn will improve the outcomes for children & families in North Carolina.

The In-Home Services Redesign Workgroup and the Division found Dr. Christensen's presentation very inspiring and would like for more county representatives to have an opportunity to hear from him. As a means to accomplish this, the Division, along with North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS), cordially invites you to "A Day with Dr. Dana Christensen". This event is being held Wednesday, August 13, 2014, from 9am to 4pm at Orange County Department of Social Services, located at 113 Mayo St., Hillsborough, NC 27278. Lunch will be provided onsite.

In order to accommodate as many counties as possible, we respectfully request that each county send no more than two representatives. It is also highly recommended that the attendees serve as senior decision-making leaders within their respective agencies. Please contact Arlette Lambert ([arlette.lambert@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:arlette.lambert@dhhs.nc.gov) or 919-527-6345) no later than the close of business Friday, August 8, 2014, to indicate how many from your agency will be attending.

The Division and NCACDSS plan to host similar events for other models such as Signs of Safety and/or Safety Organized Practice so that you can hear directly from those developers.

If you have any questions about the Four Values of In-Home Services, the work that the IHS Redesign Workgroup has done, or the Solution Based Casework event, please contact Arlette Lambert.

Sincerely,



Kevin Kelley, Section Chief  
Child Welfare Services

CC: Wayne Black  
Jack Rogers  
Child Welfare Services Team Leaders