

ORIENTATION GUIDE  
for Child Care Health Consultants  
in North Carolina



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
**Child Care Health and**  
**Safety Resource Center**

**800-367-2229**

**[healthychildcare.unc.edu](http://healthychildcare.unc.edu)**

# Contents

- Welcome Child Care Health Consultant!..... 2**
  - What is a Child Care Health Consultant? .....2
  - What do CCHCs do? .....2
  - What is the CCHC Service Model?.....3
- The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center (NC Resource Center)..... 3**
  - NC Resource Center Staff .....3
  - Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) Coaches.....3
  - The NC CCHC Resources Page .....4
    - CCHC Resource Portal ..... 4
    - CCHC Program Manual ..... 5
    - CCHC Event Calendar ..... 5
    - Links to other NC Resource Center Trainings ..... 5
  - The NC CCHC Course .....5
    - Before starting the course ..... 5
  - Additional resources for advanced learning .....6
    - Community College: EDU-153 - Health, Safety and Nutrition ..... 6
    - The NC Health and Safety Assessment and Encounter Tool (NC HSAET) .....6
- Partner Agencies..... 6**
  - What is the NC Child Care Health Consultant Association?.....6
  - What is the NC Partnership for Children?.....8
  - What is the NC Division of Child and Family Well-Being?.....8
  - What is the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education?.....8
  - What is a DCDEE Child Care (Licensing) Consultant? .....9
  - What is the NC Rated License Assessment Project (NCRLAP)?.....9
  - Who do I work with at the Local Health Department? .....9
  - What is a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency?.....9
- You are ready to get started! What is the next step?.....10**

## Welcome Child Care Health Consultant!

The NC CCHC Orientation Guide is a living document designed to assist CCHC's throughout orientation to the CCHC role and as a resource for all active CCHC's. Before entering the NC CCHC Course, this document, along with your CCHC Coach, will provide you with the information needed as you begin working in your new role. We recommend coming back to this document when questions arise. This guide provides:

- Background and foundational information
- Links to resources
- Questions to ask
- Activities to do

As you read the document and work through the activities, note any questions you have. Reach out to your CCHC Coach, the NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center, or your funding or hiring agency for more information.

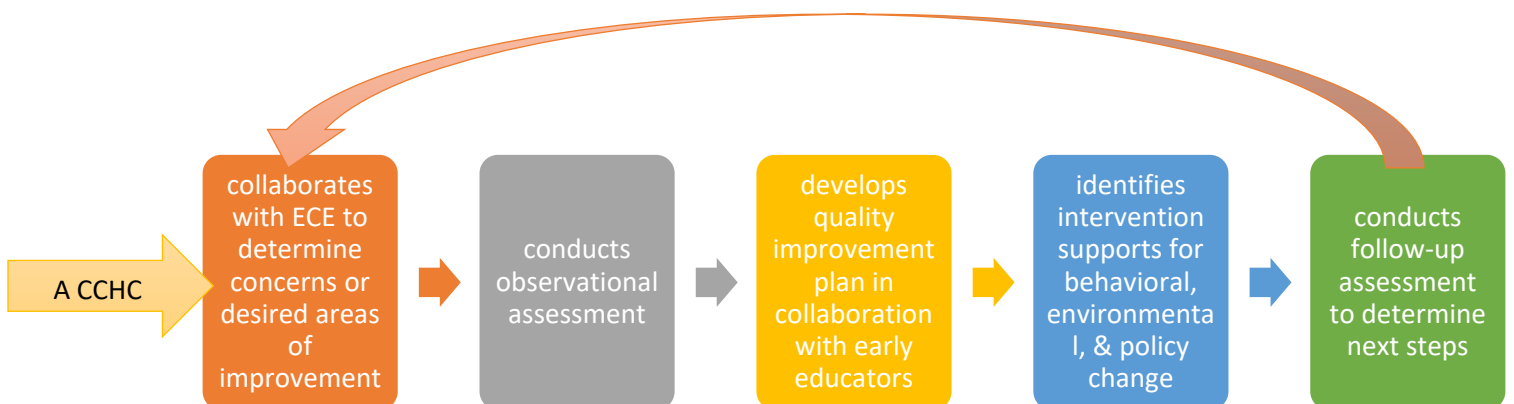
### What is a Child Care Health Consultant?

A Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) is a health professional with education and experience in child and community health and early care and education (ECE). Health professionals become active CCHCs in North Carolina upon successful completion of the NC CCHC Course.

### What do CCHCs do?

CCHCs work to improve the quality of early care and education programs by promoting healthy and safe indoor and outdoor learning environments for children in child care. CCHCs collaborate with child care facility staff including directors, operators, and early educators, other technical assistance (TA) providers, health professionals, and families to achieve this goal.

Child care health consultation involves assessment of early care and education environments and practices, joint development of a quality improvement plan, implementation of strategies to increase healthy and safe outcomes, and evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies. The strategies that CCHCs recommend often involve providing health and safety-related training and technical assistance (TA) including coaching and consultation.



CCHCs use the following references to guide their training and technical assistance:

- Federal and state laws
- NC Child Care and Sanitation rules
- Best practices from CFOC, AAP, CDC, NAEYC and other expert sources
- Environment Rating Scales/NC Rated License Assessment Project

### What is the CCHC Service Model?

The CCHC Service Model defines the standard practice of child care health consultation in NC. It was updated in 2020 to incorporate the CCHC National Competencies. Every CCHC in NC should use the CCHC Service Model to set priorities and assure alignment of goals.

- Review the CCHC Service Model and Competencies in the [CCHC Program Manual](#).
- Share the NC CCHC Service Model with your supervisor if they do not already have it.

## The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center (NC Resource Center)

The NC Resource Center provides health and safety expertise and professional support to CCHCs upon hire, throughout the NC CCHC Course, and as long as they maintain their status as an active CCHC.

**The NC Resource Center's main office location:** 5601 Six Forks Road, Raleigh, NC 27609

**Phone number:** 1-800-367-2229 (chose 1 then 2)

**Website:** [healthychildcare.unc.edu](https://healthychildcare.unc.edu)

- Familiarize yourself with the <https://healthychildcare.unc.edu/> website.

Review resources tab including:

- Newsletters and sign up to receive the quarterly [Child Care Health and Safety E-newsletter](#).
- [Posters page](#) where you can order posters for child care providers.

### NC Resource Center Staff

- Julie L. Daniels, Principal Investigator
- Jacquie Simmons, Project Director
- Vickie Fennell, Information and Lead Training Coordinator
- Lindsey Pertet, CCHC and Training Coordinator
- Jasmine Walker, Data and Evaluation Specialist
- Steven Gunn, Training Specialist
- Alicia Tanner, Regional Child Care Health Consultant Manager
- Stacy Rosser, Regional Child Care Health Consultant
- Beth Porreco, Infant/Toddler/Child Care Health Consultant
- Courtney Summey, Infant/Toddler Child Care Health Consultant

- [Contact information](#) for NC Resource Center staff.

### Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) Coaches

CCHC Coaches provide the following to both new and experienced CCHCs:

- Orientation to CCHC practice
- Competency support before, during, and after the NC CCHC Course

- Ongoing consultation/coaching guidance in the implementation of services
- Support in using the NC Health and Safety Assessment and Encounter Tool
- Webinars and other regular communication
- Goal setting for local impact and program development such as logic model and/or deliverables.

