



MN
Child
Welfare
Training
Academy



July 2022 – June 2023

Annual Report

The Fourth Year of Implementation for the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA)

Executive Summary

As of June 2023, the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA) has completed the fourth year of our implementation plan. This partnership between the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) at the University of Minnesota has made significant changes and improvements to child welfare training for Minnesota child welfare professionals.

Center for Advanced Studies
in **Child Welfare**



Throughout the 2023 fiscal year, we achieved several noteworthy milestones and accomplishments that advanced our core mission. These achievements are a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team, as well as the unwavering support of our stakeholders. While some delays as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have slowed efforts, we are on track to have all of the essential elements of our implementation completed in 2024.

This report describes the efforts made by MNCWTA in the areas of partnerships and engagement, training delivery, initiatives to address disproportionality in the child welfare system, curriculum development, evaluation and accountability, technology, policy and operations, and communications. This report captures our efforts made during the fiscal year 2023 – our accomplishments, lessons learned, and plans for the future.

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com

“The quality of training for child protection workers, supervisors and managers is a critical factor in supporting a high performing child protection system.”

**– Governor’s Task Force
on the Protection of
Children Final Report and
Recommendations
(March 2015)**

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Letter from Co-Directors

We are delighted to present the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA) Annual Report for July 2022-June 2023, which is a comprehensive reflection of the achievements, challenges, and milestones that have shaped our organization's journey over the past year. As we navigate an ever-evolving child welfare landscape, we remain steadfast in our commitment to our mission, and this report serves as a testament to our dedication and resilience.

As you make your way through this report, you will learn more about the important partnerships that have helped make this work possible (pages 7-9), the progress we have made in preparing to launch New Worker Orientation (page 21), and connections made and data collected through listening sessions on the future of Certification (page 26), among other accomplishments. There is no shortage of work, and our team remains focused on serving the child welfare workers and supervisors throughout Minnesota. At the heart of our mission is our commitment to train, develop, and support the skills, expertise, and well-being of Minnesota's child welfare workforce while nurturing a commitment to equitable child welfare practice.

We invite you to explore this report and join us in celebrating our accomplishments, reflecting on our challenges, and embracing our vision for a brighter future. Building training with significant and intentional engagement has been a priority this year. We have prioritized working together with partners as a core value in the creation of course content. As such, your continued support and engagement are essential as we embark on the next phase of our journey, and together, we can achieve even greater success in the coming years.

Thank you for your support and partnership.

Tracy and Liz



Tracy Crudo
Co-Director



Liz Snyder
Co-Director

About MNCWTA

MNCWTA provides training and professional development for Minnesota child welfare professionals. MNCWTA is a collaboration between the Child Safety and Permanency Division at the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) at the University of Minnesota.

Our mission is to train, develop, and support the skills, expertise, and well-being of Minnesota's child welfare workforce while nurturing a commitment to equitable child welfare practice.

The Academy provides training for Minnesota county agencies and tribes whose workers carry cases in child welfare and child protection, as well as their supervisors and a small number of private providers who deliver child welfare services on behalf of the counties. Please contact us if you are unsure of your eligibility to participate in MNCWTA trainings.

Visit our website to learn more about our history, our values, and our work.

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/about



About MNCWTA

Implementation Year Four

This report describes the work completed in our final year of implementation. We had an ambitious to-do list that included additional development of new worker training and certification and enhancement of the portal system for learner and course information, among many other projects. The following tasks were planned for, and completed, over the past year:

- Refine and expand our Learner Management System (LMS)
- Launch and host an updated Mandated Reporter Training
- Complete hiring for MNCWTA positions
- Develop and implement an Advisory Network
- Build on our relationships and partnerships with counties and tribes in Minnesota
- Host New Worker Certification Listening Sessions
- Continue to develop a New Worker Orientation course and prepare for training pilots
- Begin development of an updated New Worker Foundations Training
- Continue development of New Supervisor Training
- Prepare to launch cultural responsiveness tools and practices
- Expand our Training Catalog
- Prepare for simulation scenarios

For more information about the first three years of implementation, review our initial Implementation Report on the reports page of our website.

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/reports



Collaborative Partnerships and Community Engagement

The Academy continued to work with our community partners to develop and offer improved curriculum, widen our audience of learners, engage in intercultural learning and development, share information about the Academy, and learn about how the Academy can support the work of our partners.



Tribal Training and Certification Partnership

Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP)

One of our primary partnerships is with University of Minnesota Duluth's Center for Regional and Tribal Child Welfare Studies (CRTCWS). CRTCWS established the training and technical assistance center Aabinoojiiyag-Wakhanheza Un Thantanhanpi - "For All the Children" Sacred Being: Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP). TTCP works on the development and delivery of Indian Child Welfare Training. A two-day training on the Indian Child Welfare Act, the Minnesota Indian Preservation Act, and working with American Indian families, facilitated by the TTCP, is now a regular component of the current New Worker (Foundations) training required of all new county workers. During 2023, TTCP also provided this two-day training for all staff in the Child Safety and Permanency Division at DHS.

MNCWTA works regularly with TTCP on consultation of curriculum specifically related to work with American Indian families. The Academy Learner Management System team also collaborates with TTCP staff to build courses within the LMS and support registration. This partnership is central to providing child welfare professionals with training to support American Indian families and honor the sovereignty of tribal nations.

cehsp.d.umn.edu/ttcp



Collaborative Partnerships and Community Engagement



Aspire MN

AspireMN improves the lives of the children, youth, and families served by member organizations through support for quality service delivery, leadership development, and policy advocacy. Working with AspireMN over the past year, we were able to offer access to our Training Portal and catalog of offerings to a number of private provider agencies. These private providers have contracts with Minnesota county agencies and tribes to help carry cases in child welfare. Expanding the Academy training offerings to private providers was a key component of the Training Academy legislation.

www.aspiremn.org



Collaboration with Minnesota Counties

In order to stay informed of emerging workforce development needs, MNCWTA staff engage regularly with our county agency partners. Our regional training team in greater Minnesota are embedded in county agencies and regularly attend meetings with county child welfare staff. MNCWTA staff also regularly attend regional meetings of child welfare supervisors to share new training developments and learn about supervisory support needs.

Collaborative Partnerships and Community Engagement

Interculturalist

Founded in 2009, [Interculturalist LLC](https://www.interculturalist.com) is a social enterprise, helping organizations create Workplace Efficacy® and inclusion. Their work aims to enable organizations to thrive within diversity and help them create inclusive human environments.

Interculturalist LLC specializes in facilitating Intercultural Learning and Development, Emotional Intelligence Development, Diversity and Inclusion Systems Coaching, and Intercultural Training for Professional Coaches.

MNCWTA began working with Interculturalist in 2021 to expand our team's intercultural competence to create Workplace Efficacy® and inclusion, which is central to our organization's values. This work with Interculturalist focuses on building intercultural competence to "liberate diverse talent in the workplace" and emotional intelligence which "nurtures psychological safety in the workplace."

Building this capacity within the Academy is also foundational for the work of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team, outlined later in this report, in using intercultural practices with Academy learners. Having these skills as an Academy team allows us to support the building of knowledge and skill for our learners. Since 2021, our team has engaged in Interculturalist's cohort learning program on intercultural competence development, (including learning about the Intercultural Development Inventory), intercultural communication and conflict styles (utilizing the Intercultural

Conflict Styles Inventory), and cultural dimensions that influence internal and stakeholder relationships. Recently, we have expanded our cohort learning to include learning on emotional intelligence, specifically on how to affirmatively introspect and self-govern. Overall, we are in the process of completing two phases of learning: gaining a grounding in concepts and learning tools that we can use. In the coming year, we will embark on a third phase: using our learning to create actionable plans to build Workplace Efficacy® and inclusion. In essence, we are progressing from "learning as doing" to "doing the learning".

