



**Statewide Training and Education Committee
(STEC)**

**Common Core Training Requirements
Executive Summary and Recommendations**

December 10, 2004

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Recommendations for Common Core Training Requirements	6
Decision Point: Baseline Assessment	6
Decision Point: Competencies and Learning Objectives	7
Decision Point: Content.....	9
Decision Point: Content Development and Revision.....	11
Decision Point: Organization of Training	14
Decision Point: Delivery of Skill Training	16
Decision Point: Ongoing Evaluation/Evaluation Framework	20
Decision Point: Requirements for Completion.....	21
Decision Point: Tracking Training	23
Decision Point: Quality Assurance	25
Appendices.....	i
Appendix A: Excerpts from California’s Program Improvement Plan (PIP).....	ii
Appendix B: Mission and Role of The Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC)	vii
Appendix C: Working Toward an Independent Caseload: A Continuum of Responsibility and Level of Supervision for New Caseworkers.....	ix
Appendix D: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms	x

Common Core Training

Executive Summary

Introduction

This document focuses on common core training recommendations for newly hired *child welfare workers* in the State of California. These recommendations have been developed in conjunction with core training recommendations for *child welfare supervisors* and ongoing training recommendations for workers and supervisors.¹ Each set of recommendations builds upon California's existing training and training structures and is designed for statewide application. Together, the recommendations for common core, supervisor core and ongoing training requirements promote a collaborative and coordinated mission to improve the welfare of California's children and families affiliated with the Child Welfare Services Program.

California has a rich and varied training culture that is reflected in both the populations served and in regional and local training programs. A range of quality, in-service core training has historically been provided by county staff development departments, regional training academies, and the Inter-University Consortium in Los Angeles. However, the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) completed in January 2003 determined that California did not have *statewide* requirements for the initial training of new workers.

In response to this finding, the State of California Program Improvement Plan for the Child Welfare Services Program (PIP), effective July 1, 2003, stipulated that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) "*develop a common core curriculum for all new child welfare workers and supervisors that is delivered by all training entities statewide.*"² The goal of this mandate was defined as the implementation of "*a common core curriculum...in every county to train all new child welfare workers and child welfare/probation supervisors.*"³

As a result of the PIP, CDSS and the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) convened the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC). STEC developed recommendations for common core requirements that promote statewide standardization while simultaneously preserving flexibility to meet the diverse needs of individual staff, counties and regions. This document reflects the discussions and collective efforts of STEC members with respect to setting forth a coordinated framework for standardization of common core in-service training requirements.⁴

¹ The latter two sets of training recommendations will be articulated in separate documents. See Statewide Training and Education Committee-Ongoing Training Requirements-Executive Summary and Recommendations; recommendations for supervisor core training are currently in development.

² See Appendix A: PIP, Systemic Factor 4, Item 32, pg. 74.

³ *Ibid.*, pg. 76.

⁴ STEC membership includes state staff, county staff and training staff. For more information regarding STEC, please refer to the "Mission and Role of STEC" in Appendix B and the following CalSWEC Web site: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/STEC.html>.

Values Underlying the Development of Common Core Training Requirements

1. Common core training is grounded in social work values and ethics.⁵
2. Common core training builds upon, but is not limited to, new worker training currently underway in California, and utilizes existing training structures.
3. Standards encourage flexibility in the way counties meet identified training needs.
4. Standards encourage the application of best practices aimed at improving outcomes for children and families, by training strategies that progress from knowledge acquisition to building and demonstrating skills.
5. Standards endorse training delivery methods for common core training that yield measurable learning objectives and that provide the basis for evaluation of knowledge, skills, and attitude acquisition in order to promote positive outcomes for children and families.
6. Standards are consistent with those endorsed by California's Title IV-E university programs for the bachelor's and master's degrees in social work.
7. Common core training encourages inclusion of community partners, whenever possible, in order to share responsibility for child safety, permanency, and well-being.

Summary of Recommendations

In order to create a coordinated statewide framework for common core training, STEC members devised a series of decision point documents to guide the development and implementation process for the common core curriculum. These decision point documents form the body of the report, and address the following:

- A Baseline Assessment (of current new worker training in California)
- Competencies and Learning Objectives
- Content
- Content Development and Revision
- Organization of Training
- Delivery of Skill Training

⁵ The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics states, "Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics..." (NASW Code of Ethics, 1996, p. 21).

CalSWEC's Standards and Values support the use of ongoing training as a form of best practices: "No standards of practice are final. Standards must be subject to continuous review and revision, in view of the constantly growing knowledge about children, human behavior, and human ills." (CalSWEC Website)

http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/CalSWEC_Values.html and
http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/CalSWEC_Standards.html

- Ongoing Evaluation/Evaluation Framework
- Requirements for Completion
- Tracking Training
- Quality Assurance

Through the participation of subject matter experts, training professionals, child welfare practitioners and administrators, STEC's recommendations concerning content, delivery and evaluation of training invoke "state of the art," evidence-based and best practices widely acknowledged in the field. The formulation by STEC of statewide standardized common core training recommendations is by no means intended to constrain new worker training to minimum standards. Rather, STEC seeks to encourage counties and training entities to support the achievement of the best possible outcomes for children and families through effective and evaluated training.

The essential recommendations for each of the common core decision point documents are as follows:

Baseline Assessment

- A baseline assessment was conducted in all 58 counties, including responses from regional training academies, to determine what common core content areas are currently being trained throughout the state.

Competencies and Learning Objectives

- A modified, updated version of the Standardized Core Project's competencies and learning objectives will be used as the basis for establishing the competencies and learning objectives of the statewide standardized common core curriculum.
- The updated version will reflect the latest research and standards of best and evidence-based practice.
- The competencies and learning objectives will relate to those of California's BSW IV-E and MSW IV-E programs to provide a continuum of learning from the university to on-the-job applications.

