

South Carolina Department of Social Services

INFORMATION MEMO

August 19, 2014

To: All Staff

From: Amber Gillum
Acting State Director

Subject: Clarus Consulting Group

I am pleased to announce that the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) is developing a Communication Plan to help us improve our communication within the department and with external stakeholders. The Communications Plan will provide a roadmap for how we can better foster trust and credibility with the community and stakeholders through reliable, accurate, transparent and timely communication. The Plan will also address methods for improving our internal communication, including mechanisms for effective two-way communication that allows DSS to solicit on-going input. Ultimately, improved communication will help all of us in our efforts to achieve the Agency's mission.

A Communication Plan will also help us to do the following:

- Foster a trusting work environment
- Develop streamlined communication mechanisms that will help us work more efficiently and effectively as an agency
- Clarify employee roles in achieving success at the DSS
- Maintain positive relationships with external stakeholders and develop two-way communication channels that allow us to solicit on-going input from the community
- Tell our story about the achievements and challenges of DSS's work with children, youth, and families

Sponsored by Casey Family Programs, we have engaged the Clarus Consulting Group to help lead us through the communications planning process. Clarus has extensive experience working with Human Services agencies across the country, and has helped other states successfully develop and implement strategies that both strengthen internal collaboration and improve agency outcomes.

In the coming weeks, many of you will be asked to participate in interviews, on-line surveys, or focus groups to help inform the development of the Communication Plan. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and insights as we move through this process and thank you in advance for your feedback. Stay tuned for more updates as we begin this exciting journey.