We have made our work with Interculturalist part of our onboarding process for new staff to keep everyone at the Academy anchored in language and practices to support all phases of our growth.

www.interculturalist.com



Training Delivery

Accomplishments

We increased the number of staff and community trainers. Having both full-time training staff and part-time trainers with a variety of experiences in child welfare has allowed us to increase training offerings. Seven community trainers were hired between July 2022-June 2023 for the following areas of curriculum: Foundations/New Worker Training, Sexually Exploited Youth, Foster Parent College, Family Group Decision Making, and Domestic Violence. This group of



trainers represents the Metro, Southeast, and Northeast parts of the state. The hiring of these trainers brings our total to 27 active community trainers. Through our trainer recruitment, we continue to pursue applicants from around the state, so that we can meet the specific needs of various locations and populations.

With a more culturally and geographically diverse team, trainers are able to highlight a greater variety of resources and programs and better tailor training to the unique needs of each region and its learners. This reinforces a collaborative approach to learning, emphasizes best practice, and provides a more immediate connection to resources throughout the state.

Our staff trainers helped develop and facilitate the first phase of New Worker Training. They have also worked closely in collaboration with the Curriculum Development Team to build, update, and enhance training.

Training Delivery

Regional Learning Centers

In this last year of implementation, we were able to hire the final regional trainer, so now our Regional Training Team is fully staffed. Final renovations to all Regional Learning Centers have been completed. All sites feature state-of-the-art training technology, meeting rooms, amenities for learners, and more. To view a downloadable map of Minnesota and all MNCWTA Learning Centers, go to:

z.umn.edu/academy-learning-centers-map

Metro Twin Cities Learning Center

Located in Roseville in the Rosewood Office Plaza

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/roseville

Northwest Regional Learning Center

Located on the Detroit Lakes campus of Minnesota State Community and Technical College

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/detroitlakes

Southwest Regional Learning Center

Located on the Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) campus in Marshall

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/marshall

Northeast Regional Learning Center

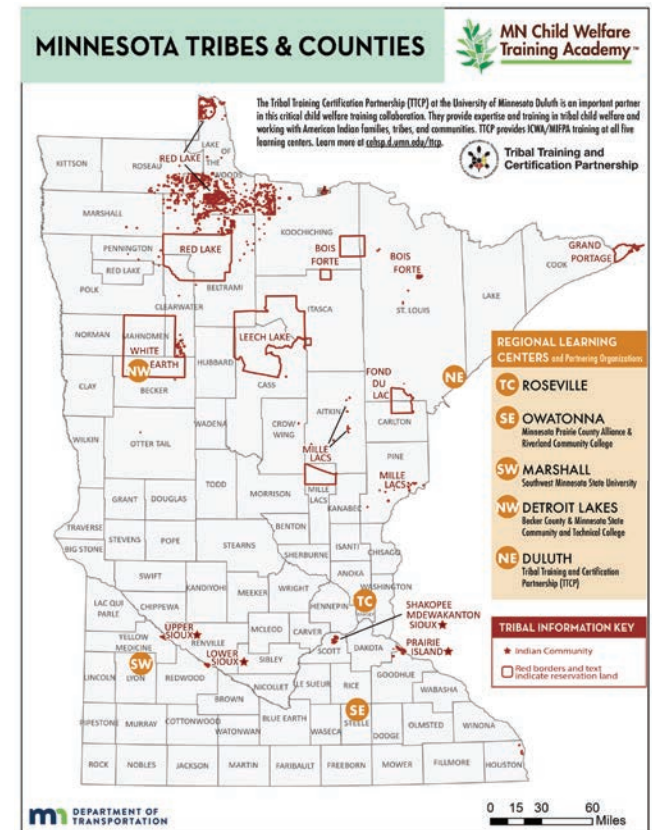
Located in Duluth and hosted by the Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP)

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/duluth

Southeast Regional Learning Center

Located on the Owatonna Campus of Riverland Community College

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/owatonna



Training Delivery

Courses Trained

New Worker Training

Child Welfare Foundations Training (CWTA X100) is designed for new child welfare/child protection county and tribal workers in Minnesota. The curriculum is a comprehensive, blended learning experience staggered over time for workers to further integrate knowledge and skills into practice. Twelve cohorts of Foundations took place during the past year.



**New
Workers**



**Specialty
Courses**



Self-Paced

Specialty Courses

- Case Planning (CWTA X211)
- Collaborative Safety - Advanced Practice (CWTA X208)
- Domestic Violence Co-Occurrence: Partnering and Engaging Parents (CWTA X209)
- Family Group Decision Making: Overview and Facilitation (CWTA X202)
- Human Trafficking and Sexually Exploited Youth: Basic Training for Child Welfare (CWTA X205)
- ICWA/MIFPA Ongoing Worker Training (CWTA X212)
- Legal Practice Skills (CWTA X201)
- Responsive Child Welfare Practice with LGBTQ Youth (CWTA X210)
- Signs of Safety + Signs of Safety: Three Month Review (CWTA X215)
- Structured Decision Making (CWTA X200)

Training Delivery

Supervisor Courses

- ICWA/MIFPA Foundations for County Agency Supervisors (CWTA X216)

Self-Paced Courses

- Mandated Reporter Training (CWTA X101)
- Mandated Reporter Training for Youth Programs
- National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI) CW Professionals (CWTA X401)
- National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI) CW Supervisors (CWTA X401)

Additional Courses

- Foster Parent Pre-Service Training (CWTA X403)
- Qualified Individual Training (CWTA X400)

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/course-descriptions

The screenshot displays a user interface for a course catalog. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Search for course" and a "SEARCH" button. To the right of the search bar are links for "FILTERS", "SORT COURSES: A - Z", and "SORT COURSES: START DATE". Below the search bar are four circular icons representing different course categories: "New Workers" (16 Courses), "Specialty Courses" (23 Courses), "Self-Paced" (5 Courses), and "View All Courses". The main content area is titled "Showing 44 Courses" and lists individual course entries. Each entry includes a course title, a date, and a status indicator (e.g., "CANCELLED", "OPEN", "WAITLIST").

Course Title	Date	Status
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) SKILLS FOR CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS: COACHING CIRCLES 4	FEB 14, 2024; 10:30AM	CANCELLED
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) SKILLS FOR CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS: INSTRUCTOR-LED WORKSHOPS (COHORT 15)		OPEN
ICWA/MIFPA ONGOING WORKER TRAINING OLMSTED COUNTY COHORT 2 ONLY		OPEN
NEW WORKER ORIENTATION: INSTRUCTOR-LED ENHANCEMENT FEBRUARY 15, 2024		OPEN
NEW WORKER ORIENTATION: INSTRUCTOR-LED ENHANCEMENT HENNEPIN COUNTY ONLY		OPEN
ICWA/MIFPA ONGOING WORKER TRAINING - STATEWIDE FEBRUARY 20-21, 2024		WAITLIST
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) SKILLS FOR CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS: COACHING CIRCLES 2	FEB 21 2024; 9:30AM	OPEN
PERMANENCY REGIONAL TRAINING	FEBRUARY 22, 2024	OPEN
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) SKILLS FOR CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS: COACHING CIRCLES 1	FEB 27, 2024; 2PM	OPEN
NEW WORKER ORIENTATION: INSTRUCTOR-LED ENHANCEMENT FEBRUARY 29, 2024		OPEN
ICWA/MIFPA FOUNDATIONS FOR MSW SCHOLARS	MARCH 4-5, 2024	OPEN
NEW WORKER ORIENTATION: INSTRUCTOR-LED ENHANCEMENT MARCH 5, 2024		OPEN
CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATIONS TRAINING: COHORT 119	MARCH 5 - MAY 23, 2024	OPEN
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) SKILLS FOR CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS: COACHING CIRCLES 3	MARCH 6, 2024; 9:00AM	OPEN
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CO-OCCURRENCE: PARTNERING AND ENGAGING PARENTS	MARCH 6, 2024	OPEN

Training Delivery

Training Metrics



183

Average number of training hours per month between July 2022 and June 2023



233

Average number of learners in training per month between July 2022 and June 2023



52

Average number of counties and tribes represented in training per month between July 2022 and June 2023

TTCP
Tribal Training
and Certification
Partnership

25

Average number of TTCP training hours per month between July 2022 and June 2023



Training Delivery

Trainer Development

The MNCWTA is committed to equipping all of our trainers with the necessary tools and skills to effectively facilitate curriculum, engage learners, promote diverse learning styles, and develop a collaborative workforce. Throughout the reporting period, we have provided several opportunities for staff and community trainers to develop and hone their skills.

