With the Charting the Course pilot being held this summer in Mechanicsburg and Montgomery County, we will be incorporating significant revisions in how we engage participants and their supervisors in the curriculum through pre and post-training learning activities. We refer to these activities as pre-work and post-work. These activities are designed to enhance learning by bridging knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to the field; where casework is actually done. Some of the pre and post-work will be completed on-line and will be worth six training credit hours.

Research shows that new workers have improved learning outcomes when they partner with a mentor or supervisor. Trainees will be asked to identify an individual at their agency with whom they feel comfortable and who is willing to support them throughout the Charting the Course training. Approved mentors will be asked to commit to the following:

- Respond to mentee’s questions regarding the operation of their agency,
- Respond to mentee’s questions regarding the material presented in CTC,
- Support their mentee’s completion of pre and post-work activities, and
- Allow their mentee to shadow them during relevant casework duties and activities when appropriate.

If the mentor is not the mentee’s supervisor, the supervisor will be asked to give approval to this mentor/mentee agreement.
AN AMBASSADOR

In February of 2010 a unique and exciting opportunity was brought to my attention. There was an opening as a Youth Ambassador with the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, a position available to former or current foster care youth currently attending college. I understood immediately that I met these qualifications—I am currently a sophomore in college and had just aged out of the system a little over a year prior. What was not entirely clear is what I had to offer, and admittedly the formality of it all seemed beyond me.

For example, the term ‘Youth Ambassador’ made for an awkward title at first. An Ambassador is typically an individual working as a spokesperson from one place, or culture, or environment to another. While these drastically different places most likely have a working knowledge of one another—or at least that the other exists—an Ambassador’s role is unique in moving at least temporarily from their home setting and being immersed into whichever environment expects to receive them.

I did not honestly expect any of this to apply to me when I signed on for the Youth Ambassador position. I thought the term was a bit of an exaggeration, or a coined phrase I was simply going to be stuck with for the duration. I had these beliefs right up until orientation.

My first day at the CWTP—Child Welfare Training Program in Mechanicsburg, I was greeted with more smiling faces than I expected. I was greeted with more folders of information than I ever anticipated. It was explained to me that as alien as the immaculate office and business-attire-clad workers felt to me, my feedback would be appreciated simply for how out of place I actually was. I would be taught skills of the strange new work environment—how to participate in meetings and digest hours of conversation for example. My first day at the office was the first day I’d worn formal shoes for more than two hours at once. I learned first to walk in the fascinating environment, one that had always existed directly beside (or above) the one I was accustomed to. I was invited into meetings, and eventually I found my voice among them.

It was a voice I grew accustomed to using, frequently, for the entire summer. In just over two months, a two day DAPIM (Define, Assess, Plan, Implement, Monitor) meeting for the statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB), the Statewide Adoption Network (SWAN) conference in Lancaster, the Youth in Transition conference in State College, the System of Care (SOC) Retreat in Harrisburg, the Independent Living Retreat in Johnstown, and in between more than enough assignments to keep the position active and engaging. In all places, I found myself again and again pleasantly surprised by how relevant my input and the input of other youth truly turned out to be. The ‘system’ is taking large steps to move toward this incorporation and I’ll always value a summer I spent close to the forefront of that move.

Ambassador is a term that implies not only a voice to others, but a level of immersion in the new setting. In the beginning, only one of the two words in my to-be title felt as though it fit me. I am certainly a Youth, but ‘Ambassador’ seemed like a bit of a long shot. The experience took my simple ‘Youth’ tag and made me into a Participant, a Facilitator, an Advocate, an Expert—an Intern, a Student, and a Friend. Ambassador can mean a great deal and I end a summer as a Youth Ambassador with many things. One of which is a title that is not simply a title given for the sake of tokenism but one that I know now attempts to express at least a half dozen real purposes and possibilities in only two words.
SAVE THE DATE

2010 Consultant and Trainer Fall Events

Southeast Region
October 8, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Montgomery County Human Services Center
1430 DeKalb Street, 1st Floor
Norristown, PA 19404

Central Region
October 14, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program
403 East Winding Hill Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Western Region
November 3, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Monroeville Training Room
Penn Center East, Building #4
400 Penn Center Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
2011 DIVERSITY TASKFORCE SPRING EVENT

Save the Date

Mark your calendars for the Diversity Taskforce Regional 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

TRAINING ROOM REMINDERS

Before exiting the training room after your training day, remember to:

- Place all used flipchart paper in the trash;
- Please trash all additional handouts, unless you would like to keep them for future use (do not leave them in the training room.)
- Please wipe down tables;
- Please ask participants to place all of their trash in the trash cans;
- Turn the lights off; and
- Lock the door when leaving.
Developmental Screening in Pennsylvania Child Welfare Services (Ages & Stages Research Project)

By Rachel Winters and Shauna Reinhart

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 that completed an interview. The results of these interviews will help us learn more about the service needs of very young children and their families who are referred to PA child welfare services.

This is the fourth of a series of Research Notes that will address study topics throughout this research. The current Research Note reports results concerning what services early intervention reported are available and if any service gaps exist.

Introduction:

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

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. As part of the research interview, a representative from 57 early intervention agencies was asked to rate the availability of a list of services and describe any gaps in services for developmental and socio-emotional concerns.

Results:

Respondents were asked to rate the availability of 12 specific services in their county on a scale of 1 (very low availability) to 10 (very high availability). They were also asked if certain evidence-based or promising interventions were available and what kinds of service gaps, if any, were they experiencing in their county.

Availability of Specific Services

EI providers reported that services were most available for speech/language problems (8.71) and sensory integration issues (7.55). Other common services included ADD/ADHD (7.13), Autism Spectrum Disorders (7.12), and conduct or behavior problems (7.12). However, there were three services that stood out as being less available.