Content

- Five select areas of content, described as the "core of the core," are determined to be standard: Case Planning and Management, Child Maltreatment Identification, Safety and Risk Assessment, Human Development, and Placement/Permanency.
- A knowledge bank of content items relating to each of the five areas noted above will be constructed with the assistance of subject matter experts in order to provide a foundation for knowledge acquisition testing.

Content Development and Revision

- A STEC-designated content development workgroup will establish lead organizations for development of each of the five "core of the core" content areas.
- The workgroup will integrate the work of the lead organizations and establish common themes or threads to the curricula.

- The lead organizations will apply the expertise of practitioners and university partners and will invite representatives from these groups to participate in the content development process.
- Content will be revised pursuant to significant new developments in the field, but no less frequently than every three years.

Organization of Training

- The sequencing and duration of training for the five “core of the core” content areas will be standardized at the level recommended by the content development workgroup.

Delivery of Skill Training

- The delivery method for child maltreatment identification (one of the “core of the core” content areas) will be standardized in a manner to support the evaluation of skill during training.
- Subject matter experts will assist in the design and delivery of the content and evaluation methods.
- Evaluation data regarding the effectiveness of skill delivery training will be reported in aggregate form.

Ongoing Evaluation/Evaluation Framework

- The Macro Evaluation Team⁶ will formulate an evaluation framework consistent with the decision points in this document.
- The evaluation framework will utilize a bank of items to assess for knowledge acquisition, and will incorporate a model to assess application of knowledge in the area of Child Maltreatment Identification.

Requirements for Completion

- Newly hired workers will be required to complete common core training within one year of their hire dates.
- Counties are encouraged, but not required, to use the promising practice model known as “The Independent Caseload Continuum” in order to maximize the effective application of common core training through progressively more challenging case management responsibilities.⁷

Tracking Training

- Common core training participation data will be collected for each individual worker by the counties, but reported in aggregate to CDSS.

⁶ The Macro Evaluation Team was convened by CalSWEC to create and recommend a common statewide framework for evaluation of in-service training as directed by the PIP.

⁷ See Appendix D: *Working Toward an Independent Caseload: A Continuum of Responsibility and Level of Supervision for New Caseworkers*. For further information, access: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/SCPTour1.html>

- The Annual County Training Plan that counties currently prepare for submission to CDSS will be modified to serve as the reporting instrument for common core training participation data.
- The Regional Training Academies (RTAs), Inter-University Consortium (IUC) and the Regional Center for Family Focused Practice (RCFFP) will provide counties with participation data for their respective trainees on a semi-annual basis.

Quality Assurance

This decision point is currently in development.

Cost Estimates

Cost assumptions for implementation of STEC's common core training recommendations are detailed in each decision point document. Some recommendations are set forth as required or mandated standards. These standards in particular require careful analysis of fiscal implications. In June 2004, drafts of the recommendations including cost assumptions were submitted to the CWDA Children's Committee for the purpose of determining actual cost estimates.

Finalization

The recommendations contained in this report will be submitted for review and final approval to the CWDA Children's Committee, CDSS, the RTA Coordination Subcommittee and the Curriculum Committee of CalSWEC, and the CalSWEC Board.

Recommendations for Common Core Training Requirements

Decision Point:

Baseline Assessment

Background

In order to develop a common core, a baseline assessment must be conducted to determine what is currently being trained across the state. This will allow the common core to build upon the training that is already delivered, maximizing the effective use of resources. The baseline evaluation will also address a key problem identified in the CFSR: on a statewide basis, California does not have the capacity to document new worker training that new child welfare workers complete.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- A baseline assessment be conducted during fiscal year 03/04 that ascertains: 1) how training is provided and 2) what Standardized Core Project (SCP) competencies and learning objectives are common across the state. This survey would *not* be a part of the C-CFSR Self-Assessment.
- CalSWEC/CDSS assign one centralized person or team to develop and refine the instruments, work with counties and RTAs/IUC to collect the data, and analyze the results.
- The analyzed data be reviewed by STEC to inform the development of the content of the common core.

Identified Cost Assumptions

The principal cost of conducting the baseline assessment would be borne by the RTA Coordination Contract at CalSWEC.

Costs to the counties would include staff time to complete the surveys and content instruments.

Costs to the RTAs/IUC would include staff time to complete the content instruments, since counties that use the RTAs/IUC for all of their new worker training would not have to fill out that section.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Decision Point:

Competencies and Learning Objectives

Background

California has been a pioneer in the use of common competencies in social work education for child welfare professionals. The Curriculum Competencies for Public Child Welfare (also referred to as the CalSWEC Child Welfare Competencies and the CalSWEC Title IV-E Competencies) were developed for CalSWEC's Title IV-E MSW program offered by California's 16 graduate schools of social work. They have been updated every 4 or 5 years, and were last revised in August 2002.

These MSW IV-E competencies were also applied to the in-service training curricula developed by the RTAs. Since they were initially intended for a longer, more educationally oriented application, they were less useful in this area.

As part of the SCP, CalSWEC developed a set of topic-specific competencies that were more geared to in-service training. These are called the SCP competencies.

Learning objectives are more specific and measurable than competencies, and are specifically linked to curriculum and to measures of knowledge and skills. They were also developed as part of the SCP.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- A modified, updated version of SCP competencies and learning objectives be used as the basis for the new common core curriculum, rather than the MSW IV-E or BSW IV-E competencies. This means that all newly hired child welfare workers would receive new worker training that at minimum covers the revised SCP competencies.
- The SCP competencies and learning objectives be reviewed and modified as needed to reflect the changes that have occurred in CWS as a result of the CFSR and CWS system improvements. They should also integrate best practices and the latest research on practice. If the RTAs/IUC have developed learning objectives, these should be considered and integrated as appropriate.
- Subsequent iterations of the SCP competencies, BSW IV-E competencies and MSW IV-E competencies use consistent language, and that they relate to each other as much as possible.