We held four staff trainer retreats to familiarize trainers with the state-of-the-art Regional Learning Centers. Additionally, each retreat presented an opportunity for trainers to join in group conversations around curriculum, facilitation strategies, and engagement techniques. There were two opportunities for trainers to attend content collaboration sessions to increase diversity of thought and keep content applicable by using new methods and approaches.



Training Delivery

Other learning and engagement opportunities were offered to community trainers and staff trainers throughout this reporting period. These included sessions specific to the development of training skills and content knowledge. These opportunities also gave trainers the ability to engage with policy experts to receive relevant updates that apply to child welfare training content and practice, discuss policy and its application to practice, and extend relationships with collaborative partners.

In addition to the learning activities described above, the MNCWTA launched its first full course specifically for our training staff during this reporting period. The course, titled *Training and Facilitation of Trainers*, was developed and delivered to staff trainers in spring of 2023. This course will continue to be refined and offered broadly to all staff and community trainers. Also, there has been internal planning with the Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP) to provide trainers with a specific course focused on Indian Child Welfare practice and facilitating difficult conversations related to the disparities and disproportionality in Minnesota's child welfare system.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) / Intercultural Development Inventory

In our commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within our organization, the DEI Team has made significant strides this year in preparation for the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) rollout to our learners. Our initiatives have included the hiring and onboarding of dedicated DEI Specialist staff, instrumental in steering the implementation of the IDI.

To ensure a seamless introduction of the IDI to new workers, the team has designed the integration of components of the IDI for the initial phases of the New Worker Training program. Collaborating closely with the LMS Team, the DEI Team has been actively involved in logistical aspects, such as setting up accounts, scheduling processes, and communicating with learners about their IDI results.

Furthermore, in conjunction with the Curriculum Development Team, the DEI Team has played a pivotal role in designing the Orientation module to include the IDI, emphasizing its integration into various curriculum development projects.

Finally, working hand-in-hand with the Evaluation and Certification Team, the DEI team is committed to thoroughly evaluating the IDI process to ensure its effectiveness and ongoing improvement. These efforts underscore our dedication to creating an inclusive and culturally competent learning environment for all.



Curriculum Development

Mandated Reporter

Mandated Reporter Training is available for Minnesota professionals identified by law who must make a report if suspected or known child maltreatment has occurred. This includes those working in healthcare, social services, youth programs, human services, mental health services, child care, education, law enforcement, coaching, or probation/corrections, as well as those working as guardians ad litem or as clergy.

This online, self-paced training is available at no cost, takes about 45 minutes to complete, and was updated by the MNCWTA in October 2022 in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

The revised Mandated Reporter Training is designed to:

- Address and improve the diversity, equity, and inclusion of its images, content, and videos
- Improve accessibility
- Include new statute requirements for youth programs (260E.055)
- Provide a certificate of completion
- Include content to reflect how to utilize resources across Minnesota to take a supportive role with families
- Incorporate and integrate the principles of adult learning so that it is relevant, interactive, experiential, and problem-oriented
- Encourage critical thinking to support culturally responsive practice

“I just took the mandated reporter training, and have taken it every year forever, and this is by far the best one I have taken. I really appreciate the focus on bias in reporting and specific steps to combat racial bias in child welfare. Well done!”

– Child Welfare Professional

Curriculum Development

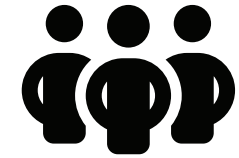
Mandated Reporter for Youth Programs

There is also a new Mandated Reporter Training for Youth Programs that launched in February 2023, takes about 15 minutes to complete, and provides specific guidance for youth program employees. As part of the Minnesota requirements for Mandated Reporters, new reporting requirements have been placed on Youth Program staff. Youth Program employees are considered Mandated Reporters and must be prepared to report suspected or known child maltreatment.

To learn more about Mandated Reporter Training and the Mandated Report for Youth Programs training, visit our website.

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/mrt

MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING



25,027

Mandated Reporter Training:
Completions between
July 2022 and June 2023



5,190

Mandated Reporter Training
for Youth Programs:
Completions between
July 2022 and June 2023

Curriculum Development

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a practice tool that promotes behavior change through deep listening, reflection, and principles rooted in empathy and supporting self-efficacy. As an evidenced-based practice, MI is one of the first approved services in the prevention plan for Minnesota's Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

The Academy serves as a key partner in MI implementation workgroups and decision-making committees to support both the initial launch of MI and ongoing needs statewide. To ensure fidelity and the ability to meet timelines, the Academy partnered with the Center for Practice Transformation (CPT), a multidisciplinary team with expertise in MI training and implementation, to develop the MI training curriculum and initial certification (i.e., Pathway One) process. The development of MI curriculum and its implementation was informed by ongoing workgroups with agency leadership and stakeholders. Monitoring and approval of implementation steps were integrated into the Governance committee, made up of state and agency leadership, along with biweekly meetings with the Academy's LMS team.

The components of the Academy's MI training and initial certification include:

- Introduction to Motivational Interviewing (MI) Skills for Child Welfare Professionals: Self-Paced (2 hours)
- Motivational Interviewing Skills for Child Welfare Professionals: Instructor-Led Workshops (14 hours)
- Motivational Interviewing Skills for Child Welfare Professionals: Coaching Circles (6 hours)
- Skills Demonstration

The Academy's MI training will be launched in its pilot phase September 2023; the pilot will run through early 2024. At that time, evaluation results will help to determine if any programmatic, delivery, or processes need to be adapted to better meet fidelity and agency needs. As part of MI implementation, the Academy will also be supporting additional pathways to MI certification that will become available in 2024.

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/mi



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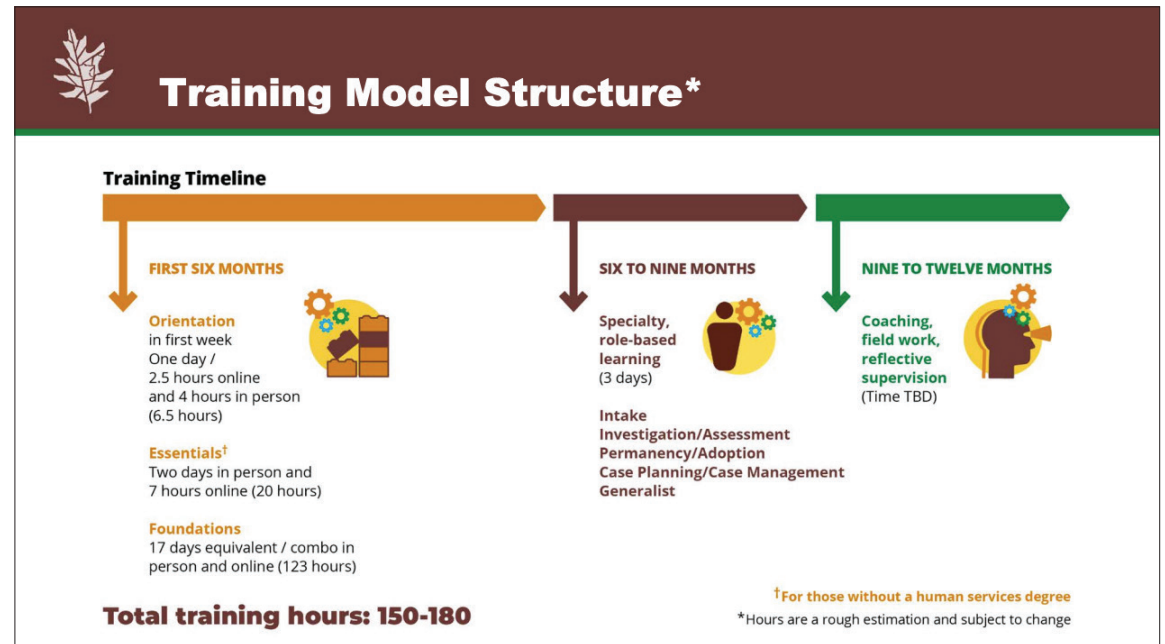
Curriculum Development

