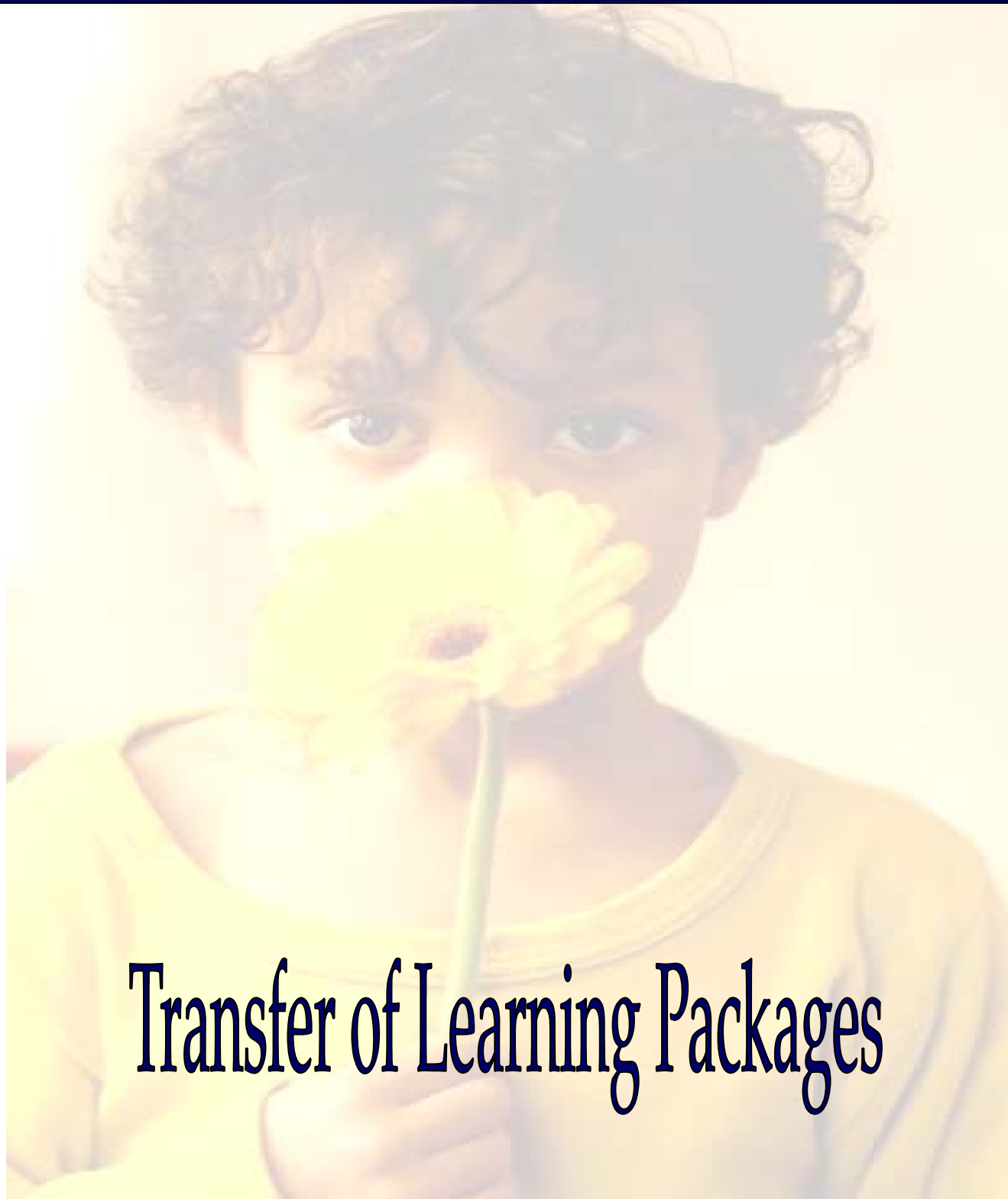




University of Pittsburgh

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program



Transfer of Learning Packages

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program is a collaborative effort of the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators. It was established to train direct service workers, supervisors, administrators, and foster parents in providing social services to abused and neglected children and their families. The Training Program is centrally managed and regionally administered by the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work.