Coaches also support and develop strategies to expand the CCHC network by working with local health departments, partnerships for children, and other agencies that provide support to child care facilities, to advocate for child care health consultation. Coaches offer support for hiring and funding agencies including:

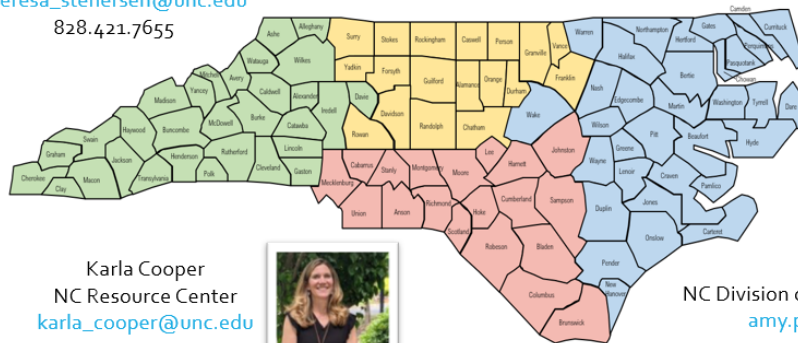
- Guidance to hiring and funding agencies on recruiting and hiring
- Oversight in CCHC model fidelity during planning for and in reporting of contract deliverables.



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Contact your CCHC Coach to set up an orientation meeting. If you are unsure who your coach is, reach out to any of us and we will make sure you reach the right person!

### The NC CCHC Resources Page

Access to resources including the CCHC Resource Portal, CCHC Program Manual, CCHC Event Calendar along with access to additional training materials.

#### CCHC Resource Portal

- The Resource Portal is only accessible to active CCHCs. It contains:
  - Announcements
  - Helpful links including a link to book a coaching appointment
  - Weekly news
  - CCHC numbers
  - Community of Practice Forum
  - CCHC Resource Library – continuously updated with new information and resources
    - Information about the NC Health and Safety Assessment and Encounter Tool (NCHSAET)
    - CCHC training materials and archived CCHC training materials
    - Professional development resources designed specially for CCHCs
    - DCDEE data and resources
- Coaches work with new CCHC’s throughout the orientation process and provide access to this portal.

## CCHC Program Manual

- This page is for CCHC's/hiring/funding agencies. It contains:
  - Hiring and Agency Resources
  - Orientation Guide
  - Service Model and Competencies
  - Standards of Practice
  - Other outreach materials.

## CCHC Event Calendar

Find learning opportunities such as CCHC Learning Collaboratives, NC HSAET Office Hours, Quarterly Webinars for CCHC's and supervisors. Throughout the year learning opportunities from other organizations that support Early Educators are also posted here.

## Links to other NC Resource Center Trainings

- Emergency Preparedness and Response in Child Care
- Infant/Toddler Safe Sleep and SIDS Risk Reduction in Child Care (ITS-SIDS)

- [CCHC Program Manual](#).
- [CCHC Event Calendar](#).
- Discuss with your CCHC Coach gaining access to the CCHC Resource Portal.

## The NC CCHC Course

The NC CCHC Course prepares child care health consultants to work with child care facilities in promoting healthy and safe environments. Completing the course is a requirement for working as an Active CCHC in NC.

The course spans approximately 12 to 14 weeks. It includes weekly zoom meetings, distance learning/self-study, one in-person session towards the end of the course (usually held in Raleigh), and a final project. The course is typically held two to three times a year.

- Contact Lindsey Pertet for more information and for an application to enroll in the [NC CCHC Course](#).

## Before starting the course

The following are the pre-requisites for the course. Reviewing the following documents before starting will ensure that you are fully prepared to start the course.

- Review the following:
  1. Documents:
    - [CCHC Competencies](#)
    - [CCHCs Make Early Care and Education Programs Healthier and Safer](#)
  2. North Carolina participants:
    - [NC CCHC Service Model](#)
    - [Module 1-5, Introduction to Public Health in North Carolina](#) (total - 105 minutes)
  3. [Caring for Our Children](#) (CFOC) National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs.

4. [North Carolina Child Care Regulations](#) including General Statutes, Child Care Rules, Sanitation of Child Care Centers. Participants not in NC must identify child care regulations in their home state.

### Additional resources for advanced learning

For advanced learning on public health, the following resources each contain collections of training resources. Work with your CCHC Coach who can help you identify which ones might be most useful.

