Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies

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About the Authors

Susan Kanak has over 30 years of government and non-profit agency management, curriculum development, and training experience. She currently is a Policy Associate at the Catherine E. Cutler Institute for Child and Family Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. She has provided training and technical assistance to child welfare agencies in more than 35 States, as well as facilitated the National Resource Center for Organization Improvement's (NRCOI) peer training network. Much of her work focuses on bringing groups together to help agencies develop and implement effective training systems and best training practices to improve the quality of child welfare training. She has written and trained three child welfare curricula and is co-designing a framework to support effective child welfare supervision with the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning. In addition to her work with the NRCOI, Susan directs the Colorado Child Welfare Training Project, assisting the Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) in implementing a child welfare training program to address the needs of Colorado's child welfare personnel; a recent addition to that program is the newly created County Director's Training Institute.

Maureen Baker is a Policy Associate with the Catherine E. Cutler Institute for Child and Family Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine, where she works with the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement providing consultation and technical assistance on issues of training systems and workforce development. Throughout her career, Maureen has collaborated with professionals in the fields of domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse, early childhood development, and children's behavioral health to identify and minimize barriers to integrated service delivery, especially through the development, implementation, and assessment of meaningful learning environments. In addition to her systems work, Maureen has over 15 years experience in the field of domestic violence, both as an advocate for battered women and children and as a community educator.

Lori Herz has 10 years of experience working as a consultant to the Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute, providing training to the State's child welfare agency staff. During her career with the Institute, Ms. Herz has planned, developed, coordinated and conducted pre-service and in-service training on a variety of curricula, including technology, supervision, program planning, adult learning theory and practice, personal and professional development, and team building. Ms. Herz is well versed in child welfare policies, laws and procedures, system of care goals, the Child and Family Services Review process, Program Improvement Planning, Family Centered Practice, Risk and Protective Capacity Assessment, and SACWIS systems. Ms. Herz piloted the curriculum developed by the Institute for Child and Family Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service, *Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being*; served on curriculum advisory boards for the Muskie School; contributed to the first edition of the *Training System Assessment Guide*; piloted a training system assessment in Rhode Island; and has presented collaboratively with colleagues from the Muskie School at several national and regional conferences.

Susan Maciolek has 15 years of experience working as a senior manager in and consultant to public child welfare agencies in States and counties across the country focusing on management systems. Ms. Maciolek spent several years as a senior manager in the Massachusetts child welfare agency successfully developing and implementing innovative programs that applied wraparound and managed care approaches to its purchased services system. As project manager, she developed and

implemented integrated service networks across the State, a central element of Massachusetts' recent comprehensive system reform. Through the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, Ms. Maciolek also consults with other States on performance contracting methods that engage service providers in improving outcomes for children and families. She co-developed the first *Training System Assessment Guide* and was a consultant on the *Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team* curriculum project and Child Welfare Training Best Practices Roundtable

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

This guide, *Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies,* provides an analytic framework for child welfare agencies or Tribal leadership teams to build a shared understanding of and commitment to the value, role, capacity, and development of their training systems. Given the complex, rapidly changing child welfare environment, managers must view the training system strategically, as a key management tool for sustaining organizational change and improvement.[1] We hope this material helps State, county and Tribal child welfare agency leaders and their university partners understand each other's perspectives, develop mutually beneficial strategies for improving their training system, and build productive relationships across other agency systems (e.g., case practice, policy, and quality assurance).

The value of training and professional development in a child welfare agency cannot be overstated. The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) have confirmed the importance of training in advancing the organizational and practice improvements that agencies are undertaking to achieve better outcomes for children and their families. In drawing lessons from the first Reviews, one observer noted that "child welfare agencies must translate the principles they adopt as their mission into the day to day child welfare practices in the field, and set up a comprehensive training system within the State that assures that the workers (at every level of the agency) have the values, attitudes, and skills and are supported in implementing those practices."[2]

These lessons from the CFSR confirmed for us the importance of focusing this guide on the *training system* and its integration into the fabric of the child welfare system. Our definition of a training system is, necessarily, broad and comprehensive. A training system is comprised of the people (trainers, managers and universities), resources (financial, technical), policies and procedures combined into a coherent whole. The purpose of the training system is to plan, provide, support, and evaluate formal and informal instruction, learning opportunities, and professional development aimed at improving agency outcomes.

When we published the first version of this guide, *Training System Assessment Guide for Child Welfare Agencies* in January 2005, taking a systemic perspective was a different approach for understanding training. A systems view requires that training directors look outward at training efforts and results, rather than inward at training organizational units and institutes. Taking a system level view of training extends to examining how the training system is integrated into an agency's overall effort to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families. In doing so, child welfare agency managers move from simply overseeing training programs and institutes to understanding how an effective training system can serve as a strategic tool to move the entire agency towards achieving its goals and outcomes. The following chart provides a systems view of a mature training system.

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[1]   Nickols, Fred. Training: A Strategic View 2003. www.nickols.us
[2]   Cohen, Elena P. Getting the Whole Picture: CFSR, Training and Front Line Practice. Draft Paper

Effective Training Systems in Child Welfare Agencies

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes	
Management/Leadership

Staff

Resources

Partnerships

Policies & Procedures | **Services & Products**

Training based on needs, curricula, classes, evaluation of training and transfer of learning

Formal and informal instruction, learning and professional development opportunities. | **Participation**

Frontline case workers/case managers

Supervisors

Managers

External partners and stakeholders | **For Organizations**

Trained, competent staff | **For Children & Families**

Safety, Permanency, Well-being |

Growth Strategies

Evaluate the training system's own quality and effectiveness.
Partner with the Case Practice & Policy System.
Partner with the Quality Assurance System.
Ensure a clear relationship between the training director and the agency's senior leadership team.
Secure an expanded source of funding and other resources.

The most significant additions to this guide are a discussion of the life cycle of a training system and strategies for building a mature system found in Sections III and IV. Training directors who reviewed and used the first version of this guide asked that we research and craft this material to help them understand how to actively manage the development of a training system through its life cycles. Through detailed interviews with experts in child welfare training and the individuals on our advisory board, we gathered the information used to develop the life cycle discussion and the performance indicators and development strategies examples.

The day-to-day work and practice of staff, supervisors, managers, partners and stakeholders must reflect and embody fundamental organizational values and practice principles. If they are not consistently aligned and integrated, the agency will operate at cross-purposes. Section II identifies the content (i.e., formal and informal instruction, learning opportunities, and professional development) that a mature training system provides and supports and the principles for assessing how well a training system functions in each of these areas. Linked to each principle are indicators (how the training system implements and acts on the principle) and sources of evidence (proof that the principles and indicators are working well) of a mature training system's strengths and success. We have organized the principles to reflect the following key organizational tiers:

- frontline social workers/case managers,
- supervisors,
- managers, and
- external partners and stakeholders.

Section III describes the phases of a life cycle and identifies the components of a training system that are combined in a rational whole in a mature system. Each of these components develops through the early, growth, and mature stages of the lifecycle:

- management/leadership,
- staff,
- resources,
- partnerships, and
- policies and procedures.

The point of growing through the cycles is to become a better, more reliable system and an effective partner to other systems.

Section IV describes five strategies that advance the development of the training system:

- evaluating the training system's own quality and effectiveness,
- partnering with the case practice and policy systems,
- partnering with the quality assurance system,
- ensuring a clear relationship between the training director and the agency's senior leadership team, and
- expanding sources of funding and other resources.

Section V provides guidance on assessing your training system, including a sample assessment tool. It is particularly well suited for use as part of the CFSR self-assessment and/or the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) development process.

Throughout this guide you will also find examples provided by child welfare agencies highlighting selected performance principles or indicators and the development strategies.

After you have looked over the information presented in this guide, you may want to modify the performance principles as well as modify, add, or delete the indicators and sources of evidence to reflect local factors such as your agency's management priorities, the current status of your training system, and the laws, policies, and regulations that govern your practice. You will also want to modify the sample assessment tool and process to reflect any changes you make. The material in this guide is intended to accommodate this type of modification by State/county child welfare agency personnel.

How federal funding requirements
support and shape training systems

Before assessing your training system, it is important to understand the context and boundaries created by Federal regulations and funding requirements. State child welfare agencies do not design and manage their training systems entirely on their own, although State and county funds can be used to support training not eligible for federal reimbursement. In fact, training systems are shaped significantly by how the Children's Bureau of the Department of Health & Human Services administers Titles IV-B and IV-E and monitors programs funded by these two sources. DHHS'

funding also creates strong incentives for States to work with public universities and for public universities to support the work of the State's child welfare agency.

Titles IV-B and IV-E
The Federal government provides funding to States for child welfare services under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The purpose of Title IV-B (subpart 1) is to promote State flexibility in the development and expansion of a coordinated child and family services program that utilizes community-based agencies and ensures all children are raised in safe, loving families. The Title IV-E Foster Care & Adoption Assistance Program provides funding for monthly maintenance payments to eligible foster care providers and for a one-time payment to assist with the costs of adopting a child as well as for monthly subsidies to adoptive families to assist with the care of the eligible child. Funding is also available for administrative costs to manage the program; training staff and foster/adoptive parents; foster/adoptive parent recruitment; and other related expenses.

In order to receive IV-B and IV-E funding, a State must submit to the Children's Bureau annual plans that describe the agency's work for the coming fiscal year. Funding is contingent upon an approved State plan to administer or supervise the administration of the program. With regards to training, the Title IV-B/Child & Family Services State Plan requires the State to discuss planned updates to the training plan including staff development plans based on the new caseworker visit funding under Title IV-B, subpart 2 which may include activities designed to improve caseworker retention, recruitment, training and access to technology. Training that will be supported with Title IV-E funds must be included. All training must be described in terms of courses offered, numbers and positions of prospective trainees, and estimated cost of the training plan. Inclusion of a detailed training plan in the IV-B State plan is required in order for the State to claim reimbursement for training activities under Title IV-E. The IV-E State plan then simply references the IV-B plan.[3]

Title IV-E Child Welfare Agency/University Partnerships have been developed around the country to develop programs in social work education which prepare undergraduate and graduate students for work in public child welfare as well as to provide high quality in-service training to practitioners in public child welfare agencies. In addition, such partnerships provide training for foster and adoptive families. These partnerships have been formed to guide the use of Title IV-E funds in creative ways that bear the intent of the federal legislation while meeting the unique needs of each State. In some States, multi-university consortia have been developed to achieve these goals.[4]

Title IV-E Stipend Programs
Funded through Title IV-E, this program offers financial support for social workers and supervisors to earn an MSW degree or, in more limited cases, a BSW degree. Title IV-E provides financial support to child welfare agencies to establish programs for social work staff to attend professional training programs on a full-time or part-time basis. These staff members receive "stipends" equal to their salaries in exchange for working for the agency for a period of years equivalent to the period of attendance at the graduate program. States generally establish stipend programs with several universities/colleges.

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[3] http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/index.htm.
[4] University of Kentucky held a one-year grant to study child welfare university partnerships. Their website is: http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/cswe/.

Child Welfare Training Grants
The Child Welfare Training Grants program (authorized under Section 426 of the Social Security Act) is designed to upgrade the skills, knowledge and qualifications of prospective and current child welfare agency staff and support special projects for training personnel to work in the field of child welfare. These discretionary grants are awarded to public and private non-profit institutions of higher learning and are designed to help State child welfare agencies develop a stable and highly skilled workforce for providing effective child welfare services. A particular focus of these grants is developing and maintaining a strong University-Public Agency Partnership to identify and develop appropriate staff competencies.

Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSRs)
The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) were authorized by the 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act (SSA), and are administered by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The reviews are designed to support a stronger Federal-State partnership for improving the outcomes of child welfare services to children and families. The reviews seek to achieve this goal by linking an initial review of State child welfare services with a program improvement process and subsequent reviews that measure progress toward those improvements. Moreover, the CFSR process is intended to be coordinated with other Federal child welfare requirements, such as the planning and monitoring of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP).

