



# QUARTER 4

## PIP 2.2.1 (B)

## **Evidence of Incorporation of Nevada Initiative Statement into Nevada New Worker Core Curriculum**

### **Notebook**

- Place text of Nevada Initiative Statement in the back cover of NNWC participant notebooks

### **Pre-Core Conference**

- Incorporated statement as a foundation of NNWC

### **Module 1**

- A1 - Initiative Statement in NNWC introduction
- A2 – Initiative Statement outlined and reviewed on slide
- B2 – Incorporated into authority –management discussion and referenced in Handout #17
- C2 – Highlighted use of active-listening in curriculum and powerpoint
- C4 – Highlighted use of active-listening and referenced statement

### **Module 2**

- B1 – Emphasized concept of joining  
Highlighted concept of individuality of client families in discussion of how a family should be served and incorporated into powerpoint  
Reinforced concepts of the statement during discussion of child and family teams

### **Module 3**

- B5 – Referenced in discussion regarding involving family in assessment process and incorporated into Handout #39

### **Module 4**

- A3 – Concepts reinforced in curriculum and powerpoint

# Pre-Core Conference Format

*Child Welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.*

## 1. Overview of Training

- ⇓ Review of Modules
- ⇓ Review of Pre-classroom Readings and Activities (Module I)
- ⇓ Review of Post-classroom Activities (OJT Activities between the modules)
- ⇓ Discussion of the Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT) web-based registration, and access to Resource Guides

## 2. Training Expectations and Guidelines

- ⇓ Attendance at Sessions
- ⇓ Participation in Training Activities
- ⇓ Completion of OJT Assignments
- ⇓ Core Training Weekly Feedback Form

## 3. Assessment of Trainee Strengths and Needs

## 4. Other Agenda Items

**Section A1****Getting Started in Child Welfare Practice****Initiative Statement**

Child Welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family.

**Purpose**

To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.

**Rationale**

People enter training programs with diverse experiences, abilities, needs, and emotions. Accepting and exploring these in a safe, structured manner promotes group cohesion and common purpose.

**Enabling Abilities**

Participants will be able to:

***Cognitive***

- ✓ Describe the personal strengths (e.g., skills, values, knowledge) they bring to child welfare.
- ✓ Describe the components of the training program.

***Affective***

- ✓ Appreciate the diversity of strengths new caseworkers bring to the job, as well as the challenge of learning new skills.

***Operative***

- ✓ Develop realistic learning goals for the training program.



## Exploring the Foundation of Child Welfare Practice

(1 hour, 30 minutes)



### Trainer Note:

This should just be a brief review of the foundation. It is merely an overview, as all the elements will be explored more in depth throughout the curriculum.



Display PowerPoint, EXPLORING THE FOUNDATION OF CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE which highlights the content below.



State:



"Let's look at the section of HANDOUT 7: A FRAMEWORK OF CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE (page 11) that details the philosophy and values that guide our work and guide us as we work towards bringing about change."

- When you build a house, you begin with the foundation. The foundation is at the bottom of everything we build. It is no different with the child welfare system. It is the base for our system on a large perspective, and it parallels the base for the relationship you have with each family.
- The foundation in child welfare consists of philosophy and values. Without it, we would not have any common direction with our families. Let's explore these terms a little bit more.
- Give participants a few minutes to look over the philosophy and values.



Ask trainees if anything in these categories jumps at them.



Ask if any of these points seem contrary to what they have thought about was involved in child welfare practice.

This foundation of beliefs and principles guides how we work with families. It directs our casework process.



"The next section of HANDOUT 7 (Page 13) is CASEWORK PROCESS. It involves a number of different methods we use when we work with families."



Show PowerPoint, NEVADA INITIATIVE STATEMENT. Read the statement and ask participants what the statement means to them. Develop a discussion around the importance of the initiative statement and the need for each child welfare worker to be accountable to the statement in their practice.



Show PowerPoint, CASEWORK..., and process with the information below.



# Nevada Initiative Statement

*Child Welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support the implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family.*

**What Does this Mean to YOU?**



**State:**

- The power and authority of the child welfare caseworker is real and significant. It must also be used as only a part of our work with families.
- Tension can exist between the activities caseworkers do to keep children safe (i.e., placement) and the activities caseworkers do to keep children at home and preserve the family (i.e., family preservation services, connecting with resources). Some of this tension can be resolved, however, by focusing on the larger picture—the development of the relationship and our focus on maintaining or rebuilding the relationship between the parent and their children.
- Caseworkers need to assist their parents in making necessary changes so that they may protect and nurture their children and preserve the integrity of the family.
- In order to do this, families need to see that the caseworker is far more than an authority figure.
- Although the caseworker is often initially perceived in a negative way due to this authority, the caseworker can change this perception. If the caseworker helps the family to identify strengths and needed resources instead of blaming, judging, or penalizing them, then the caseworker can get beyond the authority issue so that the family sees the worker as a partner rather than an authority figure.

***Formulating Authority – Managing Statements*****(35 MINUTES)****Instruct participants:**

- While we have just begun our discussion of authority, we want you to have an opportunity to prepare a statement to a parent that demonstrates your ability to manage the authority embodied in the child welfare caseworker's role.



Show PowerPoint, FORMULATING AUTHORITY-MANAGING STATEMENTS. Use PowerPoint as instructions for next activity.



Refer participants to HANDOUT 17: MY STATEMENT TO A PARENT (page 31). Review the instructions on the handout. Allow participants **5 minutes** to complete.



Show PowerPoint, MORE WITH AUTHORITY-MANAGING STATEMENTS.



After participants have written their statements, they should share their statements with the other members at their table, or in small groups if this is easier.

- Each group should choose a statement that represents their best efforts to reduce the negative perception a parent might have when entering into a relationship with child welfare.



Elicit each group's statements. Process the activity with the following instructions:



- As the statements are read, either respond as though you were the parent or invite members of the other tables to report their reactions to the statement.
- Validate those that in your judgment would serve the professional helping relationship and those that support the Nevada Initiative Statement.
- For those statements at odds with the professional helping relationship, facilitate this awareness and guide participants in reconstructing the statement.

## Summary Points



Show PowerPoint, IN SUMMARY.

- Strike a balance between our *helper/empowerer* and *authority* roles.
- Maintain focus on the child's need for safety & permanence.
- Straight-forward + non-judgmental about addressing parents' concerns = fear and anxiety.
- Cooperation depends on our focus on child safety and family strengths.



Conclude:

- Caseworkers need to balance the sometimes conflicting responsibilities of being an authority and of trying to develop a change-oriented collaborative relationship.
- This is a dilemma that can be solved by maintaining a dual focus on the child's need for safety and for permanence with his or her family.
- By addressing parents' concerns in a caring, forthright, and nonjudgmental fashion, caseworkers can defuse some of the fear and anxiety that parents naturally experience.
- Cooperation is influenced by how well caseworkers convey their intent to use the helping relationship to promote actions that lead toward resolution of the issues and problems that brought them into the family in the first place.

The professional helping relationship is the vehicle used to help families understand the child welfare issues negatively affecting their family and to facilitate necessary changes. Within that relationship is the dynamic of your authority. While this dynamic must be understood by the caseworker and managed effectively, it is never subsumed by the relationship and the focus of your work with the family while they are in the child welfare system.



**Transition:** In the next section we'll introduce the concept of human needs, an important concept in understanding and working with families.



## Handout 17: My Statement to a Parent

Imagine that you have been given a new case with a parent who you will be interviewing for the first time this afternoon. She's a 22-year-old single parent of a four-year-old, a two-year-old, and an infant. The hospital made a referral after the two-year-old came in with a broken wrist (the second in less than a year), and they noticed suspicious bruises on the child.

Imagine yourself starting to work with this parent, after learning from a senior child welfare caseworker in your agency that the parent herself was known to the agency as a child, having been maltreated by her authoritarian father, and then by her abusive stepfather. The experienced caseworker remembers that this parent has particularly low self-esteem and is generally afraid and mistrustful around authority figures.

**Instructions:** Write down, individually, the content of the message you want to convey to this parent about your attitudes and beliefs about the use authority. Then, in a small group, choose a statement that represents your group's best efforts to reduce the negative perception a parent might have when entering into a relationship with the child welfare worker.



*Consider the Nevada Initiative Statement as you compose your statement to the parent.*

- The skill component is thinking strategically how to use attending behaviors to convey to the parent your willingness and ability to focus on them, towards the end of using the professional helping relationship to achieve child welfare outcomes.

## ***Defining Attending***

**(5 MINUTES)**



Show PowerPoint, ATTENDING IS..., and review the information

The conveyance of respect, acceptance, and interest in a person through use of:

- the environment and one's body
- observing and listening
- verbal and nonverbal responses
- active listening



Show PowerPoint, MAJOR COMPONENTS OF ATTENDING.



Invite participants to summarize their understanding of the major components of attending. Cover the following:

- Attending has both physical and psychological dimensions.
- Physical attending involves the intentional use of the environment and the body to demonstrate respect for, acceptance of, and interest in the person.
- Psychological attending involves observing and assessing the person's nonverbal behaviors and appropriately responding to them.

## ***Considering Nonverbal Behavior***

**(15 MINUTES)**



State: "As you recollect from your reading, many of the behaviors of attending are related to nonverbals—being aware of our own, and observing and interpreting those of parents."



Show PowerPoint, NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (HANDOUT 30, P. 56) (HANDOUT 31, P. 57). Use PowerPoint to review following information.



Explain:

- Nonverbal behavior is a type of communication involving the body and/or the environment.
- Paraverbal communication includes tone of voice, a sigh, a gasp of fear, a wail of grief, and the like.





