

# **BACCALAUREATE CHILD WELFARE EDUCATION PROGRAM (BCWEP)**

## **MANUAL FOR STUDENTS AND FIELD INSTRUCTORS**

**The Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program  
is a partnership of:**

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families

A Consortium of Seven New Jersey  
Undergraduate Social Work Programs

The New Jersey Chapter of the  
National Association of Social Workers

*Revised August 2021*

## **Consortium Social Work Programs**

### Members

Centenary University

Georgian Court University

Monmouth University

Ramapo College

Rutgers University — Newark, Camden, & New Brunswick

Seton Hall University

Stockton University (Lead Institution)

### **Acknowledgements**

The Maine Child Welfare Internship Program Manual  
served as a model for what content to include in this manual.

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# Introduction to Program

## A. Purpose of the Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program (BCWEP)

In partnership with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NJ), BCWEP significantly increases undergraduate social work internships in public child welfare, in order to produce graduates who possess specific competencies in child welfare practice, as well as generalist social work practice knowledge and skills, and who will begin careers as caseworkers in the Division of Child Protection & Permanency. Specifically, BCWEP:

1. Supports professional education leading to the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Degree for current and prospective public child welfare practitioners.
2. Provides opportunities for students enrolled in the seven participating undergraduate social work programs (Centenary University, Georgian Court University, Monmouth University, Ramapo College, Rutgers University-Camden/Newark/New Brunswick, Seton Hall University, and Stockton University) to obtain the knowledge and competencies necessary to perform well in caseworker positions within the public child welfare system.
3. Enhances the skills of agency-based field instructors in working with undergraduate social work students.
4. Contributes to the knowledge base about best practices in educating social work students for careers in public child welfare.
5. Partners with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families in building a transformed child welfare system with a more professionally educated staff that produces better outcomes for New Jersey children and their families.

## B. Program Benefits

### 1. For Child Welfare Trainees

- a. The program pays for tuition and fees in their senior year, enabling them to devote more time and attention to their academic studies and internships.
- b. By taking a child welfare course and participating in a supervised child welfare internship, they have an opportunity to enhance their generalist knowledge base to include specialized knowledge of the public child welfare system and to develop both generalist practice skills and competencies specific to child welfare practice.
- c. They have access to field instructors who are receiving training in offering competency-based field instruction in child welfare practice.
- d. They have an opportunity to participate in building a transformed child welfare system and in creating better outcomes for New Jersey children and their families.
- e. If they successfully complete the program, they are offered employment by the Division of Child Protection & Permanency.

### 2. For Field Instructors

For social workers, providing field instruction to a student is an opportunity to “give back” to their profession—to give to another what was given to them when they were students. Field instruction also provides workers with an opportunity to experience themselves as educators as well as workers. Responding to students’ questions and reactions to the work can be challenging and rewarding.

### 3. For the New Jersey Department of Children and Families

The Division of Child Protection & Permanency is able to recruit individuals with the necessary knowledge, values, and skills to enter the public child welfare workforce. Such individuals are prepared to begin functioning effectively as caseworkers and are committed to at least two years of employment at DCP&P. A significant proportion of BCWEP traineeship graduates choose to continue their careers at DCP&P beyond the mandatory two-year period and contribute significantly to the enhancement of the public child welfare workforce in New Jersey.

### C. Practice Approaches Taught in Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Programs

Trainees completing BCWEP are able to work with clients in a child welfare setting using a strengths-based, empowerment perspective. Their work is characterized by cultural competence, a family-centered and community focus, good critical thinking skills, and strong assessment skills.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the national accrediting organization for social work education. Their Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) are the basis for accrediting baccalaureate and master's level social work programs. EPAS support academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence. EPAS specify the requirements used to develop and maintain an accredited social work program.

An accredited BSW curriculum prepares its graduates for generalist practice through mastery of the following nine core competencies specified by EPAS:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior.
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice.
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice.
4. Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice.
5. Engage in Policy Practice.
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.
9. Evaluate Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities.

In order to master these competencies, undergraduate social work students take coursework designed to build the competencies. They then practice them during a minimum of 400 hours of supervised field education.

In addition to the above competencies, student trainees in BCWEP are expected to address the learning objectives included in their child welfare coursework and the competencies specified in the BCWEP Competency-Based Learning Plan for their internships (see Section II.E below and model syllabi and field learning plan included in Appendix).

#### D. New Jersey Department of Children and Families Case Practice

As part of the continuing reform efforts a new approach to case practice was developed and released in January 2007 (revised July 2015). This document establishes practice principles for the Department of Children and Families and the Division of Child Protection & Permanency. BCWEP trainees are expected to adopt these principles into their practice. They discover that its strengths-based, family-centered model of practice is consistent with the approaches taught in their Social Work programs and by their Field Instructors. The DCP&P model of case practice is included in the appendix.

#### E. Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program Staff and Contact Information

The staff of the Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program includes the following:<sup>1</sup>

Institution	Campus Academic Coordinators
<b>Stockton University, Lead Institution</b>	<p><b><u>Director &amp; Principal Investigator, Child Welfare Education Institute (Campus Academic Coordinator)</u></b>  Dawn Konrady, EdD, LSW, MBA, MA  <a href="mailto:Dawn.Konrady@stockton.edu">Dawn.Konrady@stockton.edu</a>  609-652-4270; 609-652-4260</p> <p><b><u>Academic Coordinator</u></b>  John Searight, MSW  <a href="mailto:John.Searight@Stockton.edu">John.Searight@Stockton.edu</a>  609-626-3471; 609-652-4260</p> <p><b><u>Outcomes Coordinator</u></b>  Diane S. Falk, PhD, MSW, LCSW  <a href="mailto:Diane.Falk@Stockton.edu">Diane.Falk@Stockton.edu</a>  609-652-4736; 609-652-4260</p>
<b>Centenary University</b>	<i>Terri Klemm, DSW, LCSW</i> <a href="mailto:terri.klemm@centenaryuniversity.edu">terri.klemm@centenaryuniversity.edu</a> 908-852-1400 ext. 2346
<b>Georgian Court University</b>	<i>Megan Sherman, PhD, LCSW</i> <a href="mailto:msherman@georgian.edu">msherman@georgian.edu</a> 732-987-2368
<b>Monmouth University</b>	<i>Sarah Brown, LCSW</i> <a href="mailto:sabrown@monmouth.edu">sabrown@monmouth.edu</a> 848-863-5588
<b>Ramapo College of NJ</b>	<i>Cardacia Davis, MSW</i> <a href="mailto:cdavis3@ramapo.edu">cdavis3@ramapo.edu</a> 201-684-7297
<b>Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey- Camden/New Brunswick Campuses</b>	<i>DuWayne Battle, PhD, MSW</i> <a href="mailto:dbattle@ssw.rutgers.edu">dbattle@ssw.rutgers.edu</a> 732-932-7520
<b>Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey-Newark Campus</b>	<i>Kim L. Quick, LCSW</i> <a href="mailto:kquick520@hotmail.com">kquick520@hotmail.com</a> 973-353-5867

<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of contact persons within the Area and Local Offices of the New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency, see <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/contact/dcpparea/> or <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/contact/dcpplocal/#3>.

