# *Training* MATTERS

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**We Want to Hear from You!**

If you have questions or would like to comment about something that appears in *Training Matters*, please contact Teresa Turner, Program Administrator, Family Support and Child Welfare Services Staff Development, NC Division of Social Services, 2412 Mail Service Center, 325 N. Salisbury Street, Suite 531, Raleigh, NC 27699-2412, State Courier: 56-20-25, (Teresa.Turner@ncmail.net, 919/334-1175).

**Visit Our Website**

Go to <www.trainingmatters-nc.org>

This issue of *Training Matters* was produced by John McMahon of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

## Special Issue

# An Overview of NC's Child Welfare Training System

North Carolina's county departments of social services have an important job. Under state and federal law, they are responsible for ensuring the safety, well-being, and permanence of children in every community. To fulfill this responsibility agencies need child welfare professionals who know how to do their jobs well.

Fortunately, our state has developed a child welfare training system to help county agencies meet this need. Administered by the NC Division of Social Services, this system provides agencies with access to training that is competency-based, job-relevant, accessible, consistent, and timely. When agencies and individuals know how to use it, this system is an excellent way to enhance the professional development of child welfare staff at all levels.

This special issue of *Training Matters* explains how the system is organized, lists required courses, and answers common questions. The goal is to make sure county agencies know what this system can do and how to use it to their advantage.

If you have questions or specific child welfare training issues you'd like to discuss, please contact Teresa Turner, Team Leader of the Division's Family Support and Child Welfare Services Staff Development Team (919/334-1175, Teresa.Turner@ncmail.net).

### In This Issue

## Snapshot of the Training System

The system offers county child welfare agencies:

**A Continuum of Training.** The Division and its partners offer a continuum of more than 50 classroom-based and online courses that develop job-relevant knowledge and skills to meet the needs of workers and supervisors at all experience levels.

**Regional Training Centers.** To make training more accessible and affordable, the Division has training centers in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, and Kinston. These centers reduce agency travel costs and time away from the office for child welfare staff. Information about the regional training centers can be found online at the following location: <https://www.ncswlearn.org/help/siteinfo.aspx>

**ncswLearn.org.** This gateway web site allows child welfare workers and supervisors to take online courses, find training events at a glance, apply online to register for training, track their training attendance history, review which courses are required, recommended, or elective, and much more.

No registration fees are charged for child welfare courses offered through this training system.

# Structure of the Training System

Child welfare training in North Carolina is organized in the following way:

## 100 Series

This series is for those who are just beginning child welfare practice in a county DSS agency. The 100 series builds awareness of basic social work theories and provides practice-related and DSS-specific information. Currently the only course in this series is the pre-service training, *Child Welfare in North Carolina.* This course must be completed before attending other courses and is required before assuming direct client contact responsibilities.

## 200 Series

The training events in this series are divided into Tier 1 and Tier 2; both give participants an opportunity to learn about and apply social work theories, procedures, and practices. All child welfare workers and supervisors must complete these courses within the first year of employment.

