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ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2001- June 30, 2002



**OHIO
CHILD
WELFARE
TRAINING
PROGRAM**

*Continued
Excellence
Since 1986
www.ocwtp.com*



One of society's most important and compelling responsibilities is assuring the safety and well being of its most vulnerable members.

Among these are children at risk of abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, or exploitation. Our collective mission is to protect them from maltreatment, and to enable them to grow and flourish in safe, nurturing, permanent homes.

Achieving this mission requires the active involvement of organizations and individuals at all levels of our state and local communities. The members of the child protection team—child welfare professionals, legislators, government officials, community leaders, social service providers, law enforcement and court personnel, trainers, foster and adoptive parents, the children's immediate and extended families, and the community at large—each play a unique role in contributing to this complex undertaking. When we work together, we dramatically increase our ability to achieve our common mission.

In this Annual Report, we hope to communicate the contribution made by one member of this team—the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP). Currently in its 17th year of operation, the OCWTP is the statewide inservice training system that enables child welfare professionals in Ohio's 88 county public children services agencies to achieve high levels of competency, thereby promoting “best practice” for the children and families they serve.

This report describes both the innovative training interventions produced during 2001- 2002, and the training activities that have formed the foundation of the system since its inception. You can also read about our ongoing developmental initiatives to conduct broad-based evaluation of training outcomes, to update our competencies and curricula, and, in partnership with county public children services agencies, to develop a full array of agency-based training interventions that will help transform classroom learning into on-the-job mastery of complex skills.

The OCWTP is grateful for your contributions and hard work toward improving the lives of Ohio's abused and neglected children and their families. We look forward to further collaborations to help prepare child welfare professionals to conduct this difficult, but critical work.



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Crystal Allen, Director

Public Children Services Association of Ohio

Tom Swindel, Coordinator

Northwest Ohio Regional Training Center

Ronald C. Hughes, Director

Institute for Human Services (State Coordinator)

What Is the OCWTP?

The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program is Ohio's competency-based inservice training system for staff and managers in the 88 county Public Children Services Agencies (PCSAs).

Founded in 1986 as a state/county, public/private collaboration, the OCWTP provides an array of training activities to promote mastery of the complex knowledge and skills needed to assure protection and permanence for Ohio's abused and neglected children.