# Attending is...

**The conveyance of  
respect, acceptance, and  
interest in a person  
through use of:**

- *the environment and one's body*
- *observing and listening*
- *verbal and nonverbal responses*
- *acknowledging the*



growth



- Professionals are influenced by their feelings, as well, and it is an important task to continually evaluate your own feelings relative to parents, colleagues, and the work itself. This understanding will help strengthen your interactions with both your parents and colleagues.

## Clarifying Types of Feelings

(30 MINUTES)



Show PowerPoint, STEP 1: CLARIFYING TYPES OF FEELINGS. Use PowerPoint to assist in process.



Instruct participants to identify typical feelings that everyone experiences. List these on the flipchart.



State:



- To *fine-tune* our approach to feelings, we must first be *in-tune* to parents' feelings. We can look at all emotions as reflecting one of four states of being: angry, sad, joyful/glad, fearful/scared. One cannot truly reflect without "active listening [refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement]."
- To work with parents, you must be able to understand their feelings so that you can help them understand their feelings. This is done towards the end of utilizing these insights to influence their behavior in a way compatible with the achievement of child welfare outcomes. Understanding the feelings allows us to be able to reflect back.
- What is the function of each emotion?
- In order to put forth our best reflections, we have to understand the depth of feelings.



Show PowerPoint, UNIVERSAL EMOTIONS. Use PowerPoint to lead the discussion.



Refer to HANDOUT 37: UNIVERSAL EMOTIONS (page 67).

The ability to recognize emotions in yourself and others is an essential social skill. In the 1960s researcher Paul Ekman set out to determine if facial expressions and the emotions they conveyed were culturally specific or universal. To his surprise he found seven basic emotions were the same in all the cultures studied. Emotions are coupled with a physiological response from the body. Some responses can happen quickly and others slower depending on the situation. The following are some typical physiological responses to emotions.

**Anger**—Blood flows to the hands, heart rate increases, hormone rush--adrenaline

**Disgust**—a common facial expression—the upper lip curls to the side as the nose wrinkles slightly



- Rake and shovel: Tools that are necessary to dig for the gold. Sometimes you may need the shovel to dig deep, or use a rake to gather up the information on the surface. Tools can also be used to plant seeds for change.
- Globe: The environment/context within which problems occur and solutions can be found. You also may need to look in a lot of places to get information and find solutions.
- Screen: The criteria used to separate the gold from all other available information. You may need to sift through lots of information before you get to the information you really need.

## **Defining Assessment**

**(15 MINUTES)**



Refer to PowerPoint, ASSESSMENT IS....



- The process of gathering and analyzing information for the purpose of making decisions *with the family* about the need for change and the actions that will promote change.



Remind them of their pre-training reading assignment, *A Framework for Assessment in Child Welfare*, which offered a definition of assessment. Remind them that assessment is the first step in our intervention with families



Show PowerPoint, ASSESSMENT. Use PowerPoint to process the following points.



State:

- Assessment looks at the ways children's needs—including safety and development—are being met and in what ways they are not.
- Assessment identifies the need for change and links the need to the well-being of the children.
- Child welfare caseworkers—as agents of change—assess with the family the behaviors that are creating or failing to create the conditions that promote the safety, well-being, and continuing development of the children.



Show PowerPoint, ASSESSMENT (2<sup>ND</sup> SLIDE).



- *With the family*, caseworkers identify strengths and resources that can help achieve the identified changes within the time frames established by laws such as ASFA. We have 12 months in which to do a permanency plan, and in Nevada, we look to terminate parental rights when children are in placement for 14 out of 20 months.
- The blueprint for change—a service plan—is the product of the process of assessment and should be individualized, built upon strengths, and meet the identified needs of the family.

- The first decision we must make is, “Is this a family we should serve?” In other words, do the problems/needs being experienced by a family warrant child welfare intervention? To make this decision, child welfare caseworkers must answer these five questions. Safety and risk are key to many of the decisions we make. We will be discussing these terms much more in Module 3, but let’s briefly clarify these two terms. Safe means the child is not in present or impending danger of serious harm. Risk is the likelihood of any level of maltreatment in the future. Again, we will be discussing these at length in Module 3, but it is important to have an idea of these terms when discussing the decisions we make.
- We must also look at the second question, “Is change necessary?”
  - ✓ Often the answers to the subset of questions under “Is this a family we should serve?” make it easy to answer, “Is change necessary?”
  - ✓ Once we identify that change is necessary, standard assessment protocols help us to determine “what change is necessary” in order to increase safety, decrease risk, and improve family functioning and protective capacities.
- The third major decision is, “How should *this* family be served?”
  - ✓ What actions are needed to influence change where change is necessary?
  - ✓ What services should be put in place to increase safety and reduce risk?
  - ✓ Each family should be offered individualized services to build upon their strengths and meet their identified needs.
- The fourth major decision is, “When do we end our involvement?”
  - ✓ Should services be intensified?
  - ✓ Can services be stepped down?
  - ✓ Should the goal be changed?
  - ✓ Are the children safe and has risk been reduced?

Refer to PowerPoint, ASSESSMENT DECISION POINTS.

- Decide what type of information (gold) to acquire.
- Identify the sources of the information (globe) we need.
- Develop a strategy (choose the tools) for gathering the data.
- Develop a strategy for analyzing (the screen) the data to determine the meaning of information for child welfare.

Show PowerPoint, REVISITING KEY DECISION POINTS. Use PowerPoint to discuss the following points.

- We must keep revisiting these key decision points throughout the course of our work with families. “This is an ongoing continual process.”
- Because the decisions that must be made and the substantial amount of information that must be gathered and analyzed, we must make as many casework contacts as necessary.



# Decision Point Questions

## Handout 1 (Page 5)



- 1) Is this a family we should serve?
  - Is (are) the child(ren) safe?
  - Is (are) the child(ren) being maltreated?
  - Is there risk of harm?
  - Is there risk of foster care?
  - Is there risk of child welfare outcomes not being attained?
- 2) Is change necessary?
- 3) How should *this* family be served?
- 4) When do we end our involvement?

- Performing these tasks requires us to relate to children and families by forming and maintaining an effective professional helping relationship with them; thus, our first week was devoted to developing your abilities to get this information.
- Assessment leads to the development of a service plan that influences change in the conditions and/or behaviors that harm children or put the children at an unacceptable level of risk of abuse/maltreatment, delinquency, or of not achieving permanency and child well-being.
- Facilitating needed changes in families requires us to discover and utilize strengths within families and within the resources in their environment. In Nevada, we use Child and Family Teams to help us in this process.

***Trainer Note:***

You may need to check with participants to find out how much they know about Child and Family Teams. Do a brief review of the concept and refer back to the Nevada Initiative Statement.

## **Collaborating on Assessments**

**(20 MINUTES)**



Show PowerPoint, COLLABORATING ON ASSESSMENTS.



State:

- Once a Child and Family Team is established, it is crucial to communicate and establish other expectations and responsibilities toward the achievement of child welfare outcomes. Very seldom is it just us and the family. Hopefully, we will have many partners.
- In order to conduct and document collaborative assessments and service plans, all members of the team must rely on other team members to meet their responsibilities.
- Clear and ongoing communication is necessary to provide or clarify case information, reestablish expectations if needed, and strategically plan casework activities.
- When working with members of the team, it is important to pay attention to team needs and dynamics, while maintaining a focus on the needs of the family and answering the question, "How can we effectively work together to meet the family's needs?"
- Keep in mind, each team member brings "strengths" to the team. By remaining strengths-based, the team will be able to function more cohesively and better support each other and the family.



- Imagine that you are informed that you have no options regarding how to get to New York—you have to get there by a means established by someone else, even if it means spending too much money or doing something you find frightening, like flying or riding on a bus or hitchhiking.



Show PowerPoint, I'M WONDERING...



Ask:

- How many of you are wondering why this trip is necessary?
- Under these circumstances, how many of you would look for ways to get out of this trip?



State:

- In order to get you to New York, we have to come up with a plan that you are willing to use.
- There are lots of ways to get there—but few of you would go along with a plan that expected you to rob a bank in order to come up with sufficient cash for your ticket!
- We need to find a way to get you there that you are willing to and capable of implementing.
- This same thought process is useful for all child welfare caseworkers when developing and maintaining safety plans.



Show PowerPoint, GETTING TO A SAFETY PLAN

- The plans have to identify all the roadblocks (factors) that might impact safety.
- The plans need to be something that families will cooperate with; something they feel confident will meet their needs; something that they are willing and capable of implementing.



State:

- We are going to practice discussing child safety concerns and potential interventions with families, given that we need to develop plans that maximize the family's involvement and investment. Now that you understand the safety assessment and planning process and protocols, we are moving to a higher level of skill.



Show PowerPoint, HANDOUT 39: INVOLVING THE FAMILY IN THE ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY (page 124)



Review HANDOUT 39: INVOLVING THE FAMILY IN THE ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY (page 124), eliciting any questions and highlighting the key points of why the family's involvement is important. You can do this by telling them to read it over first, and then asking them to give examples of where involving the family has paid off by accomplishing one or more of these. Refer participants back to the Nevada Initiative Statement.



- It is respectful of the family.

## Handout 39: Involving the Family in the Assessment of Safety

The assessment of safety is an ongoing process throughout our work with a family. All child welfare workers, regardless of role, must be able to assess safety, and any worker could be in the position to take the first action to promote safety. There are many reasons why it is important to involve the family in this process of assessing safety.

