OPD OFFICE OF THE PARENT DEFENDER

TUESDAY'S TIP #4

Welcome to a new feature on our listserv – Tuesday's Tip. Each Tuesday, our office will share a tip that you can apply to your cases right now. I encourage you to save each tip in a folder so that if you're faced with the same situation in a future case, you have this handy resource available to you. These will also be available on our website as a counsel resource.

Situation: DSS wants your client to sign releases for every single provider assisting your client.

The Problem: In order for therapy (and substance abuse treatment) to be successful, your client has to trust that they can be open with their provider. Allowing the SW to have access to a client's treatment notes defeats that purpose.

Law: DSS is permitted to have access to verify compliance with court ordered services. NCGS § 7B-904.

Action Steps:

1. Prepare a limited release for your client to sign. [Available on our website and attached to this email.]
2. If your client previously signed a full release, inform DSS that it is revoked and provide the new limited release. Inform all service providers of the limited release.

Conclusion:

Don't let your client sign a blanket release! Provide DSS with a limited release that addresses attendance and progress, not individual notes.

Is this something that you can implement? Feel free to email me directly with requests/suggestions for future Tuesday's Tip!