Participants attending the revised ten module Charting the Course Towards Permanency For Children in Pennsylvania: A Knowledge and Skills-Based Curriculum (CTC) will participate in a newly designed Transfer of Learning (TOL) program. The revised TOL program, which will consist of six hours of pre and post work activities, will now be delivered on-line. These TOL activities have been designed to enhance the training participants’ learning by connecting their classroom learning to the field.

Through the TOL activities each training participant will:

- Identify the purpose of each module prior to attending the module;
- Obtain the support of a mentor or supervisor who will reinforce the concepts presented in the curriculum through discussion and example; and
- Practice new skills in the field that are demonstrated during the in-classroom activities.

Prior to attending the first module, each training participant will receive a participant’s introductory letter, a user name, password and instructions for accessing the on-line TOL activities by way of their agency’s training liaison. A contact name and number for someone at the Training Program also will be provided to answer any questions that participants might have regarding accessing the on-line TOL activities. Supervisors of the training participants also will receive a supervisor’s introductory letter as well as a copy of a mentor/mentee agreement and instructions for accessing the on-line TOL activities to assist their supervisee.

To complete the entire CTC curriculum and ultimately earn their Direct Service Worker Certification, training participants must complete both the 120 credit hours of in-classroom modules and the six hours of on-line TOL pre and post work activities.

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program looks forward to supporting the training participants’ learning experiences in the Charting the Course series both in-classroom and on-line. If you have any questions regarding the newly implemented on-line Transfer of Learning program, please contact Sharon England at SSE8@PITT.EDU.
During the child welfare interviews conducted in June, 2009, participants were asked to name a person in their early intervention agency who is most knowledgeable concerning the screening of young children. Interviews were completed with 57 early intervention workers, representing 66 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties. Thanks to all our child welfare workers for providing the early intervention contact information and to all the early intervention workers who completed an interview. The results of these interviews will help us learn more about the collaboration between child welfare and early intervention providers statewide.

This is the fifth of a series of Research Notes that will address study topics throughout this research. The current Research Note reports results concerning collaboration between child welfare and early intervention.

Introduction:

In September 2008, the state government implemented a policy that all children under age 3 who are substantiated for maltreatment be screened using the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ; Squires et al., 1999) and its Social-Emotional version (ASQ-SE; Squires et al., 2003). The ASQ is a series of age-appropriate questionnaires designed to identify children who need further developmental evaluation.

Meeting young children’s needs in child welfare requires coordination and collaboration among multiple agencies, including income and housing assistance, early intervention, medical care, substance abuse treatment, and in some cases, the judicial system. Child welfare agencies must integrate services effectively with other providers and monitor families’ progress on particular problems to achieve desired outcomes, such as reunification (Marsh, Ryan, Choi, & Testa, 2006).

Interview with Jenifer Willard, MSW, Northumberland County Children and Youth, Director of Social Services (In-home Services)

Q: How did your caseworkers present the research project to caregivers that made them feel comfortable enough to participate?
A: The workers reviewed the materials provided through the research project with the caregivers via phone contact or face to face.

Q: How did you motivate your caseworkers to contact the caregivers on their caseloads that were selected and return the agreement forms in a timely manner?
A: I simply provided the workers with the materials as the children were identified and asked that they contact the caregivers about their participation. Also the gifts provided for the workers through the research project were withheld initially until the agreement forms were completed and then given as a token of appreciation.
Research:

Research is being conducted by the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work to understand county, child, and family needs concerning screening and early intervention.

Representatives from 57 early intervention agencies were asked to respond to questions regarding collaboration with child welfare.

Results:

What information is shared between Child Welfare (CW) and Early Intervention (EI)?

Early intervention providers were asked how frequently they receive information from CW concerning children’s exposure to environmental risks. As shown in Table 1, CW providers consistently share information about children’s foster care status, but other types of information are shared less frequently.

Q: How was the information concerning the research project received by the caregivers and the caseworkers in your county?

A: The workers indicated that they simply reviewed the materials with the caregivers and they didn’t have any concerns or problems participating. The worker also thought the financial incentive was helpful for most families. The workers really didn’t seem to have a problem with the project because of its simplicity. Some of the workers mentioned that if the project had involved a lot more they would have found it to be difficult due to the growing amount of paperwork already involved with their job.

Q: What processes did you have to notify caseworkers that a caregiver from their caseload was selected for the study? What processes did you have to ensure that the agreement forms were returned quickly?

