

# MRS!

INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF NORTH CAROLINA'S MULTIPLE RESPONSE SYSTEM

January 2013

## Dispelling the Myths NC Child Welfare Policy quiz

Answer the questions below to test your knowledge of state policy. You'll find answers and explanations on the following pages. Watch out for the trick question!

	True	False
1. To be victims of domestic violence, children must have seen, heard, or been involved in the violence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. CPS cannot respond to reports of maltreatment in licensed facilities using the Family Assessment response.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. During a CPS Assessment all cases must be seen at least twice a month.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When there is a report of maltreatment and there is a conflict of interest, the DSS in the child's county of residence is the one responsible for ensuring the safety assessment is being followed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When conducting a CPS Assessment of a foster home supervised by a private agency, the CPS social worker may have no contact with the supervising agency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. County DSS child welfare agencies cannot require, demand, or otherwise compel caretakers to undergo drug screening.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. When an in-home services case is rated "high risk," policy requires CPS to see everyone in the home at least once a week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. All initial safety assessments should be rated at least "conditionally safe."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. When reunification is the goal, there's no need for birth parents to attend CFTs or permanency planning meetings as long as the foster care provider is present.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Shared parenting is required whenever a child is in DSS custody.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. APPLA can be used as a primary permanent plan for teens in group home placements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. When a child is in DSS custody there is no need to visit the child's parents if they are in prison or jail.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Kinship care assessments can be done in the office, car, or over the phone. Also, the Central Registry may not be checked for a kinship assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. All children are IV-E eligible during their first 30 days in foster care, while DSS determines their eligibility for IV-E.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Adolescents who sign Contractual Arrangement for Residential Services Agreements (CARS agreements) are still in DSS custody.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### MRS Meetings

*MRS and System of Care meetings take place three times monthly via conference call.*

*Dates and call-in and login information for February's MRS meetings will be sent out through the MRS listserv. Please send requests to join the list to Holly McNeill [holly.mcneill@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:holly.mcneill@dhhs.nc.gov)*

### MRS Questions?

If you have questions regarding the implementation of any aspect of MRS, please contact Holly McNeill at 828/757-5672 or [holly.mcneill@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:holly.mcneill@dhhs.nc.gov)

## Training Dates

### Adult Mental Health Issues Which Impact Families Served by Child Welfare

Jan. 28–Feb. 13  
Feb. 27–March. 15  
May 28–June. 13

All online

### Child Development in Families at Risk

Feb. 11–March 11  
March 4–April 1  
April 16–May 14  
May 7–June 5

All online

To learn about these courses or to register, go to <http://www.ncswLearn.org>

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### Comments?

Contact Patrick Betancourt, Child Welfare Services, NC Division of Social Services, 2408 Mail Service Center, 325 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC 27699-2408, Courier: 56-20-25, 919/334-1104; [patrick.betancourt@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:patrick.betancourt@dhhs.nc.gov)

### Online

[www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/mrs](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/mrs)

## Dispelling the Myths NC Child Welfare Policy quiz answers

### 1. To be victims of domestic violence children must have seen, heard, or been physically involved in the violence.

**FALSE.** Children are victims of domestic violence if:

- The child has ever called 911, intervened, or been physically harmed during violent incidents between adults.
- The child is fearful for his or her life or the non-offending parent/adult victim's life.
- The child is present when the batterer inflicts injury on the battered parent/caretaker.
- There has been repeated police involvement, and/or civil protective orders have been obtained.
- There is a history of DV or the violence is increasing in frequency.
- There are weapons present or weapons have been used.

Source: Chapter VIII, Section 1409, IV

### 2. CPS cannot respond to reports of maltreatment in licensed facilities using a Family Assessment.

**True.** All CPS reports (regardless of the allegations) involving allegations concerning a child in the custody of a local DSS, family foster home, residential facility, or child care situation must be done as an Investigative Assessment.

Source: Section 1408, III, A

### 3. During a CPS Assessment all cases must be seen at least twice a month.

**FALSE.** There is no pre-determined number of visits for open CPS cases. Until the case is closed or transferred, the agency shall maintain sufficient contact during the CPS Assessment to:

- Ensure the safety of the child;
- Assess ongoing risk;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the safety response; and
- Ascertain family strengths.

Section Chapter VIII, Section 1408, II, E (4)

*Note: Encouraging case-by-case analysis of the level of contact needed develops the critical thinking skills essential for effective assessments.*

### 4. When there is a report of maltreatment and there is a conflict of interest, the DSS in the child's county of residence is the one responsible for ensuring the safety assessment is being followed.