Seton Hall University	Mary Landriau, LCSW, <a href="mailto:mary.landriau@shu.edu">mary.landriau@shu.edu</a> 973-275-4830
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## II. Program Description

### A. Traineeship Selection Process

BCWEP trainees are selected in a two-step process. They complete the *Application for Financial Support and Child Welfare Traineeship* and return it, with a current résumé, to the Campus Academic Coordinator at their academic institution by March 15th. Each participating college or university may have additional application requirements, so potential applicants should first check with the Campus Academic Coordinator at their own institution. Campus Academic Coordinators then meet with a local selection committee to review applications, ranking applicants by considering their academic records and other pertinent criteria. Ranked applications are then forwarded to the Lead Institution (Stockton University) by April 15th, where they undergo additional review. The Lead Institution makes the final decisions concerning acceptances. Decisions at this level are made on the basis of equitable distribution among the participating institutions. Other factors may also influence decisions, such as the availability of field instructors and field sites for interns. Applicants are notified of the final decisions in early May.

### B. Screening Process for Prospective Trainees by the New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency

Successful applicants must undergo additional screening by the New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency. All students interning at DCP&P must undergo a criminal background check, a CARI (Child Abuse Registry Index) check to verify that the student has no history of maltreatment of children, and a check of the applicant's driving record. (A valid driver's license is required to perform the essential functions of this position. Because driving of state vehicles with clients is an essential function of this position, the following may disqualify you from consideration: driving record with five points or more within the past five years; any driving under the influence conviction within the past five years; or, any combination of three motor vehicle violations/license suspensions within the last five years.) Once cleared by DCP&P, students are matched with a qualified social work field instructor at a local or area office. Such matching is generally done by the Field Coordinator/Director at the student's college or university.

### C. New Jersey Residency Requirements

BCWEP students sign a notice of residency requirements prior to beginning BCWEP. Pursuant to Public Law 2011, Chapter 20, the "New Jersey First Act," all newly hired employees of the State of New Jersey must reside in New Jersey. As students, they do not need to have residency in the state of New Jersey but are notified that they have one year from the date of hire to establish residency otherwise they will be terminated from employment and required to pay back any money that was paid on their behalf as a participant in the program.

### D. Agreements

#### 1. Student Agreement with Lead Institution

By accepting a BCWEP Traineeship, students are stating their intention to prepare for careers in public child welfare. The State of New Jersey agrees to underwrite a portion of the cost of students' undergraduate education in exchange for an agreement to work for a

minimum of two years in public child welfare for every year of financial support received from BCWEP.

Students accepted as BCWEP trainees must sign a binding agreement by which they agree to accept employment in a caseworker position at a Local Office of the New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency upon completion of the program and receipt of their degree. If a trainee fails to complete the traineeship and accept a position or leaves that position before the two-year commitment has been fulfilled, he or she must make repayment in full (tuition and fees) to the Lead Institution, as stipulated in the *Student Agreement with the Lead Institution*.

Students also agree to accept an internship at the Division of Child Protection & Permanency, to take at least one course in child welfare, to maintain an acceptable academic record, to adhere to professional ethical standards, and to complete their academic studies in a timely manner.

Additionally, DCP&P expects that newly appointed employees, including BCWEP graduates, will understand that their primary responsibility during their first two years of employment is to become competent in case practice, provide necessary services to children and families at risk, participate in workshops and required trainings, receive appropriate supervision, and become competent in their role as Family Service Specialists. Accordingly, DCP&P shall not consider an application for educational leave for new employees to pursue graduate education, including the MSW, until they complete their initial two years of employment. DCP&P has been and continues to be supportive of enabling employees to pursue graduate education in social work, but only after they have become firmly grounded in their new roles as Family Service Specialists.

## 2. Field Instructor Agreement <sup>2</sup>

BCWEP could not function without the participation of social workers employed by the Division of Child Protection & Permanency who agree to serve as Field Instructors for our child welfare trainees. Experienced MSWs and BSWs may apply to become field instructors for BCWEP by contacting BCWEP staff at the Lead Institution, BCWEP Campus Academic Coordinators at any of the participating undergraduate social work programs, or the Training Academy BCWEP Liaison. Those selected as field instructors will receive specialized training and support from Lead Institution staff, from Campus Academic Coordinators, and from the Training Academy. Field instructors may be assigned one or more students per year. The training for field instructors is delivered jointly by BCWEP and the Training Academy and counts toward the annual continuing education requirement for DCP&P staff.

Field instructors agree to provide regular (generally one hour a week) individual or group supervision to students. To broaden students' experiences, field instructors may assign students to work with other DCP&P staff, but the responsibility for providing oversight of the students' learning remains with the field instructor. Field instructors are also responsible for the following:

- a. Clarifying mutual expectations about roles, responsibilities, work schedule, method of documenting hours worked, who to call if sick, and so forth.
- b. Providing the student with an orientation to the agency, including agency structure, authority, and linkages to community, institutions, and agencies.
- c. Helping the student to understand appropriate agency dress, office and telephone etiquette, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> Many of the social work programs have agency agreements in addition to the agreements addressed in this manual. Each social work program will negotiate such agreements directly with administrative staff within the DCP&P office where their students have been placed.



- d. Assuring that the student is aware of the critical importance of adhering to agency policy, especially in areas of protecting confidentiality, managing risk, and understanding other areas of potential liability
- e. Helping the student to become comfortable in the agency setting and to manage anxieties about performance
- f. Developing, with the student's input, a BCWEP Competency-Based Learning Plan
- g. Providing the student with work space and necessary supplies
- h. Providing the student with opportunities to participate in a variety of activities designed to build child welfare competencies
- i. Providing the student with opportunities to learn agency documentation
- j. Conducting an ongoing assessment of the student's learning
- k. Giving the student progressively more responsible roles as the student develops confidence and competence—and assuring that the student does not attempt to practice outside of a student's scope of practice
- l. Modeling good practice skills
- m. Helping the student learn what it means to be part of a team
- n. Arranging for the student to participate in staff meetings
- o. Arranging for the student to have some experience relating to other agencies
- p. Discussing the student's progress with the student's social work program, on an as-needed basis, especially identifying areas of concern with the student's performance in a timely basis
- q. Completing a written evaluation of the student's performance at the end of each semester
- r. Completing an assessment of the student's learning at the midpoint and end of the internship for purposes of tracking outcomes of BCWEP **(See Appendix for BCWEP Trainee Assessment form)**
- s. Completing a questionnaire or interview, giving feedback to BCWEP staff on the field instructor's experience with BCWEP

On occasion, difficulties arise with a student. Field instructors may contact the Campus Academic Coordinator from the student's social work program at any time to discuss student progress. In the case of learning difficulties, misunderstandings about roles and responsibilities, or concerns about a student's suitability for the profession or for work in child welfare, it is particularly important to seek early consultation from the Campus Academic Coordinator and the Training Academy BCWEP Liaison. BCWEP staff at the Lead Institution also stand ready to consult on any issues of concern.

## E. Internship Learning Objectives (Competencies) and Activities

Each BCWEP trainee negotiates a Learning Plan with their assigned Field Instructor. The model *BCWEP Competency-Based Learning Plan for Students in Child Welfare Traineeship* (see Appendix) stipulates 35 competencies that students completing a BCWEP traineeship are expected to have. BCWEP Field Instructors have collaborated with BCWEP staff to design learning experiences specifically designed to develop these competencies.

Nationwide, researchers have studied the work of child welfare caseworkers in order to determine what knowledge and skills are necessary to work effectively with families and children at risk of child abuse and neglect. From such studies, a number of research groups have developed lists of competencies needed in child welfare and child protection work. The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) has developed a set of competencies particularly suited for baccalaureate-level social workers.<sup>3</sup> With some modifications, BCWEP has adopted the CalSWEC competencies for use in its program.