A: I wasn’t really able to keep up with notifying the workers of who was selected, but the individuals that were interviewed later talked with their workers about it. When the workers were given the agreement forms they were asked to let me know when they were completed so they could be checked off. I also reviewed the lists when they were updated and emailed the workers that were not getting the agreement forms completed, asking them to complete them as soon as possible. I simply encouraged the workers to complete them in a timely fashion. I also discussed the project during department meetings and staff meetings thanking them for their time and participation in the project.

Q: What benefits do you see (or what benefits do you anticipate) for participating in this project?

A: I think the agency is hoping to get feedback about the way workers are conducting the screens with the families in order to improve that process. During this time, I supervised a MSW student intern and that individual has developed Ages & Stages kits for workers to take into the field to help with the screening process, something the agency did not have. What we have learned is that families simply do not have the materials on hand for the workers and many times they are left to ask the caregivers if the child is able to do the identified tasks on the screening forms.

Table 1. EI provider reports of how often information is received about children’s exposure to environmental and medical risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>%</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of maltreatment</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severity of maltreatment</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current foster care status</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of multiple placement moves</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosed medical conditions</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive for substances at birth</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current caregiver substance abuse</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to domestic violence</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally mandated services plan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on page 4
To what extent is there joint service planning?

An Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a written document that is developed by a multidisciplinary team, including the children’s parents, when a child receives EI services (IDEA, 2004). The IFSP includes information about children’s current developmental, physical, and social-emotional health status, family strengths and resources, outcome goals for the children and family, and services and steps that will be taken to meet the children’s needs and transition them to later preschool-age services. Respondents were asked a number of questions about joint CW and EI service planning.

As shown in Figure 1, EI providers report a range of practice concerning collaborative planning around the development of children’s IFSP. Some EI providers report that IFSPs are developed collaboratively “all” or “most of the time” (29%). However, nearly three-quarters (71%) report collaborative IFSPs “sometimes” or “hardly ever”. Joint service planning between the two agencies along with the family will likely lead to a more integrated set of family and child service goals. Families may also view CW and EI as united team members, rather than separate agencies with distinct functions.

Which areas of the IFSP are typically developed collaboratively with CW?

Results show that most frequently, EI and CW collaborate on EI services that will be provided (65%), family resources related to enhancing children’s development (58%), and major outcome goals for the child (47%). Outcome goals, criteria for determining child and family progress are also collaborated upon, but with less frequency.

Summary:

Children’s exposure to environmental risks, such as the trauma of maltreatment, chronic neglect, or violence in the home, have an impact on their developmental, social-behavioral, and academic trajectories (Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1994; Rouse & Fantuzzo, 2009). When the information is shared between agencies, a more accurate history of the child emerges, which can improve service planning. Although many agencies report having Memorandums of Understanding to share case-level information, there may still be concerns about confidentiality. Joint service planning to the extent possible along with families is likely to lead to a more integrated set of family and child service goals.

References:


SAVE THE DATES

2011 DIVERSITY TASKFORCE SPRING TRAINING EVENTS, THE CHANGING FACE OF CHILD WELFARE

Mark your calendars for the Diversity Taskforce Training Spring Events. Watch for details in an upcoming edition of the Consultant and Trainer Palette.

Northeast Region
March 31, 2011
Mayfield Training Room

Central Region
April 7, 2011
The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program

Southeast Region
April 14, 2011
Montgomery County Training Room

Western Region
April 28, 2011
Monroeville Training Room

Philadelphia
May 5, 2011
Temple University—Center City Campus

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS

In order to remain active as a Consultant or Trainer with the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, 6 hours of professional development need to be completed for each fiscal year. July 1, 2010 began a new fiscal year. Please remember to complete your Professional Development Hours by June 30, 2011 and submit outside certificates to Jennifer Kerr at jlm69@pitt.edu.
TOP RATINGS ON WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS

Congratulations to the following Trainers for receiving scores of 5.0 on their workshop evaluations for the third quarter of 2010.

Khary Atif       Robin Chapolini       Claudia Conrad  
Kathleen Donson   Renee Dorsey        June Fisher       
Pat Gadsden       Gloria Gilligan     Nancy Lindahl     
Brenda Manno       Kathleen Moore      Joan Mosier      
Noelies Zavala

WINTER WEATHER POLICY by Brandie Gilbert

As winter weather has approached, the question was raised — Will my training be cancelled? The Training Program has developed the following guidelines to assist us in making the decision to cancel or not to cancel a workshop.

