



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Health Benefits

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

September 17, 2026

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS, SUPERVISORS,
SOCIAL WORKERS**

**SUBJECT: TITLE IV-E PREVENTION ACCELERATION GRANT AWARDED TO NORTH
CAROLINA**

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Information Only ☐ Time Sensitive ☐ Action Required

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Social Services (NCDHHS DSS) is pleased to announce that North Carolina has been awarded a Prevention Accelerator Grant in the amount of \$750,000 from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). This award supports North Carolina's commitment to providing prevention services for children at risk of entering foster care and the goals of ACF's A Home for Every Child initiative. The federal grant funds will be used for the Expanding START to Strengthen North Carolina's Child Welfare Prevention project.

During the eighteen-month grant period North Carolina will move START from pilot implementation toward a more sustainable statewide prevention strategy, including support for county readiness, provider partnerships, fidelity monitoring, evaluation, and Title IV-E claiming infrastructure. This work will reduce barriers and support START expansion to additional counties in North Carolina.

NCDHHS DSS will work closely with the existing START pilot sites (Carteret, Craven, Orange, Rockingham, Henderson, and Jackson) in addition to Buncombe County who implemented START in 2017. Additionally, the state will engage cross divisional teams within DHHS, the model purveyor (Child and Family Futures), Public Knowledge, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, persons with lived experience and Medicaid managed care plans.

NCDHHS DSS is committed to ensuring that the grant related work is grounded in the use of data, rigorous evaluation, and strong safeguards that protect families and uphold our shared values.

For further information, please contact Sandi Nuss, Prevention Program Consultant, at sandra.nuss@dhhs.nc.gov.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

LOCATION: 1915 Health Services Way, Raleigh NC 27607

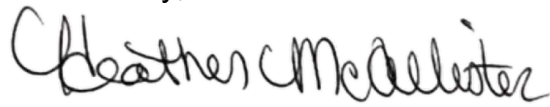
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www.ncdhhs.gov • Main Tel. 919-527-6340

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather McAllister". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Heather" being more prominent than the last name "McAllister".

Heather McAllister, MSW, LCSW, LCAS, CBIS
Section Chief for Well-Being
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
NC Department of Health and Human Services

CC: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult Regional Support
Donna Fayko, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Services
William "Ben" Rose, Lead Regional Director
Adrian Daye, Section Chief for Permanency
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety
Meredith Houchins, Interim Section Chief for County Operations
Crystalle Williams, Section Chief for Workforce and Staff Development

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