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<sup>3</sup> Information on the CalSWEC competencies may be obtained at [http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/Curric\\_Comps\\_3.html](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/Curric_Comps_3.html).

The 35 competencies are as follows:

### **WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic structure of DCP&P and child welfare practice, including Title 30, Title 9, and Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.
2. Understand the vision, values, mission, mandates and desired outcomes of the New Jersey Child Welfare System.
3. Be able to work productively with agency staff, supervisors, and clients in an environment characterized by human diversity.
4. Demonstrate an awareness of community resources available for children and families and have a working knowledge of how to utilize these resources in achieving case goals.
5. Have a working knowledge of multi-agency/multidisciplinary collaborations and can work productively with team members in implementing case plans.
6. Be able to plan, prioritize, and complete activities within appropriate time frames.
7. Be aware of potential work-related stress factors and begin to develop appropriate self-care strategies.

### **HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT COMPETENCIES**

1. Demonstrate understanding of the stages, processes, and milestones of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children and young adults—and how it is determined and assessed.
2. Understand the profound negative impact of child maltreatment on children's health and development.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the stages and processes of adult development and family life.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the potential effects of poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, violence, and other forms of oppression on human behavior.
5. Demonstrate understanding of the influence of culture on human behavior and family dynamics.
6. Demonstrate understanding of how the strengths perspective and empowerment approaches can influence growth, development, and behavior change.

### **ETHNIC SENSITIVE AND MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE COMPETENCIES**

1. Demonstrate sensitivity to clients' differences in culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.
2. Demonstrate the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the importance of a client's primary language and support its use in providing child welfare assessment and intervention services.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the influence and value of traditional, culturally based childrearing practices and use this knowledge in working with families.
5. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community-based organizations, and government agencies to advocate for equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and services.

### **CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES**

1. Be able to identify the multiple factors of social and family dynamics in child abuse and neglect, including the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the strengths-based "person in environment" perspective, and awareness of strengths which act to preserve the family and protect the child.

3. Demonstrate awareness and beginning understanding of the physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of child neglect and abuse, child sexual abuse, substance abuse, and mental illness in child victims and their families—and be able to relate these indicators to Title 9, Title 30, and to DCP&P policy.
4. Be developing knowledge of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in the lives of low-income and single-parent families and uses this knowledge in providing appropriate services.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the dual responsibility of the child welfare case worker to protect children and to provide appropriate services to enable families to care for their children, including pre-placement preventive services.
6. Demonstrate understanding of the dynamics of all forms of family violence, and the importance of culturally sensitive case plans for families and family members to address these problems.
7. Recognize the need to monitor the safety of the child by initial and ongoing assessment of risk, especially for children with special needs.
8. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of legal process and the role of social workers and other professionals in relation to the courts, including policy issues and legal requirements affecting child welfare practice.
9. Be in the process of developing a knowledge base about the effects of attachment, separation, and placement experiences for the child and the child's family and the effects on the child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development.
10. Be in the process of developing an understanding of the importance of evidence-based practice and a basic understanding of empirical research.
11. Demonstrate awareness of the principles of concurrent and permanency planning with regard to children as well as planning for older children about to terminate from the child welfare system.
12. Develop the capacity to utilize the case manager's role in creating a helping system for clients, including working collaboratively with other disciplines and involving and working collaboratively with biological families, foster families, and kin networks.
13. Show understanding of the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practices accordingly.
14. Demonstrate the appropriate use of power and authority in professional relationships, as well as the dynamics of engaging and working with involuntary clients.
15. Demonstrate the ability to assess his or her own emotional responses to clients, co-workers, and situations.
16. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the termination process, with clients and with systems.
17. Demonstrate an understanding of the critical importance of documentation in public child welfare.

To help students develop the above competencies and test what they already have learned in their prior coursework, field instructors give students learning assignments. Under close supervision, trainees test their developing knowledge and skills in real-life situations. At first, trainees only observe the work of others. Later, as they accompany caseworkers, they are allowed to participate in interviewing and documenting visits. Near the end of their internships, well-prepared trainees may do some independent work, with careful supervisory review.

Examples of learning activities designed to develop child welfare competencies have been developed collaboratively by BCWEP staff and experienced DCP&P field instructors. Such learning activities may include the following:

### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES:**

1. Participate in all student orientation activities (e.g., a scavenger hunt)
2. Learn about weekly work plans.

3. Obtain and review agency vision, values, mission statements, and organizational chart.
4. Review Reform Plan.
5. Become familiar with the provisions of Titles 9, 30, and ASFA.
6. Be assigned one Title 30 and one Title 9 case.
7. Read a verified complaint.
8. Attend a court hearing.
9. Attend a CIACC meeting.
10. Attend a CASA meeting
11. Set up informal meetings with DCP&P workers to learn about how to make referrals to community resources to which DCP&P clients are most commonly referred.
12. Attend at least one meeting where a multidisciplinary team is reviewing an agency case. Volunteer to follow through with one component of the case plan and do so.
13. Interview at least 3 agency workers to determine how they handle work-related stress. Develop your own personal plan for alleviating work stress (e.g., always take a lunch).
14. Attend a meeting of the Child Placement Review Board.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT COMPETENCIES:**

1. Accompany a DCP&P worker on a visit with a family where child maltreatment has affected the child's health and development. Discuss your observations with your field instructor
2. Attend a conference with a nurse on a high risk medical case.
3. Accompany a DCP&P worker on a visit with a family where the negative effects of poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, violence, or other form of oppression on the family are evident. Discuss your observations with your field instructor.
4. Arrange to visit a family whose culture is very different from your own. Discuss with your field instructor how awareness of culture would be helpful in working with the family.
5. Visit a Special Home Service Provider (one who cares for children who are critically ill, HIV positive, or medically fragile) or a Boarder Baby.
6. Complete a service plan with one family, including ways to work with strengths and an empowerment practice approach.
7. Work with at least one client system and use a strengths perspective and empowerment practice approach.
8. Attend a Family Group Conference or Family Team Meeting.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP ETHNIC SENSITIVE AND MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE COMPETENCIES:**

1. Meet with your field instructor and learn about cultural preparedness, including customs and child rearing practices, for the specific catchment area that your local office serves.
2. If possible, accompany an experienced worker on a visit to one client with a cultural background, ethnicity, or sexual orientation different from your own.
3. Read Service Directory and contact Resource Development Specialist.
4. Attend cultural events, visit culturally-specific service centers, or attend a meeting of an ethnic group commonly served by the agency.
5. Search the internet for information on cultural groups that are commonly served by the agency.
6. Use your understanding of the client system's culture, ethnicity, or sexual orientation in making an assessment, developing an intervention plan, linking a client with appropriate services.
7. Review your assessment, intervention plan, and service provision with your field instructor.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES:**