These include trauma-informed services, services to deal with parent-child attachment and parent-child relational problems. The figure below shows the availability of the complete list of services.

![EI reports of average service availability](image)

Availability of Evidence-Based Practices

EI participants were asked whether 5 evidence-based services were available in their counties: Nurse-Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, The Incredible Years, and Healthy Families America. Nurse-Family Partnership was reported as the most available with 66.7% of EI participants acknowledging programs in their counties. The second most frequent program was Parents as Teachers (48.5). EI participants were also asked if they had access to any other evidence-based programs, and to explain the programs. The responses to this question fell into four major classifications: Early Head Start, Head Start, Parent Child Home Program, and Parenting Classes.
Developmental Screening (Continued)

Service Gaps
Child Welfare and Early Intervention were both asked about gaps for developmental and socio-emotional concerns. Both Early Intervention and Child Welfare participants reported more service gaps in the mental health arena (70% and 38% respectively). Service gaps for developmental issues were on the lower end (22% for child welfare and 38% for early intervention). Both child welfare and early intervention participants were asked to provide further details concerning the service gaps they reported. Common themes were found in the responses by both sets of participants. The tables below outline the types of gaps that were reported.

### Reasons for Mental Health Service Gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>CW</th>
<th>EI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too few providers</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families have trouble accessing due to distance</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting list or wait for evaluations is too long</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage because of child age</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reasons for Developmental Service Gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>CW</th>
<th>EI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too few providers</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families have trouble accessing due to distance</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting list or wait for evaluations is too long</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap in specific services (e.g. speech)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage because of child age</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary:
Research shows that among 0 to 3-year-olds who are investigated for maltreatment, 30 to 35% have developmental scores suggesting they may qualify for early intervention services, but just 13% of these children received such services following child welfare referral (Casanueva, Cross, & Ringeisen, 2008). Early intervention programs provide underprivileged children short and long term advantages in their intelligence, a decreased need of grade retention, and increased academic achievement (Campbell & Ramey, 1994) with higher levels of participation leading to longer-lasting results (Hill, Brooks-Gunn, & Waldfogel, 2003). Parents also see a direct benefit to their families from participating in early intervention programs (Bailey et al., 2005). With the well documented effectiveness of early intervention programs for high-risk children, it is imperative to establish adequate services and decrease service gaps in both developmental and mental health arenas.

References:


This research is funded by the PA Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families. For questions about the study or for further information, please contact Rachel Winters, Research Coordinator, at rw14@pitt.edu or 412-624-3838.
ACT 48 CREDITS

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program is pleased to announce that we have obtained “Approved Provider Status for Act 48” credit. This approval permits those participants, who already are eligible to attend training workshops delivered by the Training Program and who hold teacher’s credentials, to apply for and obtain credits towards their teaching license. These Act 48 credits will be available as of September 1, 2010 and will not be awarded retroactively. Every effort will be made to identify training participants qualified to receive Act 48 credit prior to the training date. When eligible participants are identified prior to the training session, forms and specific instructions for completing the forms will be included in the training box for the trainers to distribute, collect and return to CWTP. In addition, trainers conducting training workshops on or after September 1st will receive directions to make announcements in the training session, alerting participants to the availability of Act 48 credits. If eligible participants are identified prior to the completion of a particular training session, CWTP must be contacted immediately upon completion of the session so that the appropriate forms and instructions can be provided to the trainee. Additional questions regarding Act 48 credits should be directed to: Rachael Ickes, Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, rmi6@pitt.edu or 877-297-7488.
WELCOME TO THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Jayme Toczylynsky

Jayme started her position with the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program in July of 2010 as a Practice Improvement Specialist for the Northeast Region. She has worked for Columbia County Children & Youth as a caseworker, CMSU MH/MR D&A, Clinical Family Specialist in the Family Based Mental Health Services Program, and Synergy System Group, Inc., as an Outreach Coordinator in Southern Columbia Area School District working with students in grades K-12.

YOUTH RETREAT

By Chris Nobles

Dear Friends,

On behalf of all supporters and participants, we would like to give special thanks for your help in making the 2010 Independent Living Retreat possible. With CHANGE as the retreat theme, your collaboration was instrumental in bringing the experience of positive change to individuals attending the retreat. The attending youth learned among many things that positive change isn’t an event of a day, or even a week. Change is a progressive goal, and one more than attainable through the harmonious collaboration of you our valued and willing partners.

Your efforts in the planning and execution are sincerely appreciated. The shared responsibility and commitment with the Child Welfare Training Program made possible a positive and productive week. This letter is both a heartfelt thank you and an eager anticipation of further collaboration. Change is an ongoing process. In the spirit of this ongoing change, we will soon call upon our valued partners once more to ask your further participation in the planning and execution of the 2011 retreat.

Once again, thank you for all your help and support.

Chris Nobles - Youth Ambassador and member of the Youth Advisory Board

BE KIND . . . REWIND

Please keep in mind the next trainer scheduled for the workshop you are training and rewind all VHS tapes back to the beginning before returning your training materials.

Thank you!!

“Free the Child’s potential and you will transform him into the world.”

~ Maria Montessori ~
CONSULTANT AND TRAINER PALETTE

Page 9

403 East Winding Hill Road
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055
Phone: (717) 795-9048
Fax: (717) 795-8013
www.pacwcbt.pitt.edu

PALETTE CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Nobles
Shauna Reinhart
Crystal Bittinger
Sue Castles
Rachel Winters
Jennifer Kerr
Jayme Toczylousky

PCYA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE