



Weaving a Web of Support

BUNCOMBE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The Scoop!

April, May, June 2007

Children Services Social Work Division Goes To Washington, DC

Submitted by: *Angie Pittman*

Program Administrators and Program Managers in Children Services attended the Child Welfare League of America National Conference in Washington, DC February 25–28. While the weather was challenging when we landed (3 inches of snow!) it was an incredible opportunity to hear best practices in child welfare across the nation, network with other professionals and visit Congressman Heath Shuler to discuss three important topics that impact our clients:

- 1) Reforming Title IV-E Eligibility
- 2) Extending Title IV-E to Kinship Placements
- 3) Defending Medicaid and expanding the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)

We advocated that Congressman Shuler take the first step in reforming child welfare financing by replacing the outdated eligibility standard for foster care and adoption assistance.

The Kinship Caregiver Support Act (S. 661) was introduced in the Senate February 16 by Senators Hilary Clinton (D-NY), Olympia Snowe (R-ME),

and Thad Cochran (R-MS). The Guardianship Assistance Promotion and Kinship Support Act, is expected to be introduced in the House soon by Representative Danny Davis (D-IL).

We stressed that in Buncombe County alone, we have 330 children who are living with kin who receive Work First funding and approximately 180 children living with kin whom have either had a substantiation of abuse or neglect or who have come into foster care. The numbers continue to climb as issues such as substance abuse and mental health rise.

We urged Congressman Shuler to oppose the President's cuts to Medicaid; including Administrative efforts to restrict Medicaid funding that serves the health care needs of children in foster care. The need for comprehensive Medicaid coverage for children in foster care is great.

We also, outlined the need to expand SCHIP to cover more uninsured children. SCHIP is a matched block grant program that has allocated \$40 billion in



Left to right: Catherine Prather, Cathie Beatty, Dawn Warren, Tammy Shook, Congressman Heath Shuler, Becky Kessel, Angie Pittman

federal funds over 10 years. The program is due to be reauthorized this year. The Congressional Research Service estimates that if the current allotment level and formula are continued into the future, in a few years most states will face a large shortfall of federal SCHIP funds affecting coverage for 1.9 million children.

We will continue to advocate for these and other changes as the legislative sessions continue. We would like to say a note of special thanks to the **Social Work Supervisory Team** for working together to address issues that arose while we were gone. They are an exemplary team and the Division could not provide the quality services to families without them!

Upcoming Events



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

The following events will be held to Kick Off Child Abuse Prevention Month.

April 3rd – County Commissioners proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month at County Commissioners meeting at 4:30 pm.

Kick Off Tying of Blue Ribbons at Rotary Pavilion at Carrier Park Amboy Rd. at noon. Remarks by Olson Huff, MD and Don Swaby, Board President of Child Abuse Prevention Services, Inc. Come see the 35,000 daffodil bulbs in the Flowers for Children Garden. Bring a picnic lunch.

April 10th – Mayor Terry Bellamy and the City Council will proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in the City of Asheville at the City Council meeting at 5 pm.

Other Child Abuse Prevention Month Activities:

- Distribution of blue ribbons at area churches;
- Displays and blue ribbons at area pediatricians;
- Brochures at libraries;
- Window displays, brochures and blue ribbons at area businesses.

April 17th – Child Abuse Prevention Services, Inc. Blue Ribbon Reception and Award ceremony: The Agency will honor Wilma Sherrill with the Blue Ribbon Award for Extraordinary Contribution to Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment. Will also be a Media Award for Increasing Awareness of Child Abuse Prevention, to be announced. The reception is 5 to 7 pm at The Forum at Pack Place. Everyone is invited.

April 20th – Blue Ribbon Night at the Asheville Tourist game: Child Abuse Prevention Services, Inc. staff and volunteers will hand out blue ribbons at the gate and take to the field before to pin a large blue ribbon on Ted E., the Tourist mascot.



**Become Aware,
Become Involved,
Demonstrate a
Commitment to
Preventing Child Abuse
and Protecting All
Children – Our Future!**

Division News... What's Going On?

