

**North Carolina Association of County Commissioners
2004-05 Ralph W. Ketner Employee Productivity Awards Application**

County:	Wilson	Employee:	Tracey Mooring & Chris Wright	Email:	<u>tmooring@wilson-co.com</u> <u>cwright@wilson-co.com</u>
County Department:	Department of Social Services	Employee Title:	Child Care Supervisor & Fraud Supervisor		
County Phone:	252-206-4168	County Mailing Address:	PO Box 459 Wilson, NC 27894		

Is this project being submitted on behalf of two or more employees?	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please provide below a listing of all project employees in Number 6. Employee & title as listed above should be for lead team member.

Fair Labors Standards Act Designation: In order for your project to be eligible, you MUST indicate one of the following. If you do not know, please contact your personnel director

EXEMPT: **NON-EXEMPT:** **BOTH (if applicable to team):**

1.	Productivity Improvement Title:	Front End Investigations in Child Care Subsidy Program
2.	Implementation Date (must be between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004)	November 2004
3.	Please describe the productivity improvement. (Please limit response to these 2 pages.)	
<p>In February and March of 2005, the Program Integrity Team and the Child Care Subsidy Team <u>saved \$94,150.00</u> in child care subsidy funds by providing up front fraud investigation for families applying for child care subsidy assistance prior to application being approved. A total of 255 families were pulled off of our child care waiting lists. Of the 255 families, 88 were found to be giving fraudulent information which determined their ineligibility for child care subsidy assistance.</p> <p>We targeted every applicant for child care subsidy assistance who was not receiving child support and completed an up front fraud screening/investigation prior to approving the application. A front end investigation is an intensive investigation completed prior to an applicant receiving public assistance to insure that the information provided is accurate and determine that the family truly is in need. The Special Investigations Team was given a list of applicants from the waiting list and immediately began collecting pertinent data through inquiries into various programs on the computer such as Employment Security, Department of Transportation, Criminal, and Eligibility files. Field visits were also completed. The investigations were completed immediately so that benefits were not delayed. If there were no problems found with the applicant's case the application was approved for child care subsidy. As a result of this initiative, 88 out of 255 families (approximately 34%) from our child care waiting lists were not approved due to ineligibility. For many families we found that the absent parent lives in the home. Even though the father is in the home, families are still eligible for child care subsidy as long as both parents are employed. Many of the cases the household income was over the income limit, or the spouse was not working. Those applicants who were found to have provided false information and who were over the income eligibility level did not receive child care subsidy assistance. This initiative saved <u>\$94,150</u> in upfront child care subsidy funds and allowed us to serve 40 additional eligible, needy families and children from our waiting lists who were eligible and truly in need.</p>		

4. Please describe why this project was initiated or what problem it addressed:

Child Care assistance is a great need in our county as well as across the state. Insuring that families who are eligible and in need of services have the opportunity to receive assistance has and continues to be a strong focus in Wilson County. With insufficient funding to provide assistance to all children in need, it is important that the integrity of our child care subsidy program be "high priority". We have a large waiting list of children whose families have requested child care assistance to work or go to school. We currently serve approximately 1200 children each month and continue to average about 500 children on our waiting lists at any given month. Quarterly reviews are completed on all families receiving child care subsidies to assess their continued need and eligibility. Prior to implementing this initiative, we would often find cases that were ineligible due to finding out that the absent parent lived in the home and was not shared at the time of application. Although, many families were still eligible as far as income, there were quite a few that were not thus making them ineligible to receive child care subsidy assistance. Fraud was apparent in this program. By preventing, detecting, and deterring fraud upfront for those who apply for public aid they are not entitled to, our agency protects the interests of those in genuine need and conserves taxpayer dollars.

5. Please quantify the improvement's results in terms of cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of services provided.

(Please indicate what resources were used to achieve your results, and what was done with the time savings, if any accrued).

By completing front end investigations, we prevented \$94,150.00 in subsidy dollars serving families who were ineligible due to excess income, which allowed us to serve 40 additional children and families who are eligible and truly in need. Proactive investigation is encouraged to protect the public and the community interest. By preventing, detecting, and deterring fraud for those who seek public aid they are not entitled to, the Child Care Subsidy Fraud Program protects the interests of those in genuine need and conserves taxpayer dollars. Our staff protect the people who are eligible and really need help.

6. Please provide any other descriptive information you would like to be considered by the review committee.

Child Care Team and Special Investigations Staff

County Manager's Name:	Ellis Williford	Supervisor's Name:	Susan Parker
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Return by JUNE 1, 2005 via email Rebecca.Troutman@ncacc.org or fax to (919) 733-1065