Specifically, the CFSRs assess how well States achieve positive outcomes in the following three domains for children and families engaged in child welfare services: child safety, child permanency, and child and family well being. The CFSRs also examine seven State and local child welfare agency systemic factors that affect the achievement of positive outcomes. The systemic factors assessed during the CFSRs are based on the requirements in the Title IV-B and IV-E regulations, and States are rated on (1) the extent to which they have met those requirements through systems, policies, procedures, or training, (2) how those systems are operating in day-to-day practice in the field, as demonstrated through data or stakeholder input, and (3) the effectiveness of the State with regard to the systemic factors in achieving positive outcomes for children and families.

The CFSR is organized into four discrete phases. The first phase is a written statewide assessment, completed by the State agency and provided to the Children's Bureau. The statewide assessment instrument is intended as a tool States can use to examine their capacity and performance in improving outcomes for children and families engaged in child welfare services. Following the statewide assessment, there is an on-site review, through which the Children's Bureau seeks an in-depth understanding of the State's performance using case reviews and interviews with a range of stakeholders. In the third phase, the Children's Bureau prepares a final report, using the information provided from the statewide assessment and the on-site review. The final report includes a determination as to whether the State is or is not in "substantial conformity" with each of the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes and the seven systemic factors. The report's discussion of the State's strengths and weaknesses is the basis for the Program Improvement Plan (PIP), developed jointly by the State and the Children's Bureau in the fourth phase. The PIP includes time frames by which the State must implement identified improvements.[5]

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[5] Hardin, Mark. *Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSRs): How Judges, Court Administrators, and Attorneys Should Be Involved.* National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues, ABA Center on Children and the Law, March 2002.

One of the systemic factors reviewed in the CFSR is Staff and Provider Training (see text box for specific requirements). For the first CFSRs, assessment reports were largely descriptive. In the second round, reports are required to be more evaluative, to clearly show an analysis of the relationship between a State's outcome data and the quality/effectiveness of the system under review.

CFSR Items Regarding Staff and Provider Training

Item 32: Initial Staff Training. Is the State operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under Titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services?

Item 33: Ongoing Training. Does the State provide for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP?

Item 34: Foster & Adoptive Parent Training. Does the State provide training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State-licensed or State-approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under Title IV-E? Does the training address the skills and knowledge base that they need to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children?

For each item, the state must discuss the following relevant exploratory issues:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, such as the level, type, duration, timeframe, amount, and intensity of training required, and whether training is completed before cases are assigned. [Items 32 and 33]

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item with regard to (1) both pre-service and ongoing training, and (2) requirements regarding licensing of, and placement of children in, foster or adoptive homes before or after training foster or adoptive parents, including training requirements for foster parents, relative caregivers, adoptive parents, and facility staff. [Item 34]

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice.

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes.

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about (1) initial staff training [Item 32], all staff including supervisors and managers [Item 33], all caregivers [Item 34] (2) the content and quality of the training, and (3) how training is reflected in staff and caregiver performance.

- The State's capacity to track that staff, foster, and adoptive parents are meeting State training requirements and to identify those who need training.

- Whether the State requires or provides initial and/or ongoing training for private agency staff, where the State contracts out full case management. [Item 32 and 33]

- Training requirements, needs, and opportunities for staff of child care facilities. [Item 34]

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county, including local or regional differences in training requirements or implementation.

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable.

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency.

- Promising approaches in this area.

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency.

Definitions

This section provides definitions for the key terms used in this guide. We recognize that States and counties may use different terms, or use the same terms differently. While the terms may vary, we have found a great deal of consistency in the actual work across States and counties. Readers are encouraged to find the terms that most accurately reflect their training systems.

Curriculum: Curriculum is a step-by-step written manual to guide a training session or event. It can include instructions to the trainer on actions to perform during the training, the content to present, and samples of handouts to prepare.[6] A crucial part of the curriculum is the definition of the course objectives, which are often expressed in terms of learning outcomes and normally include the assessment strategy for the program. These learning outcomes (and assessments) are often grouped into units (or modules) and the curriculum, therefore, comprises a collection of such units, each specializing in part of the curriculum.[7]

Training Evaluation: Evaluation of training should occur at multiple levels. Most traditionally, four levels are examined. The first assesses the extent to which the training information is useful and the presentation pleasing, both participant reactions to the training event. The second level assesses the knowledge and skills gained, as well as shifts in attitude from before to after the training. The third assesses the transfer of knowledge and skills to the field of practice. The fourth level assesses the impact of the new practice behaviors on client and organizational outcomes.[8] Other related frameworks have also been developed that expand upon these levels, and should be considered in conceptualizing and developing a model for evaluating training. Training evaluation may also assess the training event itself by assessing curriculum fidelity and trainer competence. Finally, the best training evaluation will take into account the contextual variables that affect the delivery, receipt, and transfer of training.[9]

Practice Model: A child welfare practice model[10] is, at its most basic level, a conceptual map and organizational ideology of how agency employees, families, and stakeholders should partner to create a physical and emotional environment focused on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and their families. The practice model contains definitions and explanations regarding how the agency as a whole will work internally and partner with families, service providers, and other stakeholders in child welfare services. A practice model is the clear, written explanation of how the agency functions.

Simply stated, the practice model should explicitly link the agency's policy, practice, training, and quality assurance with its mission, vision, and agency values. It is the agency's guide to the daily interactions with employees, children, families, stakeholders, and community partners working together to achieve defined outcomes.

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[6]   Charmaine Brittain, Butler Institute for Families, University of Denver, Presentation 2004.
[7]   Wikipedia
[8]   Kirkpatrick, D.L (1959). Techniques for evaluating programs. *Journal of the American Society of Training Directorss.* 13 (11), 3-9.
[9]   Barbee, A.P., Antle, B.F., and Martin, M. (2007) Supervisor-Team training: issues in evaluation. T*he Journal of the National Staff Development and Training Association,* volume 4, number 1.
[10] Herrick, Angela, National Resource Center cite Christensen, Todahl and Barrett, 1999

Recommended elements of a child welfare practice model are:
- practice principles,
- agency values,
- standards of professional practice, and
- strategies, methods, and tools to integrate these principles, values, and standards into daily practice.

We recognize that not every child welfare agency has a practice model that reflects this definition. Therefore, references to a practice model in this guide should be understood to include not only a full practice model but also whatever the agency has articulated about its practice. This could include practice principles, practice standards, desired outcomes, etc. An assessment of the training system should cover whatever aspects of a practice model do exist.

Quality Assurance: A structured process, external to the program or service, for looking at the services, products and processes of the agency's work. Sometimes this takes the form of an external party who ensures that services are provided at the level of quality required. Sometimes this is the validation of the quality improvement process, such as having experts read records and determine if they agree with the conclusions reached by the quality improvement teams.[11]

Quality Improvement: The structured, regular practice of looking at the services, products and processes of one's own work. Quality improvement is carried out by the people doing the work. There may be leadership or coaching from a person who is not a member of the team providing the service, but the problem solving and action planning are driven by those who know and do the work.[12]

Agency Training System: A training system that does not include a lead university partner, but rather retains management responsibility and control in the State agency's training unit. Although the State doesn't contract with a lead university, it will usually contract with several universities and colleges for specific components of the training system. In some States, the county agencies' training units are critical partners to the State agency's training unit.

Training Director: The senior manager who has direct responsibility for the content, quality, and results of the training system. This person reports either to the State agency's commissioner/director or, more likely, to a member of the senior management team. Whether they hold a State position or a university position (where a partnership exists) can reflect organizational control or simply funding availability. States use a variety of titles to refer to this person, including training manager, training coordinator, training administrator, or staff development manager.

Training Institute: The part of the system that is housed at a university partner. Some States refer to this as a training academy or training program. Not all States structure their training system in a manner that uses an institute to house their training work. Some States will contract with several universities and colleges to provide specific components of the State's training system, but not designate one as the lead.

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[11] Fotena A. Zirps, Still Doing It Right: A Guide to Quality in Human Service Agencies, Institute for Quality Assurance and Advocacy, 2003.
[12] Ibid.

Training System: A training system is comprised of the people (trainers, managers and universities), resources (financial, technical), policies and procedures combined into a coherent whole. The purpose of the training system is to plan, provide, support, and evaluate formal and informal instruction, learning opportunities, and professional development aimed at improving agency outcomes. The view in this guide is of the entire training system and its integration into the fabric of the child welfare service delivery system.

Training Unit: The group of State employees and/or individual contractors who are responsible for administering the training system. The size of the unit depends on the degree to which the State relies (or doesn't) on its university partner.

University Partnership: The contractual relationship that a State establishes with a lead university to operate some or all of its training program. This is different from an agency training system, in which the State agency retains management responsibility and control. Typically, the partners are the State agency and one lead university. The university may establish relationships (subcontracts) with other universities and colleges. Typically, this contractual arrangement is re-negotiated annually, though some partnerships operate under longer contracts.

University Partner: The lead university with whom the State child welfare agency contracts to deliver some or all of its training program. The university is generally selected based on its ability to meet training needs in a timely and cost-effective manner that reflects best training practice. The university's willingness to contribute its own resources to the institute is also an important consideration. Most training institutes do contract with other universities and colleges, so the lead university's ability to establish and sustain productive relationships is an important quality.

Principles, indicators, and evidence of a mature training system's services and products

This section of the guide for *Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies* identifies principles for assessing the extent to which your training system delivers the services and products (i.e., formal and informal instruction, learning opportunities, and professional development) of a mature system. The training system must function well in each of these areas to effectively support the agency in achieving positive outcomes. A training system may be working on any or all of the performance principles at any phase in its life cycle. Linked to each principle is a series of indicators and sources of evidence of a mature training system's strengths and success. For the purpose of this guide, we define performance principles, indicators and evidence as follows:

- Performance principles are comprehensive statements about the work that a training system must do well in order to be effective
- Indicators specify ways that the training system implements and acts on the principles
- Evidence is proof that the principles and indicators are in place and working well. The evidence column provides some examples and suggestions, but is certainly not exhaustive. Agencies should identify for themselves where they expect to find evidence of good performance

We have organized the performance principles to reflect the following key organizational tiers:
- frontline social workers/case managers,
- supervisors,
- managers, and
- external partners and stakeholders.

The day-to-day work and practice of staff, supervisors, managers, partners and stakeholders must reflect and embody fundamental organizational values and practice principles. If they are not consistently aligned and integrated, the agency will operate at cross-purposes. Therefore, a central component of a mature training system is that the curricula and courses are sequenced, build on themselves, and are thematically integrated across training audiences. Training content focuses on both individual and organizational needs and is linked to agency outcomes.

Frontline Social Workers/Case Managers

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) and the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) have focused increased attention on the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being. In analyzing the results of the CFSR across the country, the Children's Bureau identified systemic factors and practices that most strongly correlate with the achievement of these outcomes. A key CFSR finding was that family interactions with agency staff strongly affect outcomes. What happens between the caseworker and the family during visits and contacts, how families' needs and strengths are assessed and matched to services, the quality of case planning, and the effectiveness of strategies used to engage the family can significantly impact outcomes. The practice principles identified below are key points of leverage for improving outcomes and are the case practices on which, at a minimum, the training system should focus.

Performance Principle: Social Workers/Case Managers
The training system introduces, clarifies and reinforces the agency's practice model.

Indicators
- Provides new hire, ongoing and specialized training in the skills and knowledge needed to understand and implement the full practice model.
- Develops and supports a cadre of coaches and mentors, drawn from all levels of the agency, to reinforce good practice.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Formal initial and ongoing caseworker training program
- Formal curriculum covering topics of:
  – case practice
  – child welfare outcomes
  – decision-making
  – cultural responsiveness
- Individual training needs assessments and related professional development plan for all frontline social workers/case managers
- Skill building program for all frontline social workers/case managers
- Peer coaches identified and serve on the training team
- Field mentors trained and assigned to each worker
- Training on documentation in the automated case management system
- Evaluation results from each training event compiled, distributed and used in future curriculum development and delivery.

An example… The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare Model of Practice defines who DHS serves and the intended outcomes of child welfare services, as well as providing guiding principles for the agency's work and expectations relating to practice and program and organizational capacity. One of the standards contained in the Model of Practice is that DHS staff will receive initial and

ongoing training in the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties related to safety, permanency and well being.

