

## **Executive Summary**

# Critical Thinking in Child Welfare Assessment: Risk, Safety, and Protective Capacity

## **Course Description**

The Critical Thinking Assessment Training provides an overview of assessing risk, safety, and protective capacity. The training reviews these concepts, definitions, and applications in child protective services. Additionally, the training will discuss the concept of Minimum Sufficient Level of Care and the impacts on the lives of children and families. Finally, participants will practice creating a safety plan and consider when to implement the plan and when to revise and review. The course utilizes lecturette, case studies, small group interaction, and case scenarios to help participants integrate the information.

## **Target Audience**

This training is appropriate for new workers. New workers will be exposed to new information to assist with beginning case work while enhancing understanding of key concepts and applications to children and families.

## **Outcome Objectives**

1. Describe the definition and factors of safety, risk, protective capacity, and minimum sufficient level of care as it applies to child protective services.
2. Recognize factors correlated with child maltreatment, including child development, substance abuse and domestic violence.
3. Identify the elements of an effective safety plan and the stages in CWS cases where assessments of safety, risk, and protective capacity must occur.
4. Understand how important it is to consider and document the family's basic needs, cultural identity, values, strengths and protective capacity when assessing safety and risk.
5. Express awareness of how personal values, bias, and countertransference issues may affect an assessment, and seek appropriate consultation as necessary.
6. The trainee will value effective methods of engaging culturally and linguistically diverse families during the assessment process, including basic strategies for interviewing that are related to conducting an assessment of safety, risk and protective capacity.

## **Ways that Supervisors can support the Transfer of Learning from the classroom to the job...**

### ***BEFORE the training***

1. Supervisors should inform the trainee that four concepts will be covered in the training: risk, safety, protective capacity, and minimum sufficient level of care and that the trainee will be expected to understand these upon return to the office.
2. Supervisors should ask the worker to identify a possible safety plan in a hypothetical family situation and to then compare this to the information in the training.

### ***AFTER the training***

1. Supervisors should ask the trainee to verbalize understanding of the four concepts: risk, safety, protective capacity, and minimum sufficient level of care and their applications to families.
2. Supervisors should ask the trainee to compare the safety plan suggested prior to the training and make it more effective and accurate based on the information from the training.