Course Offering Booklet

University of Maryland Baltimore
School of Social Work
Family Welfare Research and Training Group
Policy and Skills Training Team (PSTT)
This booklet was prepared by the Family Welfare Research & Training Group, School of Social Work, University of Maryland Baltimore under contract to and with the support of its long time partner, the Family Investment Administration, Maryland Department of Human Resources.

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Background and Purpose

The Policy and Skills Training Team (PSTT) was formed in the fall of 1996 to complement the research component of the group. This gave FWR&TG the ability to assist staff by offering training that addressed needs found during research activities.

The team specializes in workforce support through design, development and delivery of training for Maryland's Family Investment workers. Under contract with FIA and DHR, PSTT designs, develops and delivers staff support training for local agency front-line workers who serve customers receiving Welfare-to-Work Assistance. Training topics and course development for FIA include supervisor training, courtesy training, communication skills, interviewing skills and assessment skills. Training targets the FIA staff in the entire state, including Baltimore City and its satellite offices.

The trainers of the Policy and Skills Training Team provide a training support resource to the Family Investment Administrations of DHR and, ultimately but indirectly, serve the families and children of Maryland.
PSTT Mission

As part of the Family Welfare Research & Training Group (FWR&TG),

... To Support those engaged in the delivery of Human Services Programs, and raise the professional standards of program delivery by providing courses and workshops which address policies and procedures, skills, strategies and techniques for staff, managers and supervisors.
Customization

Any of the courses listed in this booklet may be customized to best meet the needs of your office or department. An entire training day/course or a module may be modified to include specific issues that are of interest to the staff in your location.

The Policy and Skills Training Team welcomes requests for training delivery, as well as, requests to develop training on topics of interest to supervisors, managers and staff.

*Note: In addition to the courses listed in this booklet, we have many simulations and training exercises that focus on subjects including Teamwork, Leadership, Supervision and Communication. These can be used to enhance the training experience and provide more opportunities for interactivity during a session.*
Importance and Benefits

Proper and timely training is important to an organization in several ways. Customer trust and cooperation is based on how they feel about the agency and its staff. The perception of well trained, professional staff provides a level of comfort and lends credibility to an operation. Think of the contrast in comfort levels between two doctors, one who has some measure above the necessary training and education and one who’s training is below standards.

Training promotes esteem and a sense of accomplishment in staff. People who are competent in their work may feel more confident and look more professional to customers and co-workers.

Training, especially procedural and skill-type instruction, may help a department reduce mistakes, save time and reach or surpass organizational goals and incentives.
Course List

The following courses are ready to deliver and available to local and state Family Investment staff. Sessions can be delivered regionally or on-site and may be “tailored” to meet special training requirements. Suggested class size (for most topics) for on-site delivery is a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 25 people. If more than 25 persons are interested in a session and there are enough people (at least 12) to warrant a second session, we will arrange with the requestor to deliver additional offerings of the course. Multiple sessions may also be arranged to allow local office flexibility with scheduling and coverage.

For more information or to request a course outline, please contact Alfred Guy, Policy and Skills Training Team, at the School of Social Work at (410) 706-4390 or Fred Rohlfing at (410) 706-4391.
Assessment Skills Training

This three-day course focuses on the ongoing assessment requirements for all Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) cases and provides guidance on the 60-month time limit policies. The first part of the course addresses the 60-month time limit policy and exemption provisions. Because purposeful assessment is key to overcoming self-sufficiency obstacles, the session continues with assessment-focused training on the conduct of customer interviews, recognizing disabilities as well as experiential learning on effective problem solving and use of resources. Participants have the opportunity to practice using effective interviewing and problem solving skills in an integrated fashion.

Program Length: Three Days
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Basic Train-the-Trainer

This one-day course is designed to prepare participants to better plan and deliver information to small groups. It will be helpful to anyone who trains or is interested in training others on an occasional basis. Attendees will define training and the trainer’s role, list the characteristics of adult learners, identify and prepare learning objectives, prepare a training outline (lesson plan), select and develop activities, visual aids and handouts and identify the important elements of presenting. They will complete portions of a training outline (lesson plan), prepare supporting training materials and deliver a portion of a training module using the lesson plan and developed training materials.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Business Writing: Writing Your Business

A one-day course addressing the need for clear, concise and effective writing skills. Designed for adults across professions who engage in every kind of writing from memoranda and proposals to letters, reports and narratives. Participants will review the principles of readability, practice organizing information, and expressing their thoughts clearly, selecting appropriate style and format for the intended reader, and editing their writing to create professional documents.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Business Writing: Tools and Rules for Writing

Many employees are responsible for writing a variety of correspondence. These documents may range from simple notes to detailed directions or case files. Clear, concise written communication plays an important role in daily operations, and overall communication between staff and customers. This half-day course will give participants the opportunity to review, discuss and practice some specific area of writing and grammar.