The Model of Practice became the foundation for an introductory course, Child Welfare Practice in Iowa, which is required for all new child protective workers, case managers and supervisors. The curriculum includes a life of a case sequence of the model of practice.

http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Consumers/Child_Welfare/BR4K/Practice_Bulletins/Practice Bulletins.html

Scroll down to Model of Practice

Performance Principle: Social Workers/Case Managers

The training system introduces, clarifies and reinforces the link between the quality and frequency of worker visits with the family and child(ren) and positive outcomes for children and families.

Indicators
- Provides workers with an understanding of their role in, and builds the skills necessary for, engaging in quality visits.
- Covers the agency policies that define a quality worker visit.
- Shows how and why to document worker visits in the case record.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Agency policies and procedures in place and easily accessible
- Visitation training made available to all workers who supervise visits (internal and external)

An example…   To develop 'full performance workers' the Oklahoma DHS Child Welfare Training Program provides all new caseworkers with a New Worker Development Plan. Over 48 months, that plan includes:
- five weeks of CORE Training;
- mandatory specialized workshops;
- on-the-job training;
- structured mentoring; and
- intensive supervision.

A key tool in this plan is the *Guide for Supervisors and Mentors,* which explains the New Worker Development Plan concept, outlines what supervisors can expect from the CW Training Section, and details what is expected from supervisors and workers. Supervisors use this guide with every CORE participant who attends training. They like the guide as it provides them with information on how to prepare a new worker for the training.

An example of one of the OJT activities described in the *Guide for Supervisors and Mentors* is for the worker to accompany an experienced worker on visits to at least 4 different children in foster care. The worker then completes a Child Visitation worksheet and an Assessment of Child in Placement form, which s/he reviews with the supervisor. The purpose of this activity, as described in the guide, is to have the worker and supervisor discuss the importance of visiting children in foster care (it is not merely done to comply with policy). Through feedback from the supervisor and their own observations, workers should learn that the visits provide an opportunity to watch progress toward meeting the child's identified needs and achieving the case plan goal.

For more information see: http://www.ou.edu/cwtraining/

Performance Principle: Social Workers/Case Managers

The training system introduces, clarifies and reinforces the importance of initial and ongoing family assessments throughout the life of a case, particularly at points of transition.

Indicators
- Builds skills in conducting safety and risk assessments, comprehensive family assessments, and other standardized assessment tools approved by the agency, as well as in updating assessments throughout the life of the case.
- Builds the skills needed to accurately determine the safety of the child as well as the factors that mitigate future risk of harm/neglect.
- Builds the skills needed to communicate with and understand recommendations of outside experts who participate in multi-disciplinary assessments or provide specialized assessments.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Formal curriculum covering assessment

Performance Principle: Social Workers/Case Managers

The training system introduces, clarifies and reinforces the value of and ways to facilitate the family's partnering in service planning and throughout the life of the case.

Indicators
- Builds skills and an understanding of how to apply teaming and engaging with families, peers, agency staff at all levels, and others involved with serving families.
- Builds skills and knowledge to meet the needs of children within the context of their culture, community, family and family support network, including the father and father's kin.
- Provides workers with skills to help families identify both formal and informal ongoing supports.
- Develops an understanding of the service array and how to match and connect families with appropriate services.
- Builds the skills needed to ensure that all participants are prepared for the child and family team meeting.
- Shows how and why to document family involvement in service planning in the case record.
- Conveys the value of and builds skills needed to make full disclosure to families about privacy/confidentiality, concurrent planning, and the process for terminating parental rights.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Formal curriculum covering teaming and engaging
- Training includes practice on how to honestly and openly provide full disclosure while always putting the safety of the children first

Supervisors

Supervisors are the link between administrators and frontline workers. In their day-to-day work, supervisors translate policy, reinforce casework practice, principles and standards, and often serve as resources for community partners. When supervisors play a pivotal role in training and mentoring staff and teams, workers are better able to transfer learning. Clearly, supervisors need frequent and diverse, opportunities to be supported in the vital role they play in achieving organizational and family goals. The training system is one organizational support that can help ensure effective supervision.

Performance Principle: Supervisors

The training system provides supervisors with training in the clinical, administrative, supportive, and educational aspects of their jobs as defined by the practice model.

Indicators
- Provides supervisors with initial and ongoing training on supervisory skills.
- Provides the opportunity for supervisors to apply skills and knowledge learned to their day-to-day work.
- Enhances supervisor's knowledge of how to use data to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.
- Builds knowledge and skills in the parallel process and provides opportunities to practice those skills.
- Builds skills in and creates opportunities to mentor, coach, and model desired case practice with workers and teams.
- Identifies and assesses individuals with leadership and/or supervisory potential and provides professional development training.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Formal initial and ongoing supervisor training program
- Formal written curriculum
- On-line tutorials for new supervisors
- Skill building program for supervisors, possibly pre-promotion
- Individual training needs assessments for all supervisors
- Continuing professional development of supervisors based on identified needs
- Supervisory participation on training advisory committee
- Post training follow-up with supervisors, such as survey and feedback opportunities
- Expanded supervisory mentoring program, including a field mentor program
- Number and/or percentage of supervisors who complete the IV-E funded MSW program
- Evaluation results from each training event compiled, distributed and used in future curriculum development and delivery.

The Child Welfare Training Partnership at the University of Vermont recently conducted a Supervisor Readiness Assessment with child welfare supervisors. The assessment was designed as a self-assessment of both competencies and understanding of impending systems changes and the impact of these changes on supervisory roles. The tool asked supervisors to rate their confidence in their ability to carry out several tasks such as: developing and supporting teamwork, facilitating open communication between staff and management, providing or assuring orientation for new staff, providing clinical case supervision and fostering ownership of the agency's mission, goals, values, policies and procedures. The assessment results helped trainers focus monthly trainings with supervisors on those topics in which people felt least confident.

For more information contact: Sarah Gallagher, Child Welfare Training Partnership Coordinator
Sarah.Gallagher@uvm.edu

Performance Principle: Supervisors

The training system supports supervisors as key intervention points for improving the interactions between administration, other internal systems, social work staff, service providers, community partners, and children and families.

Indicators
- Enhances supervisors' ability to communicate to staff the agency's vision, values, practice model and desired outcomes.
- Reinforces supervisory responsibility to communicate to executive leadership the resource, policy, system, and case practice issues identified through training.
- Reinforces strategies for using the formal and informal supports in the service array to support families and communities in caring for their children. Provides information about the service array, such as types, eligibility, and access procedures.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Agency's vision, values, practice model, and desired outcomes are a central training theme
- Feedback mechanisms identified and used by supervisors
- Structured opportunities for information sharing and dialogue between supports in the service array and agency supervisors

Performance Principle: Supervisors

The training system engages supervisors as partners in the development and delivery of training for workers on their team.

Indicators
- Demonstrates its capacity, utility, and flexibility as a resource for staff development.
- Builds skills in how to identify learning gaps for and with workers and how to meet those training needs in order to support continued professional development.
- Ensures supervisors are knowledgeable about the content of the training provided to their staff.
- Supports supervisors in retaining and promoting workers.
- Creates opportunities for supervisors to give input (such as providing practical, realistic scenarios) into curriculum design and feedback on the effectiveness of training.
- Engages supervisors in training where appropriate and offers opportunities for them to share expertise and experiences.
- There are clear methods for supporting the transfer of learning.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Updated description of pre-service/new worker training modules given to supervisors
- Training tools, including videos that show supervisors sharing stories and lessons learned
- Identification by supervisors of employees who would benefit from the MSW Program
- Uses supervisors as trainers and presenters where possible and appropriate.
- Field observation reports from supervisors/peer coaches

An example… To support transfer of learning and ensure that supervisors are confident with their role in that process, the training team in the Utah Division of Child & Family Services provides supervisors with descriptive material and brief trainings on new curriculum and training that workers will receive. The supervisor packet provides supervisors with guidance and information in understanding the training, preparing their staff to be trained, and providing mentoring for their staff after they have received the training. The packet features a supervisor's handbook that summarizes the content of the training, explains its purpose and provides supervisors with info they need to help ensure that the worker is ready to participate in the training. Additionally, the packet includes information such as: a training advertisement, related practice guidelines, a table of contents from the training, and a mentoring plan and process for the training.

For more information contact: Midge Delavan, Training Coordinator, Utah Division of Child & Family Services, mdelavan@utah.gov

Managers

The executive leadership of the child welfare agency must define, communicate, clarify and regularly evaluate the organization's vision, mission, values, and goals, and encourage every staff member to deliver a single, coherent message to all partners. Additionally, managers and administrators should actively support supervisors and staff as they apply new skills and knowledge on the job. In order for that to occur successfully, there must be vertical integration of the agency's core values and practice model. Everyone in the agency must receive training in and hold a shared understanding of the vision, mission, values, goals, and practice principles. Everyone, from the person who answers phone up to the commissioner, must apply these in their daily work.

Performance Principle: Managers

The training system provides all managers with training in the leadership, managerial, and operational aspects of their jobs, as well as building skills to exemplify the practice model.

Indicators
- Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice model.
- Partners with other agency divisions to develop training to support managers in their continued professional development:
- Developing and implementing a strategic plan
- Managing scarce resources to maximum effect
- Developing and managing contracts with service providers
- Using quantitative and qualitative data to examine and improve quality and outcomes
- Managing personnel and labor relations
- Engaging in community and public relations
- Provides training and skills in modeling and supporting the practice model at all levels of the agency.
- Supports executive leaders with retention and succession planning by identifying and assessing individuals with leadership potential and providing professional development opportunities.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Formal initial and ongoing training program
- Formal, written curriculum
- Skill building program for managers, possibly pre-promotion
- Individual training needs assessments for all managers
- Continuing professional development of managers based on identified needs
- Managerial participation on training advisory committee
- Access to training provided by other State agencies
- Technical assistance provided on-site, not just classroom training

- Evaluation results from each training event compiled, distributed and used in future curriculum development and delivery.

Performance Principle: Managers

The training system engages managers as partners in the development and delivery of training for supervisors and workers.

Indicators
- Ensures managers are knowledgeable about the content of the training provided to front line staff and supervisors, especially training on the practice model.
- Creates opportunities for managers to give input (such as providing practical, realistic scenarios) into curriculum design and feedback on the effectiveness of training.
- Engages managers in training where appropriate and creates opportunities for them to share expertise and experiences with staff.
- There are clear methods for supporting the transfer of learning.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Updated description of pre-service/new worker and supervisor training modules given to managers
- Training tools, including videos that show managers sharing stories and lessons learned
- Managers serve as mentors, trainers, or presenters

An example…   In Indiana, the Director of the Department of Child Services takes an active role in the training program for new employees. On the first day of training, the Director meets and welcomes the training cohort and swears the group in with an official oath. The supervisor for each trainee attends the first day as well, and the Director meets with them for an hour to emphasize the importance of the role supervisors play in training, mentoring, and supporting new staff. At the conclusion of the training program, the Director returns as the key speaker at the formal graduation ceremony. The Director also leads 3-month reunion meetings with each training cohort to gather feedback from the workers on how well the training prepared them for field work. The data from these meetings are compiled and distributed widely to managers and supervisors and reviewed by the training team. Questions include:
- What pieces of training information have been most helpful since you have been working in field?
- What surprised you most since you have been "out there?"
- What do you wish you had been told/taught (or had been emphasized more) prior to your leaving the classroom and going to the field?
- What changes if any would you make to the training? These can be content or logistics changes.

For more information visit the Indiana DCS website at: http://www.in.gov/dcs

External Partners and Stakeholders

Child welfare agencies do their work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, including foster and adoptive parents, providers of out-of-home placement and in-home services, courts and the legal community, schools and local education authorities, sister State human services agencies/workers, and other levels of government (county, regional, State and federal). In order to have productive partnerships, child welfare agencies must deliver a single, coherent message to all their partners. The training system helps enhance this work by providing a consistent training approach and range of opportunities for external partners to develop a common understanding of the child welfare agency's vision, mission, values, goals, and practice principle. The training system also provides opportunities for child welfare agency staff to learn about these external partners and their work.