Economic Services

Submitted by *Tim Rhodes*

Expansion of the Community Outreach Division

In 1978, the Buncombe County Department of Social Services and Memorial Mission Hospital began a joint venture to provide simplified and decentralized access for Buncombe County citizens who needed both DSS and medical services. This idea of simplified access was expanded in 1985 and again in 1989 as outpost sites were established at St. Joseph's Hospital and the Buncombe County Health Center. Currently, eight other community human services and health providers partner with Buncombe County DSS to host DSS public assistance eligibility staff in their agencies.

The primary purpose of the DSS out posted positions is to provide optimal customer service and easier access for Medicaid and other DSS services with a personal touch for the client and the provider by making the service available on site in the host community agency. This enables many citizens to gain access to Medicaid and other social services who might otherwise not have these services available to them.

To date, the DSS is working in collaboration with and appreciates the efforts of the following agencies:

- The Buncombe County Health Center
- Mountain Area Health Education Center/Women's Health Center
- Community Care Partners (Thoms Rehabilitation Hospital, Visiting Health Professionals, Mountain Area Hospice, and Mountain Care)
- Emma Resource Center
- Missions Hospital
- The Veterans Administration Hospital
- The Buncombe County Medical Society
- Western North Carolina Community Health Services (WNCCHS)
- Asheville-Buncombe Community Christian Ministries (ABCCM)
- Western Highlands LME

Other benefits of these partnerships include:

- One stop service delivery for customers of both the DSS and the health provider agency. By contracting with DSS for outpost eligibility staff, applications for other State, county, and community programs can be taken thus saving a significant amount

of administrative time. Along with the State public assistance programs, out posted staff are currently accepting applications for the WIC program, the Buncombe County Medical Society's Project Access, and North Carolina Health Choice For Children, just to name a few.

- Citizens without resources or insurance to pay for health care can apply for Medicaid or other medical assistance programs at the host site while receiving medical services there.
- Information and referral services provided by the DSS outpost staff at the host sites significantly increases the participation of citizens with primary and other preventive health care programs.

ABCCM, Western NC Community Health Services (WNCCHS) and Western Highlands LME are our most recent ventures and partnerships. Staff are currently being recruited and assigned to those new sites. Effective March 1, **Kimberly Todd, Income Maintenance Caseworker I** was assigned to the Western Highlands site at 356 Biltmore with RHA, Families Together, and Parkway Behavior. We are in the process of filling the other two new outpost positions. One at ABCCM Medical Clinic and a second, combination position, at WNCCHS/ABCCM Crisis Ministry.

Family Assistance Division

Policy changes for Family Assistance Division include:

- Foster and adopted children receiving Medicaid under the categories of IAS and HSF are no longer required to prove US citizenship or identity effective March 1, 2007.
- The Division of Medical Assistance was scheduled to implement a policy on March 1st to eliminate automatic newborn coverage for children born to mothers receiving emergency Medicaid. This policy change has been delayed until further notice due to pending legislation in Congress.

On a final note, the **Family Medicaid Division** was highly affected by the retirement of three veteran caseworkers December 31, 2006. Luckily, these three positions have now been filled with experienced Medicaid workers – **Michelle "Candy" Fox, Valerie Jolley, and Regina Mapp**. Candy and Regina both come to us with years of experience in other counties and Valerie previously worked in our division in a contract position as a caseworker before going to the call center. Welcome Candy and Regina. Welcome Back, Valerie!

Employee Praise

Employee Spotlight

Submitted by Diane Maxwell



Aaron Vidaurri, Income Maintenance Caseworker II in the Family and Children's Medicaid Unit has such a friendly, caring disposition. He always helps with interpreting situations with a cheerful helpful attitude. It amazed me at the time of his helping with a local hearing for a client who could not speak English how he could translate as he read the hearing proceedings. An interpreter usually has to read one version and then interpret what it said by briefing it. Aaron has the skill of reading one language and saying it in another language as he is reading over the information. He is always being pulled by many co-workers and supervisors on the spur of a moment to help them with the interpretation of what is being said by non English speaking clients. He is always so willing to stop and help even though he has his own tasks to be completed. I have witnessed him helping co-workers with office visits by

clients as well as helping co-workers on telephone conversations. In addition to this skill, he is also helpful with computer forms and skills. He is an asset to our agency.