Discussion Points/Activities
Sentence Structure
  - Creating sentence variety
  - Sentence diagramming worksheets
Using Adjectives, Articles, and more to your advantage
Eliminating “tired” expressions
Writing effective memos
Writing directions

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Case Management Module One: The Steps

This module of the Case Management Training Series defines case management as a process of five sequentially related steps and looks at the relevant activities associated with each step. The three major categories of a customer’s service needs are introduced and discussed. Attendees examine the guiding principles of effective case management and the direct and indirect service roles, supporting behaviors, and skill sets of an effective case manager. Using a participant workbook, attendees will complete individual and partner exercises and will participate in open class discussions.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Case Management Module Two: Building the Worker-Client Bridge

This second module of the Case Management Training Series takes a step away from the technical aspects of managing a case and emphasizes interpersonal relations. It asks participants to define and discuss several topics related to establishing a working relationship with customers. We will discuss the importance of attitude, awareness of differences, both cultural and otherwise, and building rapport and trust. Attendees will participate in group discussions, practical exercises, case studies and games, all related to the above topics. Participants will, after watching a video presentation, relate some of the concepts found in the video to their workplace. This session is designed to be both energizing, through the use of practical and dynamic exercises, and introspective, with opportunities for self-evaluation and silent individual thought.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Case Management Module Three: Goal Setting & Mentoring

This third module of the Case Management Training Series looks at two important aspects of effective case management: customer goal setting, fundamental to development of a customer’s individual service plan, and the mentoring role of the case manager in that goal setting and plan development process. Goal setting principles to be discussed include the areas for developing life goals, the relationship of values, personal skills and attributes to establishing realistic goals and the importance of benefits analysis for successful goal achievement. Attendees, practicing individual goal setting, will examine their values, write SMART goals, recognize the benefits of their goals and identify the skills and attributes needed to accomplish their goals. After goal setting practice and discussions of goal setting principles, participants will look at mentoring as it relates to customer goal setting and personal development and growth. Participants will discuss reasons why people don’t set goals, will look at goal setting from the customer’s perspective, and will be introduced to the process for facilitating customer-focused goal setting and incorporating those goals into a customer’s individual service plan.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Case Management Module Four: Negotiation Skills

The fourth module of the Case Management Training Series focuses on the skill of negotiation, which is important in relationships with customers, coworkers and supervisors. The ability to express points of view, preferences, opinions and wants is essential to the effectiveness of case managers, other workers and people, in general. Participants will review the stages of negotiation and the characteristics of a good negotiation, discuss the importance of considering the motivations of others, practice various interpersonal skills and discuss the use of those skills in relation to negotiation.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Case Management Module Five: Determining and Setting Service Priorities

The fifth module in the Case Management Training Series, looks at the important aspect of recognizing and prioritizing customer needs for action and mitigation. Unresolved serious customer issues are, or can become, difficult barriers which delay or prevent the move toward independence.

Each Family Investment jurisdiction has unique resources, services, activities and vendors available for referral. This course presents various tools, methods and thought processes to assist case managers in recognizing the most difficult problems and deciding which take precedence in the referral/handling process to neutralize or lessen impact on customer progress.

Attendees will participate in individual and group exercises and practical case studies. This session is designed to improve skills in application of logic, impact assessment, and prioritizing of customer needs and problems.

Program Length:  One-half Day (3 ½ Hours)
Mini-Lecture
Individual and Class Discussion
Individual and Small Group Exercises
Case Management Module Six: Decision-Making

The sixth module of the Case Management Training Series covers decision making, using a scientific method. This method consists of several detailed steps, that when followed in sequence, allows one to effectively focus on the issue at hand. This method also provides the information and tools necessary to build the skills that are important in making good decisions. Participants will review and discuss the complete scientific method (SM-14) of creative decision making, discuss the short formula (SM-4) for decision making, review and practice different types of decision making, including voting, consensus and decision by authority. Classes will also practice decision making and critical thinking with the support of simulations and scenarios.