New Worker Training Redesign

Development of the redesigned New Worker Training is underway. This development has emphasized collaboration with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who have expertise in child welfare practice, policy, training delivery, DEI, and lived experience. During this reporting period, we further defined and refined our curriculum development process. Because collaboration is a guiding value, this new process includes a variety of opportunities to obtain feedback on the curriculum from internal MNCWTA teams, SMEs, and other stakeholders.

During this reporting period, the Curriculum Development Team conducted research and developed components of New Worker Training. In addition, we began the initial stages of creating and coordinating simulation experiences to enhance learning.

Prioritizing the essential collaboration with SMEs was an intentional effort to create a high quality and dynamic learning experience for learners, as well as ensure a variety of perspectives were included. Countless hours of work to gather expertise from our community, agencies, and policy experts to inform the curriculum was a critical piece in our development. In addition, collaboration also came from a host of internal experts that included trainers; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion specialists; evaluators; and our Learner Management Technology experts. All of the experts bring different contributions to the content. These efforts allowed us to synthesize and simplify complex information so that it is palatable and meaningful to the learning experience.



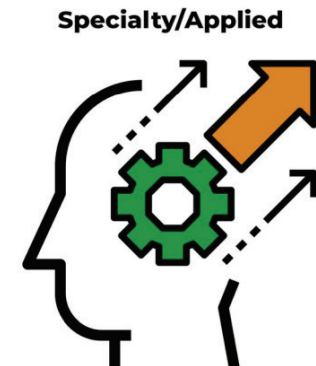
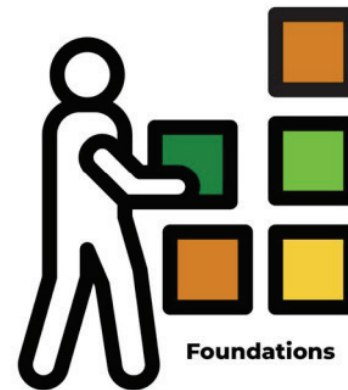
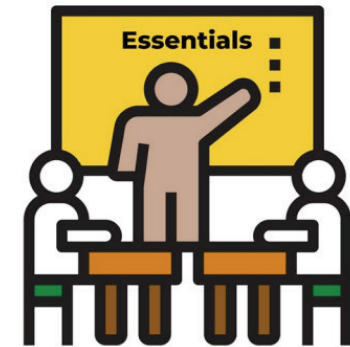
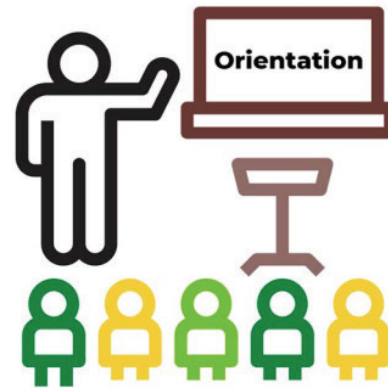
An Early New Worker Training Proposal from 2021

Curriculum Development

In the early stages of the development of New Worker Training, teams spent time aligning the competencies from the Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework with the learning objectives covered in New Worker Training. Effort was made to cover all foundational competencies in the development of New Worker Training.

In building this curriculum, we created two stories or cases that represent families in the metro and rural communities. These stories are connected to the learning objectives and competencies, and they were intentionally created to build intercultural competence for learners. Learners will be able to follow fictitious Child Protection Workers as they progress through the cases showcased in these two family stories.

The first phase of New Worker Training is Orientation. New workers will complete Orientation (which includes a self-paced and a virtual, instructor-led portion) in their first weeks of employment. The first pilot of Orientation took place in May 2023, and the feedback was positive. In December 2023, we will launch Orientation for all incoming Child Protection Workers. Orientation is a prerequisite for further New Worker training.



Curriculum Development

Course Launch Process

The Academy developed a rigorous Course Launch Process to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our workforce through the courses we develop and offer. The Academy must provide our workforce with the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies identified through needs assessments conducted with the workforce and other stakeholders and aligned with the Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework.

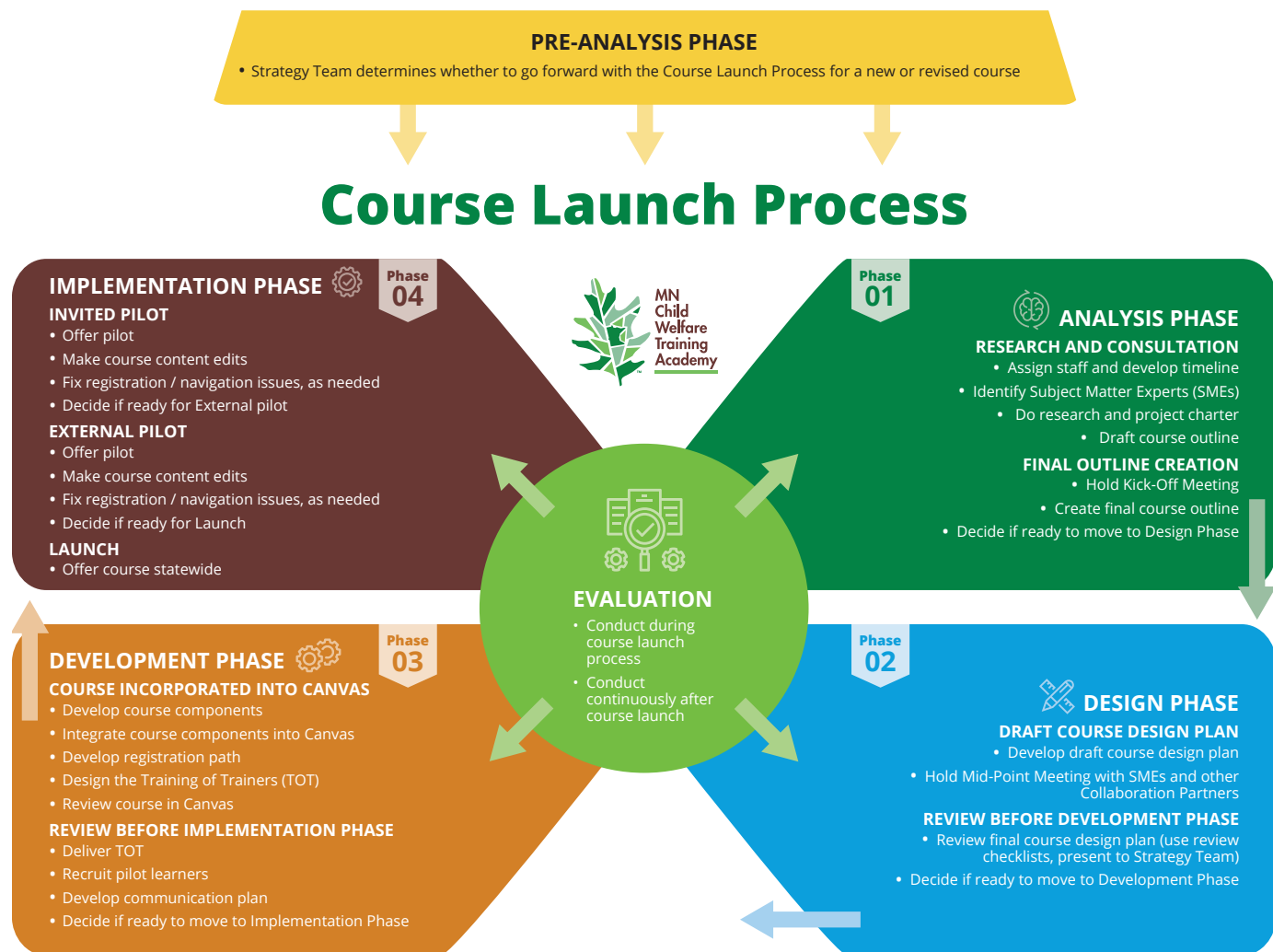
Developing and using the Course Launch Process was essential so that the curriculum we develop and offer is relevant, aligns with current best practice and policy, utilizes adult learning principles, provides opportunities for transfer of the learning from the training to the job, and ensures that learners obtain identified learning objectives and competencies. The process has provided all teams at the Academy with a framework within which to design, develop, implement, and review new curriculum for the components listed above.

