

MRS Conference Call Notes
March 2011

Counties Participating 2/14: Catawba, Cleveland, Forsyth, Gaston, Gates, Northampton, Orange, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Person, Rockingham, Scotland, Washington, Yadkin, Yancey,

Counties Participating 2/28: Alamance, Caldwell, Chatham, Dare, Guilford, Hoke, Jackson, Lenoir, Madison, Randolph, Rockingham, Surry, Warren, Watauga.

Counties Participating 2/29: Alamance, Alexander, Beaufort, Bladen, Brunswick, Caswell, Cumberland, Davidson, Davie, Edgecombe, Gaston, Harnett, Mecklenburg, Nash, New Hanover, Orange, Person, Pitt, Polk, Union, Vance, Wilson.

Agenda

Announcements from Raleigh

Discussion on changes to Risk Assessment form and protective capacity (Terri Reichert)

Completing the 5104a (Responsible Individual List form)

CFT documentation tool, what is working and what isn't? What would you change? How are you using it?

You pick the last one!

News from Raleigh

Letters:

- CFSR schedule through the end of the year
- Overview of REAP (Reaching for Excellence and Accountability In Practice) project
- Fingerprints – Foster Care Licensing Issues – we were audited and there were some compliance issues
- Money Matters Training – now offered on-line
- Changes in Instructions for completing the 5104a

Structured Decision Making

- A power point presentation by Terri Reichert

Strengthening Families and Protective Factors (slide 2)

- Strengthening Families is a conceptual framework that is an intentional focus on preventing child abuse and neglect through the promotion of protective factors
- Protective Factors - There are certain factors that have been determined to decrease the likelihood of child abuse and neglect
 - Parental Resilience
 - Social Connections
 - Knowledge of Parenting
 - Concrete Support in Times of Need
 - Social and Emotional competence

How are people doing this?

- One county said they incorporate the protective factors – try to ensure that they help build capacity for those factors.
- Don't do it in a formal "following the Strengthening Families program" way – its just best practice.
- This is something Terri wants to point out – this is nothing new. This just names it and calls attention to it in a new way.
- This does not have to be a major life-altering event – it can be something like making the family see someone they already know as a support when they had not thought of them that was before.
- CFTs are a good way to promote resiliency in families.

The Protective Factors (slide 3)

- Parental Resilience
 - The capacity to cope with all types of challenges.

How do we help a family build the capacity for this?

- We need to set aside our values sometimes and realize all the things they do well. Usually we are there telling them all the wrong things that they are doing and don't commend them for all the times they do things right and try to build on and expand those.
- Work with our families on developing supports that they can maintain when service providers are no longer involved. Shared parenting has worked in this respect as many foster parents have maintained relationships and have been supports after the child has reunified with the family.

The Protective Factors (slide 4)

- Social Connections
 - Refers to those relationships with family, friends and neighbors that can provide a sympathetic listener, advice or other supportive activity.

How do we help a family build the capacity for this?

- Advocacy network that offers support groups and as parents create friends in those environments they can use those people as supports.
- Many of the participants in these groups are former DSS clients but it is not mandatory.
- SafeChild of Wake County provides Circle of Parents which seems to be a good model.
- One county has a good program run by Smart Start.
- Determine if this is a positive connection or just a connection. Is this support going to follow through and actually support the parent in a time of crisis? Try a test run of calling the support late at night.
- One county had a client that was very isolated and we got the Mother a ride to a Spanish speaking church. She met families there that were able to help.
- A county has an advocate for the Latin/Hispanic population and Sister Suzy is a known advocate for this population.
- CFTs help with this as well – talk about who the family can bring to the CFT and have as a support.

The Protective Factors (slide 5)

- Knowledge of parenting
 - This is demonstrated by parents providing respectful communication and consistent rules and expectations.

How do we help a family build the capacity for this?

