

Introduction to Essential Elements

Last updated by: Katie Pleis 05/05/2025

Session Summary Link

Time: 6.5 hours

Recommended Class Size: Approx. 35

Learning Objectives:

- Become familiar with the training environment and evaluation procedures.
- Become familiar with the mission, goals, values, and key aspects of child welfare work.
- Gain insight into one's own cultural backgrounds, beliefs, values, and biases and how they impact engagement and decision making.
- Become familiar with the Principles of Partnership.

Materials:

- 1 Intro to EE PPT
- 2 PSU Trainers and Staff
- 3 Helpful Tips
- 4 Solidarity Statement
- 5 Employee Resources and Supports
- 6 Vision Mission Goals
- 7 Action Items
- 8 Ladder of Inference
- 9 Social Identity Wheel
- 10 Vox Viewing Guide
- 11 Buzzwords
- 12 Principles of Partnership
- 13 Intro to EE References

Media/Tools:

- Trainer PowerPoint
- Link: [Virtual Training Expectations](#)
- Link: [CWP Training Site – Essential Elements](#)
- Link: Evaluation Processes Folder (in external drive)
- [IdeaBoardz: Community Agreements](#)

- Zoom Poll: (W1) Take a Stand
- Video: Ladder of Inference
- Video: Vox - How the US stole thousands of Native American children
- Trainer Guide for Vox video (in internal Trainer PPT and Media folder)
- [Interactive map: Disproportionality Rates of Children of Color in Foster Care](#)
- [Oregon Child Welfare Data Book](#)
- Video: Voices of Youth
- [Kahoot Word Cloud: How we talk about families](#)
- [Ideaboardz: Principles of Partnership](#)

Room Preparation Guide:

- Ensure Zoom Poll "(W1) Take a Stand" is present in Zoom meeting
- Clear any responses from previous groups for both the Community Agreements and Principles of Partnership IdeaBoardz
- Ensure all trainers present for "Imagine" activity have the second Imagine slide available to project in the breakout rooms.

Engagement Legend:

-  Large Group discussion
-  Small Group Breakout Rooms
-  Polls
-  Quiz Game
-  Animated Slide
-  Written exercise
-  Annotate exercise
-  Video
-  Handout
-  IdeaBoardz

 Trainer Notes

Trainer's Agenda:

Welcome & Introduction to Essential Elements (15 minutes)

- Welcome and overview of Essential Elements
- Housekeeping & support available to participants
- Overview of Evaluations & Portfolios
- Learning Objectives

Community Building (70 minutes)

- Learning Teams introduced and developed in small groups
- IdeaBoardz: Community Agreements
- Trainer Introductions

Introduction to values and concepts of casework practice (95 minutes)

- ODHS Mission & Core Values, Vision for Transformation, Equity North Star
- Imagine Activity - considering the experience of families involved with child welfare including the importance of cultural humility and self-determination
- Take a Stand Activity - building awareness of one's own lens and bias, the importance of information gathering, and the value of multiple perspectives
- Participant action items and next steps

Aspects of Self: Understanding into one's own background, beliefs, values, and identity (40 minutes)

- Opener: world map
- Importance of self-awareness
- Ladder of Inference
- Social Identity Wheel

Historical Trauma, Disproportionality, and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) (50 minutes)

- Historical Trauma
- Video: How the US stole thousands of Native American children
- Intro to ICWA and ORICWA
- Intro to Disproportionality & Disparity

Impact on children & families (35 minutes)

- Video: Voices of Youth
- Activity: how we talk about families

Principles of Partnership & Family Engagement (75 minutes)

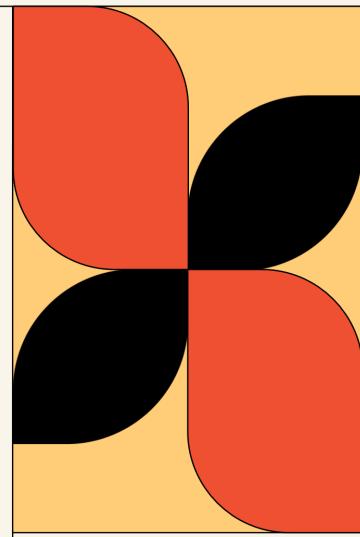
- Principles of Partnership

- Family Engagement - benefits, barriers, strategies
- Closing - principles of partnership in action

Training Content:

Slide 1

Introduction to Essential Elements



1

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:00 (2 min)

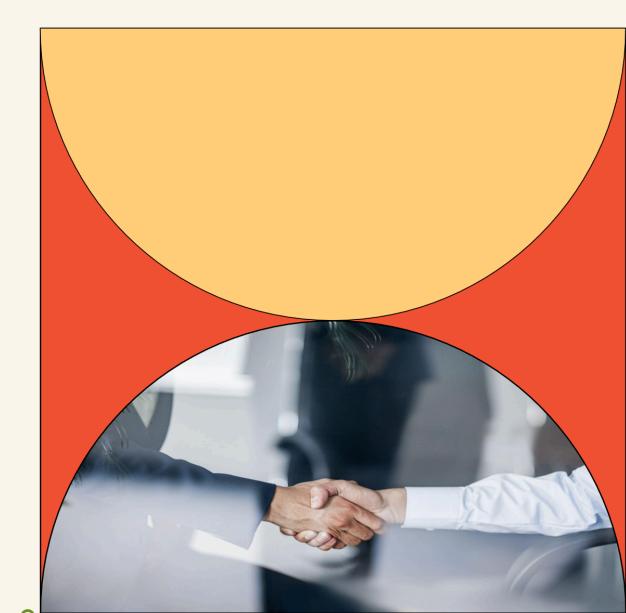
Materials/Links:

1 Intro to EE PPT

Content:

- Welcome participants to Essential Elements of Child Welfare Practice.
 - Essential Elements is a three-week training course which is required prior to carrying a caseload. It is the first training course in a yearlong training program. Within the first year, you will have other opportunities to come back for additional training on topics such as Preparing and Presenting for Success in Court, Trauma Informed Practice Strategies, Wellbeing Needs of Children, and Family Conditions.
- Today we will introduce you to the Essential Elements training and begin understanding the major themes we will be exploring throughout the next 3 weeks.
-  **Intro to EE PPT**: This handout contains today's PowerPoint slides.

Slide 2



PSU-CWP Trainers & Staff

2

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:02 (5 min)

Materials/Links:

2 PSU Trainers and Staff

Content:

- Before we dive in, we want to take a moment to share with you about trainers and other staff who you will get to meet throughout your 3 weeks of Essential Elements.
-  **PSU Trainers and Staff:** Participants can find out more about each of the trainers and staff who they will meet throughout the training, including their experience and contact information.
 - Share with participants that all the trainers with the Child Welfare Partnership have previous experience in Oregon Child Welfare.
- Invite trainers and staff who are present in the room to introduce themselves by sharing:
 - Name and pronouns
 - What role do they have in training on Day 1 (i.e. sharing links, facilitating activities, available to answer questions in chat, tech support, etc.)

Slide 3

Housekeeping

- Materials
- Virtual Training Expectations
- Attendance & Engagement
- Breaks and Lunch
- Taking care of yourself



3

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:07 (3 min)

Materials/Links:

[CWP Training Site – Essential Elements](#)

[Virtual Training Expectations](#)

3 Helpful Tips

Content:

-  **Trainer Note:** Participants have been introduced to many housekeeping items in the Meet & Greet the previous week. This is an opportunity to briefly remind participants of what to expect in the coming weeks.
- Briefly remind participants of the following:
 - Materials: If participants completed the required Google form to have materials mailed to them, Week 1 materials should have arrived. If participants do not have access to hard copies of materials, they can also access the materials on the [CWP Training Site](#) and links will be shared in chat throughout training.
 -  **Trainer Note:** Walk participants through how to access the materials electronically. Be sure to share that

the References handout, which contains sources for all cited information, for each of the sessions will be at the end of their session materials and available as the last file in the electronic materials.

- o  **Helpful Tips** and [Virtual Training Expectations](#): These handouts are in the participant materials and have been sent out to participants via email. These documents include the necessary technology requirements, information about active participation and attendance, and other general housekeeping items.
- o Attendance and Engagement: We ask that you are fully present in training by limiting distractions and by participating in the variety of activities we have planned to include large group discussions, break-out room activities, role playing, case application and more. We ask that participants keep cameras on throughout training to facilitate interaction and sharing amongst the group. We encourage folks to engage with the content in ways that suit their learning styles including taking notes on PowerPoint slides, unmuting and contributing to discussion, sharing comments and questions in chat, etc.
 - Should participants need to step away or turn off their cameras, please let a trainer or facilitator know.
 - If you know you will need to miss a period of training, please contact the training manager, Jose Maciel josmaci7@pdx.edu and classroom communication specialist, Tyler Blankenship tblank2@pdx.edu. Each request will be reviewed and a plan for making up content will be developed.
- o Breaks & Lunches: We recognize the challenges of virtual learning and want to be sure to give folks time to be off screen. We work to incorporate breaks throughout the day. Breaks may vary in time but typically include 2 breaks in the morning and 2 breaks in the afternoon. Lunch will always be for an hour, from 12-1 each day.
- o Taking care of yourself: For many, the topics discussed in training can evoke strong emotions, particularly if you have lived experience related to any topic at hand. We encourage you to reach out to others for support. That

may include people in your own life, your CTS or supervisor, or any of the trainers.