**Tier 1, 200 Series**. Courses in this tier build upon the pre-service training by providing participants with extensive information regarding job-specific issues essential to the initial and on-going assessment of children and their families.
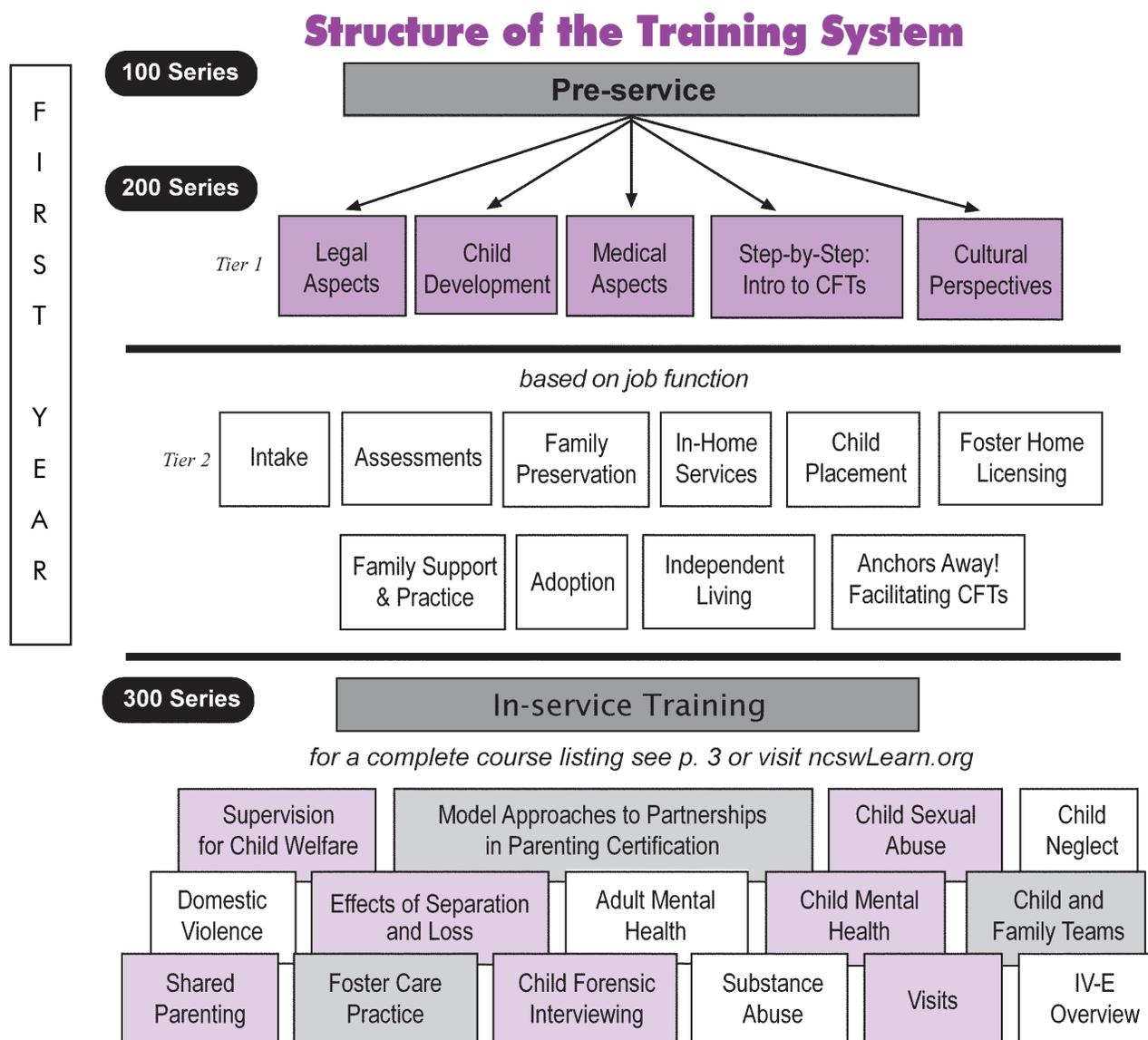
**Tier 2, 200 Series**. Courses in Tier 2 provide child welfare staff with more in-depth knowledge and skills practice regarding job specific information. Child welfare social workers and supervisors must attend the courses in this series that pertain to their job functions (e.g., intake, licensing, etc.).

## 300 Series

Courses in the 300 series are for staff who possess more than one year's child welfare experience. These courses refine and expand staff knowledge and skills gained through the 100 and 200 series courses and through on-the-job training. These courses count toward the 24 hours of in-service training required annually by all child welfare staff.

The figure below illustrates the structure of our child welfare training system but is not a comprehensive listing. For a complete listing of courses offered by the system, see the facing page or visit ncswLearn.org.

