ABOUT THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA TRAINING ACADEMY

As part of the Center for Human Services at UC Davis Extension, the Northern California Training Academy provides training, research, evaluation and consultation to 28 Northern California counties and two Northern California tribes. This service area includes rural and urban counties with various training challenges for child welfare staff. The Academy recognizes the priority need for integrated training across disciplines in the region, and we are committed to delivering high-level training and other professional services to meet counties’ needs.

Participating Counties

Alpine
Amador
Butte
Colusa
Del Norte
El Dorado
Glenn
Humboldt
Inyo
Lake
Lassen
Mendocino
Modoc
Mono
Nevada
Placer
Plumas
Sacramento
San Joaquin
Shasta
Sierra
Siskiyou
Sutter
Tehama
Trinity
Tuolumne
Yolo
Yuba

In addition, the Academy provides training and support to the Karuk and Yurok Tribes of Northern California.

Supported by the CDSS
The Northern California Training Academy is funded and supported by the California Department of Social Services.
From the Director

Looking back upon everything the Northern California Training Academy has been able to accomplish during the 2014-2015 fiscal year, it is clear that the demand for our training, technical assistance and consultation services has never been higher. While this increased demand has presented new fiscal challenges, we are proud to have earned the trust of our valued community partners with so much of the work that is integral to the continuous quality improvement of Child Welfare Services in Northern California and beyond.

During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Academy continued to provide continuous quality improvement (CQI) support and training throughout Northern California. In addition to our continued collaboration with UC Berkeley and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago on an eight-module series on CQI, the Academy also hosted a CQI Learning Collaborative with the California Department of Social Services. Further, the Academy has taken the lead on training child welfare leaders throughout California to effectively utilize the Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) in the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), which involves a comprehensive 2.5 month process of training, coaching and testing for certification.

The Academy has also focused on expanding its trauma-informed trainings to help child welfare professionals better recognize and assist our most vulnerable children and families. Throughout 2014-2015, the Academy provided child welfare and foster family agency staff throughout the 28 Northern California counties with training to identify children who are victims of or at risk of becoming commercially sexually exploited. The courses were taught by two courageous human trafficking survivors who have already inspired other survivors to come forward. The Academy looks forward to expanding our collaboration with these instructors to increase awareness and continue to inspire victims to come forward for the help and services they require.

In addition to these areas of increased focus, the Academy has met the increased demand for additional Core training for new social workers while simultaneously developing strategies for meeting the significantly increased training demand associated with the transition to Core 3.0.

Technologically, the entire Academy team has been working collaboratively to develop innovative solutions to the fiscal challenges associated with the ever increasing demand for our training and services. In the continuing spirit of continuous quality improvement, we have dedicated considerable time and resources toward reducing operational costs while simultaneously improving the quality and accessibility of our resources. The road toward implementing a solution that satisfies both demands has been a long and hard one, but we continue to learn and improve with every new idea we explore, and we are excited to announce that our move toward a completely paperless curricula and a new, comprehensive resource library will be well underway in the next fiscal year.

Reflecting upon this demanding fiscal year filled with transition and change, we are extremely grateful for the outstanding support from our valued community partners. We are especially grateful to the California Department of Social Services, Casey Family Programs, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, the Center for Social Services Research at UC Berkeley and our many high-quality professional researchers, instructors and staff who continue to work with us to advance our mission to provide quality training and organizational support to the health and human services community.

We look forward to 2015-2016 and all of the challenging, exciting work we will continue to do together in support of the professional development and continuous quality improvement of Northern California counties.

Sincerely,

Susan Brooks, M.S.W., Director
Northern California Training Academy
Center for Human Services
UC Davis Extension
University of California, Davis
TRAINING—THE NUMBERS

The Northern California Training Academy is committed to providing training across the expansive geographic region we serve. This year, training was offered in 25 different counties throughout the north state to ensure accessibility for child welfare agencies.

Thirty seven modules of instructor-guided online training were completed by 371 participants. Additionally, 19 self-guided online modules were available to participants to complete at their own pace during the year.

