

Resource Family Approval Pre-Service Training

Module Three: Meeting the complex needs of children in out of home care



Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember:

This workbook has a lot of material and it's not likely we will touch on all of the points and content in the allotted time. You are therefore encouraged to read/review all of the sections not covered in class.

Remember the group agreements:

- Everyone always has the right to pass - silence is a contribution.
- We agree to allow others to finish speaking before we speak and avoid interrupting and side conversations.
- We agree to put past hurts behind us, and focus on the needs of foster children and how we can prepare meet children's needs.
- We will work together to hold to these agreements and authorize the trainer to hold us to them.
- We agree to disagree and avoid making assumptions or generalities.
- We agree to speak personally, for ourselves as individuals.
- We're here to "try it out".
- We agree to protect one another's confidentiality.

Some Housekeeping:

- Make sure you sign in.
- We'll have a 10 minute break halfway through the module.
- Remember your self-care – take a break if you need, if you need to take a call, please feel free to find a quiet space away from the group to take your call.

RFA Training Goals

- ▶ Realistically prepare caregivers to be Resource Parents who can meet the special needs of children and youth in care.
- ▶ Prepare Resource Parents to provide familiar, safe, and nurturing environments for children in foster care.
- ▶ Prepare Resource Parents to be members of the Child Welfare Team.
- ▶ Achieve Safety and Permanency for children who are part of the Child Welfare Services system.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Now that you are midway through your training, has your understanding of the training goals changed?

Resource Parent Values:

- The trainee values the importance of a solution focused and nonjudgmental approach when working with the CWS system.
- The trainee values Permanency as a primary goal for children.
- The trainee values his/her role as a member of the CWS professional team working to provide children with permanency, stability and safety.
- The trainee values the balance between the Constitutional rights of the biological parents and meeting the safety and care needs of children.
- The trainee values the importance of the children's long term kinship relationships.

During the last class we spoke about working with Trauma, Loss and Attachment.

How does working with Trauma relate to Safety and Permanency?

Agenda

- ▶ Typical health needs of children in care and your role in supporting getting them healthy – and associated record keeping.
- ▶ Helping children in care get their educational needs met.
- ▶ How positive discipline affects self-esteem and identity.
- ▶ Discipline styles and negative impacts of physical discipline – discipline policy.
- ▶ Building a healthy self-esteem and identity through cultural connections.

Some points for you to remember

A critical component of being a Resource Family is the capacity for the parent/s to respond to the complicated needs of children in care.

The child that joins your family may have experienced trauma from abuse or neglect, or due to being separated from their biological families.

Consequently the child's may not be ready or able to respond to your care and affection, the closeness of your family, and your family routine.



Your Notes

What is the difference between routine care and more significant treatment?



Some points for you to remember

You have authorization from the Court to provide for basic/routine care.

Court orders are required - e.g.: at any time consent from the legal guardian is required:

- Psychotropic Medication
- Travel outside the state
- Invasive medical procedures
- The IEP process – this will require that a “surrogate parent” be appointed.



Your Notes

Educational Needs of Children in Care

Children in foster care have more problems in school because of:

- ▶ Placement changes
- ▶ Lost time away from school/lost credits.
- ▶ Unmet learning deficiencies including developmental delays or trauma related behavioral/emotional issues.

AB 490 provides key protections for children in care.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Common School Issues:

- Special education and Individualized Education Plan (IEP). It's important for you to keep in mind that Special Education is not "routine care", and requires a parent, guardian, or Educational Surrogate to sign/approve the IEP.
- Getting a child caught up to grade level.
- Behavioral problems and school discipline.
- Wrongly identifying/misdiagnosing children's needs due to not understanding the impact of trauma and separation on a child's ability to learn or manage social situations.

Some points for you to remember

AB 490 Protections

- ▶ Child has right to attend their school of origin for duration of school year.
- ▶ CWS must try to keep child in their current school.
- ▶ Foster Youth Services liaison.
- ▶ Right to immediate enrollment.
- ▶ Right to get partial coursework credit.
- ▶ Right to graduate from their school.
- ▶ Not penalized for absences due to their situation.



Your Notes

Health needs of children in care

- ▶ Children in out of home care have more health problems than other children.
- ▶ 9 out of 10 come into care with at least one health problem that needs medical attention.
- ▶ Children often have chronic health conditions.
- ▶ Children in care have gaps in medical history and medical care.