Collaborating Organizations

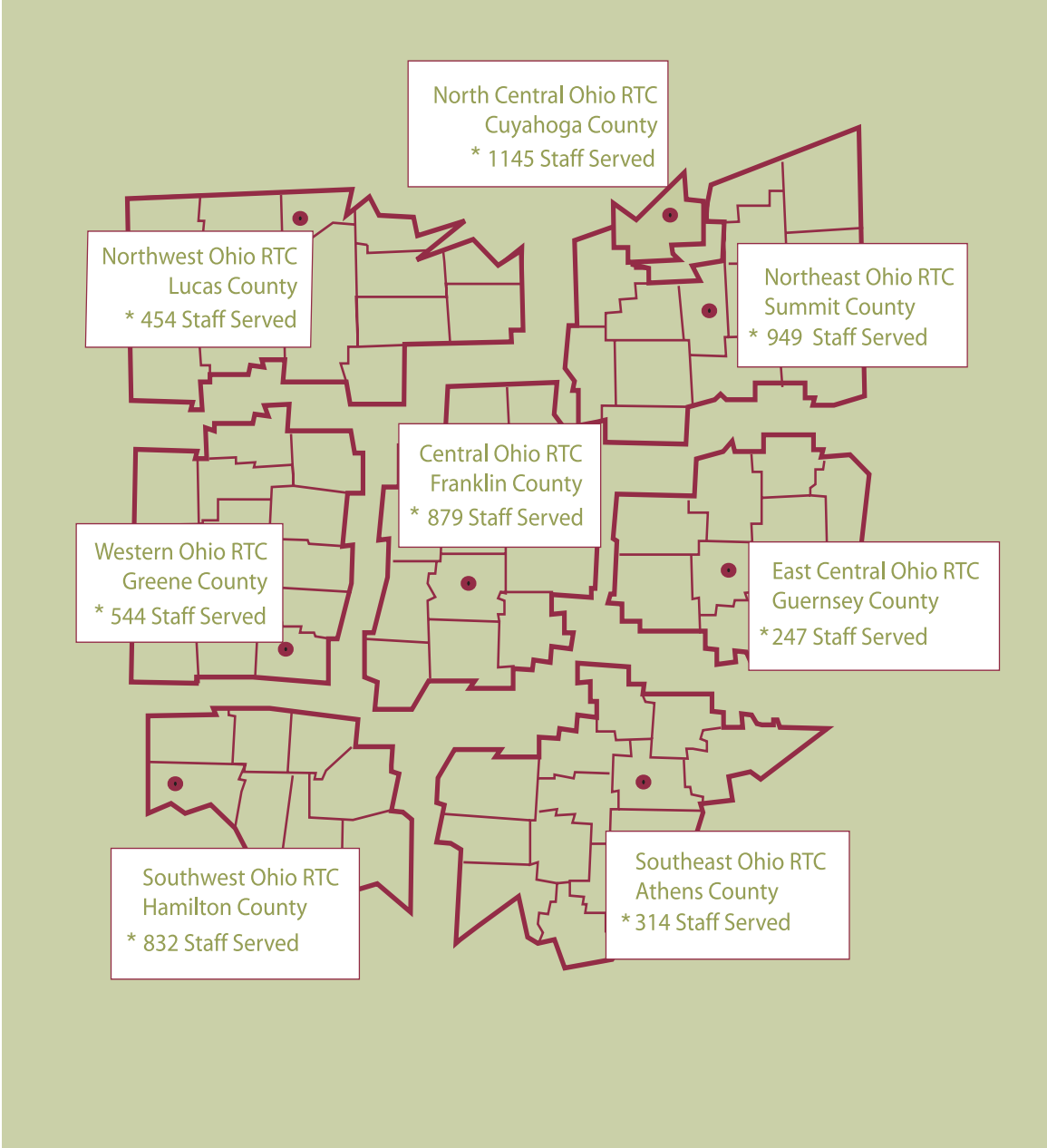
- The *Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)* co-chairs the Central Steering Committee and manages and monitors the contracts and funding for the program;
- The *Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO)* co-chairs the Central Steering Committee and advocates for the needs of county child welfare agencies and their staff;
- Eight *Regional Training Centers (RTCs)*, operated by county public children services agencies, identify and address the training needs of staff in their catchment areas and assist in developing, piloting, and evaluating training activities;
- The *Institute for Human Services (IHS)*, State Coordinator, facilitates and coordinates all program activities, develops training curricula and other resources, and provides fiscal administration for the program;
- Five *Private Child Placing Agencies* collaborate with the Regional Training Centers to provide training to adoption staff and adoptive families in public and private agencies.

Program Management and Training Delivery

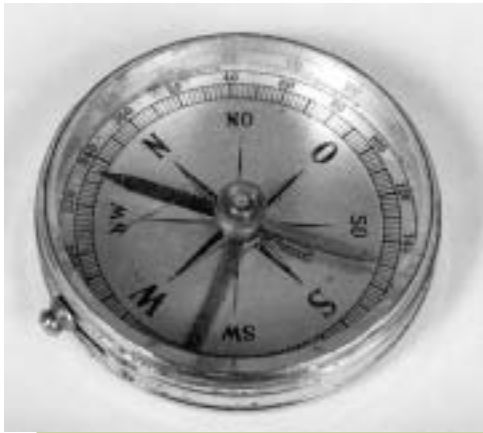
The OCWTP *Central Steering Committee*, comprised of representatives from the above-listed organizations, conducts strategic and operational planning, program management, and oversight for all OCWTP initiatives and activities. Training is provided by highly skilled and certified trainers through a regionally organized training delivery system.