**Anticipated Inclement Weather Policy:**

The Training Specialist will contact the trainer 48 hours prior to the scheduled workshop to discuss the issue of possible inclement weather, or Friday for a Monday workshop.

If the Trainer is anticipating inclement weather and has not been contacted by the Training Specialist, please contact the Specialist as soon as possible.

The Trainer and the Training Specialist together will make the decision on whether to cancel the workshop.

If the workshop is cancelled, the Training Specialist will call the participants to notify them of the cancellation.

**Emergency Inclement Weather Policy:**

The **Trainer** is responsible for contacting the Training Specialist no later than 6:00 AM the day of the scheduled workshop to cancel the workshop due to inclement weather.

If you need to cancel a workshop due to inclement weather, please call 717-991-8654.

Training Specialists will be on an on-call rotation to handle emergency weather situations.

The Training Specialist will then put a message on The Training Program’s voicemail indicating the cancellations for the day.

If a Charting the Course module is cancelled due to weather, the Training Specialist will contact the participating counties to reschedule on a per module basis. The remaining modules will go on as scheduled.
TIPS FROM DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. King sought to teach Americans that the highest justice is not the product of our laws but rather of “inner attitudes that law books cannot regulate and jails cannot rectify.” We have a lot to learn from him, 43 years after his death. Below are some lessons that Dr. King continues to teach us:

- **Be yourself**- No matter what you look like, what you sound like, or where you are from- you belong here. The purpose of your presence is to make the world a better place for all.

- **Pay attention**- What is happening on your street, in your country, in a country halfway across the world? What needs to be changed? What are the root causes of the problem? How can change happen? It happens because of caring people dedicated to making the world a better place for all.

- **Stand up for what you believe in**- Take one small step to stand up for your ideals. When we stand together, we can take leaps towards effective, justice-driven change.

- **Love really is the answer**- When we treat others as we would want to treat ourselves and our loved ones, then true, lasting work towards peace and equality can begin. When we begin and end our encounters with others in the spirit of love, the world can change for the better.

- **Violence is not the answer**- Violence is an expression of hate and the perpetuation of tensions. What good can come of it? NONE!

- **We’re all in this together**- We are part of an interdependent web of existence. What we do affects others. Use your life to act in ways that ripple love and kindness to others.

- **Change is inevitable**- Things don’t always go as planned. Have faith, be bold in your convictions, and be ready to begin again in love.

WANTED: YOUTH AMBASSADOR STUDENT INTERNS

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program is seeking Youth Ambassador Student Interns. The purpose of the internship program is to allow foster care youth enrolled in post-secondary education the opportunity to share their unique perspective of the Child Welfare System in Pennsylvania. It also provides an opportunity to incorporate youth and foster care perspectives into the work of the Training Program; enhance statewide permanency efforts for children and youth in substitute care; and to support county and private child welfare agencies in improving outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Applications for the Youth Ambassador Internship program can be found on the Youth Advisory Board Website which is [www.independentlivingpa.org](http://www.independentlivingpa.org). For additional information regarding the Internship program, please contact Lucinda Gore at (717) 795-9048 ext. 231 or lcg7@pitt.edu.
Hello everyone! I’m excited to report that I have been at The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program for almost two years. Wow, where did the time go? I love what I do; the work is plentiful and meaningful. I would like to first thank God for blessing me with the opportunity to work at The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program. I have met people who really care about the welfare of children and families. I have met a variety of stakeholders from many different family serving systems. I can’t say enough about what this has done for me personally as well as professionally. There are people out there who really care about families and what happens to them. For this, I am truly grateful.

More and more counties are interested in learning how to improve family engagement in their region. There was a county in particular who was very interested in learning how to better engage their families to serve on the different committees in their region. With the help of a Child Welfare Training Program team, that included a youth ambassador, I had the opportunity to co-train the “Strategies to Engaging Families” workshop. The agency was so open to and engaged in the training. As part of the workshop, the agency invited a former foster care youth, a resource parent and a birth parent. These individuals were very engaging in bringing great ideas to the table. What stuck out to me the most was the agency’s acknowledgement that changes needed to be made in their organization. I believe we call this transparency.

