North Carolina
Child Welfare
Education
Collaborative

Executive Summary
Academic Year 2007–2008
North Carolina’s Child Welfare Education Collaborative represents the shared commitments of academia and human services to workforce excellence in the protection of children and strengthening of families. Established in 1999 and administered by the Jordan Institute for Families at UNC-Chapel Hill, the Collaborative is a statewide effort to prepare social workers for public child welfare practice. Partners include (a) the Division of Social Services, (b) the Association of County Directors of Social Services, (c) the National Association of Social Workers—North Carolina Chapter, and (d) social work education programs, including:

- Appalachian State University
- East Carolina University
- Joint MSW (NC A&TSU/UNC-Greensboro)
- North Carolina State University
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of North Carolina at Wilmington

National estimates suggest that average annual turnover in public child welfare is 30-40%. In addition to the burden on agencies, turnover profoundly affects children and families, resulting in delayed investigations, extended permanency planning, and failed reunification. The Collaborative is one of 30 partnerships partially funded under Title IV-E of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-272). To create opportunities for both current and new practitioners, recruitment targets (1) DSS staff, (2) underrepresented ethnic minorities, and (3) those committed to child welfare careers.

Child Welfare Scholars receive specialized education and financial support to complete their degrees. In return, they commit to work in a North Carolina child welfare agency after graduation. Each academic year of support translates into a 12-month employment commitment; fulfillment of the obligation results in the loan being forgiven. In addition, students complete the state-mandated pre-service training requirement while in school, representing significant savings to agencies. To date, the Collaborative has trained nearly 600 Scholars. Approximately 80% of graduates fulfill their employment commitments (Figure 1), and many remain in DSS for several years thereafter (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Post-Graduation Outcomes for Scholars as of June 2008 (N = 470)
Summary of Accomplishments for Academic Year 2007-2008

The six Collaborative university programs trained 108 Child Welfare Scholars during the 2007-2008 academic year, with 64 of those students graduating and beginning work in public child welfare.

Scholars Served and Graduated During 2007-2008 and Overall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholars Served</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(BSW 43)</td>
<td>(BSW 199)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MSW 65)</td>
<td>(MSW 393)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>(BSW 27)</td>
<td>(BSW 166)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MSW 37)</td>
<td>(MSW 304)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each school offered at least one targeted child welfare course, as well as a series of specialized seminars and workshops. Many of these sessions included

- Child Welfare and Substance Abuse
- Child Welfare Issues for Latino Families
- Child Welfare and Domestic Violence
- Transracial Adoption
- Child Welfare Issues for Incarcerated Women

In addition, several Collaborative-wide learning and development opportunities were conducted. The Central Office co-sponsored, along with UNC-Chapel Hill's Field Education Program, a lecture, reception, and book signing by Andrew Bridge, children’s rights lawyer and author of *Hope’s Boy*, a memoir of his experiences in the foster care system. East Carolina University and the Central Office co-sponsored “Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress,” a day-long conference for Scholars and child welfare providers. The Conference drew over 200 participants, and attendees had the opportunity to learn from Jo Pryce, a nationally recognized leader in the field of secondary traumatic stress. Scholars participated in the annual UNC Law School Day, practicing crucial testimony and legal communication skills.

Each program implemented learning activities to prepare Scholars for the job search and a successful transition to the workforce. These included interview simulations, presentations from DSS personnel, and resume development.
workshops. Faculty met individually with graduating Scholars to identify employment priorities and needs. Coordinators and faculty worked closely with local DSS programs to identify and disseminate potential positions for Scholars, and to support Scholars’ applications.

Finally, a significant advocacy effort was launched in cooperation with NASW-North Carolina and the DSS Directors’ Association, resulting in funding for four additional universities to train and support Child Welfare Scholars. Figure 3 shows the locations of all 10 Collaborative schools, and the program’s reach throughout the State in terms of employment of graduates.

**Figure 3:** Collaborative University Programs with Counties (67) Employing Graduates

![Map of North Carolina showing locations of 10 Collaborative schools and employment of graduates.]

- **3 or more Collaborative Graduates Employed in This County (38 Counties)**
- **1 or 2 Collaborative Graduates Employed in This County (29 Counties)**

**Schools**

- Western Carolina
- Appalachian State
- UNC-Charlotte
- NC A&T/UNC-Greensboro
- UNC-Pembroke
- UNC-Chapel Hill
- NC State
- Fayetteville State
- East Carolina
- UNC-Wilmington

Our intent is that the Collaborative will continue to meet workforce needs in areas of North Carolina that have been traditionally understaffed and underserved, and will further contribute to the quality of child welfare practice in support of our State’s most vulnerable families and children.

North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative Central Office
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Jordan Institute for Families, School of Social Work
325 Pittsboro St., Campus Box 3550
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-2550
Telephone: (919) 962-6450
Fax: (919) 843-6398
NCCWEC@email.unc.edu

http://ssw.unc.edu/cwec