Performance Principle: External Partners and Stakeholders

The training system provides training and professional development to the agency's contracted service providers.

Indicators
- Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice principles.
- Builds provider staff skills in meeting their contractual obligations and reporting requirements.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Provider staff able to attend social worker and supervisor training
- Written training materials, invitations, agendas, and evaluations
- Formalized process to integrate stakeholder feedback into training.
- Major stakeholders are aware of the training that is provided, and have input into the formulation, revision and evaluation of curriculum.

Performance Principle: External Partners and Stakeholders

The training system offers training to sister State/county agencies and other stakeholders with whom the child welfare agency routinely works.

Indicators
- Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice principles.
- Helps to clarify the role that sister agencies play in supporting children and families.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Written training materials, invitations, agendas, and evaluations

- On-line courses available on agency's public website

- Training plan includes opportunities/courses for partners and stakeholders

An example… Illinois has over 4,250 direct services staff, 18,000 foster caregivers, 160,000 mandated reporters and 25,000 child care staff requiring training to identify and report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. To meet this high volume training need, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) worked with Western Illinois University to develop an on-line training course accessible through the statewide on-line training system, known as the Virtual Training Center (VTC). The content helps identify various forms of child abuse or neglect, the duty of the mandated reporter, how to report suspected child abuse or neglect, and what to expect when making a report and working with the Department while investigating a report.

Through the VTC, staff, foster parents and other allied helping professionals are provided an online account to access casework, supervisory, and foster care training programs from their office or home computer.

Examples of other on-line training courses include: *Child and Family Teams; Working with Individuals that are Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Burgos (Illinois-specific policy requirements for working with Spanish language clients); Using the Eco-Map and Genogram in Casework; Early Childhood Intervention (0-3); and New Employee Orientation.*

For more information please contact Judy Zaleski, Training Administrator, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Judy.zaleski@illinois.gov.

Performance Principle: External Partners and Stakeholders

The training system coordinates foster and pre-adoptive parent training.

Indicators
- Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice principles.
- Helps to clarify the role that foster and pre-adoptive parents play in supporting children and families.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Formal, written curriculum
- Evaluation results from each training event compiled, distributed and used in future curriculum development and delivery.

An example…   The Maine Child Welfare Training Institute (CWTI) at the University of Southern Maine provides introductory and in-service training to foster and pre-adoptive parents and child welfare caseworkers under a Cooperative Agreement with the Office of Child and Family Services of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. CWTI offers foster and pre-parent classroom training, including on-line training for make-up sessions.

The introductory training offered to pre-adoptive and foster parents gives them the skills necessary to understand and cope with the experience of receiving an adoptive or foster child into their home. Throughout the training, the various roles played by the pre-adoptive or foster parent are identified, reinforced and practiced. These roles include:

- Nurturer: Supporting the foster child's attachment to your family as well as the child's connection to, and memory of, his or her birth parents.
- Permanency Facilitator: Helping achieve the permanency plan—which might be reunification, guardianship, or adoption—and helping foster children visit their birth parents.
- Birth Parent Supporter: Getting to know birth parents and empathizing with their struggles; modeling positive parenting skills; and communicating with birth parents about the child's day-to-day life.

For more information see Maine Child Welfare Training Institute website: http://www.cwti.org/.

Performance Principle: External Partners and Stakeholders

The training system encourages the use of training best practices across the child-serving human services system.

Indicators
- Includes trainers from stakeholder agencies in assessing common information needs and assures it is provided through training or other formats.
- Encourages sister State agencies and courts to participate in all phases of agency training—needs assessment, development, delivery, and evaluation.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Advisory committee membership with external partners and use of focus groups

- Training policy that specifies community members' participation in training sponsored by the agency and vice versa

- Process to identify and address emerging training needs

An example… The Rhode Island Child Welfare Institute (CWI) found that training on effectively engaging fathers in case planning was needed by caseworkers and others involved in child welfare. To develop the training, CWI formed an advisory committee of training staff, child welfare agency staff (CQI/QA Manager, Agency Director, and direct line workers), community agencies (RI Parent Information Network, Children's Friend and Service, Family Life Center), and sister State agencies (Department of Corrections and Child Support) and consumers (2 fathers and 1 mother with a history of child welfare involvement). The committee created a 6-hour pilot curriculum titled, "Where's Daddy: Engaging Hard to Reach Fathers." The CWI piloted the curriculum with an audience of community and child welfare staff. Evaluation data resulted in an expansion of the curriculum to an 18-hour training program, which has been conducted approximately 10 times. The success of the program can be attributed to: (1) consistent involvement of the advisory committee in curriculum development, training facilitation and evaluation, (2) acknowledgement by participants of child welfare's role in excluding fathers and (3) an instructional design that models the process of working with fathers collaboratively to provide support.

For more information, please contact Tonya Glantz, MSW, Clinical Training Specialist, RI Child Welfare Institute, tglantz@ric.edu.

Performance Principle: External Partners and Stakeholders

The training system offers cross system and professional development opportunities.

Indicators

- Creates opportunities for managers, supervisors, and social work staff to participate in external training in areas such as domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, and education.
- Creates opportunities to learn about services available from the provider community.
- Supports participation in local, regional, and national professional conferences.
- Encourages membership in related professional organizations.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Training database tracks staff attendance at external training events
- Professional development budget and policy
- Provider fairs
- Trainers attend professional conferences and share information with other trainers

Life Cycle of a Training System's Structure

This section describes the life cycle of a training system's structure as well as the components and indicators of a mature structure. Just as States vary in how they organize and administer their child welfare systems, they also vary in how they organize and administer their training systems. Our purpose in this guide is not to comment on which organizational approach is the "right" one. Rather, our purpose is to present an analytic framework that focuses on the desired performance of a training system. This framework will work regardless of how the State organizes and manages its training system.

A life cycle is, in general, a predictable pattern characterized by commonly used stages of development. Organizations can evolve through each phase of growth regardless of whether they consciously recognize the cycles or not. However, child welfare leaders and training directors can use the concepts of the life cycle to find patterns and target their system's growth and development. Rather than selecting actions or developing plans based solely on familiarity, popularity, or ease-of-use, an effective director can become familiar with the underlying drivers and choices within the life cycle. By using the framework and materials presented in this guide to view their past experiences and feedback on their training system, child welfare leaders and training directors can proactively manage the development of the training system rather than accepting the life cycle stage their system is in. [13]

The life cycle in general and changes in particular components do not progress in a linear or hierarchical manner. Rather, changes are dynamic, with some components becoming mature before others. For example, a training system's partnerships might reach a mature stage while its policies and procedures are still in an early or growth stage. Its management/leadership might cycle from early to mature back to growth as a result of changes in the child welfare agency's leadership. Nor is there a linear relationship between the structure's components and the performance principles for the training system's services and products. Leaders of a training system may select certain components on which to focus just as they may choose to work on certain performance principles at any phase in its life cycle. The assessment tool included in this guide is intended to help managers determine where they might best focus their efforts.

Overall, the momentum of the training system's development should be in the direction of increased: stability and sustainability, reliability as a partner, effectiveness, scope of services and delivery methods, expansion of participants, and inclusion of partners.

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[13] Miller, Danny & Friesen, Peter. (1984). A longitudinal study of the corporate life cycle. *Management Science.* Vol. 30 (10). pp. 1161-1183.
Daft, Richard L. (2001). *Organization Theory and Design.* (Seventh Edition). South-Western College Publishing. Cincinnati, Ohio. pp. 284-289.
Einhorn, Hillel J. & Hogarth, Robin M. (n.d.). Decision making: going forward in reverse. *Harvard Business Review on Managing Uncertainty.* pp. 131-146.

Changes in the structure are important and effective only if they spark and support changes in the system's performance and, ultimately, agency outcomes.

Stages in the Life Cycle

Through our interviews with training directors, we have identified the stages of a training system's life cycle as Early, Growth, and Mature.

Early. In the early development stage, the training system is usually small, entrepreneurial, and can feel like any start-up venture. The training system often gets its structure and control only from the training director, with little input from the agency's leadership team. Efforts focus on delivering a limited number of courses for just a few audiences. Staff are "jacks of all trades," often developing curricula, delivering training, and coordinating all logistics. Funding is erratic and there are only a few resources dedicated solely to the training function. Evaluation efforts are limited to attendance, trainee satisfaction, and trainer delivery style and method, rather than impact on practice and outcomes.

Growth. As the training system grows, it becomes more structured, stable, and integrated with other internal agency systems. Procedures are formalized, a clear hierarchy and division of labor are established, and formal management control is established. Training systems in the growth stage may offer additional complementary courses and expand their audience. Although growth is generally desired and seen as beneficial, the associated workload may outpace staffing and resources, creating a frenetic pace. This stage is considered the innovation stage in the life cycle. At this stage, evaluation may begin to include measuring increased knowledge and skill from before to after training.

Mature. In its mature phase, the training system is fully integrated with other systems in the agency. The training system itself is large and can feel bureaucratic, with control systems, rules, and procedures. However, in a well-functioning system, these features support effective and efficient use of resources, according to agency priorities, with positive impact on performance and outcomes. At this stage, evaluation may focus on transfer of training to the field of practice and on the effects of training on client and organizational outcomes.

Structural Components

The structural components, in their mature phase, are described below.

Management/Leadership. In a mature training system, the training director is part of the agency's leadership team and an active participant in the development and management of the agency's strategic plan, which includes training priorities. The strategic plan, in turn, guides the development of the annual training plan, for which the training director is accountable to the leadership team.

Staff. Training system staff includes State and county employees, university partner staff, consultants, and contractors, trainers, curriculum writers, and support staff. One of the important decisions of a training system is whether trainers will be practitioners or professional trainers or some combination. As the system moves through its growth stage, the types of trainers used may change as the content and curriculum becomes more structured.

Resources. The resources needed by a training system include financial support, technology, and dedicated classroom space. Training systems should move from relying solely on Federal IV-E funds and State matching dollars to a more diverse funding base that includes public and private grants and fee-based programs. In doing so, it becomes a more mature system, capable of consistently providing a broader array of services and products.

Partnerships. Training systems include a range of partnerships: State agency partnerships with universities, State agency partnerships with county agencies, training system partnerships with other internal systems. In order for the training system to be an integrated part of the whole, its contributions must be clear and it must give and accept feedback effectively. Two key strategies for moving the training system to a mature stage involve partnerships with other internal systems (i.e., the case practice system and the quality assurance system).

Policies & Procedures. A mature training system has policies and procedures that spell out clear, consistent, and enforced expectations for training system staff and managers as well as trainees and their supervisors. Policies and procedures are generally not established during the early stage of development, but sometime in the growth stage. They are necessary to reach maturity because policies and procedures are a critical means for the training system to communicate and ensure its reliability as a partner.

Performance Principle: Management/Leadership

The training director is viewed as and acts as a proactive change leader.

Indicators
- The training director is a member of the agency's leadership team.
- Decision making authority is truly collaborative through a well-articulated governance structure that includes an advisory group to help provide oversight.
- Key agency leaders can describe the training system's value and role in a paragraph or less.
- The agency's strategic plan includes training priorities.
- The training system management team has the range of skills necessary to develop, secure resources for, lead, and sustain an effective training system.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Training director is invited to leadership meetings.
- Governance structure, membership, charter
- Agency strategic plan
- Annual assessment of organizational training needs
- Annual training plan based on identified individual and organizational training needs
- Training system management team job descriptions and skills

An example…   In Indiana, the Deputy Director of Staff Development is a member of the Department of Child Services Executive Team and reports directly to the Agency Director. In her role, she oversees the training partnership with Indiana University and has functional supervision of the entire training unit. The Deputy Director attends every policy, legal, and legislative meeting with the Executive Team in order to ensure that training is represented across all spectrums within the Agency. She meets regularly with the Deputy Director of Field Operations to align training with practice. She also consults frequently with the Deputy Directors for Practice Support (which includes Policy and Quality Assurance) and Programs and Services to insure that all training activities reflect agency policies, practices and procedures.