- [Community ToolBox](#)
- [MCH Navigator](#)
- [Public Health Learning Navigator](#)

Community College: EDU-153 - Health, Safety and Nutrition

This course covers promoting and maintaining the health and well-being of every child. Topics include health and nutritional guidelines, common childhood illnesses, maintaining safe and healthy learning environments, health benefits of active play, recognition and reporting of abuse/neglect, and state regulations. Upon completion, students should be able to apply knowledge of NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development for health, safety, nutritional needs, and safe learning environments.

### The NC Health and Safety Assessment and Encounter Tool (NC HSAET)

NC HSAET is a web-based assessment and encounter tool, updated in 2021 by the NC Resource Center for use by active CCHCs in North Carolina. The tool is used by CCHCs to collect and store data on:

- encounters with child care facilities and community partners including trainings and meetings
- assessments of the health and safety aspects of child care environments and practices
- quality improvement strategies

The sections of the NC HSAET align with the CCHC National Competencies:

- Illness and infectious diseases
- Children with special health care needs
- Medication administration
- Safety and injury prevention
- Emergency preparedness, response, and recovery
- Infant and child social and emotional wellbeing
- Child abuse and neglect
- Physical Activity
- Nutrition
- Oral health
- Environmental health
- Staff health and wellness
- Policies

CCHCs will receive training for the NC HSAET in the NC CCHC Course. CCHC Coaches will help with incorporating this tool into the work of CCHCs. A CCHC can access the encounters portion of the NC HSAET prior to becoming an active CCHC. Contact the regional CCHC coach for guidance.

- Read more about the NC HSAET Tool in the NC CCHC Resource Library in the CCHC Resource Portal.
- A CCHC and supervisor must complete a [new user form](#) for the CCHC to access the tool.
- For questions about the tool, email the NC Resource Center: [NCHSAET@unc.edu](mailto:NCHSAET@unc.edu).

## Partner Agencies

### What is the NC Child Care Health Consultant Association?

The NC CCHCA, created in 2000, is a membership association of CCHCs. Members share ideas and resources, assist in solving problems and concerns, and offer collaboration and support to CCHCs across the state. The

CCHC Association has a CCHC chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary who support an executive committee which meets monthly. The Association is divided into three regions, west, central, and east. The regions hold quarterly meetings organized by an elected regional representative.

Membership in the CCHC Association is renewed annually. In addition to being better connected to your CCHC peers, the benefits of membership include:

- The NC CCHC Annual Conference
- Access to attend quarterly regional meetings
- Ability to serve as an officer or on a committee

Become a member and get involved - visit the [CCHC Association website](#) for more information.



## What is the NC Partnership for Children?

The NC Partnership for Children (NCPC) supports local Partnerships for Children (PFC) throughout the state to ensure that young children enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. NCPC provides funding to 75 Local PFCs that work in all 100 North Carolina counties. Local PFCs provide a variety of services for children birth to five years old and their families including high quality child care and health and family support services. Local PFCs determine the best approach to meet the needs in their communities. This includes determining which services to fund such as child care health consultation.

Plan to meet with the Local PFC staff, including the Executive Director. You will want to be familiar with the services they offer in the community and identify how you can collaborate. Local PFC technical assistance staff help early care and education programs, and early educators develop quality child care programs. They may offer support with nutrition and physical activity, behavior, or more generalized support.

If your CCHC position is Smart Start funded, you may be a:

- Local Partnership for Children employee or
- Employed at a local health department or other community agency

Work with your supervisor and coach to develop or review a Logic Model that includes a statement of need, identification of a target population, description of program or activity elements, outputs, and outcomes. The Logic Model shows how the outcomes impact long-term Smart Start goals.

- Visit the Smart Start website [www.smartstart.org](http://www.smartstart.org) to learn more and identify your [Local PFC](#).
- Review the sample Logic Model in the [CCHC Program Manual](#).
- Discuss developing a logic model with your CCHC Coach.