Slide 4



The slide features a central yellow box with the title "Employee Resources & Support" in bold black font. Below the title is a photograph of two hands, one adult and one child, holding a small red heart. To the left of the yellow box is a white area containing a bulleted list of resources. At the bottom left is a green stylized logo, and at the bottom right is the number "4".

- Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Safety Culture Hour
- ODHS Trauma Aware

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:10 (2 min)

Materials/Links:

5 Employee Resources & Supports

Content:

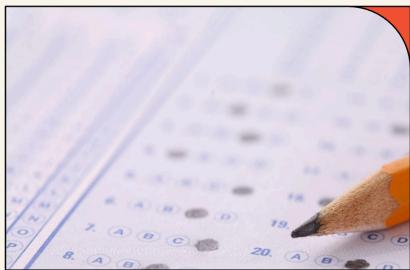
- Child Welfare work is impactful to both families and to you as a case worker. We want you to be aware of resources that are available to you both now and throughout your careers.
-  **Employee Resources & Supports**
 - Briefly introduce participants to this resource in participant materials.
 -  **Trainer Note:** There is more information about each resource on the handout and in the below content. The trainer does not need to go into detail about any specific resource.
 - Employee Resource Groups (ERGs): ERGs are agency sponsored employee communities that work to achieve well-being and equity for a marginalized or underserved population. ERGs are founded on

shared identities, experiences, interests, allyship, and service. They provide a space for employees to come together, share knowledge, support one another, and collaborate on initiatives that enrich our workplace culture and create equitable outcomes for Oregonians..."

- ODHS currently has 12 ERGs. More information can be found in the [ERG brochure](#).
- PEBB Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other Wellness Programs: The EAP is a free and confidential benefit for employees and their family members which is provided through your employer. EAP programs include counseling, coaching, peer support, financial coaching, legal consultations, and more.
 - PEBB also provides other wellness programs. More information is available through their [website](#)
- Safety Culture Hour: [Teams Channel](#) "Safety Culture Hour is a virtual drop-in style micro-learning opportunity offered twice monthly to all Child Welfare professionals to support learning at all different levels, on a variety of topics including psychological safety, healthy team habits, the intersection of safety culture and anti-racism, learning from mistakes, and more! Safety Culture Hour aims to support Child Welfare professionals as they explore safety culture concepts and teaming behaviors. We encourage folks to join our [Safety Culture Hour Channel](#) for access to announcements, materials, and a community ready to support the journey. All are welcome!"
- ODHS Trauma Aware: [Trauma Aware OWL page](#) Trauma Aware promotes resilience, supports wellbeing, and seeks to restore safety and power for those who have experienced trauma and toxic stress. We facilitate the ODHS goal of being a Trauma Informed Organization through interactions with individuals and teams, but also through systemic solutions that address equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Our interventions, consultations, tools, and trainings reflect current research infused with

the knowledge and lived experiences of our workforce as well as Oregonians involved in our programs.

Slide 5



Evaluations and Portfolios

- Daily Evaluations
- Portfolio of Learning and Professional Development
- Writing Exercises
- Simulations
- Knowledge Assessment



5

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:12 (13 min)

Materials/Links:

Link: [Evaluations Processes Folder](#)

Content:

-  **Trainer Note:** A member of the Evaluation team, typically Kirstin O'Dell, will be present to remind folks about various evaluation processes which were introduced in detail at the Meet & Greet. If a member of the Evaluation team is not available, the trainer should present the following information:
 - Evaluation materials are under the Evaluation Processes tab of the Participant Binder. The following bullet points can be used to briefly review the evaluation process and portfolio of learning which includes work samples, simulations and the knowledge assessment.
 - Review of the Daily Evaluation of Training
 - Participants will receive daily emails from a member of the evaluation team. Evaluation links are also available in each day's Google Drive and will be provided at the end of the day by the trainer.

Participant feedback is critical to training success and continued improvement. Specific feedback is most helpful.

- The evaluation team collects, enters and summarizes your feedback. The information is used by the training team in shaping future training. Your input is very valuable and important.
- If any participant experiences an issue in class, please let the trainer know right away so it can be addressed and resolved.
- o Portfolio of Learning and Professional Development
 - After you complete this training, you, your supervisor and program manager will receive a portfolio that contains a variety of assessments and work samples. Let's go over what will be included in your portfolio.
 - Self-Assessment of Learning worksheet
 - At the end of the training, participants will complete the Self-Assessment of Learning via a link that will be sent to their email.
 - The purpose is to connect classroom training with the field.
 - The more specific you can be the better.
 - Identify at least 1 thing (can be more) from training you feel confident about, 1 thing you are interested in/passionate about and 1 thing you want further development in.
 - A copy will be included in your portfolio along with a coaching tool for your supervisor to guide a transfer of learning and next steps conversation.
- o Essential Elements Knowledge Assessment Frequently Asked Questions
 - Direct participants to their Knowledge Assessment Frequently Asked Questions handout.
 - The assessment will be on the last day of class, scheduled from about 2 PM until the end of the day. On the last day of training, from 1-2 PM you will have time to review your material, complete any remaining assignments, and ask any final questions.
 - While the knowledge assessment is scheduled until the end of the day, many will finish sooner. In

addition, if you need more time, please let us know right away so we can make arrangements.

- The questions will be True/False, matching, and multiple choice. There is no fill in the blank or essay questions.
 - You will be using a Class Marker website to take the assessment. More information will be provided in Week 3 of training for how to access the assessment.
 - Please note: This is not a pass/fail test. This assessment measures your baseline level of knowledge. A report will be included in your portfolio that will indicate the areas in the assessment that you demonstrated that you know and the areas that indicate that more learning or review is needed.
 - If you need accommodation to take the knowledge assessment, please notify Kirstin O'Dell as soon as possible so that we can work with you and have adequate time and staff to provide any accommodation needed.
 - Direct participants to their Knowledge Assessment Reference Guide handout.
 - The reference guide indicates all the content areas covered in the knowledge assessment. However, you do not need to overly focus on this guide during your three weeks of training. There are many important aspects of this training (e.g., skill development/values) that are not covered in the knowledge assessment. The reference guide is a useful tool to help you prepare for the assessment, but you are encouraged to approach this training holistically to begin developing the necessary skills and values to do this job well.
- o Essential Elements Simulations Information Sheet
- On Friday of this week, you will be participating in two simulations: an initial contact and partial interview with a parent and a partial interview with a child.
 - Go over the schedule for Friday and ask participants to let Kirstin O'Dell know immediately if they need to be scheduled for a particular time on Friday (note that simulations are difficult to make up).

- You will be given an assignment on Friday to complete either before or after simulations.
- Included in your portfolios will be your self-reflections and the videos of your simulations for the purpose of continued learning and professional development.
- More information about simulations will be provided as you go through the week. You will receive a rubric for the simulations assessments which will clearly describe the things we'll be looking for in each simulation. A detailed description about simulations can be found in the Google Drive in a folder titled "Simulation Instructions and Information".

Slide 6

Learning Objectives

1	Become familiar with the training environment and evaluation procedures.
2	Become familiar with the mission, goals, values, and key aspects of child welfare work.
3	Gain insight into one's own cultural backgrounds, beliefs, values and biases and how it impacts engagement and decision making.
4	Become familiar with the Principles of Partnership.



6

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:25 (1 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Now that you're familiar with the expectations for the training environment and the evaluation procedures, let's talk about our learning objectives and what's in store for you during the rest of the day.
- After you get to know us and each other a little better, we're going to dive into understanding what the fundamental goals and values that underpin all of ODHS' work with Oregonians, and especially your work as a child welfare case worker.
- This afternoon, we'll get started by doing some activities designed to encourage reflection on how your own experiences and background color the individual lens through which you view the world.
- We'll also begin discussing the best practices for partnering with and engaging families involved with child welfare, which we'll continue to explore tomorrow.

Slide 7



Create Your Learning Teams

- Select a reporter to share with the large group
- Introduce yourself, sharing your name and pronouns, if comfortable
- Share your position and location within Child Welfare
- Share your experience working with children, families, or in human services
- Together, create a Team Name and select a Team Mascot

7

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

9:26 (24 min) *Suggested 10 min break after this slide*

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Over the next two days, you will have an opportunity to share space with a small group of your colleagues to dig deeper into the content we cover in the large group. These small groups will be known as your Learning Teams.
- One of the conventional wisdoms in training is that “relationships precede learning”. We here at PSU believe that even in a virtual setting, we can create community in our learning space. Utilizing learning teams in these early days together is one of our strategies.
- In a moment, we will break you up into your small groups. You will have an opportunity to introduce yourselves, get to know one another, and develop your team identity through the selection of a name and a mascot.
-  **Small Group Breakout Rooms (15 min.):** While you are in your room, select one person to report out when you return to the main room. If you do not have a volunteer, the reporter is the person whose date of birth is closest to today.

