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## Statewide Report for Trainers and County Administrators: Analysis of Common Core Data, December 2007

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### BACKGROUND:

In 2002, CalSWEC and the California Regional Training Academies/Inter- University Consortium began development of a statewide evaluation of common core training. This evaluation is part of the strategic plan for multi-level evaluation of child welfare training in California. The purpose of the strategic plan for training evaluation is to develop rigorous methods to assess and report effectiveness of training so that the findings can be used to improve training and training-related activities. In doing so, the strategic plan is directly responsive to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Program Improvement Plan (PIP).<sup>1</sup>

The development of the Common Core evaluations is following a rigorous process to insure that test items reflect the competencies, learning objectives, and content of the curricula and measure trainee learning as accurately and consistently as possible. Knowledge test plans and test items and embedded skills assessment tools have been developed and critiqued by teams representing the RTAs/IUC, CalSWEC, counties, and consultants. Test items and supporting materials have undergone multiple revisions by these teams prior to use in testing situations. Some will undergo more revision as the teams review testing findings. Results reported here are based only on items that have met review and performance standards; however, it is important to remember that the both the curricula and tests are in a pilot stage and results may vary slightly from year to year or as different versions of tests and curricula are implemented.

### RESULTS FOR THE YEAR (10/06 - 9/07):

Results are shown here for pre- and post-knowledge testing in the Placement and Permanency and Case Planning modules, and for the embedded skills assessment in Child Maltreatment Identification, Part I. Trainee profiles are also included which show select demographic, educational, and experience differences for trainees during this time period.

**Overall, trainees are learning information identified as important by expert teams representing the RTAs/IUC, CalSWEC, and counties. Their knowledge from pre- to post-test increases at a statistically significant level.**

### HOW ARE THE EVALUATION FINDINGS BEING USED?

- Knowledge test results are being used to show whether or not participants are learning important facts, concepts, procedures, and relationships.
- Information on how trainees respond to individual items is being used to identify areas in the curricula that are unclear or need to be expanded or updated, as well as to identify test items that are too easy, too difficult, or unclear.

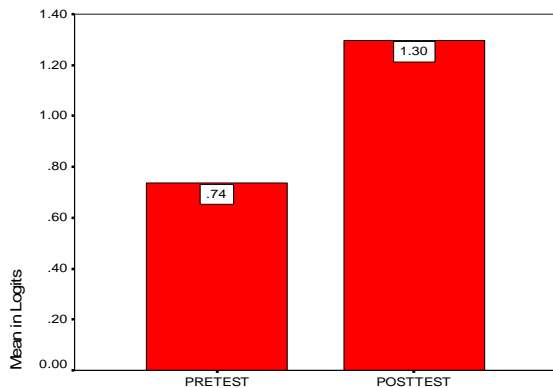
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<sup>1</sup> "Training Evaluation Report", California Social Work Education Center, December 20, 2004

- Demographic and other background variables are used both to provide profiles of the workforce participating in Core training, and to aid in identifying issues with individual test items. Differences in the percentage of people from different groups who answer a test item incorrectly may reflect important differences in local practice, the way curriculum is being delivered regionally, or how trainees of different races or genders understand a question's content. These differences are tracked as part of the test validation process and items that are problematic will be rewritten or dropped.

## - RESULTS FOR COMMON CORE TOPICS -

### Curriculum Topic: Placement and Permanency



**Test Versions:** 1.0 and 1.1.

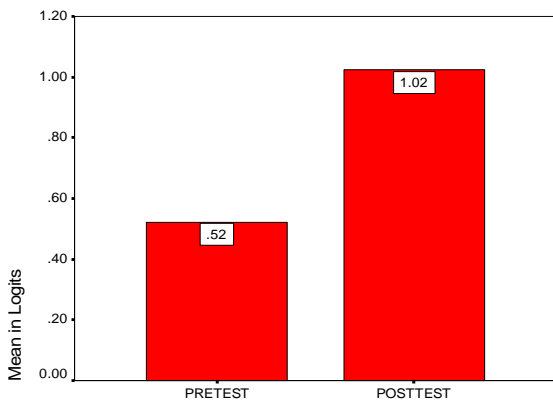
**Date Range:** Classes conducted between 10/1/06 and 9/30/07. Data submitted by due date of 9/30/07

