

2010 Innovations Award Application

ID# **10-MW-04IN**

State: IN

Assign Program Category: Human Resources/Education: Training and Development

Program Name: Division of Staff Development

Administering Agency: Indiana Department of Child Services

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Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

The Division of Staff Development prepares child welfare staff to effectively utilize learned knowledge and developed skills to maintain children safely in their homes or promote permanency if necessary. Through collaborations involving the State Personnel Department, and a partnership with the Indiana University School of Social Work, competency based interviewing tools and curriculum have been developed, combined with a coaching/mentoring field program, and delivered by well-prepared instructors in an innovative, collaborative manner.

How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: The program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 1, 2010 to be considered.

The Division of Staff Development was created in August of 2006 at which time it immediately partnered with the State Personnel Department to focus on workforce development. In addition, the Partnership for Child Welfare Education and Training with the Indiana University School of Social Work was established January 1, 2007 through a contractual relationship.

Why was the program created? What problem(s) or issue(s) was it designed to address?

In January 2005 via Executive Order, Governor Mitch Daniels acknowledged the critical need for drastic changes in the provision of child welfare services in Indiana by creating DCS as a

stand alone agency. Commitment to the mission of the agency was then further affirmed by the Indiana General Assembly who authorized the hiring of 800 new family case managers over the course of the biennium ending SFY 2008, which has allowed the agency to drastically reduce the average caseloads of our caseworkers to the 12/17 standard recommended by the Child Welfare League of America.

In the strategic plan submitted to Governor Mitch Daniels in January 2005, Department of Child Services Director James W. Payne committed to initiating a course of change within the agency that would emphasize effective practice, consistent delivery, quality assurance, effective supervision, professional development, and, above all, accountability. As a part of DCS change initiatives, a research-based, best practice model of working with children and families, which incorporates a Child and Family Team meeting process, was rolled out beginning in 2005 with full statewide implementation completed in 2008.

In order to further agency initiatives and fully implement its course of change, agency leadership recognized that it needed to develop a workforce prepared to manage the difficult work of child welfare and highly skilled and committed to the DCS mission and practice model. The agency recognized that in order to build this workforce it needed to develop a comprehensive training program that prepared workers from their first day on the job and continued to build on these skills through professional development and leadership training.

Prior to 2005, new employees were interviewed and selected on a local basis (92 local county offices) without established interviewing tools, and training was delivered primarily through a contractual relationship with various instructors. New field workers were assigned caseloads prior to receiving any formal training and learned “on the job” from co-workers who were available. Curriculum was purchased through Institutes in other states or private contractors. Some training occurred internally, but external trainers, some not familiar with Indiana policies or procedures, provided a great deal of classroom instruction. Additionally, the agency did not have a consistent practice for identifying and recruiting candidates, conducting interviews, or orienting new hires.

This program was created to establish a continuum of training beginning with the interview process and continuing through new worker training, ongoing training and workforce development. A close collaboration has been established with the Indiana State Personnel Department to make sure the right staff are hired, trained and supported appropriately and provided with professional development opportunities.

The ultimate goal was to improve outcomes for families and children as evidenced by established practice indicators and reduced staff turnover. The agency also sought to instill agency commitment at all levels, and develop leaders within the agency.

Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order:

- 1) Establishment of the Staff Development Division – August, 2006
- 2) Review of Training and All-Staff Survey Regarding Training Needs – August 2006
- 3) Development of Field Mentor Program for Field Operations Staff – Fall, 2006

- 4) Collaboration with Indiana University School of Social Work With Resulting Contract Focusing On 4 Deliverables; Curriculum and Training Development; Production and Support; Comprehensive Evaluation; Training Records Information System; All Deliverables Implemented In 2007
- 5) Collaboration with Indiana State Personnel Department To Develop Interview Tool With Established Competencies and Scoring Benchmarks, Which Coincided With New Worker Training Development Utilizing The Same Competencies - 2007
- 6) Development of an Effective Training System Strategic Plan In Collaboration With The National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, March 2007
- 7) Finalization of Training Associated With The Newly Established Practice Model, 2007
- 8) Assisted With The Development of The Region V of The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Training Directors Roundtable; 2007; This Collaboration Provides Information Between The Region V Stats on Training/Workforce Development Issues
- 9) New Worker Training Updated To Include The Practice Model, Organized Transfer of Learning Days With Trained Field Mentors and Behavioral Anchor Scales To Evaluate Effectiveness, 2007 and 2008
- 10) Development Of New Supervisor Training Based On National Model; Implementation of Supervisor Mentor Program, 2008
- 11) Development Of Prescreening Interview Process for Family Case Managers to Reduce Time to Fill Vacancies, 2008
- 12) Leadership Programs Established For Both Supervisors and Local Office Directors In Collaboration With Casey Family Programs, 2009
- 13) Comprehensive Individual Training Needs Assessment Completed For 1400 Line Staff; Updated Strategic Plan Held In Collaboration with the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, 2009
- 14) Videoconferencing and Webinar Training Conducted Throughout Indiana through 18 Regional Sites; This Technology Allows The Agency To Effectively Provide Learning Opportunities While Minimizing Costs, 2009
- 15) Collaboration Between Staff Development, Indiana State Personnel Department and the Indiana Department of Child Services Executive Team To Identify and Address Training Needs Of Staff Throughout the Agency, Ongoing

Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

Every child welfare agency has a training arm or division to prepare staff for the jobs they do. Indiana has taken a creative approach of partnering with national, regional, and local partners both internal and external to the Department of Child Services to identify and implement best practice.

In particular, the Indiana Department of Child Services, at its inception, partnered with the Indiana State Personnel Department to provide customized Human Resources support imbedded within the agency. The goal of this collaboration was to improve child welfare outcomes by improving retention. Tasks developed to meet this goal included: effective recruitment including a selection process, appropriate and effective training, transfer of skill to the field

program and accountability through clearly defined performance expectations and coaching employees. Starting in January of 2007, several steps were completed focusing on the development of supervisors to have the necessary skills to select, reinforce and coach front line staff. These steps were documented along with timelines and persons responsible for their completion. In August 2008, Indiana was selected to present its unique relationship between the Department of Child Services and the State Personnel Department at a Workforce Institute Seminar “Scaling the Summit” in Denver. Attendees of the workshop reported that such a collaboration was not occurring within their states, but clearly represented a best practice approach to worker satisfaction, professional development and retention.

Furthermore, Indiana’s Partnership for Child Welfare Education and Training with the Indiana University School of Social Work is a true partnership where all decisions are jointly made, unlike many other contractual relationships between State Child Welfare Agencies and Universities. All training needs and requests are carefully reviewed and plans developed to address.

What were the program’s start-up costs?

Prior to August of 2006, internal costs for training (consisting primarily of personnel including a training manager, two supervisors, six trainers and a support staff person) were \$415,891 with contractual costs of \$749,810. Starting in January of 2007, total costs for the Staff Development Division, including the Partnership for Child Welfare Training and Education (not including the DCS sponsored Master of Social Work and Bachelor of Social Work programs) are approximately \$3,052,000 annually.

Staff Training Needs and Development are a priority for the current Director, who emphasizes that appropriate preparation and support are critical for staff retention. Training costs have significantly increased due to the expanded workforce and the increased emphasis in this area. At the same time, effort has been expended to coordinate more closely with other divisions/departments as described above to efficiently utilize all available resources. Curriculum that used to be purchased at a cost of up to \$100,000 for 4-day training is now developed in house through the partnership. All supervisor and leadership training that has been developed with the assistance of external funding sources has been modified and brought “in-house” with partnership trainers developed to provide the training. The ability to develop Computer Assisted Trainings is available through the Partnership and is readily used by the agency to help minimize cost. Video conferencing and meeting place technologies are also used to cut down on the number of in-person meetings requiring significant travel, lodging and overtime costs. In summary, all activities that have been externally provided in the past are now conducted at lower costs by staff within the Partnership.

Staff now consists of the Deputy Director of Staff Development and Training, an Assistant Deputy Director, the Partnership Director from Indiana University, two training managers, four supervisors, three curriculum writers, eighteen trainers and four support staff. In addition, there are two staff members in the production area, three who work in the evaluation area (two part-time) and two who manage the training records information system. The Training Records Information system is managed through the Enterprise Learning Management System, a

PeopleSoft software product supported through the State Personnel Department that the State had already purchased for its personnel management system.

What are the program's annual operational costs?

As explained above, the annual operational costs for the training of almost 3,000 individuals is \$3,052,000.

How is the program funded?

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act provides for up to 75% of training costs associated with child welfare to be reimbursed by the federal government. The remaining 25% of the costs are funded by the State of Indiana with a small percentage of funds each year provided by foundation funding partners including Casey Family Programs and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

The Indiana Department of Child Services was enacted through executive order 05-15 followed by Public Law 145-2006 based on Senate Bill 529, which passed in 2005. This provided for Family Case Manager caseload size to coincide with best practice, allowing the adoption of a uniform practice model which required comprehensive training. The legislation also provided for the expansion of the workforce (doubling the number of Family Case Managers) which required a massive training effort to prepare the workers to receive caseloads. In summary, this program did not require legislation, but became necessary because of legislation that had been passed.

