

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vaya Health Partners With Local DSS Offices to Provide an Overview of North Carolina’s Child Welfare System

Regional Training Sessions Held Throughout the Month of October

ASHEVILLE, NC - Vaya Health proudly unveiled the latest addition to our “Pathways to Permanency” program in October of 2023. The new training, titled “Child Welfare 101” focuses on educating local stakeholders on North Carolina’s child welfare system, as well as how local Department of Social Services (DSS) offices are serving their communities.

Child Welfare 101 is a critical component of Vaya’s ongoing commitment to enhancing collaboration between community stakeholders and those in the child welfare and behavioral health sectors. The Pathways to Permanency program is designed to foster synergy between Vaya and the communities it serves within its regions — building connections and partnerships with County DSS offices and mental health providers.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to provide these training sessions to communities across our region, thanks to the continued support and partnership of many local DSS offices and providers,” stated Ashley Parks, Child and Family Treatment Continuum Director at Vaya. “Through our work together we’re able to ensure that both foster parents and providers have the tools and resources they need in order to provide the best possible care and support to these kids.”

Based on multi-sector focus groups conducted in the planning phases, Vaya identified key needs to be addressed within the system, such as: shared understanding, accessible quality

behavioral health assessments and interventions, as well as safe and supportive homes. In response, workgroups composed of cross-system stakeholders were created to develop, plan and implement solutions — and partner with communities to address identified needs.

Due to the partnerships created by the Pathways to Permanency program, child welfare professionals from local DSS agencies will co-facilitate the upcoming Child Welfare 101 training series, alongside staff from Vaya. Participants will receive a comprehensive overview during the 90-minute training and ultimately be equipped with an in-depth understanding of:

- The key components of the NC child welfare system
- Collaboration with county child welfare workers and Vaya’s Embedded Care Managers
- Incorporating the Circle of Care, including Child & Family Teams and the System of Care Philosophy
- Available resources for youth aging out of foster care

This unique training opportunity is open to a wide range of professionals including Vaya staff, foster parents, non-therapeutic foster care behavioral health providers, individuals considering becoming foster parents, and child-placing agency staff.

Interested participants are encouraged to sign up for a training session aligned with the Vaya region where they provide services to ensure broad access. If individuals are unable to attend a training in their area, they are encouraged to attend other sessions offered nearby.

To register for an upcoming training and to learn more about the Pathways to Permanency program, please reach out to Ashely Parks at ashley.parks@vayahealth.com

About Vaya Health

Vaya Health is a specialty managed care organization that oversees publicly funded behavioral health and intellectual/developmental disability services across a 31-county region of North Carolina. Vaya manages Medicaid, federal, state and local funding to meet member and community needs while advancing whole-person health. Together with our members, provider network and local partners, we’re moving forward to a healthier North Carolina. Access to crisis assistance is available 24/7 at 1-800-849-6127. Learn more at vayahealth.com.

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