



CHILD WELFARE MID-YEAR POSITION REQUEST

DURHAM COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

FEBRUARY 8, 2018

BACKGROUND

- CHILD WELFARE IS THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT
- FEDERALLY MANDATED UNDER CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)
- GENERAL STATUTES CHAPTER 7B OUTLINES DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COUNTY DSS
- FUNDING IS PRIMARILY FEDERAL AND COUNTY WITH SOME STATE DOLLARS
- DURHAM DSS RECEIVES BETWEEN 3000 AND 3500 REPORTS A YEAR
- CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) IS THE AREA RESPONSIBLE FOR RECEIVING AND CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION/ASSESSMENT AND REACHING A DECISION

STAFFING

- CHILD WELFARE WORKERS ARE TRAINED PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS
- EACH SOCIAL WORKER MANAGES A CASELOAD AND PROVIDES SERVICES AND CASE-MANAGEMENT TO THE CASE OVER THE LIFE OF THE CASE
- WORKERS MUST ASSESS, PLAN, COORDINATE, AND DETERMINE RISK/SAFETY ON AN ONGOING BASIS
- THE WORK IS CHALLENGING: INVOLUNTARY SERVICES, DIFFICULT CASES, TRAUMATIC SITUATIONS, LONG HOURS, BURDENSOME PAPERWORK, STRESSFUL MANDATES

THE REQUEST

- SEEKING TO ADD AN ADDITIONAL UNIT TO THE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES AREA
- 5 SOCIAL WORKERS AND 1 SUPERVISOR CREATES AN ADDITIONAL UNIT ABLE TO RECEIVE, INVESTIGATE, AND CLOSE OUT REPORTS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT
- FUNDING WITHIN CPS AREA IS LIMITED AND CAPPED. THE COUNTY IS THE PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCE FOR THIS REQUEST LONG TERM
- WE HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED SOME ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDS (CAPPED) MAY BE AVAILABLE TO US IN NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET THAT COULD HELP OFFSET COSTS


REASONS FOR REQUEST

- CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES IS REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN A 1:10 WORKER/CASELOAD RATIO. CURRENTLY DURHAM DSS HAS ABOUT A 1:15 (EXCLUDING BACKLOG)
- HB 630 WILL PLACE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS ON THE DEPARTMENT TO MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS OF CPS. FAILURE TO MEET STANDARDS CAN RESULT IN CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS, SANCTIONS, AND POTENTIAL STATE ASSUMPTION OF THE PROGRAM AND LOSS OF LOCAL CONTROL
- LOW WORKER MORALE AND TURNOVER WITHIN CHILD WELFARE HAS BEEN AT HISTORICAL LEVELS FOR DURHAM COUNTY. WHILE THESE ISSUES ARE PREVALENT IN CHILD WELFARE NATIONWIDE, LEADERSHIP BELIEVES A DRIVING FACTOR IN TURNOVER IS THE CASELOAD LEVEL BEING EXCEEDINGLY HIGH FOR STAFF

[illegible]



WHAT ARE WE DOING TO BUILD THE BEST PRACTICE POSSIBLE

- ADDRESSING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION WITH TARGETED PROVEN STRATEGIES
 - GIVING EMPLOYEES A VOICE IN WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE DO IT
 - DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICES AND TOOLS TO ASSIST STAFF IN DOING THEIR JOBS
 - BUILDING EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE IN ALL THAT WE THINK, SAY, AND DO
 - MANAGING FOR RESULTS: CONNECTING OUR WORK TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES TO GET BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOMES
 - ASSESSING FLEXIBILITY FOR STAFF AND FOCUSING ON SELF-CARE
 - DEVELOPED A STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADDRESS LONG TERM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES WITHIN CHILD WELFARE
 - PARTNERING WITH THE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION TEAM
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OUR CHALLENGES

- MAINTAINING PROPER WORKER/CASELOAD RATIOS CONSISTENTLY IN ALL AREAS OF CHILD WELFARE
- FIGHTING RETENTION: THE NATURE OF THE JOB IS DIFFICULT AND RETENTION IS A NATIONAL ISSUE IN CHILD WELFARE
- ENSURING SAFETY UNDER EXTREME WORK CONDITIONS: RYLAN'S LAW
- DEVELOPING SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR STAFF
- OUR PARTNERS: THEY HAVE CHALLENGES AS WELL WITHIN THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT FOR CAPACITY AND WITHIN THE GUARDIAN AD LITEM. WE ARE WORKING CLOSELY WITH THEM TO ADVOCATE AS IT TAKES LEGAL, GAL, AND THE COURTS ALONG WITH OUR PROVIDERS TO BE SUCCESSFUL FOR OUR FAMILIES