What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer the program?

Training aids utilized within Staff Development are not unique but include LCD's, computers, DVD's, Computer Assisted Trainings and basic Microsoft Office software. Videoconferencing equipment has been installed at each of the 18 regional training sites. Collaboration is occurring with the State of Indiana Office of Technology Department to implement webinars, maintain the staff development portion of the Department of Child Welfare Website and establish list-serves to better disseminate information. Staff Development has also partnered with the Indiana State Personnel Department to modify and utilize the Enterprise Learning Management System to automate the process for posting training, registering employees, tracking attendance, and enabling staff to print a "learner's transcript" detailing the trainings they have completed.

To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and email address.

Components of this program are present in every state in the country. The uniqueness of this program is the ability to piece together the numerous components that make up a competent,

stable workforce and weave them into a continuous strand to improve outcomes for families and children. No one person is responsible for this accomplishment. Key persons include the Deputy Director of Staff Development, M.B. Lippold, the Human Resources Director, Doris Tolliver, the IU Partnership Director, Patricia Howes and the Director of the agency, James W. Payne, who prioritized training when the department was established in 2005 and has fully supported it since that time.

Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

The majority of states in this country have some sort of arrangement with a university to provide training. Federal funding makes such an arrangement very attractive. Typically, the state welfare agency enters into a contract with the university to provide certain types of training which the university then develops and implements. Some states provide mentorship type programs. Some states have developed specialized supervisory training. Other states have developed leadership programs. Again, the uniqueness for Indiana is the manner in which Staff Development has partnered with the Indiana State Personnel Department, Indiana University, Indiana Office of Technology, the Region 5 Training District, and the DCS Executive Team to combine all of these elements into a comprehensive employee development program to enhance workforce development.

Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

Training to this point has focused on Field Operations staff. Some training has occurred for support, legal, and fiscal personnel, but it has not been coordinated or developed based on established competencies with transfer of learning and coaching affiliated with it. Those areas will be further developed in the next two to three years.

Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem(s) or issues (s). Provide tangible examples.

Pros: In 2001, the Federal Child and Family Service Review found that Indiana was not properly preparing its Family Case Managers prior to assigning case loads. The review conducted in the summer of 2007 stressed the lack of quality new worker training and preparedness of the field staff upon graduation from the institute. Agency turnover (negative turnover) which was well over 30% for Field Staff in 2005 was reduced to 14.51% in December of 2009. Ten established Practice Indicators based on data associated with child safety, well-being and permanency have shown steady improvement over the last four years. Training evaluation data based on surveys, pre- and post-tests and peer evaluation based on validated skill assessment scales continue to show training satisfaction and effectiveness for newly hired Family Case Managers (over 2000 in the last four years). All initial expectations have been met.

Cons: Merging different cultures, some associated with the public state agency and the external partnership with a public university, has been challenging. Each entity has a series of rules, procedures and practices unique to their organizational structure. Collaboration has involved a great deal of communication and some compromise. However, it has become apparent that the

sum of the all of the parts results in a comprehensive “whole” that can meet all identified workforce development needs without extensively adding resources. Technology has also presented some challenges in delivering consistent, reliable training. Although the state introduced audio-video equipment to deliver remote training, the equipment has not worked consistently and has required extensive troubleshooting and contingency planning.

How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The training plan developed in March of 2006 to establish an effective training department in close collaboration with the State Personnel Department, other state agencies, and the external partnership with Indiana University has been followed closely using the outcomes identified and the benchmarks set up at that time. Minor adjustments regarding the 4 deliverables outlined in the Partnership agreement have been made; however, the plan laid out in 2005 has generally been followed. Technology will continue to change the way that training is delivered and may result in some additional modifications to the current plan; however, the recent strategic plan developed does not call for additional growth or major modifications.

What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

The Department of Child Services was established as a unique, separate agency due to the vision of a newly appointed Governor who was committed to children and families in Indiana. By appointing a strong child advocate, a former Juvenile Court Judge, to direct this agency, Governor Daniels established that children would continue to be a priority within his administration. Legislation followed in 2005 which allowed a workforce to be established based on best practice and provided with the tools and training to effectively assess and protect Indiana’s children. Resources were allocated at a time when economic challenges face every state in this country.

Other states are clearly facing economic and political challenges which make workforce development challenging. Nevertheless, a strong collaborative effort within agencies, across agencies within state government, and across states is critical in maintaining a stable, competent staff to effectively address child safety, permanency and well-being.