This type of approach is what is needed in this paradigm shift of engaging families in our family serving systems. The work of family engagement is essential in stakeholders working together and connecting to improve outcomes for families and communities. I feel good about the work we are doing as a state, and I’m glad to be a part of it.

At The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, we are moving forward with some new projects that we are excited about. We have a Parent Advisory Committee called Families and Communities United (FCU). Families and Communities United’s mission is to advocate, educate and empower individuals involved with family serving systems to be resources for themselves and their communities. We envision communities having the tools and support needed to assist individuals involved with family serving systems to build permanent relationships in their community and to nurture a healthy quality of life for families in Pennsylvania.

The projects we are currently working on are a parent handbook, and the Families and Communities United website. These projects are ongoing. I would like to thank everyone who participates in moving forward the family engagement initiatives; your work is greatly appreciated.
THE CONSULTANT AND TRAINER ADVISORY BOARD IS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

The Consultant and Trainer Advisory Group holds quarterly meetings in the central region and western region to discuss consultant and trainer ideas, concerns, questions and needs. The quarterly meetings also provide communication between the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, and the Consultants and Trainers. The overall goal of the advisory group is to advocate and promote for Consultants and Trainers of the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program.

If you interested in becoming a part of this group or have any questions regarding membership or functioning of the advisory group please feel free to contact one of the members listed below. We would love for you to join us at our next meeting!

CTAG Representatives:
Joan Mosier: jmtraining@aol.com
Tom Trafalski: tomtrafalski@yahoo.com
Chuck Laudermilch: cclaude@ptd.net
Dan Krikston: dkrkston27@yahoo.com

Training Program Staff Contacts:
Rob Winesickle raw57@pitt.edu
Claudia Witmer: cpw11@pitt.edu

The next meeting dates are:

May 5, 2011
9:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Family Links
Pittsburgh, PA

and

May 10, 2011
10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program
Mechanicsburg, PA

“When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments; tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become.”

~Louis Pasteur~
LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

BY ROB WINESICKLE

On January 13, 2011, the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) provided legislative updates at the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators’ (PCYA) quarterly meeting. Updates were provided surrounding: a recently released bulletin, special transmittal, draft bulletins that have been issued for comment, bulletins that are currently under development, as well as recently enacted legislation.

The bulletin addressed by OCYF was 3130-10-02 – Permanent Legal Custodian Policy. The purposes of this bulletin are to reiterate the guidelines and requirements for choosing permanent legal custodianship (PLC) as a permanency option for children who have been adjudicated dependent, or delinquent with shared case responsibility, and for exercising the option to subsidize this permanency choice. This bulletin further introduces new legislation that allows states the opportunity to use federal funding to subsidize relative/kinship PLC caregivers in eligible cases. Lastly, the bulletin lists programmatic and eligibility differences between federal, state and county SPLC arrangements. Included are references to applicable federal and Commonwealth statutes and regulations.

OCYF also presented on the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) and Compelling Reasons Special Transmittal. The purpose of this transmittal is to reinforce with public and private children and youth agencies, and juvenile courts, involved with children for whom termination of parental rights (TPR) may be under consideration, of the requirements to file timely petitions and to document compelling reasons when determining that the filing of the petition is not in the child’s best interests.

Attendees at the meeting were informed that draft bulletins that have been issued for comment include Safe Haven Program, Independent Living Services, and Child Fatality and Near Fatality Reviews. Bulletins currently under development include Safety Assessment and Management Process, Disaster Planning, Concurrent Planning and Action, Resource Family Home Approval, Master Client Index, and Voter Registration.

Recently enacted Pennsylvania legislation addressed at the meeting included Senate Bill 1360 (Act 101 of 2010), House Bill 2258 (Act 115 of 2010), and House Bill 2338 (Act 119 of 2010) The Children in Foster Care Act.

Senate Bill 1360 (Act 101 of 2010) was signed on October 27, 2010 and will be effective on April 25, 2011. This legislation provides the option for adoptive parents and birth relatives to enter into a voluntary agreement for ongoing communication or contact between the child and the birth relative or between the adoptive parent and the birth relative. This legislation also requires the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare to establish a statewide information registry for records/document associated with all adoptions finalized or registered in this Commonwealth. Additionally, Act 101 of 2010 outlines who may request information from the court, the agency that coordinated an adoption or a successor agency. The act further defines who may be the subject of a request for information.