For a complete list of classes, attendance and training days, please visit our website at humanservices.ucdavis.edu/academy

In summary, during the 2014-2015 year, the Northern California Training Academy offered the following:

- 340 Classes
- 680 Completed Training Days
- 6,071 Participants in Attendance
- 8 Conferences/Events
- 25 Webinars
- 11 Core Training Programs
- 2 Supervisory Core Programs
- 1,290 Hours of Field Training and Coaching
- Assisted 6 Counties in Completing their County Self-Assessment (CSA) and Peer Review (PR)
### Areas of Training

- Adoptions: 2 Courses, 4 Training Days
- Conferences/Events: 8 Courses, 10 Training Days
- Core/Supervisory Core: 69 Courses, 91 Training Days
- CWS/CMS Consortium: 24 Courses, 80 Training Days
- CWS/CMS Statewide: 18 Courses, 24 Training Days
- Health/Behavioral Health: 11 Courses, 13 Training Days
- Interviewing: 21 Courses, 26 Training Days
- Key Concepts: 25 Courses, 28 Training Days
- Leadership: 23 Courses, 25 Training Days
- Legal: 4 Courses, 6 Training Days
- Safety Organized Practice: 42 Courses, 72 Training Days
- Trauma and Well-Being: 4 Courses
- Vulnerable Populations: 20 Courses, 25 Training Days
- Specialized Training: 119 Courses, 589 Training Days

### Where We Conducted Training

In an effort to make our training as accessible as possible to our valued community partners, the Academy offered on-site training in a variety of counties throughout the northern region.
CQI Learning Collaborative

On February 25-26, 2015, the Northern California Training Academy brought together more than 80 participants from 25 Northern California counties and their community partners to focus on structural and functional capacities required to sustain continuous quality improvement (CQI) in child welfare services. Representatives from UC Berkeley, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, the Butler Institute for Children and Families, UC Davis and the California Department of Social Services were on hand to help Northern California counties examine the analytic and decision-making tasks inherent to the CQI process, as well as demonstrate what a system should look like when those tasks are executed well.

“It was] good to talk about the nuts and bolts of how to start a CQI system,” wrote a participant from Tehama County.

County child welfare agency participants included directors, managers, analysts and staff interested in understanding the process for conducting case reviews with the federal case review tool and utilizing a CQI system in an effort to improve that process.

In addition to learning from and collaborating with the statewide and national experts presenting, counties also benefited from sharing their own successes and challenges during multiple breakout sessions. The CQI Learning Collaborative was also followed by a series of webinars hosted by the conference’s presenters, offering participants an opportunity to dig deeper, share information and develop collaborative solutions to ongoing challenges.

Training to Identify the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

In response to a new state law requiring statewide training for county child welfare workers and out-of-home caregivers on awareness and identification of children who are commercially sexually exploited, or who are at risk of being commercially sexually exploited, the Northern California Training Academy worked throughout the 2014-2015 year training child welfare and FFA staff throughout the northern region during the last fiscal year. In addition, 18 participants took part in a CSEC Training for Trainers offered by the Academy.

“I liked that the instructors were also [human trafficking] survivors,” wrote a participant from the June 24 San Joaquin County CSEC training. “Their personal stories were helpful.”

In addition to meeting the learning objectives set out by the California Department of Social Services and CalSWEC, the Academy’s CSEC trainings offered an evaluation component to ensure continuous quality improvement in the training of this important topic.

The Academy will continue to provide identification and awareness training in 2015-2016. In addition, we will provide additional training beyond the introductory level in the coming year.

“I will directly relate this information to the youth I work with. I will also be aware of the possibilities of these issues while working with youth.”

~ June 11, 2015 Redding CSEC training participant
Federal Grant Project Improves Services to Vulnerable Families in Butte County

With the assistance of the Northern California Training Academy, Butte County’s Employment and Social Services Agency recently completed a four-year, $1.4 million grant project aimed at improving outcomes for children and families affected by parental drug abuse.

In 2010, the Northern California Training Academy helped Butte County apply for federal funding to develop and implement its Children Affected by Methamphetamine (CAM) program. The small county’s social services agency was one of only 12 organizations nationwide to receive federal funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration that year.

In addition to helping the county receive grant funding, the Northern California Training Academy actively participated in several aspects of the CAM project. The Academy facilitated focus groups and assisted with the improvement of services provided to families participating in Family Treatment Court. It provided training to social services staff in family-centered child welfare practice and the use of early developmental screening tools. The Academy also designed the evaluation of the county’s enhanced services resulting from the four-year program.