OCWTP DIVIDES OHIO INTO 8 REGIONS FOR EFFICIENT TRAINING DELIVERY



* This represents child welfare caseworkers, supervisors, and administrators



Leadership and Innovation...

Why Ohio is a Leader in Child Welfare Training

Since 1986, the OCWTP has been a leader and innovator in developing state-of-the-art inservice training for child welfare professionals. OCWTP's resources and models have been adopted by a majority of state and provincial public child welfare organizations throughout North America.

The OCWTP is unique in the following ways:

Emphasis on System Change

The OCWTP uses training as a stimulus and a catalyst to promote large-scale change to achieve “best practice” throughout the child welfare system.

All training is based on our standardized *Universe of Competencies*, a comprehensive listing of the prerequisite knowledge and skills to achieve “best practice” in child welfare. By training to these competencies, we not only define “best practice,” but provide the workforce with the knowledge and skills to achieve it

Assuring Standardization While Responding to Individual Needs

All OCWTP programming balances two competing but equally compelling priorities: the standardization of training to assure common values, standards of practice, and methods throughout the work force; and the capacity to respond to unique individual, local, and regional training needs.

The “Right People” to the “Right Training” at the “Right Time”

Our Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) process identifies the highest priority training needs in the system. All staff complete an ITNA every two years. The compiled data determines what training will be offered and which staff will attend it. A quarterly planning cycle enables us to address needs in a timely manner. The training program expends its resources on high priority needs; staff attend only needed training; and the organization realizes the greatest possible return on its training investment.

Highly Skilled Trainers

The OCWTP maintains a trainer pool of approximately 350 active trainers. They are among the most highly skilled in North America. All trainers must demonstrate expert content knowledge, well-developed training skills, and practice experience in the competency areas they will teach. Prospective trainers are rigorously screened, evaluated, and fully trained before they are approved. Continuous monitoring and technical assistance assure they maintain the OCWTP's high standards of quality over time. Trainers are recognized annually at the OCWTP Trainer Event, and individual awards are given for training excellence.

Commitment to Collaboration

The OCWTP is guided by the *Central Steering Committee (CSC)*, a leadership and decision-making team whose members represent state and local, public and private, rural and urban, and management and staff perspectives. The CSC's diversity of membership, collaborative interdependence, and its commitment to negotiation and consensus building, promote solutions that best address the diverse needs and perspectives of OCWTP constituents. This collaborative body has sustained the OCWTP and assured its continuing quality.

∞ System Change

∞ Standardization
Combined with
Responsiveness to
Individual Needs

∞ Right People
Right Training
Right Time

∞ Skilled Trainers

∞ Comittment to
Collaboration



Lessons in Leadership for Child Welfare Trainers and Educators

17-Years of Continuing Excellence

*Sophisticated Methodologies
High Work Force Impact*

Prior to 1985, many staff in Ohio’s public child welfare agencies (PCSAs) had no access to job training. The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program was formed to address this need. Through repeated developmental cycles, the OCWTP has continued to promote “best practice” by addressing the training needs of Ohio’s child welfare work force.

1985-1991 Establishing the OCWTP’s Competency-Based Structure

The Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) and the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) jointly designed and financed a statewide system of child welfare training. The program was staffed by eight Regional Training Centers, located in county PCSAs, and by the Institute for Human Services as State Coordinator. A Central Steering Committee was formed to conduct program planning, management, and oversight.

OCWTP developed the *Universe of Child Welfare Competencies*, a listing of the knowledge and skills needed to achieve “best practice.” These competencies formed the foundation of all training needs assessment, trainer selection, and curriculum development.

Standardized core training was developed for all newly hired caseworkers, supervisors, and managers. The Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) process was instituted to identify the highest priority training needs, and to develop specialized training to address these needs.

The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) identified the OCWTP as the exemplary child welfare training program in the nation. CWLA published a revision of Ohio’s *Core Curriculum for Child Welfare Caseworkers*, and the monograph, *Target: Competent Staff*, describing Ohio’s competency-based training model. Many states and provinces began to adopt Ohio’s competency-based training model.