### *Application of the Nevada Initiative Statement*

- Family Centered Practice
- Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being
- Family Decision Making

### *Increased Family Awareness of Safety Issues*

Some families are unaware of safety issues, such as tying a baby in a crib to prevent unsupervised wandering or leaving a 5-year-old unattended. Sometimes providing information can rectify the problem.

### *Recognition of Family Members as Experts*

Whatever their struggles, family members are experts on their own lives, including the problems they have experienced and the solutions they have attempted. They are also experts on their network of informal resources. The family's knowledge is key to casework assessment and intervention.

### *Respect for the Family's Rights*

Families have a right to be involved in the decisions made and actions taken that pertain to their members. We have a responsibility to help them do so to the extent they are willing and able.

### *Reasonable Efforts*

Law and regulation, grounded in the principles of good practice, dictate that *reasonable efforts* must be made to prevent placement of children, unless no other intervention can promote their safety. The family is the key resource for determining what alternatives to removal can promote the safety of the children.

When children are removed from the care and custody of their caregivers, information must be provided that explains whether reasonable efforts to prevent or eliminate the need for removal were made. If reasonable efforts were not made, then justification is required.

Nevada policy identifies a list of services that could be used to prevent placement. This list is examples only. These services may include family assessments, safety planning, diligent efforts to locate absent parents or relative resources, intensive family preservation, post-adoption support services, case management, counseling, daycare, respite services, homemaker services, services designed to increase parenting skills, family budgeting, coping with stress, health, and nutrition.

However, the court may waive "reasonable efforts" if:

1. Certain felonies have been committed against the child or another child of the parent; or
2. The parent has previously had parental rights to another child involuntarily terminated; or



3. “Aggravated circumstances” are present as specified and defined by state law.

Note that the court makes the determination to waive reasonable efforts, not child welfare.

### *Influencing Change-Readiness in the Family*

Most families, given opportunity and assistance, are the best source of long-term solutions to their own difficulties. Genuine efforts on the part of the child welfare worker to involve the family in assessing safety will increase their sense of discomfort with the present situation, help them internalize responsibility for it, give them a sense of efficacy that they can make positive choices on behalf of their children, and help them begin to see a future where their children's needs for safety and emotional security are met.

### *Reduction in the Risk of Violence/Increasing Worker Safety*

Many of us have a natural tendency to avoid raising difficult issues because of a fear of hostility. The risk of violence in what is often a tense situation can be reduced if family members feel they have the opportunity to speak and if the listener uses interpersonal helping skills that communicate a genuine interest in hearing and understanding the family's point of view.

### *Recognition of Progress*

Workers need to be aware of when a child formerly in impending danger of serious harm has become safe. The family is an excellent source of information about what has changed, how change occurred, and who or what can maintain the change—key factors in determining modifications to the plan of intervention. Information from the family helps the worker decide whether services can be decreased, must be increased, and if a child can return home if the child is in care as part of a Safety Plan. Also, if no progress has been made, nor is likely to be made in the foreseeable future, the information gathered from the family can help in deciding which alternative permanency planning goal may need to be pursued.



Show the film clip from the movie *Apollo 13* (5 minutes, 56 seconds) where ground crews from various NASA departments work with the astronauts on board the space ship to build an air filter out of a conglomeration of mismatched odds and ends.



Show PowerPoint WHO DOESN'T LOVE TOM HANKS? Process video with the following information:

- If not offered by participants, point out that they all believed there was a solution available to the crew on the ship if they all cooperated, remained open minded, and none of them thought he had the solution by himself. They valued each other's expertise and this, in turn, helped them work as a team.
- Solicit responses to the second question that include tape, a manual cover, a sock, a plastic bag.
- Do you think ground control and the crew considered all the possible ways a sock could be used before they gave thoughtful consideration to how to solve a specific problem with what was already available on the rocket?



Show, THE MORAL OF THE STORY



Explain:

- This belief is synonymous with the basic premise of the strengths approach utilized in child welfare, i.e., that solutions lie within the family. By identifying, utilizing, and adding resources to the family's basic strengths, and by working in partnership with them, strengths will support and sustain desired outcomes. The experience of teaming often brings out the best in everyone.



Tell participants that strengths can include the ability to identify and utilize needed resources in the community as well as within the family.

- Our environment presents us with sources of problems as well as solutions.
- As caseworkers, we need to identify what in the family's environment is disruptive or harmful and what or who in its environment might be able to be helpful. This latter concern helps us make the decision, "How should the family be served?"
- It is critically important to maintain a focus on strengths during the assessment process in order to avoid an exclusive emphasis on the family's deficits, problems, or pathology. Focusing on pathology is a rut to get in to, and it must be avoided if we are going to help families change.



Show PowerPoint, STRENGTHS = BUILDING BLOCKS FOR CHANGE

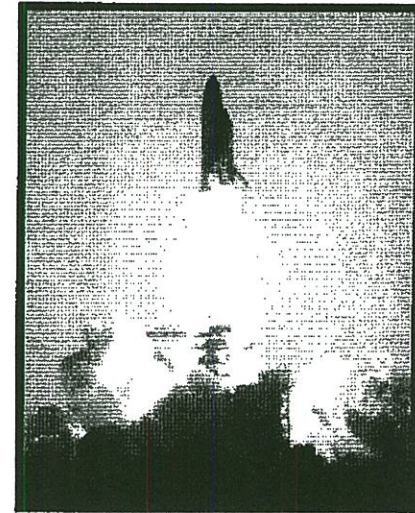
- Strengths are the building blocks for change and can be the mitigators of problems. They may not all be apparent, and the utility of strengths may not be apparent. Therefore, caseworkers may need to help the family discover their ability to build effective solutions. This can only happen if child welfare



# The Moral of the Story...

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- In space, solutions lie within the astronauts and the crew in Houston.
- In child welfare, solutions lie with families.



## **Incorporation of the Nevada Initiative Statement (NIS) within Intermediate Core Curriculum**

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

### **Weekly Binder**

- Include the Nevada Initiative Statement inside each participants binder on a note card (laminated/hardcopy) and/or Handout

### **Pre – Core Conference**

- There is no Pre Core Conference, however can incorporate NIS in Supervisory Information or Outline – Maybe attach to Mentorship Program Info

### **Intermediate Core Curriculum**

- **Stage 1:**
  - Section 1, Pg. 5 – Nevada Initiative Statement Activity Identified
  - Section 1, Pg. 9 - Nevada Initiative Statement Activity, PowerPoints, and Handout #3  
(The activity is simply a breakdown of the statement in which we ask the participants if they believe the statement to be true or false. Therefore in theory this statement would become the hallmark and foundation of beliefs for the entire Intermediate Core training and all casework practices.)
  - Section 2, Pg. 10 – Nevada Initiative Statement Outlined
  - Section 2, Pg. 16 - Discussion on how the use or misuse of the 3 Core Helping Conditions can affect the outcomes of the NIS
  - Section 3, Pg. 20 - Nevada Initiative Statement Outlined
  - Section 3, Pg. 29 - Highlights how biases and negative feelings towards the family may impact best practice which in turn impacts the NIS in curriculum and PowerPoint
  - Section 5, Pg. 39 - Nevada Initiative Statement Outlined
  - Section 5, Pg. 45 - Highlights the importance of communication with families in curriculum and on handout 11
  - Section 8, Pg. 61 - Nevada Initiative Statement Outlined
  - Section 8, Pg. 67 - Highlights the use of attending in curriculum and PowerPoint
  - Section 8, Pg. 71 - Highlights the use of active listening in curriculum
  - Section 8, Pg. 73 - Highlights the concept of reflection and a family's feelings in relationship and referenced to the NIS
  - Section 9, Pg. 76 – Day 2 - Initiative Statement Outlined and Incorporated within the Experiential Activities



➤ **Stage 2:**

- Section 1, Pg. 3 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 3, Pg. 16 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 3, Pg. 20 – Highlights how the safety and wellbeing of children greatly depends on the safety and well-being of the parents and family in the curriculum as indicated in the NIS and a PowerPoint slide will be added to reflect the following.
- Section 3, Pg. 21 – Highlights the importance of assessing caregivers protective capacity in conjunction with the NIS within the curriculum and notation made in the PowerPoint slide and Handout #33
- Section 3, Pg. 21 – Highlights the importance of involving the family in the safety assessment within the curriculum and Handout #34
- Section 4, Pg. 26 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 4, Pg. 27- Highlights the inclusion of the family oriented safety plan in accordance with the NIS in the curriculum and PowerPoint slide.
- Section 6, Pg.40 - Day 2 - Initiative Statement Outlined and Incorporated within the Experiential Activities

➤ **Stage 3:**

- Section 1, Pg. 3 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 3, Pg. 16 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 3, Pg.17 - Highlights the framework of practice and incorporates all of the “pieces” including the NIS within the curriculum and PowerPoint
- Section 5, Pg.31 - Day 2 - Initiative Statement Outlined and Incorporated within the Experiential Activities

➤ **Stage 4:**

- Section1, Pg. 3 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 4, Pg. 19 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 4, Pg. 20 & 21 - Highlights the importance of family involvement in CFT's in curriculum, PowerPoint, and Handouts #73A and 73B.
- Section 6, Pg. 29 - Day 2 - Initiative Statement Outlined and Incorporated within the Experiential Activities

➤ **Stage 5:**

- Section1, Pg. 3 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 5, Pg. 28 - Initiative Statement Outlined
- Section 5, Pg. 34 - TOL Activity Written Pledge of the NIS along with other tools and ideals to uphold once they begin working in the field and PowerPoint. (This activity is a transfer of learning tool and ultimately a pledge for the participants to remember that they have undertaken a promise to serve families to the best of their abilities by abiding by this statement.)

