



**Guilford County
Department of Social Services**

**Proposal for Child Welfare Leadership Team Capacity-Building &
Organizational System Improvements**



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October 3, 2024

Sharon Barlow, Director
 Guilford County Department of Social Services
 1203 Maple St.
 Greensboro, NC 27405

Re: Budget Amendment for Child Welfare Leadership Team Capacity-Building & Organizational System Improvements

Director Barlow:

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Allies4Outcomes **Child Welfare Leadership Team Capacity-Building & Organizational System Improvements budget amendment proposal** to you, HHS Director Isler, Deputy Director Craver, and your Board. Through our strong collaboration, communication, coordination, and partnership, we have partnered towards achieving the initial scope of work goals. We propose to continue the forward momentum and continue both individual supervisor and manager capacity-building and organizational shifts to support a continuous quality improvement mindset throughout the organization. We have proposed the following plan for the next six months to continue building on our work together thus far.

This continued partnership has two broad focus areas, and we present two budget options below to continue our engagement for **six months**.

Focus Areas	Activities & Deliverables Option 1 includes all activities, Option 2, includes activities denoted with a *	Proposed Budget Option 1 864 hours/108 days Six Consultants	Proposed Budget Option 2* 432 hours/54 days Six Consultants
Organizational System Improvements: Shifting culture in the organization to enhance a safety culture and continuous quality improvement mindset			
Continuous Quality Improvement Team Development, Planning, and Implementation Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning & Sessions with Cheyenne and Team* • Process for embedding CQI practices program wide, in multi layers • Standard Operating Procedures and Roles of Team 	\$60,000	\$30,000



<p>Focus Areas</p>	<p>Activities & Deliverables Option 1 includes all activities, Option 2, includes activities denoted with a *</p>	<p>Proposed Budget Option 1 864 hours/108 days Six Consultants</p>	<p>Proposed Budget Option 2* 432 hours/54 days Six Consultants</p>
<p>Deep Data Dives (D3) with the team into child welfare performance measures, processes, and other systemic factors impacting outcomes</p> <p>Organizational Structure, Standard Operating Procedures refinement, and other systemic issues that arise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework for Program Specific Messaging related to CQI Team Role • Complete timeliness of initiation Deep Data Dive, including SWOT analysis and Focus Groups <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Complete timeliness of initiation Deep Data Dive, with staff completing the SWOT analysis and A4O facilitating the Focus Groups • Co-lead next Deep Dive with Division Director or other leadership as designated • Coach Division Director or other leadership as designed on leading a Deep Data Dive <p>*finish current SOP work</p>		



Focus Areas	Activities & Deliverables Option 1 includes all activities, Option 2, includes activities denoted with a *	Proposed Budget Option 1 864 hours/108 days Six Consultants	Proposed Budget Option 2* 432 hours/54 days Six Consultants
Leadership Team Capacity – Building and One-on-One Coaching Through Integration of Leading, Managing, Programmatic Oversight, Coaching, and Accountability for Stronger Outcomes			
<p>Onboarding New Program Administrators</p> <p>Intensive Coaching with Specific Supervisors</p> <p>Continued support and Coaching with Program Managers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As they are hired • Iris Moss & Tamara Hardy to partner with five identified Assessment, Intake, On-Call and Family In Home Supervisors* • Dawn Gavasci to partner with Permanency Planning Supervisors* • Angela Pittman-Vanderweide, Katie Swanson, and Jacqueline McKnight to continue to partner with assigned Program Managers 	\$77,025	\$38,512
Mileage/Hotel/Travel (Estimate)	<p>To/From Guilford County Hotel – Federal/State Rate (if stay overnight)</p> <p>Travel Time: \$50/hour for Consultants & \$62.50 hour for Lead Consultant & \$75 hour for CEO/CSO</p>	\$25,326	\$12,663
Subtotal		\$162,351	\$81,175
Administrative Fee	General & Professional Liability Insurance, Workers Comp,	\$32,470	\$16,235



