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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



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Stages of Implementation

Assess needs of
child welfare
therapists

Consultation with
Child Welfare
Experts

Curriculum
Development





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Methods

– Literature Review

– Focus Groups

- 5 focus groups at a community-based agency were completed with current therapists

– Team Meetings with Child Welfare Experts



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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



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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



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Results

Therapeutic Training Needs

- Working with the “whole” family
- Safety (for clients and therapists)
- Treatment modalities



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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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