In addition, participants will discuss considerations and issues that relate directly to the workplace and view and discuss The Abilene Paradox and how it applies to real situations, in and out of the office.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises, Individual and Group
Self-Evaluation
Case Management Module Seven: Case Documentation

The seventh module of the Case Management Training Series focuses on standardized, quality case documentation (case narratives) as an essential component of a case record. Case documentation ensures that case management and case decisions are based on good information and information recall, provides documentary evidence of case interaction and/or communication with or on behalf of the customer and tells the chronological story of the customer’s experiences and outcomes. It forms the basis for the agency’s and the caseworker’s professional involvement with the customer. During this session, participants will review the objectives and benefits of case narratives; discuss the elements of quality case narratives and complete activities and exercises that require them to write case narratives using scripted case events. They will review and have the opportunity to apply the rules of grammar, sentence structure and punctuation as they relate to factual, clear, concise, descriptive writing. Within the practice of case management, the timely preparation and maintenance of quality case documentation is yet another essential skill of effective casework.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Case Management Module Eight: Managing the Child-Only Case

The eighth and final module of the Case Management Training Series focuses on child-only cases, which account for over one-third of the active TCA caseload. Case managers must be able to recognize these unique cases, discern the needs of both child and caretaker, and provide guidance and services to protect the child and assist the caretaker.

Children in these cases are often referred to as the invisible customers. Frequently living with non-parental caregivers, many have in the past been victims of abuse, abandonment, parental death or incarceration. Some have emotional or physical problems. They tend to be older than the average traditional TCA child member, and may remain in our system until reaching the age of majority. Non-parental caregivers in child-only cases are often older and thrust into their new role suddenly. Grandparents and other relatives perform a valuable service, but must navigate uncharted waters in seeking resources and assistance.

Participants will receive an overview of case structure, review formal and informal child-only case types, examine the origins of non-traditional cases, and discuss utilization of resources and services.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Individual and Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
University of Maryland Baltimore  
School of Social Work  

Policy and Skills Training Team  

Courtesy Training  

A day-long session that focuses on the essentials of effective customer service: courtesy/sensitivity, communication skills, professionalism and teamwork. Attendees will view FISH! The Video with its four themes of Play, Make Their Day, Be There, and Choose Your Attitude, complete exercises related to the video presentation and will participate in group discussions, practical exercises, case studies and special activities, all related to the topic of customer service.  

Program Length: One Day  
Video  
Mini-Lecture  
Class Discussion  
Small Group Discussion  
Practical Exercises  
Self-Evaluation
Energy and Teams

A half day session that focuses on the stages of group development and their importance in team activities. Participants will define “group,” “team” and “energy,” and discuss how that energy can be used to improve team work and team results. We will also discuss the ideas from a video presentation and relate them to team work. Participate in group discussions, practical exercises, case studies and self, as well as, group evaluation.

Program Length: One Half Day
Video
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Interviewing Skills: The Right Balance

The one-day course is designed to give workers (whether "new" or experienced) the basics (tools) of interviewing: types of questions and probes, interview structure, verbal and non-verbal clues and much more. The necessary balance between building rapport and information gathering is stressed. The Assessment Process is discussed to show the link between thorough information gathering and successful attainment of independence. How to interact successfully with various customer "types" is included in the course. Handouts, exercises, group activities, and practice interviews are included to reinforce learning.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
It’s Time for Personal Effectiveness

The focus of this course is time management, or more specifically, the management of daily activities in relation to the time in each day. Attendees will identify and define concepts related to time management, complete a time management matrix and discuss and review the use of various “time saving” tools. All participants will receive practical planning tools (handouts).

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Narratives: The Writing of a Life

Narratives are much like a doctor’s chart, using the information to recognize a customers’ situation and problems, and deciding the service or help needed. We are literally writing the story of their lives.

As a case progresses, customer narratives will be entered by a number of case managers, and each will likely have a different writing style. Even with prescribed data entries and order of entry, style of narratives will vary. However, readability and content of narratives are the most important issues. Hastily written comments, incomplete entries, incorrect abbreviations, etc. cause missed opportunities, wasted time (audit reviews, corrections), and inaccurate service provision.