## What is the NC Division of Child and Family Well-Being?

The Division of Child and Family Well-Being (DCFV) brings together complementary programs within NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to support North Carolina's children growing up safe, healthy, and thriving in nurturing and resilient families and communities. DCFV includes the following sections:

- Food and Nutrition Services
- Community Nutrition Services
- Whole Child Health, including Child Behavioral Health and Children and Youth programs
- Early Intervention

DCFV supports child care health consultation in NC directly through the role of the State Child Care Nurse Consultant, who works in the Whole Child Health Section:

- serving as a CCHC Coach
- promoting child care health consultation by establishing and maintaining links between CCHCs, NC DHHS, community organizations, and professional associations.

- Visit the [NC Division of Child and Family Well-Being](#) website.

## What is the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education?

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) is a division of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and is responsible for:

- Assuring education/training requirements of early educators and administrators (Workforce Education Unit).

- Increasing access to child care for low-income families (Subsidized Child Care Program) by providing financial assistance through child care subsidies for eligible families.
- Regulation of any child care facility in NC where a person is caring for more than two children who are unrelated to them for more than 4 hours per day, with some exemptions such as summer programs, drop-in care, and military bases.

### What is a DCDEE Child Care (Licensing) Consultant?

Child Care Consultants (CCCs) are part of the DCDEE Regulatory Team and are required to visit all licensed child care facilities. CCCs ensure compliance with child care regulations, including health and safety standards. Consultants also investigate complaints related to child care requirements and alleged child maltreatment.

- Review the list of Child Care (Licensing) Consultants by county/coverage once you have been given access to the CCHC Resource Portal.
- Attend a [pre-licensing workshop](#).

### What is the NC Rated License Assessment Project (NCRLAP)?

The NCRLAP was established to define the quality of child care in the state and to assist parents in choosing child care. It does this by assigning a star rating to licensed child care facilities in NC. Facilities that meet the minimum standards set by the DCDEE receive a one-star license but can earn up to five stars. As part of the NC CCHC Course, you will visit a child care facility and learn from an NCRLAP assessor about the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale.

- Watch a [short video about the star rated licensing assessment](#) process. Other videos are available on the NCRLAP website under [resources](#). Note that the video “child care consultant” refers to the licensing child care consultant, not the CCHC.

### Who do I work with at the Local Health Department?

Many CCHCs in North Carolina are employed a local, county health department. As a health department employee, you must be familiar with health department policies, procedures, and requirements such as training and documentation. Regardless of the hiring agency, CCHCs should work closely with the health department staff in their county.

Health department partners:

- Health Director
- Children’s Environmental Health/Sanitation Specialist
- Communicable Disease Coordinator
- Immunization Coordinator
- Child Health Nurse
- School Nurses
- Health Educators
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- Identify the [Local Health Department\(s\)](#) in your area.

### What is a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency?

CCR&R agencies provide:

- consumer education on quality child care to families who are searching for child care programs for their children including details about quality and information on availability.
- services to improve quality in child care programs through technical assistance and the provision of professional development activities.
- and collect data to use for planning and policy development for the public and private sectors.

North Carolina has 14 CCR&R regions. Each region is overseen by a regional CCR&R lead agency. As a CCHC, you may interact with CCR&R staff such as

- Birth-to-Three Specialists
- Healthy Social Behavior Specialists
- School Aged Specialists
- Other technical assistance providers providing core services

- Search for your local [CCR&R](#) contact through the [statewide directory](#).
- Review this document to learn more about programs and resources that CCR&R may refer families to. [Resources for Families with Young Children in North Carolina](#).

### You are ready to get started! What is the next step?

- Reach out to neighboring CCHCs, your supervisor, colleagues, and other community partners to gain more knowledge about your role and your local community.
- Begin to think about how you want to introduce yourself to the child care facilities that you will be serving. You may want to use a flyer that describes the CCHC services in your county and provides your contact information. You will have an opportunity to create a flyer in the NC CCHC Course.

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If you complete this document and still have time before starting the NC CCHC Course, your CCHC Coach can provide additional activities to get started on.