## Structure of the Training System

**F I R S T   Y E A R**

**100 Series** — Pre-service

**200 Series**

*Tier 1*: Legal Aspects | Child Development | Medical Aspects | Step-by-Step: Intro to CFTs | Cultural Perspectives

*based on job function*

*Tier 2*: Intake | Assessments | Family Preservation | In-Home Services | Child Placement | Foster Home Licensing

Family Support & Practice | Adoption | Independent Living | Anchors Away! Facilitating CFTs

**300 Series** — In-service Training

*for a complete course listing see p. 3 or visit ncswLearn.org*

Supervision for Child Welfare | Model Approaches to Partnerships in Parenting Certification | Child Sexual Abuse | Child Neglect

Domestic Violence | Effects of Separation and Loss | Adult Mental Health | Child Mental Health | Child and Family Teams

Shared Parenting | Foster Care Practice | Child Forensic Interviewing | Substance Abuse | Visits | IV-E Overview

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# Child Welfare Courses, 2008-2009

**100 Series**
1. Child Welfare in North Carolina

**200 Series – Tier 1**
1. Child Development in Families at Risk
2. Cultural Perspectives
3. Legal Aspects of Child Welfare in North Carolina
4. Medical Aspects of Child Abuse and Neglect for Non-Medical Professionals
5. Step by Step: An Introduction to Child and Family Teams

**200 Series – Tier 2**
1. Adoptions in Child Welfare Services
2. Anchors Away! How to Navigate CFTs: The Role of the Facilitator
3. CPS Assessments
4. CPS In-Home Services
5. Family-Centered Practice in Family Preservation Programs
6. Foster Family Home Licensing
7. Intake in Child Welfare Services
8. Placement in Child Welfare Services

**300 Series**
1. The ABC's of Including Children in Child and Family Teams
2. Adult Mental Health Issues which Impact Families Served by Child Welfare
3. Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Training: Understanding the Instrument, Ratings, and Outcomes
4. Child Forensic Interviewing
5. Child Welfare Practices for Cases Involving Domestic Violence
6. Coaching in the Kitchen: Guiding Parents through Teachable Moments
7. Deciding Together

8. Domestic Violence Policy Training
9. Effects of Separation and Loss on Attachment
10. Emotional Aspects of Termination of Parental Rights
11. Financial & Legal Aspects of Adoption
12. Fostering and Adopting the Child Who Has Been Sexually Abused
13. Fundamental Training Skills I
14. Fundamental Training Skills II: Facilitation
15. In the Best Interest of the Child: Making the Most of Visitation
16. Introduction to Child Sexual Abuse
17. Introduction to Substance Abuse for Child Welfare Services
18. Introduction to Supervision
19. IV-E: An Overview
20. Life Books: Motivating the Memory Keepers
21. MAPP/GPS UNITE Advanced Seminar
22. Methamphetamine: What a Social Worker Needs to Know
23. MAPP/GPS
24. Money Matters: Foster Care Funding Basics
25. Motivating Substance Abusing Families to Change: An Advanced Practice Course
26. Shared Parenting
27. Supervisors Strengthening Staff Performance: Managing Transfer of Learning in the Work Place
28. Technical Assistance and Learning Support (TALS)
29. Testing Our Patience: Investigation and Intervention in High Conflict Custody Cases

## Courses Available Online

### 100% Online
- Child Development in Families at Risk
- *Coming Soon:* Introduction to the Monthly Foster Care Contact Record
- *Coming Soon:* Methamphetamine: What a Social Worker Needs to Know

### Blended Courses (Partially Online)
- Child Welfare in North Carolina: Pre-Service Curriculum for New Workers and Supervisors
- Supervisors Strengthening Staff Performance: Managing Transfer of Learning in the Work Place

30. Understanding and Intervening in Child Neglect
31. Understanding Child Mental Health Issues
32. Understanding the Interstate Process in Placement of Children
33. What's Good for Families Is Good for Workers (Cornerstone II)
34. Widening the Circle: Child and Family Teams and Safety Considerations
35. Working with Others, Working with Outcomes (Cornerstone IV)

### Independent Living Resources
1. Helping Youth Reach Self-Sufficiency (Foster Parent Training)
2. LINKS 101 (formerly Adolescent Independent Living 101)
3. LINKS 201 The Sequel (New LINKS course)

## Inclement Weather Policy

*The following applies to the Regional Training Centers. Classes held at sites other than the training centers will be cancelled if the public schools in that area are closed.*

Whenever there is a threat of, or actual, inclement weather, contact the facility where the training is to be held. See numbers at right. In addition, each training center has an answering machine that will be updated daily during inclement weather.