This training course provides attendees the opportunity to look at narratives as a very important resource from which we manage and plan the steps leading to customer well-being and independence.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Phone Smarts – Good Call Management

This one-day course is designed to provide the tools and skills needed for delivering excellent telephone-contact customer service. Participants will discuss the various mindsets and emotions likely to come over the telephone line, review suggestions for mitigating anger, and discuss using empathetic responses and the condition/benefit formula. Participants will take a Telephone Skills Self-Assessment, and will receive “take-away” skill guides and materials to enhance telephone performance and effectiveness.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Self-Evaluation
Stress: Reduction and Management

Attendees will define terms related to stress and identify personal stressors. They will discuss and practice stress reduction activities and relaxation skills, complete a self-evaluation of lifestyle and develop a personal stress-management plan.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Video Presentation
Musical Presentation
Supervisory Strategies to Maximize Your Potential

*Doing More With Less*

Attendees will discuss problem solving and how to identify roadblocks. They will participate in a team simulation exercise (Survival at Sea). Attendees will also discuss group decision-making, process improvement and change. They will also complete small group activities and team exercises.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Simulation (team exercise)
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 1: What is the Challenge of Leadership?

The Challenge of Leadership is the first class in a series. The audience is managers, supervisors and those who will be in the near future. We begin brainstorming a list of the workplace responsibilities of supervisors and employees. Next, we’ll discuss the similarities and differences in responsibilities. We will also consider and discuss the transition from employee to supervisor, and its dynamics, which include a mindset of acceptance. The necessary skill sets for successful leadership come from two distinct areas, Work-Related Skills and Personal Skills. We will have a brief introduction to each of them.

The end of the training will involve discussions and activities related the dynamics of leadership. To accomplish this, we will take the following path.

•Accomplishing work through others - *Supervising*
•Efficient & productive work through others - *Managing*
•Accomplishing the above, while building and promoting positive relationships, within the workplace - *Leading*

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Video Presentations (2)
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Small Group Exercises
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 2: Listening and Communicating as a Leader

This is the second course in a series of seven. The audience is managers, supervisors and those who will take on that responsibility in the near future. The necessary skill sets for successful leadership come from two distinct areas, Work-Related Skills and Personal Skills. During this one-day training, participants will continue to build upon these skills and the definition of leading introduced in Topic 1. *Leading is building and promoting positive relationships in the workplace.* We begin by defining credibility and character and how they relate to effectively listening and communicating as a leader. We will define leadership listening as a step toward earning credibility. Participants will be introduced to the continuous cycle of leadership communication, and will relate it to six primary categories of leadership messages: vision/mission, calls for change, expectations/motivation, delegation, performance feedback and recognition. Effective leader communication requires attention to message content and also to message delivery. Participants will be introduced to verbal, written and electronic methods of message delivery and will discuss when they are most appropriate and effective.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Partner Exercises
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 3: Vision and Planning

Course provides supervisors with guidance and planning skills related to ‘seeing’ the organization’s goals in the constantly changing FIA landscape. Techniques and benefits of developing a holistic view of the work environment, understanding the roles of customers, workers and supervision in the provision of services, are covered. Recognition (vision) of the process, and awareness and appreciation of worker talents and skills provides the planning tools necessary in reaching stated goals. The adage ‘the right tool for the right job’ describes the planning for, and implementation of work flow. The vision and plan for reaching the goal should then be shared with the team.

Course teaches supervisors and leaders the value of having forward vision (envisioning) in recognizing their work life goals and personal life goals.

Also provided are the planning and action steps to be used in the attainment of beneficial change envisioned by supervision to improve a practice and process. A presentation segment provides methodology for a short presentation of a proposed change, its benefits, change process, departments involved, cost, etc.

Program Length: One Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Partner Exercises
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 4: Followers – Strength in Talents

Strength in Talents is the fourth course in a series of seven. The audience is managers, supervisors and those who will take on that responsibility in the near future. The successful leader is a talent manager. Talent management is a key contributor to employee engagement. A leader’s talent management mind set means being aware of, being interested in, believing in and valuing the uniqueness and contributions of each and every follower. During this half-day of training, participants will define talent management and learn why it is an essential component of effective leadership and of employee engagement. We begin by defining talent and how it differs from skills and knowledge. Participants will be introduced to one approach to identifying talent types in the workplace and will discuss why and how the management of those talent types can benefit both the organization and the individual employees. Engaged employees are attracted to, involved in and enthusiastic about their work. Engaged employees “give their best” to the attainment of organizational goals. Acknowledging and identifying your followers’ strength in talents can help make employees want to “give their best”.