Some points for you to remember

Health needs of children in care:

- Asthma
- Infections
- Lice/scabies
- Skin problems
- Obesity and diabetes
- Severe dental disease
- Anemia
- Effects of poor nutrition and failure to thrive
- Eating disorders
- Premature birth
- Developmental delays
- Effects of pre-natal substance exposure



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Caregiver role in health care

- ▶ Get health history from social worker at placement and share with the child's doctor.
- ▶ Exercise universal precautions
- ▶ Get Medi-Cal benefits card at placement, ask for name of existing doctor and Health and Education Passport.
- ▶ Make an appointment for a CHDP well-child medical and dental appointment within 30 days of the child's placement in your home. Have doctor fill out Health Contact Form (HEP 30) for every doctor visit and obtain paperwork from MD.
- ▶ Follow up with any recommended treatment and inform social worker.
- ▶ Provide documentation to your worker at each monthly visit.



Your Notes

What is a CHDP well-child exam?

Broad evaluation that includes:

- ▶ Evaluation of known medical history
- ▶ Physical Exam
- ▶ Nutrition screening
- ▶ Hearing and Vision examination
- ▶ Evaluation of developmental/educational progress
- ▶ Dental Health screening
- ▶ Recommended lab tests and immunizations

Some points for you to remember

A CHDP must be completed within thirty days of the child's initial placement in your care; from that point on, CHDP/Well Child Check Ups are scheduled by your physician.



Your Notes

What is a Health and Education Passport?

- ▶ A set of records of child's known health and medical history and records of follow up care.
- ▶ The passport travels with the child while in placement and resource parent maintains records.
- ▶ Addresses fragmentation of medical history that results in poor care of children in care.



Some points for you to remember



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

California Children's Services (CCS)

- ▶ A state Health Services program that provides special medical care and funding for serious, chronic and disabling physical conditions or diseases.
- ▶ Project Follow Up: high risk infant evaluations
- ▶ Diagnostic Program: refers and pays for evaluation by medical specialists.
- ▶ Treatment Program: comprehensive case management and funding to treat serious conditions.



Your Notes

A moral life

- ▶ Think back and talk about how you learned right from wrong in your family.
- ▶ How did your cultural community guide your development of a conscience?
- ▶ What is the difference between discipline and punishment?



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Consider the Attachment Cycle we spoke about in Module 2. Attachment is a learning process that underlies the development of trust in others, our self-image (self value, how we respond to others), and how we make choices based on this critical learning process.

What helps us learn right from wrong?

- A healthy and safe relationship with someone who can provide feedback to us about our behavior.
- Goal is to INTERNALIZE the idea of acting rightly.

Our Behavior is Communication

Discipline starts by understanding the function, or the meaning of your child's behaviors as well as your own parenting style.

Discussion:

- ▶ How does a young child express discomfort – physical pain, emotional pain?
- ▶ What is your parenting style?

Remember, discipline is modeled and taught by adults to children.

Some points for you to remember

The Continuum of Discipline:

- Promoting Positive Behavior
- Promoting Self Control
- Responding to Lack of Self Control



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Punishment vs Discipline

- ▶ Punishment is about imposing your control on another person, or expressing YOUR OWN dissatisfaction/anger/frustration about a person or situation.
- ▶ Discipline is about teaching, e.g. root of the word discipline, DISC, is the root for many words and concepts that focus on teaching or modeling for a child:
 - Discuss
 - Discourse
 - Discover
 - Disciple



Your Notes

You can figure out the need behind a behavior.

Understanding your child's behaviors is possible by looking at:

- ▶ The Setting of the behavior – where/when is the behavior occurring.
- ▶ The Antecedents to the behavior – what happened immediately before the behavior.
- ▶ The Consequences of the behavior – what happened after the behavior – did the child avoid a task? Did the behavior lead to the child avoiding closeness with you and your family?

It may be that the child does not know the reason behind the behaviors and the way it affects others.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Based on observations...

- Connect the setting, antecedents and consequences to the behavior:
- This cycle is called a “movement cycle” that is what happened from the very beginning to the very end of the behavior.

Deduce the function of the behavior...that is the goal of the behavior:

- Expression of feelings – trauma, difficulty attaching, maybe the child just had a hard day.
- Seeking attention – but the child does not have the skills to do so in an appropriate way
- Avoid an unsettling situation – the child may not know how to self regulate

Children express their feelings through behavior – it's necessary to read into, interpret their behaviors using a trauma lens.

