

***Social Services Board***

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*DSS Director*

 **To: Maggie Cveticanin, Director**

**Cc: Valery Dambreville, Deputy Director**

**From: Jovetta L. Whitfield, Assistant Director**

**Re: January 22, 2025, Assistant Director Board Report for Child & Family Services (C&FS) Division**

**Highlights of Activities December 18, 2024, to January 10, 2025**

We had a relatively quiet month in Child & Family Services. A few highlights are listed below.

Our LINKS youth held their annual holiday celebration in December where they enjoyed delicious food, fun activities, and gifts to celebrate the holiday season together. Thank you, County Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, and DSS Board Vice-Chair, Jacqueline Beatty-Smith for attending.

Share Your Christmas/Holidays: Staff were able to put on their Elve hats and deliver gifts to families (children and our seniors) during the last two weeks of December. While we faced some challenges, the Durham Community and our Community Partners came through and every family, child, and aging adult referred were sponsored. We served **1249** children and **1028** adults; we would like to acknowledge Atrium Senior Living Center residents, SW Jaime Coates, Durham Bar Association and Duke CANMEC Team for providing additional items and gift cards to ensure every individual referred to the Holiday Cheer program received gifts.

The Child & Family Services Division Training Day was held December 19th. We had speakers from NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence, One More Child Sex Trafficking and had a refresher on a few child welfare policies as we prepare to move into 2025. We also took some time to acknowledge staff and celebrate our successes.

DHHS/Child Welfare Updates:

Effective February 3, 2025, the fingerprint process for all prospective resource parents in NC will change to comply with Federal and State Laws.

NC DHHS is transitioning to a new curriculum, the National Training Development Curriculum (NTDC) to training resource parents. This curriculum provides prospective resource families with relevant and relatable information based on research and input from experts, resource families, and former youth who had been affected by foster care. Resource families will have access to information on trauma informed parenting, the effect of trauma, substance use, as well as how to work with the child’s parents, agencies, and more.

Effective January 2, 2025, agencies, private and Department of Social Services were able to be trained in the NTDC. Durham County DSS licensure unit has registered for the Train the Trainer (TTT) classes. Once they are certified, we will implement the new curriculum which will replace the current TIPS-MAPP curriculum.

**Community Events February 2025**

There are no scheduled community events.

**Community/Partner Collaborations:**

Community partners meetings continue with DSS County Attorneys, Safe Babies Court Implementation Team, Alliance Health, Durham Police Department Special Victims Unit (SVU) & the Sheriff Department and the Family Drug Treatment Court Team.

Vacancy Update as of 1/6/25

We currently have 15 vacancies - 10 Child Welfare Social Workers (CWSW), 2 Supervisors, 1 Licensing Social Worker, 1 SWIII, & 1 Community Social Services Associates (CSSA) who monitor family visits and provide transportation to and from the family visits and medical appointments.

Challenges/Barriers/Concerns

Limited therapeutic resources and trauma informed interventions/ placements continue to be ongoing concerns for teenagers with challenging behaviors. We continue to work with Alliance Health and the DHHS Rapid Response Team for guidance and support. A bi-weekly meeting is held with Alliance to review cases involving youth with complex behavioral and mental health needs. Due to the limited placements, youth are placed out of state and social workers are traveling monthly to conduct visits.

**Program Outcome Measures (HB630) – December 2024**

(Note: some outcome measures are \*monthly and some \*\*SFY which will be cohort data.

Source: CYA004 & DHHS Child Welfare Data Warehouse)

\***CWS 1 – Timely Initiation of Assessments –** **State Goal 95%**

We have up to **45 days to complete** an Investigative Assessment and some may take longer depending on the need for child or forensic medical exams. Data is entered after a case decision is made. Therefore, some months may have partial data and/or data not yet available

**December 2024 – 88.1%**

**\*CWS 3 – Monthly Case Work Home Visits (Foster Care) – State Goal 95%**

Of the number of children in foster care for a full month who had a visit in the home:

**December 2024 – 90.96%**

Of the number of children in foster care for a full month who had at least one visit:

**December 2024 – 95.16%**

NOTE: This measure is based on the requirement in section 422(b)(17) of the Social Security Act that requires that states ensure that their children in foster care are visited by a case worker monthly. **The federal government** monitors states annually on performance. **The performance standard is that 95% of children who are in care for a full month must receive a visit that month and of all the visits that occur in the home 90% must occur in the child's residence.**

**North Carolina has adopted the 95% visitation** standard for HB630 County Performance Measures. While the home visit component is not part of the HB630 Measure, the federal government evaluates statewide performance with penalties for noncompliance.