1. Read a case record, including the SIS history and the web-based SDM

2. Consider and discuss with your field instructor how to preserve your own safety and avoid risk.
3. Working with an experienced caseworker, accompany the worker on initial and subsequent visits, keeping separate notes on your observations.
4. Complete an independent assessment of the family, identifying strengths and needs. Compare your assessment with the experienced worker's.
5. Apply the appropriate legal and policy frameworks and discuss your understanding of DCP&P' responsibilities in protecting the child/children and strengthening/preserving the family.
6. Practice case plan development.
7. Meet with a DAG or Litigation Specialist.
8. Review policies on Titles 9 and 30, attend court, and discuss with field instructor.
9. Work with your field instructor on developing self-awareness.
10. Review Division mission and policies of concurrent planning (reasonable efforts to prevent placement and reunite families).
11. Talk to an investigator and an ongoing work to see how they handle the dual responsibility to protect and children and to preserve the family.
12. Talk with a domestic violence worker regarding complications of child welfare work in domestic violence situations.
13. Observe a session between a CADC and a client to learn about how substance abuse affects families.
14. Interview a Child Protective Services Forensic Investigator.
15. Go out on an initial referral/intake involving a child with special needs., using SDM forms to document:
  - a. Complete initial safety assessment
  - b. Complete initial risk assessment
  - c. Complete initial investigation
  - d. Complete strengths and needs on parents and children
  - e. Under supervision, complete an investigation
16. Review ASFA policy and permanency timelines; discuss with field instructor
17. Review policies on aging out
  - a. Review case on aging out client
  - b. Review and discuss aging out programs with field instructor
18. Review finalized KLG case or review case where child has been returned home
19. Attend court hearings to gain an understanding of:
  - a. Initial complaint hearing
  - b. Fact finding hearing
  - c. Regular review
20. Meet with the Litigation Specialist to gain an overview of the litigation process
  - a. Review of Titles 9 and 30 policy
  - b. Review the content of a specific complaint
21. Attend Juvenile Court with the Juvenile Court liaison
22. Be involved directly with a removal or re-placement
  - a. Supervise first visit
  - b. Complete paperwork
23. Review a case that has a long foster care history
  - a. Focus on understanding the effects of long-term foster care on children
  - b. Discuss with field instructor
24. Spend at least one-half day in the foster care unit/office to observe how placements take place
  - a. Learn about the kinship process
25. Review CPR (Child Placement Review forms); review a CPR hearing.
26. Attend meeting with adolescents aging out of the foster care system.
27. Design an assessment and case plan to address the specific aspects of one case and the case manager's role.

28. Keep a journal of your client interactions, clearly delineating the ethical standards and principles used in client interactions. Turn in to your field instructor and discuss in supervision.
29. Demonstrate use of a strengths-based model in interviewing, in participating in family group conferences, in engaging both voluntary and involuntary clients.
30. Demonstrate use of empowerment practice principles in giving positive feedback to clients. Whenever possible, allow the family to have choices. Start where the client is!
31. Use process recording in order to articulate and develop self-awareness and understanding of your own emotional responses to clients. Assess how your own feelings color your ability to work effectively with clients.
32. Read journal articles related to termination process with clients; role play a termination session with clients; use supervisory conference time to process your understanding of the termination phase of the social work process.
33. Review case records where the documentation is exemplary.
34. Practice documentation in all phases of child welfare work.

One of our former field instructors, Adrienne Jackson, MSW, has developed a guide, *Guide to Becoming a Successful Division of Child Protection and Permanency Employee: A Learning Path for Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program Trainees*, which suggests additional learning experiences and a calendar for introducing BCWEP students to learning experiences throughout the two semesters of their internship. The guide is available through the BCWEP office.

#### F. Limitations on Intern Activities

Student interns' primary role is learning. Therefore the above list of activities includes terms such as "read," "consider," "review and discuss," "accompany," "practice developing a case plan," "talk with workers," "observe," "visit a court," "*be involved in* a removal," "interview clients *under supervision*," and "keep a journal."

As Field Instructors get to know their student intern, they will form an assessment of that student's abilities and readiness for taking on assigned activities. At first, student interns will be familiarizing themselves with all aspects of agency functioning and policy. They will "shadow" their field instructor and other workers, observing workers' interactions with clients and learning about follow-up activities and documentation practices. As they gain experience in observing client interactions, they may gradually be allowed to participate in (and take the lead on) interviews, and assist caseworkers with various aspects of follow-through. Student interns may prepare draft documentation for review by their field instructor and may, after the drafts have been reviewed, make log entries into the computerized record under the name of the caseworker who has reviewed the material. Student interns must disclose in the record that they are entering material on behalf of the caseworker. Under no circumstances may student interns make decisions independently about risk to a child, whether a case should be opened or closed, or whether a child should be removed.

Student interns may not transport clients in their own cars. And, under current policy, BCWEP interns may not drive state cars. Student interns may not make any independent visits to clients until their level of competence has been thoroughly assessed by their field instructor. Student interns may not make independent visits to clients after office hours or in situations where their safety may be in question. Student interns must always report to their field instructor immediately after they have made an independent visit.

#### G. Evaluation of Student Interns

Each educational institution has its own procedures for evaluating students. It is the responsibility of Campus Academic Coordinators to assure that Field Instructors are instructed in the appropriate format for student evaluations. Such evaluations generally occur at the end of each

semester of the Academic Year. BCWEP specific evaluations are distributed at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters.

#### H. Criteria for Termination of Traineeship

Students may be terminated from their BCWEP Traineeship if, after all efforts to resolve academic or behavioral difficulties have been exhausted, the student continues to fail to meet academic or professional standards (i.e., the *NASW Code of Ethics*).<sup>4</sup> This decision may be made independently by the social work program in which the student is enrolled, especially in cases of failure to maintain an acceptable level of academic achievement. Ideally, however, the decision to terminate should be collaborative, and involve the DCP&P Field Instructor, the student's social work program as represented by the Campus Academic Coordinator, and the Training Academy BCWEP Liaison. Since the BCWEP Traineeship is an award granted to specially qualified students and not a right, students who are terminated may not appeal their termination. Every assurance will be made by all participating in the BCWEP partnership that students will not be terminated arbitrarily.

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<sup>4</sup> Termination from BCWEP does not mean termination from the social work program in which the student is involved. Decisions to terminate students from their social work program are made by the Programs themselves, not by BCWEP.

# APPENDIX

- A. *BCWEP Competency-Based Learning Plan for Students in Child Welfare Traineeship, revised 5/26/11*
- B. *BCWEP Model Syllabus*
- C. *New Jersey Department of Children and Families Case Practice*
- D. *BCWEP Trainee Assessment Form*



# BCWEP Competency-Based Learning Plan

FOR STUDENTS IN CHILD WELFARE TRAINEESHIP, Revised 5/26/11

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

FIELD INSTRUCTOR NAME/DEGREE: \_\_\_\_\_

This Learning Plan is designed to be a guide to field instructors working with students enrolled in the Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program. Researchers across the United States have interviewed large numbers of public child welfare workers to determine the knowledge, skills, and practice perspective that promote best practices in public child welfare. The result of their interviews is the following list of competencies, which are grouped into workplace management, human behavior and the social environment, ethnic sensitive/multicultural practice, and core child welfare practice competencies. While it may not be possible for a student to master all of these competencies in a one-year internship, students and field instructors can develop an individualized plan that will give students an opportunity to develop into well-prepared beginning caseworkers.

This plan gives examples of learning activities that may be appropriate in addressing the competencies listed below. The Learning Plan should ideally be designed jointly by each field instructor and student, using these competencies and suggested learning objectives as a guide. A list of suggested learning activities is included in the BCWEP Field Manual.