Identified Cost Assumptions

The current RTA/IUC core training curricula cover nearly all of the SCP competencies.⁸ Minimal additional costs would therefore be incurred by counties that already have their newly hired staff complete the RTA/IUC core training within the first year of hire. Note that these counties already incur costs for this purpose, and those costs should be taken into consideration.

Some modification of curricula will be required by the RTAs/IUC, especially related to using common learning objectives.

Counties that provide their own new worker training may incur costs to modify that curriculum to cover the modified SCP competencies and learning objectives. They may also require technical assistance from CDSS, CalSWEC or the RTAs/IUC.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Next Steps

Review and revise the competencies and learning objectives to assure that they remain relevant, and that they are consistent with the principles of CWS system improvements and the CFSR.

Compare and consolidate the SCP competencies and learning objectives with the RTA/IUC competencies and learning objectives.

Gather data via the baseline survey as to whether the competencies are covered by the RTAs and the counties in their new worker training. (*See Common Core Training Requirements Decision Point—Baseline Assessment.*)

Conduct a cost analysis for modifying the curriculum prior to the implementation of the common core.

⁸ CalSWEC and the RTAs/IUC conducted a preliminary analysis of whether the RTAs/IUC covered the SCP competencies in their curricula, and determined that they cover nearly all of them. Some may not be required as part of a common core training, but some curriculum revision may need to occur at the RTAs/IUC.

Decision Point:

Content

Definition of Content

For the purposes of STEC, **content** is defined as the *information presented* in the training. This is distinguished from **delivery**, which is the *method of presenting the information*. Common content in training can imply anything from using only the same titles of training courses to standardizing every item of information that is presented.

Level of Standardization

CalSWEC convened the Macro Evaluation Team to prepare a common statewide framework (as required by the PIP) for evaluation of in-service training. The Macro Evaluation Team functions as a subcommittee of STEC and is co-facilitated by national experts in training evaluation. Training evaluation professionals acknowledge that in order to perform statewide evaluation of training in any meaningful way, selected critical parts of the information must be standardized throughout the state. This would allow for testing to determine if knowledge has been attained by trainees.

For example, if common language is not used to define some of the terms in the learning objectives and competencies, then one cannot test whether a trainee attained sufficient level of knowledge from the training—they may have simply been trained with a different term.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- Select areas of content (i.e., information) be determined to be standard. Standardized content would be limited to those areas where it is critical to evaluate whether the trainees attained the knowledge outlined in the learning objectives and competencies.
- These select areas of content be the subject of intense item development and that all training programs agree to train this specific knowledge and to use these items in their knowledge tests.
- The standardized common content areas include the five “core of the core” areas previously identified by the Standardized Core Advisory Committee: Case Planning and Management, Child Maltreatment Identification, Safety and Risk Assessment, Human Development and Placement/Permanency.

Identified Cost Assumptions

Resources would be required (i.e., staff time) to identify the areas of content that would be standardized, and to provide content that is current and based on the best available evidence in the field. This cost would be borne mainly by CalSWEC and/or CDSS.

RTAs/IUC would incur costs of modifying curricula to assure that standard content is presented.

Counties that provide their own new worker training would incur similar costs.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Next Steps

Identify both common and critical areas of content through the baseline assessment.

Decision Point:

Content Development and Revision

Definition

Content Development refers to the process by which common content (*defined as the information presented*) will be developed for the common core.

Background

It is necessary to articulate a structured process for content development and revision in order to create standardized content for the five “core of the core” subject areas: Case Planning and Management, Child Maltreatment Identification, Risk Assessment, Human Development and Placement/Permanency.

Principles and Values

The purpose for standardizing content development is to provide the highest quality of information to every new child welfare worker in order to promote equitable and effective case management throughout the state that will provide maximum benefit to families. The following principles and values are intended to uphold this purpose:

- Content and periodic revisions will reflect “state of the art” knowledge and applications
- Content will support improved outcomes for children and families
- Standardization of content will advance fairness and equity throughout the child welfare system
- Standardization will be essential for purposes of training evaluation; evaluation, in turn, will foster further refinements of content
- Content will expand upon BSW IV-E and MSW IV-E competencies
- Existing curricula and baseline assessment data will be shared and used as a foundation for current content development
- Content will apply transfer of learning principles and strategies
- The development process will draw upon the combined expertise of practitioners and university partners

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- STEC designate a smaller workgroup to oversee the development of the five common content development areas. This workgroup will identify a lead organization (or organizations) as needed for each content area. The lead organizations will be charged to develop content with the advice of the workgroup.

- The content development workgroup establish a means to integrate the material in the five content areas. The integration activities will be done concurrently with the development of content and will ensure that common themes are effectively interwoven among the five content areas, as applicable. The workgroup will also recommend the most effective sequence by which the content can be organized.
- The content development workgroup will establish a timeline for content development, including the creation of successive and final drafts, the provision of feedback and the approval process. The content must be completed by June 30, 2005. STEC will approve the timeline by September, 2004.
- The content development workgroup will apply the principles and values of the content development process as follows:
 - State of the art knowledge and applications will be achieved by utilizing subject matter experts, evidence-based and best/promising practices. Each competency and learning objective will be supported by research whenever possible and areas for future research will be documented.
 - Content will support improved outcomes for children and families by linkage to the outcome goals of the PIP and the CWS system improvements.
 - Content will emphasize the importance of family strengths and family and youth engagement
 - Content will promote the advancement of fairness and equity by addressing relevant issues throughout the curriculum.
 - Content will be designed in accordance with the PIP-mandated evaluation framework in order to support evaluation of training.
 - Content will be designed to relate to BSW IV-E and MSW IV-E competencies
 - Content development will utilize the baseline assessment results as well as existing curriculum whenever possible.
 - Content will be designed to incorporate transfer of learning methods.
 - The expertise of practitioners and university partners will be reflected in the content by including representatives from counties, RTAs/IUC and universities in the composition of the workgroup.
- STEC will approve the content once it is developed.
- CalSWEC will disseminate the common core content once development is completed.
- RTAs/IUC/Counties will integrate standardized content into common core curriculum.
- Content is revised every three years or sooner based on developments critical to effective social work practice, using the process described herein.

