

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Technical Assistance Report



Prepared for Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare
By Mike Corey, MSW, Consultant, NRCCPS
On-site dates: December 1&2, 2009

Please indicate which responses were employed in this T/TA:

- Technical Assistance
- Training
- Phone Consultation
- Referral to another NRC
- Referral to Other Organization
- Review of Policy and Materials
- Publications Provided
- Secondary Research
- Other

(Please explain the Service Responses in the report which follows)

Situation and Technical Assistance Request

This aspect of the TA request deals with the Bureau's expressed need to improve the Access (telephone intake) section of the BMCW's child protection response. Specifically, the primary focus' of NRCCPS TA is to improve supervisory and worker staff understanding and application of the competency of "information collection". Improved information collection and sufficiency of information will provide Access staff and the management of the Bureau with a higher degree of confidence in decisions associated with accepting/screening of reports and appropriate response time for reports accepted consistent with the safety intervention approach of the Bureau.

Site Visit

The site visit occurred on December 1&2, 2009. The purpose of the site visit was to begin the process of improving information collection with emphasis on the three Access supervisors.

The TA began with a discussion discussion on the status of call backs in the Bureau (a process used when there is not an access worker available to take a call) as it related to the time response and ability of Access staff to get in back in touch with a reporter who has a family situation that they believe is child abuse and neglect.

Following was an examination of the issues regarding information collection with specific reference to the need to examine information gathered at Access from a perspective of the sufficiency of the information. Reference materials were provided to the Access supervisors to further their ability to transfer learning to the staff.

During the course of the site visit the following persons were involved in discussions, meetings and applications. Jackie Hall, Program Manager, Access; Nidhi Khare, Lori Wagnitz and Rita Zappen, Access Supervisors; Cathy Dupar, Lee Johnson and Carolyn Lee, Regional Managers; and Matt Gebrhardt, Section Chief of Access and Initial Assessment.

As noted above site visit participants were provided with reference materials regarding the competency of information collection; a reference guide regarding information gathering during the exploratory stage of access for use with access workers; information regarding judging the sufficiency of information; and a case summary providing a level of information sufficiency based upon an actual cps report. All of the referenced materials were discussed with supervisors and the program manager during the site visit. Supervisor's were also provided with a Assessment Guide to evaluate their workers "Competency regarding Access and their own Supervisory Competency to Transfer Learning".

Next Steps

The next TA site visit is scheduled for January 12&13, 2010. The emphasis of the site visit will be to expand understanding of the role of Access throughout Bureau functions and to further knowledge and understanding of the sufficiency of information necessary to make sound decisions regarding allegations reported to the Bureau by the community.

These objectives will be accomplished through individual TA provided by NRCCPS to each of the three Access Units. This will include the evening unit as well as the two day time units. The methods utilized will include discussion of role of Access and relationship of Access to

Initial Assessment, Safety Services and Ongoing Services. Additionally, actual Wisconsin CPS reports will be reviewed and analyzed by all Access staff according to Standards of Practice and feedback will be provided to all Access staff.

Lastly, Access Supervisors, Regional Managers and the Section Chief will participate in a debrief regarding the unit TA, the process of assessment of staff, and a discussion regarding information regarding how calls are received and accepted including the time of the day calls come into the Bureau. This TA is for the purpose of assisting the Bureau in making the most appropriate decisions possible regarding the focus and function of Access.

All methods identified will be developed/refined and applications will be made during the off site TA time prior to the January, 2010 site visit.