- o After selecting your reporter, each team member will share their name, pronouns if comfortable, position and location in Child Welfare, and a bit about themselves, to include experience working with children and families or in human services more generally.
 - o Once everyone has introduced themselves, as a team select a name you think represents your group as well as a mascot. Your mascot can be a real or make-believe object, animal, person, or symbol.
 - o You will have 15 minutes together for this activity. When you return, you will share your team members' names, position/location, as well as your team's name and mascot.
 - o For example, I would share my name is Aimee Dickson, I am a trainer at PSU. My teammates are Sheila – Certification in Marion, Katie – Permanency in Lincoln, and Kyle - CPS in Linn. Our team's name is the Triumphant Trainers, and our mascot is a Wise Owl standing atop a Trophy.
-  **Trainer Note:** Create breakout rooms with no more than five participants per room. Make note of any Non-Active Training (NAT) participants and participants who may only be making up the first day of training. Ensure equal distribution of participants without including make-ups or NATs. Make-up participants can join Learning Teams. Create an additional breakout room for NATs to make calling them back after activities easier. Once rooms are arranged, set a timer for 15 minutes total and share the instruction slide with BORs. Once teams come back, each will share their participant names, position/locations, team name, and mascot. The report-out should be about 10 minutes. Offer first break after this activity, regardless of time.

Slide 8

Co-creating a space for learning:

- Listen for understanding
- Recognize both intent and impact
- Move forward, move back

In your Learning Teams, add to this list

Community Agreements



8

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

10:00 (30 min)

Materials/Links:

[Community Agreements Ideaboardz](#)

Content:

- Community agreements reflect expectations for discussion and behavior in the virtual classroom. These agreements are most effective when co-created among participants.
- Community agreements guide the way we participate in discussion and other class activities, helping all participants to interact within an inclusive, respectful, and equitable framework.
- There are a few ideas for community agreements on the slide, but your input is needed to further develop this list.
-  **Small Group Breakout Rooms (6-8 min.):** In a moment, participants will go to their small groups to come up with 3 additional community agreements.
 - o Encourage participants to include thought and discussion about interactions in both the large group and in breakout rooms.
 - o Participants should also consider anything that they need from trainers/facilitators to have an effective learning space.

-  **IdeaBoardz:** Please add agreements to the [IdeaBoardz](#).
-  **Large Group Discussion (5-10 min.):** When you return, the list that has been created will be reviewed and checked for agreement.
- Once the community agreements have been developed, they will be exported to a document to be sent out via email at the end of today. Community agreements will be revisited periodically over the next three weeks of training.
-  **Trainer Note:** Ensure Ideaboardz is cleared from previous cohort. Send participants to learning teams to discuss and develop at least three community agreements together. Allow 6 total minutes for groups to discuss and add agreements to the IdeaBoardz. Debrief and review agreements when participants return. Export agreements to PDF to email out at the end of the day.

Slide 9

Equity in Child Welfare

Why do we do this work?

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

10:30 (15 min)

Materials/Links:

4 Solidarity Statement

Content:

- At the Meet & Greet, participants had the opportunity to review statements of solidarity for racial equity from both ODHS and the PSU-Child Welfare Partnership. It's important to acknowledge our commitment as trainers to engage with you all in this learning and unlearning and to hold space for this.
 -  **Solidarity Statement:** A copy of the PSU-CWP statement is in participant materials.
- We asked you all to reflect on the importance of equity and antiracism in Child Welfare work and to review the Child Welfare Vision for Transformation and Equity North Star to prompt your thinking. In a moment, we will be asking you all to discuss your reflections with your colleagues.
- We know equity and antiracism work is also very personal, so we want to begin with our training team sharing why we personally bring equity into this work.

-  **Trainer Note:** Each trainer who is present will have 30-60 seconds to briefly share their “why” related to equity and antiracism.
 - Prior to training, the lead trainer can use a random order generator, such as <https://www.ultimatesolver.com/en/random-order> to determine the order for sharing.

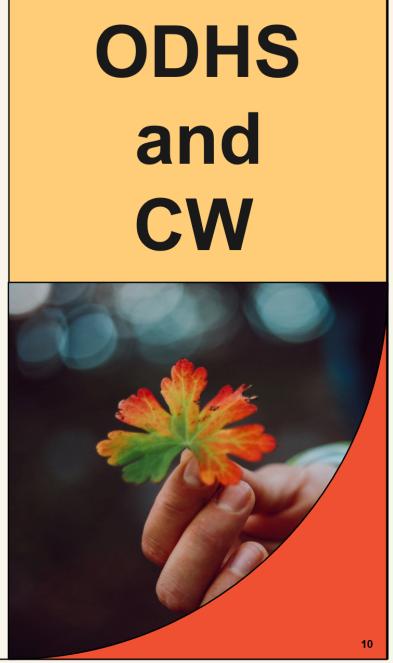
Slide 10

Guiding concepts for how to do our work:

- Vision for Transformationⁱ
- ODHS Mission and Core Values ⁱⁱⁱ
- Equity North Starⁱⁱ
- CW Goals ^{iv}

**Do all these values and goals align with each other?
How will you practice them, or how might it be
difficult to do that?**

**ODHS
and
CW**



10

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

10:45 (10 min) *Suggested 10 min break after this slide*

Materials/Links:

7 Vision Mission Goals

Content:

- Participants were asked to review the Vision for Transformation¹ and the Equity North Star² after last week's Meet and Greet session. Those two pieces of guidance, along with the ODHS

¹ Child Welfare Division, Oregon Department of Human Services. (2020). *Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation*. ODHS Child Welfare Division.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/child-welfare-transformation/pages/default.aspx>

² Oregon Department of Human Services. (2020). *ODHS Equity North Star*. Oregon Department of Human Services.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/equity/Pages/equity-north-star.aspx>

Mission and Core Values³, and the Child Welfare Goals⁴ really focus the scope of Child Welfare work.

-  **Vision Mission Goals:** This handout shares all four concepts, and has space to answer the prompt on the slide: Do these values and goals align with each other? And how will you practice them, or how might it be difficult to do that?
-  **Small Group Breakout Rooms (5 min.):** In pairs, participants will talk together about their answers to the prompts.
 -  **Trainer Note:** this activity will not be debriefed; it is an opportunity for participants to talk without the expectation of sharing their thoughts or conversation.

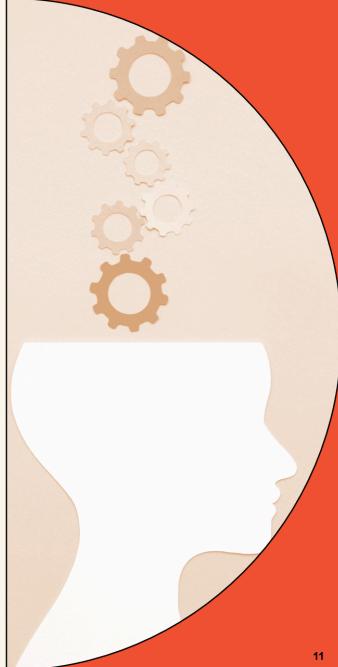
Slide 11

“Imagine” Activity

Let's look at two different families' interactions with child welfare through the parents' eyes.

Part 1: Consider and discuss the first family's experience as a large group.

Part 2: Consider and discuss the second family's experience in break-out rooms led by a trainer.



11

³ Oregon Department of Human Services. (n.d.). *About ODHS*. Oregon Department of Human Services.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/about/Pages/default.aspx>

⁴ Child Welfare Division, Oregon Department of Human Services. (n.d.). *Child Welfare Procedure Manual*. Oregon Department of Human Services.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/rules-policy/Documents/cw-procedure-manual.pdf>

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

11:05 (3 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Our next activity will encourage perspective-taking and reflecting on your own reactions, which are important skills for all child welfare workers.
- You will be asked to look at interactions with child welfare through the eyes of two different parents in two different situations.
- We'll look at two scenarios, the first as a large group and the second in Learning Teams with a trainer present to facilitate the conversation.
- We encourage everyone to engage in this activity and share their reflections. Please be mindful of the community agreements as you do so.

Slide 12

Imagine:

You are a parent who recently immigrated to this country and are undocumented. In your country of origin, corporal punishment of children for misbehaving was an acceptable form of discipline. Last night your 6-year-old son threw a tantrum while you were fixing dinner. You hit him in the face with the wooden spoon you had in your hand. You immediately regret it and have seldom, if ever, done anything like that before.

