

Training **MATTERS**



A PUBLICATION OF THE NC DSS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES STATEWIDE TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

Volume 11, Number 3 • July 2010

Training Matters is produced by the North Carolina Division of Social Services Child Welfare Services Statewide Training Partnership, an organization dedicated to developing and delivering competency-based, job-relevant, accessible child welfare training. Partners include:

- NC Division of Social Services
- NC Association of County Directors of Social Services
- Appalachian Family Innovations at Appalachian State University
- Center for Family and Community Engagement at NC State University
- Independent Living Resources, Inc.
- NC Child Welfare Education Collaborative
- UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work (Jordan Institute for Families)
- UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine
- UNC-Greensboro Department of Social Work

We Want to Hear from You!

If you have questions or would like to comment about something that appears in *Training Matters*, please 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, patrick.betancourt@dhhs.nc.gov, 919/334-1104.

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.

Update on Child Welfare Training in North Carolina

In 1995, child welfare agencies in North Carolina were under a lot of pressure. Under state and federal law, they had a mandate to ensure the children in every community were safe and well cared for.

This is a desperately important job. To do it well agencies need well-trained professionals who are deeply committed to families.

Like child welfare agencies in many parts of the country, our child welfare agencies had little difficulty finding committed individuals, but they sometimes struggled when it came to attracting and retaining people with the knowledge and skills needed for child welfare work. Indeed, most child welfare workers had no formal social work education.

In 1995 agencies also struggled with worker turnover, which meant counties had to continually recruit and train employees.

Fast forward to 2010. North Carolina's child welfare agencies face the same pressures they did in 1995.

Today, however, public child welfare agencies have an advantage that they didn't have in 1995. They have access to an extensive infrastructure designed to support them in their efforts to train child welfare workers.

NC's Training System

In the past 15 years the NC Division of Social Services and its partners have created an impressive child welfare training system for North Carolina. County child welfare agencies now have access to the following:

A Continuum of Training. The Division and its partners have developed a continuum of classroom-based child

NC's Child Welfare Training System: Key Statistics

	1998	2009
Curricula offered	24	44
Training events offered	170	274
Number of the above events offered at the regional training centers	58	143
Training days delivered	717	2,281
Offerings of the pre-service training	20	36
County DSS registrants	5,959	7,530

welfare training courses. Each course focuses on developing job-relevant knowledge and skills. A range of courses has been created to meet the needs of all workers and supervisors, even those with years of experience. Every course is thoroughly evaluated.

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. Learn more about them at: <www.ncswlearn.org/help/siteinfo.aspx>

Timely, Specialized Training. The Division responds in a timely way when urgent training needs arise. An example of the Division's responsiveness is the training it offered to help counties understand and implement recent changes to the Risk Assessment (DSS-5230) and Risk Reassessment (DSS-5226) tools. *continued* →

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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.

Looking Ahead

Though the Division and its training partners have achieved a great deal, they are not sitting on their laurels. As the box at right indicates, North Carolina is actively exploring new ways to use e-learning to make training for child welfare professionals more effective, accessible, and affordable for county agencies.

To learn more about what's offered through North Carolina's child welfare training system, visit <www.ncswlearn.org>.

Courses Available Online

100% Online

- Adult Mental Health Issues which Impact Families Served by Child Welfare
- Child Development in Families at Risk
- Introduction to the Monthly Foster Care Contact Record
- Understanding Child Mental Health Issues
- Understanding and Intervening in Child Neglect
- Methamphetamine: What a Social Worker Needs to Know

Coming Soon . . .

- Money Matters: Foster Care Funding Basics
- Becoming a Therapeutic Foster Parent (Training for Trainers)

Blended Courses (Partially Online)

- Child Welfare in North Carolina: Pre-Service Curriculum for New Workers and Supervisors

Webinars

90-minute online seminars for county DSS agencies. Past offerings include:

- Finding Families for Teens
- Special Topics in Foster Care: Relative Search and APPLA
- Successful Foster Home Licensing
- Using Medical Homes
- Working with American Indian Families and Tribes
- Working with Families who are "Stuck"
- Working with Substance Abusing Families (Forum for Supervisors)

Two Advanced Child Welfare Courses Go Online

Child Mental Health Issues and Child Neglect

Beginning July 1, 2010, the NC Division of Social Services, in partnership with Jordan Institute for Families at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work, is proud to offer two advanced online courses for child welfare social workers and supervisors employed with North Carolina county DSS agencies.



Understanding Child Mental Health Issues

This 300-series course, previously offered as a three-day classroom-based training, gives participants a basic understanding of the childhood mental health problems most commonly seen in child welfare settings. Specifically, the course teaches the causes, symptoms, prognosis, risks, treatments and interventions for:

- Pediatric depression
- Juvenile bipolar disorder
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD)
- Reactive attachment disorder
- Oppositional defiant and conduct disorder
- Post traumatic stress disorder

In this course, participants (a) complete an interactive self-paced online session (approximately 8–10 hours), (b) take a knowledge assessment, and (c) participate in a 2.5 hour live online session focusing on the impact of a child's mental illness on permanency planning. During

this live session participants have a chance to ask questions and discuss best practice; at the end they receive a certificate of completion. Course credit: 18 contact hours.

Understanding & Intervening in Child Neglect



Like the previously offered classroom-based training of the same name, this interactive, self-paced online course explores how neglect affects children and families, explains how poverty and neglect are linked (but not the same), and helps participants develop skills for

working with families who are neglectful.

Participants have two weeks to complete a self-paced online session during which they review the importance of comprehensive and balanced assessment that includes the strengths and needs of each family member. This training encourages participants to recognize the need for various approaches when providing services to families depending on safety and risk levels. At the end of this session, which takes approximately 6–8 hours to complete, participants take a knowledge assessment and receive a certificate of completion. Course credit: 12 contact hours.

To Learn More

For more information or to register, visit <www.ncswlearn.org>. Hurry—spaces fill up quickly!