## Section I

### Introduction to Stage 1

<b>Purpose</b>	To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.
<b>Rationale</b>	This section prepares participants for the topics of the training by introducing trainers and participants, reviewing the plan for today's training, and providing an overview of forthcoming topics. Participants are engaged in the process through exploration of their learning needs and identification of how the training will address those needs.
<b>Activities</b>	Nevada Initiative Statement (T or F) Scavenger Hunt Introductions
<b>Materials</b>	Identify Learning Objectives <b>Handouts:</b> Handout 1: <i>Rules of the Road</i> Handout 2: <i>Personal Learning Objectives</i> Handout 3: True or False <b>Flipcharts:</b> None <b>Other Supplies:</b> None
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes





Assign participants to small groups and share with them that this is their opportunity to identify their own learning objectives with regard to today's topic. Given the identified agenda for today, ask them to identify those things about which they hope to learn more during the training today and tomorrow.

- Individually write down 1 or 2 learning objectives.
- Discuss your needs in small groups.
- Share 2 learning needs with the large group.

When groups reconvene and report back, document their needs on a flip chart. Discuss which learning needs will be covered in this training and which will be covered in a different stage of Intermediate Core.



Post the flip chart findings in a prominent area of the room. We will be referring back to it at the end of the training on Day 2.



Show PowerPoint TRUE OR FALSE



Refer Participants to Handout 3: True or False



Instruct the participants that you will be reading statements from Handout 3. For each question they will hold up their colored p “Green” side facing towards the trainer if they believe the question to be “True” and “Red” side facing the trainer if they believe the statement is “False”. Once all participants are ready begin reading the questions aloud. After all of the questions have been read turn to the next slide.



Show PowerPoint NEVADA INITIATIVE STATEMENT and use it to open a discussion about its purpose and why this is currently important for child welfare. What does this statement mean to you?



We have reviewed the plan for Stage 1 training. Next, we will turn our attention to engagement in child welfare.



# True or False

Handout  
3



- Listen to the statement that is being read.
- Decide whether the statement is “True” or False”
- For “True” statements hold up your “Green” sign and for “False” statements hold up the “RED” sign



### HANDOUT 3: TRUE OR FALSE

**Instructions:** Decide if each statement is True or False by holding up your paddle and showing the “Green” side for True and the “Red” side for False.

1. Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children’s needs.
2. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members.
3. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making.
4. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family.
5. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.



# Nevada Initiative Statement

Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.



## Section II

### Engagement & the Helping Relationship

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To develop participants' ability to utilize the core helping conditions to engage with individuals and families and to develop effective professional helping relationships.
<b>Rationale</b>	Child welfare professionals must develop quality relationships with individuals and families in order to conduct appropriate assessments and plan for targeted interventions to promote positive outcomes.
<b>Activities</b>	Define Engagement Suspending Judgment (photographs) Let's Give It a Whirl What Can You Do? Difficult Situation Handouts: None Flipcharts: None
<b>Materials</b>	Other Supplies: None
<b>Time</b>	60 minutes

Even the most challenging of families have strengths, so do individuals. Seek out those strengths in parents and work to reinforce them. This is a great starting point for change, and changing harmful conditions is key to successful child welfare outcomes.



This is a great time to highlight how the Core Helping Conditions can greatly affect the outcomes of this statement. Go through each sentence of the statement and ask participants how the use or misuse of respect, empathy, and genuineness can impact each sentence. Additionally, open a discussion on what consequences would this have on children and families.



Divide the class into 4 groups. Give each group a photograph and ask them to take 3-5 minutes to describe what they believe about this person based solely on the photograph. Have each group share their photograph and summary with the class.

After all groups have shared, summarize the actual stories of each person utilizing the following PowerPoint slides and facilitate a brief discussion about the importance of suspending judgment.



Show PowerPoints of photographs and ROHAN MURPHY, RICKY COWLES JR & AMY PREASMYER, MARISOL VALLES GARCIA, & ERIK WEIHENMAYER in order while discussing the groups' impressions.



The purpose of this activity is to highlight the human tendency to make assumptions, draw conclusions, and make judgments with limited information. This enables the trainer to point out the value in meeting families and individuals where they are with respect and empathy.



Show PowerPoint CHALLENGES IN CHILD WELFARE.



Despite our best efforts to avoid judgment and to meet others where they are, we are challenged in the field of child welfare by dealing with situations that may be personally offensive, disrespectful to us, and contrary to our belief systems. Such situations make engagement particularly difficult.



### Section III

#### **Exploring Needs, Problems/Challenges & Strengths**

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

**Purpose** To develop child welfare caseworkers' understanding of the role of needs, problems, and challenges in behavior and to develop the caseworkers' ability to apply the strengths perspective with parents in child welfare practice.

**Rationale** Needs, problems, and challenges underlie behavior. Families make choices in an effort to meet their needs, but the child welfare agency becomes involved because the needs of one or more children are not being adequately met. Understanding the needs, problems, and challenges at the root of problematic behaviors is a key to affecting change. Strengths are an individual's or a family's characteristics and the external resources that help them to meet the challenges of their lives, respond effectively to stressful situations, adapt and grow in the face of adversity, and achieve child welfare outcomes. Parent strengths are often overlooked as caseworkers focus on assessing the problems or deficits of individuals and families on their caseloads. Specific strategies exist that child welfare caseworkers can use to develop an understanding of parent strengths so that they may be utilized to affect the change necessary to achieve child welfare outcomes.



Show PowerPoint DEBRIEF, and use it to facilitate a debrief of the activity.

- What were your feelings regarding the tough choices you had to make?
- Did anyone feel hopeless?



The debrief should focus on the empathetic feelings engendered for parents throughout the exercise. If participants do not address them, make sure to highlight the following:

- No decision was easy. Everything required sacrifices.
- Getting through the day when you are poor and challenged with mental health and/or substance abuse issues is exhausting.
- Dignity is experienced in multiple ways. The loss of dignity is damaging and impacts feelings of being respected.
- Anxiety and fear impacts decision-making.
- Sometimes, there are no good options.
- The love for his children and family was always there, even if he was making decisions that would negatively impact the relationship.
- A natural progression of the debrief should be that families have strengths.
- Be sure to cover the following
- A natural progression of the debrief should be that families have strengths.



Show Powerpoint NEVADA INITIATIVE STATEMENT, and refer back to the Nevada Initiative Statement and encourage a discussion about the first and second statements. Include highlights regarding the negative biases workers may have on families and how that can impact best practice and the outcomes of this statement.



Show PowerPoint STRENGTHS PERSPECTIVE. (This slide is animated.)



What do you know about the strengths perspective?



# Nevada Initiative Statement



***Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members.***



## Section V

### **Child Development & Maltreatment**

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To develop child welfare caseworkers' understanding of child development so they can assess and/or intervene effectively with children who are being harmed or may be at risk of harm.
<b>Rationale</b>	A primary reason for a child welfare agency to enter into a formal relationship with a family is the existence or risk of harm to a child's physical, mental, or social well-being. To determine safety and assess the need for change-supporting activities and child welfare services, the child welfare caseworker must gather child-specific information that helps determine whether the child's developmental needs are being met.





Show PowerPoint TIPS FOR INTERVIEWING CHILDREN and use it to facilitate a discussion.



We will discuss interviewing in more depth later, but, for now, let's go over a few tips for interviewing children.



Refer participants to Handout 11: *Communication Strategies for Child Welfare Workers* and point out that this handout can be used as job aide. Additionally, reference communication strategies to the Nevada Initiative Statement (Sentence 4) and the importance of it when communicating with families.



Facilitate a discussion including the following points:

- When interviewing children, match communication with the child's cognitive & emotional development.

As you are engaging and building rapport, ask a few questions to determine what the child's cognitive level is. For example, you can ask a young child about their knowledge of colors or shapes to get a handle on their developmental level.

- Assess child's level of functioning.

This is an ongoing process throughout the interview. Remain cognizant of how the child is responding to the interview.

- Questions need to be **at** their level (not above, not below).

Asking questions over their heads will confuse children, but they will likely respond with a guess. Asking questions below their developmental level will be offensive and may cause them to shut down since they perceive that you don't understand or care.



Show PowerPoint HOW CHILDREN COPE and use it to facilitate a discussion.

Many of the children you encounter in child welfare are distraught, angry, stressed, afraid, and/or confused. What behaviors have you witnessed in children?

## HANDOUT 11: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR CHILD WELFARE CASEWORKERS

### Relationship

**Frame the event.** The first time you meet, tell the child your name and what your job is, in non-technical words. With young children, repeating this may be necessary every time you meet until a very familiar relationship has developed.

**Use an inviting opening statement.** Put the child at ease by describing what you are going to do and why, e.g., "I understand from your foster mother that you have been having some problems at home, and I would like to hear about them from you."

**Encourage questions.** Allow and/or encourage the child to ask questions about this talk and about your role and purpose in being involved with the child and his/her family.

**Attend to emotional content.** Consider how certain words relate to the child. Be judicious in using euphemisms and talking around a difficult topic. If a word seems to have negative connotations for the child, the personal meaning it has should be explored.

**Make descriptive comments.** Use non-threatening comments during engagement (e.g., "I see you're wearing your Superman cape today") that focus children's attention on themselves, convey interest, and encourage them to want to talk to you.

**Avoid critical statements.** Be wary of critical statements that invoke defensiveness, anger, and resentment. Instead of saying, "Stop scribbling all over the chair," offer the child paper and redirect the activity, "Oh, you like to draw! Here, you may draw on this."