**N=682** complete pairs of pre and posttests

- BAA N=23
- Central N=69
- IUC N=171
- Northern N=100
- Southern N=319

**\*Gains from pre to posttest are statistically significant.**

### Curriculum Topic: Family Engagement in Case Planning and Case Management



**Test Versions:** 1.0 - 1.25.

**Date Range:** Classes conducted between 10/1/06 and 9/30/07. Data submitted by due date of 9/30/07

**N=674** complete pairs of pre and posttests

- Central N=111
- IUC N=139
- Northern N=126
- Southern N=298

**\* Gains from pre to posttest are statistically significant.**

Data Range: 10/1/06 -9/30/07

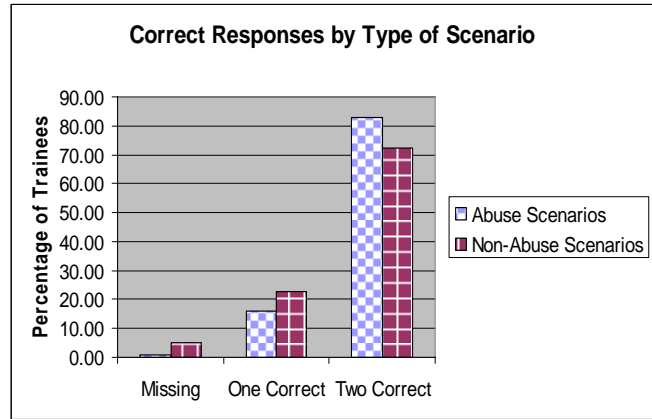
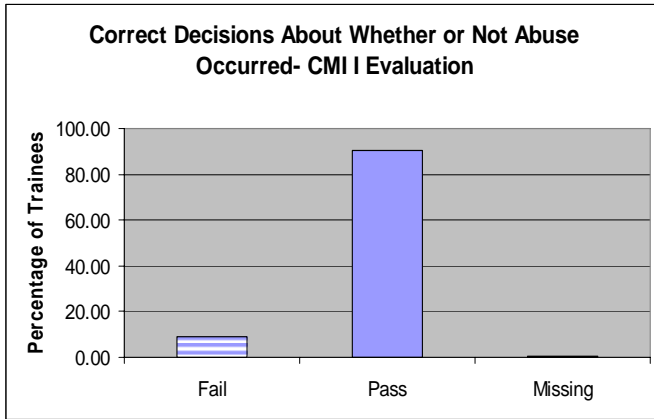
### Curriculum Topic: Child Maltreatment Identification, Part 1

The strategic plan identified the need to evaluate the key skill area of child maltreatment identification with an embedded skills assessment. Embedded assessments build on activities that are already part of the training day both to provide evaluation data and reinforce key learning through additional practice and feedback.

The embedded evaluation for Child Maltreatment Identification, Part 1 requires participants to analyze potential indicators of abuse in four different scenarios and make overall decisions about whether or not the children described have been victims of physical abuse. In Part A, trainees must decide whether each of 13 elements that can indicate abuse is present in the scenario, is not present, or requires more information to make a decision. In Part B, trainees

must make an overall decision about whether or not abuse has occurred, and in Part C they must indicate the three most important elements in making their decision. These are then given credit if they match those identified as most important by an expert group.

Results are presented here for the overall decision regarding abuse (Part B):



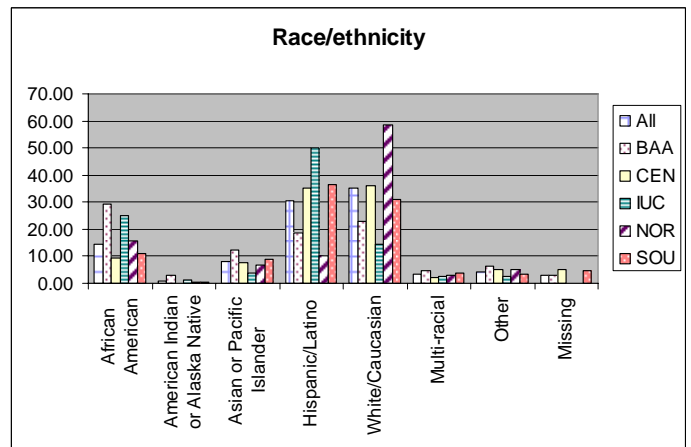
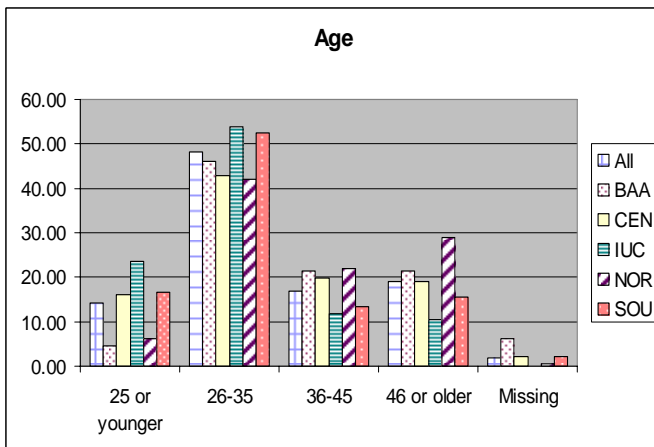
- Just over 90% of trainees passed Part B with a minimum of 3 correct<sup>2</sup>.
- Trainees did slightly better in when the decision was abuse than when it was not abuse, and this result may be due to a slight skew in the results. More specifically, trainees did especially well on one of the abuse scenarios where the perpetrator acknowledged hitting the child with a belt, which may have skewed somewhat the overall results. (The other abuse scenario had more subtle factors indicating that abuse occurred.)

## - RESULTS FOR DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION -

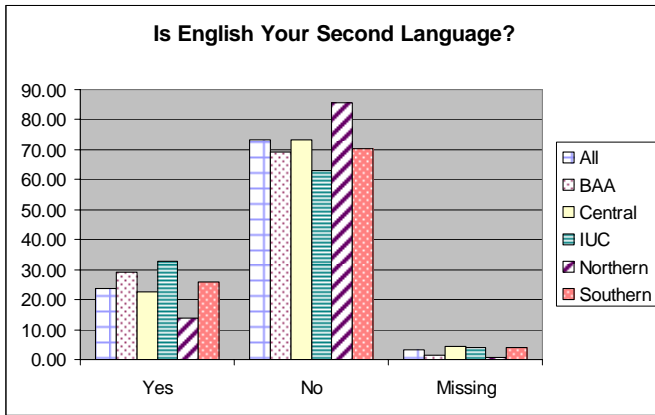
### Trainee Demographic Profiles:

Trainee profiles are shown in the following tables for the key variables of age, race, ESL status, child welfare experience prior to their current position, educational level, and Title IV-E participation, statewide and by region. Bars represent the percentage of trainees in each category.

### Demographics



<sup>2</sup> Graph based on 206 responses to the latest versions (1.1. and 1.2) of the evaluation, administered between February and August 2007. All regions are represented with the exception of IUC which was using an older version of the evaluation during this time period.



## Education and Experience