Program Length: Half-Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Take Home Workbook
Laminated Pocket Card
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 5: The 3 “Ws & the H” of Delegation

Delegation is the fifth course in a series of seven. The audience is managers, supervisors and those who will take on that responsibility in the near future. Delegation skills are core component of good leadership. Effective leaders know that delegation is more than just a time management tool because, done skillfully, it can benefit both the individual and the organization. During this half-day of training, participants are introduced to the what, when why and how of delegation, and learn that it is an essential part of leadership and employee development. We begin by defining delegation, as giving meaningful assignments to staff, with the intention of giving responsibility and authority to complete the assignments and provide accountability during the process. The basics of communication, trust and ongoing interaction are incorporated into the five-step how of delegation: Planning, Assigning, Tracking, Supporting and Evaluating. Delegation can be a catalyst for relationship building, trust and job satisfaction. When done correctly, it can have a positive effect on motivation.

Program Length: Half-Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Take Home Workbook
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 6: Motivation & Work

This course will address the general acknowledgment that motivation refers to forces that push the individual to try to satisfy or fulfill basic needs or wants. It is also known that one individual cannot motivate another. However, individuals can provide the environment, relationship and situations that make it possible for people to feel motivated.

We will discuss the differences between coercion, control, influence and motivation. This program is designed to enable supervisors to identify the factors that affect employee performance in the workplace and those that influence the employees’ own internal needs. We will discuss the external and internal factors that motivate, review the major theories of employee motivation and apply these theories to the workplace, and review the skills that encourage the achievement of both organizational and employee goals.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Slide Presentation
Video Presentation
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Small Group Exercises
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 7: Recognizing Life and Work ~ The Balance

Our managerial teams are a valuable resource, spending many hours each workday guiding the provision of services to customers. And for the rest of each day our managers and supervisors go home to their personal lives. Personal lives and work lives are not so separate, but overlap and influence each other in many ways. Quality of life is usually not determined by just personal life or just work life, but is a result of the work and personal lives combined. There is often a direct correlation between a person’s degree of job satisfaction and personal life contentment.

This course helps managers look for ways to:
Find the balance within her/his life and work
Recognize what we bring to work each day/what we take home
Learn how to care for and about self
Understand effects of “all work, no play”
Appreciate the gift of work
Acknowledge/act on employees’ need for workplace appreciation
Care for the Team ~ Helping others find balance

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Video Presentation
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Small Group Exercises
Supervisor Training Series, Topic 8: Promoting the Team in Team Work

Each of our supervisory personnel most often manage a group of employees (case managers, specialists, etc.) tasked with the business of providing services to our FIC customers. The individual supervisor is responsible, in part, for ensuring that the group completes their part of the customer service function, and if appropriate, routes the case into the next FIC process. Each supervisor individually has one or more areas of expertise. Imagine the power of harnessing the combined skills of the supervisor team to find solutions, clear up roadblocks, and chart process improvement!
This course is about your actual team of supervisors, who can effectively combine their talents, opinions and ideas to problem-solve and address issues which arise in day-to-day operations.

Discussion Points/Activities
What does ‘Team’ stand for, as in Teamwork
Team applications:
- Promoting Team Cohesion
- Working Relationships
- Non-Mgt Resources

Video and Discussion – “Life & Work ~ A Manager’s Search for Meaning”

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Video Presentation
Class Discussion
Practical Exercises
Small Group Exercises
Take Five: Stress Reduction at Work

Sitting at a desk, using a computer, interacting with coworkers and customers during the workday can all be stress producers. Take Five training is about building personal stress management breaks into the workday. It is about encouraging physical and mental well-being by energizing with personal stress reduction exercises. Take Five encourages attendees to be aware of their body and their stress level and to learn to give themselves mini five- to ten-minute stress breaks.

During this half day of training, attendees will discuss the costs of chronic stress and the benefits of stress management. They will be introduced to the four (4) stress management competencies: Source Management, Relaxation, Thought, and Planning & Analysis. Each participant will complete a personal Stress Management Inventory that measures how strong their stress management skills are in each of the competency areas. Throughout the training, attendees will be introduced to and practice stress reduction exercises that fall in the competency areas of Relaxation and Thought. Participants will leave the training with a Desk Guide containing instructions for the exercises introduced during the session along with other activities that will enable them to practice Take Five: Stress Reduction at Work.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Personal Stress Management Inventory
Practical Stress Reduction Exercises
Take Five: Stress Reduction at Work Activity Desk Guide
Telephone Interviewing

Attendees will reinforce basic interviewing skills, including active listening, trust and rapport by participating in scripted practice scenarios. They will practice using the telephone as an effective information gathering tool; acceptable when face-to-face contact is not practicable or prudent.

Program Length: One Half Day
Mini-Lecture
Class Discussion
Small Group Discussion
Practical Exercises
Contact Us:

2013

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