

# Training **MATTERS**



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*Training Matters* is produced by the North Carolina Division of Social Services Child Welfare Services Statewide Training Partnership, which is 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 Barium Springs Home for Children
- 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

## We Want to Hear from You!

If you have questions or would like to comment about something that appears in *Training Matters*, please contact Kathy Dobbs, Child Welfare Services, NC Division of Social Services, 2412 Mail Service Center, 325 N. Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC 27699-2412, Courier: 56-20-25, Tel: 919/334-1176, [Kathy.Dobbs@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Kathy.Dobbs@dhhs.nc.gov).

## Visit Our Website

Go to <[www.trainingmatters-nc.org](http://www.trainingmatters-nc.org)>.

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

## Substance Abuse and Child Welfare: Training Resources

The current issue of *Children's Services Practice Notes* (v. 17, n. 1) explores the challenges that prescription drugs can present to child welfare professionals. As a complement to that issue, we share with you the following tips and learning resources related to working with substance-abusing families.

### Training

**NC Division of Social Services** offers the following substance abuse courses through [www.ncswlearn.org](http://www.ncswlearn.org):

- Introduction to Substance Abuse for Child Welfare Services
- Methamphetamine: What a Social Worker Needs to Know
- Motivating Substance Abusing Families to Change: An Advanced Practice Course

For more information, class times, or to register visit [www.ncswlearn.org](http://www.ncswlearn.org).

**National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare** offers four free online self-tutorials on understanding child welfare and the dependency court.

The tutorials are geared toward four different audiences:

- Substance Abuse Treatment Professionals (<http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/tutorials/tutorialDesc.aspx?id=1>)
- Child Welfare Professionals (<http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/tutorials/tutorialDesc.aspx?id=2>)
- Legal Professionals (<http://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/tutorials/tutorialDesc.aspx?id=3>)
- Legislators (<http://www.ncsacw.samhsa.gov/training/training-guide-legislators.aspx>)



## Webinar Series: Use of Psychotropics among Children in Foster Care

The National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health is offering this three-part webinar series.

*Part 1: Mental Health, Psychotropic Use, and Evidence-Based Interventions*

Held Monday, January 9, 2012. Audio recording and PowerPoint slides available online.

*Part 2: Clinical Management and Monitoring of Psychotropic Medications*

Held Monday, February 13, 2012. Audio recording and PowerPoint slides available online.

*Part 3: Collaborative Oversight and Monitoring Approaches: State Examples*

Scheduled for Tuesday, February 28th from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

To learn more or to register, go to <http://gucchdtcenter.georgetown.edu/>.



## Tips for Working Effectively with Medical Providers

Different professional orientations, training, and nature of interactions with families can make it difficult for social workers and medical providers to see eye to eye and align efforts on behalf of families. If you have felt frustrated and discouraged, you are not alone. Here are some tips that can guide you in collaborating with physicians in support of families:

- Use their language. List observable or reported symptoms and criteria that make you concerned.
- Schedule a time to talk and have a list of medications/doses and questions prepared.
- Often a nurse, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant involved in patient care will be more accessible than a physician.
- To be transparent and collaborative, ask the family's permission before contacting the medical provider.

As child welfare professionals we are not qualified to make a judgment call about the need for medications or advise families about doses. We can play an important role in helping families learn about prescription drug use and safety, as well as helping the medical community learn about the struggles families face when drugs are misused or abused. We can educate physicians about ways they can promote safety and well-being—such as recognizing that some parents have difficulty keeping track of medications and understanding the effects on child-rearing and self-care when adults are over-medicated. We can convey to physicians the importance in explaining to patients any addictive potential of prescriptions and stress the importance of helping patients manage their medications.

Source: Flemming, E. & The Family and Children's Resource Program (2011, April 19). Reduce the risk: Child welfare and prescription drug abuse [webinar]. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work. [http://www.trainingmatters-nc.org/tm\\_v13n1/4-19-11.pdf](http://www.trainingmatters-nc.org/tm_v13n1/4-19-11.pdf)

## Treatment

Drug treatment is often a long-term process. Treatment affects the whole family by reshaping relationships, family rules, activities and interactions. Every family is different and will need varying types and degrees of support.

Reflect on your knowledge of drug abuse treatment services in your community. If you are already working with a family struggling with drug addiction, how well matched are their current needs with various resources in your community? Your agency can play an important role in advocating for important treatment components that may not be readily available in your community.

**NC's Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities.** You can find a listing of substance abuse treatment facilities in your community online at <http://nationalsubstanceabuseindex.org/north-carolina/facilities.php>

## Evidence-Based Methadone Treatment

**Families Facing the Future** program was developed for parents receiving methadone treatment and for their children. The primary goals of the project were to reduce parents' use of illegal drugs and to reduce risk factors for their children's future drug use while enhancing protective factors.

This program is rated a "2 - Supported by Research Evidence" on the Scientific Rating Scale based on the published, peer-reviewed research available. The practice must have at least one rigorous randomized controlled trial with a sustained effect of at least 6 months.

Source: California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare. (2011). <http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/families-facing-the-future/>

## Practice Model for Child Welfare and Substance Use

Reprinted from the *CB Express* (Feb. 2012, v. 13, n. 1), <http://cbexpress.acf.hhs.gov/>

Responding to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' call for interagency collaboration in serving families with substance use disorders involved with child welfare, Children and Family Futures (CFF) developed a practice model centered on multidisciplinary partnerships.

The Collaborative Practice Model for Family Recovery, Safety and Stability outlines links between the child welfare, juvenile court, substance abuse treatment, mental health, and other systems vital for family recovery and resilience. The practice model highlights best practice examples to guide communities and agencies in tailoring cross-system collaborations.

This approach not only resonates with the core values of child welfare but also those within the substance use disorder realm in achieving success when treating substance use disorders. The model focuses on 10 linkages:

- Mission, underlying values, and principles of collaboration
- Screening and assessment
- Engagement and retention in care

- Services to children of parents with substance use disorders
- Working with the community and supporting families
- Efficient communication and sharing information systems
- Budgeting and program sustainability
- Training and staff development
- Working with related agencies
- Joint accountability and shared outcomes

Multiple examples of organizations that have developed each type of linkage are provided. The guide concludes with a list of resources and tools to promote collaboration and a matrix that details characteristics of progress—from fundamental practice to good to best practice—for each of the system linkage elements.

This free publication is available on the CFF website: [http://www.cffutures.org/files/PracticeModel\\_0.pdf](http://www.cffutures.org/files/PracticeModel_0.pdf)

