

**Key Issues in Child Welfare Practice:
Social Worker as Practitioner
Day 1**

California Common Core

December 31, 2108



Overview of the Day

- Introduction
- Role of the Practitioner
- Intersection of Key Issues
- Key Issues Facing Youth
- Motivation and Stages of Change

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Group Agreements



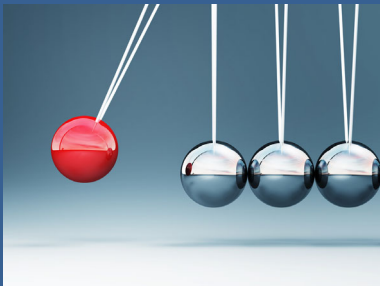
- Be collaborative
- Ask lots of questions – let us know what you think
- Be open to trying new things
- Be willing to make mistakes
- Maintain confidentiality
- Be responsible for your own learning

Recall Activity

- Think about some of the key concepts from the e-Learning modules
- In your group, read the card prompt and discuss the answers

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Pendulum Activity



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Activity

- Reflect on what assumptions, feelings, and possible biases may be present based on your response to each statement.
- What are some ways that this could impact your work with families?

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Common Errors in Child Welfare

- Making a decision with insufficient information
- Remembering either the very first information or the most recent
- Selectively remembering information
- Being reluctant to change one's own mind
- Focusing in on one explanation

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How do we avoid these errors?

WE can...

- Gather information
- Consider alternative explanations
- Utilize family team meetings
- Utilize assessment tools
- Use trauma-informed practices
- Examine own feelings and biases
- Consult with your supervisors

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Strength-based Practice

- Identify family strengths and resources that can be used in providing services and supporting a family.
- Use family strengths as benchmarks to assess the status of a family over the course of time.
- Use community-wide strengths to develop resources in the community.
- “The goal of strength-based practice is to activate an individual’s sense of responsibility for his or her actions...through a focus on potential rather than pathology.” (Clark, 2001).

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Building on Strengths

- All families have strengths.
- When families and their resources are involved in decision-making, outcomes can improve.
- The family’s culture is a source of strength.
- Building on functional strengths already present in families results in more lasting changes in the family after the child welfare intervention is over.

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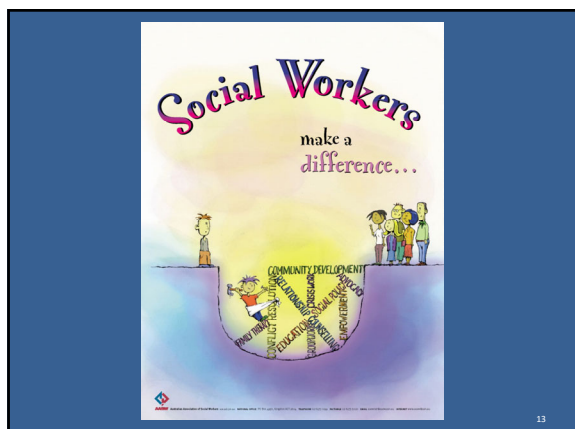
Benefits of Focusing on Strengths

A strengths-based approach helps families:

- Feel the social worker is interested in their success
- Think the relationship they are developing with the social worker is important
- Feel more optimistic
- Feel more able to make positive changes in their lives

(from Redko et al., 2007)

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Casework Components: Practice Behaviors Activity

- Using your assigned Casework Component review the practice behaviors associated with the component:
 - Identify the CPM practice behaviors associated with assessment and support for families where substance use disorders, intimate partner violence, and/or behavioral health issues are present.

Task for Activity: Design a Poster

There are 4 rules:

1. The group can only use the page of chart paper.
2. Only pictures can be used (graphics, symbols, icons, or diagrams are okay; no letters, words, or numbers).
3. All team members must participate.
4. The group will have 10 minutes to make their poster.

Intersection of Key Issues: What to Consider...

