



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

2410 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2410

Courier # 2410 • Fax: (919) 733-4756

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Pheon E. Beal, Director
(919) 733-3055

March 15, 2004

Dear Community Child Protection Team Chairperson and County Directors of Social Services

SUBJECT: Community Child Protection Team Update

Dear CCPT Chairperson:

This letter will provide you with the latest information and developments relating to Community Child Protection Team (CCPT) issues. This information include a report from the National Citizen's Review Panel Conference, information on HIPPA, CCPT training and the CCPT Reference Guide. Also included with this letter is a copy of the CCPT end of the year report for 2002. This report was compiled from information contained in the end of the year reports and copies of the report to the local Boards of County Commissioners that you sent to the Division in 2003.

Our CCPT Coordinator, Ms. Fulton participated in the National Citizen's Review Panel Conference at the University of Kentucky. This conference brought together Citizen Review Panel representatives from other states to exchange ideas and information about the state of review panels nationwide. There was a lot of interest in including panel members in regular child protection services training. Many participants expressed an interest in conducting exit interviews with social workers leaving an agency to determine their exact reason for leaving as a means to address high turnover rates. You may see the conference proceedings at <http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/crp/>. Ms Fulton is expected to attend the 2004 National Citizen's Review Panel Conference in May.

Any CCPT member interested in participating in this conference may do so at your own expense. The conference registration is \$100.00, (\$125.00 after April 15th). To receive a registration form for the conference contact Blake Jones at the University of Kentucky Training Resource Center, 1 Quality Street - Suite 700, Lexington, Kentucky 40507, Phone (859) 257-7210, Fax (859) 257-3918, Email - bljone00@uky.edu.

The United States Congress passed the KEEPING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SAFE ACT OF 2003. Public Law 108-36, a section of the Act expands the role of Citizen Review Panels to add:

- review of CPS “practices” as well as policies and procedures;
- public comment on impact of CPS procedures and practices; and
- recommendations to improve state and local CPS.

P.L. 108-36 also, requires The United States Department of Health and Human Service to conduct a study of the effectiveness of citizen review panels, and report on citizen review panel activities.

Some CCPTs have expressed interest in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) as it relates to CCPT responsibilities. On May 21, 2001, the Division issued a Dear County Director letter with information about HIPPA and guidelines for employing HIPPA for CCPT business. That letter may be found on the web at <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/dcdl/section/childrenservices.htm>

Other HIPPA information can be found on the web at <http://www.hipaaplus.com/abouthippa.htm>

The Division is in the process of updating the *CCPT Reference Guide*. The Guide should be ready for mailing during April. The updated version should be given to any member that has joined the CCPT since the October 2000 version was distributed. When members exit the CCPT, the members reference guide should go to the individual taking the place of the old member.

Please contact Ms Fulton to schedule a time for her to meet with your team. She will expect to participate in case reviews of both active child welfare cases and fatality reviews. She will also provide technical assistance and training for teams at any time. The Division held six chairperson training programs during 2002-2003. The sites were Mocksville, Sylvania, New Bern, Elizabeth City, Lillington, and Wentworth. Ms. Fulton offers training based on request, information from agency reviews by Division staff, contents of the end of the year reports and or reports to the Board of County Commissioners, etc.

In 2003, the, Community Child Fatality Prevention Team applied for and received grant funds to develop and provide training on the Infant Homicide Act (Safe Surrender). The team will provide regional training for CCPT/CFPT members **and** Department of Social Services (DSS) child welfare staff in the upcoming months. This training will address the Infant Homicide Act, a safe surrender protocol model, responding to the media, and how DSS will respond to infants coming into custody of the agency as a result of the law. You will receive registration information about this training activity within the next six weeks.

YOUR END OF THE YEAR REPORT AND A COPY OF YOUR REPORT TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WAS DUE AT THE DIVISION BY JANUARY 30, 2004. PLEASE SEND THESE DOCUMENTS NOW IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO. YOUR INFORMATION MUST BE INCORPORATED INTO THE STATE’S END OF THE YEAR REPORT. THE STATE’S END OF THE YEAR REPORT MUST BE INCLUDED WITH OUR ANNUAL IVB STATE PLAN

REPORT by JUNE 2004. Please refer to your *CCPT Reference Guide* for information to be included in the report.