Classes will be cancelled whenever a facility is closed and resume whenever a facility reopens. Thus, for four-day training, if the community college is closed on Tuesday and Wednesday and reopens Thursday, training will begin with Day 1 on Thursday; the remaining two days will be rescheduled. If you are traveling the night before the training begins and no closing announcements have been made, listen to weather reports and use your best judgment as to whether to attend the event. If we know early enough before the first day of training that a center is closing, we will make every effort to call participants in advance.

### Numbers to Call
- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (828/254-1921)
- Asheville Training Center (828/670-5050)
- Central Piedmont Community College (704/330-6888)
- Charlotte Training Center (704/395-2110)
- Cumberland County Weather Line (910/678-7701)
- *Fayetteville Training Center (910/677-0460)
- Guilford Technical Community College (336/454-1126 or 336/334-4822)
- Greensboro Training Center (336/954-1747)
- Lenoir Community College (252/527-6223)
- Kinston Training Center (252/520-2413)

*\*If Cumberland County schools are closed, there will be no classes at Fayetteville RTC.*

# Courses Required for Child Welfare Staff

North Carolina has training requirements in place for all child welfare workers and supervisors. The best way to find out about training requirements for your position is to go to ncswLearn.org, log in, and go to the Individualized Training Assessment, or ITA. The following summary, which is based on North Carolina law [G.S. 131D-10.6A(b)], may also be helpful.

## Child Welfare Workers

In their first year of employment all child welfare workers are required by law to attend the following:

1. *Child Welfare in North Carolina.* This 72-hour course must be completed before workers assume direct contact responsibility with clients. Participants attend 11 days in the classroom and complete the equivalent of one classroom day online. You must complete this course before you can attend other courses.
2. *Child Development in Families at Risk.* Offered completely online. 12 credit hours.
3. *Cultural Perspectives.* Three classroom days. 18 credit hours.
4. *Legal Aspects of Child Welfare in North Carolina.* Two classroom days. 12 credit hours.
5. *Medical Aspects of Child Abuse and Neglect for Non-Medical Professionals.* Two classroom days. 12 credit hours.
6. *Step by Step: An Introduction to Child and Family Teams.* Two classroom days. 12 credit hours.

In addition, in the first year of employment child welfare workers must attend the courses from Tier 2 of the 200 series that address their job function areas. For example, intake workers must attend *Intake in Child Welfare Services.* Staff responsible for more than one function (e.g., licensing and placement) must take multiple courses from Tier 2. Staff who must attend more than one job-specific training event should work with their supervisor to prioritize training attendance.

After the first year of employment, child welfare workers must complete 24 hours of continuing education each year. Select courses from the 300 series to fulfill this requirement. For selection tips, see the box below.

**The best way to learn about requirements is to log on to ncswLearn.org**

## Supervisors

By law, the training requirements described above also apply to county DSS child welfare supervisors. In addition, within a year of assuming child welfare services managerial functions, supervisors must attend *Introduction to Supervision for Child Welfare Services.* This nine-day course helps new supervisors understand their role, their strengths as a supervisor, and ways to manage change. It emphasizes assessing worker skills, using individual development plans for workers, and providing feedback prior to the formal evaluation process. Participants leave with concrete tools to use as they interact with staff and supervisors. (54 credit hours)

After the first year of employment, child welfare supervisors must complete 24 hours of continuing education each year. Courses from the 300 series specifically for supervisors include:

- *Supervisors Strengthening Staff Performance: Managing Transfer of Learning in the Work Place.* Four classroom days, plus the equivalent of one classroom day online. 30 credit hours.
- *What's Good for Families Is Good for Workers.* Four days, 24 hours.
- *Working with Others, Working with Outcomes.* Three classroom days, 18 credit hours.

