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Abstract

Strengthening Families with Children with Developmental Disabilities: A Model for Integrating Resources, Activities, and Services to Support Families

The Family Support Network of North Carolina is requesting funding to support the planning and development of a system of family support activities to ensure the integration of resources, activities, and services to support families with children with developmental disabilities.

The *Strengthening Families* Project will establish a planning process in Pitt, Wilson, Edgecombe, and Nash counties in Eastern North Carolina and at the state level. The goals of the proposed project are to strengthen family support for unserved and underserved families with children with developmental disabilities; to increase availability of and access to culturally appropriate support for families of diverse backgrounds; and to integrate formal and informal supports for families at both state and local levels.

Planning will be carried out by a Local Family Support Collaboration Team, co-led by a parent of a child with developmental disabilities and a parent of a typically developing child. The team will include representatives from the Family Support Network of Eastern North Carolina; local public and private organizations; and the faith community. A parallel State Family Support Collaboration Team will include parents; the Family Support Network of North Carolina, the Center for Development and Learning (both part of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine); the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities; the NC Department of Health and Human Services; NC Department of Public Instruction; NC Division of Social Services; private sector representatives, representatives of the faith community, and elected officials. These teams will plan activities to:

- integrate family support activities at the community level and state levels;
- integrate faith-based, private and publicly funded efforts to support families;
- increase access to services for families with children with disabilities who are typically unserved and underserved; and
- increase the availability of culturally appropriate family support.

These Family Support Collaboration Teams will develop a plan for implementing a “one-stop family support center” to ensure an integrated system of resources and services for effective family support.