



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

325 North Salisbury Street • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408  
Courier # 56-20-25-MS# 2408

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Director  
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Pheon E. Beal,  
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September 29, 2003

**DEAR COUNTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS, WORK FIRST PROGRAM MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS**

**Subject: Selection of the Counties for the 2003 Expansion of the Multiple Response System**

As you are well aware, the General Assembly has authorized the expansion of the MRS demonstration project to a total of 33 county departments of social services. This number includes the original 10 MRS demonstration counties and 23 other counties. The special provision language allows for us to exceed the maximum number of 33 if it can be determined that we have the resources to accommodate more counties.

We sent you a letter on August 1, 2003 inviting your agency to submit a plan for inclusion in the expansion of MRS. The response to our invitation was overwhelming in that 41 counties submitted proposals describing their plans for consideration as a MRS expansion county. The Division has evaluated its resources and capacity, and is very proud to announce all 41 agencies have been selected for inclusion in the 2003 expansion of MRS. The 41 counties to be included in the 2003 expansion of MRS are as follows:

Alexander	Ashe	Brunswick	Caswell
Catawba	Chatham	Cherokee	Clay
Cleveland	Currituck	Davidson	Davie
Duplin	Durham	Gates	Graham
Halifax	Harnett	Haywood	Henderson
Iredell	Jackson	Johnston	Lee
Lincoln	Macon	Martin	Moore
New Hanover	Orange	Pasquotank	Person
Polk	Scotland	Swain	Union
Wake	Warren	Watauga	Wilson
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The inclusion of these counties will increase the total number of MRS counties to 51 across North Carolina. The expansion of MRS to include more than half our county departments of social services provides us the opportunity to build on the efforts of the original 10 counties to use the family-centered principles of partnership woven throughout MRS's seven strategies to achieve our mission of ensuring safe, nurturing and permanent families for children. We will also be better positioned to continue our efforts of accomplishing a profound reform of child welfare services across the state.

The family-centered principles of partnership are that 1) everyone desires respect, 2) everyone needs to be heard, 3) everyone has strengths, 4) judgments can wait, 5) partners share power; and, 6) partnership is a process. These provide the basis for MRS's strategic inter-dependent system of service provision.

The seven strategies of MRS are:

1. Implementation of a strengths-based, structured intake process
2. A choice of two approaches to reports of child abuse, neglect or dependency
3. Coordination between law enforcement agencies and child protective services for the investigative assessment approach
4. A redesign of in-home services
5. Utilization of a team-decision making approach in Child and Family Team meetings
6. Implementation of Shared Parenting meetings in placement cases
7. Collaboration between WorkFirst and child welfare programs

We welcome these counties into the MRS, and anticipate building a close partnership with each of them as they implement its seven strategies. We will continue to identify opportunities to keep the other 49 counties updated on the progress of the 51 MRS demonstration counties. We would encourage the remaining county departments of social services to continue your planning in anticipation of the statewide implementation of MRS.

Any questions concerning the expansion of MRS should be directed to Tony Troop, MRS policy consultant. He may be contacted by telephone at (919) 733-4624 or by e-mail. His e-mail address is [Tony.Troop@ncmail.net](mailto:Tony.Troop@ncmail.net).

Sincerely,



JoAnn Lamm, Program Administrator  
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Section

CC: Pheon Beal  
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Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders  
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Work First Program Representatives  
Local Business Liaisons

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