This structured process allows for the following:

- Opportunities for diverse perspectives to inform the curriculum development, because the process includes built-in opportunities for subject matter experts (SMEs); diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) experts; DHS partners; and others to provide feedback at varying stages. For example, curriculum developers, subject matter experts (SMEs), and other interested parties have built-in opportunities to discuss, review, and agree on the intended learning objectives for all courses.
- Opportunities for us to obtain feedback by conducting formal evaluation processes during several pilot testing phases. The Training Delivery Team, the Learner Management Team, invited and “real” learners, and others provide feedback on the new course that is then incorporated into the curriculum before the next phase of pilot testing or the full course launch.

Curriculum Development

Designing and testing the curriculum that we offer through our courses is a comprehensive process that involves Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. Our Course Launch Process is a formalization of these steps and aligns with the ADDIE model of curriculum development.



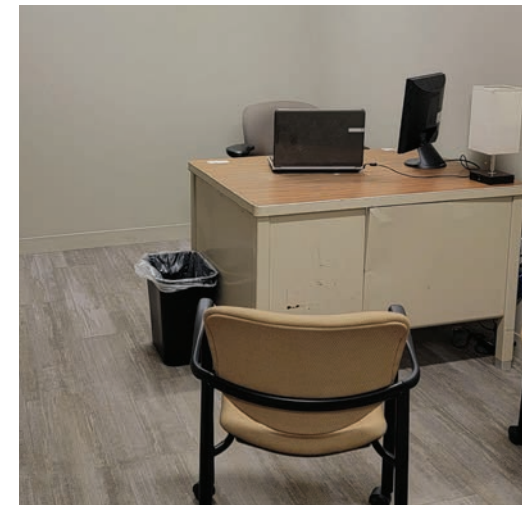
Curriculum Development

Simulation Preparation

This year in simulation, we continued to refine the format and content of four simulations: three in the New Worker Foundations curriculum in the areas of engagement, interviewing and safety planning, and court preparation, and one in New Supervisor curriculum in the area of supportive supervision. Scenarios were developed with the input of SMEs and Academy trainers; in addition, the relevant skills, competencies, and objectives derived from the content areas were incorporated into the structure of the simulations.

A virtual reality program developed for Utah child welfare was identified as the best fit for our curriculum. The software focuses on risk identification, and will likely be paired with the interviewing and safety planning simulation.

Logistical planning of simulation rooms, cameras, and other practical elements will begin shortly. After this, work to refine our own simulations (including collaboration with the Evaluation and Certification Team) will begin. Piloting of our own simulations will occur soon after, and after further refinement, implementation will begin in tandem with the other completed Foundations modules. After this, work will shift to the continuous running of simulations for learners throughout the state.



Simulation rooms located at the Twin Cities Metro Learning Center

Evaluation and Certification

Sharing Our Work

Over the past year, the Evaluation and Certification Team worked closely with Communications staff to create and distribute information about our work, which is critical to providing transparency on our findings. Updates during our fourth year of implementation included sharing our Evaluation Framework, which depicts how we collect information to improve our curriculum and training delivery and helps our Academy team and the public know if we are achieving our goals. We also described the types of data collection methods we use to answer our evaluation questions. Finally, we provided a Mandated Reporter Training Update to show how learners in the first three months of its availability had reacted to this training.

New Worker Certification Proposed Model

Between July 2022 and June 2023, the MNCWTA Evaluation and Certification Team developed a proposed New Worker Certification Model. This model aligns with the legislation for the MNCWTA, as well as the Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework and best practices in certification, so that new child welfare workers will be able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary both early in, and throughout, their careers.

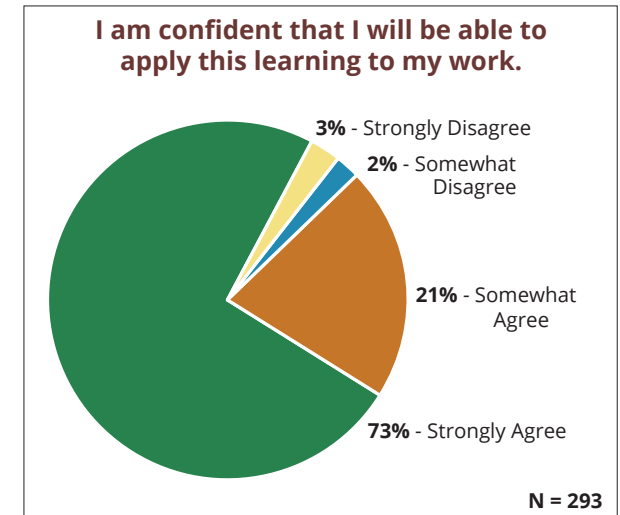
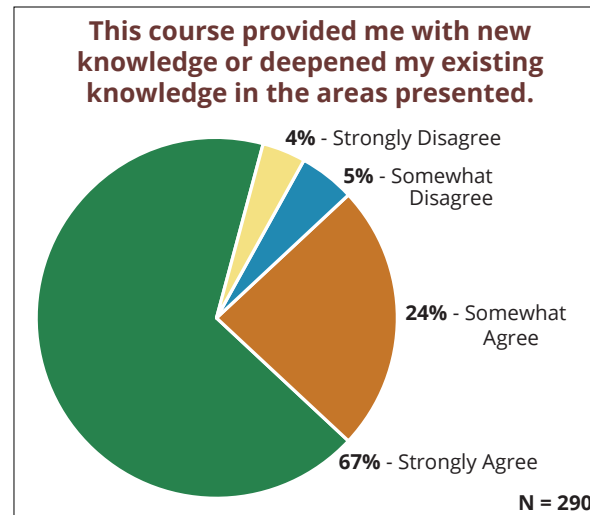
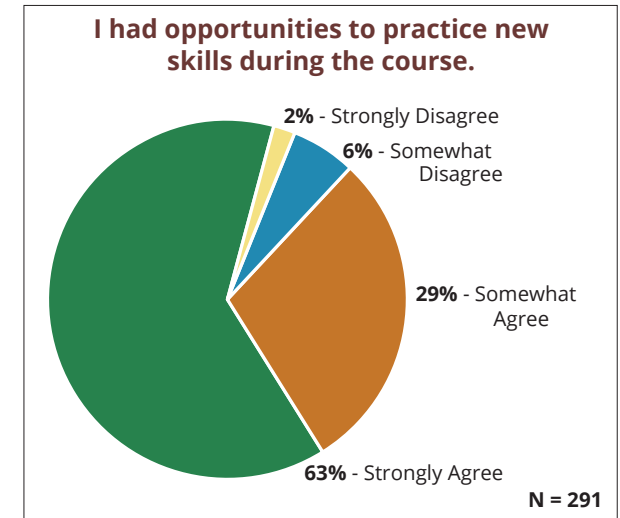
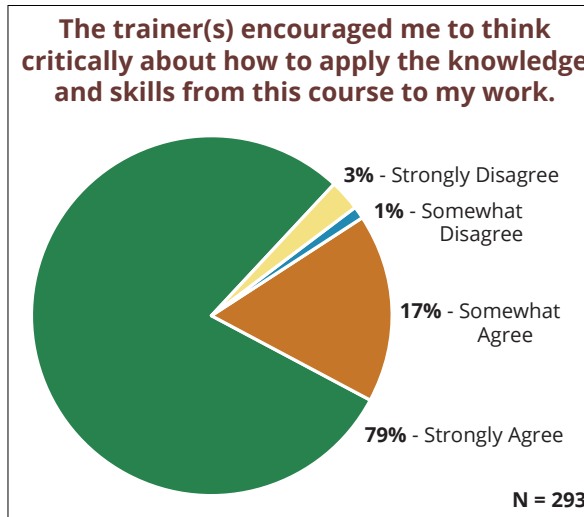
We sought input on the model throughout Minnesota by offering in-person, virtual, and recorded presentations. We held a total of 10 in-person sessions in locations around the state, including for partners such as the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA), Hennepin County, and the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Safety and Permanency (CSP) Unit. In these sessions, we provided background information and the rationale for certification, the legislative requirements pertaining to certification, and the structure of the proposed model for new worker certification. The virtual and in-person presentations allowed time for questions and discussion, and a feedback form was available for those who watched the recorded presentation or had additional comments. We are in the process of developing a “Frequently Asked Questions” document that addresses the feedback provided, or questions posed, at these listening sessions.

