The University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work, The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center has created a new online curriculum series, Child Advocacy Studies or CAST. The focus of CAST is to develop the awareness and knowledge of current and future child advocates of the various factors that lead to child maltreatment and to promote collaboration among various professional disciplines.

CAST was first developed by the American Prosecutors Research Institute and Winona State University through the National Child Protection Training Center.

Throughout the Resource Center’s online version of CAST, course participants will examine, evaluate, and demonstrate their understanding of the course content through their participation in critical thinking questions, activities, readings, and lectures. Using state of the art technology, this online curriculum includes original videos that have been developed to illustrate important concepts and a professionally monitored discussion board.

To register for the CAST I online course please email cwtpreg@pitt.edu to obtain, if not previously provided, a demographic form. To participate in the CAST course an email address must be provided. Upon submission of the completed demographic form, request can be made to receive a username and password for the Resource Center E-Learn Site.

Technical and accessibility questions should be emailed to helpcwtp@pitt.edu.

Questions regarding CAST curriculum content may be emailed to: CAST@pitt.edu

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Brought to you by:

University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work
Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center

403 East Winding Hill Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717-795-9048 | www.pacwrc.pitt.edu
CAST Series 1 Modules include:

**Module 1: Thinking Critically**
This module provides a foundation for subsequent CAST Modules. The participants will learn to examine, evaluate, and comprehend information by identifying, developing, and employing critical thinking skills.

**Module 2: The Historical Foundations of Child Welfare**
This module provides participants with information regarding history and policy development related to child welfare, protection, and maltreatment. The focus is on the events, trends, policies, and issues that, over time, have shaped the experiences of children and families and determined their well-being or lack thereof in the United States. Prerequisite: CAST I Module 1.

**Module 3: Balancing Parental Rights with Society’s Interest in Protecting Children**
In this module participants are provided a historical perspective of case law, legislation, and child welfare policies related to the rights of children and parents. Participants are challenged to balance the rights of parents with society’s responsibility to protect children along with the rights of children. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1 and 2.

**Module 4: The Evolution and Interdependence of Child Welfare Practice and the Law**
Through an examination of both federal and state legislation from the early 20th century up to present day, participants learn how the laws governing child welfare have evolved and how the interdependence of the two systems have become the foundation of professional child welfare practice in the United States. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-3.

**Module 5: The Etiology of Child Maltreatment**
Participants are presented an examination of the myriad of potential causes of child abuse and neglect and focus on some of the more widely accepted frameworks of causation. The focus is on cultural considerations as well as the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-4.

**Module 6: Categories and Trends in Child Maltreatment**
The various categories of child maltreatment and the statistics and trends that shed light on the scope of this problem are presented in this module. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-5.

**Module 7: Indications of Child Maltreatment**
Recognition of indicators of abuse and neglect is essential in keeping children safe. Participants are presented in this module those indicators of child maltreatment or “red flags” that raise suspicion and warrant careful consideration, especially when they occur repeatedly and/or in combination with one another. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-6.

**Module 8: Medical Issues Related to Child Maltreatment**
Cross-systems collaboration with the medical community is essential in the identification and treatment of child maltreatment. Medical aspects of child maltreatment will be presented with the support of three physicians who have significant expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of child abuse and neglect. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-7.

**Module 9: Diversity Issues Related to Child Maltreatment**
This module explores the importance of cultural competence and diversity in protecting children. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-8.

**Module 10: Multidisciplinary and Interagency Response to Child Maltreatment**
This module presents strategies for working effectively as part of multidisciplinary and interagency team and explores the roles of various professional groups and organizations in responding to child maltreatment. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-9.

**Module 11: Assessing Family Functioning in Child Maltreatment**
Assessment is an ongoing interactional process, not something isolated to the first meeting or two with an individual client or family. In this module participants are provided a description of several assessment models and strategies. The stages of family development including family functioning, family strengths, challenges, and resilience are also presented. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-10.

**Module 12: Engagement and Interactional Skills in Child Maltreatment**
An emphasis on both skill and theory is part of a comprehensive and complex whole in the interactional process. In this module participants will be exposed to the components of the ongoing interactional process including but not limited to engagement, empathy, and intervention. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-11.

**Module 13: Secondary Traumatic Stress, Burnout, and Self-Care in Work with Child Maltreatment Cases**
In this module the opportunities and challenges associated with being a caring, empathic, compassionate professional will be presented. The participants will explore the occurrence of secondary traumatic stress and the importance of self-care when working with child maltreatment. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-12.

**Module 14: Role of Advocacy in Child Maltreatment**
Participants are presented both macro and micro forms of advocacy, within the context of child maltreatment in this module. Ethical dilemmas and challenges occurring when responding to needs of clients and engaging in reform initiatives are explored. Prerequisite: CAST I Modules 1-13.

**Module 15: Child Advocacy Studies: A Capstone Experience**
In this final module, participants will be provided a challenging opportunity to reflect on the knowledge and skills acquired throughout CAST I. Using a complex case scenario, the participants are asked to synthesize the information presented in the previous 14 modules into a coherent whole by demonstrating their abilities to utilize various lenses in conceptualizing the case. The goal is twofold: integration and preparation for enhanced professional practice. Prerequisite: CAST I Module 1-14.

Participants will receive 3 Resource Center Credits and 3 Continuing Education Credits for each module completed.