- Workers feel that they are so overwhelmed with paperwork that they do not have time to model the parenting and do the in home work as they used to.
- Holly suggested Coaching in the Kitchen training – offers help and suggestions on how you can use moments that occur spontaneously and turning them into teaching moments. Only offered twice every six months so keep an eye out.
- Need to determine if people have age appropriate expectations and then consequences that coexist with that? Use exception questions (“When did you feel like beating your child but you didn't?”) and then determine why they didn't follow the negative route that one time and build on that to determine how they can related that instance to others.
- At the end of In-Home Services training everyone shares their favorite intervention and Holly is amazed at the ways people are using the Internet to find new activities.
- One social worker had families who could not get to parenting classes. She got a TV and VCR donated and some parenting videos and set up an area in her office for parents to view the videos then discuss with her.
- One county refers families to Parents as Teachers. This program allows the professional from Parents as Teachers to go into the home and work with the parent one on one.

The Protective Factors – (slide 6)

- Concrete Supports in times of need
- This is the ability to cover day-to-day expenses and unexpected costs that come up from time to time, access to supports such as health services, counseling, and other social services.

How do we help a family build the capacity for this?

- A lot of churches in the community can offer concrete assistance so the DSS has updated their list of what churches offer what.
- Other counties have noticed that the faith community has expanded its outreach.
- Provide family with resource numbers and addresses for them to have we needed.
- Angel Food Ministries for some families is a good program. It can be accessed on line and they deliver to various area. They provide a substantial amount of food at a reduced rate.
- One agency has EA funds that are available to CPS clients above and beyond the regular EA assistance. Also keep a mini food pantry in the office.

The Protective Factors (slide 7)

- Social and emotional competence of children
- Nurturing and attachment is when parents and children have strong, warm feeling for one another, and trust that their basic needs will be met.

How do we help a family build the capacity for this?

- Mom had been in foster care as a child (likely due to dirty house issues) and she had 2,3, and 4 children. She kept a super clean house but the kids were bouncing off the walls. Holly got her to take 15 minutes away from the cleaning and play with the children. It seemed natural to Holly but wasn't to this mom. But she saw how they always calmed down and enjoyed it when Holly came in and let them on her lap and played with them and she was interested and open to finding out why they acted that way for her.
- Suggesting to families that they do things with their children and someone suggested that DSS make a list of low cost or free things to do with their families because many of them can't think of things they can afford to do with their families for fun.
- Encourage parents to participate in school activities.
- One county has developed their own program for youth in foster care from ages 6-12 that helps teach these kids about these areas and helps them to find supports in the community
- Intensive In Home Services.
- Dreams program.

Kristin Shared what the Division is doing on the Prevention End on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors framework.

- Center for the Study of Public Policy – one of our partners through the Children's Bureau
- How we can learn more about these protective factors and incorporate the
- Bring CSPP to do more in depth training for us around protective factors
- Self Assessment tool that the CSPP has published
- Link to info on Strengthening families and Protective factors
 - <http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors/protective.cfm>
 - http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net/index.php/partner_organizations/category/alliance/

Structured Decision Making (slide 8)

- The SDM's are a natural fit for assessing the presence of protective factors in families that are involved in the child welfare system

The SDM Tools (slide 9)

- DSS-5229 Strengths and needs assessment
 - A good method to help identify protective factors
- DSS-5226 Risk Reassessment
 - Makes allowances for the presence of protective factors in the assessment of risk
- DSS-5230 Risk Assessment

- Awareness of protective factors may mitigate risk and can be used as justification for overrides
- DSS-5227 Reunification Assessment
 - Allows for protective factors to be considered

Comments:

- Need to educate families on the differences between strengths and protective factors – being employed is a strength but if they are working 3rd shift and leaving kids alone that is not a protective factor.
- Can we use simple language on the forms that are shared with the families?
- The Spanish forms are not up yet but we they are in the queue for translation.

Filing our the 5104a (Responsible Individual's List) Correctly

- The Policy Team is working with DIRM and Performance Management to have an automated system as soon as possible.
- In the meantime, these forms are being sent to Terri and she is noticing some consistent errors across most counties.
- Instructions for this forms are in the last half of the policy – Chapter 8, Section 1427 talks about how to complete this form.