You get a call the next day informing you that your son has been placed in resource care after disclosing to his teacher that the bruise on his face was a result of being hit by you. The child welfare worker who contacted you indicated your son was afraid to go home, so out-of-home placement seemed necessary.

A day has passed, and you have not seen your son. You are scheduled to attend a court hearing today and have no idea of what to expect. You don't know where your child is or who he is with. You don't know for sure when you will get to see him.

What thoughts are going through your mind? How are you feeling?

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

11:08 (10 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Let's consider the first scenario. As you read and listen to the scenario, imagine you are the parent in this situation and consider the following two questions:
 - What thoughts are going through your mind?
 - How are you feeling (emotionally and in your body)?
-  **Trainer Note:** Trainer reads scenario aloud. After reading the scenario, pause for 5-10 seconds to allow participants to process what they read/heard.
 - Next, ask participants to put their answers to the two questions mentioned above (and shown at the bottom of the slide) in the chat.
-  **Large Group Discussion (5 min.):** Before this activity, we talked about the goals, mission and vision of ODHS and child welfare. Do you see those principles in action in this scenario? How or how not?
 -  **Trainer Note:** Offer any of the following prompts to guide the discussion. Ask participants to unmute to share their thoughts or type in chat.
 - The scenario states that the parent recently immigrated from another country and is undocumented. What fears or worries might the parent be feeling based on those circumstances? What additional barriers or disadvantages could this parent face in navigating the child welfare and court systems?
 - Follow-up: What could a worker do to address this parent's fears and strive to lessen the impact of the disadvantages the parent faces?
 - The ODHS Child Welfare Vision for Transformation states, "We value fairness, equity, inclusion, accessibility, diversity, and transparency in our work." What would it look like to treat this family more equitably? What could the worker have done differently?
 - The Vision for Transformation also states, "We value the voices, experiences, cultures, intellect and uniqueness of

the children and families we serve.” What could a worker do in this scenario to show that they value and honor the family’s voice and culture?

-  **Trainer Note:** After the large group discussion, remind participants that they will go into Learning Teams in breakout rooms to consider the second scenario.

Slide 13



You have been married for twelve years. You and your spouse met while you were in college. It was love at first sight. You have an eleven-year-old son and a nine-year-old daughter. Your spouse is a well-established professional in the community, and you have a job working part-time for the school district. It seems you have the perfect life.

You are at work, and you receive a call from someone who identifies themselves as being from child welfare. They tell you they will need to meet with you regarding your daughter. You ask what this is about and are told that they would rather speak with you in person. You persist in knowing the nature of the concern. They tell you that your spouse is being questioned by the police for molesting your daughter.

What thoughts are going through your mind? How are you feeling?

13

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

11:18

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

-  **Trainer Note:** This slide will be projected in the break-out rooms and read aloud by the trainer in each room. Breakout rooms for each Learning Team should be ready with one trainer assigned to each room. Ideally a co-trainer will create/update the groups ahead of time and assign one trainer to each room.
-  **Small Group Breakout Rooms (10 min.):** Trainer-led conversation in Learning Teams.
 - Now let's consider the second scenario about a different family. Like last time, as you read and listen to the scenario, imagine you are the parent in this situation and keep these two questions in mind:
 - What thoughts are going through your mind?
 - How are you feeling (emotionally and in your body)?
 -  **Trainer Note:** Trainer reads scenario aloud while it is visible to participants on shared screen in the break-out room. After reading the scenario, pause for 5-10 seconds to allow participants to process what they read/heard.
 - Ask participants to share their answers to the two questions mentioned above (and shown at the bottom of the slide).
 - Next, offer any/all the prompts below to guide a discussion about the scenario. Encourage participants to share their ideas aloud as opposed to in chat.
 - What are some possible ways a parent might react upon learning that news?
 - What reactions would you consider "acceptable" or "unacceptable"? Why?
 - How capable do you think this parent would be of answering a worker's questions after receiving that news?
 - What questions do you think this parent may have?
 - How could the worker have been more trauma-informed when providing this information to the parent?

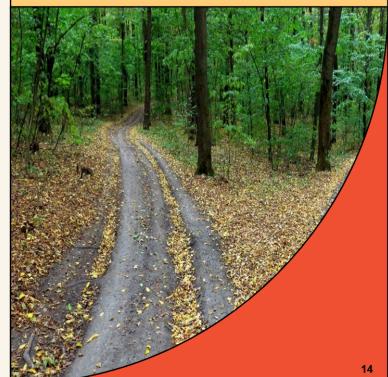
-  **Large Group Discussion (5 min.):** Once participants return, debrief their experience of the activity. Ask the group to share (unmute or type in chat) what thoughts or feelings came up for them throughout the activity.
 -  **Trainer Note:** After participants share, highlight the following points about the activity (if not covered in participants' reflections):
 - The purpose of this activity is to help new workers imagine what it must be like for a parent when they are first contacted by the agency.
 - We will continue to discuss the ways families are impacted by race, trauma and other systemic factors throughout training.
 - This afternoon, we'll talk about how your awareness of and response to both a family's history of trauma and their cultural identities can lessen the trauma caused by child welfare's involvement.

Slide 14

Anonymous Poll:

- Respond to each of the prompts in the Zoom Poll with “Agree” or “Disagree”

Take a Stand



Suggested Start Time (and Duration):

11:35 (3 min)

Materials/Links:

Poll: (W1) Take a Stand

Content:

- The next activity, which we call Take a Stand, will ask you to reflect on your own perspective on statements that reflect common family conditions within Child Welfare work.
-  **Poll - (W1) Take a Stand:** Put zoom poll up for everyone to respond "agree" or "disagree" to the following statements:
 - A parent raised in a family with intergenerational abuse will be less likely to adequately parent a child.
 - A non-offending parent who does not believe that child sexual abuse occurred cannot protect the child.
 - A parent who is abusing substances cannot provide adequate care and protection for their child.
 - A parent who is not taking prescribed medication for a diagnosed mental illness cannot safely care for their child.
 - Survivors should be held as accountable as perpetrators for keeping children safe from domestic violence.

Slide 15

Take a Stand Prompts

- **What was your thought process in selecting “agree” or “disagree” for each statement?**
- **How did it feel being made to take a stand based on the information provided?**

A parent raised in a family with intergenerational abuse will be less likely to adequately parent a child.

A non-offending parent who does not believe that child sexual abuse occurred cannot protect the child.

A parent who is abusing substances cannot provide adequate care and protection for their child.

A parent who is not taking prescribed medication for a diagnosed mental illness cannot safely care for their child.

Survivors should be held as accountable as perpetrators for keeping children safe from domestic violence.



15

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

11:38 (12 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

-  **Small Group Breakout Room (5 min.):** Once the poll is complete, send the Learning Teams to break out rooms for 5 minutes to discuss their experience of being made to answer one way or another. Explain that there is no requirement to disclose their answers, but rather it is an opportunity to discuss how they made their decision and what it felt like.
 - o Share instruction/prompt slide to breakout rooms.
-  **Large Group discussion (5 min.):** Once participants return, debrief their experience of the activity. Begin by asking participants why they think we conduct this activity, then move into covering the concept of self-determination and the imperative to gather complete information, including multiple perspectives, before making determinations.

Slide 16



Action Items

Write down:

- One thing you think will impact how you do casework
- One thing you want to ask your CTS or supervisor

16

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

11:50 (10 min) *Break for lunch afterwards*

Materials/Links:

7 Action Items (additional sheets available in supplemental folder)

Content:

- To wrap up the morning, revisit all we've done today: outlined what Essential Elements will look like, created learning teams and developed community agreements for our group, explored what it might feel like to be involved in the Child Welfare system, and examined personal biases.
-  **Action Items Handout:** Take time (trainer will determine appropriate amount based on need) to write down one thing that we did that will impact how you do your casework, and one question you want to ask your Coaching and Training Specialist or Supervisor.
- If time allows, ask participants to share or ask questions.
-  **Trainer Note:** There are 10 minutes scheduled here to allow for additional time needed for morning activities, or to use as needed based on participants' needs. If there is time after Action Items are addressed, you can review the Week 1 Agenda either didactically or by incorporating an activity where

participants can share what they are most interested in/curious about or looking forward to.

Slide 17



Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

1:00 (7 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

-  **Annotate Activity:** Participants will annotate to indicate places on the map of significance to them. Participants will take note of the various places on the map that have been marked.
 - The lens every person uses to view the world is affected by personal experiences, culture, and things that are of significance to each person.
 - Understanding our own lens helps us to gain self-awareness, to include our own biases.
 - It is important to be open and curious about other people's worldview and the reasons that have created that view.

Slide 18

“To reach others, we have to first know ourselves. And to contact the deeper truth of who we are, we must engage in some activity or practice that questions what we assume to be true about ourselves.”