**Give praise and encouragement.** Be mindful that children are acutely aware of being evaluated by adults; praise helps them feel supported and safe in talking with you. However, praise their efforts, not what they say. ("I know it's hard to talk about this, but you're doing great.") Encouragement helps children to establish their own internal locus of control.

**Comment on specific behavior.** Direct judgments/observations towards the behavior, not the child, e.g., "You are not bad, but when you spit at your sister, it upsets her." Provide specific information when describing your observations.

**Speak in the first person.** Always attempt to speak to youth (old enough to understand) in the first person when they are present. Avoid referring to them in the third person when possible, e.g., in family interviews.

### Language

**Establish a common vocabulary.** Note the words for things, experiences, and people that the child uses in his/her questions and answers, and try to adopt those in your communications, e.g., the special names for family members and significant others, for toys and important belongings, for body parts. Note the simplicity or complexity of the words and sentences the child uses and try to accommodate the child's level.



**Use simple, clear words.** Use vocabulary that is developmentally appropriate, e.g., *sad* instead of *depressed*. Use words that are short (1-2 syllables) and common, e.g., *house* instead of *residence*. Use concrete, visualizable nouns instead of abstract ones, e.g., *backyard* instead of *area*. Use proper and common nouns instead of pronouns, e.g., "What did Mary do?" instead of "What did she do?"; "in the house," instead of "in there"; "Tell me about what happened at school," instead of "Tell me about that." Use concrete, action-oriented verbs like *show*, *tell*, or *said* instead of abstract ones like *depict*, *describe*, or *indicated*. Avoid legal and professional jargon or acronyms; instead, translate them into simpler words for the child.

**Use simple sentences.** Aim for only one main idea per sentence or question. When combining ideas, introduce no more than one new idea at a time. Try to use as few negative constructions as possible. Use active voice for verbs, instead of the passive, e.g., "Did you see a doctor?" instead of "Were you seen by a doctor?" Avoid difficult-to-process adverbs and prepositions such as *while*, *during*, *before*, *after*, *ahead of*, *behind*. Avoid interrupting an idea with a descriptive phrase; put the phrase at the end of the idea instead, e.g., "Please tell me about the man *who wore the red hat*," instead of "The man *who wore the red hat* is the one I'd like you to tell me about."

**Explain transitions.** When shifting topics and when moving from the present to the past or vice versa, alert the child that that is what you are going to do.

**Ask for examples.** To be certain that you and the child understand exactly what is meant, ask the child to share an example, such as, "How did you act when you were feeling sad this morning?"

**Avoid abstract concepts.** Don't ask the child about abstract concepts like "What is the difference between truths and lies?" Instead, give the child everyday, concrete examples and let the child *demonstrate*, rather than *articulate*, knowledge of such concepts as truth and lies, right and wrong.

**Avoid asking for relational judgments.** Remember that children's ability to use language does not mean that they have mastered all the concepts expressed in the language. Don't expect children under about age nine or ten to give "reliable" estimates of time, speed, distance, size, height, weight, color, or to have mastered any relational concept, including kinship. (Adults' ability to give many of these estimates is vastly overrated.)

**Use restating.** Restate in simpler terms statements or questions that the child may not have entirely comprehended.

**Use repetition.** With children, redundancy is a useful thing. To check for comprehension, repeat statements that the child may not have completely absorbed or understood. But explain to the child why he/she is being asked the same questions more than once or by more than one person. Repeated questioning is often interpreted (by adults as well as children) to mean that the first answer was regarded as a lie, or wasn't the answer that was desired. Repeat names and other nouns often instead of using strings of (often ambiguous) pronouns or unanchored instances of "that" and "there."



**Be aware of children's very literal use of language.** For instance, "Did you have your clothes on?" might get a "no" answer; "Did you have your pajamas on?" might get a "yes." Similarly, do not tell a child, "Just answer my question yes or no." Children can interpret this to mean that only a "yes" or a "no" answer (or even "yes or no"! ) is permitted, whether or not such answers are appropriate. Children might think that answers like "I don't know" or "I don't remember" and other explanations would be forbidden.

**Be on the alert for possible miscommunication.** If a child's answer seems inconsistent with prior answers or doesn't make sense to you, check out the possibility that there is some problem with: 1) the way the question was phrased or ordered; 2) a literal interpretation on the part of the child; or 3) assumptions the question makes about the child's linguistic/cognitive development or knowledge of the adult world.

### Voice

**Speak slowly.** With younger children, slow speech; however, avoid using "baby talk."

**Use your gentlest tone of voice.** Especially when communicating to younger children, use a calm and gentle tone of voice.

**Use a calm and controlled tone of voice.** Avoid being reactive to the emotional intensity of a child's tone of voice. The adult's tone of voice should be calm and controlled when trying to deescalate a crisis or when calming a child who is extremely angry or upset.

### Body Language

**Maintain eye contact.** Take the lead in maintaining eye contact; however, some children may not feel comfortable reciprocating (for personal or cultural reasons) and should not be forced to.

**Stay tuned to attending.** Be mindful of your body language and maintain face-to-face contact. With younger children, this may involve kneeling, sitting, or lying on the floor so that your eye contact is at the same level as the child.

### Space

**Find the comfortable distance.** Direct yourself towards the child/youth from a comfortable distance, but do not come so close that the child/youth appears fearful or uncomfortable.

**Tune in to the environment.** Make surroundings as comfortable as possible. This includes reducing unnecessary sound, sitting (if that is more comfortable for the child), and not having obstacles such as desks interfering.

**Use touch when appropriate.** Be mindful that touch can convey support and nurturance in as simple a form as a hand on the shoulder or a handshake; however, use touching very carefully due to the reaction it may evoke in abused children. If a child flinches or withdraws, do not touch him or her. In general, touch should not be initiated with a child who has been sexually abused.

\* Refer to Nevada Initiative Statement to connect communication and its importance to families and casework.



## Section VIII

### **Developing Questions & Conducting Interviews**

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

**Purpose** To develop child welfare caseworkers' ability to plan, structure, and conduct meaningful interviews with families and collateral sources in order to obtain necessary information to guide assessments and to plan for targeted interventions.

**Rationale** Child welfare professionals must be able to demonstrate an ability to communicate with a wide variety of individuals in an interview setting because the information obtained in these interviews inform assessments and drive case-related decisions. To effectively gather useful information for such purposes, caseworkers must be aware of questioning techniques and must skillfully manage the interviewing process.



Think of someone you've known who has the ability when she is talking with you to make you feel as though her attention is focused completely on you and, for that moment, you are the most significant person in the world.

That describes attending, which we define as the conveyance of respect, acceptance, and interest in a person through use of:

- the environment and one's body
- observing and listening
- verbal and nonverbal responses

Attending has both physical and psychological dimensions.

Physical attending involves the intentional use of the environment and the body to demonstrate respect for, acceptance of, and interest in the person.

Psychological attending involves observing and assessing the person's nonverbal behaviors and appropriately responding to them.

These behaviors are not new to you, but the difference in an interview setting is consciously and strategically using attending behaviors to convey your willingness and ability to focus on the other person in order to facilitate an effective helping relationship.



Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement, and briefly discuss the importance of attending with children and families and how this statement can benefit the casework processes.



Show PowerPoint ATTENDING SKILLS, to remind participants of some behaviors they might want to consider using. Explain that the first three bullets may be difficult to accomplish in the training environment, but it is important to understand how these things could impact attending behavior.

- Create a comfortable environment
- Remove physical barriers
- Minimize distractions
- Make appropriate eye contact
- Gestures



# Attending Skills

- Create a comfortable environment
- Remove physical barriers
- Minimize distractions
- Make appropriate eye contact
- Gestures
- Facial expressions
- Using encouragers



*\* Refer to the  
Nevada  
Initiative  
Statement*







Display PowerPoint, REFLECTION. Use it to facilitate a discussion about the meaning of reflection.



Refer participants to Handout 17: *Dos and Don'ts of Reflection* and briefly go over contents.



Invite participants to describe their understanding of reflections.

Reinforce answers that convey the message that reflection is critical in establishing empathy, demonstrating respect, promoting trust in caseworker-parent relationships, encouraging disclosure of information necessary to conduct assessments, and maximizing success at all the phases of the helping relationship.

Be sure to include the following points in the discussion:

- Active listening involves using both verbal and nonverbal interpersonal skills to let people know they are being heard and understood. Reflections are an important component of active listening.
- Reflections are concise restatements of the content or feeling—or both—of the person's immediate past message.
- The immediate purpose of reflection is to convey understanding. In doing so, reflection encourages the speaker to continue talking, builds trust, and contributes to establishing a relationship.



Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement, and briefly discuss the importance of active listening with children and families and how this statement can benefit them and the caseworker.



Display PowerPoint FOCUS OF REFLECTION.



The types of information useful for reflection includes:

- Feelings
- Needs



- Emphasize that reflecting is not parroting, and that reflections take the content to a deeper level by clearly communicating that the listener is “doing something” with the speaker’s expressed thoughts and feelings.



State:

To *fine - tune* our approach to feeling, we must first be in – tune to parents’ feelings. We can look at all emotions as reflecting one of our four states of being: angry, sad, joyful/glad, fearful/scared. One cannot truly reflect without “active listening. ( \*Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement and briefly touch on the relationship between the concept of reflection and how a child or family feels.



We will now cover the final key to interviewing – summarization.



Show PowerPoint SUMMARIZATION. Use PowerPoint to highlight the following quote.

“A good summarization contains no new or additional information, but brings together information regarding facts or feelings previously discussed.”