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	Capacity-Building & Coaching Curriculum Content, fiscal & operational tasks, taxes		
Total Contract Amount		\$194,821	\$97,410
1571 Reimbursement	Reimbursement approximately 40%, can identify exact reimbursement amount if 337 is shared	\$77,928	\$38,964
Total for Guilford County		\$116,893	\$58,446

We appreciate your consideration of this continuation of consultation and are excited to partner to continue strengthening the community's DSS safety net system. If you have questions or need further information, please contact me at (828) 713-9877 or angela@allies4outcomes.com.

In Partnership,

Angela Pittman – Vanderweide, DSW
CEO/Founder, Allies4Outcomes

Note: See addendum 1 for company background and team bio's



ADDENDUM 1: Company Background & Team Experience

Company Background

Mission: Cultivating Growth, Enriching Results through People

Vision: To utilize partnerships & neuroscience-based, evidence-informed approaches to cultivate leadership practices that improve organizational health and trust, foster a growth mindset, build a strong workforce, and enhance service delivery to forward organizational, client, and fiscal results.

Allies4Outcomes (A4O) is a nationally and NC-certified Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) that partners with local, state, and federal government agencies, Universities, non-profit organizations, and other allies to drive systemic change. A4O's capacity-building approach is grounded in implementation science and utilizes a multi-tiered framework that connects learning to day-to-day policy application to practice, decision-making, and leadership.

Methodology: Allies4Outcomes partners with organizations to deliver a neuroscience-based, evidence-informed, and experience-based leadership approach to consulting, training, observation and feedback loops, and capacity-building services to drive systemic change. A4O's capacity-building model is grounded in implementation science and utilizes a multi-tiered, equity-focused framework that connects learning to day-to-day policy application to practice, decision-making, and leadership.

A4O's service array includes:

- **Leadership, Supervisory, and Team Training & Capacity – Building**, incorporating training sessions observation, feedback loops, and real-time application leadership practices that improve trust, psychological safety, belonging, and workforce retention to advance outcomes
- **Onboarding Boost & Practice Boost** – focus on both new and veteran workers, supervisors, and managers to enhance application policy to practice, make safety decision-making, prioritization, safe case trajectory, and understand the organization's expectations to advance the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and their families
- **System Evaluations, with Recommendations** – of Health and Human Services, Department of Social Services, and specific program areas within human services, guided by an organizational efficiency and effectiveness framework
- **Policy and Practice Essentials** through **connecting Pre-Service Training to the field, mini-trainings**, coaching, and field observation sessions to strengthen practice areas
- Evaluating child welfare and human services organizations' systems' strengths and challenges provides recommendations for enhancing outcomes.



- **Technical Assistance and Program/System Improvement Consulting**, grounded in safety culture, safety science, and policy application to best practice.
- **Integration of Lived – Experience Lens** across service array
- **Focus on belonging across systems**, amplifying diversity, equity, and inclusion
- **Cultivates a resilient, healthy organizational culture and climate** through trust, psychological safety, equity, inclusion, and **belonging**
- **Develops high-performing teams** through belonging, performance measures, and sustainable practices
- **Advances workforce recruitment, hiring, onboarding, retention, and resiliency wellness supports**
- **Conducts continuous quality improvement and quality assurance reviews**, analyzes data trends, and identifies strengths, challenges, and recommendations for improvement across all program areas
- **Develops and implements continuous quality improvement** teams, processes, practices, tools, and training
- **Curriculum development, research application to practice**, and facilitation of communities of learning and practice
- **Adult & Aging Services** Consultation, Training, and Capacity-Building
- **Human Services Consolidation** – Board Development, Evaluation, Recommendations, and Implementation.