Outstanding Supervisor Recognition

Submitted by Erica Jourdan

Alisa Davis, Social Work Supervisor in the Children Services Foster Care

Unit is highly proactive, organized and very responsive to staff's input. She really makes an effort to learn what matters to her staff – and it matters to her what her staff are good at and what they like. She then takes that information and is a strong advocate for her staff. However, she is also clear and is supportive. Alisa doesn't expect her staff to do it all alone – she offers her help even when she herself is very busy. Her ability to pace herself helps staff to trust her as well. If she says she's going to do something, she does it. If she can't take something on, she always offers (and listens to) alternative suggestions. She guides, protects, and advocates. Lastly, when she's meeting with staff, she is completely present and focused on what is being said. She is professional, organized, and concerned. She smiles easily and yet doesn't hesitate to tell staff their limits when needed. It's a pleasure to work with (and for) her!



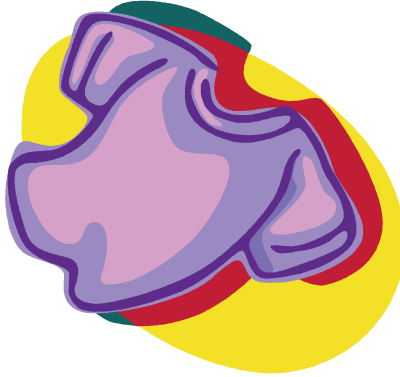
Other DSS News!

T-Shirts! T-Shirts! T-Shirts!

Submitted by Kathy Coco

DSS recently held a previously owned county & DSS shirt sale. Staff brought their used shirts to 1st.floor conference room and were able to make some money by selling their shirts and purchasing shirts at a reduced rate. Staff had a good time looking at all the different designs and trying to figure how vintage some of the shirts were!

The total amount which went directly



to the sellers was over \$100!! This sale was a result of an idea in the suggestion box. Plans are in the works to do another sale in the future.

There is a big demand for khaki & denim button down shirts. So get your shirts together & come prepared to make some money.

DSS Mentoring Program

Submitted by Kathy Coco

The FN Staff Development team has sponsored the Mentoring Program since April 2006. The purpose of the program is to make new employees feel welcome and improve their transition into the agency. The mentors volunteer at least once a week to meet with the employee. Some of the things the mentors may do are:

- Check in on the new employee at least weekly, more often if possible.
- Occasionally invite the new hire to lunch or share information about downtown restaurants, interesting places to visit, etc.
- Answer questions related to the agency or community and be the person the new hire can go to “in a pinch”.

The mentor’s role is not to “train” the new worker as trainers, lead workers and supervisors are responsible for that.

Supervisors identify staff in their work area that would be appropriate to be mentors & give their names to FN Staff Development Team. If you are interested and want to learn more about the program, please contact Teresa Mathews (teresa.mathews@buncombecounty.org) or (5832).

This is another example of DSS taking care of employees, especially new employees!

DSS Goes Hybrid

Submitted by Jennifer Chilton

DSS has welcomed six new Toyota Prius cars to be driven by employees for travel and transportation related to their respective job responsibilities. Recognizing that driving the technologically advanced hybrid would be new and a little different than the traditional vehicles, staff were asked to watch a ten minute video designed to instruct them on the operation and care of the vehicles. We are excited about the increased safety, economic, fuel and environmental advantages associated with the use of the hybrids. We have moved into this new era of automotive technology and feel fortunate to be part of Buncombe County Government. This is one aspect of our contribution toward a caring community in harmony with its environment where citizens can succeed, thrive, and realize their potential.

DSS Community Partnerships

Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM)

Submitted by Leila Moore

In Buncombe County we are especially fortunate to have outreach health provider programs in addition to the Buncombe County Health Center. One program is the ABCCM Clinic which is sponsored by a coalition of Christian ministry from some 250 churches in the area. The Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM) Medical Ministry provides acute and episodic health care services to a lot of our clients who are uninsured and underinsured in Buncombe County.