Identified Cost Assumptions

See cost assumptions in the Common Core Decision Point—Content.

Additionally, costs would be incurred by RTAs/IUC/Counties/CalSWEC/CDSS for the staff time required to participate in the development process and for contracting the services of subject matter experts. The use of subject matter experts and associated costs will be agreed upon in advance of their use.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Decision Point:

Organization of Training

Background and Purpose

For the purpose of STEC, **organization of training** refers to *the order of training on particular topics or content areas* (i.e., when a topic/content area is to be covered or where a topic/content area is best placed in an overall training plan). **Organization of training** is different from **delivery of training**, which refers to the *method of presenting information*.

Level of Standardization

The organization of training content affects the effectiveness of training, and the ability to evaluate that effectiveness. In order to attain a skill, for example, a trainee needs to attain a set of knowledge that underpins that skill. Similarly, some areas of knowledge build upon others.

For example, in order to adequately perform a safety and risk assessment, a worker needs some working knowledge of child development. Similarly, safety and risk assessments depend upon the ability of the worker to identify child maltreatment with some level of accuracy. In addition, effective child welfare curricula establish themes or overarching principles (e.g. family-focused, strength-based, outcomes-oriented, etc.) and reinforce these themes as they apply in different content areas.

Some standardization is therefore required for the organization of the training, and this is intricately related to the development of the actual content. The organization of training should be standardized to the extent that skill-building and knowledge-building require it. Since the five “core of the core” content areas are standardized in terms of content, a standard sequence relating to the “core of the core” should be recommended.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- The content development workgroup make recommendations as to the organization of training for the five “core of the core” content areas: Case Planning and Management, Child Maltreatment Identification, Safety and Risk Assessment, Human Development and Placement/Permanency.
- The content development workgroup make recommendations as to the organization of the remainder of common core training.
- The content development workgroup develop tools to orient trainees to each content area when they are unable to attend common core trainings in the recommended sequence.

- Flexibility should be maximized, while preserving the ability to measure the effectiveness of training.
- The content development workgroup will seek approval for its recommendations by STEC concurrently with approval of the content.

Identified Cost Assumptions

See cost assumptions for the Common Core Decision Point—Content Development and Revision.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Decision Point:

Delivery of Skill Training

Definition of Delivery

For the purpose of STEC, **delivery** refers to the *method of presenting information*. It is distinguished from **content**, which is the *information that is presented*, and from **organization**, which is the *order of the different topics within the common core, and the configuration of the days of training*.

(See Common Core Decision Point—Content, and Common Core Decision Point—Organization of Training.)

Level of Standardization

The Macro Evaluation Team has noted that in order to evaluate whether participants have attained a certain skill, selected critical parts of both the information (content) and the delivery must be standardized throughout the state. For the purpose of California’s common core “delivery of skill training,” STEC proposes that there be standard content and a standard method of delivery for the topic area *Child Maltreatment Identification*.

Evaluation of skill across training programs requires not only commonality of content and common training delivery methods, but also a common method of evaluation. This allows one to demonstrate statistically that a) x number of participants have received the same training and b) there is evidence of skill attainment by the participants. Therefore, in one trial content area where delivery is standard, a common evaluation would be used to assess the attainment of skills by trainees. *(See Common Core Decision Point—Ongoing Evaluation/Evaluation Framework.)*

For example, if case planning is the identified content area, a curriculum would be developed with standardized content and with instructions on how to teach that specific skill and how to coach participants during the training. An activity and corresponding assessment tool would be developed to rate each participant’s skill attainment in the training. All trainers would be trained in the same content, coaching, and assessment methods.

In considering the level of standardization, it should be noted that only select skill sets are proposed to have the level of standardization described above. Further, it is equally important to note that the remainder of the common core *not* be standardized at this level to provide maximum flexibility to RTAs and counties.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- One skill area in new worker training be delivered in a standardized format and evaluated using a common evaluation tool.
- The Child Maltreatment Identification topic area be developed for the initial version of the common core.
- Delivery of the remainder of the common core *not* be standardized, so that counties and the RTAs/IUC are able to deliver the common core tailored to their regional and county needs.
- With regards to training and evaluation of the topic *Child Maltreatment Identification*:
 - Definition of abuse and neglect: Until further notice, training and evaluation materials will refer to the 300 section of the *California Welfare & Institutions (W&I) Code* for legal definitions of abuse and neglect. Any policy changes at the statewide level regarding the operational definition of abuse or neglect need to be reflected in training and evaluation materials.
 - Length of training: No recommendations at this time.
 - Teaching more than the minimum core at the regional and county levels: In order to ensure a level playing field among all trainees being evaluated, the essential core should be evaluated *first*. A county or RTA could proceed with additional topical material *after* the initial evaluation.
 - Evaluation:
 - Proceed with Kirkpatrick's Level 2 evaluation, which includes some knowledge acquisition (e.g., sexual abuse) and also includes some skill development (e.g., physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, failure to thrive). The most critical aspects in each category, as well as fairness and equity issues, will need to be determined and incorporated.
 - Needs to be designed by national experts in training evaluation.
 - Use/compile resources already available to assist in creation (e.g., slides, classroom performance system, etc.). These would include written scenarios, video interviews and/or slides, each accompanied by explanations, including scenarios that are *not* examples of abuse/neglect.
 - Skill measurement could include: 1) use of a scenario that would mirror information available to a worker, such as statements from parents and collateral contacts, or 2) watching a video interview or reviewing a written scenario about a sexual abuse victim and then identifying signs & symptoms, etc.

