



SOP Stories from the Field

What is SOP?

Safety Organized Practice, or SOP for short, is a combination of Child Welfare best practice techniques done in a thoughtful and purposeful way to build safety. As a Child Welfare worker you are probably already doing many of the techniques and practices that are fundamental to SOP.

The best practices that are under the umbrella of SOP include: Cultural Humility, Structured Decision Making (SDM), Signs of Safety, Multi-Cultural Process of Change, Partner-Ship Based

Collaborative Practice, Trauma Informed Practice and Appreciative Inquiry.

The main goals of SOP are: Good Working Relationships, Critical Thinking and Enhancing Safety.

SOP will not change the day to day tasks you are currently doing as a Child Welfare worker. It will in time change the way we engage and interact with our families to create better outcomes for the families we work with.



A word from your SOP Coach Jenni AhSing

It has been a pleasure working with your Agency for the past two months. You are a talented and hardworking bunch and I have enjoyed our coaching sessions. SOP can be used by anyone in any position so if you are not using SOP with your workers and your families, give me a call or email me to discuss how we can implement SOP into the work you do.

Email: jahsing@mail.sdsu.edu
Phone: 760-518-0778.



SOP Implementation Update

The SOP Three Day was presented to Cohort 1 in September 2013.

The SOP curriculum is broken into 12 modules which are provided once a month. It has been broken down so that the worker is given the opportunity to absorb the new idea and practice it in the field before going on to the next part of SOP. Cohort 1 has already participated in

Module 1 and 2. To enhance the transfer of learning the Agency has provided two coaching sessions in between each module to support implementation into practice. Coaching is open to all workers and four sessions have been provided thus far.

It has been exciting to see the support from workers and management alike in the implementation of SOP.

Review: SOP Module 1 and 2

Module 1-Interviewing for Safety and Danger focuses on ensuring we are making balanced assessments with our families using the three questions: What's working well? What are we worried about? And what needs to happen next?

It also ensures that we keep our focus on the impact to child

and introduces the definition of safety: Safety is acts of protection taken by the caregiver that mitigate the danger demonstrated over time.

Module 2- Three Questions to Organize Your Practice discusses how to utilize the three questions to answer the "essential question", Are the children safe?

It also focuses on how important the use of behavioral detail is versus jargon and labels. Using behavioral detail when discussing a family and their circumstances not only ensures everyone has the same understanding of what is truly happening with the family, it also helps build better relationships by minimizing judgment.

Orange County

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What Coaching is and what Coaching is not...



I have had a lot of questions about coaching and wanted to spend a moment clarifying what coaching is and what it is not.

Coaching is not:

- Training
- The coach telling you what you did wrong and how to fix it.
- A time to complain about your clients.
- Therapy.

Coaching Session Ideas:

- Work 1:1 with individual staff to discuss specific cases. Supervisor participation is helpful.
- Work with groups or units to practice certain tools they want to use in the field. (For example: Safety house, harm and danger statements, safety networks and case plan writing. It is best when a case or

referral is brought to the coaching session so the unit or group can see how the tools and concepts work with that family.)

- Go out in the field with staff to support the staff as they practice SOP in the field.

Things to remember:

- Coaching sessions are confidential unless there is a safety threat or concern not being addressed.
- Integrating SOP tools, specifically The Three Questions into case consultations, multidisciplinary consultations, unit meetings, supervision will help all workers become more familiar with the concepts and language of SOP.
- Everyone can use coaching—managers, supervisors, line workers, hotline workers, and office staff.
- Coaching and SOP are organic in nature. It is mandated that

workers be trained in SOP but workers are not mandated to use SOP or the coaching sessions.

- Even if you are not actively attending the modules you can utilize the coaching sessions.
- Mixing workers (For Example: Front end, back end and adoptions) during one coaching session can be very valuable. SOP can be used at all levels in the County as well as during the entire life of the case. Mixing workers shows how SOP is a common language and use of the tools throughout the case can improve communication with our families and between workers.
- If you do not have a case or family to be coached on, ask to join another worker's coaching session to see what a coaching session looks like.
- Supervisor involvement in the coaching sessions is encouraged (and beneficial) but not mandated.
- A worker may miss up to two modules and still be able to participate in the rest of the modules.