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/cls

Evaluation and Certification

Continuous Evaluation of Academy Courses

We ask all learners who participate in a Training Academy course to complete an end-of-course feedback survey. Learners rate their level of agreement to statements about trainers, course content and delivery, and course relevance. Learners also have the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback about what went well or what could be improved in the course, as well as to offer trainer-specific feedback. We provide internal summary reports on a regular basis for continuous improvement related to the courses and/or training delivery. Overall, our end-of-course feedback surveys have shown that learners are satisfied with Academy courses and report an increase in their knowledge of the content area. For example, out of 291 responses over a four month period to our end-of-course feedback survey for specialty courses, 78% of learners indicated that the course was very or extremely relevant to their current work.



Evaluation and Certification

Evaluation of New Worker Orientation Course Pilot

In keeping with the Course Launch Process described on page 18, the Evaluation and Certification Team was instrumental in collecting feedback from Academy trainers and invited learners for the first Invited Pilot of the “New Worker Training: Orientation” course in May 2023.

Feedback about the logistics, the learning platform (Canvas), the self-paced modules, and the instructor-led enhancement portion, as well as any strengths or challenges encountered, was provided by Academy staff trainers and invited learners through both closed-ended and open-ended survey items. The Evaluation Team presented these data to the Academy Leadership Team and decisions were made regarding updates that needed to be made to the course before the second Invited Pilot was held in September 2023.

Comments from the Continuous Evaluation of Academy Courses (previous page) about how learners will use the information from the course include:

I got some really great interviewing techniques.

I will use these skills in my practice. I recently was assigned court involved cases so this aligned well.

Implement more consistently in my practice.

Discuss with other coworkers who have not taken the course yet.

All of it. It impacts my day-to-day work duties.

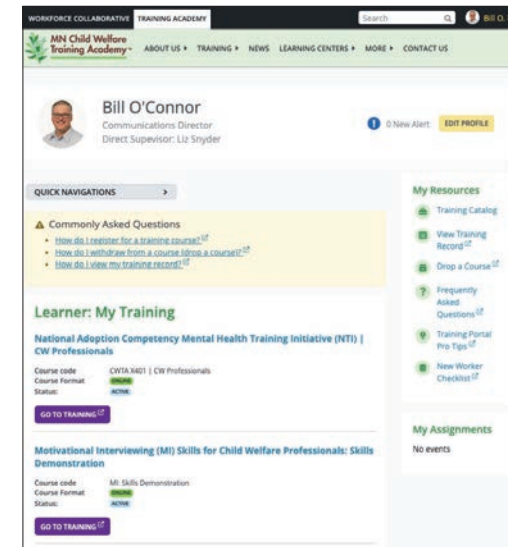
Learner Management System and Training Portal

In order to meet the MNCWTA mission to train, develop, and support the skills, expertise, and well-being of the Minnesota child welfare workforce, the Training Portal system and Canvas, the learner management system (LMS), were developed and adopted to track learner progress, assign courses, and showcase the course catalog. All of these components were designed and constructed with child welfare professionals' learning experience as central.

Since launching the Portal in November 2021, we have added many features to enhance the learner experience and support the reporting needs for the workforce.

Over the past year, the LMS team has:

- Hired three new MNCWTA LMS Coordinators to assist with learner progress and enrollment management, including increasing our responsiveness to learners as they have needs within the portal and LMS systems
- We have improved user/learner experience through:
 - Conducting continuous research on how to create the best user experience for adult learners
 - Creating new process guides in collaboration with other MNCWTA teams (Curriculum and Training Development)
 - Creating new Canvas course template pages utilizing the MNCWTA branding standards
 - Creating help videos and other tutorials for learners to walk through the features of the new systems.



- Portal updates and features included:
 - Reporting analysis tools to meet the needs of the MNCWTA
 - Master of Social Worker (MSW) and Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) Coordinator roles to help Title IV-E consortium faculty to be able to assign and view students course load and progress

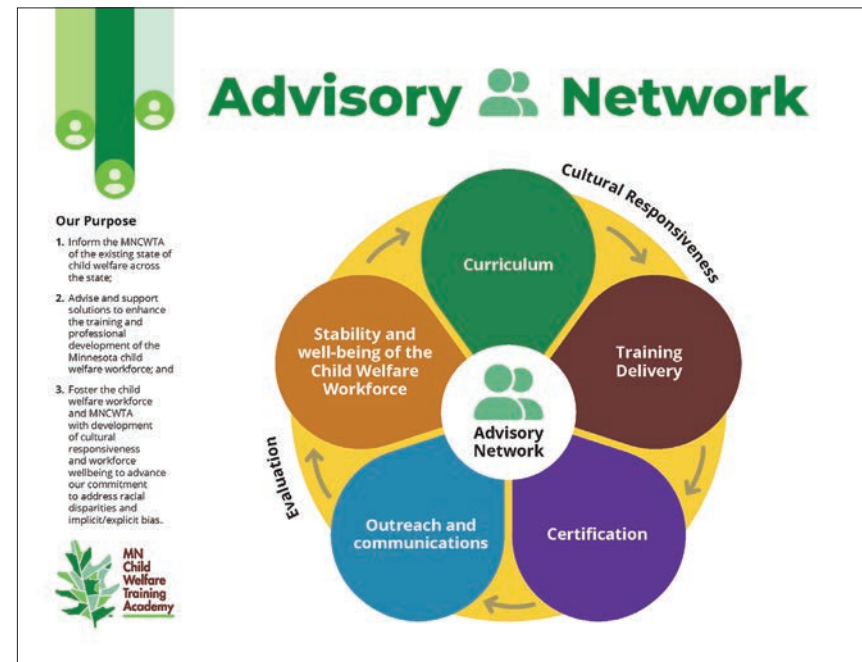
Looking ahead to 2024, the LMS team is excited to begin additional updates to the portal by creating staff reports, a learner dashboard, and a course scheduling tool.