For more information visit the Indiana DCS website at: http://www.in.gov/dcs

Performance Principle: Staff

The blend of practitioners and training professionals who develop and deliver training is the result of an explicit strategy and training standards.

Indicators
- Staff roles, responsibilities, and relationships are formalized.
- Staffing levels and skills are sufficient to meet workload.
- The training system is able to balance demands placed on it by both internal and external sources.
- Ongoing training of trainers occurs.
- Contracted trainers/consultants are held to same standards as staff trainers.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Job descriptions
- Contractor standards
- Training of trainer curricula
- Budget for staffing/consultants
- Annual assessment of trainer strengths and areas for improvement regarding their approach to material and training techniques

An example…   The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program (PACWTP) has created a series of trainer practices and standards that assure a high quality training experience for participants attending CWTP programs. In summary:

Initially, PACWTP selects trainers only after they participate in an application/interview process developed and completed by internal staff. Applicants for trainer contracts must have direct experience with the child welfare system or demonstrate familiarity with the training needs of staff working in the child welfare system.

Once selected, potential trainers are required to attend a two-day Development of Trainers session (DOT) provided by PACWTP. Completion of the DOT does not immediately grant a trainer the ability to train as each individual curriculum requires an approval process for each individual trainer. Applicants may seek approval to train on a curriculum but may be required to participate in existing training on that curriculum prior to approval; applicants must demonstrate subject matter expertise and curriculum familiarity prior to providing instruction. All applicants must attend an arranged training on content session provided by PACWTP staff for all new curriculum.

Once approved to train a curriculum, trainers must maintain or exceed training program standards for training evaluation (completed after each training) and maintain or exceed minimum standards for units of service provided annually or within a 36-month approved cycle. For 07-08, trainers will also be required to obtain 6 hours annually of approved continuing education credits.

If a trainer does not meet the minimum standards as per their evaluation scores, technical assistance and support is provided to the trainer by PACWTP staff to assure improved performance. Otherwise, the trainer will be considered "inactive."

For further information contact: the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program at 717-795-9048.

Performance Principle: Resources

The training system is on equal footing with other systems regarding the allocation of resources.

Indicators
- Comprehensive training needs assessment drives forecasting for resource needs.
- Funding comes from a variety of sources, including the State, counties, private grants, and/or fees.
- The training system is able to invest in dedicated classroom space.
- Technology is available and used to support Computer Based Training (CBT) and Distance Learning.
- A Learning Management System is used to track progress on individual training plans.
- Conducts comprehensive training evaluation to show how well trainees actually gain knowledge and skills and successfully transfer knowledge and skills to field practice, and show that those new behaviors lead to better casework practice and outcomes for children.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Training system budget, including all sources and uses of funds
- Training needs assessment and results
- Capacity to contract with training and subject matter experts.
- Reports on attendance and personal training plan compliance and achievement
- Written evaluation plan
- Findings from evaluation that are incorporated into curriculum

An example…   Since July 1, 2007, the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program (PACWTP) has been working with the 67 county agencies delivering child welfare services to implement an Organizational Needs Assessment (ONA) process. This process involves PACWTP staff engaging in discussions with representatives from each county to assess the organizational needs of that county agency. These discussions occur between a regional PACWTP team (comprised of PACWTP staff including at least one Practice Improvement Specialist, one Transfer of Learning Specialist, one Curriculum and Instructional Specialist, one Independent Living Specialist, and staff from their Technology and Training Delivery Departments) and an individual or group of individuals identified by the county. PACWTP uses an ONA Discussion Guide to begin the conversation. but discussions are directed by the needs of the county. Following discussions, the PACWTP team develops recommendations for training, technical assistance and transfer of learning activities that address the agency's identified needs. The county agency then reviews the recommendations and chooses which, if any, to prioritize to meet its desired outcomes. The PACWTP regional staff schedules appropriate county-specific training and is available to provide technical assistance to the county as it implements activities.

The results of the ONA process are a consideration in PACWTP's annual process of allocating resources and scheduling training, technical assistance and transfer of learning events. The PACWTP training calendar leaves anticipated budgeted training days unallocated for specific training so that the PACWTP regional team has the time and resources to work with the county to address the needs identified in the ONA process. The PACWTP is beginning to collect data from the ONA process that will inform statewide resource allocation in future years.

The ONA process is on a three-year cycle. By the close of 2010, each of the 67 counties will have engaged in the ONA process.

For further information contact: the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program at 717-795-9048.

Performance Principle: Partnerships

| Accountability among the partners is clear, understood by all, and enforced.

Indicators
- There is a strong contractual relationship between the child welfare agency and its university partner and identified contract managers.
- The roles and responsibilities of the State and county agencies are clearly defined, mutually supportive, but not duplicative.
- There is a productive working relationship among training, practice/policy, and quality assurance systems that includes a feedback loop.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Written contract document(s)
- Training staff roles in CFSR and PIP planning.
- Curriculum content revised to reflect learning from other systems.

An example…   Child Welfare Training in Wisconsin is a partnership among the Division of Child and Family Services, 71 county child welfare agencies, 11 Tribal child welfare programs, and five University of Wisconsin system universities. To help coordinate training and services, Wisconsin DCFS created five regional training partnerships. Each partnership has a local steering committee which coordinates the development and delivery of Title IV-E training within their regions. The statewide training system is overseen by the Wisconsin Child Welfare Training Council (WCWTC) which includes representatives from each regional steering committee (including county and Tribal representatives), each of the five university partners, and the State DCFS agency.

The mission, goals, operating procedures, as well as the roles and responsibilities for each partner in the Wisconsin Child Welfare Training System are clearly defined and agreed upon which leads to the successful operation of the training system as a whole. The universities are responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating training programs and implementing the Training Partnerships. Each Training Partnership acts as a conduit for DCFS, ensuring that the training programs are meeting regional interests and needs while maintaining statewide standards. The WCWTC coordinates the work of all parts of Wisconsin's child welfare training system. For more information please contact Chris Sieck at crsieck@wisc.edu or to view the Wisconsin Child Welfare Training System Document, visit: www.wcwts.wisc.edu/TrainingCouncil.aspx

Performance Principle: Policies & Procedures

Written training policies and procedures are current, reflect best training practice, and are included in the child welfare agency's policy manual.

Indicators
- A full set of standard training practices, policies, and procedures are written and enforced.
- Training policies cover preparation for, attendance at, and behavior in training sessions.

Evidence (May support more than one performance principle and indicator.)

- Training policies and procedures are included in the agency's policy manual

An example… The Idaho Department of Health & Welfare is a "learning organization" and encourages all of its employees to be excited about the learning process and to be lifelong learners. It has developed and uses a "New Worker Learning Agreement" which is designed to help create readiness for learning before the worker arrives at Core Academy training. The agreement is filled out by the worker with his/her supervisor and Chief and turned in prior to the first Academy session. The agreement covers several items including agreeing: to participate actively and share thoughts, ideas and challenges while attending Academy, to arrive on time and remain in the training room for the duration of training and that worker participation and performance will be reported to his/her Supervisor and/or Program Manager. http://www.icwpartnership.org/academy/

Strategies for Developing a Mature Training System

In interviews, training directors repeatedly mentioned five key strategies for moving through the life cycle stages to a mature training system. Of particular importance are partnerships with the case practice, policy and quality assurance systems. In addition to these partnerships, the training system must proactively manage its own management structure, funding sources, and self-evaluation. The end result of these strategies is a training system that is mature enough to be sustainable and stable over time, regardless of external events, such as changes in elected officials and the need to respond to crises.

1 | A training system must evaluate the extent to which it effectively addresses individual and organizational needs as well as its impact on child, family, and agency outcomes.

A proactive evaluation demonstrates the training system's commitment to being accountable for the impact and outcomes of its work. This, in turn, helps the training system respond proactively to its own learning and to prove its value, rather than reacting to external whims and shifting demands. An effective evaluation begins with an assessment of both individual and organizational needs. It should include multiple levels of evaluation to track and assess attendance, trainee satisfaction, trainer competency, content efficacy, transfer of learning, and at the highest level, impact on child/family and organizational outcomes. The results of regular needs assessments should be used to inform the annual training plan. While individual needs may cover a broad range of possible training topics, it is the organizational needs assessment that should determine priorities for allocating training resources. The evaluation would then focus on the quality and impact of the activities specified in the training plan.

An example… California's child welfare system is a State supervised and county administered system with a regional component for provision of training. Six regional university-partnerships which include four regional training academies (RTAs), the Inter-University Consortium/Los Angeles County Training Division (IUC), and the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice (RCFFP) provide a continuum of training and professional education to county staff across the State coordinated by the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC).

In an effort to standardize the core curriculum, California DSS (CDSS) contracted with CalSWEC in 2002 to develop and coordinate standardized training and evaluation. Through the CFSR process, California had identified a need for standardized, common core curricula across all 58 counties. Its PIP included action items mandating the development and implementation of the curricula and a "Framework for Training Evaluation."

CalSWEC partnered with counties, the RTAs, IUC, and representatives of CDSS to form the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC) which oversees the development and implementation of the statewide curricula. STEC also has responsibility to develop and oversee the evaluation plan. including the Framework for Training Evaluation. The Framework provides an overall structure to design the evaluation of the common core curricula. Designing an effective training evaluation requires that the STEC identify the most important training content as well as the level of curriculum standardization necessary to link training content to increases in knowledge and skills of trainees.

With its Framework, and the structure of the STEC, California's training system can demonstrate that:

2 | The training system must partner with the practice and policy systems to develop a well-articulated case practice model that is fully reflected in and supported by agency policies, procedures, and resources.

Training directors on our advisory committee uniformly State that the training system cannot be fully mature if the child welfare agency has not articulated a case practice model that is an operational statement, not just a conceptual or philosophical statement (see the definition on page 14). In fact, absent the agency doing so, training directors/institutes often become the drivers of defining a practice model. Given the training system's responsibility for training staff, supervisors, managers, and external partners and stakeholders on the agency's practice model as well as building the skills required to implement it successfully, it is easy to understand that training directors find themselves articulating how the agency works with children and families. This becomes even more complicated in a State-supervised county-administered system where States cannot mandate a practice model. In such cases, the State agency might articulate practice principles that it expects counties to reflect in their practice. Practice principles might serve as a substitute for a practice model or as the foundation for its later development.

An example…   The training specialist for the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) identified partnering with the practice/ policy system as a strategy that has been critical to helping the Iowa (IA) training system evolve. The Iowa training system is guided by a Training Committee made up of approximately 30 people from across the agency, including policy, training and field practitioners (workers and supervisors) and university partners. Training serves as a vehicle for communicating the Iowa Model of Practice throughout DHS and the Training Committee acts as a feedback mechanism between field practice, policy and training.

The Model of Practice serves as the foundation for training content-- something concrete that outlines the agency's beliefs and defines the agency's services, approach and desired organizational and child and family outcomes.

For more information contact: Margie Poorman, Training, Iowa Department of Human Services, mpoorma@dhs.state.ia.us

3 | The training system must partner with the quality assurance/quality improvement system to receive critical feedback about the state of practice to help guide training content.

Training directors interviewed advised that the sooner the training system forges a strong partnership with the State and county agency quality assurance system, the better. The quality assurance system can help the training system develop a robust evaluation of training and the transfer of learning to actual practice. It can also provide feedback about case practice to inform curricula content and training priorities.

An example…   Child Welfare services in Wisconsin are delivered via a State-supervised, county-administered system. Wisconsin's 72 counties share some standards of practice for child welfare workers. Each county, however, has evolved its own local practices as well. In order to assess the status of children and families who are a part of the child welfare system, the State partnered with the counties to implement a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system. Wisconsin began a Quality Service Review (QSR) process in September of 2005, reviewing approximately 16 counties per year. As of February 2008, 35 counties have been reviewed.