What is working well?

How have your colleagues been utilizing SOP in their daily work?

Supervisors at the CHIP office are so excited about SOP they want their non-module attending workers to be familiar with the basic concepts and language of SOP and invited them all to a unit meeting/mapping session. They brought breakfast/snacks and were very actively involved in the coaching session.

Workers and supervisors in the MOB office that are attending the SOP sessions are meeting once a month to share their experiences with SOP and how they are using it with their families.

Four members of this group (Elena Valle, Sarah Abedzadeh, Tassianan Mervilus, Andrea Astran) attended a coaching session on 12/17/13 in which they shared what they were doing to integrate SOP into their practice. We also mapped a case Elena (DI) was to receive the next day and helped her write harm and danger statements to share with the family.

Tassiana (FSW) has made herself a new face sheet form that she uses when she first gets a new case which includes SOP language and has an eco-map style. She also uses the Three Houses on a regular basis.

Sarah (DI) has made a field packet of SOP information by condensing the PowerPoint from the 3-day presentation and adding additional information she gathered from an SOP blog she found (<http://safetyorganizedpractice.blogspot.com/p/resource-library.html>). Once she has it all uploaded to a soft copy she is going to provide it to Colleen Honch for distribution so others can use in the field.

Elena (DI) who is new to investigations has found the Safety Circle activity very useful with her families.

Kudos to these workers that are leading the way!!!!

Things to Try

Curious as to how you can start using SOP in your practice? Here are some things to try!

- Think about all of your current cases. Can you clearly state at which decision point you are? Can you clearly articulate why a child is in placement versus not in placement? Can you clearly articulate why a case is open or not open? Can you clearly articulate exactly what acts of protection you need to see for the child to be safe?
- Listen to your conversations about families. How often are you using jargon?
- Notice whether you are TELLING families what will happen next and how often you are having a CONVERSATION with the family about what will happen next. (Don't DO anything differently, just notice.)
- Think about current case plans for your families. Notice whether the objectives are about SERVICES or BEHAVIORAL CHANGE.

* Note that a lot of these things to try do not involve action. A central idea of SOP is changing the way we think about our families we work with; in time this simple act will change the way we interact with our families, for the better.

Upcoming Training and Coaching Dates



Training

Mod 3

1/16/13-

OC Training Center

Coaching

1/7/14

9-12 800 Eckhoff Rm 1304

1/7/14

1-4 800 Eckhoff Rm 2119

1/14/14

9-12, 1-4 840 Eckhoff Rm A010

Supervisor Coaching Tip

Here are some ways you can help your workers integrate what they are learning in the SOP monthly modules into the work they do with their families:

Module 1—Interviewing for Safety and Danger

- This module focuses on ensuring we are doing balanced assessments. When a worker is telling you about the family, listen for balance. If the account is all problems, ask about strengths, protective capacities, and acts of protection. If the account is all positive, ask about harm and danger.
- When a worker is telling you about a family, listen for jargon. Probe for more detail to ensure you both have the same understanding of the family.

Module 2: Three Questions to Organize Your Practice

- When a worker begins a consult or a supervision session ask the three questions. What is working well? What are we worried about? What needs to happen next? Let your workers know you will be formatting your consultations this way. Listen for the "rigorous balanced assessment."
- Follow up the three questions with "What is your sense of the impact that is having on the child(ren)?"

Module 3: Small Voices, Big Impact: Keeping Children at the Center of the Work

- Help workers remember that one way to gather children's information is to use either Three Houses or Safety House prior to completing SDM assessments. Ask questions about where a certain piece of information would go on which SDM assessment

Remember we are all learning SOP together. It is okay to make mistakes or be clumsy. When you practice SOP you model your willingness to put yourself into the position of the learner, with the hope that your worker will in turn be willing to put themselves in the learner role with their families. This will increase family engagement!