1992-1996 Ongoing Development to Address Changing Needs

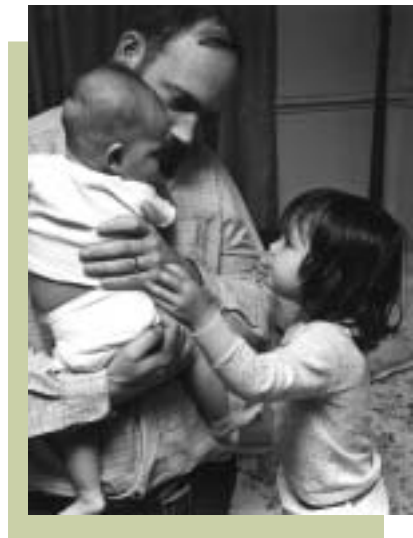
OCWTP developed a multi-module *Child Sexual Abuse Intervention* series to help workers identify, assess, and intervene in situations of sexual abuse.

Training on culture and diversity was developed for caseworkers, supervisors, and all OCWTP trainers, to promote cultural competence throughout the work force.

Formal training for trainers in presentation skills was developed and mandated for all trainers; preservice and core training were developed for foster caregivers.

Core training for both workers and supervisors was revised to promote a family-centered approach to child protection, and a series of curricula were developed to promote effective risk assessment in all child welfare activities to better identify and serve at-risk children.

A multi-module *Adoption Assessor* curriculum was developed for staff of public and private agencies to support the mandates of Ohio's adoption reform legislation.



1997-2001 Transfer of Learning, Advanced Level Skill Building, and Expanding International Influence

OCWTP recognized that without post-training feedback and support, trainees often failed to use newly-learned knowledge and skills on their jobs. OCWTP targeted Transfer of Learning (TOL) as a primary program objective.

OCWTP developed four intensive, advanced-level Skill Building Certificate Training programs for caseworkers and for supervisors. A second tier of advanced-level *Adoption Assessor* training was presented statewide.

Ohio hosted the third International TRAINet conference. Participants included trainers and training managers from the 32 states and provinces that had adopted Ohio's training model and resources. The OCWTP received many training products from TRAINet collaboration at no cost.

Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) published the four-volume *Field Guide to Child Welfare*, authored by IHS staff. Ohio PCSAs received 1000 copies financed by a grant from the George Gund Foundation.

The OCWTP partnered with Ohio's Schools of Social Work to initiate a pilot program to incorporate the equivalent of core training into social work curricula, enabling graduating students to be immediately employed in child welfare agencies.

House Bill 448 codified the OCWTP into state law, mandating critical components and assuring the program's continuing operations.



Promoting Change Region by Region Throughout the State

In addition to providing traditional training, the OCWTP offered a variety of specialized training and system development activities to address unique regional and individual county needs. A description of these activities by region follows:

Central Ohio RTC - Franklin County

Maltreated children and their families in central Ohio are served by a variety of organizations under contract with public child serving agencies. This requires coordination, inter-agency collaboration, and efficiency in service planning and delivery. The Central Ohio RTC helped strengthen this collaboration by conducting training throughout the region that included many of the network agencies. This collaboration promotes consistency in best child welfare practice, regardless of which agencies are providing the service, while promoting effective communication between collaborating caseworkers.

Northeast Ohio RTC - Summit County

A recent increase in shaken baby injuries in the region lead NEORTC to work collaboratively with a child welfare expert in developing a curricula, Shaken Baby Syndrome, piloted in late 2001. With the onset of welfare reform, neglect referrals have increased. This region partnered with NWORTC and an experienced trainer to present a new curricula on neglect in June 2002. In order to bring child welfare expertise into the training arena as well as offer high quality leadership within the region, NEORTC is again presenting the Trainer Development Program. This initiative provides advanced training and career development for seasoned human services practitioners.

