

Curriculum Introduction (Trainee's Guide)

This half day curriculum focuses on critical thinking activities that link critical thinking to assessment. Throughout the training, the trainer will guide the trainees through the activities and facilitate active participation in the development of a critical thinking framework.

It is recommended that trainees take one of the Harvard Implicit Bias Tests (available here: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>) after this module and that they use their experience with the test to extend efforts to identify potential bias that could impact their work.

Some content in this curriculum was developed by NCCD and the Northern California Training Academy as part of the Safety Organized Practice Curriculum. Safety Organized Practice (SOP) is a collaborative practice approach that emphasizes the importance of teamwork in child welfare. SOP aims to build and strengthen partnerships with the child welfare agency and within a family by involving their informal support networks of friends and family members. A central belief in SOP is that all families have strengths. SOP uses strategies and techniques that align with the belief that a child and his or her family are the central focus, and that the partnership exists in an effort to find solutions that ensure safety, permanency, and well-being for children. Safety Organized Practice is informed by an integration of practices and approaches including:

- Solution-focused practice¹
- Signs of Safety²
- Structured Decision making³
- Child and family engagement⁴
- Risk and safety assessment research
- Group Supervision and Interactional Supervision⁵
- Appreciative Inquiry⁶
- Motivational Interviewing⁷
- Consultation and Information Sharing Framework⁸
- Cultural Humility
- Trauma-informed practice

¹ Berg, I.K. and De Jong, P. (1996). Solution-building conversations: co-constructing a sense of competence with clients. *Families in Society*, pp. 376-391; de Shazer, S. (1985). *Keys to solution in brief therapy*. NY: Norton; Saleebey, D. (Ed.). (1992). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. NY: Longman.

² Turnell, A. (2004). Relationship grounded, safety organized child protection practice: dreamtime or real time option for child welfare? *Protecting Children*, 19(2): 14-25; Turnell, A. & Edwards, S. (1999). *Signs of Safety: A safety and solution oriented approach to child protection casework*. NY: WW Norton; Parker, S. (2010). *Family Safety Circles: Identifying people for their safety network*. Perth, Australia: Aspirations Consultancy.

³ Children's Research Center. (2008). *Structured Decision Making: An evidence-based practice approach to human services*. Madison: Author.

⁴ Weld, N. (2008). The three houses tool: building safety and positive change. In M. Calder (Ed.) *Contemporary risk assessment in safeguarding children*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.

⁵ Lohrbach, S. (2008). Group supervision in child protection practice. *Social Work Now*, 40, pp. 19-24.

⁶ Cooperrider, D. L. (1990). Positive image, positive action: The affirmative basis of organizing. In S. Srivasta, D.L. Cooperrider and Associates (Eds.). *Appreciative management and leadership: The power of positive thought and action in organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

⁷ Miller, W.R. & Rollnick, S. (2012). *Motivational Interviewing*, (3rd Ed.). NY: Guilford Press.

⁸ Lohrbach, S. (1999). *Child Protection Practice Framework - Consultation and Information Sharing*. Unpublished manuscript; Lohrbach, S. & Sawyer, R. (2003). Family Group Decision Making: a process reflecting partnership based practice. *Protecting Children*. 19(2):12-15.

Tips for Training this Curriculum (Trainer's Guide)

MATERIALS

The SDM Policy and Procedures Manual, vignettes, sample tools and answer keys used in this curriculum are produced by the Children's Research Center. Please contact Rod Caskey (rcaskey@mw.nccd-crc.org) at the Children's Research Center for access to these materials. Because CRC makes regular updates to the materials, please ensure you are using the most recent materials when you present this curriculum.

COUNTY VARIATIONS IN PRACTICE

While all counties using the Structured Decision Making Tools follow the standardized assessment format and use the same SDM tools and definitions, there are some variations in county practice regarding some aspects of implementation, policy and use of supporting materials. Prior to presenting this training module, review the county policies and practices for standardized assessment and confer with county administration regarding specific county practices.

In addition, some counties provide separate staff training regarding the SDM Hotline Tools. Prior to offering this module, determine whether or not the trainees will receive the hotline content. The hotline content is marked optional in the curriculum for this reason. If the hotline content is included, shorten the time allowed for other segments to ensure completion of all the required segments.

USE OF SDM TOOLS FOLLOWING THIS TRAINING

After completing the Assessment Skills Lab curriculum, trainees can begin using the SDM tools as part of their social work practice; however, please ensure trainees understand that this initial training does not make them expert users of the SDM tools. The classroom training they receive with this module must be reinforced with field learning, regular supervision, and mentoring. We also STRONGLY recommend that social workers participate in the relevant advanced SDM training modules approximately 3 months after using the tools in the field to expand and reinforce their knowledge.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Because this training is activity rather than lecture based, trainers should have extensive knowledge of the Structured Decision Making Tools and experience using the tools. Trainers should be prepared to address a wide variety of trainee questions in the moment relying on the SDM Policy Manual and professional experience. Regional Training Academies may have additional resources for preparing trainers to present this curriculum.

SAFETY ORGANIZED PRACTICE

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