Planning for each review begins 6 months in advance at which time the site leader meets with the county's human services director to orient him/her to the review process. Three months prior to the review, the site leader makes a full presentation to county child welfare staff and stakeholders, gives the county a pool of randomly-selected families, and identifies the focus groups to be held during the review. During the week of review, teams of case reviewers interview the caseworker, focus child, their parents, caregivers, service providers and informal supports for a day and a half on each case (each team reviews two cases that week). The case reviewers then debrief with the caseworker and their supervisor to identify what's working well, what's not and why, and offer suggestions for improving outcomes. This generates the "micro" perspective on practice. Simultaneously, the site leader conducts numerous focus groups to gain the "macro" perspective from the child welfare partners/stakeholders. At the end of the week, the micro and macro findings are synthesized from the full review and presented to county staff and administrators, highlighting patterns of practice, successes, and challenges.

Following the review, the county works with a trained facilitator to develop an Action Plan to improve outcomes for families and children. The facilitator assists county staff in identifying root causes of the systemic and practice issues identified in the review and formulating strategies to achieve improved outcomes. Training, coaching and mentoring (identified as key components in the Action Plans) are provided by the Wisconsin Training Partnerships and help to guide the development of future training content. Currently, skill-based curricula on topics including Engaging Families in the Change Process, Interviewing for the Purpose of Assessment, and Family Teaming, (followed up with onsite, individualized coaching/mentoring) have all been implemented as a result of the QSR process.

For more information on Wisconsin's Continuous Quality Improvement system please visit: https://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/cqireview/index.htm

4 The training director and the agency's senior leadership team must have a clear relationship and communication to ensure connections among key agency systems.

The role of the training director and who s/he reports to tends to evolve in conjunction with clarifying his/her authority, accountability and responsibility. This evolution is not possible without a clearly stated role for the training director and connection to the State agency. An unclear or confused relationship will undermine communication and hamper the ability to establish key partnerships with other management systems. Additionally, in some States, one of the roles that the training system plays is a communication link between the counties and the State agency.

An example… Colorado delivers child welfare services through a State supervised, county administered model. For the Training Manager in the El Paso County Department of Human Services (El Paso DHS) this model offers several opportunities to collaborate with key partners. Specifically, the Training Manager identified 2 relationships that were critical to the development of the El Paso DHS training system:

- Building and maintaining strong positive relationships with the executive leadership of El Paso DHS. When the training director was initially hired, the DHS Director established a direct reporting relationship with him. This allowed the training director to participate on the senior leadership team and build relationships with leaders of all the other divisions. Over time, the Training Manager has had several organizational 'homes,' depending on the organizational structure put in place by the Director. The Training Manager initially was part of the Administrative Services Unit and is now in the Performance and Quality Improvement Division. Through these well-established relationships and clear communication channels, the Training Manager has ensured that leadership recognizes and supports training as an organizational priority.

- Coordinating with the Colorado Workforce Development Services Office within the Colorado State Department of Human Services to ensure that together they deliver comprehensive training for El Paso DHS Child Welfare and Assistance Payments Supervisors, Caseworkers, Technicians, Case Aides and leadership. The training director has used this relationship to advocate for and secure resources to support training that promotes El Paso DHS's organizational priorities.

For further information contact: Linda Kean at lindakean@elpasoco.com

5 | A training system must secure an expanded source of funding and other resources, such as classroom space, and technology.

Many training systems operate for years with only State and federal IV-E funds. However, mature systems use other sources to support expanded training services. These include Federal and private grants and fee-based training programs (often used for training events offered to provider agency staff). One way child welfare agencies maximize training resources is through university partnerships. Therefore, training leaders should understand the various structural options, their relative benefits, and what would work best for their State. In addition to how well a specific structure maximizes resources, decisions about structure should be informed by an evaluation of the training system's quality and effectiveness.

In addition to fiscal resources, training systems need dedicated physical space and technology to support distance learning, web-based training, and other innovative approaches to training delivery.

An example… Through the Illinois Office of Training and Professional Development, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) develops both annual and 5-year strategic training plans. A central theme in these plans is using a 'blended' learning strategy that combines distance learning (on-line and web conferencing) with classroom learning and on-the-job training assignments. The blended learning strategy supports a continuous learning model for training caseworkers, casework supervisors, service providers, foster parents, community partner organizations, allied helping professionals and statewide mandated reporters.

The Department uses technology to implement the various aspects of the continuous learning model. The foundation of this technology is the Department's new on-line Virtual Training Center (VTC). This learning management system includes a personal account for all staff and caregivers, on-line training registration, professional development plan, and training courses; an on-line lending library of books, articles and journals; and an employee or caregiver transcript that tracks and reports mandated and elective pre-service and in-service training. The VTC also provides a leadership link for administrators, managers and supervisors to track and report on agency, division, unit, work team and individual staff training information. The Virtual Training Center provides data for developing the State training plan and budget, and for training program evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement work.

The Department also utilizes statewide web and video conferencing, and portable training classrooms using wireless laptop computers. Illinois is creating regional and local portable laptop computer learning labs using wireless and wide area networks. In addition, Illinois is making portable and fixed video conferencing available through a statewide Video Conference Network, which can be used in dozens of State agency facilities, or on the campuses of university partners. Using these tools, DCFS has the ability to connect all their workers to a statewide distance-learning network in real time. In addition, the DCFS uses CD Rom-based training and web-based courses to train thousands of department staff, private agency staff, licensed foster caregivers, and other mandated reporters each year.

Illinois invested in distance learning to save employee travel time and expense. Payback on investment was realized within the first year due to the decrease in direct cost of training, the decrease in travel time, a corresponding increase in time spent on direct client services, and an increase in the amount (quantity) of training that can be delivered to staff using distance-learning technology.

For more information please contact: Judy Zaleski, Training Administrator, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Judy.zaleski@illinois.gov.

Training System Assessment Process and Tool

This section of the guide for *Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies* describes a process for conducting a training system assessment. The addendum provides a detailed model training workshop. Using this process, or a similar one, should ensure that the value and benefits of the assessment are communicated throughout the agency. This process and related materials are intended to accommodate modification by State and county child welfare agency personnel, since no one guide can fully reflect an individual agency's management priorities, the current status of its training system, and the laws, policies, and regulations that govern its case practice.

The purpose of the training system assessment is to identify the extent to which your agency's training system contains the components necessary to positively impact children's safety, permanency, and well-being. The aim is for a strengths-based, participatory assessment process, with broad involvement of internal and external stakeholders. This process will also help the executive management team reflect and clarify their role in, and expectations of, the training system. The results of the assessment process should, at minimum, include:
- a shared understanding of the strategic value and role of the training system to the agency's achievement of child, family, and agency outcomes;
- information about the extent to which the training system is aligned with and supportive of the organization's vision, values, principles, and goals; and
- components of the training system that need management attention and action.

The training system assessment can be carried out in three phases, as described below.

Up-front Commitment, Planning and Communication
- Brief senior leaders, clarify their expectations, and obtain their commitment to sponsor the assessment. Obtain commitment to the general definition of *training system* in this guide and modify indicators and evidence as appropriate. (This should be done by the State Training Director.)
- Brief County/Regional Directors, clarify their role and gauge their willingness to participate in the assessment. (This should be done by the State Training Director, in conjunction with the senior manager to whom they report.)
- Identify/select assessment team members (Who should be on the team? Who should lead the team? What should the role of the training unit be?)
- Conduct a workshop with a group of key stakeholders to define the assessment approach and process, refine assessment principles and indicators and decide data gathering methods.
- Develop a work plan for the assessment process, including a communication strategy.
- Announce the assessment within the agency, include reason for, benefits of, timing, and logistics about the assessment.
- Follow-up the announcement with needed phone calls, e-mails, briefings and meetings to build awareness/understanding of and commitment to the assessment.

Information Gathering and Analysis
- Collect and review information about the agency and training system such as: descriptions of the agency's mission, values, culture and structure; recent evaluations of the training system, as well as evaluations of specific training events; CFSR report and resulting Program Improvement Plan; the IV-B/Child & Family Services State Plan; current offerings and calendar; and unit organization and staffing.
- Finalize the assessment tool.
- Test the assessment tool and method of gathering data, debrief then refine the instrument and data collection method.
- Implement data gathering.
- Analyze the data. There are many ways this can be done, depending on how you would like to review the data. One possibility is to use a spider chart (also called a radar chart) to visually represent the current status of your training system. Benefits of using a spider chart include the ability to see your areas of strength and potential growth as well as visually understand the balance across all of the variables you are tracking. See Addendum 3 for more information.
- Provide updates to participants and senior leaders presenting any anticipated mid-course corrections to the work plan.

Reporting and Using the Results
- Develop a written draft report, including background, findings, and recommendations.
- Share draft report and debrief with participants and senior leaders on the findings.
- Gather comments on the report, including proposed next steps, and finalize the report.
- Distribute the report widely.
- Conduct presentations, briefings and planning sessions about the assessment findings, report and next steps.
- Work with senior leaders, county/regional directors and other agency stakeholders to:
  – build an understanding of the findings, recommendations and opportunities for system improvement;
  – reinforce commitment to act on the results of the assessment; and
  – develop a plan to implement priority improvements.
- Implement the agreed upon improvements.
- Schedule a time to reassess how well the training system is supporting the agency's mission and mandates.

SAMPLE TRAINING SYSTEM ASSESSMENT TOOL

This section of the guide provides a tool you can use to collect assessment data on your agency's training system. As you begin to think through the data you want to collect as part of your assessment, you will need to modify this tool to support your decisions about the specific indicators to be used for each principle and the methods for collecting data.

Position: _____

Years in the Agency: _____

Assessing Your Agency's Training System Content

Please use the rating scale to assess the performance of your training system against each of the indicators. Rate all components of each question by circling the number that reflects your opinion. The rating scale ranges from 1 to 5, as follows:

1 = I strongly disagree
2 = I disagree
3 = I neither disagree or agree
4 = I agree
5 = I strongly agree

If you are unsure about a particular indicator, please circle "DK" for Don't Know.

Frontline Social Workers/Case Managers

Practice Model

1. The training system provides new hire,
   ongoing and specialized training in the skills
   and knowledge needed to understand and
   implement the full practice model.

a. New hire	1	2	3	4	5	DK
b. Ongoing	1	2	3	4	5	DK
c. Specialized	1	2	3	4	5	DK

2. The training system develops and supports a
   cadre of coaches and mentors, drawn from   1   2   3   4   5   DK
   all levels of the agency, to reinforce good
   practice.

Worker – Family Visits

3. The training system provides workers an understanding of their role in and builds the skills necessary to engage in quality visits.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

4. The training system covers the agency policies that define a quality worker visit.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

5. The training system shows how and why to document worker visits in the case record.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

Comprehensive Family Assessments

6. The training system builds skills in conducting safety and risk assessments, comprehensive family assessments, and other standardized assessment tools approved by the agency as well as in updating assessments throughout the life of the case.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

7. The training system builds the skills needed to accurately determine the safety of the child as well as the factors that mitigate future risk of harm/neglect.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

8. The training system builds the skills needed to communicate with and understand recommendations of outside experts who participate in multi-disciplinary assessments or provide specialized assessments.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

Family Involvement

9. The training system builds skill and an understanding of how to apply teaming and engaging with families, peers, and agency staff at all levels, and others involved with serving families.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

10. The training system builds skills and knowledge to meet the needs of children within the context of their culture, community and entire family and family support network, including the father and father's kin.
   a. Culture

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

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b. Community	1	2	3	4	5	DK
c. Family network	1	2	3	4	5	DK

11. The training system provides workers with the skills to help families identify both formal and informal on-going supports.

     1   2   3   4   5   DK

12. The training system develops an understanding of the service array and how to match and connect families with appropriate services.

     1   2   3   4   5   DK

13. The training system builds the skills needed to ensure that all participants are prepared for the child and family team meeting.

     1   2   3   4   5   DK

14. The training system shows how and why to document family involvement in service planning in the case record.

     1   2   3   4   5   DK

15. The training system conveys the value of and builds skills needed to make full disclosure to a family about privacy/ confidentiality, concurrent planning, and the process for terminating parental rights.

     1   2   3   4   5   DK

When assessing how your State's training system supports your frontline social workers/case managers, consider answers to items above as well as the degree to which the training content is organized sequentially, addresses the cultural diversity of trainees and the children and families served by the agency, and is delivered frequently enough and in a timely fashion.