On November 23, 2010, House Bill 2258 (Act 115 of 2010) was signed and became effective on January 22, 2011. This act amends the Juvenile Act to provide for sibling placement and visitation. It is now required that reasonable efforts be made to place siblings together unless it is contrary to safety or well-being. The act also states that when siblings are not placed together, visitation must occur at least twice a month, unless it is contrary to the safety or well-being of the child. Matters regarding placement of siblings together must be determined at the initial time of placement, as well as each permanency hearing.

On November 24, 2010, House Bill 2338 (Act 119 of 2010), The Children in Foster Care Act was signed. It will be effective on March 24, 2011. The Children in Foster Care Act outlines basic protections that must be awarded to children in foster care. It also requires that the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare develop a model grievance policy and procedure for use by county and private agencies and make that policy and procedure available to the county and private agencies within 30 days of the effective date. Each county or private agency must then adopt the model grievance policies and procedures or revise its current policies and procedures within 45 days of the effective date.

Join us to learn more about these legislative updates at the Spring Consultant and Trainer Regional Events.
It is important for the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program to have the most up-to-date contact information. We use this information to send your trainer boxes, contact you for the scheduling of trainings, contracts, and correspondence you receive from the Training Program. We are requesting that everyone send their current email address and an updated biography of themselves for their trainer files. Please also inform us of any changes in your mailing address or phone numbers. If you have any changes or are not sure what information we may have, please feel free to contact Sue Castles at skc17@pitt.edu.

Have you updated your contact information lately?

My name is Tonya Burgess. I am a Parent Ambassador at the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program. I have had different experiences with the child welfare system at different intervals of my life: as a teenager growing up, as a mother and as a grandmother. Now I am a professional that works for the child welfare system.

It is because of my experience on both sides of this formal system that I believe that families are the experts on themselves. When families are involved in formal family serving systems and are faced with making life changing decisions they should be at the table in the beginning helping to cultivate and nurture those decisions. All of the decisions should not be made only by professionals; however I do believe that those of us that work with families want to see them succeed.

This is the foundational concept of Pennsylvania’s new Parent Advisory Committee, Families and Communities United. Families and those that work with families know the daily challenges that are faced in their own lives and in the communities in which they serve and live. It will take all of us working together to achieve positive changes.

Families and Communities United Parent Advisory Committee wants to partner with family members and communities across the state from county to county, in implementing solutions and sharing resources to better improve safety, permanency, and well being in our families and communities.

If you are a parent, family member, or work with families involved in any of the Pennsylvania family serving systems, we would like to hear from you and partner with you to effect positive change in our systems. Please contact me, Tonya Burgess, Parent Ambassador, at The University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Training Program at 717-795-9048 ext. 285 or at tob12@pitt.edu. Thank you in advance for joining us in our mission to improve the lives of children and families.
Beginning in January 2009, the Consultant and Trainer Advisory Group developed, and in partnership with the Training Program, initiated a Trainer Feedback Form and process. The purpose of this form was to assist the Training Program in gathering information regarding your pre-training contact with the Training Program (including confirmation with the Training Specialist and correlation of materials that you received for your training day); actual training day experience (including training room access and cleanliness and participant responsiveness) as well as any post-training follow-up you were requesting from the Training Specialist. These forms are mailed out with every training materials box and are collected on a weekly basis. All feedback we receive is inputted into a database and then shared and reviewed each week with members of the Organizational Effectiveness/Regional Team Department, Administrative Department, Curriculum and Trainer Development Department as well as the Statewide Quality Improvement Department. If a concern arises in which the Fiscal or Technology Department need made aware of, they too are shared that information. Each Training Specialist, Administrative Assistant or Curriculum and Instructional Specialist then respond to each and every concern that is noted each week regarding how they will be resolving the concern that has arose. These responses too are tracked in the database and may include phone calls to building managers, follow-up with cleaning agencies or curriculum revisions. Feedback and follow-up with the Trainer only occurs if it is requested per each Trainer Feedback Form. Your feedback from these forms is what provided the Training Program the input it needed in order to secure new training space in both Norristown and Williamsport. So, in summary, keep those feedback forms coming our way; they are of great benefit to the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program and to you too as one of our most integral parts for delivering training that assists Pennsylvania in achieving positive outcomes for its children, youth and families. If you have any questions regarding the Trainer Feedback Form process, please feel free to email Jennifer Kerr at jlm69@pitt.edu.