Letter

- The Letter sent to the individual must contain a thorough, detailed reason for the substantiation. Have to have that information for due process.
- Terri sees a lot of letters that do not have enough information.
- This information would go at the beginning of the sample letter.
- Fields most commonly done incorrectly:
 - 24 – RIL code
 - 25 – Date of RIL placement – must be a minimum of 16 days after letter goes out.
 - 26 – Date Division notified – date you are submitting the information to the Division
- If there is a Judicial Review or hearing, the name cannot be put on the list until the order is signed, so you cannot send the information to the state until the order is signed.
- Recommendation is that counties have a central person to review this information for accuracy due to the liability issues.
- If all information is not filled in completely and correctly, and all supporting documentation is included, Terri will not put the person on the list and will return the packet to the county.
- The Division has reached out to AOC to help judges understand the critical nature of the Review process.

Other Items:

Absent Parents

- Orange County shared their Diligent Efforts checklist (attached to these notes).

CFT Documentation Tool

- If you did all the work but couldn't have the meeting cause maybe the supports didn't show up, people would like a way to capture why it didn't happen. (Show your diligent effort.)
- There is a Word Version – email Holly and she will send it to you.

Combining PPAT and CFTs

- Holly asked what the group thought about combining the forms for PPAT's and CFT's.
- Most thought it would be too confusing on the 28th call, however more people were interested on the 29th.

CFSRs and CFTs

- Holly was just part of a CFSR and wanted to point out that CFT's can really help or hurt your CFSR. They should be documented well and the planning piece done.

Supervision course in Asheville

- Only 7 people so far, in danger of being cancelled. Lasts 3 days over 3 months. Most people really enjoy it,

April Meetings:

Dates: 13th, 25th, and 27th.

Case Name: _____

ABSENT PARENT CHECKLIST: DILIGENT EFFORTS TO LOCATE

Known Identifying Information:

Absent Parent: _____ DOB: _____

Race: _____ Sex: _____ SSN: _____

Last Known Address: _____

Telephone Numbers: _____

Present Employer: _____

Past Employer: _____

Last Contact Date with Child(ren): _____

Last Contact Date with Parent of Child(ren): _____

Relatives (maternal and paternal and contact information): _____

DATE ACTION INITIATED	DATE INFORMATION RECEIVED	
		Discussion with known parent re contact info for absent parent (initial and ongoing)
		Discussion with children re contact info for absent parent (initial and ongoing)
		Discussion with collaterals re contact info for absent parent (initial and ongoing)
		Discussion with relatives re contact info for absent parent (initial and ongoing)
		Telephone Call to Engage Absent Parent
		Introduction Letter Mailed re CPS Involvement
		Contact landlord for forwarding address
		Contact utility companies (water, electric, gas) to determine account status or change in service
		Other
		Criminal Record Check: Civil/RIL/Gun Permit
		Out-of-State Criminal Record Check if Need Verified with Supervisor
		CPS Record Request/Check (HOST)
		Court Calendar Check for Absent Parent – Orange County or other counties where father is rumored/ known to reside or spend time http://www1.aoc.state.nc.us/www/calendars/Crimi

		nalQuery.html
		Department of Correction Screen/Probation and Parole System Screen (WIRM) Probation- Hillsborough- 732-9303 Chapel Hill / Carrboro- 967-9237
		Criminal website searches: Federal Inmates: http://www.bop.gov/iloc2/LocateInmate.jsp NC Inmates: http://webapps6.doc.state.nc.us/opi/offendersearch.do?method=view Sex Offender: http://www.familywatchdog.us/
		Department of Motor Vehicle Screen: NCDL # +Auto Registration Screen (WIRM)
		Orange County Compass Service Record Search (Work First/Food Stamps/Medicaid/ Social Security) Other NC Counties, WIRM
		Employment Security Search (Work History and wages) (WIRM)
		Tax Records/City Directory Search- 245-2500 or http://web.co.orange.nc.us/TaxInquiry/index.asp
		Veterans/Military Search: Branch Served: Dates Served: Orange County Veteran's 245-2890
		Internet Sites Searched: MySpace/Facebook/whitepages.com/spokeo.com/pipl.com/Alumni sites
		Child Support (245-2175) Child Support Agent: Paternity Status:
		Contacted child(ren)'s school for any parent info listed
		If address is known and this is a FC case, father's home visited between 8am and 5pm
		If address is known and this is a FC case, father's home visited between 5pm and midnight

Shared from the MRS call of 3/14 with permission of Orange County DSS.