East Central Ohio RTC – Guernsey County

During 2001, ECORTC provided leadership in a variety of interagency child welfare initiatives, with the purpose of promoting best practice throughout the region through the sharing of resources. ECORTC completed its 8th Canton Region Annual Conference for supervisors across the state, stressing skill building in employee recruitment and retention. ECORTC finished its 10th year as coordinator of the regional Foster/Adoption/Kinship Specialist Group, and its 13th year as Chair of the Supervisory Core Group in the Canton Region. Finally, ECORTC collaborated with SEORTC to provide a 6-month skill-building program for caseworkers on interviewing young children.

North Central Ohio RTC - Cuyahoga County

Cuyahoga County, traditionally an ethnically diverse community, has become home to increasing numbers of immigrant families. Caseworkers must resolve a variety of cultural and language barriers to serve these families and to collaborate effectively with local leaders and service providers. The North Central Ohio RTC offered a series of workshops on the specific cultural groups residing in Cleveland's ethnic neighborhoods, to support the agency's cultural competence initiatives.



Southwest Ohio RTC - Hamilton County

Communicating effectively with children is a central part of child welfare casework. Southwest Ohio RTC offered a series of workshops on "child-friendly" interviewing strategies to help workers overcome the linguistic and developmental challenges encountered when communicating with very young children. The advanced-level workshops were designed to promote high levels of skill proficiency.

Southeast Ohio RTC - Athens County

To provide networking opportunities, SEORTC initiated regular quarterly meetings of its region's executive directors to discuss and merge policy and training. SEORTC also hosted quarterly networking sessions for its region's supervisors and caseworkers to discuss topical areas chosen by the participants to learn how other counties handle similar situations. The SEORTC initiated its first mentoring project using an approved trainer to visit county agencies and work with their staff on a one-to-one basis to improve their interviewing skills to gather information for case planning. In addition, the SEORTC provided 201 days of training to 2,192 participants, and arranged for 49 workshops in county agencies.

Western Ohio RTC - Greene County

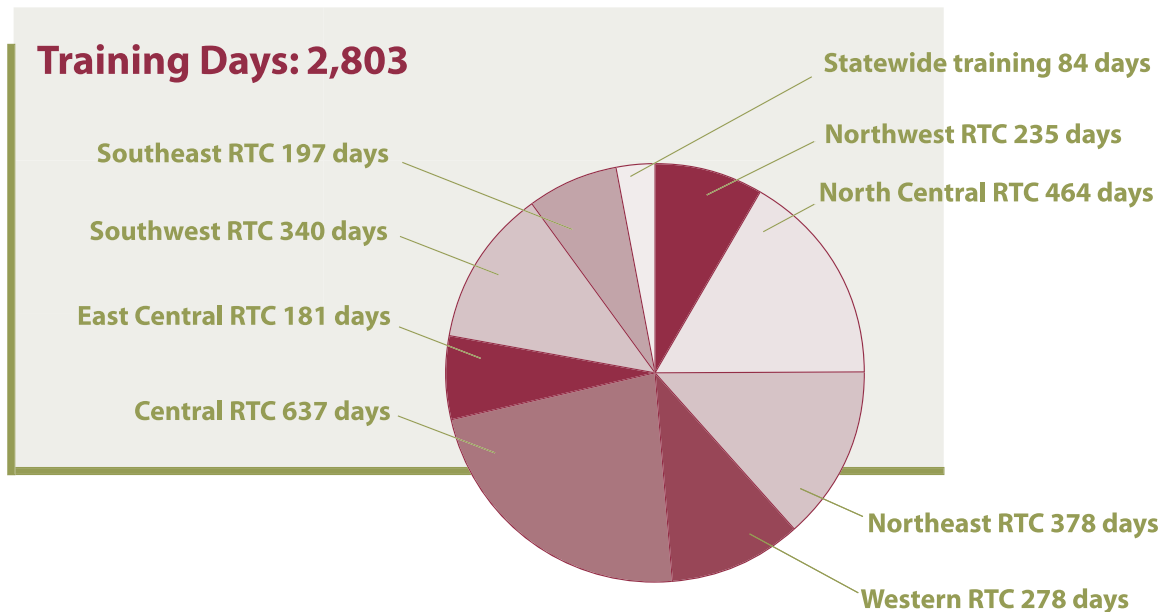
To address identified gaps in service delivery in Greene County, the Western Ohio RTC joined with the Greene County Family and Children First Council to co-sponsor a community-wide conference to improve collaboration and teamwork among child-serving organizations in the region. The program involved child welfare staff, other social service providers, health care professionals, and educational personnel throughout Western Ohio.