Policy and Operations

Advisory Network and Kickoff Meetings

In Fall 2022, MNCWTA carried out both broad and targeted recruitment for the Advisory Network (AN). AN members include professionals in the child welfare field or related fields of practice, those with lived experience with the child welfare system, those who have an interest in addressing disparities and disproportionality in child welfare through training, and those who have an interest in supporting the well-being and development of the child welfare workforce.

MNCWTA launched the AN in early 2023 with two kick-off sessions during which we shared the purpose and objectives of the AN. We are using an engagement process that matches AN members based on project needs and their experience, role, and/or capacity. Thus far, the AN has been



engaged in five projects, with 38 members participating. One primary engagement area for our AN members has been serving as SMEs for the development of our New Worker Training.

- 5 projects
- 43 points of engagement
- 38 individuals engaged

www.mnchildwelfaretraining.com/advisory

Policy and Operations

Child Welfare Policy Changes

Policy changes and updates inform much of the ongoing development, delivery, and collaboration needs for the MNCWTA. Most significantly, the training-related policy changes were part of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) implementation.

FFPSA is federal legislation that passed in 2018, and it has shifted the way child welfare services are provided in Minnesota. FFPSA allows for Title IV-E reimbursement to state, county, and tribal agencies for federally-approved prevention services carried out for children at imminent risk of out-of-home placement and their caregivers. The goal of FFPSA is to establish prevention services that will strengthen families, prevent maltreatment, and address conditions that can lead to out-of-home placement.

The MNCWTA has been a key partner with DHS in the broad outreach and information sharing related to FFPSA implementation stages, updates to qualified residential treatment programs, and other prevention services. Our Curriculum Development, Policy and Operations, and Communications Teams have supported collaborative messaging with DHS by hosting webinars, creating videos, and participating in workgroups.

An example of this is the Motivational Interviewing training that the MNCWTA developed (see also page 20). Over the past year, the MNCWTA was part of ongoing MI workgroups and planning teams with DHS and the Center for Practice Transformation, the contracted partner developing and delivering initial training for MI. Another example is the Qualified Individual Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (QI-CANS) Training, which the MNCWTA developed. The MNCWTA trains the QI-CANS training for qualified individuals who will be carrying out the CANS assessment as part of the FFPSA residential services process.

The screenshot shows the website for the MN Child Welfare Training Academy. The page title is "Family First Prevention Services Act". The content includes an introductory paragraph about the FFPSA of 2018, a section for "Webinar Recordings" with a note about receiving proof of training, and a section for "FFPSA Residential Services" with a list of links to various resources such as "FFPSA Placement Process Changes (08/05/21)", "FFPSA Juvenile Treatment Screening Team Process and Documentation (08/12/21)", "QRTP Assessment Process and Qualified Individual Requirements (08/17/21)", and "Out of Home Placement Plan (08/24/21)".

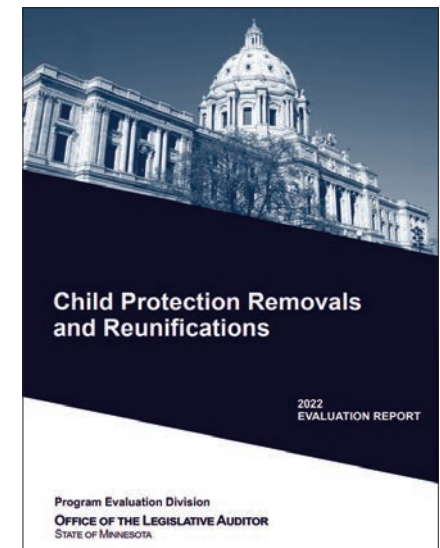
Policy and Operations

Training Policy Collaboration

Workgroup on Law Enforcement Training: In response to recommendations from the [Office of the Legislative Auditor Recommendation on Child Protection Removals and Reunifications](#), the MNCWTA led the formation of a workgroup established to provide recommendations on law enforcement training for situations in which there are removals or immediate holds of children. Workgroup engagement was high with members participating from multidisciplinary fields including law enforcement, training, MACSSA, TTCP, and more.

Home Studies Course: In preparation for the release of a new licensing best practice guide, the MNCWTA partnered with the Permanency and Placement Unit, the Foster Care Licensing Division, and MNCWTA Advisory Network to begin updating the “Assessing Prospective Foster and Adoptive Parents: Conducting Home Studies” curriculum about how to conduct home studies of prospective foster and adoptive parents. The training is expected to be available in 2024

Curriculum Integration: Following listening sessions with the workforce and leadership, the MNCWTA Curriculum Development Team determined the course development timelines and topics for New Worker Training and made requests for Subject Matter Experts and other policy partners. This collaboration with policy staff, professionals in the field, and individuals with lived experience has been essential to supporting the restructure and refinement of training for new workers. During this reporting period, practice guidance and several policies were updated and integrated into training (e.g., safety-focused practice initiatives and the structured decision-making assessment revision).

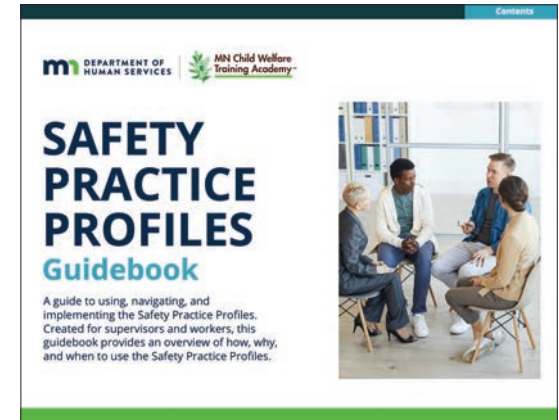


Policy and Operations

Child Safety Practice Framework: Within the context of the larger Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework, the Child Safety Framework focuses specifically on child safety and aims to define practice and promote consistency across the state. The Child Safety Framework was developed in collaboration with agency workers, supervisors, and leadership following the 2015 Taskforce on the Protection of Children to define safety practice more clearly, while also providing a tool to support practice. The Child Safety Framework outlines a set of shared principles, guidance, and practice tools designed to support child welfare professionals.

Safety Practice profiles: In the effort to support practice and consistency in safety focused practice, the safety practice profiles have been developed, and piloted twice with workers and supervisors on their content, accuracy, and usability. The profiles describe caseworkers' actions and behaviors when working with a child or family and provide a guide for supervisors when talking with caseworkers about how to advance their practice skills. A practice profile is a description of 'core activities' that allows a program to be teachable, learnable, and doable in typical human service settings and to promote consistency across practitioners at the level of actual service delivery. The core components within the safety practice profiles, and of which specific behaviors are detailed include: gather information, involve safety networks, ongoing safety assessment and planning, and identify safety threats and protective capacities.

Safety Assessment Redesign: The Training Academy is also working with partners at Evident Change and the Child Safety and Permanency Division to integrate the revised safety assessment, which is part of Minnesota's decision support system and informed by research, policy, and best practices. This coordination will align with the launch of the assessment tool into practice approximately fall 2024.



Communications

Audience

During the fourth year of our implementation, we continued to grow our audiences by creating targeted lists for county foster care licensors, our new Advisory Network, private providers, and key community partners who help to share our updates and announcements. We work to maintain an updated list of county supervisors, managers, and tribal leaders.

In addition to our monthly newsletter - The Acorn - we began sending quarterly updates to supervisors and tribal leaders with information that is specific to them. To our active Training Portal users, we send regular Pro Tips based on the questions and concerns we collect from their feedback. The Advisory Network receives updates about curriculum development and pilot trainings, as well as other opportunities to engage with the Training Academy.

Our opt-in mailing list, which can be accessed from the bottom of our home page, continues to grow. This list is open to everyone, and allows us to regularly provide updates on our work and progress.

