Building a Needs-based Curriculum for Child Welfare Therapists

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Background and Purpose

• Therapeutic services are contracted out

• Limited pre-service training for therapeutic service-providers

• Therapists report being unprepared to work with the child welfare population
Stages of Implementation

1. Assess needs of child welfare therapists
2. Consultation with Child Welfare Experts
3. Curriculum Development
Methods

– Literature Review

– Focus Groups
  • 5 focus groups at a community-based agency were completed with current therapists

– Team Meetings with Child Welfare Experts
Results
Difficulties Experienced

• Unknowns about the child welfare system

• Communication in DCF cases
  – What DCMs need

• How to work with mandated clients
  – Building rapport
  – Productivity barriers
Results
Agency-Based Training Needs

• Documentation
  – Writing notes for DCF-involved clients
  – Documentation needs of DCMs

• Productivity
  – Maintaining necessary caseload
  – Scheduling of clients
  – Self-care
Results
Therapeutic Training Needs

• Working with the “whole” family
• Safety (for clients and therapists)
• Treatment modalities
Curriculum Development
Examples of Potential Modules

• Knowledge of the DCF system
  – Key players and court process

• Inter-agency Collaboration
  – Interfacing across organizations, systems, and professional disciplines

• Child Maltreatment and Child Development
  – Identifying maltreatment, how to report maltreatment
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