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<sup>1</sup> The Child Welfare Competencies, except for minor adaptations to relate them to New Jersey were developed by the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC). Format of this document adapted from Competencies Assessment and Learning Contract, University of Minnesota School of Social Work (9/27/04). This Competency-Based Learning Plan and Assessment Tool was developed in partnership with field instructors working with students in Stockton University's Title IV-B, Section 426 federal grant and field instructors working with students in the Baccalaureate Child Welfare Education Program, a consortium of baccalaureate social work programs in New Jersey (Centenary University, Georgian Court University, Monmouth University, Ramapo College, Rutgers University, Seton Hall University, and Stockton University).

<b>WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES (see BCWEP Manual for suggestions)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic structure of DCP&amp;P and child welfare practice, including Title 30, Title 9, and Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.</li> <li>2. Understand the vision, values, mission, mandates and desired outcomes of the New Jersey Child Welfare System.</li> <li>3. Be able to work productively with agency staff, supervisors, and clients in an environment characterized by human diversity.</li> <li>4. Demonstrate an awareness of community resources available for children and families and have a working knowledge of how to utilize these resources in achieving case goals.</li> <li>5. Have a working knowledge of multi-agency/multidisciplinary collaborations and be able to work productively with team members in implementing case plans.</li> <li>6. Be able to plan, prioritize, and complete activities within appropriate time frames.</li> <li>7. Be aware of potential work-related stress factors and begin to develop appropriate self-care strategies.</li> </ol>	

<b>HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES (see BCWEP Manual for suggestions)</b>
<p>8. Demonstrate understanding of the stages, processes, and milestones of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children and young adults—and how it is determined and assessed.</p> <p>9. Understand the profound negative impact of child maltreatment on children’s health and development.</p> <p>10. Demonstrate understanding of the stages and processes of adult development and family life.</p> <p>11. Demonstrate understanding of the potential effects of poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, violence, and other forms of oppression on human behavior.</p> <p>12. Demonstrate understanding of the influence of culture on human behavior and family dynamics.</p> <p>13. Demonstrate understanding of how the strengths perspective and empowerment approaches can influence growth, development, and behavior change.</p>	

<b>ETHNIC SENSITIVE AND MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES (see BCWEP Manual for suggestions)</b>
<p>14. Demonstrate sensitivity to clients' differences in culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.</p> <p>15. Demonstrate the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan.</p> <p>16. Demonstrate understanding of the importance of a client's primary language and support its use in providing child welfare assessment and intervention services.</p> <p>17. Demonstrate understanding of the influence and value of traditional, culturally based childrearing practices and use this knowledge in working with families.</p> <p>18. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community-based organizations, and government agencies to advocate for equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and services.</p>	

<b>CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES (see BCWEP Manual for suggestions)</b>
<p>19. Be able to identify the multiple factors of social and family dynamics in child abuse and neglect, including the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors.</p> <p>20. Demonstrate understanding of the strengths-based “person in environment” perspective, and awareness of strengths which act to preserve the family and protect the child.</p> <p>21. Demonstrate awareness and beginning understanding of the physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of child neglect and abuse, child sexual abuse, substance abuse, and mental illness in child victims and their families—and be able to relate these indicators to Title 9, Title 30, and to DCP&amp;P policy.</p> <p>22. Be developing knowledge of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in the lives of low-income and single-parent families and uses this knowledge in providing appropriate services.</p> <p>23. Demonstrate an understanding of the dual responsibility of the child welfare case worker to protect children and to provide appropriate services to enable families to care for their children, including pre-placement preventive services.</p>	

<b>CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES (continued)</b>	<b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES (see BCWEP Field Manual for suggestions)</b>
<p>24. Demonstrate understanding of the dynamics of all forms of family violence, and the importance of culturally sensitive case plans for families and family members to address these problems.</p> <p>25. Recognize the need to monitor the safety of the child by initial and ongoing assessment of risk, especially for children with special needs.</p> <p>26. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of legal process and the role of social workers and other professionals in relation to the courts, including policy issues and legal requirements affecting child welfare practice.</p> <p>27. Be in the process of developing a knowledge base about the effects of attachment, separation, and placement experiences for the child and the child's family and the effects on the child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development.</p> <p>28. Be in the process of developing an understanding of the importance of evidence-based practice and a basic understanding of empirical research.</p>	

<b>CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES (continued)</b>	<b>LEARNING ACTIVITIES (see BCWEP Field Manual for suggestions)</b>
<p>29. Demonstrate awareness of the principles of concurrent and permanency planning with regard to children as well as planning for older children about to terminate from the child welfare system.</p> <p>30. Develop the capacity to utilize the case manager's role in creating a helping system for clients, including working collaboratively with other disciplines and involving and working collaboratively with biological families, foster families, and kin networks.</p> <p>31. Show understanding of the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practices accordingly.</p> <p>32. Demonstrate the appropriate use of power and authority in professional relationships, as well as the dynamics of engaging and working with involuntary clients.</p> <p>33. Demonstrate the ability to assess his or her own emotional responses to clients, co-workers, and situations.</p> <p>34. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the termination process, with clients and with systems.</p> <p>35. Demonstrate an understanding of the critical importance of documentation in public child welfare.</p>	

## **State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families Case Practice Model**

*The Department of Children and Families' (DCF) case practice is intended to define who the agency serves, the expected outcomes of these services, and the guiding principles and expectations of the organization.*

*Below you will find DCF's case practice, which resulted from an extensive process of consultation within DCF and among key stakeholders.<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> Retrieved 6/29/2016 from [http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/about/welfare/case/DCF\\_CasePracticeModel.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/about/welfare/case/DCF_CasePracticeModel.pdf)



## **New Jersey Department of Children and Families Case Practice**

### **I. Introduction**

The Department of Children and Families' (DCF) case practice model is intended to define who the agency serves, the expected outcomes of these services, and the guiding principles and expectations of the organization. This case practice model will help establish clarity about how we expect children and families to be treated and how they and their natural support networks will be engaged in the decisions affecting their safety and well-being. This document has been developed to define, guide, and support a strengths-based and family-centered model of practice that achieves safety, permanency, and well-being for children.

The development and implementation of this model is dynamic and continuous, and will continue to be undertaken in collaboration with families, youth, staff, stakeholders, and the public. Achieving this model of practice with every child and family will take time, but it is the standard through which practice and future commitments will be assessed and measured. As such, DCF commits to an ongoing process of reevaluation of our progress against this model.

### **II. Mission and Outcomes**

In partnership with New Jersey's communities, DCF will ensure the safety, well-being, and success of New Jersey's children and families.

DCF's child welfare practice seeks to achieve three primary outcomes for children and families: safety, permanency, and well-being. These outcomes are based on what the professional research supports as the most critical outcomes for our work and include the six outcomes for which the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) holds us accountable.

### **III. The Families and Children We Serve**

Within DCF, Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) protects and serves children who have been abused or neglected, children who are alleged to be abused or neglected, children placed into the agency's custody, and families in which child abuse or neglect has occurred. CP&P also provides certain child welfare services in non-protective service matters as a result of state statutes, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with other state agencies, Court Orders for CP&P intervention, and a family's request for, or agreement to receive, services. Children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral health care challenges and their families are served through the Children's System of Care (CSOC). Through Family and Community Partnerships (FCP), we support community-based, outcomes-focused initiatives to strengthen families through training and direct services in order to prevent child maltreatment and avoid the need for foster care services.

