University of Kentucky
College of Social Work
Training Resource Center

Training Resource Center

Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services
Department for Community Based Services

University Training Consortium
Dear Colleagues,

The Training Resource Center (TRC) at the University of Kentucky College of Social Work is rooted in the belief that providing protective and intervention services to vulnerable children and families is a highly complex task that involves effort, input, and cooperation from numerous systems and partners in a community. As with all social problems, the challenges that Kentucky’s families face do not occur in isolation. A host of personal, environmental, and systemic factors converge to form an intricate web of causation. As a result, no one agency or entity can be solely responsible for the effort of protecting and strengthening our community’s children and families. To that end, the UK TRC strives to be a conduit for productive partnerships and a vehicle for continued cutting-edge solutions to complex issues.

We look forward to our continued work with all of our partners and thank each of them for the unique and vital role they play in the network that continues to enhance the well-being of families and children.

Missy Segress
Director, TRC

James P. “Ike” Adams, Jr., Ph.D.
Dean, College of Social Work

Susan Bunch, BSN, RN
Medically Fragile Training Program

Doug Burnham, MSW
Special Project

Ashley Cruickshank
Budget Director

Jeff Damron
Resource Parent Mentor Program

Cherryl Davenport
Administrative Support

Tamikia Dumas, MS, LSW
Resource Parent Mentor Program

Jessica Fletcher, MSW
Associate Director

Christy K. Fitch
Administrative Business Officer

Christina Hoglen
Administrative Associate

George Humlong
Resource Parent Training
Special Advocates for Education

Blake Jones, LCSW, Ph.D.
Citizen Review Panels
Children’s Justice Act Task Force
The mission of the University of Kentucky College of Social Work’s Training Resource Center (TRC) is to provide training, technical assistance, service, and evaluation to professionals and caregivers working to improve the well-being of families, children, and communities throughout Kentucky and around the world. The TRC has been designing and implementing child welfare training, evaluation, and service programs across the state for nearly two decades. Working as a team of staff and associated faculty, the TRC administers, implements, and supports numerous child welfare programs, each of which brings best practices to human service providers, foster and adoptive parents, and relative caregivers throughout Kentucky and across the nation.

Striving to achieve the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being for Kentucky’s children are not goals that can be the sole responsibility of one agency. Collaboration is the foundation for achievement of such important goals. The University of Kentucky TRC is a collaborative partner in Kentucky’s University Training Consortium (UTC), a nationally recognized training and professional development system. The UTC includes all eight state universities, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, and several private universities. The Training Resource Center is pleased to be a collaborative partner, both with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Department for Community Based Services, and the lead university for the UTC, Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), in the effort to make Kentucky a safer, healthier place for children and families.

**Shonda Lucas**
Adoption Support for Kentucky

**Jennifer Lyons**
Administrative Associate

**Jessica Morris, CSW**
Continuing Education

**Stephanie Ratliff, CSW**
Credit for Learning

**Rebecca Sanford, MSSA**
Public Child Welfare Certification Program

**Christine Sauer, MSW**
Adoption Support for Kentucky

**Missy Segress, MS**
Director

**Melissa Slone, MSW**
Credit for Learning

**Terry Stivers, LCSW**
Credit for Learning

**Carrie Taylor**
Administrative Associate

**Gary Trumble**
IS Tech Support Specialist

**Pam Weeks, JD, MSW**
Credit for Learning
Resource Parent Training Program

What works to keep a child in a permanent stable living situation, to be safe, and to grow and develop to their fullest potential? This question is asked by Kentucky’s Social Service Workers and resource parents alike. As evidence-based practices prove themselves to be effective, it is the Resource Parent Training Program - that communicates these practices to workers and foster and adoptive parents statewide. Social issues from unemployment to drug abuse drive the focus of the-program’s efforts. Presenting preparatory trainings, such as The Child Welfare League of America’s Pre-Service Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (PS-MAPP), starts Kentucky’s adults on the road to providing a - temporary home for children in care. The program’s development of a refresher course, PS-MAPP: The Road Revisited allows for inactive, experienced resource parents to regain their certification as foster/adoptive parents. Development and the presentation of curricula, such as Care Plus and Adding to Your Discipline Toolbox, assist resource parents in overcoming atypical behaviors from children in their home. For Kentucky’s teachers, Walk A Few Miles in Their Shoes highlights the reasons for some of the special education challenges for children in care. In addition to statewide training conferences, and participation in regional training events, the program provides information and encouragement to Kentucky’s resource parents through Certificates of Completion and Appreciation, as well as through the publication of a Foster/Adoptive Support & Training magazine, known as F.A.S.T. Track.

program highlights

- FAST Track Magazine reaches over 4300 staff and families per issue.
- The Resource Parent Handbook has over 5000 copies in print and is available online.
- Each year the program delivers over 500 Certificates of Completion and Appreciation.
- In the past five years, the program helped train over 300 adults at local pre-service trainings.
- In 2009, the program worked with the Multimedia Staff at Eastern Kentucky University Training Consortium to produce its first online training, The Medical Passport for Children in Care.
Medically Fragile Training Program

The mission of the Medically Fragile Training Program is to provide training to resource homes in Kentucky caring for children with complex medical needs. Since 2003, the Training Resource Center has developed, coordinated, and conducted this type of training for resource families and social service workers statewide.