-Adapted from A.H. Almaas



18

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

1:07 (3 min)

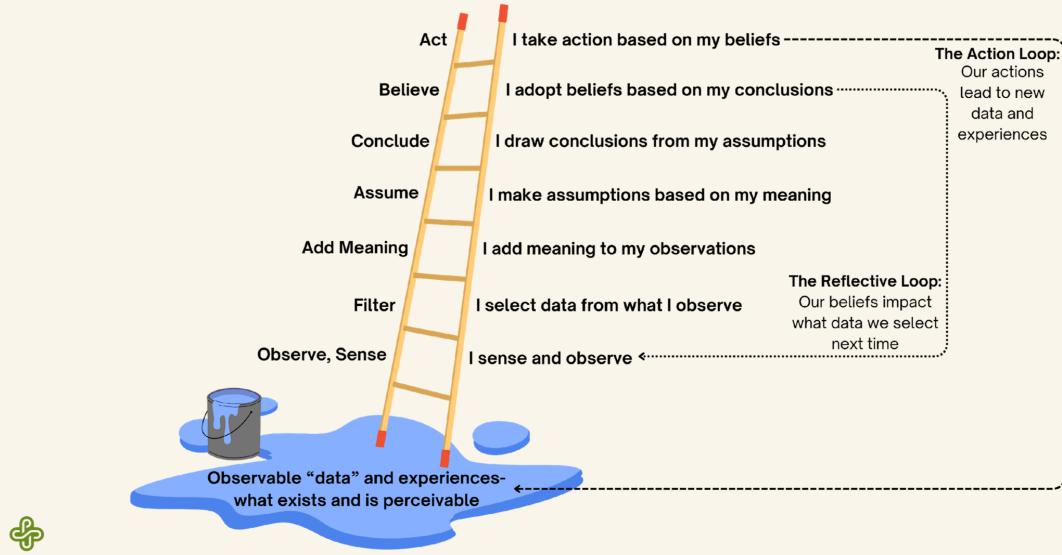
Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

-  **Trainer Note:** This quote introduces participants to the next several slides, where they will be encouraged to recognize themselves and the perspectives and biases they will be carrying into the work. The trainer can use the first question to gauge participants' thoughts and choose any further questions to meet the group's needs.
 - What does this quote mean to you?
 - Why might it be important to understand our own beliefs and values when working with families?
 - What does it mean to question what we assume to be true about ourselves?
 - How can we go about understanding ourselves better?
 - Do you think this applies to the casework you believe you will be doing?

The Ladder of Inference⁶



19

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

1:10 (15 min)

Materials/Links:

Ladder of Inference (caption).mp4

8 Ladder of Inference

Content:

- Developing strategies to examine our own thought processes to identify bias is crucial in child welfare work.
-  **Ladder of Inference (caption).mp4 (5:32)⁵:** We're going to watch a video about the Ladder of Inference⁶, which is a framework we can use to see where our own experiences and beliefs can lead to biases that influence our decisions and actions.
 - o While you watch, jot down ideas about when and how you might use the Ladder of Inference in your work.
-  **Large Group Discussion (5 min.):** Invite 2-3 people to unmute to share their ideas about when/how they might use

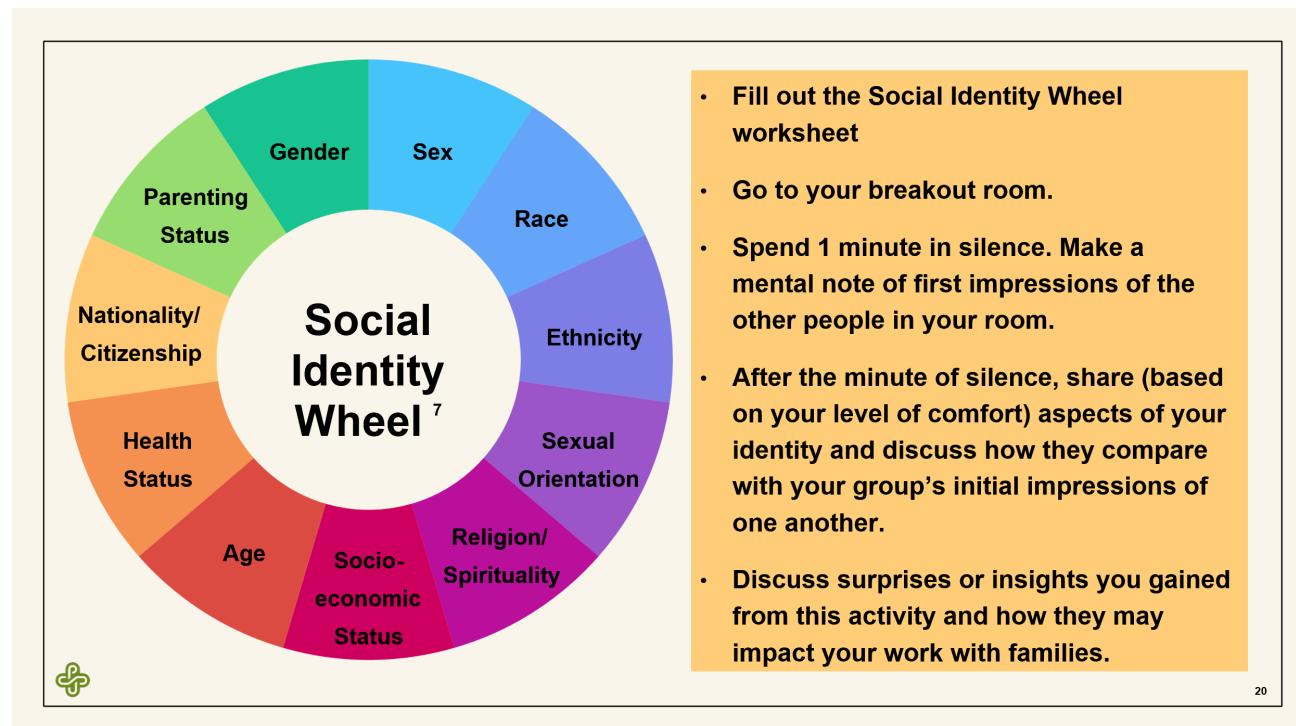
⁵ Labovic, B. (Director). (n.d.). *Rethinking thinking* [Video]. TedEd. <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/rethinking-thinking-trevor-maber>

⁶ Senge, P. M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline*. New York: Doubleday/Currency.

the Ladder of Inference in their work. Others can put ideas in chat.

- o The Ladder of Inference can be a helpful tool to use when staffing with your supervisor about your experiences with families and how to best serve them. Why do you think it could be useful in that context?
-  **Ladder of Inference:** In your materials, you have a handout with a visual representation of the Ladder of Inference. You may want to hang onto it to refer to as you begin working with and discussing families in the context of child welfare casework.
-  **Trainer Note:** If they aren't mentioned during the large group discussion, share the points below about how using the Ladder of Inference can improve communication and decision-making:
 - o By becoming more aware of our own thinking and reasoning and making it visible to others.
 - o By asking others to clarify their thinking and reasoning.
 - o By allowing ourselves to consider other possible meanings, i.e. for behavior exhibited by co-workers and clients.
 - o By encouraging each other to draw conclusions tentatively while incorporating broader ranges of information into our decision making.

Slide 20



Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

1:25 (20 min) *Suggested 10 min break after this slide*

Materials/Links:

10 Social Identity Wheel

Content:

- We all come to this work with our own experiences, beliefs, and values. They shape the people we are and the work we do in Child Welfare.
- We must be aware of our thoughts related to our social identities, share our experiences with others, and eagerly listen as others share their experiences with us.
- As a child welfare worker, you are constantly interacting with people of various backgrounds, experiences and beliefs. Some will be like yours, and some will be very different.
-  **Social Identity Wheel:** Look at the handout titled Social Identity Wheel⁷. On the first page, there are several (but not all possible) different social identity categories. On the second

⁷ The Program on Intergroup Relations, University of Michigan. (2021). *Social Identity Wheel*. LSA Inclusive Teaching Initiative, University of Michigan.