### **IV. DCF Values and Principles**

The foundation of this case practice is a clear understanding of the values and principles that we expect to be reflected in our work:

#### *Core Values*

- Safety: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- Permanency: Children do best when they have strong families, preferably their own, and when that is not possible, a stable relative, foster or adoptive family. We must strive to ensure children do not enter foster care unnecessarily and do not leave our supervision without a permanent and stable family living situation.
- Well-Being: We will offer relevant services to children and families to meet their identified needs and promote children's development, education, physical and mental health.
- Most families have the capacity to change with the support of individualized service responses.
- Government cannot do the job alone; real partnerships with people and agencies involved in a child's life – for example, families, pediatricians, teachers, child care providers -are essential to ensure child safety, permanency and well-being, and build strong families.

### *Principles*

- In making determinations about plans and services, we consider the child's safety and health paramount. ° We must provide relevant services with respect for and understanding of children's needs and children's and families' culture.
- No child or family will be denied a needed service or placement because of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical or emotional handicap, religion, or special language needs.
- Where appropriate, families will be provided with the services they need in order to keep their children safe and at home in order to avoid the trauma of removal.
- Understanding the disproportionate representation of children and families of color among those supervised by CPP, we will continually assess our tools, services and strategies to prevent racial and ethnic bias.
- Foster care will be as temporary an arrangement as possible.
- If at all possible, children in out-of-home placements will be safely reunified with their families within 12 months. Families will be provided with the services they need to allow for safe reunification whenever possible.
- If a child cannot be safely reunified within timeframes established under federal and state law, DCF will find a permanent home for the child, using child-specific recruitment plans when necessary, preferably with an appropriate relative or an adoptive family.
- We must work to ensure children in out-of-home placement have:
  - Stable placements that promote the continuity of critical relationships, including with their parents, siblings and capable relatives, to achieve a sustainable permanent family setting.
  - Placements in settings that are the least restrictive and meet their individual needs.
  - Decision-making that is informed by a long-term view of the child's needs, informed by the family team, and is consistent with federal and state timelines about achieving an exit from care to a sustainable, safe permanent home.

## **V. How We Work**

Reflective of these values, the practice model is a continuous set of activities that we will apply in practice. Our practice model emphasizes:

- Quality investigation and assessment,

- Engaging youth and families,
- Working with family teams,
- Individualized planning and relevant services,
- Continuous review and adaptation, and
- Safe and sustained transition from DCF involvement.

## 1. Quality Investigation and Assessment

- Quality investigations require the use of structured decision-making tools to evaluate child abuse or neglect referrals and to support sound judgments based on the nature of the allegations and initial findings. The process usually begins at the State Central Registry (SCR), where we receive calls about child abuse or neglect. SCR is typically the first point of contact between the community and DCF. We will respond to all callers promptly with respectful, active listening skills. We will gather essential information, including the identification of all individuals who are parents and other important family members. We will screen referrals using uniform instruments that structure the process of assessment and response to information related to child safety.

Allegations of abuse or neglect are geographically referred to Intake Units within each of the local CPP offices. We will:

- Begin the initial investigations of suspected child abuse or neglect within 24 hours and complete this work within 60 days, absent exceptional circumstances, using uniform instruments to make decisions about child safety.
- Assess and document the child's safety at every contact with the child and family.
- Develop safety plans with the active participation of the family if the immediate safety of the child is in question at any time during the initial assessment process.
- Secure necessary resources and quickly mobilize community and family supports.
- Work collaboratively with partners in law enforcement, health care, substance abuse, public welfare, and the education system.

Assessment starts with the Department's initial contact with the family or with the individual who is calling on behalf of a child, and continues throughout the family's involvement with DCF.

Assessment is not the completion of forms but rather it is an ongoing process, which prioritizes the safety of children by "gathering and analyzing information that supports sound decision making."<sup>6</sup> Our assessments are made in large part by personal contact by the worker with the family and seeing them where they live. This work explores the underlying causes of child maltreatment or the risk of child maltreatment and the factors that prevent parents from making the necessary changes to keep their children safe. It is work that is done by engaging parents and family members and with the family team and it is a continuous process.

In all of our assessment work, we will strive to:

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<sup>6</sup> United States Department of Health and Human Services, Rethinking Child Welfare Practice under the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997: A Resource Guide, Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000, p. 33.

- Use assessment instruments in order to identify services that protect against determined risk factors and enhance parental capacity.
- Assess family members' strengths and needs within their social and cultural environments.
- Match services to the family's needs and capabilities. Planning is focused first on the family's highest priority needs and seeks to capitalize on its strengths.
- Address children's safety, permanency and well-being on a continuous basis, regardless of whether a child is living at home or in out of home placement.

When abuse or neglect is not alleged, but families are identified to SCR and request or agree to receive supportive services from CP&P, our Child Welfare Assessment work, like our assessment work in the context of an investigation, is designed to determine strengths, skills, and concrete and immediate needs. In these instances, since we are not investigating an abuse or neglect allegation, we will not utilize child protection, investigatory tools. We will use assessment and engagement strategies to unearth the family's needs and offer relevant, supportive services.

## **2. Engaging Youth and Families**

Engagement is the foundation to build trust and mutually beneficial relationships among children, youth, family members and DCF staff. We must listen to, assess, and address the needs of children, youth, and families in a respectful and responsive manner that builds upon their strengths. Part of engagement involves understanding the culture of a family and helping the family identify all potential team members. Good engagement with children and families will help staff have an accurate and more comprehensive understanding of the strengths of the families as well as their challenges, and will help in the identification of appropriate services. Engaging a youth/family does not mean that we lose objectivity about the safety risks to children. It does mean that, whenever safe and appropriate, youth and parents will be included in decision-making about the services and supports they need and be active participants in finding solutions to family issues and concerns about child safety. This involves providing family members with complete information not only regarding their situation and the Department's decision-making but also full disclosure regarding laws, regulations, and policies that impact their life situation.

## **3. Working with Family Teams**

Building a family team around a youth/family has multiple benefits. Teams are useful for gathering important information about the strengths and needs of families that contribute to the overall functional assessment of a family's situation, and the development of a plan that has the best chance for success. This family team can also assist the family throughout the involvement of the Department and help CPP staff facilitate the service plan. When it is time for the family to end its involvement with DCF, the family team can help support the family's transition.

Who comprises the family team convened by DCF? The short answer is everyone important in the life of the child, including interested family members, foster/adoptive parents, neighbors, and friends as well as representatives from the child's natural support system, such as schools, therapists, and substance abuse treatment providers. Parents, children and youth, when age appropriate, and team members should become active participants in making decisions about what services and supports are needed, how and who should deliver the services, and how to identify success. In situations where there is little or no parental involvement, family teams are still an important strategy, and DCF will still use family teams absent interested parental involvement.

Day-to-day practice with families and planning for children includes but is not limited to the following:

- Children are helped to have connections with their family networks and preferably with their parents and relatives when it is safe to do so.
- If a child must be separated from his/her birth family, we will strive to find an out-of-home placement that is safe, appropriate and the least restrictive necessary to meet the child's individual needs. We will strive to find a placement that keeps siblings together and in the child's community so that continuity of education, health care, and friendships are maintained.
- If siblings are not placed together, our efforts to appropriately reunite siblings will be active and ongoing.
- The overall family team is strengthened in most instances by sustained family interaction. We will provide immediate and ongoing support of frequent visits between children and their families, including with their siblings who may not live with them, unless it is unsafe to do so. Visits should occur in family-like settings in order to promote and facilitate interactions with one another and, to the extent those settings are elusive, we will strive to develop more of them.
- A team approach to consultation, planning, and decision-making must become central to our work. Family members in this process are key participants, as are relevant community partners (e.g., domestic violence agencies, substance abuse programs, mental health providers, schools and early childhood centers, public health centers, and the like).
- DCF will convene family team meetings regularly, including when a team member, such as a parent or foster/adoptive parent, requests such a meeting.