## CFT Meeting Facilitators

Because the use of a neutral facilitator significantly enhances the effectiveness of Child and Family Team meetings, anyone who facilitates CFT meetings in high and intensive risk cases is required to attend *Anchors Away! How to Navigate Child and Family Teams: The Role of the Facilitator* within the first 12 months of facilitating.

## To Learn More

For additional information on training laws, policies, and resources, visit <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/training/childwelfare.htm>.

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## Choosing Courses After the First Year

We suggest you do the following when choosing courses to meet training requirements after your first year:

- **Consult your supervisor**. Your supervisor should be able to identify areas in which you need to improve. He or she may also suggest you take a course based on the needs of your agency. Use your supervisor's feedback when selecting a course.
- **Assess your needs**. To help you with this process, consult the Individualized Training Assessment. This online assessment, which takes about 15 minutes, helps you pinpoint your interests and identifies trainings tailored specifically to your needs. Access the ITA through <www.ncswLearn.org>.
- **Gather information**. To learn about the courses offered, visit <www.ncswLearn.org>. Once you have a course in mind, ask people you know who have taken this course if they would recommend it.

Skipping these steps is risky. If you choose a course at random because you think of training as simply time away from the office or you are "just getting your hours in," you may find yourself a prisoner in the classroom, which could be an uncomfortable experience for you and other participants.

Make the most your time. Of the 50 plus courses available, surely there is something out there that is either new to you or that you could benefit from reviewing.

# How to Register

There are three ways to apply to register for child welfare training in North Carolina: online, fax, and US Mail.

## Application and Notification

Whichever method you choose, submitting a registration application **does not guarantee** you a spot in training. After the closing date for registration, a registrar will update you on your status. You will receive either a letter confirming your registration, a "wait list" letter, or an "event full" letter. These will be sent to you as an e-mail attachment or by US mail. These letters will be sent only to the person enrolled for the course, not the person's supervisor or the agency's training administrator.

These procedures are followed for all but the pre-service course, *Child Welfare in North Carolina*. For the pre-service, confirmation letters will be sent out as soon as registrations are confirmed. Letters about pre-service registration status will be mailed or e-mailed to the supervisors of pre-service participants.

## Online Applications

To apply to register online for Division-sponsored training events you must have an account on ncswLearn.org (see below). Only staff from NC county departments of social services, state agencies, and private child-placing agencies are eligible to register for these events.

Once you have an account, go to <ncswLearn.org>. Log in to your account. Click on the "Find a Training" button. A menu will appear; use it to find course descriptions and a schedule of course offerings. Once you find your desired training event, click on "Submit Application for Registration" and provide the requested information. Your application will be received by the course registrar, who will update you on the status of your application.

## Fax/US Mail Applications

In the future all registration applications will need to be submitted online. Right now, however, you can still submit an application via fax or US Mail. Here's how:

**Complete Your Application Form.** Fill out a separate form for each event you want to attend. Use the form found at <https://www.ncswlearn.org/help/pdf/children registrationform.pdf>. Complete the application by printing or typing the information. Applications must be complete; incomplete applications will not be processed until all of the information is obtained. If you are admitted to the course, your name will appear on the certificate as it does on the first line of the application. Home phone numbers are requested in case of inclement weather.

**Submission.** Send applications to the course registrar; registrar fax and mailing information can be found in the Division's training calendar or on ncswLearn.org. Applications will not be accepted until after the registration opening date.

## Key Information for All Applications

**New Employees.** Agencies with new employees to hire must use the new employee's name and employment starting date when registering for training. Do not use another employee's name to secure registration for the individuals to be hired.

**After Registration Closes.** If the registration closed date has passed and you have not yet registered but wish to, contact the course registrar. He or she will let you know whether space is available. Registration applications submitted after the closing date must be faxed.

**No Substitutions.** Agencies may not register one person and then send another person in his or her place, even if the first person cancels. Training slots are assigned to individual participants, not to a particular county. If someone cancels his or her registration, the registrar fills the classroom vacancy by contacting the next person on the waiting list.