The program provides the training, *Join Hands Together*, for those resource homes desiring certification to care for children who are designated medically fragile. This training curriculum was originally developed by the Department for Community Based Services. It addresses nutrition, growth, development, and medical disabilities.

Training curriculums and events have also been developed to meet the ongoing training and certification requirements of medically fragile resource homes. Since July 2010, two statewide training events are held each year in accordance with the recertification needs of the state’s medically fragile resource homes. These events give resource parents the opportunity to select from a variety of training topics that are offered by experts and medical professionals. These training events provide Kentucky’s medically fragile resource parents the opportunity to gain knowledge most relevant to the needs of the children in their care.

**ONGOING CURRICULUMS**

- The Price They Pay
- Preventing Disease Transmission
- Finding a Hopeful Spirit
- Is the Pediatrician Enough?
- Growing Up Medically Fragile
- Finding Resources

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**program highlights**

- Each year an average of 345 resource parents receive training provided through the Medically Fragile Training Program.
- Evaluations of the medically fragile trainings often report that training sessions “Exceed” or “Greatly Exceed” expectations for achieving learning objectives, organization, understandability, practicality of training, and trainer knowledge, assistance, and enthusiasm.
- The medically fragile listserv communicates with more than 450 resource parents statewide.
- Medically Fragile Orientation is now offered online.
Special Advocate for Education – S.A.F.E.

The Special Advocate for Education (S.A.F.E.) partnership was developed through collaboration between the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the UK College of Social Work Training Resource Center. This initiative focuses on the needs of resource parents as they work with their local school systems to support positive educational experiences for the children in their care. Research over the past three decades has shown that compared to the general school population, the 7,000 children in out-of-home care in Kentucky:

- Have poorer attendance rates
- Are less likely to perform at grade level
- Are more likely to have behavior and discipline issues
- Struggle to receive appropriate support services
- Are less likely to attend college

Yet, there is much that engaged and well-informed resource parents can do to improve the school experience for children and youth in their care.

S.A.F.E. Specialists are trained educational advocates. They can provide the following within the region they serve:

- Phone and email support to resource parents in need of education assistance regarding children in care
- Accompany resource parents as they attend meetings with school personnel focusing on the educational progress and needs of the child in care, such as parent/teacher conferences and Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) meetings
- Attend site-based decision council or school board meetings to determine the culture of the school as it related to their priorities in providing educational services
- Group presentations and/or discussions about educational issues and S.A.F.E.

From basic moral support to more in depth training, S.A.F.E. Specialists provide resources to foster and adoptive parents focused on positive engagement with the school system in an effort to improve educational outcomes for children in care.

program highlight

S.A.F.E. Specialists spend approximately 1000 hours each year making 2000 or more contacts assisting resource parents with navigating the school system to aid Kentucky’s children in care.
Adoption Support for Kentucky (ASK)

Adoption is a very unique experience and Adoption Support for Kentucky exists to provide a continuum of proactive advocacy, ongoing support, and specialized training to foster and adoptive families. ASK has Adoptive Parent Liaisons throughout the Commonwealth who provide peer-led adoption support group meetings monthly. They also provide support and information by phone, email or through one-on-one meetings. Some who attend ASK support groups adopted years ago, while some are new adoptive parents. Others who attend are caring for the child of a relative or are foster parents considering adoption. ASK is proud to offer its services to families formed through state, private, relative or international adoption; as well as to resource parents and relative caregivers. Other services ASK offers include mentoring with an experienced adoptive family, information on adoption policies and procedures, education and training, advocacy assistance, a lending library, and statewide resource information.

program highlights

- ASK received the North American Council on Adoptable Children’s (NACAC) 2010 Parent Group of the Year Award.
- NACAC has declared ASK a model for post-adoption support.
- ASK provides 32 adoptive parent support groups a month across Kentucky for a total of 384 per year.
- ASK provides childcare at all support group meetings.
- ASK provides training on issues related to foster and adoptive parenting at all support groups.
- ASK Adoptive Parent Liaisons are available for one-on-one support and training.
- ASK began in May of 2002. In the first year ASK had an attendance of 981 parents, with 592 children receiving childcare. Attendance has since grown to more than 4,000 parents, with nearly 3000 children in childcare.
- Since 2003, over 18,000 parents have attended ASK support groups, with over 11,000 children receiving childcare.
- Adoptive Parent Liaisons have provided support to resource parents through thousands of phone calls, emails, and one-on-one meetings.
The Resource Parent Mentor Program (RPMP) started in 1999 in recognition of the need to provide newly approved resource parents with support to enhance the quality of care provided and improve placement stability for children in out-of-home care. The program started with 16 veteran resource parents mentoring 32 newly approved resource parents. Over a decade later, more than 300 mentors are providing support to approximately 500 mentees.