- Needs to refer to W&I 300 Codes for definitions (include sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, etc.).
- Results of evaluations: Should only be shared in aggregate form.

Identified Cost Assumptions

- CDSS/CalSWEC/RTAs/IUC: Resources would be required (i.e., staff time, and/or evaluation consultation) to review existing curricula and modify as needed to support skill practice and skill demonstration for 6 hours (1 day) of curriculum; develop handouts and develop embedded evaluation design and materials; train the curriculum (or observe someone train it), administer the evaluation, revision time for both, and refinement of scoring rubric; subcommittee work, watching pilot, and revisions based on pilot.
- RTAs/IUC would incur costs of modifying curricula to assure that standard content is presented in a standard delivery method (in progress).
- Counties that provide their own new worker training would incur similar costs to RTAs/IUC.

Required Resources and Cost Estimates to Implement Recommendation:

1. Subject Matter Experts' (SMEs') time and Evaluation Consultation; costs to be borne mainly by CalSWEC/CDSS.
2. Software for Item Banking and analysis
3. Training for Trainers
4. Database Management and Data Analyses
5. Tracking of Training

Next Steps

National experts

- Review and modify existing curricula to support skill demonstration and skill practice for 1 day of curriculum
- Review Kempe Series Slides on Physical Injuries Due to Child Abuse (and others) to determine use of slides for evaluation process
- Bring together group of content experts to develop inter-rater reliability on the slides that will be used for evaluation
- Write scenarios to accompany slides, and scenarios can stand on their own (for types of abuse that are not visible to the eye)
- Develop evaluation materials
- Pilot test

STEC Subcommittee members

- Review final content of curricula for final approval
- Assist in setting standards for standardization of child maltreatment identification curriculum
- Assist as content experts to develop inter-rater reliability on the slides that will be used for evaluation

STEC and National Experts

- Identify critical areas necessary for standardized delivery methods of common skills training.

Decision Point:
Ongoing Evaluation/Evaluation Framework

Please refer to the Macro Evaluation Framework Report (December 2004), prepared for the State of California Department of Social Services by consultants Cynthia Parry and Jane Berdie.

Decision Point:

Requirements for Completion

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- All newly hired line workers be required to complete the common core training program within one year after their hire dates. STEC viewed this as the least costly standard, since this corresponded with the longest probation period for a county.
(See below: Identified Cost Assumptions—bullet regarding small counties.)
- Each course of the common core must be completed in its entirety, as determined by the entity conducting the training.
- Common core training must include the standardized competencies and learning objectives of all common core content areas, the standardized content of the five “core of the core” content areas (Case Planning and Management, Child Maltreatment Identification, Safety and Risk Assessment, Human Development and Placement/Permanency), and the standardized delivery of Child Maltreatment Identification.
- The Independent Caseload Continuum be used as a “promising practice model” to guide the completion of the common core curriculum. Use of this as a “promising practice” is encouraged, but should not be required absent additional resources to implement it.⁹

Identified Cost Assumptions

- Many counties already complete new worker training prior to the first year of hire by sending their line workers to the new worker core training offered by the RTAs/IUC, or by conducting their own new worker training as part of their staff development and training infrastructure.
- In order to estimate costs, baseline data must be gathered in order to determine how many counties do not currently meet this standard of training. *(See Common Core Decision Point—Baseline Assessment.)*
- Costs of time away from the job for employees must be accounted for and the relative cost of ‘backfilling’ for this time depends on whether a county already sends their newly hired child welfare workers to new worker training for the length of the common core. CWDA and CDSS must determine the methodology used to calculate backfill.

⁹ See Appendix D: “Working Toward an Independent Caseload: A Continuum of Responsibility and Level of Supervision for New Caseworkers.” For further information access:
<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/SCPTour1.html>

- The Baseline Assessment survey will assist in determining how many counties will incur costs as a result of this requirement.
- Some provisions will have to be made for small counties to meet this requirement, as they should not be forced to choose between training their workers and sending workers out to respond to children and families.

Several types of costs are implicit for counties:

- Costs of staff time to send staff to additional training if the common core is longer than the new worker training the county currently utilizes.
- Costs of changing their training programs to reflect the content of the common core. This may include expanding the amount of time line workers spend in training during their first year of employment. *(This may also be a cost for the RTAs/IUC.)*
- Costs of tracking who has been trained and who has not. This will also include costs of developing such a system and technical assistance for counties to complete this task. *(See Common Core Decision Point—Tracking Training.)*

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Next Steps

Conduct cost analysis once the length of time that the new worker will be away from their duties is known.

Decision Point:

Tracking Training

Background and Purpose

Many local and regional training programs already maintain records of child welfare training attendance and completion, but such information is not provided to CDSS on a consistent basis statewide. To date, the culture of training in California has not prioritized a common method for tracking who receives what training and when the training is delivered. However, this is a *sine qua non* for the federal review and a method of ongoing reporting must be devised and utilized.

Definition of Tracking Training

For the purposes of the common core, *Tracking Training* refers to collecting and managing data about completion of the common core training requirement by new workers. (*See Common Core Decision Point—Requirements for Completion.*)

Level of Standardization

Data on completion of the common core is fairly straightforward. Counties would need to report how many line workers they had hired, and how many had completed the common core requirement within the designated 1-year timeframe. A simple question on the Annual County Training Plan would likely cover this in a standardized format.

How counties choose to track completion of training at the individual worker level would not be standardized. Counties would, however, need a system to verify that new employees had attended and completed the common core.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- Common core training participation data be collected for each individual new worker by the counties, but reported in aggregate to the state.
- Counties report on their current staff's completion of core training via the Baseline Assessment.
- CDSS, with input from STEC, modify the Annual County Training Plan that counties already complete to include information on newly hired or promoted staff, and whether they have completed, or partially completed, the common core within 12 months of service in their current position.