What are the system's strengths?

_____
_____
_____

What needs improvement?

_____
_____
_____
_____
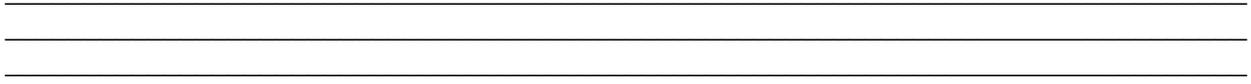
Notes: _____

Training Supervisors

1. The training system provides supervisors
   with initial and on-going training on
   supervisory skills.

a. Initial	1	2	3	4	5	DK
b. Ongoing	1	2	3	4	5	DK

2. The training system provides the
   opportunity for supervisors to apply skills
   and knowledge learned to their day-to-day
   work.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

3. The training system enhances supervisor's
   knowledge of how to use data to improve
   outcomes for children, youth and families.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

4. The training system builds knowledge and
   skills in the parallel process and provides
   opportunities to practice those skills.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

5. The training system builds skills in and
   creates opportunities to mentor, coach, and
   model desired case practice with workers
   and teams.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

6. The training system identifies and assesses
   individuals with leadership and/or
   supervisory potential and provides
   professional development training.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

Supervisors as Key Intervention Point

7. The training system enhances supervisors'
   ability to communicate to staff the agency's
   vision, values, practice model and desired
   outcomes.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

8. The training system reinforces supervisory
   responsibility to communicate to executive
   leadership the resource, policy, system and
   clinical case practice issues identified
   through training.

   1   2   3   4   5   DK

9. The training system reinforces strategies for using the formal and informal supports in the service array to support families and communities in caring for their children. Provides information about the service array, such as types, eligibility, and access procedures.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

Partnering with Supervisors

10. The training system demonstrates its capacity, utility and flexibility as a resource for staff development.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

11. The training system builds skills in how to identify learning gaps for and with workers and how to meet those training needs in order to support continued professional development.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

12. The training system ensures supervisors are knowledgeable about the content of the training provided to their staff.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

13. The training system supports supervisors in retaining and promoting workers.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

14. The training system creates opportunities for supervisors to give input (such as providing practical, realistic scenarios) into curriculum design and feedback on the effectiveness of training.
    a. Input into curriculum design

1	2	3	4	5	DK

    b. Feedback on effectiveness

1	2	3	4	5	DK

15. The training system engages supervisors in training where appropriate and offers opportunities for them to share expertise and experiences.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

16. There are clear methods for supporting the transfer of learning.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

When assessing how your State's training system supports your supervisors, consider answers to items above as well as the degree to which the training content is organized sequentially, addresses the cultural diversity of trainees and the children and families served by the agency, and is delivered frequently enough and in a timely fashion.

What are the system's strengths?

_____
_____
_____

What needs improvement?

_____
_____
_____

Notes:

_____
_____
_____

Managers

Leadership, Managerial, and Operations Training

1. The training system provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice model.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

2. The training system partners with other agency divisions to develop training to support managers in their continued professional development:

   a. Developing and implementing a strategic plan

1	2	3	4	5	DK

   b. Managing scarce resources to maximum effect

1	2	3	4	5	DK

   c. Developing and managing contracts with service providers

1	2	3	4	5	DK

   d. Using quantitative and qualitative data to examine and improve quality and outcomes

1	2	3	4	5	DK

   e. Managing personnel and labor relations
   f. Engaging community and public relations

1	2	3	4	5	DK

1	2	3	4	5	DK

3. The training system provides training and skills modeling and supporting the practice model at all levels of the agency.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

4. The training system supports executive leaders with succession planning by identifying and assessing individuals with leadership potential and providing professional development opportunities.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

Managers as Partners

5, The training system ensures managers are knowledgeable about the content of the training provided to front line staff and supervisors, especially the training on the practice model.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

6. The training system creates opportunities for managers to give input (such as providing practical, realistic scenarios) into curriculum design and feedback on the

effectiveness of training.

a. Input into curriculum design	1	2	3	4	5	DK
b. Feedback on effectiveness	1	2	3	4	5	DK

7. The training system engages managers in training where appropriate and creates opportunities for them to share expertise and experiences with staff.　　1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　DK

8. There are clear methods for supporting the transfer of learning.　　1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　DK

When assessing how your State's training system supports your managers, consider answers to items above as well as the degree to which the training content is organized sequentially, addresses the cultural diversity of trainees and the children and families served by the agency, and is delivered frequently enough and in a timely fashion?

What are the system's strengths?
_____
_____
_____

What needs improvement?
_____
_____
_____

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

External Partners & Stakeholders

Contracted Service Providers

1. Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice principles.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

2. The training system builds provider staff skills in meeting their contractual obligations and reporting requirements.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

Sister State/County Agencies

3. Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice principles.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

4. The training system helps to clarify the role that sister agencies play in supporting children and families.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

Foster & Pre-Adoptive Parents

5. Provides an orientation to the agency's vision, values, goals, and practice principles.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

6. The training system helps to clarify the role that foster and pre-adoptive parents play in supporting children and families.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

Training Best Practices

7. The training system includes trainers from stakeholder agencies in assessing common information needs and assures it is provided through training or other formats.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

8. The training system encourages sister State agencies and courts to participate in all phases of agency training needs assessment, development, delivery, and evaluation.

1	2	3	4	5	DK

Cross-Training

9. The training system creates opportunities for managers, supervisors, and social work staff to participate in external training, especially in specialty areas such as domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, and education.

   a. Managers

1	2	3	4	5	DK

b. Supervisors	1	2	3	4	5	DK
c. Social work staff	1	2	3	4	5	DK

10. The training system creates opportunities to learn about services available from the provider community.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
11. The training system supports participation in local, regional and national professional conferences.	1	2	3	4	5	DK
12. The training system encourages membership in related professional organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	DK

When assessing how your State's training system supports your external partners and stakeholders, consider answers to items above as well as the degree to which the training content is organized sequentially, addresses the cultural diversity of trainees and the children and families served by the agency, and is delivered frequently enough and in a timely fashion.

What are the system's strengths?
_____
_____
_____

What needs improvement?
_____
_____
_____

Notes: _____
_____
_____
_____

Assessing Your Agency's Training System Structure

Please use the rating scale to assess the performance of your training system against each of the indicators. Rate all components of each question by circling the number that reflects your opinion. The rating scale ranges from 1 to 5, as follows:

1 = I strongly disagree
2 = I disagree
3 = I neither disagree or agree
4 = I agree
5 = I strongly agree

If you are unsure about a particular indicator, please circle "DK" for Don't Know.

Structure

Management/Leadership

1. The training director is a member of the agency's leadership team.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

2. Decision making authority is truly collaborative through a well-articulated governance structure that includes an advisory group to help provide oversight.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

3. Key agency leaders can describe the training system's value and role in a paragraph or less.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

4. Agency's strategic plan includes training priorities.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

5. The training system management team has the range of skills necessary develop, secure resources for, lead, and sustain an effective training system.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

Staff

6. Staff roles, responsibilities, and relationships are formalized.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

7. Staffing levels and skills are sufficient to meet workload.
1 2 3 4 5 DK

8. The training system is able to balance demands placed on it by both internal and external sources.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

9. Ongoing training of trainers occurs.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

10. Contracted trainers/consultants are held to same standards as staff trainers.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

Resources

11. Comprehensive training needs assessment drives forecasting for resource needs.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

12. Funding comes from a variety of sources, including the State, counties, private grants, and/or fees.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

13. The training system is able to invest in dedicated classroom space.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

14. Technology is available and used to support CBT and Distance Learning.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

15. A Learning Management System is used to track progress on individual training plans.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

16. The training system conducts a comprehensive training evaluation of how well:
    a. trainees actually gain knowledge and skills,

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

    b. trainees successfully transferred knowledge and skills to field practice,

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

    c. new behaviors lead to better casework practice and outcomes for children.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

Partnerships

17. There is a strong contractual relationship between the child welfare agency and its university partner and identified contract managers.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

18. The roles and responsibilities of the State and county agencies are clearly defined, mutually supportive, but not duplicative.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

19. There is a productive working relationship among training, practice/policy, and quality assurance systems that includes a feedback loop.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

Policies & Procedures

20. A full set of standard training practices, policies, and procedures are written and enforced.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

21. Training policies cover preparation for, attendance at, and behavior in training sessions.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | DK |

When assessing the structure of your State's training system …

What are the strengths of the system's structure?

_____
_____
_____

What needs improvement?

_____
_____
_____

Notes:_____
_____
_____
_____

Child Welfare Training System Assessment Workshop

This addendum to the guide presents a model for a training workshop on the value, content, and approach for conducting an assessment of the training system. As you begin to think through an assessment of your agency's training system, you may want to customize the suggested instructors notes, learning objectives, or activities to help achieve the results you expect to achieve.

Time: Approximately 5 hours

Background
The audience for this workshop is the team that will determine the approach to the agency's training system assessment and carryout and oversee this system-level review. This workshop is intended to reinforce the value of an effective training system to the mission of the agency, introduce the main concepts of a training system assessment, facilitate customization of the indicators to be assessed, agree on who will be involved in the assessment process and suggest methods that can be used to decide the implementation strategy. The workshop is an interactive working session and participants will be expected to contribute to and be fully involved in large and small group decision making. Ideally, this workshop provides an opportunity for key stakeholders to have input into the training system assessment process and tools, as well as to commit, personally and organizationally, to receiving, reviewing and acting on the findings of the assessment

Learning Objectives
When this workshop is complete, the participant will be able to:
- explain the goals, purpose, and benefits of assessing the agency's training system;
- define the approach, method, tools, and indicators and evidence the agency will use to assess its training system;
- understand his/her role in the assessment process; and
- support a positive review of the findings that includes responding to and acting on suggestions for improvements in the training system.

Activities
- Confirm the importance, benefits and priority of this training system assessment to the agency (15 minutes).
- Provide an informational briefing on the components of the current training system (30 minutes).
- Engage in an Appreciative Inquiry Interview process to reflect on the best current training system structure and practice (30 minutes).
- Walk through the guide for *Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies* (30 minutes),
- Refine the performance principles and indicators (45 minutes),
- Determine appropriate sources of evidence (45 minutes),
- Decide which stakeholder groups will be involved in the assessment and what their role will be (30 minutes),
- Customize the data gathering methods (30 minutes),

- Develop a work plan for the assessment process (45 minutes),

Suggested Materials
- Guide for *Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies*
- Definition of a training system
- Training system materials, such as organizational chart, budget, most recent needs assessment, current Child & Family Services State Plan, current training catalog, any evaluation reports
- Performance principles and indicators from the guide

Advance Preparation
- With the leadership team, identify and invite assessment team members.
- Invite the commissioner or director to 'keynote' the workshop by attending or sending a message that can be shared about the importance of the training system assessment process to the agency, his/her hopes for outcomes of the process, and other high level guidance.
- Review *Appreciative Inquiry Handbook for Leaders of Change,* David Cooperrider, Diana Whitney, Jacqueline Stavros (ISBN #978-1-57675-493-1 and design interview questions.
- Prepare flipchart pages for each of the three phases of the training system assessment process with headings for activities, lead person, team members, other resources and dates.
- Make sure a flip chart, markers, newsprint pad, overheads, laptop, and LCD projector are in the room.

Trainer's Instructions
1. Begin the workshop by welcoming the group and introducing yourself and other presenters. Ask participants to introduce themselves indicating where they are from and their anticipated role in the training system assessment process.

2. Review the purpose of workshop and proposed agenda for the session. Confirm that the participants are clear that this is an interactive working session expected to generate decisions about the key aspects of the training system assessment process. Points to highlight include:
   - Workshop goal: To decide how to ensure that the agency's training system assessment is a productive, efficient process that provides useful information about how effective our training system is in supporting your agency's vision, values, mandates and desired outcomes for children and families.
   - To accomplish that goal we're going to discuss the training system assessment process, confirm/customize the assessment principles and indicators and decide the data gathering approach—who should be included in the assessment process and the method of gathering information from each participant (for example e-mail, interview, focus group or a combination). We're also going to develop a work plan for the assessment process, including a communication strategy, roles and responsibilities and timelines.
   - As we go through this workshop, you'll have several opportunities to talk about the assessment methods, principles and indicators and reflect on how you and the organization can best support the findings and lessons learned from the assessment process.