The Resource Parent Mentoring Program provides emotional and practical support to newly approved resource parents, while reinforcing skills learned in training. Mentees are matched with mentors in a six month mentoring relationship. Mentors help mentees to better understand children in care and the child welfare system. The program recognizes the transition for children returning home is enhanced when resource parents embrace birth parents as partners. Mentors encourage mentees to work in partnership with birth parents and the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS).

DCBS Recruitment and Certification (R&C) staff have recognized the contributions mentors have made in helping mentees be successful resource parents. As evidence of this, staff provide program referrals on the day a family is approved as a resource home so they can immediately be matched with a mentor. Additionally, staff request extended mentor matches for families needing additional support.

Many mentors have remarked that their desire to help new resource parents is due to the positive experience they had as a mentee. New mentors often indicate they maintain a lasting friendship with their former mentor. The real success of this program is due to the dedication of mentors providing timely and reliable instruction, coupled with meaningful and genuine emotional support, at just the right time.

**Program Highlights**

**Participant Quotes**

“The program is very helpful. Marlene gave me many helpful tips on how to manage my family life with foster children involved. I was comfortable with her and could discuss anything with her. I feel like I have met a new friend.” –Mentee

“I really liked having someone to call on when I had questions about my family and the placement of teenagers in my home. Anytime I needed advice my mentor was always there.” –Mentee
Grandparents & Other Relatives Raising Children Training Project

The purpose of the Grandparents & Other Relatives Raising Children Training Project is to increase the number and quality of educational support groups for relatives raising children. The project aims to do this by providing resource materials and training to anyone developing and/or leading such groups. A manual has been created that consists of two primary sections, one is content on how to go about establishing and maintaining support groups, and the other is topical resource content to assist a group leader in building the agenda for group meetings.

The manual is not intended to be a “curriculum” but rather a resource from which group leaders can pull material in addressing some of the many issues faced by relatives raising children. The material can be used to supplement “packaged programs” or to help tailor a program for a specific group. Group leaders should feel free to pull material directly from the manual or to modify material to fit the needs of a particular group. The manual is available for download at www.uky.edu/TRC/sites/www.uky.edu.TRC/files/GPORRCForWEB.pdf.
Citizen Review Panels

Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) were established by a 1996 amendment to the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). In order for states to continue to receive federal money through CAPTA, they were to implement at least three CRPs by July 1999. Kentucky’s CRPs work on such issues as staff retention, training of foster parents, and improving sexual abuse investigations. In an annual report, panels make recommendations for improvement in child welfare policy, procedure, and practice. Currently, there are over 50 volunteers serving on two regional and one statewide panel. These are located in the Southern Bluegrass and Jefferson DCBS Service Regions. The statewide panel was formed in 2009 and draws on volunteers from throughout Kentucky to evaluate policies and practices of the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS).
Evidence-based Child Welfare Network

In order to address the complex, multifaceted nature of child maltreatment and child welfare, the UK College of Social Work Training Resource Center, in partnership with the Department of Community Based Services (DCBS), has formulated a plan to convene a multidisciplinary network of experts to provide recommendations and advisement to DCBS to further enhance the department’s planning, strategy, and delivery systems.

The purpose of this network of experts is to provide solution-driven recommendations for improving child outcomes and the quality of service provision by DCBS and its partner agencies in the private sector. This group will include state and national experts from various disciplines and systems. The network will include researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and educators. These professionals will come from a variety of disciplines that interconnect to impact child welfare.

In order to provide the most useful and efficacious recommendations, the network will use data-driven, evidence-based information to guide its work. The group will use existing DCBS data, as well as other available data sets to explore and assess the current strengths and challenge areas for the department. In addition to basing all work on evidence-based science, the network will also employ the use of translational science techniques to help assist DCBS in furthering their mission to provide leadership in building high quality community based human service systems that enhance safety, permanency, well-being, and self-sufficiency for Kentucky’s families, children, and vulnerable adults.