**Cancellations**. If you are registered for a course but you cannot attend, please e-mail the course registrar immediately. This will make it possible to meet the training needs of staff from other agencies. If you register but do not attend and do not e-mail the registrar, your supervisor and agency director will receive a "No Show" letter notifying them of your absence from training.

**Training Credit**. To receive a certificate of completion participants must be present for the entire training, unless it is an emergency. If you miss the first day of training you will be asked to register for another event. If you must leave early or arrive late due to an emergency, speak to the trainer to arrange a time to make up missed material. Until the material is made up, you will receive an incomplete, and a letter will be sent to your supervisor informing them of your "incomplete" status.

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### Creating an Account on ncswLearn.org

Note: you must have a work e-mail address.

1. Go to <http://www.ncswLearn.org>
2. Click "Create a User Account" under the "New Users" heading on the left-hand side of the screen.
3. Search for your information profile in the system. Do this by entering your first and last name and clicking on the "Search for My Information" button. A list of names will appear.
4. If your name is NOT shown, click the "I'm Not Listed Above" button to enter your personnel information and request an account.
5. If your personnel information IS found in the system, click "Select" next to the name that matches your information. You will be asked to verify your selection by entering your work e-mail address in the appropriate box. Click the "Verify My Information" button. If the site cannot verify your work e-mail address, please contact a web site administrator by clicking on the "Help" option in the menu at the top of the screen.

# ncswLearn.org: A Valuable Training Resource for NC's DSS Agencies

ncswLearn.org is a valuable child welfare training resource for North Carolina's county departments of social services. Here is a brief description of just some of the useful things child welfare workers and their supervisors can do through this gateway web site.

## Individualized Training Assessment (ITA)

Once you have an account* on ncswLearn.org you will have access to the Individualized Training Assessment, or ITA. The ITA is a tool to help county DSS child welfare social workers and supervisors identify and prioritize their training needs. It allows you to:

* Identify your training needs based on current job responsibilities.
* Find your highest priority trainings.
* Get a list of your required, recommended, and elective courses offered by the Division.
* Provide an overview of your training expectations to your supervisors and administrators.

The ITA is divided into two parts. **Part A** (Training Requirement) provides a comprehensive list of your required, recommended, and elective trainings based on your job function. **Part B** (Self-Assessment) pinpoints your training interests and priorities and allows you to identify a shorter list of trainings tailored specifically to your needs. Through Part B, users assess themselves in terms of a specific set of competencies (knowledge and skills related to job function). This assessment, which takes approximately 15 minutes, generates a list of recommended trainings based on your responses and your training history. You can apply to register for training directly from your ITA report.

## View Your Training History

Once you have an account* at ncswLearn.org you can also use the site's Personalized Learning Portfolio (PLP) to review your training attendance history. Simply click on the PLP button and then click the "Training Attendance History" button on the left-hand side of your screen.

## Supervisor Resources

The "Supervisor Resources" section of ncswLearn.org allows county DSS supervisors to manage all aspects of training related to their employees. Through this area of the site supervisors are able to register their employees for training, view their employees' training schedules and cancel registrations as needed, view their employees' training attendance histories, and view their employees' Individualized Training Assessments (ITA).

## County Training Manager Resources

There is a section on ncswLearn.org where your county's designated DSS staff development manager or a training coordinator can manage all aspects of training related to the agency's child welfare staff. To gain access to this feature, your agency's staff development or training coordinator will need to contact ncswLearn.org's web administrator by clicking on the "Help" option in the menu at the top of the screen and requesting access rights.

## To Learn More

Go to <www.trainingmatters-nc.org/tm_v9n2/tm_v9n2.htm>

**Special Option**: ncswLearn.org now allows social workers, supervisors, and county DSS training managers to use the site to enter and track worker attendance at training that is not sponsored by the Division. This new feature is available for your agency's convenience; you are not required to use it. Questions? Contact ncswLearn.org's administrators via its "Help" section.

* Details about who is eligible for an ncswLearn.org account and how to get one can be found on page 5.

Special Issue: Overview of North Carolina's Child Welfare Training System