



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: 1/21/2020

New Business

Department:

Health & Human Services (HHS)

Presenter(s):

Stoney Blevins
Rebecca Smith
Jennifer Barnette

Contact(s):

Stoney Blevins, Stoney.Blevins@buncombecounty.org

Subject:

START Program Expansion

Brief Summary:

Poly-substance use has impacted Child Protective Service provision in Buncombe County (BC) with about 50 screened-in reports each month. In Fiscal Year 2018, 161 children aged five or younger were victims of maltreatment and parental substance abuse; 44% needed placement in BC custody.

To address this, BC implemented the Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) Model in 2017. To date, 65 families involving 115 children and both mothers and fathers were served. 83.3% of families were intact at closure with parents achieving sobriety and improving parental capacity. However, many more children and their parents needed the START program and could not be served due to capacity limitations. The START Expansion 2020 project will double BCHHS's capacity to provide intensive support and trauma services to child-welfare involved families including parents and young children.

The START Expansion awards \$1,385,760. The grant will be used to fund 4 FTE's, to begin as soon as possible through April 2021. Any additional labor will be secured via contract with grant funds.

The implementation/ sustainability plan is as follows:

- 1) Family mentors will be Certified Peer Support specialists who will be able to bill Medicaid for Medicaid-eligible services and the START Leadership Team will continue working with our Local Management Entity to advocate for additional Medicaid billing options.
- 2) By October 2021, North Carolina will be required to adopt the Families First Prevention Law creating the opportunity to draw down IV-E dollars to support evidence based preventative services. Child and Family Futures is continuing to work toward building the national evidence base for the START model and Buncombe County is contributing to this.
- 3) Continue to explore opportunities to draw down Medicaid Administrative Claiming dollars.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Approve budget amendment and approve the establishment of 4 FTE grant funded positions to begin as soon as possible through April 2021. Additional labor will be secured via contract.

County Manager's Comments & Recommendation:

County Manager recommends as presented.