

THE WAY FORWARD

DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

March 2016

LEADING THE WAY

Evidence based training and professional development. What is the Child Welfare Training Academy?

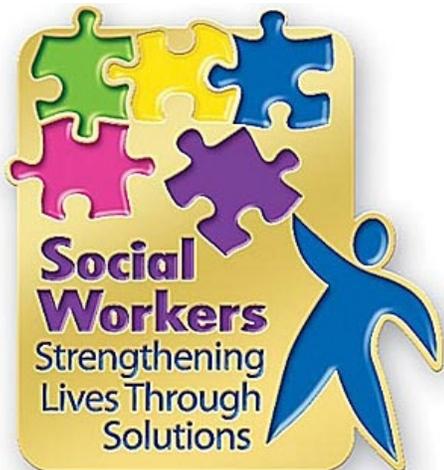
FORWARD THINKING

Olivia Y. Interim Remedial Order - Progress and Perspective

VISIONARY MOVEMENT

NASW Advocacy Day at the Capitol - Recruitment of the next generation of social work leaders in Child Welfare

MARCH IS NATIONAL SOCIAL WORKER MONTH!



VALUES and VISION:

CELEBRATING ALL DFCS FIELD STAFF!

Celebrating Worker Excellence

This month, The Way Forward wants to highlight frontline staff with a commitment to the evidence-based Practice Model, consistency in goal attainment, and most of all, dedication to the protection of children and the preservation of families. Each region nominated a frontline worker that meets these standards.

REGION 1N	AMANDA GASS	REGION 4N	BRITTANY HAMILTON
REGION 1S	WENDY JACKSON	REGION 4S	LOZENA KING
REGION 2E	KELLEY COLEMAN	REGION 5E	MARIE WHITE
REGION 2W	CHAMBRIA CHILLIS	REGION 5W	TREMEKA SMITH
REGION 3N	PATTY GUISE	REGION 6	COURTNEY SPEIRS
REGION 3S	CHRISTY MORRIS	REGION 7E	VALISA MCCRORY
HARRISON	CHRISTIANA MAYFIELD	HANCOCK	DEMETRIA VALENTINE



THE WAY FORWARD:

MISSISSIPPI'S DFCS NEWSLETTER

Welcome to DFCS' monthly newsletter: THE WAY FORWARD. THE WAY FORWARD orients you to who DFCS is, what we do, and how we are moving Mississippi forward in child welfare.

THE WAY FORWARD IS
EDITED BY DR. ANNA LYN
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Leading the Way:

The Child Welfare Training Academy



The Child Welfare Training Academy (CWTA) originated in September 2011. The collaborative effort between the University of Mississippi and the Division of Family and Children's Services came about as a result of the Olivia Y Lawsuit and the Modified Settlement Agreement. The CWTA is charged with providing evidence-based pre-service classroom training to all newly hired front-line workers and supervisory staff being hired into the agency, as well as ongoing training for existing staff. The evidence-informed training curriculum is based on the **Mississippi Practice Model**.

Front-line workers receive 128 hours of evidence-informed classroom training provided by CWTA Education and Training Specialists and 160 hours of OJT training provided by DFCS trainers over an 8-week period.

Newly hired Area Social Work Supervisors and those considering taking a supervisory role receive 40 hours of evidence-based classroom training. Trainees evaluate both of these trainings, and the trainees are tested for competency at the end of each week of classroom training.

Enhanced evaluation of the pre-service training and supervisory training began this year with the addition of the Knowledge Translation and Sustainability project led by Drs. Viktor Burlaka and Daphne S. Cain. This evaluation measures trainee competency over a 1-year period of time (knowledge sustainability), and the implementation of evidence-based practices in the field (knowledge translation).

The CWTA is providing 288 days of ongoing training for existing DFCS staff during 2015-2016. Evidenced-based training topics include: Stress Management, Human Trafficking, Working with Adolescents, Protective Capacities, Preventing Maltreatment and Placement Disruption, Childhood Trauma, Professional Etiquette, Substance Abuse in the Family, Childhood Mental Health, Life Book, Cultural Diversity, Ethics, Engaging Incarcerated Parents, and Working with Absent Parents.

Olivia Y. Lawsuit Interim Remedial Order Update

The Complaint in *Olivia Y. et al. v. Barbour, et al.* was filed in March 2004 in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi against the Governor of Mississippi, the Executive Director of the Department of Human Services, and the Director of the MDHS Division of Family and Children's Services, all in their official capacities. The Complaint alleged that Mississippi's foster care system was failing to adequately protect children in its custody and provide necessary services in violation of their federal constitutional rights. The Plaintiffs, represented by New York-based Children's Rights, Inc. (CRI), sought class action certification for all children in foster care.

The Plaintiffs filed a "Renewed Motion for Contempt and for the Appointment of a Receiver" on March 9, 2015, alleging various

deficiencies in the State's work. After a continuance, an organizational analysis was conducted by Public Catalyst, a consulting group primarily comprised of the former management of the New Jersey child welfare system (and who are credited with helping to turn it around). Public Catalyst subsequently mediated the parties' negotiation of an "Interim Remedial Order." This Order, filed on December 22, 2015, requires the State to make a substantial investment in human resources and technology in 2016 to avoid reopening of the Plaintiffs' contempt motion. The Order also requires the parties to renegotiate the terms and implementation timetable of the Modified Settlement Agreement.

Pleadings, reports and the Public Catalyst assessment are available to the public at: <http://www.mdhs.ms.gov/olivia-y-lawsuit/>

PROGRESS IN THE REMEDIAL COURT ORDER

- "In but not of" Agency Structure
 - Executive Director named - Dr. David Chandler
 - Blended MDHS and DFCS positions identified
- Better Resources in Field Operations
 - Second Deputy Director of Field Operations named - Viedale Washington
 - Draft plan submitted for department reorganization for Field Operations
 - Draft plan in progress for licensed resource homes
 - Workload audit in progress
- Technology
 - Procuring tablets for field workers
 - Allocating positions to support technology
- Legislative Agenda
 - Agenda is advancing with House and Senate Bills
 - Agenda is supported by Dr. Chandler and Governor's office

Celebrating Social Workers!

Dr. David Chandler meets with eager social work students and social workers at the State Capitol during the Mississippi Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers advocacy day!

SAVE THE DATES....APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH...EVENTS ARE OCCURING STATEWIDE



- *If you wish to make a difference in your community or want to help with an awareness event, contact your local DFCS office.*

Report Child Abuse

Call **1-800-222-8000** to report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child in Mississippi or report on-line at **www.msabusehotline.mdhs.ms.gov**

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