- Substance Use Disorder
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Behavioral Health

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Substance Use Disorders Key Concepts

- Substance abuse is an issue that affects all of us.
- There is always an underlying reason.
- Most individuals with serious substance use issues begin using in adolescence. Chronic use can cause fundamental and permanent changes in the brain.
- Primary classifications: Uppers, Downers, and All Arounders
- There is a continuum: Mild – Moderate – Severe
- Impact on children
- Formal and informal treatment options

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Intimate Partner Violence Key Concepts

- Safety first for adult survivors and children
- Hold the person who batters accountable
- Child being a witness is a traumatic and serious event
- IPV is a learned behavior
- Family violence is an equal opportunity
- It's about power and control
- Acknowledge survivor's right to choice
- Advocate
- Safety Planning

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Effects of Dating Violence

- Symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Engagement in unhealthy behaviors, such as tobacco and drug use, and alcohol
- Involvement in antisocial behaviors
- Thoughts about suicide

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Teen Dating Violence Key Concepts



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Behavioral Health Key Concepts

Behavioral Health impacts everyone!

- Co-occurring: 4% of those with behavioral health diagnoses also have addictive disorders (9.2 million adults)
- Children, teens, and adults are affected
- Use of psychotropic medication
- Parenting with a disorder

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Role of Psychotropic Medication

PROS

- Psychotropic medications are drugs that target the brain and affect a person's mind, emotions, moods, and behaviors. Studies have found them to be effective for specific conditions.

CONS

- There are potential serious side effects to many psychotropic medications
- Monitoring of medications is not always well coordinated across all individuals involved in youth's treatment.

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Meet Julie, Charles, Kathy, and Joey



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Now what?

- How do these issues intersect with each other?
- How will you be able to identify the core issue(s) for each parent?
- What is the impact on the child(ren)?
- How is the caregiver's action impacting the child's safety?

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Characteristics of a Case Plan

- Collaborative
- Developmentally appropriate
- Includes youth and family voice
- Incorporate formal and informal supports and services
- Least restrictive setting and modalities
- Strength based, child centered, family focused, culturally relevant and trauma informed

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Closing

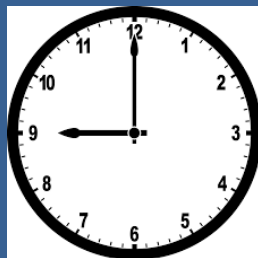
- Share 3 specific new ideas, tools, or strategies that I might use in my work.
- Share 2 specific things I learned or was reminded about my own challenges with bias.
- Share 1 lingering question about the concepts or content from today.

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See you tomorrow at 9:00am!

Preview of Day 2

- Stages of Change
- Role of the Social Worker
- "If there's breath, there's hope."



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Key Issues in Child Welfare Practice: Social Worker as Practitioner Day 2

California Common Core

December 31, 2108



Overview of Day 2

- Welcome back activity
- Stages of Change
- Role of the Social Worker
- Where there is breath, there is hope

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Activity

Commonality

noun com·mon·al·i·ty \,kă-mə-'na-lə-tē\

Simple Definition of COMMONALITY

: the fact of sharing features or qualities

: a shared feature or quality

Source: Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary

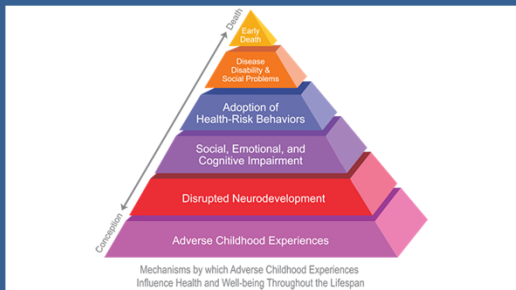
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“If there is a fundamental challenge within these stories, it is simply to change our lurking suspicion that some lives matter less than other lives.”

— Gregory J. Boyle, *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*

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Adverse Childhood Experiences



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Healing Neen



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“Where there is breath, there is hope.”
—Tonier Cain

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Assume Good Intentions!