*Lindsey*



We make a point of summarizing what we have done in training to bring things together for you. We do this to help you think about all the information we have already covered and to try to see if there is understanding, if anything needs clarification, and to transition to our next topic.



Refer participants to Handout 18: *Summarizing Summarization* and briefly go over contents.



What are the purposes of summarization in an interview?

Be sure to cover the following:

- Check understanding

## Section IX

### Review & Skill Application

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.
<b>Rationale</b>	This section prepares participants for the topics of the training, by reviewing highlights of Stage 1 and providing an overview of forthcoming topics. Participants are engaged in the process through exploration of their learning needs and identification of how the training will address those needs.
<b>Activities</b>	Index card Questions (review) Practice Interviews – Feedback Trainee Current Case Scenario w/ Feedback form Role Plays (Interviewing)
<b>Materials</b>	Handouts:  Handout 20: <i>Sabrina Turner</i> Handout 21: <i>Case Status Summary</i> <i>Continue, Start, Stop Peer Feedback</i> handouts (Participants will need enough to provide feedback to each other participant in the class. These are not included in the participants' notebook and must be distributed in class.)  Flipcharts: None Other Supplies: None
<b>Time</b>	All day

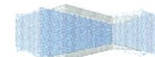


## Section I

### Introduction to Maltreatment, Safety & Risk

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

Purpose	To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.
Rationale	This section prepares participants for the topics of the training, by reviewing highlights of Stage 1 and providing an overview of forthcoming topics. Participants are engaged in the process through exploration of their learning needs and identification of how the training will address those needs.
Competencies	Identifies indicators of abuse and neglect in child victims and their families.  Conducts an initial assessment of child safety and risk.  Develops and effectively documents a safety plan.  Utilizes investigation and interviewing strategies to address the degree of safety and risk to child(ren) remaining in the home.
Materials	Handouts:  Handout 1: Rules of the Road (from Stage 1) Handout 22: Personal Learning Objectives  Flipcharts: None  Other Supplies: None
Time	30 minutes



### Section III

#### Safety Assessment

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To develop participants' ability to conduct safety assessments and to involve family members in an assessment of safety concerns and their ability to promote the safety of children.
<b>Rationale</b>	In Nevada, the framework of assessment requires decisions to be made regarding safety and risk. Without an integrated analysis—including the role of needs, underlying conditions, contributing factors, strengths, and change readiness—case plans may focus too narrowly on the problematic behavior, paying scant attention to the reasons for the behavior that may conceal risk of future abuse or maltreatment. Absent an understanding of the impact of these factors, facilitating long-lasting change with families (child safety, permanency, and well-being) is difficult to achieve.
<b>Competencies</b>	Conducts an initial assessment of child safety and risk.
<b>CFSR Performance Indicator</b>	Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.





- Manage existing safety threats.
  - Prevent additional safety threats from arising.
  - Prevent risk factors from rising to the level of a safety threat. (We will talk about the difference between risk and safety later.)
- This is a strengths-based approach.

We assess caregiver protective capacity in 4 categories. Solicit or give examples in each category.

- Cognitive – Consider whether or not the caregiver has some cognitive impairment that would impede his/her ability to ensure the child's safety.
- Behavioral – Look at the history and/or pattern of behavior that has promoted or failed to promote child safety.
- Emotional – What is the caregiver's current emotional state, and how does that impact the child's safety?
- Family network/environment – The caregiver's role and involvement in any circumstances in the home or family system that impact the child's safety.



Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement and open a brief discussion regarding the significance of the safety and well-being of the entire family (especially parents) and how the flux of instability pertaining to these issues can greatly impact children. How does the safety and well-being of children depend on the safety and well-being of the parents and family in the curriculum.



Show PowerPoint ASSESSING PROTECTIVE CAPACITY.

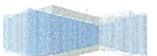


Refer participants to Handout 33: Assessing Protective Capacity.



Divide the class into 3-4 groups. Instruct them to select one of the case examples from the previous activity on present and impending danger. (Alternately, they may select a case situation with which one group member is working or has worked.) The group should talk through the case scenario and expand details as needed. Using this case information, the group should complete Handout 33.

Have each group share their findings with the large group for a discussion.





# What About Caregiver Capacity?

## *Parent or caregiver's strengths or abilities to:*

- Manage existing safety threats,
- Prevent additional safety threats from arising, or
- Prevent risk influences from creating a safety threat.

## *Categories:*

- Cognitive
- Behavioral
- Emotional
- Family network/environment

\* Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement







\* Utilize the Nevada Initiative Statement to facilitate a discussion on the implementation of family centered practice when assessing protective capacity of parents, caregivers, and families.



Show PowerPoint SAFETY ASSESSMENT



With a clear understanding of what safety means, we engage in assessing the safety of children. Following a stepwise process helps to organize the assessment in such a way that we are able to consider all aspects of the safety puzzle.

A safety assessment is a process for evaluating family functioning, safety threats, child vulnerability, and caregiver protective capacity to determine if a child is in present or impending danger of serious harm.

The ultimate question at the end of the assessment process is – is this child safe?



Show PowerPoint INVOLVING THE FAMILY



Refer participants to Handout 34: *Involving the Family in Safety Assessment*.



Caseworkers do not conduct safety assessments in a vacuum. Families should be involved in this process. Why?

Go over the handout to discuss the reasons that families should be involved. Ask participants to share examples of the ways they involve families in the assessment process.



In connecting safety assessment and family involvement, note the Nevada Initiative Statement and identify the importance of involving the family in the safety assessment process



Show PowerPoint SAFETY THREATS. (animated slide)





# Assessing Protective Capacity



- **Select a case scenario & expand details.**
- **Complete Handout 33.**
- **Discussion** \* Utilize the Nevada Initiative Statment



## HANDOUT 33: ASSESSING PROTECTIVE CAPACITY

(\*Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement and consider family centered practice when making your conclusions.)

What are the safety concerns in this case?

What cognitive factors are related to the caregiver's capacity to protect?

What behavioral factors are related to the caregiver's capacity to protect?

What emotional factors are related to the caregiver's capacity to protect?

What family network/environmental factors are related to the caregiver's capacity to protect?

Can this caregiver manage the existing safety threats?

Can this caregiver reasonably prevent additional threats from arising?

Does the caregiver have adequate protective capacity to keep the child(ren) safe?



## HANDOUT 34: INVOLVING THE FAMILY IN SAFETY ASSESSMENT

(\*Note the Nevada Initiative Statement and identify the connection between the safety assessment and family involvement.)

The assessment of safety is an ongoing process throughout our work with a family. All child welfare workers, regardless of role, must be able to assess safety, and any worker could be in the position to take the first action to promote safety. There are many reasons why it is important to involve the family in this process of assessing safety.

### ***Increased Family Awareness of Safety Issues***

Some families are unaware of safety issues, such as tying a baby in a crib to prevent unsupervised wandering or leaving a 5-year-old unattended. Sometimes providing information can rectify the problem.

### ***Recognition of Family Members as Experts***

Whatever their struggles, family members are experts on their own lives, including the problems they have experienced and the solutions they have attempted. They are also experts on their network of informal resources. The family's knowledge is key to casework assessment and intervention.

### ***Respect for the Family's Rights***

Families have a right to be involved in the decisions made and actions taken that pertain to their members. We have a responsibility to help them do so to the extent they are willing and able.

### ***Reasonable Efforts***

Law and regulation, grounded in the principles of good practice, dictate that *reasonable efforts* must be made to prevent placement of children, unless no other intervention can promote their safety. The family is the key resource for determining what alternatives to removal can promote the safety of the children.

When children are removed from the care and custody of their caregivers, information must be provided that explains whether reasonable efforts to prevent or eliminate the need for removal were made. If reasonable efforts were not made, then justification is required.

Nevada policy identifies a list of services that could be used to prevent placement. This list is examples only. These services may include family assessments, safety planning, diligent efforts to locate absent parents or relative resources, intensive family preservation, post-adoption support services, case management, counseling, daycare, respite services, homemaker services, services designed to increase parenting skills, family budgeting, coping with stress, health, and nutrition.

However, the court may waive "reasonable efforts" if:

1. Certain felonies have been committed against the child or another child of the parent; or
2. The parent has previously had parental rights to another child involuntarily terminated; or
3. “Aggravated circumstances” are present as specified and defined by state law.

Note that the court makes the determination to waive reasonable efforts, not child welfare.

### ***Influencing Change-Readiness in the Family***

Most families, given opportunity and assistance, are the best source of long-term solutions to their own difficulties. Genuine efforts on the part of the child welfare worker to involve the family in assessing safety will increase their sense of discomfort with the present situation, help them internalize responsibility for it, give them a sense of efficacy that they can make positive choices on behalf of their children, and help them begin to see a future where their children’s needs for safety and emotional security are met.

### ***Reduction in the Risk of Violence/Increasing Worker Safety***

Many of us have a natural tendency to avoid raising difficult issues because of a fear of hostility. The risk of violence in what is often a tense situation can be reduced if family members feel they have the opportunity to speak and if the listener uses interpersonal helping skills that communicate a genuine interest in hearing and understanding the family’s point of view.

### ***Recognition of Progress***

Workers need to be aware of when a child formerly in impending danger of serious harm has become safe. The family is an excellent source of information about what has changed, how change occurred, and who or what can maintain the change—key factors in determining modifications to the plan of intervention. Information from the family helps the worker decide whether services can be decreased, must be increased, and if a child can return home if the child is in care as part of a Safety Plan. Also, if no progress has been made, nor is likely to be made in the foreseeable future, the information gathered from the family can help in deciding which alternative permanency planning goal may need to be pursued.



