

# NEW JERSEY CHILD WELFARE TRAINING PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW



Established in 2007, the New Jersey Child Welfare Training Partnership is a collaborative effort between the NJ Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office of Training and Professional Development (OTPD) and a DCF-funded University Partnership headed by Rutgers School of Social Work, Institute for Families, Office of Child Welfare Workforce Advancement. The Partnership provides ongoing professional development to the state's child welfare workforce, most often Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) caseworkers.



Rutgers collaborates with Montclair State University's Robert D. McCormick Center for Child Advocacy and Policy in the northern part of the state and Stockton University's Child Welfare Education Institute in the southern portion of the state to develop and deliver effective, relevant training courses designed to assist CP&P workers in ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families.



Following a 2005 Children's Rights lawsuit, New Jersey entered into a Modified Settlement Agreement that established an annual training requirement of 40 hours for NJ's child welfare workers. This 40-hour threshold is intended to increase knowledge and skills related to the workforce's interaction with children and families. The Partnership was initially charged with implementing change in the state's culture of child welfare practice, supporting movement from a *case management* service delivery model to the state's current *strengths-based, family-centered, and child-focused model* of supporting families.



Today, the Partnership exists as a workforce development approach, building the skills and knowledge of more than 5,000 professionals dedicated to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families across the state. The Partnership provides professional development training to DCF staff on a variety of topics designed to enhance practice with children and families.

## NEW WORKER TRAINING

New CP&P workers attend an intensive set of trainings that orient them to DCF, including courses that review federal and state laws related to their responsibilities, provide a history of New Jersey's child welfare system and reform, promote self-care, and introduce the state's electronic recordkeeping systems.

## PRE-SERVICE AND FOUNDATIONS

Pre-Service and Foundation courses are a set of obligatory trainings that provide fundamental information on building skills critical for child welfare professionals and are mandated by CP&P. These critical courses prepare workers for the overlapping issues between child welfare, mental health, domestic violence, and substance use.

## ELECTIVES

Curriculum development efforts of the Partnership schools provide staff with a wide variety of Electives to supplement learning and skills required of all workers with relevant and timely topics in effectively serving vulnerable children and families. Over 100 elective titles include *Girls and Gangs*, *Technology Addiction*, *Human Trafficking*, and *Compulsive Hoarding*.



In an effort to measure participant satisfaction and knowledge gained from attending trainings, surveys and pre/posttests for all course offerings are routinely administered. Satisfaction surveys assess the overall training experience and solicit feedback on the workshop, materials, and instructor. High stakes pre/posttests determine knowledge retention of course content and are unique to each course. Passing scores are set by OTPD; Pre-Service, Foundation, and Mandatory courses require a score of 80% or higher, while Elective courses require 70% or higher on the posttest to pass the course.

# NJCWTP HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY 2015

## Training Days

- Caseload-carrying staff and supervisors provided with 229,767 hours of training
- Workforce averaged 71.5 hours annually
- 2,464 days of training coordinated and conducted by the Training Partnership
  - University Partnership conducted 1,296 days of training
  - OTPD conducted 1,168 days of training

## Attendance

- 6,406 unique professionals attended trainings
- 47,197 duplicated participants attended trainings
  - Total attendees for University Partnership = 24,975 duplicated participants\*
  - Total attendees for OTPD = 22,222 duplicated participants\*
- *Total attendees defined as the sum of the attendees for all training days. Participants who attended courses with multiple days are counted multiple times, reflecting their participation each day.*

## Course Offerings

- 164 unique course titles were offered and conducted
  - 209 Pre-Service classes
  - 456 Mandatory in-service classes
  - 511 Elective classes

## Satisfaction

- Relatively high for classes
- Average overall score was 3.55 on a 1-4 scale
- Most agree trainings were a useful experience
- Most agree children and families benefit from knowledge and skills gained

## Pre/Posttests

- Offered for all courses
- Average pretest score: 60%
- Average posttest score: 81%

*Training classes are offered year-round at locations throughout the state, largely in CP&P local offices and at the Professional Center at DCF in New Brunswick, NJ. More information on the Institute for Families at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey can be found at <http://socialwork.rutgers.edu/InstituteForFamilies>*