Transfer of Learning is the effective and continuing APPLICATION, by trainees to their jobs, of the KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS gained in training.

*Adapted from Mary L. Broad and John W. Newstrom in
Transfer of Training: Action-Packed Strategies to Ensure High Payoff
from Training Investments*

The purpose of training is to assure that caseworkers have the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to perform their professional responsibilities. Research shows that a phenomenon called the “results dip” occurs shortly after training as a caseworker tries to transfer the new knowledge and skills to practice. During the “results dip” period, it is typical for a caseworker to feel awkward and experience frustration when practicing new skills. As a result, many caseworkers abandon efforts to implement new knowledge and skills and instead, return to old practices that feel more comfortable to them. The effects of the “results dip” can be reduced through a commitment by caseworkers and supervisors to achieve Transfer of Learning (TOL) goals and objectives.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN TRANSFER OF LEARNING?

Effective learning is achieved through a partnership between individuals and organizations. The Learning Partnership is a triad formed with staff from the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program (Training Program), county Children and Youth Agency representatives (supervisors and administrators), and trainees. This partnership facilitates effective application or transfer of learning on the job through shared responsibilities at each phase of the learning cycle.

WHAT IS THE LEARNING CYCLE?

The Learning Cycle describes the process that we follow as individuals and agencies when learning new information and developing new skills. The stages of the Learning Cycle include:

- ❖ Assess Learning Needs;
- ❖ Identify Learning Methods;
- ❖ Prepare for Learning;
- ❖ Experience Learning;
- ❖ Apply Learning; and
- ❖ Feedback.

Each member of the learning partnership has a critical role throughout the cycle in order to achieve positive outcomes that promote the safety, permanency, and well-being for Pennsylvania’s children.

WHAT IS A TRANSFER OF LEARNING PACKAGE?

A TOL Package is a set of steps/activities built around an identified curriculum designed to enhance application of knowledge and skills from the training.

Both supervisors and caseworkers can receive training credit for their participation in a TOL Package. In addition, many activities in a TOL Package meet the applicable educational and professional standards for Continuing Education (CE) hours for Licensed Social Workers.

WHAT TYPES OF TRANSFER OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

- ❖ **Ten Step TOL Package:** The most comprehensive package designed to provide optimum application of an existing Training Program curriculum.
- ❖ **Standard TOL Package:** A combination of learning steps and activities that supplement an existing curriculum designed to meet a statewide need.
- ❖ **County Specific TOL Package:** Customized curriculum content and/or transfer of learning steps developed to meet a county agency need.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN A TOL PACKAGE?

A TOL Package can include the following activities:

- ❖ **Pre-work:** Pre-work Activities are designed to connect the job with the initial training; to be completed by the caseworker prior to the workshop; and be discussed by the trainer at the beginning and/or throughout the workshop. Pre-work provides the caseworker with an opportunity to “tune-in” to the content of the curriculum.
- ❖ **TOL Support Session:** This is an onsite visit to an agency by a Practice Improvement Specialist before or after training. The purpose of the visit is to support and advance the participants’ application of the knowledge and skills learned within training to their practice. The session is typically held with caseworkers and/or supervisors.
- ❖ **Booster Shot Training:** This follow-up training provides a review of the initial training’s key learning points. It aids in the retention of learned knowledge from the initial training, continues reducing the effects of the “results dip”, and to continue efforts to advance the learning and apply it to practice.
- ❖ **Assessment:** This is a written assessment that is tied to the learning objectives of the training completed and is reviewed by the caseworker and/or supervisor. It is intended to assess a caseworker’s skill level at a point during the TOL process. This is meant to be a collaborative process between the supervisor and caseworker.

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN A TRANSFER OF LEARNING PACKAGE?

Available TOL Packages may be offered in a county Children and Youth Agency upon an Administrator’s request to the Training Program’s Regional Team. Additional questions regarding TOL Packages can be directed to Maryann Marchi at (717) 795-9048 or email mfm12@pitt.edu.

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program

OUR MISSION:

is to train and provide technical support to those working in the Child Welfare system and to support those working with us to help families and communities to safely parent children and youth.

OUR VISION:

is safety, permanence, and well-being for children and youth, families, and communities, supported by the work of competent, committed, and confident professionals.

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