

SUPERVISOR TRAINING PROJECT

New York

Interview with Joan Richardson, Training Specialist at New York State Office of Children & Family Services

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Supervisor Requirements

New York is a state supervised, locally administered state. Each of the 58 Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) provides Child Protective Services (CPS). It is at the discretion of each LDSS to determine whether to provide Prevention, Foster Care and Adoption services directly or through a contract with a private, not for profit child welfare agency. The contracted agencies have the discretion to establish their own standards for the education and preparation of those in supervision and management positions. Many agencies require Master's degrees.

To become a supervisor in one of New York's public child welfare social service agencies, the minimum qualification is a Bachelor's Degree. Each of New York's 58 districts hires child welfare staff at its own discretion, within the confines of State and county Civil Service rules, and therefore may institute requirements for Master's degrees and/or specialized training. New York does not have an annual training hour requirement for all child welfare staff. The annual statewide training requirement for experienced CPS staff and supervisors is six hours.

Pre-service Training

The Office of Children and Family Services contracts with several state universities to provide training to supervisors. NYS law requires that all Child Protective Services (CPS) Supervisors complete the core CPS caseworker training sequence. In addition, they must complete Supervisor CORE Modules I & IIA. Module I covers introductory topics for supervisors, including leadership styles and functions; strengths and challenges of the position; worker development; emotional and physical support; time management, etc. Module IIA covers topics specific to CPS, including: informed decision-making; assessing abuse/maltreatment; legal issues; conflict management, etc. Each module is competency-based. The curricula for Modules I & IIA are currently being revised.

Supervisor CORE Materials:

[Overview of Safety and Risk PowerPoint](#)
[Supervisory Training Curriculum Review](#)

CURRICULUM:

[Module One](#) (complete curriculum)

Module Two:

[Cover Page](#)

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[Act A: Integrating Supervisory Functions](#)

[Act B: Promoting Informed Decision Making](#)

[Act C: Promoting Child Safety](#)

[Act D: Assessing Abuse and Maltreatment](#)
[Act E: Supervising the Assessment of Risk During CPS Response](#)
[Act F: Conflict with Worker Safety](#)
[Act G: Examining Court Issues](#)
[Act H: Action Plan](#)

Trainer's Guides:

[LearnLinc Component A - Introduction to SET Behaviors](#)
[LearnLinc Component B - Overview of Safety](#)
[LearnLinc Component C - Overview of Risk](#)

Ongoing Training

New York State has a comprehensive selection of generic courses for supervisors, including but not limited to, Conflict Resolution, Managing Difficult Employees, Fundamentals of Supervision, and Providing Effective Feedback. Some of these courses are offered using a distance learning format. The State offers a Clinic on the [Skill of Engagement for Supervisors and Senior Caseworkers](#), which aims to strengthen supervisors' awareness of their practice and to improve their ability to engage workers. New York also offers Supervisory Critical Thinking: Decision-Making in Child Welfare. . Also, New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) provides its own core training for CPS caseworkers and CPS supervisors through its James Satterwhite Training Academy. After each delivery, the supervisors of the trainees are brought together for a seminar on the [NYC OJT Guide](#) for Supervisors to become familiar with the guide and to focus on the learning base for caseworkers.

As a support to ACS' Improving Outcomes for Children Initiative, during which ACS delegated case management of foster care, adoption and most preventive services to its contracted agencies, OCFS developed and supported the provision of *Applying Critical Thinking Skills in Child Welfare* to caseworkers and supervisors in the contracted agencies. This training is provided upon request to local district supervisors and caseworkers.

Trainers Guide:

[Cover Page](#)
[Morning Session](#)
[CPS Session](#)
[Foster Care Sessions](#)

In 2007, the State enacted legislation to implement a family assessment response (FAR) practice as an alternative means of addressing child maltreatment reports. New York contracted with the American Humane Association to train its caseworkers and supervisors on the new practice. Since 2012 the FAR training has been provided by the Butler Institute for Families. FAR supervisors attend three training courses along with their staff. In addition, a specific training for supervisors was created, titled Supervising a Practice Shift to FAR. Coaching sessions are provided to help supervisors to use group supervision and to assist their staff in implementing the practices in the field. Twenty-five counties and one ACS zone have elected to implement this alternative response to CPS investigation in accordance with their individual screening criteria.

Professional Development

New York provides support for local department of social services supervisors to pursue their Master's degree in Social Work. The OCFS Bureau of Training and the Division of Child Welfare and Community

Services partner to conduct ongoing s training needs assessments with local departments of social services and agency service providers The Office of Children and Family Services' (OCFS) Regional Offices work closely with the districts and agencies to identify or address training needs as they arise. These may be specific to case practice issues, organizational issues and emerging needs, such as using logic models and data to establish goals and track performance.

Supervisor Supports

New York's Office of Children and Family Services' (OCFS), in conjunction with the Northeast and Caribbean Implementation Center (NCIC), has developed and piloted a model of supervision and support system for child welfare supervisors. The resulting product, Keys to Excellence in Your Supervision (KEYS) is an outcome-focused, family-centered, solution-focused, data-informed model of supervision that is supportive of an organizational climate that fosters resilience in both staff and families. The KEYS model incorporates seven core elements of supervision, seven organizational structures, and career-long learning opportunities aligned with our case practice model and practice improvements. The supports either currently available or under development include:

- Relevant, accessible manager and supervisory training programs and delivery
- Coaching for supervisors in implementing the KEYS supervisory practice model
- A newly designed Core Curriculum for new supervisors together with supports for local districts that complement their efforts to develop new staff
- Creation of peer networks for line and administrative supervisors.
- Quality assurance and self-assessment tools to support the implementation of the supervisory practice model.

[KEYS Model of Supervision Diagram](#)

[KEYS Child Welfare Supervisory Competencies](#)

Partnerships

New York partners with the following entities regarding training for supervisors: Northeast and Caribbean Child Welfare Implementation Center (NCIC); State University of New York (SUNY) Albany; SUNY College Buffalo; SUNY Stony Brook; Hunter College; Brookdale College, Butler Institute for Families at the University of Denver and Cornell University.