



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

325 North Salisbury Street • MSC 2406 • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2406
Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director
(919) 733-3055

July 9, 2008

Dear County Director of Social Services

Anson, Bertie, Duplin, Greene, Halifax, Hoke, Hyde, Martin, McDowell, Nash, Pamlico, Vance

SUBJECT: School Based Child and Family Support Team Initiative [\(CFST\)](#) Plan/Agreement

Each county whom receives this letter has been receiving recurring funds in the amount of \$35,067 to assist with employing facilitators to conduct child and family team (CFT) meetings with children referred to the county DSS by their school. Previously, a "Terms and Conditions Statement" was signed by each county receiving these funds to agree that a position would be established for this specific purpose.

In addition to the commitment to maintain an established CFT Facilitator position, a plan/agreement must be developed to address how each county CFT Facilitator is collaborating with their local school district to support the children and their families referred to the DSS by the school that are at risk of academic failure and or out of home placement. The plan does not have to be extensive in length. A sample plan outline is attached to show what is required.

Currently, a county DSS can code the CFT Facilitator's time preparing for a CFT, participating in a CFT, and any follow up needed to help meet the child's needs that were identified during the CFT. A child that is open for a CPS assessment or CPS In-Home Services code the time spent to the Services Information System (SIS) code 219. Time spent doing the same tasks for a child in foster care is coded to 119.

The Division of Social Services has created a new SIS code number to allow a county DSS to code a facilitator's time spent preparing for, participating in, facilitating, and any follow up to a CFST meeting specifically for those children not open for any child welfare services and therefore the child would not have an open client ID (SIS #). The service code is 319 (Child and Family Support Team Activity) and program code N (Non-DSS Reimbursable) effective July 1, 2008 for applicable counties. The SIS manual will be updated in the near future to reflect this change.

The county DSS CFT Facilitator shall continue to take the lead in conducting a CFT for those children and their families whose primary unmet needs are related to child welfare, abuse, or neglect. When the primary need identified is preventing academic failure, the school support team will take the lead in facilitating the meeting. Though, it is important to maintain focus on our MRS Principles of Partnership as well as the

System of Care philosophy and principles as county DSS are encouraged to collaborate with schools, other agencies, and family partners on a local level to best meet the needs of the families they work with.

If a plan/agreement is not submitted by a county DSS to the Division by August 31, 2008, those funds will be reallocated to another county.

If there has been no identified person employed, whether continued, contracted or newly hired, to be the CFT facilitator and contact for the CFST Initiative for the entire period of time between July 1, 2008 and October 31, 2008, all CFT facilitator funds will begin the process of reallocation to another county in November 2008.

A temporary CFT Facilitator/contact person for the Initiative may be utilized for the period of a maximum of 3 consecutive months if there is a loss/leave of that employee from that position. The temporary CFT Facilitator/contact person may have an additional position at the agency but they are to have attended CFT Facilitator training.

The training, "Anchors Away, How to Navigate Child and Family Teams, the Role of the Facilitator," is still currently being offered regularly at training sites throughout the state. Go to <http://www.ncswlearn.org/> for information and registration.

During the Federal Child and Family Services Review, CFT's were continually recognized as a strength. They are a highlight of our Program Improvement Plan that we plan to expand in an effort to improve family centered child welfare practice in NC. The Division does hope each county is successful in maintaining a CFT Facilitator that is able to collaborate with their schools.

Please submit the plan/agreement to Rick Zechman at 325 N. Salisbury St., 2406 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2406 by August 31, 2008. If you have any questions about this letter, please feel free to contact Rick Zechman (eric.zechman@ncmail.net) with the Family Support and Child Welfare Team at (919) 334-1108.

Sincerely,



Charisse S. Johnson, Chief

Attachment:

DSS Sample CFST Plan

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher
Sarah Barham
Local Business Liaisons Managers
Jo Ann Lamm
Children' Services Program Representatives
Family Support and Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Work First Representatives
Hank Bowers

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