## Section IV

### Safety Planning

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To develop child welfare caseworkers' ability to identify & develop a range of potential safety interventions when acting to promote the ongoing safety of children.
<b>Rationale</b>	Once a determination has been made that a child is unsafe, the caseworker must develop a plan with the family to provide for the child's safety pending further intervention. Promoting and ensuring child safety is a primary responsibility of child welfare workers, and safety planning is a useful strategy for doing so short of out of home placement. Safety planning is a child centered, family focused, and strengths based approach.
<b>Competencies</b>	Conducts an initial assessment of child safety and risk. Develops and effectively documents a safety plan.
<b>CFSR Performance Indicator</b>	<b><i>Safety Outcome 1:</i></b> Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect. <b><i>Safety Outcome 2:</i></b> Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
<b>Materials</b>	Handouts: Handout 41: <i>Nevada Safety Plan</i> Flipcharts: None Other Supplies: None
<b>Time</b>	



## Learning Process

### Safety Planning

12:30 -1:30 (1 HOUR )



Show PowerPoint SECTION IV: SAFETY PLANNING.



Show PowerPoint WHAT IS A SAFETY PLAN?



Go over the following points:

A safety plan is:

- A time limited, written plan.
- Decided upon *by* the family in collaboration with the caseworker
  - Briefly address the Nevada Initiative Statement in conjunction with safety planning and the ideals that it promotes around inclusion of the family throughout this process.
- Put into place upon contact with the family when a child is in present and/or impending danger of serious harm.
- Designed to ensure immediate protection of the child.
- Action oriented.
- Sufficient to manage & control safety threats.
- Based on a high degree of confidence that it can *be* implemented & sustained.



Show PowerPoint RISK & SAFETY CONTINUUM.



Facilitate a discussion about the risk and safety continuum, asking the participants to describe the difference between risk factors and safety issues. Be sure to include in the discussion that risk factors represent potential situations that could become safety issues. When these risk factors pass over the safety threshold, as identified by the ISVOO criteria, they become safety issues.





# Involving the Family



**Families should be involved in assessing the safety of children.**

- **Increased family awareness of safety issues**
- **Recognition of family members as experts**
- **Respect for the family's rights**
- **Reasonable efforts**
- **Influencing change-readiness in the family**
- **Reduction in the risk of violence/increasing worker safety**
- **Recognition of progress**

**Handout 34**  
**\*Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement**

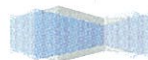


## Section VI

### Review & Skill Application

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** *Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.*

Purpose	To allow participants to demonstrate skills in assessing maltreatment, safety, and risk.
Rationale	This section provides an opportunity for participants to experientially demonstrate the skills covered in Stage 2 Day 1 of this training, including the assessment of maltreatment, safety, and risk. Putting these skills into practice in the training setting will allow for immediate trainer and peer feedback, help to clarify the overall training competencies, and enable performance of skills in a safe learning environment.
Competencies	Identifies indicators of abuse and neglect in child victims and their families.  Conducts an initial assessment of child safety and risk.  Develops and effectively documents a safety plan.  Utilizes investigation and interviewing strategies to address the degree of safety and risk to child(ren) remaining in the home.
CFSR Performance Indicator	Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.





## Section I

### Introduction to Substantiation Criteria, the NIA, & Documentation

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

**Purpose** To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.

**Rationale** This section prepares participants for the topics of the training, by reviewing highlights of Stage 2 and providing an overview of forthcoming topics. Participants are engaged in the process through exploration of their learning needs and identification of how the training will address those needs.

**Competencies**

Demonstrates an understanding of how to identify indicators of abuse and neglect in child victims and their families.

Demonstrates an understanding of how to conduct an initial assessment of child safety and risk.

Demonstrates an understanding of how to develop and effectively document a safety plan.

Demonstrates an understanding of investigation and interviewing strategies to address the degree of safety and risk to a child remaining in the home.

**Materials**

**Handouts:** Handout 1: Rules of the Road

**Flipcharts:** None

**Other Supplies:** None

**Time** 30 minutes

### Section III

#### The Nevada Initial Assessment

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To develop participants' ability to organize information and complete comprehensive assessments utilizing the Nevada Initial Assessment structured tool in order to identify risk factors and safety concerns for children.
<b>Rationale</b>	Conducting an accurate and thorough assessment in the investigation stage of a case is a crucial step toward the ultimate outcome for children. The initial assessment identifies the issues that need to be addressed in the case plan to affect necessary change in the family system, thereby intervening to enhance the safety, permanence, and well-being of children. Without such an assessment at the outset, intervention efforts will likely not be appropriately targeted to meet the needs of the family, and a positive outcome is less likely to occur.
<b>Competencies</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of how to conduct an initial assessment of child safety and risk.  Demonstrate an ability to utilize the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) in determining the level of safety.
<b>CFSR Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Safety Outcome 1:</b> Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
<b>Materials</b>	Handouts:  Handout 55: Questions for Structuring the Assessment Process: Six Assessment Areas  Handout 56: Understanding the Six Assessment Areas  Flipcharts: None  Other Supplies: None



## Learning Process

### Safety and Risk Assessment

1:00 -2:30 (1 ½ HOURS )



Show PowerPoint SECTION III: THE NEVADA INITIAL ASSESSMENT.



Show PowerPoint PIECES OF THE FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE.



We have discussed in some detail the various “pieces” comprising the framework of practice, including:

- The role of the professional helping relationship in promoting change;
- The interpersonal helping skills that you need in order to work effectively with families;
- The indicators of child abuse and neglect;
- Safety factors and safety interventions;
- The variables that influence risk;
- Understanding how contributing factors and underlying conditions form the basis of behavior and create the dynamics for risk of abuse/neglect or risk of not achieving child welfare outcomes; and
- Considering how strengths can mitigate risk and have utility in the case-planning process.

Thus far, we have reviewed these “pieces” individually and in some combinations.



Before beginning this next discussion, begin by addressing how the Nevada Initiative Statement requires workers to utilize all of the “pieces” in the framework of practice in order to best serve children and families.

Facilitate a brief discussion, pointing out that, in child welfare practice, not only do we need to attend to all the pieces; we need to integrate them in a logical way to view the picture accurately and describe how this assessment information is relevant.

Ask participants to share their ideas about how these components of the practice framework impact assessment and outcomes for children and families.



# Pieces of the Framework of Practice



- PHR - Promoting Change
- IHS
- Indicators of Abuse and Neglect
- Safety Factors and Interventions



- Variables that Influence Safety & Risk
- Contributing Factors and Underlying Conditions
- Strengths Mitigate Safety & Risk

\* Utilize the Nevada Initiative Statement to begin discussion on the integration of all of the “pieces” when conducting assessment.





## Section V

### Skill Application

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To allow participants to demonstrate skills in making substantiation decisions, completing the Nevada Initial Assessment, and documentation.
<b>Rationale</b>	This section provides an opportunity for participants to experientially demonstrate the skills covered in Stage 3 Day 1 of this training, including making substantiation decisions, completing the Nevada Initial Assessment, and documentation. Putting these skills into practice in the training setting will allow for immediate trainer and peer feedback, help to clarify the overall training competencies, and enable performance of skills in a safe learning environment.
<b>Competencies</b>	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of the criteria necessary to substantiate or unsubstantiate abuse or neglect.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of how to conduct an initial assessment of child safety and risk.</p> <p>Demonstrate an ability to utilize the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) in determining the level of safety.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the necessity to document the process &amp; findings of the initial assessment &amp; subsequent services.</p>

**CFSR Performance  
Indicator**

## Section I

### Introduction

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

<b>Purpose</b>	To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.
<b>Rationale</b>	This section prepares participants for the topics of the training, by reviewing highlights of Stage 3 and providing an overview of forthcoming topics. Participants are engaged in the process through exploration of their learning needs and identification of how the training will address those needs.
<b>Competencies</b>	Child Welfare Professionals will have an understanding of the plan for training for Stage 4.
<b>Materials</b>	<b>Handouts:</b> Handout 64: <i>Personal Learning Objectives</i> <b>Flipcharts:</b> None <b>Other Supplies:</b> None
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes



## Section IV

### Effective CFTs

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

Purpose	To prepare participants to facilitate meaningful CFTs.
Rationale	This section provides participants with guidance and tools to plan and facilitate collaborative CFTs that promote quality case plans and effective service provision. Quality, targeted case plans and services are essential to positive outcomes for children and families.
Competencies	
CFSR Performance Indicator	
Materials	Handouts: Handout 70: Planning Preparing to Improve CFTs Handout 71: CFT Plan Flipcharts: None Other Supplies: None
Time	



Show PowerPoint SECTION IV: EFFECTIVE CFTs.



Show PowerPoint THE ORIGIN OF CFTs.



CFTs are based on the Family Group Conferencing Model that originated in New Zealand. New Zealand was experiencing a problem similar to the over-representation issue we have in the United States. There, aboriginal Maori children were being placed in foster care at proportionally higher rates than non-aboriginal children, so a group of Maori leaders approached the government to discuss the possibility of using some of their cultural practices in making decisions about Maori children. Government officials agreed and worked with the Maori community to create the Family Group Conferencing Model, which involved a day-long meeting in which the family was given the power to develop the plan for a child or family.



This original model has been adapted throughout the world, especially in the United States, to be feasible with the given capacity of our child welfare systems. Obviously, we not have the capability to dedicate an entire day to a meeting with each family due to the large volume of families we must serve, and we have some systemic constraints that prevent us from allowing families to have such wide latitude in developing the case plan.



Show PowerPoint TALKING IT OUT.