Thank you for your continuing support for children and families in North Carolina. For additional information about CCPT you may contact Phyllis Fulton at her new address at 325 N. Salisbury Street, MSC 2410, Raleigh, NC 27699-2410. Her telephone number is 919-733-2279. The fax number is 919-733-4756. Her email address remains phyllis.fulton@ncmail.net

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jo Ann Lamm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jo Ann Lamm, Program Administrator
Family Support & Child Welfare Services Section

JSL:pbf

Cc: Sherry Bradsher
Children's Program Representatives

FSCWS-07-04

Community Child Protection Team
Citizen's Review Panel
2002 End of Year Report

The Community Child Protection Team (CCPT) program was established in every county by North Carolina General Statutes G.S. 7B 1406, (previously G.S. 143-576.1), in 1991. CCPTs are required by law to review child welfare cases and submit an annual report to the board of county commissioners. This report may contain recommendations, and advocate for system improvements and needed resources where gaps and deficiencies are found. In 1997 North Carolina designated CCPTs as Citizen's Review Panels which were required by the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA). The panels, which must meet at least every three months, are intended to involve citizens in ensuring that states are meeting their goals of protecting children from abuse and neglect. The CCPT is a move to engage the community to look within itself to assess how resources and services promote child protection within a defined geographical area.

In North Carolina CCPTs review active child protective services cases and cases of child fatalities when the cause of death is suspected to have been child abuse or neglect. Team members may refer non-Department of Social Services involved cases for CCPT review. From the case reviews CCPTs determine the child protection needs of the county. Once needs are identified, the CCPT advocates for improvements in the child protection system of the county.

Each of the 100 counties of North Carolina has established CCPTs. In most counties CCPTs have combined with the Child Fatality Prevention Team (CFPT). The CFPT was established by General Statute G.S. 7B 1406, (previously G.S. 143-576.1), to review child deaths when the death was not attributed to child maltreatment and the family had not been involved with child welfare services within twelve months of the death.

In North Carolina, as of December 31, 2002, thirty Community Child Protection Teams are chaired by the Director of the County Departments of Social Services. Forty-one other CCPTs are chaired by a staff person from the County Department of Social Services. Twenty-nine CCPTs are chaired by non-DSS personnel.

In addition to mandated members each county's board of county commissioners may appoint up to five members from the community-at-large. Teams may recommend to the board of commissioners for appointment, individuals that represent the diverseness of the community.

Many counties rely on the County Department of Social Services personnel to take the lead in selecting cases to be reviewed and the nature of information shared from the case records. Teams have an opportunity to expand their spear of influence by eradicating communication barriers between agencies and organizations represented on the team and other components of the community. It is a recognized fact that CCPT members represent a small fraction of the community. An effective CCPT must develop a plan that will allow the team to capture the full essence of child protection in the county including available resources, deficiencies in

services or resources, accessibility, etc.

Information received in 2002, from the end of the year reports of fifty-four counties, cited parental drug and or alcohol involvement (44%) and ineffective parenting (20%) as the factors that most often increased the risk levels of the children in the families. Site visits to fifteen local team meetings corroborated these findings. Other child protection needs most often cited throughout the state were teen pregnancy, recreational sexual activity among teens, inadequate community transportation systems, school drop outs, ineffective mental health services and some law enforcement agencies failure to provide adequate services to children that have been sexually abused.

Information gathered from the reports indicates that CCPTs recommend:

- More effective mental health services for substance abuse addicts victims of child sexual abuse, and out of control teens
- State funding for more efficient transportation services for rural communities
- Family preservation services that include in-home parenting instruction for all counties in the state
- A legislative review of North Carolina's stalking laws to insure that the laws include the stalking of children
- Strengthening the enforcement of laws governing child sexual abuse, firearm storage, and fire detectors.

The North Carolina Division of Social Services evaluates the recommendations for possible action. Currently the Division in partnership with the Division of Mental Health is developing a program that addresses the mental health needs of children. Multiple Response System (MRS) is currently being piloted in fifty-two counties and one of the seven strategies being tested is a re-design of how DSS provides services to families once a finding has been made which includes referrals to Family Preservation Services (FPS).

Members of the CCPT are offered training in areas that often put children at risk. During 2002 three regional chairperson training workshop were conducted. Issues discussed at this training included, selecting good team members, motivating the entire membership to carryout their responsibilities more effectively, how to select cases for reviews, frequency of meetings and confidentiality. Sixty-six chairpersons participated in this training.