- Once the common core is agreed upon and developed, counties report on new staff's completion, or partial completion, of initial common core training via a modified version of the Annual County Training Plan above. Training data will be reported by counties, regardless of which entities provide training.
- RTAs/IUC provide counties information on which employees have completed the RTA/IUC core courses on a semi-annual basis, so that this may be integrated into the Annual County Training Plan. More frequent reporting to the counties on completed training is encouraged, but not required.
- CDSS, CalSWEC and the RTAs/IUC, with input from counties, develop tools and resources to assist in tracking completion of training by employees.

Identified Cost Assumptions

CDSS would use staff time to develop the modified version of the Annual County Training Plan.

Counties that do not currently track who has completed core training would incur costs to develop such a system.

RTAs/IUC/CalSWEC would incur costs in developing tools and resources to assist counties to track completion of training.

RTAs/IUC already report on training attendance with their counties, so this should not be an additional cost. However, RTAs/IUC may require resources to expand their ability to track and report completion of training.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Decision Point:

Quality Assurance

Definition

For the purposes of STEC, Quality Assurance for the common core is defined as the oversight structure and process that determine adherence to statewide standards for content, competencies, learning objectives, skill delivery, organization of training and evaluation methods. Standards for individual course completion and completion of the entire common core can be found in the *Common Core Decision Point—Requirements for Completion*. Standards for verification of training can be found in the *Common Core Decision Point—Tracking Training*.

Purpose

Quality assurance oversight for the common core is intended to provide for systematic monitoring and evaluation to ensure that statewide standards of quality are met. STEC quality assurance for the common core will be designed to answer the following questions: (1) Is the standardized curriculum current? (2) Is the standardized curriculum being taught, and is it being taught according to standardized methods for skill delivery? (3) Is the curriculum being evaluated according to the standardized evaluation framework? Additionally, it will be the purview of quality assurance oversight to determine the system by which the standardized common core curriculum is revised, so that “state of the art” content and training methods are incorporated.

Level of Standardization

Quality assurance standards will be applied uniformly throughout the state. Procedures will need to be tailored for applications at both the county and regional academy/inter-university consortium levels.

Recommendations

STEC recommends that:

- The Content Development Oversight Group (a/k/a the Content Development Workgroup) will assume responsibility for the development of the common core quality assurance structure and process after completion of the development of the common core content, competencies and learning objectives.
- The Content Development Oversight Group will assume responsibility for designing the structure and process by which the competencies, learning objectives, content and delivery of skills are revised. Revisions will be conducted every three years or sooner, based on developments critical to effective social work practice.

- Quality assurance procedures will be designed to assure that evaluation data and advances in the field are reflected in the STEC-approved revisions of training methods and curricula.
- The monitoring of quality assurance for the common core will focus upon upholding and promoting the statewide standards as described in the following common core decision point documents: *Competencies and Learning Objectives; Content; Content Development and Revision; Organization of Training; Delivery of Skill Training; and Ongoing Evaluation/Evaluation Framework.*
- Quality assurance procedures will be designed to determine whether common core competencies, learning objectives and content are sufficiently addressed and current according to the most recent STEC-approved revision of the common core curriculum.
- Quality assurance procedures will be designed to determine whether evaluation methods conform to the standards of the most recent STEC-approved common core evaluation framework.
- Quality assurance procedures will be designed to determine whether delivery of skill training methods conform to the most recent STEC-approved standards for skill delivery.
- Quality assurance procedures will specify the training elements that are to be examined by quality assurance reviewers and the frequency of quality assurance reviews.

Identified Cost Assumptions

Costs will be incurred by the RTAs/IUC, CalSWEC and CDSS for staff or contractors' time to develop and perform the functions of quality assurance oversight, including devising the format for reporting quality assurance measures.

RTAs/IUC will incur costs to train trainers to teach county staff about quality assurance issues and reporting procedures.

RTAs/IUC will incur additional costs for staff time needed to prepare common core training materials and records for examination by quality assurance reviewers.

To the extent that counties provide core training, counties will incur costs for staff time needed to prepare training materials and records for examination by quality assurance reviewers.

Additional county staff time will be required to receive training in quality assurance issues and reporting procedures.

For additional cost assumptions, see also *Common Core Decision Point—Content* and *Common Core Decision Point—Content Development and Revision*.

Actual Cost Estimates

Pending fiscal analysis.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Excerpts from California's Program Improvement Plan (PIP)

Systemic Factor # 4: Staff/Provider Training

Item 32 – The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.

Summary of Federal Concerns/Issues for Item

Item 32 was rated as an area needing improvement. The federal report stated that "Although the State makes available an array of training opportunities and some counties have implemented formal new-worker training, there is no statewide requirement for initial training for all staff that supports the goals and objectives of the Child and Family Services Plan."

"Stakeholders commenting on this topic expressed concern about the lack of uniform statewide requirements for staff training or staff development." Because training is a county-specific activity, stakeholders felt there is considerable variation across the State. Another concern expressed was that "because of high caseloads, case managers and supervisors do not have the opportunity to mentor new staff and provide sufficient hands-on training."

The report noted that in some counties there is a lack of necessary training for probation staff regarding specific child welfare requirements. Stakeholders in one county reported that cross-training activities with probation, law enforcement, mental health, public health and court personnel were extremely helpful and conducive to strengthening partnerships. "Stakeholders in the two other counties reported that there is no cross training between CWS and probation, and suggested that this would be useful for both agencies."

Program Improvement Goal:

We will develop a common core curriculum for all new child welfare workers and supervisors that is delivered by all training entities statewide.

Source of Problem

- Current training system does not track and assess new staff training.
- Currently the CDSS does not have mandatory uniform statewide minimum core curriculum for initial training.
- Because of their high caseloads, case managers and supervisors do not have the opportunity to mentor new staff and provide sufficient hands-on training.
- Lack of necessary training of probation staff regarding Division 31 regulations.