During the discussion “Talking it Out” encourage participants to consider the Nevada Initiative Statement. Ask them how do CFT’s help achieve the outcomes of this statement?



What is the purpose of using the CFT model?

Facilitate a brief discussion, leading to the notion that CFTs are aimed at giving families a voice in what will happen with their cases.



Select 4-6 volunteers to participate in an activity. The remaining participants will observe. The volunteers will engage in a 10-15 minute panel discussion/debate addressing the following questions:

- Do we really give families a voice in CFTs?
- Do families believe that they have a real voice in the process?



# Talking It Out



What is the purpose of using the CFT model?



**Volunteers?**

Consider the Nevada Initial Statement. How do CFT's help achieve the outcomes of this statement.



Assign half of the volunteers to present the perspective of child welfare staff member and a half to present the perspective of family members. [Note: If the class is large, some volunteers can be added to represent the viewpoint of service providers.]

Allow each group of volunteers to present their viewpoint and then encourage them to engage in a discussion/debate with the other group of volunteers.

At the conclusion of the discussion/debate, allow the observers to pose any questions they might have for the panel volunteers.

Debrief by facilitating a discussion about how the perspective of family members and caseworkers may differ significantly with regard to the purpose or goal of a CFT. CFTs offer an opportunity to empower families if used effectively.



**Show PowerPoint TAKING ACTION .**



Refer participants to Handout 70: Planning Preparing to Improve CFTs. Instruct the participants to record at least two action steps that they may take individually to improve the quality of CFTs as they use them with families for case planning.

Ask for volunteers to share one or more of their identified action steps. Encourage participants to put these ideas into action the next time they have a CFT.



In this section family engagement and active participation (that is identified in the Nevada Initiative Statement) is crucial to achieving an effective CFT.



**Show PowerPoint PLANNING A CFT.**



**Facilitate a discussion on the following:**

- What do we need to keep in mind when planning a CFT? Record responses on flip chart?
- How do factors like impaired mental health or cognitive ability or issues like substance abuse or domestic violence impact the way we plan for a CFT?



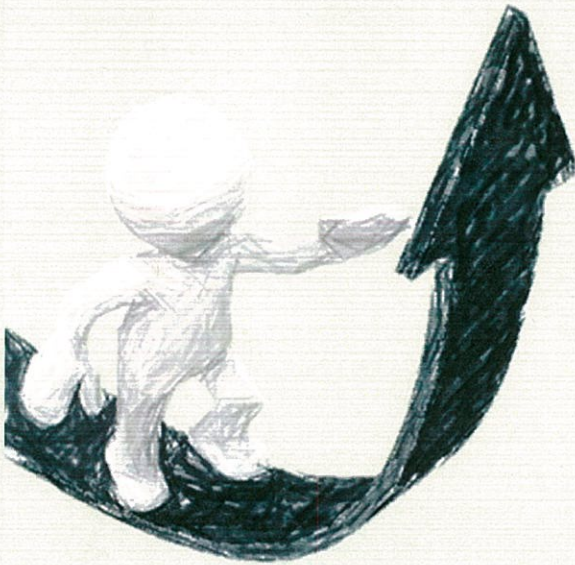
When planning a CFT, family engagement and empowerment are vital to long term changes and effective decision making. Refer to the Nevada Initiative Statement and initiate a conversation among the participants regarding strategies they might utilize during this process.



## Taking Action



# How can we improve CFTs?



Handout  
70

\* Refer to the  
Nevada Initiative  
Statement

# Planning a CFT



**What do we need to keep in mind when planning a CFT?**

What about the impact of:

- impaired mental health or cognitive ability
- like substance abuse
- domestic violence



**\*Discuss the importance of empowerment and family engagement in reference to the Nevada Initiative Statement.**



## **Learning Process**

### **Review & Introduction**

**8:30-9:15 (45 MINUTES)**



Show PowerPoint, LOOKING BACK and use it to conduct a brief review of yesterday's material.



Divide the class into two groups and explain that we will be doing a group review activity. For this activity, groups of participants will write a story from a defined viewpoint to review the information covered in this stage of training.



Refer participants to Handouts 73A & 73B : *A Day in Review*. These handouts includes a starting sentence for two separate stories, and each group will create one story. Assign each group to one of the two handouts.



Instruct the first person in each group to write one additional sentence and then pass the paper to the next person in the group. The next group member will write another sentence in the story and then pass the paper on to the next person. The groups will continue to add a new sentence and then pass the paper along to another group member until the trainer signals everyone to stop.

The stories that each group writes must begin with the given sentence and proceed based on information covered in Stage 4 on case planning and service provision. In this way, the activity will serve as a review of yesterday's class material.

Allow about 15 minutes for writing the stories. At the end of this time, have a representative of each group read each of the stories and clarify the points covered in class.



We have been discussing case planning and service provision. We are going to spend our remaining time practicing those skills.

## HANDOUT 73A: A DAY IN REVIEW

(\* Incorporate the Nevada Initiative Statement during this activity)

I am a child welfare worker and just got a new case.



## HANDOUT 74B: A DAY IN REVIEW

(\* Incorporate the Nevada Initiative Statement during this activity)

Somebody reported me and my children to child welfare, so now I have a caseworker.

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Section I

Introduction Overview

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

**Purpose** To prepare participants for the training that will help them achieve child welfare outcomes.

**Rationale** This section prepares participants for the topics of the training, by reviewing highlights of Stage 4 and providing an overview of forthcoming topics. Participants are engaged in the process through exploration of their learning needs and identification of how the training will address those needs.

**Competencies** Child Welfare Professionals will have an understanding of the plan for training for Stage 5.

**Materials**

**Handouts:**

Handout 1: Rules of the Road (from Stage 1)

Handout 77: Personal Learning Objectives

**Flipcharts:** None

**Other Supplies:** None

30 minutes





## Nevada Intermediate Core: Stage 5

Separation, Loss, & Permanency

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### Section V

#### Review & Skill Application

**Nevada Initiative Statement:** Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.

**Purpose** To allow participants to demonstrate skills in child welfare practice.

**Rationale** This section provides an opportunity for participants to experientially demonstrate the skills covered throughout Intermediate Core.

**Competencies**

#### CFSR Performance

##### Indicator

##### Materials

##### Handouts:

Handout 86: *Tic Tac Toe Review*

Handout 87: *Case Presentation Form*

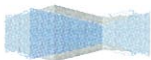
Handout 88: *Action Plan*

Handout 89: Pledge

Flipcharts: 5 sheets, each labeled for 1 of the 5 stages of Intermediate Core

Other Supplies: Blank index cards

Xs and Os for Tic Tac Toe game



## **Learning Process**

### **Action Planning : Embedded Skills**

**:15-4:00 (45 MINUTES)**



**Show PowerPoint ACTION PLANNING.**



**Instruct the participants to gather in their groups to process the feedback received during the case review and discussion.**



**Provide participants with Handout 86: Action Plan.**



**Instruct the groups to briefly go over the feedback received on their case and use it to develop a feasible action plan to be recorded on the handout. Each group should share their plan with the class. Encourage the individuals whose cases were discussed to put these action plans into place upon returning to the field. Point out that some of the suggested solutions might be beneficial on other cases that are being handled by everyone in training, and encourage the participants to consider using these or other creative solutions to challenging issues on their cases.**



**Show PowerPoint SUMMING IT UP.**



**Instruct the participants to turn to Handout 89 (it isn't numbered) "My Pledge". Read the pledge out loud and if they agree have them sign the bottom of the page and keep it with them as a reminder of the pledge they make to children, families, and themselves every day they aim to make an impact of the lives of the abused and neglected.**



**Congratulate the class on completing Intermediate Core.**



**Gather the participants in a circle and provide one person with a ball or other small object. Ask that person to identify the most significant positive change in their approach to child welfare practice as a result of participating in Intermediate Core. Instruct that person to toss the ball to another participant who will share their most significant**





# “I pledge...”



Turn to the last Handout, read it, sign it, and keep it with you as a reminder of the pledge you make to children, families, and yourself every day that you aim to make an impact on the lives of the abused and neglected.



## "My Pledge"

I, \_\_\_\_\_, pledge to the following:

- ☞ I believe that Child welfare agencies in Nevada believe families are the primary providers for children's needs. The safety and well-being of children is dependent upon the safety and well-being of all family members. Children, youth and families are best served when staff actively listens to them and invites participation in decision making. We support full implementation of family centered practice by engaging families in child and family teams and offering individualized services to build upon strengths and meet the identified needs of the family. The Nevada Partnership for Training believes in and follows the statewide initiative statement in our training program.
- ☞ I will utilize the three core helping conditions of respect, empathy, and genuineness and elements of a professional helping relationship when working with children and families.
- ☞ I will be aware that my biases and attitudes may have a negative impact on children and families and will reflect on my feelings to achieve best practice approaches.
- ☞ I understand that appropriately communicating with the children and families I serve will enhance the casework process and be more likely to increase parental involvement and long term changes.
- ☞ I believe that attending and actively listening to children and families will make me a better caseworker and help to build a trusting relationship to better provide appropriate services and support to each family.
- ☞ I understand that before I can ensure the safety and well-being of a child that I have to ensure the safety and well-being of the family and assess the protective capacity of the parent(s)/caregiver(s).
- ☞ I will involve each child and family when conducting safety assessments and include their contributions when creating a safety plan and any other changes that should be made in the home.
- ☞ I will consider and incorporate all of the "pieces" in the framework of practice when assessing, providing services, and helping families.
- ☞ I understand the magnitude of including the families and their requests before, during, and after CFTs and will involve service providers when needed to better serve each family.