Northwest Ohio - Lucas County

During 2001 the Northwest Region experienced turnover of staff assigned to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect in substitute care settings. As a result, workers with little experience were asked to conduct these investigations, which are routinely quite complex and require highly specialized skill. However, there were not adequate numbers of these workers to warrant conducting a training class. The Northwest RTC resolved this challenge by scheduling a four-day intensive skill development workshop, "Out-Of-Home Care Setting: Investigating Allegations and Assessing Risk," and offering it to all out-of-home care investigators throughout the state.

TRAINING STATISTICS

Pie charts show distribution by region

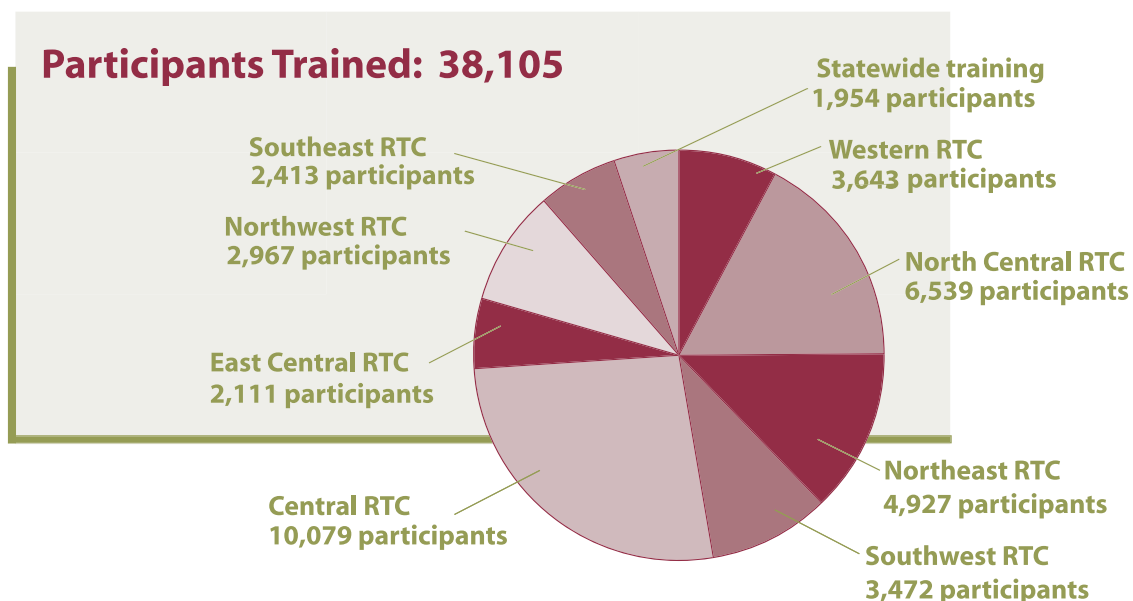


Training Topic Areas: 137

Workshops Presented: 2,249

Average Length of Workshop: 7.4 hours

Average Evaluation Score: 4.6 (out of a 5 point scale)



ANNUAL PROGRAM COST: \$4,745,304

COST PER TRAINEE CONTACT HOUR: \$16.59

STATE COORDINATION (IHS): \$1,391,788

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION: \$545,152
 OCWTP Administration: \$502,870
 Adoption Administration: \$42,282

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT: \$846,636
 OCWTP Development: \$743,280
 Adoption Development: \$103,356