The ABCCM Free Clinic serves individuals living in Buncombe County who are not covered by health insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, and who meet requirements at or below 200% of the poverty level. The clinic provides general medical care, prescription medications and other services including health education, nutrition counseling and basic lab testing for those who qualify. Referral arrangements with Project Access and with Mission Hospital and specialty providers enable patients to receive radiology services, laboratory testing and other specialty medical services.

The medical clinic is open for six sessions per week; Monday through Wednesday from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon (sign in is between 9:00 and 11:00) and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 5:00 pm through 8:30pm (be there by 5:00 in order to be seen).

The ABCCM pharmacy is open Monday through Wednesday from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm and Friday from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Prescription drugs are provided by drug companies and local hospitals.

Located at 155 Livingston Street in downtown Asheville, you may call the clinic at 828-259-5339 and FAX to 828-259-5316.

**The Asheville
Buncombe Community
Christian Ministry
(ABCCM) Medical
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and episodic health care
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clients who are
uninsured and
underinsured in
Buncombe County.**

***If you would like to make a referral, volunteer time, or donate items, please call
(828) 259-5300.***

Human Services Update

Together We Work...SMART

Submitted by Jim Holland

Over the last several months, you may have heard a little or a lot about Strategy Maps, Scorecards, Performance Measures, Objectives, Targets and probably the most misunderstood phrase, The Balanced Scorecard. Hopefully, this brief article may help you to better understand this process.

Human Services (Health, DSS, Child Care, and Work Force Development) management has been engaged in developing a road-map that will tell us and our stakeholders what we intend to do so we can provide the best services in the most efficient manner possible. This roadmap helps to define what actions we must take so we stay true to the County vision of creating a caring, healthy community in harmony with its environment.

In creating this road map (or Strategy Map), we want to assure that we're staying on course. One way to do that is to develop individual scorecards that let each member of the Human Services Agencies measure their success. By using this scorecard, each Human Services team member can see how their success ensures the success of our patients and clients as well as the organization.

By now, you may have already participated in a staff meeting that focused on the Balanced Scorecard and your role in that development. If you haven't yet participated in one of these meetings, one is coming to a location near you soon. We'll also be sending additional information through email, bulletin boards, newsletter, and a soon to be introduced Human Services Intranet.

Please know that Human Services succeeds because of a dedicated staff determined to make a positive difference in the lives of Buncombe County citizens. The Strategy Map and Scorecards help to assure that we are always focused on supporting a caring, healthy community in harmony with its environment.

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What's going on at The Health Center?

Check out The Health Center Times at:
<http://health.buncombe.org/HCTimes/default.htm>

Word Search

Submitted by Kathy Coco

C N P Y S T A F F K N Q U C M
J F M P Y B P B K O T W O H V
X M A L S W L R S X V X K P Q
O E S U R F V S F P E N S E S
G E N N O F O C L A Z P P T D
M T E C S M Z R V J Y R E D B
Q I Z H I Y X E M R L N G Q E
I N I B V Z N A Q S I E Y L Q
M G T R R U F Q K B E Z C F L
J R I E E O M I A G D I O Q I
B O C A P J F C D O B L P T A
I O B K U X E A X U P J R U M
S M J C S L B Z C U G K C Y E
S S Y T I D V O I C E M A I L
I J D F I D Q F O O F B L B O

ISSI
Citizens
Coxe Avenue
Cubicle
E Mail
File Cabinets
Forms

ID Badge
Lunch Break
Meeting Rooms
Pens
Staff
Supervisors
Voice Mail



Quotable Quotes

“A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done.”

-Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”

-John F. Kennedy

DID YOU KNOW?

Submitted by Rhonda Ashley

HOT CROSS BUNS

The word bun is derived from the Saxon word "boun" (pronounced 'bo-han') which means "sacred ox." At the ancient Celtic feast of Eostre, an ox was sacrificed with the ox's horns becoming a symbol for the feast. They were carved into the ritual bread, thus "hot cross buns." Initially, the cross on the buns represented the moon, the heavenly body associated with the goddess Eostre, and its four quarters. Today, the cross on hot cross buns represents the cross of Christ.