Action Steps:

1. The CDSS will use the C-CFSR county self-assessment and System Improvement Planning processes to determine how initial and on-going training is provided in the counties. **(Cross-reference to Systemic Factor 4, Item 33)**
2. The CDSS will work with counties, the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) and the Regional Training Academies (RTAs) to develop requirements and competencies for child welfare workers and supervisors with the goal of strengthening case practice. The CDSS will ensure that the contracts with the regional training academies include provisions requiring the academies to develop common core curricula to ensure training in comprehensive family needs assessments, including assessing educational and mental health needs of all children both in-home and out-of-home, and that training is consistent statewide. **(Crossreference to Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9; Systemic Factor 2, Item 28)**
3. The CDSS will provide training to child welfare and probation supervisors on good case planning practice, including involvement all family members in case planning and the need to visit with parents when such visits are part of the plan; comprehensive assessment of all children's needs; assessing all in-home children's educational needs and assessing all in-home children's mental health needs **(Crossreference to Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9; Well-Being Outcome 1, Items 17, 18 & 20; Well-Being Outcome 2, Item 21; Well-Being Outcome 3, Item 23; Systemic Factor 2 Items 25 & 28)**
4. The CDSS will work with the regional training academies to ensure that child welfare managers and supervisors receive priority training, using standardized curricula, on evidence-based techniques for mentoring new and seasoned staff.
5. The CDSS will work with the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice to ensure that relevant probation officers receive priority training on child welfare requirements including concurrent planning, and visitation requirements and the TPR process.
6. The CDSS will conduct focused training regarding Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) requirements and cultural considerations of Native American children for both county staff and tribal ICWA workers. The CDSS will measure ICWA compliance using the C-CFSR process. This training will include training for Indian tribes on their rights and responsibilities regarding intervention on Indian Child Welfare Act cases. **(Cross-reference to Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9; Permanency Outcome 2, Item 14; Systemic Factor 2, Item 28; Systemic Factor 2, Item 32)**

Measurement Method

We will measure improvement in this goal by reporting on completion of action steps.

Frequency of Measurements

Progress will be tracked quarterly.

Determination of Goal Achievement

This goal will be achieved when a common core curriculum is implemented in every county to train all new child welfare workers and child welfare/probation supervisors.

Systemic Factor 4, Item 32

Improvement Goal: We will develop a common core curriculum for all new child welfare workers and supervisors that is delivered by all training entities statewide.

Measurement Method: We will measure improvement in this goal by reporting on completion of action steps. (06/05)

Frequency of Measurement: Progress will be tracked quarterly.

Determination of Goal Achievement: This goal will be achieved when a common core curriculum is implemented in every county to train all new child welfare workers and child welfare/probation supervisors.

Action Steps	Benchmarks	Dates of Completion	Tasks
1. The CDSS will use the C-CFSR county self-assessment and System Improvement Planning processes to determine how initial and on-going training is provided in the counties. (Cross-reference to Systemic Factor 4, Item 33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDSS will identify training concerns and/or disparities and make recommendations for improving training across the State, including the development of a common core curriculum for new workers and supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 06/04 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDSS will convene and support a statewide training task force that includes state staff, county staff and training staff. (06/03) CDSS, in consultation with the statewide training task force, will identify on-going training data for counties to include in the C-CFSR county self-assessment and develop an outline for counties to report the data. (10/03) CDSS will provide the counties, upon request, by telephone and e-mail, with technical assistance to resolve policy questions related to training data (12/03)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDSS will assess effectiveness of training. • CDSS will monitor state training program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/04 • 06/05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CalSWEC and the RTAs will provide technical assistance to counties regarding the collection and reporting of the data (12/03) • The training task force will analyze the training data submitted by the counties in the C-CFSR, and the recommendations from California's Stakeholders Workforce Preparation and Support Group; and make recommendations to support the development of a standardized training program, including a common core curriculum, for new workers and supervisors (06/04) • In consultation with CalSWEC, CDSS will develop a common framework for assessing the effectiveness of training that is aligned with the federal outcomes (12/04) • CDSS will report quarterly on the completion of these tasks and TA provided (09/03, 12/03, 03/04, 06/04, 09/04, 12/04, 03/05,06/05)
2. The CDSS will work with counties,			

Appendix B:

Mission and Role of The Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC)

Background

STEC evolved from the Standardized Core Advisory Committee (SCAC) that CalSWEC convened beginning in 1998 as part of the Standardized Core Project. (For more information on the Standardized Core Project, please refer to the CalSWEC Web site:

<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/StandardCoreProjectHome.html>)

Mission

STEC's overall mission was defined prior to the federal CFSR, by the SCAC, as follows:

On behalf of, and in consultation with, CalSWEC/CDSS/CWDA/the RTAs and IUC/LA DCFS Training Unit/RCFFP, the Statewide Training and Education Committee will set standards for statewide public child welfare training and coordinate their implementation.

Concurrent with the advent of STEC in spring 2003, the PIP was finalized by CDSS and the federal government, and called for CDSS to convene a Statewide Training Task Force to address the statewide training requirements of the PIP. STEC became that task force, and is co-chaired by Barrett Johnson of CalSWEC and Greg Rose of CDSS.

Specific considerations for development of the common core:

- STEC is charged with developing standards that meet the requirements of the PIP while preserving as much as possible the flexibility of counties to meet their respective training needs.
- STEC will guide the process of developing statewide training products, maximizing efficiency by building upon work already completed by CalSWEC, CDSS, and the RTAs/IUC/RCFFP/LA DCFS.
- STEC can recommend that certain standards be *mandated* or *required*, but will acknowledge the costs of implementing any requirements as part of the recommendations, and identify the assumptions that underlie costs.
- STEC will participate in cost analysis as appropriate, with the support of county and state fiscal staff.

STEC Participants:

STEC has a prescribed membership, but the representation from any given group can change.