FOR TRIBAL LEADERS AND MINNESOTA COUNTY SUPERVISORS MN Child Welfare Training Academy

Supervisor and Tribal Leader Reminders

New Worker Orientation Registration Opens Next Week
On Monday, December 4, **New Worker Orientation** will be available for registration in the Training Catalog. If you have new workers who plan to attend Foundations Cohort 118 beginning on February 19 (virtual), **New Worker Orientation** must be completed before they can enroll in Foundations. To learn more about Orientation, and how it fits with other New Worker Training, check out this [article on our website](#).

We are also hosting several statewide meetings to discuss these upcoming changes. The presentation should only last 20-30 minutes, followed by time for questions and answers. **If you haven't already, please register for one of the following Zoom meetings:**

- [Tuesday, December 5 at 1:00 p.m.](#)
- [Wednesday, December 6 at 3:00 p.m.](#)

We hope you can join us at one of the statewide meetings above. If not, we will record one and make it available on our website.

Open Seats in Upcoming Foundations Cohorts
If you have new workers that need Foundations Training, two additional cohorts have opened up:

- **Leech Lake Tribal Cohort** | [Cedar Lakes Casino](#) | Starts December 4 (2 or 3 seats are still available)
- **Cohort 117** | [Twin Cities Metro](#) | Starts January 23 (plenty of seats)

To learn more, log into your [Training Portal](#) and visit the Training Catalog.

Motivational Interviewing (MI)
If you or your staff are wanting to complete **Motivational Interviewing** Training, the first two course Workshops) are open for registration tomorrow. More information opens tomorrow. More information opens tomorrow.

If you have questions, contact us at mnchildwelfaretraining@mn.gov

Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy
www.mnchildwelfaretraining.org

The Acorn

April 2023

Welcome to **The Acorn**! Each month we share the latest trainings and resources available to child welfare professionals throughout Minnesota.

Updates

You are invited to our Southwest Regional Learning Center Open House in Marshall!
The event is on **April 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at our [Southwest Regional Learning Center](#). Come meet our staff, participate in a listening session, learn more about our programs and partners, and share feedback on what is most important to you! [Learn more and RSVP here](#).

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month
By increasing awareness about child and adolescent abuse, we can help prevent it.

Open Houses
Regional Learning Center
April 21, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Marshall, MN
Come meet our staff, participate in a listening session, learn more about our programs and partners, and share feedback on what is most important to you!

STAND UP FOR CHILDREN
RESPECT
EVERY CHILD MATTERS
BELIEVE
CARE
PROTECT
FOR CHILDREN
NO EXCUSE FOR CHILD ABUSE
HAVE A DIFFERENCE
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
PROTECT
SHARE

Welcome to the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy!

The Department of Human Services and University of Minnesota Twin Cities have partnered to enhance child welfare training. Our mission is to train, develop, and support the skills, expertise, and well-being of Minnesota's child welfare workforce while nurturing a commitment to equitable child welfare practice.

Updates

SSIS Basics Video Course Now Available
For new workers, SSIS Labs are no longer part of Child Welfare Foundations Training. Instead, recordings of the SSIS training are now available on our Training page, under Quick Links, called [SSIS Basics for Child Protection Workers](#). This is a great resource for new and current workers to watch and review as needed.

New Worker Orientation
This training is now available for new child protection workers to complete during their first two weeks on the job. Learn more about [New Worker Orientation here](#).

Training Registration

LOGIN to your [Training Portal](#) profile by selecting **Existing Profile**, then go to the **Training Catalog**. All currently scheduled courses are available there.

Need a Profile?
Ask your supervisor to invite you. If you are a tribal leader or supervisor, or you do not need a supervisor to assign your trainings, submit the [New Profile Request Form](#). If you have questions or technical issues, [let us know](#).

Communications

Press and Promotional Efforts

To better maintain transparency and accountability, we continue to make ourselves available to the press. We shared press releases with as many Minnesota news outlets that we could reach, including announcements of the launch of an updated Mandated Reporter Training, which was written in collaboration with DHS. We received press coverage of our Roseville Learning Center Grand Opening, as well as public listening sessions and Regional Learning Center open houses.

MNCWTA sponsored and tabled at several conferences over the past year. We regularly table at the Minnesota Supervisors Conference, which is attended by approximately 300 state agency supervisors and managers. In October 2022, we hosted a table at the St. Louis County Health and Human Services Conference in Duluth, and in March 2023, participated in the Minnesota Social Services Association (MSSA) annual conference. We will continue to reach out to child welfare professionals throughout Minnesota, and work to make our trainings known to all intended audiences.



Communications

Social Media and Communications Metrics

We hired our first graduate student to work as a communications assistant, focusing on social media and content strategy. This new effort brought about a significant increase in followers and engagement through our Instagram account and our LinkedIn page. We also evaluated our LinkedIn group (which was intended to promote worker engagement), and determined that our users preferred other options. Our Facebook and X (Twitter) followers are still active, but we are seeing less growth through those channels. The Training Academy will continue to utilize all social media channels where our audiences prefer to engage.

	Year 1 July 2019-June 2020	Year 2 July 2020-June 2021	Year 3 July 2021-June 2022	Year 4 July 2022-June 2023
Website		159 average monthly users	1,188 average monthly users	4,976 average monthly users
Blog Posts	11 posts	37 posts	37 posts	31 Posts
Email Marketing	6 mailings (average of 448 recipients)	47 mailings (average 692 recipients)	53 mailings (average 876 recipients)	68 mailings (average 1,315 recipients)
Facebook	100 Likes; 102 Followers	159 Likes; 169 Followers	190 Likes; 205 Followers	233 Likes; 263 Followers
Vimeo	Average 28 views per month	Average 91 views per month	Average 192 views per month	Average 11,697 views per month
Instagram			90 Followers	234 Followers
LinkedIn			72 Followers	177 Followers
X/Twitter			66 Followers	88 Followers

What's Next for MNCWTA?

Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities and challenges that await us in the coming year. We remain committed to our mission and are strategically positioned to capitalize on emerging trends and evolving needs within our industry. Our focus on innovation, sustainability, and stakeholder engagement will continue to drive our success in the future.

In our fifth year (July 2023 - June 2024), look for:

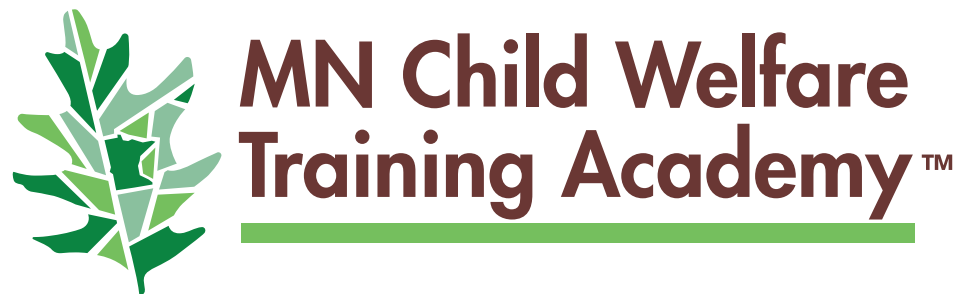
- The launch of New Worker Orientation training
- Learners to begin taking the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), with follow-up coaching meetings facilitated by our IDI Qualified Administrators
- The launch of New Supervisor Training
- The pilot and launch of Motivational Interviewing (MI)
- Continued development of New Worker Foundations Training
- The use of simulation experiences for our learners
- Continued development and training of the advanced catalog of courses



The Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA) is a collaboration between the Child Safety and Permanency Division at the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Our mission is to train, develop, and support the skills, expertise, and well-being of Minnesota's child welfare workforce while nurturing a commitment to equitable child welfare practice.

Funding by grant JPK 160374 from Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Children and Family Services Division.

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Accessibility

If you need this workbook in a different format, or if you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in a training, contact us as soon as possible at info@mnchildwelfaretraining.com.