**FALSE.** Usually the county responsible for conducting the CPS Assessment is the child's county of residence as defined by statute. In conflict of interest cases and in some out-of-home placement cases, the county responsible for conducting the CPS Assessment will not be the child's county of residence. In either case, the county conducting the CPS Assessment is fully responsible for the completion of a thorough CPS Assessment and for ensuring all components of a thorough assessment occur. Source: Chapter V, Section III, C (1) (b)

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**5. When conducting a CPS Assessment of a foster home supervised by a private agency, the CPS social worker may have no contact with the supervising agency.**

**FALSE.** When the assessment is related to an out-of-home placement provider, there are additional required activities. Policy states that:

- The agency responsible for supervising the home shall be notified verbally within 2 hours that a report was received and accepted for a CPS Assessment.
- For facilities licensed by the NC Division of Health Services Regulation, verbal notification shall be to the intake/complaint unit at 1-800-624-3004. Should this occur after hours it is permissible to leave a message.
- For facilities supervised/licensed by the NC Division of Social Services, verbal notification that a report has been received is not required.

Source: Chapter V, Section III, C (5), (b)

**6. County DSS child welfare agencies cannot require, demand, or otherwise compel caretakers to undergo drug screening.**

**True.** In cases where there is reason to suspect that substance abuse contributes to risk for the child, a drug screen can be requested of the caretaker. A positive drug screen alone is not an indication of substance abuse or dependency, just as a negative drug screen alone does not indicate of a lack of substance abuse or dependency issues.

However, DSS should make no statements that would lead the caretaker to feel coerced or under duress. This includes statements such as “If you don’t agree to the take the test, I will have to remove your children,” or “If you refuse to take the test, it will be considered a positive result.” Even implying this is considered coercive. Source: Chapter VIII, Section 1408, II, E (5)

**7. When an in-home services case is rated “high risk,” policy requires CPS to see everyone in the home at least weekly.**

**FALSE.** At a minimum, the following requirements shall be in effect:

- All children substantiated as abused, neglected, or dependent, or identified as “services needed” and their parents or primary caretakers shall be seen face-to-face two times per month.
- All other children (unsubstantiated or found “services recommended” or “services not recommended”) residing in the home shall be seen face-to-face one time per month.
- Every other week the social worker shall be required to have face-to-face contact with as many significant family members as necessary to ensure the children’s safety. This face-to-face contact should include a discussion of the risk factors and behaviors identified during the assessment.

Source: Chapter VIII, Section 1412, VI, A

## Training Dates

### Child Welfare Practices for Cases Involving Domestic Violence

Feb. 27–28

Washington

March 12–13

Greensboro

April 3–4

Fayetteville

April 25–26

Asheville

June 4–5

Raleigh

### CPS Assessments

Feb. 12–15

Charlotte

March 25–28

Greensboro

April 9–12

Fayetteville

May 21–24

Asheville

June 17–20

Charlotte

### CPS In-Home Services

Feb. 26–March 1

Greenville

March 19–22

Greensboro

May 7–10

Asheville

June 4–7

Fayetteville

### Effects of Separation and Loss on Attachment

Feb. 25–26

Fayetteville

June 3–4

Asheville

June 26–27

Charlotte

To learn about these courses or to register, go to <http://www.ncswLearn.org>

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## Training Dates

### Fostering and Adopting the Child Who Has Been Sexually Abused

April 9-12  
Asheville

April 23-26  
Fayetteville

### Intake

March 3-5  
Kinston

April 24-26  
Charlotte

May 15-17  
Asheville

### Legal Aspects

Feb. 14-15  
Statesville

March 13-14  
New Bern

April 4-5  
Clyde

### Medical Aspects

Feb. 11-12  
Fayetteville

Feb. 20-21  
Greenville

April 18-19  
Asheville

### MAPP-GPS

Feb. 12-28  
Fayetteville

March 5-14  
Beaufort

April 30-May 10  
Asheville

### Staying Power! A Supervisor's Guide to Coaching and Developing Child Welfare Staff

March 5-7  
Asheville

May 7-9  
Location TBA

To learn about these courses or to register, go to <http://www.ncswLearn.org>

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#### 8. All initial safety assessments should be rated at least “conditionally safe.”

**FALSE.** The presence of an allegation does not necessarily warrant a safety response. Therefore it is inappropriate to consider the mere existence of an allegation as a safety factor. Source: Section 1408, II, F (1)

Some points to ponder on this one:

- Why complete the form if the rating is a foregone conclusion?
- A quick analogy: You go to your physician. He does a complete work up. You pass with flying colors—blood pressure and cholesterol good, no diabetes, good heart rate, etc. But he says “Just to cover my bases, I still want you to take this medicine.” Are you going to take it? Many people would not. The same goes for families when they don’t see the need for a safety response.
- What’s more, using a safety response in all cases dilutes the importance of them for families and social workers.