The following groups were invited to participate in STEC:

- CWDA Children's Committee Regional Representatives and CWDA HR Representatives
- Regional Training Academies (RTAs) and Resource Center for Family Focused Practice (RCFFP) (directors and/or designees)
- Inter-University Consortium (IUC)/ LA DCFS Training Unit (directors and/or designees)
- County Staff Development staff
- Title IV-E Stipend Program representatives
- Judicial Council representatives
- Tribal representatives
- Union representatives
- CDSS Resources, Development and Training Bureau staff
- CalSWEC staff

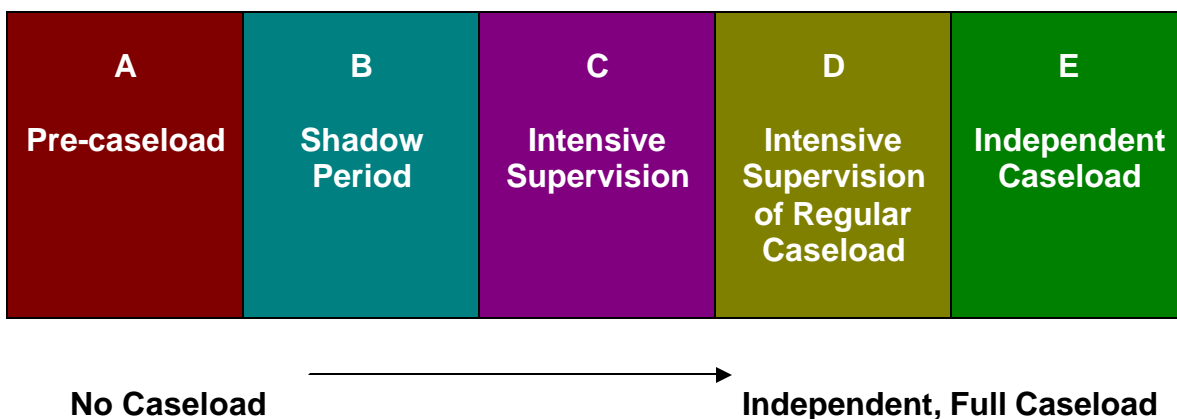
Appendix C:

Working Toward an Independent Caseload: A Continuum of Responsibility and Level of Supervision for New Caseworkers¹⁰

Assumptions of the Independent Caseload Model

- Assuming an independent caseload involves moving along a continuum from no caseload to a fully independent caseload.
- Training is done in stages in correlation with different levels of supervision.
- Some content of the Standardized Core Curriculum (SCC) is more appropriately completed at different stages of the continuum. (Example: General content areas such as *Human Development, Fundamental Issues in Child Welfare Practice, Child Welfare in a Multi-Cultural Environment*, etc. would happen before a caseload was assumed. More applied content areas such as *Interviewing, Risk Assessment, Family Needs Assessment, Court Procedures, Time Management, Stress Management*, etc. would be completed as the new worker assumes cases.
- Each student has different needs for training, and moves through the caseload continuum at a different pace.
- In order for supervisors to be integrated adequately into the training process, they must receive training and support.
- Along with periods of increased supervision with line workers, it is assumed that Supervisors will incorporate discussion of this continuum into their own supervision with their managers. The model of supervision could look something like a clinical supervision model, where both the supervisee and the supervisor are supervised.
- Managers must also be involved and go to the manager core.

Stages



¹⁰ For further information, access: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/SCPTour1.html>

Appendix D:

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

ACL – All-County Letter issued by CDSS to the 58 California counties

Baseline Assessment – a survey conducted by CalSWEC to establish a baseline understanding of current training for child welfare workers and new or newly promoted supervisors

C-CFSR – California Child and Family Services Review, an outcomes and accountability system

CDSS – California Department of Social Services

Common Core – the training areas that all newly hired child welfare workers are required to complete within one year of hire

Core of the Core – five training areas of the common core for which content will be standardized statewide: Case Planning and Management, Child Maltreatment Identification, Safety and Risk Assessment, Human Development and Placement/Permanency. Delivery will be standardized for Child Maltreatment Identification.

CWDA – County Welfare Directors Association of California

CWS – Child Welfare Services

Independent Caseload Continuum – a model for new workers and their supervisors by which the worker assumes more challenging case management responsibilities in a graduated continuum of learning and mentoring

IUC – Inter-University Consortium: California State University, Long Beach; California State University, Los Angeles; University of California, Los Angeles; and the University of Southern California

Kempe Series Slides on Physical Injuries Due to Child Abuse – One of several series of slides that is available for use in testing recognition of child abuse and neglect

Kirkpatrick Levels of Evaluation – D. Kirkpatrick was a pioneer in the field of training evaluation, and was the first to describe levels of training evaluation in four stages or levels (1959). Level 1 refers to evaluation of trainees' opinions or level of satisfaction with training received. Level 2 refers to assessment of trainees' knowledge and skill. Level 3 refers to assessment of trainee's transfer of learning (TOL). Level 4 refers to evaluation that links

outcomes with training. Cindy Parry and Jane Berdie have since expanded these four stages to approximately eleven discrete levels of evaluation. Please refer to the December 2004 Macro Evaluation Framework Report for more detailed descriptions of C. Parry's and J. Berdie's expansion upon Kirkpatrick's earlier work.

LA – DCFS – Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services

PIP – Program Improvement Plan

RCFFP – The Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice

RTA(s) – Regional Training Academy(ies): Northern California Children & Family Services Training Academy; Bay Area Academy; Central California Child Welfare Training Academy; Public Child Welfare Training Academy-Southern Region; and the Inter-University Consortium

SCAC – Standardized Core Advisory Committee

Standardized Core Project (SCP) – a set of topic-specific competencies, learning objectives and content for in-service child welfare training¹¹

STEC – Statewide Training and Education Committee

Supervisor Core – the training areas required of all promoted or newly hired child welfare supervisors

W&I Codes – Welfare and Institutions Codes

¹¹ For further information, access: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/StandardCoreProjectHome.html>