

CPS Change Notice 1-03

Date: April 16, 2003

Manual: Children's Services Chapter VIII: Protective Services

To: County Directors of Social Services

Effective: June 1, 2003

Chapter VIII: Protective Services Manual has been revised to incorporate Section 1407: Structured Intake.

Section 1407: Structured Intake is attached to this manual change notice.

The need for development/clarification of the CPS Intake process arose from the Federal Child and Family Services Review and the identified need for accurate and consistent screening at Intake throughout the state. A county workgroup was formed in September 2003, consisting of 13 county partners and State Division staff to review Intake Screening and policies. Section 1407, Structured Intake is a result of the collaboration of this workgroup.

Structured Intake is a component of the Structured Decision-Making Model which includes the following tools: Safety Assessment, Family Risk Assessment, Family Strengths and Needs Assessment, Case Decision Summary/Initial Case Plan, Family Risk Reassessment, and Family Reunification Assessment. Structured Intake consists of the following components:

- Structured Intake Report
- Maltreatment Screening Tools
- Response Priority Decision Trees

A strengths-based approach is a crucial component of Structured Intake. Identification of risk factors is important, however, it is equally important that we communicate to reporters that the goal of child protective services is to ensure safe homes for children, not focus on the negatives and rush to "fix" families without recognizing each family for the inherent strengths they possess. Focusing on strengths at Intake communicates to the public that we are family-centered and have incorporated a belief in strengths, resources, and the potential for growth and change within families into our social work practice.

The **Structured Intake Report** replaces the **DSS 1402, CPS Intake Report** and should be used statewide. Some important differences to note are that the reporter is asked about the family's strengths, culture and safety factors. The **Structured Intake Report** captures demographic information regarding the family as well as answering the who, what, when, where, and how relating to the allegations. The **Structured Intake Report**

guides your intake interview by including specific questions related to the following categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, domestic violence, substance abuse, abandonment, drug exposed infant, supervision, injurious environment, improper discipline, and proper care. **Universal screening of domestic violence and substance abuse occurs at every Intake.**

Another change at Intake is the consultation of the **Maltreatment Screening Tools**, which guides your decision-making as to whether the allegations meet North Carolina's legal definitions of abuse/neglect/dependency. Once the decision has been made to accept the report, the corresponding **Response Priority Decision Tree** is consulted, which informs your decision-making in regards to response time.

The goal of **Structured Intake** is to increase the quality of information obtained during CPS Intake, and to achieve greater consistency in screening decisions. This process strives for greater consistency by tying the categories directly to the law, capturing information about how the reporter views the family in more detail than before, tying the response time to specific allegations, and using a strengths-based interview approach.

It is the expectation that all 100 counties implement **Structured Intake**, along with the **DSS 1402, Structured Intake Report** effective 06-01-03. Please ensure that all staff members who have responsibility for agency policies and procedures governing child protective services Intake are provided copies of this new Section of the manual or access via the DSS web site. The on-line manual web address is:

<http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/childrenservices/>

Once on the Division's web page, click on "Quick Links", then click on "Manuals", and click on Chapter VIII. You can also access **DSS 1402 Structured Intake Report** form via the children's services "Form" link contained in the "Quick Links" box. Any questions may be addressed to Children's Services policy staff at (919) 733-4622.

Instructions:

Remove

Chapter VIII: Section 1408 Attachment
2 CPS Intake Report

**(Note to remove only Attachment 2,
the remainder of Section 1408
remains current policy)**

Insert

Chapter VIII: Section 1407

Sincerely,

Sherry's Braddock

Sherry S. Bradsher
Deputy Director

Attachment:

[Section 1407- Structured Intake](#)