3. Introduce the commissioner or director (or read his/her message) to talk about why he/she believes now is the right time to assess the agency's training system, the anticipated benefits from the assessment and the role of the participants. Ask the administrator or director to

mention the expected timeline, identify the lead person other parameters for the assessment. Reinforce and confirm with the group the following point:

- We want to implement an assessment process that is strengths based and participatory with broad involvement of internal and external stakeholders. The results of the assessment process should, at minimum, include:
  – a shared understanding of the strategic value and role of the training system to the agency's achievement of family, worker and organizational outcomes;
  – information about the extent to which the training system is aligned with and supportive of the organization's vision, values and outcomes; and
  – components of the training system that need management attention and action.

4. Discuss the agency's current training system. (This presentation may be made by the training director.) Provide information such as organizational placement and chart, the number of trainers, the experience/backgrounds of the trainers, the current course offerings, curricula under development, the budget, training needs assessments and evaluation reports. You want participants to understand that the agency has a core staff of trainers, a history of providing training and established relationships with agency staff, foster/adoptive parents, supervisors and managers. Additionally you want participants to appreciate that the assessment is intended to openly, honestly and respectfully look at how the strengths of the current training system can serve as a cornerstone for improvement.

5. Explain that before we get into the nuts and bolts of this assessment, we would like to spend some time reflecting on the strengths of our current training system. We will use an Appreciative Inquiry Interview process to guide our reflection. Appreciative Inquiry is a model for organizational change that involves discovering what gives life to the organization, envisioning what might be possible based on what is currently working well, designing how it can happen, and planning to sustain positive change. Provide each participant with the Appreciate Inquiry Interview and ask that they pair up to interview another participant in the group. Each person will spend 10 minutes interviewing their partner and 10 minutes being interviewed by their partner. Include interview questions such as:

   1. Please describe the best training you have ever experienced. What was it that made this training so effective? How did this have an impact on you?
   2. Tell me about a time when you or a colleague exercised what you learned in training in a positive, constructive way. What made it positive? How was it successful?
   3. Consider a challenge or obstacle that you are dealing with today. What's the most positive outcome you can imagine? How can training help to make this happen?

   Debrief the interview activity as a whole group by asking participants:

   1. What contribution(s) did training make to help you or your partner meet their individual or organizational goals?
   2. Based on the information we have shared today, what best practices or elements of the training system do we want to be sure to keep in the future? What training system strengths have emerged from our discussion today? (For more sample questions and information on Appreciative Inquiry, please refer to the *Appreciative Inquiry Handbook for*

Leaders of Change, David Cooperrider, Diana Whitney, Jacqueline Stavros (ISBN #978-1-57675-493-1).)

6. Remind the group that the focus of this assessment is the training system itself and its relationship to the work between child welfare staff and families as well as with other systems and organizations that support that work. (Display the definition of a training system.) Ask the group to brainstorm the 'other systems and organizations that support the work of the training system' and write them on a flip chart. You'll return to this list later in the day when the group is ready to decide who should be involved in the assessment process and what their role should be.

7. Then walk through selected sections of the guide starting with the assessment performance principles and indicators, covering the three phases of the assessment process. Remind participants that the information in the guide serves as a starting point; the expectation is that the group will discuss and decide the data collection method and which indicators to include in the agency's assessment, which indicators to modify/wordsmith and which indicators, if any, to leave out. Encourage clarifying questions during this walkthrough; however, ask participants to wait until all the performance principles and indicators and the three phases of the process have been presented before discussing modifications in detail. Suggest that participants make notes of their thoughts to refer to later on during the workshop. Points to highlight include:

   • The material in this guide was shaped by the lessons learned from the first round of Child and Family Services Reviews, which clearly highlight the importance of having a training system that supports the goals of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, provides initial and ongoing training for staff who deliver these services as well as current and prospective foster/adoptive parents, and is integrated with other key systems. While we can add to, delete from or modify any part of this material, we do want to be mindful of the lessons learned from the CFSR reviews.

   • We're looking to identify performance principles that must function well in order for the training system to be effective in supporting organizational improvement efforts and in achieving positive outcomes for children and their families. Linked to each principle is a series of indicators and sources of evidence of the training system's strengths and success for each principle. The performance principles are structured to reflect four tiers of organizational practice:

- social workers/case managers
- supervisors
- managers
- external partners and stakeholders

These levels of practice must all reflect and embody fundamental organizational values and practice principles; we will operate at cross-purposes unless they are consistently aligned and integrated.

- In each of the four practice levels, summarize the introductory comments, mention the principles and highlight the indicators and sources of evidence.

- As you go through the three phases of the assessment process, convey and reconfirm relevant information from the senior management briefings such as expectations, timing, and lead persons.

8. Move into a small group activity to refine the actual indicators. Organize the small groups by the four tiers of organizational practice. Assign each group a set of principles and related indicators. The task of each group is to rework the assigned indicators to respond to the comments from the large group and the larger needs of the agency. Each group should be sure that they incorporate terms and language commonly understood within the agency. Ask each group to assign a recorder who will write the principles and related indicators developed by the group on a flip chart and a reporter who will share the group's work with the larger group. Give the groups 45 minutes for this exercise.

9. Ask each group to report back to the large group using their flip charts. Process each group's report asking the following types of questions:

- Do these performance principles and indicators get at the information that is most important for us to know from this assessment?

- Do these performance principles and indicators reflect our agency's language, structure, practice model, and laws/regulations?

- Do these performance principles and indicators fit together or conflict when you look at them as a whole?

- Is the wording clear?

- Are there too many (too few) indicators? Remember someone needs to collect and analyze all the data.

10. When consensus around the performance principles and indicators is reached, begin a discussion on stakeholder involvement. Ask participants to refer back to their notes and point out the flip charts listing other systems and organizations that support the work of the training system. Identify with the group other systems and organizations should be involved with the assessment, what their role should be and the timing of their involvement. In other words, will the assessment include:

- all agency staff ?

- selected agency staff ? (If so, who?)

- all stakeholders ?

- elected stakeholders? (If so, who?)

Process with the group until consensus is reached on which groups should be involved, when and what the role of each group should be.

11. After you've confirmed who will be included in the assessment, move to a facilitated discussion of the data gathering approach. Ask participants to refer back to their notes and brainstorm a list of data gathering techniques. While you may come up with others, the most common data gathering methods involve interviews/surveys —individual or group—conducted face-to-face, over the phone, or via mail/e-mail; and archival review of relevant written materials and literature. Brainstorm with the large group the pros and cons of each method of gathering data. Decide with the group what method (s) will be used to generate data. You may decide to use a combination of approaches, for example, a face-to-face interview with selected staff, phone interview with other involved parties and e-mail to other participants. Suggest that the group consider mirroring the Appreciative Inquiry Interview process they experienced during this workshop. Develop a list of already existing written information and literature about system evaluations, the agency and training system that needs to be gathered, reviewed and incorporated into the assessment process, such as descriptions of the agency's vision, values, and structure, recent evaluations of the training system as well as evaluations of specific training events, CFSR report/PIP, IV-E training plans, current offerings and calendar, unit organization and staffing.

12. Once the group comes to consensus around the performance principles and indicators, involvement of stakeholder groups and data collection methods, confirm with the group that the evolving approach, method and data collections tool seem to work together. If not, discuss adjustments.

13. Develop the training system assessment work plan by reviewing the three phases of the training system assessment process:
- upfront commitment, planning and communication,
- information gathering and analysis, and
- reporting and using the results.

For each of the three phases discuss the major activities involved, who should be the designated lead person, who should be team members, resources and milestone dates. Keep in mind that this work planning activity may raise issues that need to be addressed in the earlier decisions regarding who should be involved in the assessment, the data gathering methods and the performance principles, indicators, and evidence. That type of cycling back is expected and should help confirm the key group decisions.

14. Review agreed upon next steps and end the session by answering any last minute questions.

Sample Spider Chart

There are many tools that can help with analyzing data once it has been reported. Microsoft Excel offers a number of chart options to visually display your data. Below is an example of a Radar Chart (also called Spider Chart) created for a State that collected assessment data from their Executive Team (ET), and from their Training Staff (TS).

Training System Assessment Data
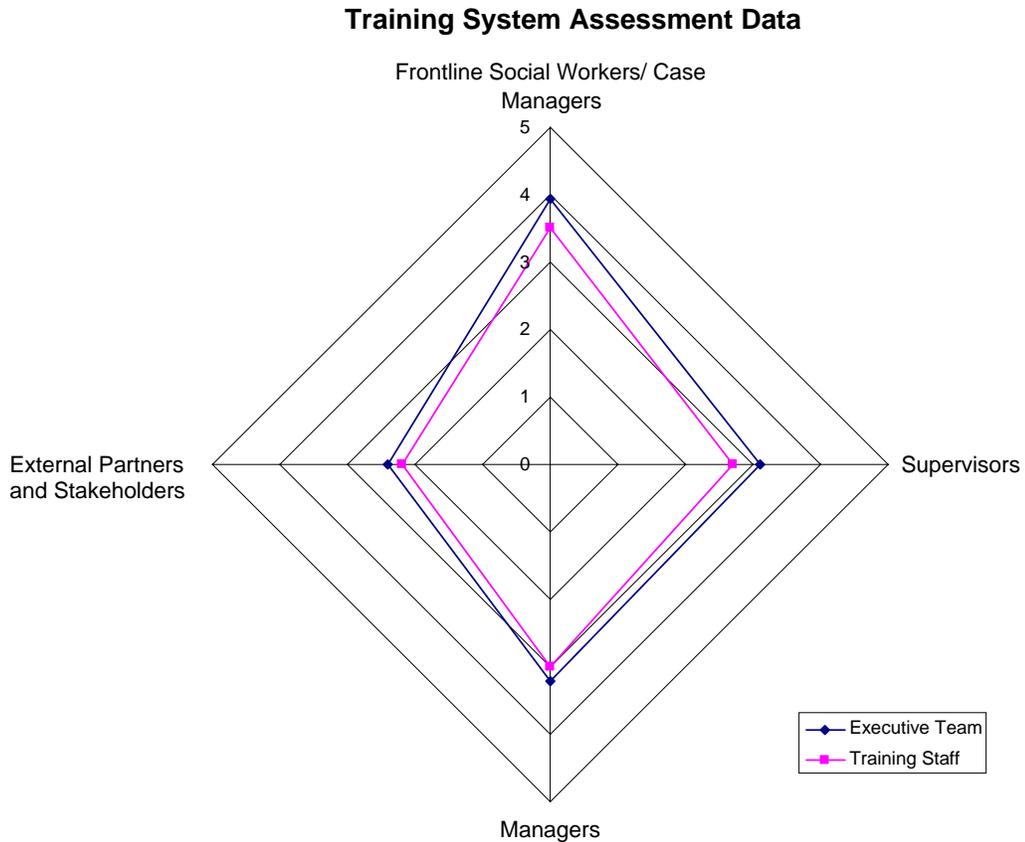
	Total for Frontline Social Workers/ Case Managers	Total for Supervisor	Total for Managers	Total for External Partners & Stakeholders
Executive Team	3.93	3.1	3.22	2.4
Training Staff	3.51	2.7	3	2.2

The total scores for each organizational tier are plotted in the graph and displayed in numeric form to illustrate the results of the assessment. As a supplement to this chart, you may choose to create spider charts that plot the results of all of the performance principles. Once you have developed these reports, there are many questions you might ask of an advisory group.

- What are your top five strengths and five challenges?
- Using the spider charts, does any pattern emerge that makes sense of these strengths and challenges, and if so, what are they?
- What are your priorities for change within the next year?
- Using the spider charts, show the current status of your training system and explore how your priorities will alter the spider chart.