DCF will convene a family team meeting prior to or within thirty days of a child's out-of-home placement. The purpose of this meeting is to bring together the family, CP&P Worker(s), extended family members, friends, community specialists, natural supports, and/or other interested people identified by the family or CP&P to join together to strengthen and empower the family, and help the family and CP&P make viable plans and decisions on behalf of the child and his or her family. The meeting also serves to continue the family engagement and full disclosure process, review the time frames as delineated under the Adoption and Safe Families Act, the child's need for permanency, and DCF's concurrent planning practice.

The goals and objectives of the meeting are to:

- Agree on next steps for the family, service providers, resource parent(s), and the Division
- Inform parents and any other potential caregivers that permanency within 12 months is the goal and what options will be considered
- The Worker benefits from engaging the family in case planning by –
- Developing improved Case Plans and realistic permanency goals with the family/adolescent
- Identifying additional relatives - both maternal and paternal - and family friends, who may also reside outside the United States in a foreign country for consideration as a safe support or placement option for the child(ren)
- Identifying additional, appropriate community supports, beyond which he or she is already familiar

- Constructing solutions to achieve successful closure of a case/termination of agency intervention

#### **4. Individualized Planning and Relevant Services**

Planning is neither a separate process from assessment nor an exclusive activity of DCF. Generally, our work involves families and/or youth committed to a plan, including decisions regarding needed services and supports. Goals are behaviorally specific, realistic, time-limited, measurable, and clearly understood and agreed upon by the family, the family team and the court. Service plans, developed with the family team, will focus on the services and milestones necessary for children and families to promote children's development, education, physical and mental health, and for children in out-of-home placement, connected to the reason for the out-of-home placement, barriers to reunification or childhood well-being. We will expand the sum – and our utilization of – flexible funds to address the unique needs of children and families.

Service plans divide long-term goals into short-term behaviorally specific objectives that are measurable and achievable. Progress and planning reviews are essential and will be conducted with the family and the family's team members on a consistent basis in order to achieve best results.

When children are placed in out-of-home care, we will commence the concurrent planning process immediately upon placement to ensure the child's permanency and well-being, and:

- We will make diligent efforts to identify, evaluate, and consider relatives for placement, consistent with child safety and well-being. Preference and available supports should be provided for relative placement.
- We will strive to place children in family settings that can be expected to become the child's permanent placement if necessary, unless another placement is temporarily needed for therapeutic reasons.
- We will make every effort to place children within the community or county of their parents' residence unless the reason for the location of the placement outside the community or county is to help the child achieve his/her goals.
- When a child is placed into foster care, placement selection will take into account the location of the child's school; we will strive to avoid the child having to change schools as the result of placement. The child shall be enrolled in school in a timely manner and the resource family shall be assisted in navigating the child's educational needs.
- We will strive to avoid temporary or interim placements for children.
- Children will receive a pre-placement assessment and a comprehensive physical examination and mental health assessment within 60 days of entry into out-of-home placement. Recommended treatment services will be provided on a timely basis.
- DCF will arrange enrollment in preschool or day care programs as appropriate or timely school transfers if needed.

We will protect children in out-of-home placement from abuse and neglect. Investigations of allegations of abuse and neglect in out-of-home placements by the Institutional Abuse Investigations Unit will be thorough and completed within 60 days, absent exceptional circumstances.

In addition, when adolescents are placed in out of home care:

- A goal of “Independent Living” will not be used for any child under the age of 16 and only after all permanency goals have been actively pursued and appropriately ruled out.
- We will advise youth, age 12 and older of their rights while in out of home care including health, safety, communication, education, case planning, and court involvement.
- We will advise youth, age 14 and older, of educational, employment/vocational training and resources, housing, and other transitional supports and make appropriate and timely referrals.
- Older youth in out-of-home care will be encouraged and provided the opportunity to complete high school and will be provided opportunities to learn a trade or apply for college.
- Youth turning 18 years old in out-of-home placement will be encouraged to remain in care to receive education and training services and other supports that will be provided to them until age 21. Eligible youth will be encouraged to apply for our Foster Care Scholars Program, which offers tuition assistance to youth in, or formerly in, out-of-home placement.
- Youth, age 14 and older, will have written transitional plans that are youth driven and include, strengths, interests, and goals regarding connections to a caring adult, education, employment, housing and health. In addition services and supports are identified to help the youth live safely and function successfully as adults.
- DCF will assist eligible, non-U.S. citizen youth without green cards to apply for and obtain green cards before they reach age 18.
- Youth who are in out-of-home at age 18 up to 21 will be assisted in applying for or sustaining their Medicaid so that there is no lapse in health and mental health care coverage upon their exit from out-of-home care.

## **5. Continuous Review and Adaptation**

Ensuring that the family’s plan is implemented with the appropriate people, intensity, and quality and determining whether supports and services are meeting the needs identified in the plan are critical to achieving the desired results of safety, permanency, and well-being.

Day-to-day practice with families and planning for children includes but is not limited to the following:

- Decisions and planning will be based on concerns about the child’s health, safety, permanency, and well-being.
- Family team meetings and other processes will be used to review the child and family’s status, service progress, appropriateness of permanency goal, and results to ensure that the service plan maintains relevance, integrity, and appropriateness. The plan will be modified as goals are met and circumstances change.
- Continuous and ongoing attention will be paid to permanency for children.

## **6. Safe and Sustained Transition from DCF Involvement**

Safely ending the family’s involvement with DCF by achieving permanency for the child will be the focus of collaboration from the beginning of the relationship and will be supported by actively partnering with the family or adolescent. The decision to transition from DCF involvement will be driven by the achievement of the appropriate levels of safety and permanency as defined by the behavioral goals in the plan. For adolescents who may be exiting the out-of-care system, this transition will include a plan for his/her future and life-long supports and connections to meaningful adults and resources.

Day-to-day practice with families and planning for children or youth includes but is not limited to the following:

- Safety and risk of harm will be assessed prior to transitions and closure.
- Services and supports should be put in place to facilitate a smooth, timely, and successful transition when changes occur.
- Families whose children are reunited will receive transitional supports that enable them to safely sustain their children in their home.
- Families and young adults will be connected with informal supports to assist them to function independent of outside supervision upon case closure.

## **Model of Practice Related to Program and Organizational Capacity**

The executive leadership of DCF recognizes that it is their responsibility to demonstrate the same values and practices with employees as workers demonstrate with families. Day-to-day practice with employees, communities, and other stakeholders includes but is not limited to the following:

### **A. Agency Management and Leadership**

- Managers at the state and local level will work together to focus on the continuous improvement of programs, services and staff, relying on current and accurate performance data, to meet the needs of the children and families and to produce positive outcomes.
- Managers and supervisors will provide leadership and support in order to create, affirm, and sustain an organizational culture and structure that supports a strengths-based, family-centered model of practice.
- Managers at the state and local level will demonstrate the same measure of respect for staff as staff is expected to demonstrate in their work with families.
- Managers, supervisors and staff will be accountable for implementing the strategies and values of this practice model in our work with children and families.