Strategies that contributed to the program’s success included providing parenting classes and in-home support using the "Nurturing Parenting in Recovery" curriculum. The county was also able to hire three peer parent mentors—people who have participated in Family Treatment Court with successful outcomes and are now able to help other parents who are struggling with similar challenges.

Over the duration of the grant project, 73 families and 133 children received enhanced services through the CAM program. Some of the exciting findings obtained from the evaluation were that re-entry rates for families participating in Family Treatment Court have declined during the past few years and the number of families seeking education has increased.

“I am so proud of the work we have accomplished and the families we assisted,” said Patti Morelli, Butte County CAM Grant project director. “The entire team was dedicated to the process and outcomes were beyond what I expected. I look forward to seeing how the strategies we implemented will continue to benefit families in our community.”

To learn more about the Northern California Training Academy and its programs and services to support vulnerable children and families, visit the website. humanservices.ucdavis.edu/academy

Threading Communities: Working Together to Strengthen Relationships

On January 9, 2015, the Northern California Training Academy and Humboldt State University hosted an event aimed at bringing together public and community agencies, private practitioners, Hmong-affiliated organizations and institutions, students and faculty in order to strengthen communication with and services for Hmong community members, including those served by Child Welfare.

The Hmong are members of a Southeast Asian ethnic group that have developed their own independent culture within their small mountainous farming communities. After the United States pulled out of Vietnam in the 1970s, many Hmong were forced out of the region due to the help they provided the American military. Many such Hmong came to settle in Northern California after 1976.

“The cultural information shared by [Cher Teng Yang] was incredibly helpful,” wrote one participant from the North Coast Rape Crisis Team. “Having knowledge of cultural values can help our approach in reaching out to the Hmong community respectfully.”

Hosted in Eureka, more than 90 participants attended the one-day convening. National, regional and local scholars and practitioners were on hand to help participants identify needs and begin developing solutions for decreasing barriers and...
increasing inclusiveness of services for Hmong community members. “This was the first time I’ve heard information on Hmong culture,” said a Humboldt County Public Health worker. “It was very enlightening and the information was delivered very well.”

To learn more about the Hmong culture, visit www.hmongcc.org.

Three Houses Training with Nicki Weld
In September 2014, the Academy hosted a series of trainings throughout the northern region with New Zealander social worker and trainer Nicki Weld, creator of the Three Houses information gathering tool. The tool was designed specifically to build rapport with children and youth and allow social workers to bring forward the voice of children and young people in the safety planning process. With trainings in Davis, Sacramento and Redding, a combined total of 67 participants from 13 Northern California counties benefited from learning about the tool directly from its creator.

“Nicki [was] authentic, clear and knowledgeable – I loved this. One of my best workshops,” said a participant from the September 18 training in Redding. Throughout the trainings, Weld highlighted the benefit of taking a trauma-informed approach to using the tool. Weld emphasized that the Three Houses was not designed as a forensics tool, but rather a tool to learn about the world of the child and the family in the interest of supporting their safety and well-being.

During her time collaborating with the Academy, Weld also participated in a short introductory video for child welfare professionals new to the Three Houses approach. The video can be viewed at the Academy’s SOP website. To get to the site, visit the Academy’s main page and look for the Communities of Practice link.

In recognition of the key role of supervisors in the field of child welfare and informed by the responses to a comprehensive needs assessment with supervisors, the Northern California Training Academy developed a continuum of training and coaching opportunities to support supervisors throughout 2014-2015. Some of these trainings included:

Core Training for Child Welfare Supervisors
This recently revamped version of Supervisory Core launched in 2014 and is continuing to evolve to meet the ever-increasing and demanding role of child welfare supervisors. With increased emphasis on the importance of coaching and the impact of secondary trauma, this five-module program educates supervisors about leadership and supervisory skills designed to improve performance and collaboration between agencies and the community.

The Coaching Institute for Child Welfare Supervisors
Developed to provide child welfare supervisors with concrete information on how to integrate coaching into daily practice, this institute provides participants with the information and tools to integrate the best skills, theories and abilities of coaching into a solid evidence-based coaching strategy.

The ER Academy for Supervisors and Program Managers
Building on the foundation of Safety Organized Practice, this is a unique opportunity for supervisors and managers of ER in Northern California to network together and share experiences and strategies for the work and decision-making required in the front end of child welfare practice.

Performance Management: A Refresher
Performance Management is a personnel management model that enables agencies to develop steps that promote mutual accountability between employers and employees in order to make the best use of the organization’s human resources. This training serves as a refresher course for supervisors who previously explored this topic as a part of Supervisory Core.
Group Supervision

Group supervision is an essential tool supervisors can use to enhance critical thinking, effective decision-making, and the implementation and practice of Safety Organized Practice (SOP). This training explores the process of group supervision within a child welfare context and provides a framework for organizing the work of group supervision.

The Katie A. Northern Learning Collaborative

The Collaborative was created to facilitate collaboration between and across agencies seeking to effectively implement the Katie A. Core Practice Model. To assist our valued community partners in achieving this goal throughout the 2014-2015 fiscal period, the Academy has hosted multiple regional convenings, enhanced its communities of practice online forum and resources website, as well as offered multiple webinars related to implementation efforts and strategies.

These combined resources continue to bring both child welfare and mental health professionals together to discuss and form solutions to collaborative challenges. In addition, the Academy has continued its collaborative partnership with the Chadwick Center for Children and Families in an effort to assist counties with screening and assessment tools and additional trauma-informed guidance.

During the July 25, 2014, Katie A. regional collaborative, 69 participants from 17 counties, including county mental health partner agencies, came together to continue building its collaborative approach to implementing the Katie A. Core Practice Model. An additional convening was held on April 1, 2015, in Davis, where 55 participants from 18 counties attended. Participants from the California Department of Social Services, the Chadwick Center for Children and Families and UC Davis were also in attendance to help facilitate both convenings.

The Northern California Training Academy looks forward to additional opportunities to facilitate collaboration that will result in better outcomes for children and families served by child welfare services.

Safety Organized Practice (SOP) Orientation for Parents

On December 1, 2014, the Academy officially released its SOP Orientation Guide for Parents and Caregivers, a new curriculum created to provide counties that have implemented SOP with materials to use in parent support or parent empowerment groups. The curriculum introduces families to SOP tools and strategies and addresses the importance of culture and the impact of trauma.

The intent of the curriculum is to provide families with an understanding of the processes involved in Safety Organized Practice and empower them to become collaborative partners in safety planning. The hope is that when parents have a clear understanding of the tools and strategies that inform child welfare professionals, they can better partner with child welfare to meet the goals of child safety and well-being.

The guide and associated materials are currently available in the Resources section of the Academy’s Safety Organized Practice website.

 Taiwanese Social Workers Visit Northern California

On September 8-12, 2014, a delegation of 14 Taiwanese social work representatives visited Davis, Sacramento, Placer County and Oakland to learn about child welfare practices in California and bring this knowledge back to Taiwan in hopes of implementing new practices.

In Davis, the delegation visited the Northern California Training Academy, where they were interested in the variety of training, research and evaluation services the Academy provides to the 28 Northern California counties.

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MEETINGS AND OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

The Northern California Training Academy participates in several collaborations and meetings to represent and advocate for Northern California child welfare systems and to gather feedback and information to be applied toward enhancing the services we provide.

Child Welfare Directors’ Association (CWDA)/ Regional Children’s Meetings
- Mountain Valley Meetings (monthly)
- Northern Children’s Meetings (monthly)
- Children’s Operational Subcommittee Meeting (monthly)
- Children’s Committee Meeting (monthly)

Statewide Meeting Participation
- California Macro Evaluation Subcommittee of the Statewide Training and Education Committee
- California Partners for Permanency (CAPP) Grant meetings
- California State University, Chico, Title IV-E Advisory Committee
- California State University, Sacramento, Title IV-E Advisory Committee
- State ICWA meeting
- CalSWEC Board
- Content Development Oversight Group (CDOG)

• Core 3.0 Design and Subcommittee meetings
• Core Practice Model Design team meeting
• CQI Planning Committee
• Humboldt State University, Community Advisory Committee
• Katie A. Core Practice Model Implementation meetings
• Katie A. Northern Learning Collaborative
• Mountain Valley CWS/CMS regional meeting
• Northern Director’s Meetings
• Practice Profiles Development Committee
• Regional Training Academy Directors’ Meetings
• Research and Training Network
• Safety Organized Practice Backbone Committee
• Statewide Adoptions Technical Assistance meeting
• Statewide Katie A. Learning Collaborative planning meetings
• Statewide SDM 3.0 Core meeting
• Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC)

National Meeting Participation
- Board of National Supervisors Development Committee
- National Coaching Collaborative
- National CWLA Committee on Rural Practice
Technical Support

The Academy works to address county-specific training and technical assistance needs, including program development, program evaluation and leadership development. Below is a list of some of the support we provided to specific counties this fiscal year.

**Butte County**
- Leadership
- SOP Case File Review
- SDM Training for IR/ER Workers, Risk Assessment and Safety Assessment
- RED Teams

**Del Norte County**
- Katie A. Screening and Assessment Implementation

**Humboldt County**
- Hmong Threading Communities Convening

**Karuk Tribe**
- CWS/CMS New Users

**Lake County**
- Adoptions
- Teen Summit Collaborative
- RED Teams

**Mendocino County**
- Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Training

**Nevada County**
- Child Sexual Abuse Investigation
- Resource Management for Leaders

**Sacramento County**
- ER Academy

**San Joaquin County**
- SDM Family Strengths and Needs Assessment

**Shasta County**
- SOP RED Teams
- FSNA Information Gathering

**Sutter County**
- SOP Group Supervision

**Yolo County**
- Program Overview/System Change TA
- SOP for Community Partners
- RED Teams TA
County Self-Assessment and Peer Review

Since July 2014, in partnership with county and CDSS staff, the Academy has offered technical assistance in the writing and editing of County Self-Assessment and System Improvement Plans for Modoc and Nevada counties, as well as facilitating the peer reviews, stakeholder meetings, focus groups and assistance in preparing data analysis and report writing for Colusa, Lake, Mendocino, Sierra, Sutter and Yolo counties.

Child and Family Services ReviewTrainings

The Children's Bureau of the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) has recently modified the implementation of Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) qualitative reviews to allow states to oversee the process, including conducting the reviews. To implement the CFSR in California, the California Department of Social Services has opted to utilize the On-Site Review Instrument (OSRI) to collect qualitative case review data. The Northern California Training Academy has taken the lead on training child welfare leaders throughout California to effectively utilize the OSRI in the CFSR process.

Training for the CFSR OSRI case review position is a comprehensive 2.5 month process. Reviewers must attend a four-day training and engage in coaching for the subsequent two months. Following the coaching process, all reviewers must complete a mock OSRI on a standardized case which is graded for accuracy. Those who receive passing scores become certified to conduct the CFSR OSRI process.

The integration of qualitative analysis with statistical outcomes will allow counties the opportunity to strengthen their programs in a holistic manner. The qualitative approach will allow for an in-depth review of the continuum of child welfare services that span from emergency response intake to permanency, the practice habits in each of the task areas within the continuum of CWS, documentation efforts and impact on outcome measurements, application and accuracy of assessment tools (i.e., Structured Decision Making), and the inclusion of collaborative work with service providers and the community.

The Academy coordinated the development of the OSRI curriculum, relying on the expertise of Joanne Brown, a retired Alameda County Superior Court commissioner who has provided training, strategic planning and assessment for court, social services and state agencies in more than 35 states and works regularly with courts, probation, corrections, law enforcement and community groups to help improve the public response to the increasingly complex needs of diverse communities under stressful conditions. Our many thanks to Joanne Brown and the Academy staff for their support in the development of this comprehensive training process!

"Joanne [Brown] has a good teaching style for this long, intense training."
– March 17, 2015, Federal Case Review Participant
Reaching Out

Reaching Out is our bi-yearly publication that is celebrating its 10th year of production. The publication examines current issues in child welfare practice with a particular focus on Northern California counties. Each issue highlights one topic area and offers articles on best practices, profiles on northern counties, research analysis, state and federal regulations updates, articles for administrators, tips for social workers and resources specific to each topic area.

Our latest edition, released in January 2015, provides a comprehensive review of Safety Organized Practice, including strategies, skills, implementation efforts and perspectives from counties and child welfare professionals who have championed SOP.

Social Worker Health Study

Working on a daily basis with families in crisis and children exposed to trauma is a common reason why many human service professionals leave their job prematurely. Understanding how to prevent and alleviate secondary traumatic stress (STS) among social workers is a needed area of research in social work. The Northern California Training Academy, led by Holly Hatton-Bowers, recently received a UC Davis grant to study this topic. The Academy conducted an anonymous survey of Northern California public child welfare workers, and the survey’s results showed an adverse association between STS and the physical and emotional well-being among the social workers surveyed. The study also found that child welfare workers experiencing high levels of STS are less likely to make good decisions and/or effectively provide needed services to clients.

Child welfare professionals and organizations may benefit from supporting good self-care strategies such as exercising and eating healthy, and supporting opportunities for supervisors to provide emotional support. Some agencies have begun to experiment with offering ongoing support groups for child welfare supervisors that also provide tools for supervisors to work with the people they supervise who are impacted by STS.

A more detailed report is available on the “Publications” page on the Academy website.

Currently in development, our next issue will focus on coaching in child welfare and human services.

The Coaching Toolkit for Child Welfare Practice

This publication was developed by the Academy to help guide the development and implementation of formal professional coaching within a child welfare context. Now entering its fourth year of publication, the Toolkit continues to reach new child welfare agency leaders, coaches, learners and supervisors regionally, nationally and internationally. Over the past three years, it has been requested by child welfare professionals from Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Washington D.C., and Wisconsin. Internationally, interest in the Toolkit has been expressed by readers in Australia, Belgium, Sardinia, and the provinces of British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario in Canada.

Included with the printed Toolkit is a DVD with several video demonstrations of simulated coaching sessions. Our coaching website also features these videos for streaming. To view the videos and/or learn more about the Toolkit, please visit the Academy website at: humanservices.ucdavis.edu/academy
Crisis Communication and Preparation in Child Welfare: A Defined Narrative in the Face of Crisis

With the increasingly rapid pace of the 24-hour news cycle, child welfare leaders sometimes find themselves unexpectedly facing a public crisis situation. The death or near death of a child, the tragic death or injury of a social worker, or an unfavorable decision made by a practitioner can become a prime-time news event in a matter of minutes, leaving underprepared leaders forced to respond to a narrative already in place.

To better prepare child welfare leaders for crises inherent to their very important work, the Northern California Training Academy teamed up with Casey Family Programs to walk child welfare leaders through steps to take in order to be prepared before an incident occurs, including the development of a crisis communication plan, working within a political environment, and creating a narrative that promotes successful institutional solutions that will improve the safety and well-being of children and families in foster care.

To better prepare child welfare leaders for crises inherent to their very important work, the Northern California Training Academy teamed up with Casey Family Programs to walk child welfare leaders through steps to take in order to be prepared before an incident occurs, including the development of a crisis communication plan, working within a political environment, and creating a narrative that promotes successful institutional solutions that will improve the safety and well-being of children and families in foster care.

The video portion of this project is nearing completion and is expected to be released in early 2016. In addition, the Academy is developing a workbook to accompany the video series that will help Northern California counties apply and customize communications strategies in order to prepare themselves and their organization to take a holistic approach to crisis response in the interest of benefiting the lives of children in foster care.

Communities of Practice Website

The Academy continues to expand its online presence this year in a continued effort to cultivate a community of practice for child welfare professionals. Over the past year, the Academy's Communities of Practice (COP) website has grown to include standalone websites dedicated to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), Social Worker Health and Wellness, and Supervisor Development.

The Communities of Practice website can be accessed at the Academy’s main site. humanservices.ucdavis.edu/academy

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in Child Welfare Services

Social services agencies throughout California and across the country are required to collect data on children and families involved in the child welfare system. But the real question is—how can this data be analyzed and used to improve the lives of children and families in crisis?

The Northern California Training Academy partnered with the Center for Social Services Research at UC Berkeley’s School of Social Welfare, and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago to develop a unique, online educational series to help public child welfare leaders address this question.

The comprehensive series, Continuous Quality Improvement in Child Welfare Services, is a hybrid learning experience which combines interactive workbooks and video-based modules that focus on a number of topics related to the development of a systematic improvement process.

“Some counties and states are now being required to implement some form of CQI process in their social services agencies,” said Susan Brooks, director of the Northern California Training Academy. “We’ve been offering CQI trainings regionally, but we wanted to make this training available to all agencies across the country that need it. Our collaboration with UC Berkeley and Chapin Hall is making that possible.”

