North Carolina Child Welfare Family Leadership Model

North Carolina Division of Social Services (DSS) recognizes that families served by the child welfare system play an integral part of program development, implementation, and evaluation. The North Carolina's Child Welfare Family Leadership Model ensures that family voice informs state-level decisions and aligns county family engagement/leadership approaches with state-level system efforts.

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CFSR Systemic Factor: Agency Responsiveness to the Community

DSS engages with stakeholders to implement the provisions in the CFSP, develop the APSR, and engages in ongoing consultation regarding major concerns of stakeholders in the goals, objectives, and updates to the CFSP.

Steering Committee North Carolina Division of Social Services' Child Welfare Services with Family and **Agency Partners**

NCDHHS/DSS supervises all 100 counties and governs this work

Ongoing Consultation with Families and **Community Stakeholders** regarding major concerns on family engagement efforts

Tier Three: **Child Welfare Family Advisory Council**

Family partners are advising on specific child welfare topics, policies, and systemic issues. Family partners are actively engaged in supporting and strengthening family engagement efforts across the state.

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North Carolina Child Welfare Family Advisory Council (CWFAC) Membership comprised of Family Partners

Family Partner Feedback Days State-driven, targeted consultation with families on specific policies and programs

Family Engagement Concerns/Solutions

Training and Implementation Support

Tier Two: **Family Leadership Development**

Family partners are actively involved in educating, supporting, and facilitating family perspective. Skills are developed through training and actions at the community level as part of ongoing local family engagement programming.

County Department of Social Services **Family Engagement** Committees (FEC) Initial 3 will have biological parent representation on the CWFAC

Families training DSS staff and/or other parents; co-facilitating discussions in community; and/or providing peer support to other parents

Tier One: **Family Leadership Exploration**

Family partners have personal experience with child welfare and have been asked to participate because of their experience.

Families participate in trainings, workshops, and/ or conferences to better understand child welfare issues

Families participate in focus groups, stakeholder meetings, and/or panels to share their experiences

Families participate in family support and educational groups such as parenting classes to learn additional skills

Foundation: Strong Family Engagement

Quality, Family-Centered, Parent Engagement Strategies

Quality worker-parent interactions set a foundation for achieving safety, permanency, and well-being for children.

A Family Partner is defined as a youth or adult who has received services or is the caregiver/parent of someone who has received services and who has firsthand experience with the child welfare system. Therefore, when we refer to Family Partners we are speaking of both youth and adults.

A Family Engagement Committee (FEC) is defined as a group of individuals comprised of biological parents who have been involved in the child welfare system - along with other families and community stakeholders - at the county level who come together to discuss, implement, and support strategies to improve family engagement and permanency for children.