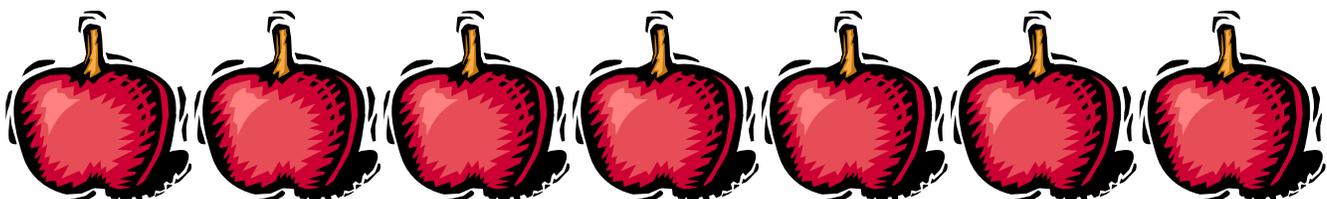


Section B: Program Information

(3) Promoting Safe and Stable Families

**Family Preservation
Family Support
Time-Limited Reunification
Adoption Promotion and Support Services**

**Children's Administration
Department of Social and Health Services**



Annual Progress and Services Report FY 2006 Promoting Safe and Stable Families

Children's Administration will use Title IV-B, subpart 2 funds on actual service delivery within the following four categories:

- **Family preservation:** Family Preservation Services (FPS) are available primarily to families whose children face "substantial likelihood" of being placed outside of the home or to assist with reunifying a child with their family (from out-of-home care). Interventions focus on resolving the immediate crisis and strengthening a family's relationships through a variety of community resources. FPS are available to families within 48 hours of referral and are offered for a maximum of six months by a contracted service provider.

In FY 2006, Children's Administration (CA) reviewed all of its contracted programs including Family Preservation Services. This review was done to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Effective and efficient contracted services which have demonstrated outcomes are available to match client needs.
- 2) Significant increase in the use of performance based contracts;
- 3) Use of Evidence-Based Practice where appropriate;
- 4) Effective and efficient contracted services are available to clients in all regions; and
- 5) Strengthened business partnership between CA and business partners.
- 6) CA completed an internal review of this service in the fall 2005. Issues were identified and CA and contractors worked together on change recommendations.

In FY 2007, CA is moving forward to implement the following changes recommended as a result of the internal review:

- 1) Implementation of the North Carolina Family Assessment Survey (NCFAS) and North Carolina Family Assessment Survey – Reunification (NCFAS-R);
 - 2) Using the NCFAS to establish a baseline for performance targets for contracted services beginning July 1, 2007; and
 - 3) Continuing work with CA to establish a prioritized menu of Evidence Based programs/services appropriate for clients in need of Family Preservation Services.
- **Community-Based Family Support:** Alternative Response System (ARS) services are provided statewide through regional contractors to help reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect and re-referrals to CPS. ARS serves families whose CPS referrals are determined to be low risk or moderately low risk at intake or following investigation. Priority is given to families who have one or more of the risk factors which research has shown to best predict the likelihood of re-referral. Contracts are outcome oriented rather than fee for service, and operate under one of two ARS models: Public Health Nurse (PHN) model or Social Service. The Public Health model focuses on health issues particularly with children under the age of six. The Social Service model has a broad focus, ranging from parenting classes to making referrals for housing and employment resources.

In FY 2006, CA reviewed all of its contracted programs including Alternative Response System (ARS) services. This review was done to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Effective and efficient contracted services which have demonstrated outcomes are available to match client needs.
- 2) Significant increase in the use of performance based contracts;
- 3) Use of Evidence Based Practice where appropriate;

- 4) Effective and efficient contracted services are available to clients in all regions; and
- 5) Strengthened business partnership between CA and business partners.
- 6) CA completed an internal review of this service in the fall 2005. Issues were identified and CA and contractors are working together on change recommendations.

In FY 2007, CA is moving forward to implement the following changes recommended as a result of the internal review. We expect to begin implementation of recommended changes by January 2007.

- 1) A standardized early intervention/alternative response program that includes a standardized assessment, agreed performance measures, an agreed set of core services, motivational interviewing and a standard payment system; and
 - 2) A menu of Evidence Based Programs.
- **Time-Limited Family Reunification:** Time limited family reunification services provide FPS for family reunification when children have been in out of home care not more than 15 months, and also fund Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS) available to families whose children are at "imminent risk" of foster care placement or to reunify a child with their family from out-of-home care. Contracted community agencies provide intensive in-home therapeutic services (6 to 10 hours of therapy per week) for up to 40 days, or paraprofessional services for up to 90 days. Services are available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. IFPS focus on improving the family's ability to overcome a crisis situation and to remain together safely. While IFPS is available to families whose children are at imminent risk of out-of-home placement as well as to reunify a child with their family from out-of-home care, the IVB-2 funds for time limited family reunification will be used for IFPS services for children in out of home care not more than 15 months. Expenditures are tracked through a Social Service Payment System code that indicates the service is being provided to a child in out of home placement for not more than 15 months.

Time limited family reunification services also include Family Team Decision Meetings and Transportation and Supervised Visitation services. Parent-Child Visitation contracts provide transportation and supervision for visits between children in out-of-home care and their families, essential services that support family reunification.

In FY 2006, CA reviewed all of its contracted programs including Intensive Family Preservation Services. This review was done to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Effective and efficient contracted services which have demonstrated outcomes are available to match client needs;
- 2) Significant increase in the use of performance based contracts;
- 3) Use of Evidence Based Practice where appropriate;
- 4) Effective and efficient contracted services are available to clients in all regions;
- 5) Strengthened business partnership between CA and business partners; and
- 6) CA completed an internal review of this service in the fall 2005. Issues were identified and CA and contractors worked together on change recommendations.

In FY 2007, CA is moving forward to implement the following changes recommended as a result of the internal review.

- 1) Implementation of the North Carolina Family Assessment Survey (NCFAS) and North Carolina Family Assessment Survey – Reunification (NCFAS-R);
- 2) Using the NCFAS to establish a baseline for performance targets for contracted services beginning July 1, 2007; and

- 3) Continuing work with CA to establish a prioritized menu of Evidence-Based programs/services appropriate for clients in need of Intensive Family Preservation Services, especially the Homebuilders model.

Time limited family reunification services also may include Family Team Decision Meetings and Transportation and Supervised Visitation services. Parent-Child Visitation contracts provide transportation and supervision for visits between children in out-of-home care and their families, essential services that support family reunification.

- **Adoption promotion and support services:** Adoption promotion and support services include coverage of adoption medical costs not covered by Medicaid, Out-of-home Care Services, and the Adoption Program. These services may also include recruitment of prospective adoptive homes, development of specialized adoption curricula and training of staff on adoption related issues.

Family preservation services, community based family support via the Alternative Response Systems services to families referred for child protective services, time limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services span the continuum of child welfare services. Each service targets children at a different point in the continuum, facilitating permanency at each point.