

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CWS-AL-08-09**

TO:	COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ATTENTION:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS CHILDREN'S SERVICES SOCIAL WORKERS
DATE:	November 5, 2009

SUBJECT: REVISED STRUCTURED DECISION MAKING TOOLS AND TRAINING

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2010

The Division of Social Services has completed the validation study of the risk assessment tools. Revised Family Risk Assessment, Risk Reassessment, Reunification Assessment, Case Decision Summary/Initial Case Plan, and Family Assessment of Strengths and Needs tools have been approved. Prior to implementation date of the revised tools, program managers, supervisors, local staff development trainers and/or lead workers are strongly encouraged to participate in one of several regional training opportunities available.

The training will focus on the purpose of the study, examining how well the current risk assessment tools estimate the likelihood of future child maltreatment for the families assessed by county departments of social services. It will navigate through the many revisions to the tools that were developed through collaboration with the Children's Research Center and county departments of social services. The training will discuss the goal of more accurately identifying the families that are at higher risk of future child maltreatment so that those families may be targeted for more case contact and service provision. Finally, it will include a practice skills development on using the revised tools.

The Division has scheduled eleven training events targeted to program managers, supervisors, local staff development and/or lead workers. Each county will be responsible for training front line workers within their agency. The training can count as four hours toward the twenty four hour continuing education requirement. Attached is registration form that should be emailed but may be faxed to the contact person listed on the form. A confirmation will be emailed or can be faxed back to the participant with directions and any needed attachments to bring with them. The following training events have been scheduled:

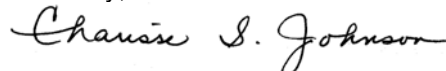
LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Cumberland County DSS	11/20/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Halifax County DSS	12/4/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Craven County DSS	12/7/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
New Hanover County DSS	12/8/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Iredell County DSS	12/14/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Jackson County DSS	12/15/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
McDowell County YMCA	12/16/2009	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Guilford County DSS	01/04/2010	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Orange County DSS	01/05/2010	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Mecklenburg County DSS	01/12/2010	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Wilson County DSS	01/27/2010	10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Please begin to review the revised tools and accumulate agency questions to bring to the training. Questions that are submitted will be captured and added to a Question and Answer document to provide further clarity.

Once a county has received the training and is able to provide the information to their staff, the county can make the decision to begin using the new tools prior to 03/01/2010 but the expectation is that every county must begin using the revised tools by 03/01/2010. The revised tools will be available on the Division forms website and all staff development trainings will incorporate the new tools 03/01/2010.

If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact Rick Zechman (eric.zechman@dhhs.nc.gov) with Child Welfare Services at (919) 334-1108.

Sincerely,



Charisse S. Johnson, Chief
Child Welfare Services

Attachments:

[Risk Assessment Validation: A Prospective Study Executive Summary](#)

[DSS-5230](#) Family Risk Assessment

[DSS-5226](#) Family Risk Reassessment

[DSS-5227](#) Family Reunification Assessment

[DSS-5229](#) Family Assessment of Strengths and Needs

[DSS-5228](#) Case Decision Summary/Initial Case Plan

[Registration Form](#)

cc: Sherry S. Bradsher
Sarah Barham
Child Welfare Services Team Leaders
Children's Services Program Representatives
Local Business Liaisons
Regulatory and Licensing Services Consultants
Jack Rogers