#### 9. When reunification is the goal, there is no need for birth parents to attend CFTs or permanency planning meetings as long as the foster care provider is present.

**FALSE.**

- **CFTs.** It is literally *impossible* to have a CFT meeting when the family and natural supports (either biological or fictive) are not present. Source: Chapter VII, I, (A) (2)
- **PPATs.** Parents have the right to participate in every review of their child’s case by the Permanency Planning Action Team. Parents must be provided adequate notice of team meetings. Source: Chapter IV, Section 1201, V (h)  
*Refer to Section 1201, Case Reviews, for more information.*

#### 10. Shared parenting is required whenever a child is in DSS custody.

**True.** A social worker should facilitate an initial shared parenting meeting as soon as possible but no later than 7 days after a child’s placement out of the home to ensure the partnership between birth and foster parents has a strong beginning and is supported by DSS. Subsequent initial shared parenting meetings should be held within 7 days if the child is moved to another placement.

Source: Chapter IV, Section 1201, E

#### 11. APPLA can be used as a primary permanent plan for teens placed in group home placements.

**FALSE.** APPLA is a permanent living arrangement for a youth age 14 or over who resides in a family setting which has been maintained for at least the previous six concurrent months. APPLA cannot be used for children placed in group settings. Source: Chapter IV, Section 1201, VI, E (5)

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**12. When a child is in DSS custody there's no need to visit the child's parents if they are in prison or jail.**

**FALSE.** When reunification is the plan, there shall be at least one face-to-face contact with parent(s) per month. Source: Chapter IV, Section 1201, H

**13. Kinship care assessments can be done in the office, car, or over the phone. Also, the Central Registry may not be checked for a kinship assessment.**

**FALSE.** Once the Safety Resource is identified, a check of the CPS Central Registry must be conducted and the formal Kinship Care Initial Assessment, which includes a home visit, must be completed with that person.

- It is appropriate to check the ACIS for any criminal charges or convictions in North Carolina through the AOC database as well as for civil actions such as a domestic violence protective order within the Civil Case Processing System (VCAP).\*
- An assessment of the Safety Resource's home environment must take place prior to the child being left in the care of the Safety Resource.

Source: Chapter VIII, Section 1408, II, F (2)

*\*Note: Your county DSS security officer can help you gain access to these databases.*

**14. All children are IV-E eligible during their first 30 days in foster care, while DSS determines their eligibility for IV-E.**

**trick question.** It is true that IV-E administrative reimbursement may always be claimed for time spent in determining the eligibility of a child, whether or not the child is found to meet IV-E requirements (101-Z). However, no other administrative costs can be claimed to IV-E until IV-E eligibility is determined. Once IV-E eligibility is determined, administrative costs may be claimed starting with the first day of the month in which all initial IV-E eligibility criteria are met.

Source: Chapter XIII, Section 1500, II (B)

**15. Adolescents who sign Contractual Arrangement for Residential Services Agreements (CARS agreements) are still in DSS custody.**

**FALSE.** Counties are encouraged to offer young adults who have been in county custody the opportunity to remain in a licensed foster care facility while continuing their education. The CARS agreement (DSS-5108) allows for state assistance with payment of the standard board rate to the facility.

A CARS agreement is simply a voluntary agreement between the young adult and the agency that allows for State foster care board payment to a licensed foster care facility. The youth is not in DSS custody. Rather, he has voluntarily agreed to be in the agency's placement authority for the duration of the agreement. A CARS agreement differs from a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) in that the young adult, rather than his parents or guardian, is exercising his legal authority to request the placement arrangement.

Source: Section 1201, F, 1, (h) CARS Policy

## Training Dates

### Building Awareness and Cultural Competency

Feb. 5-7

Charlotte

March 13-15

Fayetteville

March 13-15

Wilmington

March 26-28

Greensboro

April 17-19

Fayetteville

April 22-24

Asheville

### Coaching in the Kitchen: Guiding Parents through Teachable Moments

Feb. 4-6

Fayetteville

Feb. 25-27

Asheville

### Step by Step: An Introduction to Child and Family Teams

Feb. 12-13

Duplin County

Feb. 13-14

Granville County

March 12-13

Columbus County

March 19-20

Nash County

March 20-21

Winston-Salem

April 9-10

Martin County

April 23-24

Alamance County

### Introduction to Substance Abuse for Child Welfare Services

April 30-May 1

Location TBA

To learn about these courses or to register, go to <http://www.ncswLearn.org>