- Most parents want to be good parents and, when adequately supported, they have the strength and capacity to care for their children and keep them safe.
- Parents want what is best for their children.

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Building the Relationship

“Here is what we seek: a compassion that can stand in awe at what the [families we work with] have to carry rather than stand in judgment at how they carry it.”

— Gregory J. Boyle,
Tattoos on the Heart:
The Power of Boundless
Compassion

- What can you do to demonstrate:
 - Empathy?
 - Respect?
 - Genuineness?

Think about how this may be different for parents, youth, and children.

Child Protective Services:
A Guide for Caseworkers, 2003

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Ways to Build Rapport

- Be open-minded
- Find out what is important to the family
- Use mirroring
- Listen to the family's explanation of the situation without correcting or arguing
- Ask questions

Child Protective Services: A Guide for Caseworkers, 2003

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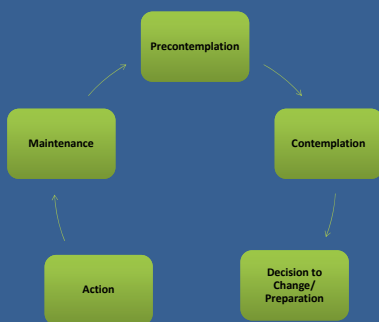
Ways to Build Rapport *(cont'd)*

- Clarify expectations and purposes
- Clarify commitment and obligations to the working relationship
- Acknowledge difficult feelings, and encourage open and honest discussion of feelings
- Be consistent, persistent, and follow through
- Promote participatory decision-making (team meetings)

Child Protective Services: A Guide for Caseworkers, 2003

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Stages of Change



Child Protective Services: A Guide for Caseworkers, 2003

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Walk-about Activity

- Think of one way that YOU can support a parent or youth in each stage of change.
- Be Specific!
- Visit each chart and write your idea.

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What about relapse?

Lapse vs. relapse

- Relapse can be an opportunity to enhance recovery
- Try a trauma-informed response vs. punitive response
 - What happened?
 - What were you thinking of at the time?
 - What have you thought about since?
 - Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
 - What do you think you need to do to make things right?

<http://www.iirp.edu/news/1976-time-to-think-using-restorative-questions>

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The Role of the Social Worker

Key take-aways:

- You are not expected to be an expert – consult with your supervisor or other agency/community partner who has expertise in substance use disorder, intimate partner violence, and/or behavioral health disorders.
- You can't create a plan with just the people you are worried about.
- Safety is paramount.

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What are some resources available to you in your county?



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In-Home Safety Assessment

Indicators of possible substance use:

- A report of substance use is included in the CPS call or report
- Drug paraphernalia (e.g., a syringe kit, charred spoons, a large number of liquor or beer bottles)
- The scent of alcohol or drugs
- A child or other family member reports alcohol or drug use by a parent
- A parent appears to be under the influence of a substance, admits to having a substance use disorder, or shows other signs of addiction or abuse (e.g., needle marks)

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Social Worker Safety

- Review General Home Visit Safety Tips



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How do Intimate Partner Violence, Substance Use Disorders, and Behavioral Health intersect?

- When IPV is experienced, it is related with depression, suicidality, generalized anxiety disorder, and PTSD.
- IPV is associated with increased substance use, and increased substance use is associated with an increased risk of IPV.
- It is recommended that interventions for IPV, substance use disorder, and behavioral health be integrated and trauma informed.
- Development of strong social networks have been reported to be helpful.

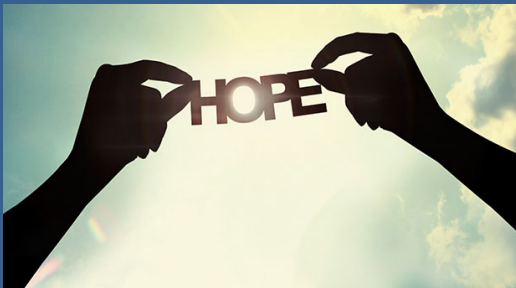
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Let's Practice



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Transfer of Learning



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