### **B. Policies and Standards**

- The agency will continue to develop and implement policies and standards consistent with the model of practice that help children and families access quality services that promote their safety, health, permanency and well-being.
- Policies and standards will be congruent and consistently support this model of practice.

### **C. Qualifications, Workload, and Professional Development of Staff**

- DCF will create conditions for staff that make positive outcomes-based work with children and families likely. We will strive to achieve workloads that enable practice to be consistent with the model of practice. Supervisors will not carry cases.
- DCF will implement an overall training and workforce development plan. Initial and ongoing professional development opportunities will be available to employees in order to address the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties related to safety, permanency and well-being and reinforce the values and standards delineated in the practice model. Training for agency staff will be standardized, field tested, evaluated, and competency-based.
- DCF will provide training for current and prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and employees of licensed agencies that develop the skills and knowledge they need to achieve the values and standards of this model of practice.



#### **D. An Array of Services**

- Success for children and families means DCF must continue to develop an array of services that meet the needs of children and families. Most of the services necessary for children and families are provided by DCF-supported community agencies, which play an important role in preserving child safety, promoting permanency, developing child wellbeing, and strengthening families. Community services to support, nurture and help families with problems must become more readily available so that involvement with CPP is time limited, focused and outcome oriented.
- DCF must develop strong linkages at the state and local level for families to services or benefit programs that serve the same population – including public health, mental health, dental care, substance abuse, education, medical services, food assistance, and financial and work supports – to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.
- DCF will work in partnership with community based providers and agencies to use organizational and community cultural strengths to develop more responsive services and supports to children and families.

#### **E. Information Systems**

- The statewide information systems, as they are modernized throughout DCF, will readily provide comprehensive, child-specific information to staff that helps them perform their work.

#### **F. Quality Assurance**

- DCF will track and publicly report on its performance across a continuum of key indicators. Decision-making will be data-driven and informed by the best, reliable information available to DCF.
- DCF will rebuild a process for continuous quality improvement that uses quality assurance information to identify and implement improvement in practice, policies and training.

**20XX-XX BCWEP TRAINEE ASSESSMENT**

**STUDENT:**

**FIELD INSTRUCTOR:**

**SEMESTER:**  Fall (due by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>)  Spring (due by April 15<sup>th</sup>)

On the following chart, please rate the degree to which you think that the student for which you provided field instruction is prepared for handling the responsibilities of a beginning caseworker at the Division of Child Protection and Permanency. Please compare this student at the end of each semester with the level of preparation that you believe an “average” new hire at DCP&P has on their first day. Please provide any additional comments you might have at the end of the evaluation. Submit via email to [bcwep@stockton.edu](mailto:bcwep@stockton.edu)

<b>WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>Inadequately prepared</b>	<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	<b>Adequately prepared</b>	<b>Well prepared</b>	<b>Very well prepared</b>	<b>Insufficient opportunity to observe</b>
1. Demonstrates knowledge of the basic structure of DCP&P and child welfare practice, including Title 30, Title 9, and Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Understands the vision, values, mission, mandates and desired outcomes of the New Jersey Child Welfare System.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is able to work productively with agency staff, supervisors, and clients in an environment characterized by human diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Demonstrates an awareness of community resources available for children and families and have a working knowledge of how to utilize these resources in achieving case goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Has a working knowledge of collaboration with multidisciplinary teams and can work productively with team members in implementing case plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is able to plan, prioritize, and complete activities within appropriate time frames.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is aware of potential work-related stress factors and begin to develop appropriate self-care strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>Inadequately prepared</b>	<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	<b>Adequately prepared</b>	<b>Well prepared</b>	<b>Very well prepared</b>	<b>Insufficient opportunity to observe</b>
8. Demonstrates understanding of the stages, processes, and milestones of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children and young adults—and how it is determined and assessed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Understands the profound negative impact of child maltreatment on children’s health and development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Demonstrates understanding of the stages and processes of adult development and family life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Demonstrates understanding of the potential effects of poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, violence, and other forms of oppression on human behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Demonstrates understanding of the influence of culture on human behavior and family dynamics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Demonstrates understanding of how the strengths perspective and empowerment approaches can influence growth, development, and behavior change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>ETHNIC SENSITIVE AND MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>Inadequately prepared</b>	<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	<b>Adequately prepared</b>	<b>Well prepared</b>	<b>Very well prepared</b>	<b>Insufficient opportunity to observe</b>
14. Demonstrates sensitivity to clients' differences in culture, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Demonstrates the ability to conduct an ethnically and culturally sensitive assessment of a child and family and to develop an appropriate intervention plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Demonstrates understanding of the importance of a client's primary language and support its use in providing child welfare assessment and intervention services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Demonstrates understanding of the influence and value of traditional, culturally based childrearing practices and use this knowledge in working with families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Demonstrates the ability to collaborate with individuals, groups, community-based organizations, and government agencies to advocate for equitable access to culturally sensitive resources and services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES</b>	<b>Inadequately prepared</b>	<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	<b>Adequately prepared</b>	<b>Well prepared</b>	<b>Very well prepared</b>	<b>Insufficient opportunity to observe</b>
19. Is able to identify the multiple factors of social and family dynamics in child abuse and neglect, including the interaction of individual, family, and environmental factors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Demonstrates understanding of the strengths-based "person in environment" perspective, and awareness of strengths which act to preserve the family and protect the child.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Demonstrates awareness and beginning understanding of the physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of child neglect and abuse, child sexual abuse, substance abuse, and mental illness in child victims and their families—and be able to relate these indicators to Title 9, Title 30, and to DCP&P policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Is developing knowledge of the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination in the lives of low-income and single-parent families and uses this knowledge in providing appropriate services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Demonstrates an understanding of the dual responsibility of the child welfare case worker to protect children and to provide appropriate services to enable families to care for their children, including pre-placement preventive services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Demonstrates understanding of the dynamics of all forms of family violence, and the importance of culturally sensitive case plans for families and family members to address these problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CORE CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE COMPETENCIES--CONTINUED	Inadequately prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared	Insufficient opportunity to observe
25. Recognizes the need to monitor the safety of the child by initial and ongoing assessment of risk, especially for children with special needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Demonstrates a beginning understanding of legal process and the role of social workers and other professionals in relation to the courts, including policy issues and legal requirements affecting child welfare practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Is in the process of developing a knowledge base about the effects of attachment, separation, and placement experiences for the child and the child's family and the effects on the child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Is in the process of developing an understanding of the importance of evidence-based practice and a basic understanding of empirical research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Demonstrates awareness of the principles of concurrent and permanency planning with regard to younger children as well as planning for older children about to terminate from the child welfare system.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Is developing the capacity to utilize the case manager's role in creating a helping system for clients, including working collaboratively with other disciplines and involving and working collaboratively with biological families, foster families, and kin networks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Shows understanding of the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practices accordingly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Demonstrates the appropriate use of power and authority in professional relationships, as well as the dynamics of engaging and working with involuntary clients.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Demonstrates the ability to assess his or her own emotional responses to clients, co-workers, and situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of the termination process, with clients and with systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Demonstrates an understanding of the critical importance of documentation in public child welfare.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Identify the student's strengths as you observed his/her field activities.

What areas do you think the student needs to improve?

Other comments:

THANK YOU!!

Please submit via email to [bcwep@stockton.edu](mailto:bcwep@stockton.edu) by December 1<sup>st</sup> (Fall) or April 15<sup>th</sup> (Spring).