TARGETED OUTCOMES

PHASE I

✦ Provide a forum for information sharing, problem-solving, and information dissemination relevant to DCBS and child welfare at large
✦ Build and maintain a “cycle of knowledge” that is continually using data and evidence to improve organizational culture, practice, and policy of DCBS and the field of child welfare

PHASE II

✦ Provide a scientific assessment of the department’s service continuum including partnering agencies
✦ Provide evidence-based recommendations to identified areas/issues of interest
✦ Provide consultation on the implementation of network recommendations in order to promote improvement of child outcomes (e.g. reduce number of days in out-of-home care) and overall improvement in the quality of the service continuum
Credit For Learning: Educational Outreach In Public Child Welfare

Credit for Learning (CFL), implemented in July 2002, is a collaborative project among the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University, and the Eastern Kentucky University Training Consortium. The goal of this program is to assist CHFS in meeting child safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes, and Council on Accreditation standards, by enhancing the professional expertise of public child welfare personnel through graduate social work education.

CFL is an innovative university/agency partnership offering child welfare workers the opportunity to earn graduate-level credit as non-degree graduate students, while fulfilling the professional development requirements for employment. Child welfare practice courses are collaboratively designed, developed, and taught by teaching teams, including university instructors and child welfare professionals. The courses utilize distributed education models, which combine intensive face-to-face classroom sessions and web-based sessions. These are offered at off-campus sites throughout the state to allow participation by students/employees who live in both rural and urban areas.

The UK College of Social Work dedicates social work faculty to this program on the main campus in Lexington and at off-campus programs in Hazard/Prestonsburg/Corbin, Morehead, and Northern Kentucky. CFL faculty collaborate with CHFS personnel in identifying and addressing learning needs within the service regions, and also assist CHFS in increasing the number of graduate trained staff through recruiting, advising, and mentoring those interested in pursuing a Master of Social Work degree. To date, over 2000 participants have received professional development through UK’s CFL program.

All communities are impacted by family violence. Academic outreach efforts, such as CFL, help bridge the gap between research and practice. Ultimately, communities, families, and children benefit from professionals who continue to educate themselves in evidence-based practices and develop the critical thinking skills necessary to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children and families.
The Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) was implemented by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services and eleven university undergraduate social work programs to better serve the children and families of Kentucky. The goal of this program is to fill the ranks of child welfare with competent, well trained workers who provide high quality services following employment. The Cabinet has partnered with Kentucky universities to offer juniors and seniors, pursuing their Bachelors in Social Work, the opportunity to complete their academic program in conjunction with the Cabinet’s child welfare training curricula, prior to graduation. Students take specialized child welfare courses, complete both practicum placements in child welfare settings, participate in training retreats every semester, and attend six days of intensive, pre-employment training in their final semester. These students are provided in-state tuition, and a stipend. They must complete a two year employment commitment with the Cabinet, upon successful completion of the program.

The University of Kentucky has participated in the PCWCP program since 1996, and has graduated approximately 18% of the total number of program graduates in the state. Placed throughout Kentucky, our graduates work in both direct service and supervisory positions.
Children’s Justice Act Task Force

The Children’s Justice Act Task Force is established in accordance with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act which authorizes grants to states to develop, establish, and operate programs designed to improve:

- The handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim;
- The handling of cases of suspected child abuse or neglect related fatalities;
- The investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation; and
- The handling of cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are victims of abuse or neglect.

The Task Force is composed of professionals from throughout Kentucky who have been appointed by the Department for Community Based Services Commissioner, and its goal is to oversee CJA funds as they are distributed to community partners in the development of programs to address the goals listed above. Examples of CJA funding recipients are: the Administrative Office of the Courts (guardian ad litem training), Kentucky’s Children’s Advocacy Centers, and the University of Louisville Forensic Medicine Program. The money distributed to these programs is based upon evaluations of their efficacy, and the evaluations are monitored annually by the Task Force.

Additionally, the Task Force maintains and distributes a scholarship fund of $10,000 per year. This money is used to assist child welfare professionals in attending workshops and conferences that are relevant to their field. Scholarship recipients are asked to attend Task Force meetings and share the information they have gained through their experience.
Approximately 35 different trainings are offered each year
Continuing Education Program

The UK College of Social Work’s Continuing Education (CE) program has been in existence for nearly two decades. Each semester, the CE program trains over 400 social workers, psychologists, and other health and mental health professionals. Workshops are held throughout Kentucky, including Lexington, Maysville, Florence, Hazard, Ashland, and Elizabethtown. Currently, there are seven online courses to serve our customers throughout the Commonwealth and the nation.

For Continuing Education program information and registration, please visit www.uksocialworkonline.com.

POPULAR TRAININGS

- For Better or Worse: Domestic Violence Training for the Mental Health Professional
- Screening for Substance Use Disorder in Social Work Practice
- HIV/AIDS: It Can Happen To You
- Spirituality and Social Work Practice
- Ethics for Social Workers