<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/wp-content/uploads/sites/853/2021/12/Social-Identity-Wheel.pdf>

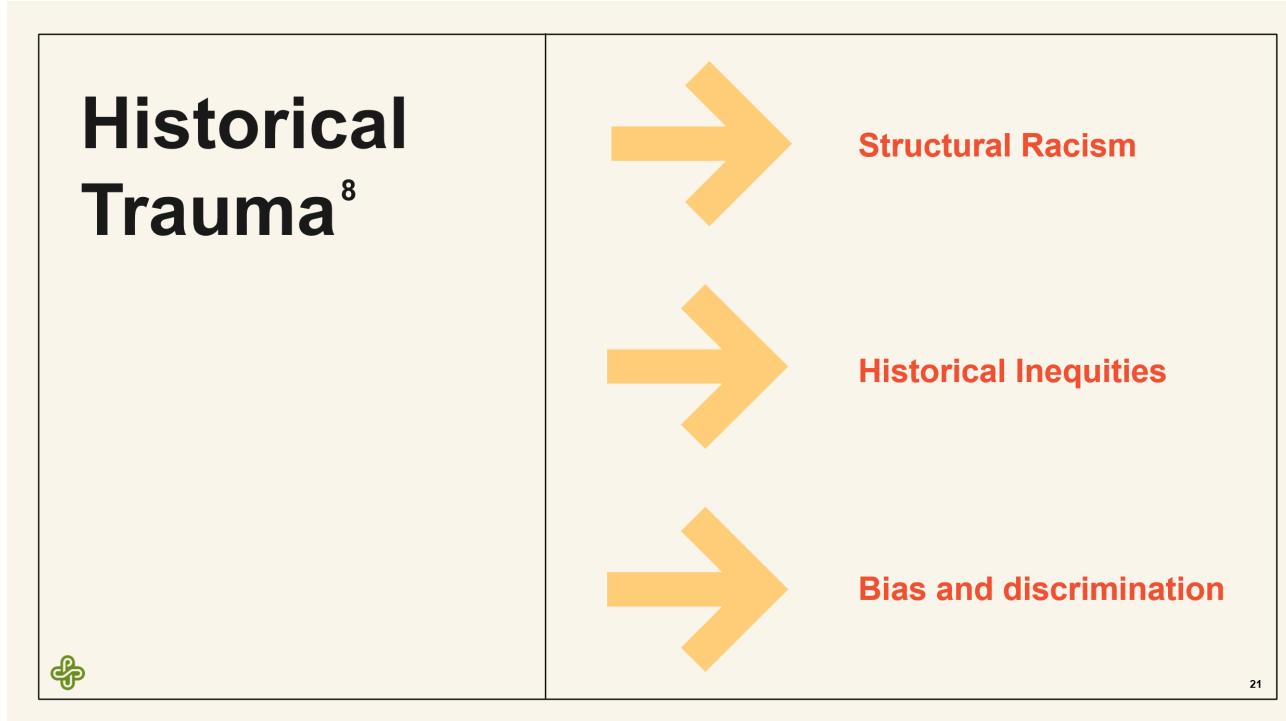
page, there is a broad definition of the concept of social identities, along with some examples of how one might identify within these identities on the second page. There are also 6 numbered labels to prompt you to consider how these social identities show up in your life:

- o Identities you think about most often
- o Identities you think about least often
- o Your own identities you would like to learn more about
- o Identities that have the strongest effect on how you perceive yourself
- o Identities that have the greatest effect on how others perceive you
- o Identities that will have the biggest impact on casework and interacting with families
- Take 3 minutes to respond to the handout, putting the number of the label on the identities that correspond for you. You do not have to choose a number for each of the social identities on the wheel, and if you want, you can put more than one number for a particular identity.
-  **Trainer Note:** If the trainer has filled out their own Social Identity Wheel prior to class, they can show it to the group as an example. The trainer can choose two-to-three identities to talk about briefly and explain how/why they chose the number(s) for how those identities impact their life.
-  **Small Group Breakout Rooms (8 min.):** Now that we've done some self-reflection, we're going to spend time looking at our first impressions around identity and share with each other in small groups.
 - o Open the breakout rooms for 3-4 people each (random assignment, not Learning Teams). In the rooms, participants will spend 1 minute in silence and make a note of the first impressions they have of others in the room.
 - o After the first minute, participants will share their self-reflections with each other, compare their reflections, and discuss any insights they have.
 - o Bring participants back and debrief this activity. Ask participants what their initial feelings were about this activity, and how they experienced the 'sharing' part of it.

Ask participants why we would do such an intimate activity on the first day of training. Encourage vulnerability throughout the training, particularly when it comes to “uncomfortable” or “big” topics.

- Debrief: The ability to quickly and automatically categorize people is a fundamental quality of the human mind. Categories give order to life, and every day we group other people into categories based on social and other characteristics. This is the foundation of stereotypes, prejudice and, ultimately, discrimination.
- We have all learned at this point in our lives that first impressions may or may not be accurate, and that we can't or shouldn't judge a book by its cover; yet that is what our mind automatically does, and it takes effort not to fall into that trap.

Slide 21

**Suggested Start Time and (Duration):**

1:55 (5 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- As you thought about your own identities and the experiences you've had related to them, it's also important to consider the identities of the parents, children and communities we work within and how experiences related to their identities can impact their engagement with child welfare.
- The children, families and communities with whom you will work often have experienced a variety of traumas. Keep in mind that contact with Child Welfare in and of itself is a traumatic experience. While the goal should always be to partner with families to support child safety, families may also experience involvement as a loss of control in which a government agency comes in, uninvited, to make decisions about their family. Think back to the feelings described earlier in the "Imagine" activity.
- In addition to personal trauma, some families which we encounter may have experienced historical trauma.

- Historical trauma refers to a collective trauma experienced by a specific racial, ethnic or cultural group⁸. It often stems from major events and has lasting, multigenerational impacts.
 - Invite the group to share examples of historical traumas
 - Examples of historical traumas include the Holocaust, slavery, and the US Indian boarding school policy. They also involve ongoing discrimination and systemic oppression.
- Historical traumas can be past or current events. The name refers to the fact that these events have lasting, intergenerational impacts.
- These historical traumas are intertwined with both explicit and implicit bias and structural racism – laws, policies and practices that create and maintain inequities based on race – and result in inequities in areas of health, socioeconomic status, incarceration and contact with child welfare.

⁸ Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2024, October 10). *Understanding Historical Trauma*. Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/equitable-practice/understanding-historical-trauma/?top=245>

Slide 22

**Suggested Start Time and (Duration):**

2:00 (25 min)

Materials/Links:[Vox: "How the US stole thousands of Native American children"](#)

(or Vox How the US.mp4)

10 Vox Viewing Guide

Trainer Guide (located in TR PPT and Media folder)

Content:

- We are going to watch a video that describes one example of historical trauma that directly relates to Child Welfare practice. This video describes the United States' history of forced assimilation and family separation in Native American communities.
-  **Vox Viewing Guide:** As you watch the video, participants should take notes and reflect on the prompts in the guide. Following the video, participants will have an opportunity to discuss their reflections in small groups.
-  **How the US stole thousands of Native American Children⁹ (13:41):**

⁹ Chakraborty, R. (2019). *How the US stole thousands of Native American children* [Video]. Vox.

- o Following the video, allow participants a few minutes to continue completing the viewing guide and responding to reflection questions.
- Debrief the video by discussing the viewing guide:
 1. What did you notice about the experience of children taken to boarding schools? What losses did they experience?
 - Children's experiences included being stripped of traditional clothing, having their hair cut, and being given new names. They were forbidden from speaking their Native languages. (00:02:49)
 2. What was the purpose of the Indian Adoption Project?
 - The primary purpose of the Indian Adoption Project was to stimulate the adoption of Native American children into primarily non-Indian households, continuing the assimilation tactics from boarding schools. (00:06:42)
 3. How did the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) aim to address the issue of family separation among Native American communities? What protections does it provide?
 - The ICWA aimed to give tribes a role in court decisions regarding the welfare of Native American children and required states to provide services to prevent family separation and prioritize keeping children with their relatives. (00:11:14)
 4. Discuss the ongoing challenges faced by Native American children in the foster care system today. What statistics were provided regarding their placement compared to white children?
 - Native American children are four times more likely to be placed in foster care than white children, even with similar issues in their families. (00:11:56)

Slide 23

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)¹⁰

The purpose of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is "...to protect the best interest of Indian Children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families by the establishment of minimum Federal standards for the removal of Indian children and placement of such children in homes which will reflect the unique values of Indian culture..." (25 U.S. C. 1902).

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) is a federal law that protects American Indian and Alaska Native children, families and Tribes from unnecessary child removal and displacement. The Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act (ORICWA) ensures the federal law is applied consistently within Oregon's systems.



23

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

2:25 (5 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Throughout training, we will be discussing the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)¹⁰.
-  **Large Group Discussion (5 min.):** Invite participants to review the purpose of the ICWA on the slide. How does this purpose relate to the history spoken about in the video? How do ICWA and ORICWA aim to rectify past injustices and protect the well-being of Native American children? What are some

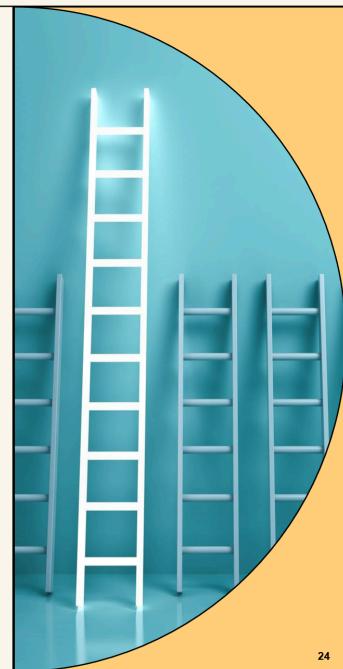
¹⁰ Oregon Department of Human Services. (n.d.). *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)*. Retrieved February 08, 2024. ODHS Tribal Affairs. <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/tribal-affairs/pages/icwa.aspx>

concrete ways that child welfare agencies can collaborate effectively with tribal governments and organizations?