Our Team's Experience

A4O collaborates with a diverse team of subject matter expert contractors who bring specialized knowledge and significant professional experience to meet the specific needs of each client. The CEO, COO, CSO, and team of expert contractors have provided training, consultation, and leadership to human service organizations at both the state and local levels, enhancing the capacity of professionals in 38 counties in North Carolina, 23 state jurisdictions, and five countries. A4O's contractor team includes 24 subject matter experts, boasting a wide range of experience and education.

The team features two PhDs/DSWs, two LCSW's, seven MSWs, four BSWs, thirteen professionals with master's degrees in other disciplines, and six with bachelor's degrees in psychology or related fields. Together, the A4O Team brings 525 years of collective experience in roles such as social workers across all program areas, supervisors, managers, administrators, DSS and HHS directors, COOs and County fiscal directors, CQI Directors, Economic Services Directors, State consultants, leaders of non-profit and for-profit organizations, project managers, Lean Six Sigma - Green Belt, and CWIS technology consultants across federal, state, and local government and private sectors.

By leveraging this subject matter expertise and experience, A4O ensures that partner organizations benefit from exceptional partnership, leadership, and creative solutions through consultation, training, and hands-on observation of field practices with families, supervisors, managers, and leaders. Through leadership observations, our team emphasizes integrating technical/managerial skills with leadership practices to improve trust and psychological safety, observation, feedback loops, and cross-organization, multi-level workforce capacity-building. The team will collaborate closely with your County and/or your organization's Leadership Team, customizing services to meet specific goals and aligning the most qualified consultant with each area of need to drive meaningful change and improvement toward achieving outcomes.



Dr. Angela Pittman – Vanderweide **CEO, Leadership & Organizational
Subject Matter Expert, &
Collaborative Capacity-Builder**



Dr. Angela Pittman–Vanderweide is the Chief Executive Officer of A4O and has over 33 years of experience in progressively responsible executive leadership roles, including private, non-profit, state (NC DHHS), and local government. Through that lived experience, Angela has developed the ability to partner with others to enhance performance and meet organizational, fiscal, and client outcomes. Angela has practiced child welfare consultation nationally and internationally, with extensive experience in North Carolina and 25 other jurisdictions across the US. Angela has served national subject matter expertise in leadership practices that improve trust and psychological safety, cultivating a healthy culture and climate; building, engaging, and retaining a resilient workforce; equity, inclusion, and belonging; change agility & implementation science; resource capacity building; and organizational effectiveness. Additionally, Angela has implemented system-wide continuous quality improvement teams and strategies to identify trends, build on strengths, and improve fiscal, organizational, and client outcomes.

Angela is committed to social justice, cultural humility, diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging in communication, workforce, and service delivery. Engaging persons with lived experience to inform leadership practices, system improvements, and practice changes is foundational to Angela’s consulting. Angela also has lived experience becoming the legal guardian of a 16-year-old daughter formerly in foster care. This has expanded her lens and her application of lived experience to her consulting, leadership, and training.

Angela has over 20 years of university teaching and training experience, including in the classroom, synchronous, and asynchronous methodologies. Angela currently teaches in MSW & DSW programs at the University of Kentucky. Angela holds a Doctorate of Social Work (DSW) degree from the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. In 2020, Angela published an article entitled “*Leadership Rebooted: Cultivating Trust with the Brain in Mind,*” which forwards a model of leadership that is aligned with a human service organization’s mission, values, and ethics. Angela lives with her partner, Craig, and our daughter, Lucy, in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina.



Katie Swanson, LCSW

Chief Strategy Officer, Trainer, Leadership & Organizational Practice and Change Subject Matter Expert



Katie Swanson, MSW, LCSW, is the Chief Strategy Officer of Allies4Outcomes and a co-owner of another business – Expansion Solutions. Katie has over 23 years of experience in progressively responsible executive leadership roles, including local and state (DHHS) government. Through that lived experience, Katie has developed the ability to partner with others to enhance performance and meet organizational, fiscal, and client outcomes. Katie has extensive social services experience in North Carolina, including being the director of social services in Cleveland County and management experience in both Buncombe and Catawba counties. She was recently Deputy Director for County Operations for the NC Department of Social Services. She has worked closely with other Social Services Directors as a Tri-Chair in Child Welfare for the North Carolina Association of County Department of Social Services.

