

ADMIN LETTER #C.S. 01-02

TO: COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT: NEW CHILD WELFARE ASSESSMENT
INSTRUMENTS**

DATE: February 14, 2002

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2002

Children's Services Social Workers

The purpose of this letter is to provide counties with the new child welfare assessment instruments and instructions for completion. These tools were adopted to achieve greater consistency among all child welfare staff across the state in providing on-going safety and permanence with children and families. Over the last several months, county and state staff have jointly worked to achieve a set of instruments that will result in a broad-based family assessment, while identifying current safety issues, future risks of maltreatment, assessing the family strengths and needs, as well as providing a structured decision-making process. The new policies, instructions and forms become effective April 1, 2002.

The assessment packet contains tools and instructions for use during the continuum of child welfare services beginning with CPS Investigative Assessment through Placement. These instruments consist of the following forms:

CPS Investigative Assessment: For all cases accepted for CPS Investigative Assessment, the worker shall complete a **Safety Assessment, Risk Assessment Of Abuse/Neglect, and a Family Strengths and Needs Assessment**. These three instruments shall be completed and used to guide the case decision-making, to unsubstantiate or substantiate, and is documented on the **Structured Investigative Assessment Case Decision Process** form.

CPS Case Planning and Management: All cases that are referred to CPS Case Planning and Case Management, a **Family Risk Reassessment of Abuse/Neglect and a Family Strengths and Needs Assessment** shall be completed on a quarterly basis and/or when circumstances within the home change. The results of the reassessments should be used in determining the progress families make in the reduction of risk factors and resolving family needs.

Placement: Family Reunification Assessment, Reunification Safety Assessment and the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment are to be completed in all cases of child placement with a goal of return home. The first re-assessment shall be completed within 60 days of the first Service Agreement (Plan A). The second re-assessment shall be completed within an additional 90 days of the first re-assessment (not to exceed 150 days from the first Service Agreement). Subsequent re-assessments shall be completed every 6 months thereafter. The results of these assessments should be used to guide permanency planning goals to return a child home or secure an alternative safe placement. These time frames will coincide with the Service Agreement and Permanency Planning Action Team meetings.

To assure that the dates identified for completion of the structured decision making instruments coincide with time frames required for CPS Investigative Assessments, CPS Case Planning and Case Management and Placement, we realize that several standards will need to change.

The Children's Services Section has scheduled seven workshops to provide county program managers and supervisory staff with training regarding the process and implementation of these new instruments. Each county will be responsible for training front line workers within their agency. The training will be held from 9:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. These sessions can count as six hours toward the twenty-four hours continuing education requirement. Please contact the listed registration person, providing the name of staff attending, a can be reached phone number and a fax number for directions. The following sessions have been scheduled:

DATES	LOCATION	REGISTRATION
February 21, 2002	Hickory 100 maximum	Lou Decker (828) 251-6316
February 25, 2002	Gastonia 100 maximum	Bonnie English (704) 330-2730
February 26, 2002	Rocky Mount 100 maximum	Elaine Highsmith (336)- 334-3930
February 27, 2002	Kinston 100 maximum	Betty Williford (252) 520-2413
March, 2002	Asheville area TBA	TBA
March, 2002	Central area	TBA

Makeup Day	TBA	
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After April 1, 2002, you may access the new forms from the Children's Services website at <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dss/csm-10/adm/index.htm>.

If you should have questions regarding this letter, please contact the Policy and Initiatives Team at

(919) 733-4622.

Sincerely,

Charles C. Harris, Chief

Children's Services Section

Attachment

Assessment Tools

[North Carolina Safety Assessment](#)

[North Carolina Family Risk Assessment of Abuse/Neglect](#)

[North Carolina Family Assessment of Strengths and Needs](#)

[NC Case Decision Summary/Initial Case Plan](#)

[North Carolina Family Risk Reassessment of Abuse/Neglect](#)

[Family Reunification Assessment](#)

cc: Pheon Beal

Sherry Bradsher

Children's Services Team Leaders

Children's Programs Representatives