Slide 24

Disproportionality and Disparity

**National Center for Juvenile Justice:
Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color
in Foster Care¹²**



Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

2:30 (15 min)

Materials/Links:

National Center for Juvenile Justice: Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster care:

https://ncjj.org/AFCARS/Disproportionality_Dashboard.asp?selDisplay=3

Oregon Child Welfare Data Book:

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-data-book-2023.pdf>

Content:

- As the video pointed out, the legacy of family separation for Native American children includes that Native American children are 4x more likely to be placed in foster care than white children, even when similar issues present in other families. This is an example of disproportionality.

- Disproportionality is a concern both in Oregon and nationally¹¹.
- Let's look at the data. Screenshare [Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster Care](#)¹² and explain to the group this website is built off of data reported by individual states into a federal database. Select American Indian/Alaska Native children first to tie the content from the Vox video and ICWA slide into this content. This map was last updated in 2021, but the information has been consistent over time, without significant shifts nationwide in the last decade.
- Ask participants about other populations they believe may be disproportionately represented in Oregon's foster care system and select the groups on the map accordingly.
- As you can see on the map as well as in the most recent published data in [Oregon's Child Welfare Data Book](#) (share link), we have an over representation of Native American children and Black children in our child welfare system. 15 states have an overrepresentation of Hispanic children. Other groups that are overrepresented in the child welfare system include LGBTQ+ youth and youth with disabilities¹³.
- Not only are these groups disproportionately represented in Child Welfare, but they also face disparate outcomes, including longer stays in foster care and reunification being less likely.
- It's important to note that these disparities are complex and influenced by various factors, including laws and policies that target communities, historical inequities such as access to resources, and individual and systemic bias that affects decision making.

¹¹ Office of Reporting, Research, Analytics, and Implementation, Oregon Department of Human Services. (2024, October). *2023 Child Welfare Data Book*. Oregon Child Welfare Data and Reports.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/data/cwdata/cw-data-book-2023.pdf>

¹² Puzzanchera, C., Zeigler, M., Taylor, M., Kang, W. and Smith, J. (2023). *Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster Care Dashboard*. National Center for Juvenile Justice.

https://ncjj.org/AFCARS/Disproportionality_Dashboard.asp?selDisplay=3

¹³ Child Welfare Information Gateway. *Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare*. (2016). Black Child Legacy Campaign. https://blackchildlegacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/racial_disproportionality-and-disprarity-in-child-welfare.pdf

- Working with populations that are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system should prompt us to be culturally responsive and trauma informed if we want to make a positive impact. Oregon's Vision for Transformation aims to redress disproportionality and disparate outcomes in the Child Welfare system.
-  **Trainer Note:** Redress is a more actionable word to use than address when talking about fixing the problem of disproportionality in child welfare. Address implies awareness and intent to investigate resolution at a future date, which is what we've been doing for a decade. To redress, or fix, a problem implies action will be taken.
-  **Trainer Note:** As time allows, this would be a good time for a shorter break with the possibility of including breathing, mindfulness or other wellness exercise.

Slide 25



Supporting Adolescents in Foster Care Video Series ¹⁴



25

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

2:45 (7 min)

Materials/Links:

Voices of Youth.mp4

Content:

- Child Welfare involvement not only affects parents but also youth. It is important to understand that our interactions with them can have lasting effects.
-  **Voices of Youth.mp4¹⁴ (5:40):** This is a five-minute video of foster youth talking about their experience in foster care. This video emphasizes the importance of listening to youth voice, and throughout Essential Elements, we want to come back to this.
 - Many of the youth represented in the video are youth of color. As was discussed, this highlights the disproportionality that exists in the child welfare system.

Slide 26

¹⁴ Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). *Voices of Youth: Supporting Adolescents in Foster Care* [Video]. YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vu_BAayToJA

Debrief

In your Learning Teams, discuss:

- What stood out to you most from the video?
- How does the information shared relate to any topics already discussed today?

26

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

2:52 (8 min) *Suggested 10 min break after this slide*

Materials/Links:

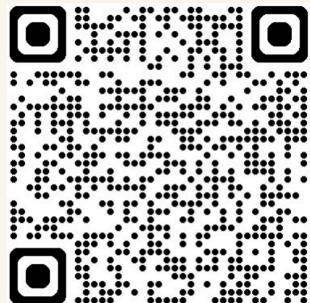
N/A

Content:

-  **Small Group Breakout Room (5 min.)**: Participants will return to their Learning Teams to discuss their reflections on the video. Groups to discuss:
 - What stood out to you most from the video?
 - How does the information in the video relate to the concepts discussed today?
 -  **Trainer Note**: this activity will not be debriefed; it is an opportunity for participants to talk without the expectation of sharing their thoughts or conversation.

Slide 27

How we talk about families



Scan the code or visit
Kahoot.it and enter the
Game Pin shared in the
chat



27

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

3:10 (15 min)

Materials/Links:

[Kahoot Word Cloud link](#)

11 Buzzwords

Content:

- According to the Child Welfare Capacity Building Center for States, “Buzzwords” are popular words, phrases, or jargon frequently used to quickly communicate ideas in a particular field or in popular culture¹⁵. Buzzwords often are harmless in meaning and impact. However, they can be misleading and damaging when used to describe individuals and families in child welfare settings.
- Buzzwords can be introduced early on through screening by way of the reporting party’s description of suspected child abuse or neglect or a caseworker’s interpretation of a reported

¹⁵ Capacity Building Center for States. (2021). Buzzwords: Moving to Behavioral Descriptors Tip Sheet. Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/resources/buzzwords-moving-to-behavioral-descriptors-tip-sheet>

incident. Buzzwords and phrases can be repeated throughout the life of a case in documentation as well as verbal descriptions of a family passed from one child welfare professional to another.

-  **Kahoot Word Cloud:** What are some of the words or phrases you have heard to describe people who encounter the child welfare system? Please scan the QR code on the slide or go to kahoot.it and enter the Game PIN to share. This will create a word cloud with your responses.
- Debrief the word cloud by reading the most prominent words and asking participants for additional thoughts. Presuming there are several buzzwords or otherwise negative words, ask participants if the words align with the Vision for Transformation or their own values around child welfare work.
- Sometimes, the language used to describe families – parents, children, extended family members – can be outright disrespectful.
- Often, negative language arises out of frustration, anger, and disappointment experienced by child welfare professionals but can also arise because of unchecked bias and discrimination.
- Because word choices can influence perceptions, frequently repeated negative buzzwords may affect how a caseworker views the child and family during the assessment and may directly impact decision-making. Buzzwords may also lead to labeling that can be difficult for families and individuals to overcome.
-  **Buzzwords:** Refer participants to the handout and emphasize that most anyone can find themselves thinking or using these words at times, either out of frustration or as part of a prevailing way of speaking about families in the local office. The key is to pause and reflect on what is leading you to use these types of words or phrases to describe families and then re-align your language to match your values and those of the agency.

Slide 28

The Principles of Partnership¹⁶

1	Everyone desires respect
2	Everyone needs to be heard or understood
3	Everyone has strengths
4	Judgements can wait
5	Partners share power
6	Partnership is a process



28

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

3:25 (20 min)

Materials/Links:

12 Principles of Partnership

[Principles of Partnership Ideaboardz](#)

Content:

- The Principles of Partnership¹⁶ were originally developed by a training team at Appalachian Family Innovations in North Carolina to provide guiding values for partnerships between individuals as well as between groups or systems. Since their development, many states, including Oregon, have adopted these Principles, as they are at the heart of family centered

¹⁶ Appalachian Family Innovations. (2003). *Partners in Change: A New Perspective on Child Protective Services*. Morganton, North Carolina.

practice. Family centered practice entails working with families across service systems to enhance their capacity to care for and protect their children.

- It is a focus on children's safety and needs within the context of their families and communities. Family centered practices involve building on families' strengths to achieve optimal outcomes. It is also important to note that in family centered practice, family is defined broadly to include not only birth parents, but blended families, kinship, resource parents, and adoptive families.
- The most effective way to protect children is to strengthen their family and family supports. These principles help us to behave and speak in ways that are strength based, trauma informed and culturally responsive.
-  **Principles of Partnership:** Participants should read the handout and put one principle that resonates for them and why in the chat.
-  **Small Group Breakout Rooms/Ideaboardz (10 min.):** We are going to take some time in our learning teams to brainstorm what it looks like to put the Principles of Partnership into practice. Participants should follow the link to the Ideaboardz before going into their breakout rooms. Once in their rooms, each learning team will comment on each principle. The comment should describe one or more ways that they think they would utilize that principle in working with families.
-  **Large Group Discussion (5 min.):** As a class, debrief the activity. Instead of listing the different ways each team might utilize the principles, discuss the process of how they thought about each principle, and what they considered when thinking about what they look like in practice.