Available at no cost to download, the series currently features seven modules with instructional videos and accompanying workbooks. Each module focuses on topics related to the development of the CQI process in child welfare, including an introduction to CQI, a look at the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle, the development of best practice principles in measurement and evaluation, and how to create a CQI culture within an agency.
Seven of the eight planned modules have already been released, with the final module scheduled for filming in early 2016. For more information or to participate in the CQI series, visit the Academy’s main website, select “Communities of Practice” and then “Continuous Quality Improvement.”

**CWS/CMS Training Consortium**

The Northern California Training Academy partners with a consortium of Northern California counties to provide Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) training at a computer lab in Orland, Glenn County.

The consortium includes these participating counties:

- Butte
- Colusa
- Glenn
- Lake
- Lassen
- Modoc
- Plumas
- Shasta
- Siskiyou
- Tehama
- Trinity

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Orland lab offered 35 courses for a total of 104 scheduled training days. In total, 150 participants attended the Consortium trainings this fiscal year.

**CWS/CMS Statewide Services**

The Northern California Training Academy offers Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) training to Northern and Mountain Valley California counties and to the California Department of Social Services staff who previously accessed the training through the statewide training contract. These counties include:

- Alpine
- Amador
- El Dorado
- Humboldt
- Inyo
- Mendocino
- Mono
- Nevada
- Placer
- Sacramento
- San Joaquin
- Sierra
- Sutter
- Tuolumne
- Yolo

A full array of trainings are offered, including new user, business objects, health and education passport, help desk, and multiple other CWS/CMS training topics. SafeMeasures training for line staff, supervisors and managers is also offered.

The trainings are held in computer training labs in Sacramento and Stockton. In addition, in-county training is provided upon request.

During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Sacramento and Stockton labs offered training to 118 participants in 73 training days for a total of 438 training hours.
EVALUATION OF SAFETY ORGANIZED PRACTICE FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING

At the end of the 2013-2014 and throughout the 2014-2015 fiscal period, pre- and post-test surveys were provided by the Northern California Training Academy to examine participants’ level of knowledge obtained by participating in the Safety Organize Practice (SOP) Foundational trainings as well as participants’ level of satisfaction. After completing the SOP Foundational training, participants were asked to complete a post-training assessment at the end of the training (trainings lasted two to three days). The purpose of the post-training assessment was to obtain information regarding participants’: 1) intended integration into practice; 2) perceptions of the integration process; 3) knowledge of the techniques after attending the training; and 4) feedback on the training experience.
PARTICIPANTS’ LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE TRAININGS
A total of 379 participants rated their level of satisfaction with the SOP foundational trainings. Overall, participants rated a high level of satisfaction with various aspects of the training (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.
Percentages of participants’ who agree or strongly agree with various aspects of the SOP foundational trainings.

Participant’s Level of Satisfaction with SOP Foundational Trainings

As a result of this training, I substantially increased my knowledge on this topic • 70%

As a result of this training, I have developed new skills • 67%

I learned new ways to practice that I will begin using immediately • 65%

The trainers presented the information in ways that were clear and understandable • 70%

The training met my expectations • 68%

The training was well organized • 73%
SURVEY RESULTS: PARTICIPANTS’ PERCEIVED KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION

Participants on average significantly increased their perceived knowledge of SOP skills and behaviors from before (M=2.12, SD=.72) to after (M=3.62, SD=.71) participating in the foundational trainings; t(372)=34.18, p<.00 (see Figure 2). There was also a significant increase in participants’ perceived knowledge of their county’s risk assessment tool, SDM, from before (M=2.66, SD=1.05) to after (M=3.52, SD=.78) participating in the SOP foundational training, t(372)=18.20, p<.00 (see Figure 3).

Figure 2.
Participants’ knowledge acquisition from before to after attending the SOP foundational training.

Knowledge of SOP Skills and Behaviors (N=373)

| Know Very Well | 5…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 4…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 3…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 2…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 1…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
| Never Heard of Before | 0…………………………………………………………………………………………… |

Prior to Training 2.12  After the Training 3.63

Figure 3.
Participants’ knowledge of their county’s risk assessment tool, SDM.

Knowledge of SDM Tool (N=373)

| Know Very Well | 5…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 4…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 3…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 2…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
|               | 1…………………………………………………………………………………………… |
| Never Heard of Before | 0…………………………………………………………………………………………… |

Prior to Training 3.21  After the Training 3.84

For additional data and/or access the full evaluation brief, please contact the Northern California Training Academy.
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