Katie is creative and innovative and works to meet organizational and client needs through targeted strategies to improve client outcomes. Katie creates positive solutions to complex problems involving but not limited to the workforce crisis and service delivery, specifically in economics (Medicaid, Food and Nutrition Services, Child Support) and social work services (Adult Services and Child Welfare). Katie has deep experience analyzing systems, changing processes, and finding solutions. She demonstrates robust leadership qualities that encourage others to enjoy working alongside her to achieve the goals they set out to accomplish. Additionally, Katie has worked as a consultant in multiple North Carolina counties. Currently, she teaches an asynchronous class at the Appalachian State University, working with students interested in Social Services and doing her part to positively influence the incoming workforce.

Dawn Gavasci

Consultant, Trainer, and Permanency Subject Matter Expert



Dawn Gavasci brings over three decades of leadership, supervision, and practical experience in child welfare across state and county levels to her training, leadership, and consulting. She is a subject matter expert in Permanency, focusing on permanency planning policy application, fiscal and funding issues, and strategies to enhance permanency performance outcomes. Dawn excels in building robust relationships with the workforce, County & DHHS colleagues, community leaders, and stakeholders, significantly contributing to collective efforts to improve outcomes. One notable example is her leadership in a court collaborative project aimed at addressing the Judicial system at various levels to reduce court continuances, thereby improving timeliness to permanence.



Dawn's extensive child welfare experience covers all practice areas within the field, serving in various roles such as social worker (Assessments, Family In-Home, and Permanency), Supervisor, Program Coordinator (Families for Kids), Program Manager for Adoptions, Permanency, licensing, and LINKS (10 years), and NC DHHS Child Welfare Regional Specialist. She has substantial expertise in implementing continuous quality improvement processes across all program areas, including analyzing data trends, understanding the "stories" behind the data, and engaging the workforce in developing strategies to enhance practice, supervision, and outcomes.

Additionally, Dawn has deep experience collaborating with MCOs to find placements for children with substantial behavioral health needs. Additionally, she has been a team lead in Disaster Planning and activation of those plans with NC Emergency Management. Her dedication to driving systems change and serving the citizens in North Carolina is evident through her extensive network of relationships, practice, leadership expertise, and the achievement of collaborative community, organizational, and client outcomes. Dawn holds a Bachelor of Social Work from UNC Pembroke, has two children, and resides in Eastern North Carolina with her husband.

Tamara Hardy, MSW

Leader, Trainer, and Policy & Practice Subject Matter Expert



With over 30 years of executive leadership experience in child welfare across both public and private sectors, Tamara has held numerous leadership positions in state and local governments. Her background includes roles as a manager, supervisor, and direct practitioner in child welfare, along with working with non-profits that serve children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Tamara's volunteer work and personal experiences have also contributed to her family-centered approach to child welfare. Additionally, she has spent eight years teaching and training child welfare professionals in field settings. Throughout her career, Tamara has developed a strong ability to collaborate with the workforce, engage with families, and enhance outcomes for all stakeholders.

Tamara is deeply committed to driving transformative changes in the child welfare system, focusing on children's and families' safety, permanence, and well-being. She excels at amplifying the voices of youth and families, fostering partnerships, and promoting continuous improvement and innovation to achieve organizational excellence. Her career has been marked by a dedication to ensuring equitable access to services and implementing strategies that improve outcomes for marginalized communities, particularly regarding social determinants of health.

Tamara is well-versed in addressing power imbalances, bias, and equity issues within policies and practices, having led various initiatives in the public child welfare sector. Her leadership in dynamic environments has earned her multiple accolades, particularly for her compassionate and balanced style that emphasizes support, accountability, and workforce retention.



Tamara holds a Master's in Social Work from Winthrop University and is an Associate Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She resides in South Carolina and enjoys spending time with her daughter and traveling in her free time.

Dr. Jacqueline O. McKnight

Organization & Leadership Subject Matter Expert



Dr. Jacqueline O. McKnight was appointed as the Deputy Director of Child and Family Services for Mecklenburg County, DSS, in the fall of 2017. In 2021, her role expanded to Deputy Director of the DSS Department, which she served until the fall of 2023. In these roles, she was responsible for supporting the Director of DSS in overseeing and managing all social service programs.

Dr. McKnight brings over three decades of experience overseeing administrative operations and developing programs that positively impact participants' lives. Prior to accepting this role, Dr. McKnight was the Executive Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Administration for Children's Services. Dr. McKnight has oversaw over 4,000 staff members and a diverse network of contracted providers. She has also been responsible for overseeing, integrating, and coordinating child welfare programs, both public and private, toward better outcomes for children and families.

Dr. McKnight has a wealth of experience, including work focused on leadership development, prevention service implementation, interagency collaborations, substance abuse, and interpersonal violence among communities of color, as well as the implications for female consumers of service. Dr. McKnight received a Bachelor's in Social Work from York College CUNY, a Master's in Social Work from Columbia University School of Social Work, and a Doctorate of Philosophy from Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services. She is the recipient of the Children FIRST Doctoral Fellowship, 2004 and 2005, and a 2016 NASW-NYC Top Leader Award Recipient. She is also certified by Yale School of Management Executive Education -Women's Leadership Program. Dr. McKnight currently serves as a Graduate Adjunct Professor at UNC at Charlotte -School for Social Work and a former adjunct professor at Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services and Casey Family Programs Foundation's Leadership Academy. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center, Healthy Blue- Blue Cross Blue Shield's - Foster Care Advisory Group, and formerly a Board member for Mecklenburg County's Race Matter for Juvenile Justice.



Iris Moss

Consultant, Trainer, and Policy & Practice Subject Matter Expert



Iris Moss brings over thirty-six years of experience in human services, specializing in child welfare through various direct practice and leadership roles. From an early age, Iris knew her purpose was to help others. She began her career in El Paso, Texas, working as a Social Service Worker for the Department of the Army. In this role, she developed the parenting curriculum PEEC (Parenting Early Education for Children) for first-time soldier parents, led parenting groups, and provided continuous support to program participants.

Iris later moved into child welfare, working with the Department of Human Services for Children and Families in Texas and Georgia. She held several key positions, such as Assessor/Investigator, Family In-Home Worker, and Foster Care/Licensing Worker. Iris is also a certified MAPP (Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting) Instructor, delivering foster care training and conducting home studies to license potential foster parents. Her child welfare work frequently centered on military families, as she lived on a military base with her own family.

Continuing her career at Mecklenburg County's Department of Social Services/Youth and Family Services, Iris took on various practitioner roles, including Investigations, In-Home/Treatment cases, and working as a Court Diversion Social Worker. She was later promoted to supervisor and then program manager, overseeing the community resource services team. In this capacity, she developed and managed a diverse array of DSS and Public Health programs, including the DSS Nursing Program, Education Liaison Program, Domestic Violence Program, Housing Program, Housing Subsidy Program, Family Partner Program, Mental Health Program, and the after-hours intake team. Her leadership and mentorship contributed to a 40% increase in the promotion of supervisors within her team. As a Project Lead, Iris also significantly improved programs in collaboration with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Children's Resource Center.

A native of Winston-Salem, NC, Iris now lives in Charlotte, NC, with her husband. She has two children and is recently retired; she enjoys traveling the world with her husband. Iris earned a BS in Criminal Justice with a Minor in Social Work from UNC-Charlotte and holds an MBA with a concentration in Leadership.