- Children may engage in negative behaviors in response to separation or traumatic/neglectful experiences.
- Children may be triggered in response to neutral events.
- Caregivers need to learn different skills and strategies to handle these behaviors.

Logical Consequences

- ▶ Logical consequences are situations engineered by the person in authority that are logically connected to the wrong. It is logical because it "fits" the offense.
- ▶ Logical consequences can be very effective in teaching self regulation and social skills that the child did not previously have the opportunity to learn.



Your Notes

LET'S BRAINSTORM SOME LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES...

Some points for you to remember

Logical consequences are effective because they teach children and youth that the "punishment fits the crime", much like the real world works.

There are times when parents need to step in with logical consequences in order for our children to not have to face the natural consequences. This is because our children may be ill equipped to manage the real world and today's world is scary and our kids need our help.

Time Out/Time Away:

- It's important to consult with a Mental Health Professional prior to starting a Time Out procedure with a child you don't know.
- Keep in mind that Time Out may bring about a trauma event for a child, that is if the child was subjected to isolation or other types of terrifying events.

Additional points about Time Out:

- Allows time for the child and adult reflect.
- Is not punitive, it's only supposed to last as long as necessary.
- Important for parent to follow and dialogue with the child about the logical relationship between the time out and the child's behavior.

Child Welfare Discipline Policy

- ▶ No physical discipline of child in care.
- ▶ No physical discipline of other children in front of a child in care.
- ▶ Logical and natural consequences for behavior.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

The key is to prevent the child from being re-traumatized in while in care.

- Requires that the Resource Parent be vigilant about the child's readiness to share closeness with others, so that a child avoids closeness or has difficulty adapting to your home:
- Is most likely an indication that the child is not able to trust others or otherwise manage interpersonal closeness.
- Is most likely unaware that he/she is acting out/rejecting the closeness.
- Is unaware that he/she is acting out traumas.

What is Culture?

- ▶ Culture is the systems of knowledge shared by a group of people.
- ▶ Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior; that is the totality of a person's learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted/taught.
- ▶ A culture is a way of life of a group of people--the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one person or generation to the next.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Cultural awareness - refers to:

- Awareness of one's own cultural values and biases.
- Awareness of the other's experience and background.

Cultural Humility – As members of the CWS team, we strive to stay aware that we cannot know everything about a person's cultural background. It's important that we take the opportunity to learn about the child, that is:

- Ask the child or those close to share about the child's preferred traditions.
- Do research and learn about the relevant traditions that you can incorporate into your home.

Most important, we must listen closely to our children's verbal and nonverbal communication. The main source of problems in caring for children from diverse cultural backgrounds is the lack of understanding and tolerance.

Very often, neither the resource parent nor the child understands the other's perspective, it takes time to learn!

When getting to know the cultural influences on a child's values, behavior and performance, we have to avoid the conclusions that:

- Culture makes no real difference in the grand scheme.
- Cultural differences justify inappropriate behaviors or interactions.

The Many Cultures we Live In

Our individual culture is made up of:

- ▶ Our racial or ethnic background
- ▶ The region of the country, state or county we grew up in
- ▶ The home we grew up in and the home we've made as adults
 - every family and home has a specific culture
- ▶ The many subcultures we can be of part of, e.g.:
 - Spirituality/Faith
 - Profession
 - Clubs or other social groups



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Can you share examples of key traditions, activities and people who helped you develop a sense of identity?

The needs of LGBTQ youth

LGBTQ youth are at high risk for:

- ▶ Bullying and hate crimes
- ▶ Physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- ▶ Trafficking
- ▶ Mental/Behavioral Health Concerns

Some points for you to remember

Be Culturally Humble!!

- Learn words and terms that are relevant and respectful.
- Explore your beliefs and biases
- Learn about LGBT youth developmental needs.
- Understand the process of Coming Out.

Create an inclusive and accepting home life.

Assure safe community and school setting.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ Youth

LGBTQ Youth have the right to:

- ▶ Express their orientation to others.
- ▶ Get support for their feelings as part of normal sexual development.
- ▶ Be free from harassment.
- ▶ Engage in inclusive social activities.
- ▶ Express their orientation through clothing, jewelry and hairstyle.
- ▶ Have access to LGBTQ inclusive materials.



Your Notes

Some points for you to remember

**HOW CAN YOU LINK A CHILD TO THEIR
CULTURE IN YOUR HOME, THE
COMMUNITY AND WITH THEIR BIRTH
FAMILY?**



Your Notes



Thank You!!