Slide 29

What does family engagement mean?

- Collaborating and partnering with family members throughout their involvement with the child welfare system.
- Recognizing families as an expert on their respective situations and empowering them in the process
- Family engagement is a mindset.



29

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

3:45 (5 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- The Children's Bureau, part of the Administration for Children and Families, has compiled several sources for family engagement, and we will be referencing one of their briefs today¹⁷. Family engagement involves child welfare workers actively collaborating and partnering with family members throughout their involvement with the child welfare system. It involves recognizing parents and caregivers as experts on their respective situation and empowering them in the process. It is a family centered, strengths-based approach to making decisions, setting goals and achieving desired outcomes for the family. In contrast an agency driven approach would see the caseworker as the expert on the family, the sole decision

¹⁷ Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2021). *Family Engagement: Partnering with families to improve child welfare outcomes*. Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-fam-engagement/>

maker, and would fail to look at the family in the context of a larger social system.

- Family engagement is a mindset. It is a way of doing the work throughout the life of a case, rather than just a tool to be implemented intermittently.

Slide 30

Benefits of Family Engagement

- Family preservation
- Increased safety
- Better outcomes
- Reduced resistance
- Increased family buy in
- Expanded options
- Enhanced family decision
- Targeted & tailored services



30

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

3:50 (5 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Some of the benefits of family engagement include:
 - Family preservation- if we can engage with families upfront, we are in a better position to assist with family preservation while ensuring child safety.
 - Promoting safety for children and better outcomes.
 - Reduce resistance and increased family buy-in- People who feel heard and have a voice regarding solutions are more likely to stay engaged and follow through with the services needed.
 - Expanded options- The inclusion of kith/kin, tribes and community partners both during assessment and in the

case planning process can open the door to identify potential and helpful connections.

- o Enhanced family decision skills- When we authentically engage with individuals and family members these individuals and family members will be more inclined to open up about their strengths and their struggles; thereby creating an opportunity to dialogue around any needed changes.
- o Targeted and tailored services- When we listen to the unique needs of individuals and families, we are better able to provide culturally responsive, trauma informed, targeted and tailored services.

Slide 31

What are some barriers to family engagement?



31

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

3:55 (15 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Most families that child welfare encounters did not ask for our intervention and may not understand how child welfare could be beneficial to their family. How might you react if a government official showed up at your door or called you to discuss how you are managing your family? There are many other factors or circumstances which can create a barrier to engagement.
-  **Large Group Discussion (10 min):** What might be some challenges to achieving true engagement?

- o Trainer Note: the following are things to discuss if participants do not bring them up:
 - Communication styles: Culture, education, personality and past experiences are some of the things that can affect the way a person communicates. The style in which people communicate can create a barrier or misunderstanding. We should also consider nonverbal communication like facial expressions and body language.
 - Fear/Mistrust: The people we encounter may have fear or mistrust from previous experience with child welfare or because they have heard something negative from others about child welfare. They may not trust our intentions. If the person is an undocumented person, they may be fearful that we would report them to authorities. It's important to note that this is not our job as child welfare workers.
 - Family Stressors: Family stressors such as an illness in the family, unemployment, or strained relationships could be a barrier to engagement. When people are in crisis or don't have their immediate needs met, it can be hard to fully engage.
 - Position in society or socio-economic status: Social class differences can create gaps in understanding and connection. People who live in poverty may feel like they are misunderstood by people who are not living in poverty; they are focusing on survival, so when we ask them to engage in services it's the last thing on their mind. They may live in the moment and have difficulty thinking ahead to the future. People of high-socio economic status may feel that their problems are not to be shared with a social service agency. They may feel like they have the

situation under control and are put off by our involvement.

- Cultural Norms & Formalities: Individuals have different norms around greetings and rapport building. Do we shake hands, kiss someone's cheek or give them a pat on the shoulder? What's proper? It's hard to know unless you have knowledge of someone's culture, so let them lead the way. If you are at someone's doorstep, and you see that people take their shoes off before entering the house, do you do the same? First impressions can have a significant impact on our ability to engage. Some families may not be comfortable sharing their business with government officials and in fact there may be taboos within their culture regarding talking about certain information with people outside the family. For example, a refugee may fear government intervention or may have had a negative experience with government officials in their country of origin. This can have an impact on their willingness or trust with the engagement process.
- Unresponsive or non-receptive family: There could be many reasons for a parent being unresponsive or non-receptive. Some reasons to consider include a mental health disorder such as anxiety or depression, feeling hopeless or defeated, being under the influence of substances or in rare circumstances anti-social, which is a very small percentage of the population whom child welfare workers encounter who we will not be able to effectively engage because of anti-social tendencies and extreme criminal thinking behavior.
- Attitude of the worker: When we are unable to effectively engage with a family member it is important to look inward and do some

self-examination. Consider if we have biases, perhaps the person reminds us of someone we have worked with in the past, or a family member. Perhaps we are climbing up the ladder of inference and we need to climb back down. We may unknowingly be exhibiting facial expressions or body language that interfere with engagement.

- Personal trauma: A person who has experienced trauma may have difficulty engaging if they have not had time to prepare for an encounter. They may be triggered by something you say or do, or by a location. They may have difficulty focusing or tracking a conversation because of a trauma response they are experiencing.

Slide 32

What are some family engagement strategies?



32

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

4:10 (5 min)

Materials/Links:

N/A

Content:

- Engaging with families who did not voluntarily seek out our services, who are dealing with extreme family stressors, who may have a different cultural background or who have been historically marginalized or oppressed can be challenging and can create barriers. The good news is that there are strategies that we can employ to work through these barriers and challenges.
- The strategies we are discussing today include the importance of taking time to build relationships.
-  **Large Group Discussion:** Invite participants to share their ideas for family engagement strategies.
 - Trauma informed practice strategies: a strengths-based framework that is responsive to the impact of trauma, emphasizing physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both service providers and survivors. It creates

opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

- Honesty and transparency: We need to explain and possibly even re-explain our purpose and goal for our visit, as well as the possible outcomes of our interaction.
- Cultural humility: Be curious, listen with the intent of understanding, and check your biases.
- Client centered interview strategies: Use empathetic listening to understand the world through the other person's eyes.
- Identifying strengths and protective factors: Partnering with families when identifying and developing solutions around behaviors, conditions and circumstances that need to change.
- Utilizing family team meetings.
- Encouraging the involvement of fathers. While we would employ all the same practice strategies with fathers, we want to emphasize their importance because historically in our child welfare system we have not given fathers the same level of engagement that we provide to the maternal side of a family. We should be putting our very best effort into engaging all caregivers no matter their gender or level of involvement.
- All these strategies demonstrate a positive regard for those we work with. Who doesn't want to be regarded positively? It's much better than shame.

Slide 33

Practicing the Principles of Partnership

Add to your team's original ideas:

Ways to be Culturally Responsive

Ways to be Trauma Informed



33

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

4:15 (11 min)

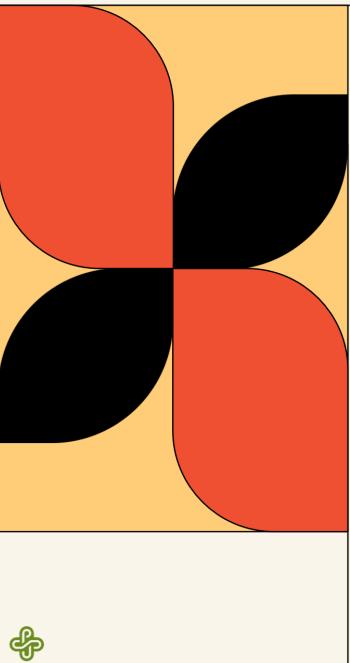
Materials/Links:

[Principles of Partnership Ideaboardz](#)

Content:

-  **Ideaboardz (10 min.)**: Throughout discussing engagement, there have been conversations about how to navigate the strategies and barriers. What are some of the ways to make those strategies more culturally responsive and/or trauma informed?
 - Have participants return to the Ideaboardz where they identified ways to incorporate the Principles of Partnership into their work with families. Ask them to reflect on ideas they had that were already culturally responsive or trauma informed, or to add ways to ensure their engagement will meet those needs.

Slide 34



Please fill out
today's evaluation!

Please see the Introduction to Essential Elements References handout for all sources cited in today's presentation

Thank you!

34

Suggested Start Time and (Duration):

4:26 (4 min)

Materials/Links:

Evaluation link

13 Intro to EE References

Content:

- You've completed your first day! Thank you for attending and engaging today! Please take a moment to fill out today's evaluation.
-  **Intro to EE References:** The sources cited today can be found in this handout, which is at the end of your materials.
-  **Trainer note:** One suggestion for this activity is to have all participants turn their cameras off, fill out the evaluation, and then turn their cameras back on when done.
- Tomorrow we will be back in the classroom taking concepts we explored today and applying them to contacting and engaging families. See you in the morning!