DIRECT DELIVERY OF TRAINING: \$1,236,308

OCWTP Training: \$930,975
 Adoption Training: \$305,333

78%
of OCWTP
funding is from
Title IV-E,
Title IV-B,
TANF, and
Medicaid

22%
is provided
through
local dollars

REGIONAL COORDINATION: \$2,117,208

Regional coordination for OCWTP training is provided by 8 Regional Training Centers and 5 subcontracted private adoption agencies. Funding distribution is as follows:

OCWTP:	\$1,979,239
Southeast RTC:	\$180,492
North Central RTC:	\$313,751
Central RTC:	\$288,696
Western RTC:	\$230,865
East Central RTC:	\$178,596
Southwest RTC:	\$261,842
Northwest RTC:	\$228,794
Northeast RTC:	\$296,203
ADOPTION:	\$137,969
Childrens Home of Cincinnati:	\$25,596
Catholic Charities:	\$28,525
Lutheran Social Services:	\$25,473
Northeast Ohio Adoption Services:	\$29,520
Adoption Network:	\$28,855



Building a Foundation for the Future ...

The 2001-2002 program year marked the first year of a four-year initiative to assure that OCWTP remains current, state-of-the-art, and responsive to the changing needs of Ohio's child welfare work force.

Child welfare practice has changed dramatically since OCWTP's inception. Changes in client populations and needs, the composition of the work force, increasing numbers of children served, and an unstable resource base have continued to challenge the service system.

To help sustain high levels of practice competence and organizational integrity, the OCWTP adopted four program goals for 2001-2005;

- 1) Fully assess the current work environment, the composition and needs of the client population, changes in principles of "best practice," and factors contributing to high rates of staff turnover;
- 2) Revise the *Universe of Child Welfare Competencies* to reflect changes in the prerequisite knowledge and skills required for "best practice";
- 3) Develop a continuum of training strategies that promote mastery of complex practice skills, and that help to retain qualified personnel in the work force;
- 4) Evaluate the outcomes of training activities, including the impact of training on job performance and organizational change.

During 2001-2002, the OCWTP focused on completing Phase I, the comprehensive *Statewide Developmental Assessment*. A variety of data collection methods were used, including extensive literature searches; focus groups; questionnaires; analysis of data from prior OCWTP feedback and evaluation studies; and personal interviews with a range of key informants, both within and outside the child welfare system.

The final assessment report will be disseminated in 2003, and will be posted on the OCWTP website at www.ocwtp.com.

OCWTP *Testimonials*

Five Public Children Services Associations that had recently implemented significant changes in service delivery systems reported the OCWTP was critical in implementing those changes. Rhonda Reagh, Executive Director of Greene County CSB states, "Without the support of the RTC, many of these changes might not have occurred." The RTC provided specific training and consultation on change process.

A caseworker from Southeastern Ohio states, "I was dealing with a gay youth. Training assisted me in being culturally sensitive to the turmoil this youth has already experienced."

In Jefferson County, staff was inspired to develop and implement a multi-disciplinary team for the investigation of child abuse when they attended OCWTP training.

A Lucas County Children Services supervisor states, "It helped me depersonalize conflict and change. We tend to look at change as being something imposed upon us, when we should really be looking at it from the aspect of what the issues are and what role we can play in positively implementing change."

A caseworker from Southeastern Ohio states, "In dealing with hostile and argumentative clients, I was able to utilize skills learned in training to deescalate the situation by remaining calm and speaking softly to the client."

Becky Thomas, Training Officer at Cuyahoga Department of Job and Family Services, reported that attending training of trainer workshops taught her "...how to sequence information, how to include transfer of learning methodologies in workshops, how to use a variety of training methodologies that appeal to different learning styles, and how to include culturally relevant information in each workshop."

The Stark County DJFS Assistant Social Services director states that the six-day advanced mediation training helped her to resolve complaints from foster parents and clients, and to resolve problems among staff members at her agency. She states, "mediation training taught me how to get to the root of the problem and...reach a solution that meets both persons' needs."

Rose M. Handon, a Franklin County Children Services supervisor, states, "My social work, clinical, and administrative skills have been enhanced through the various workshops. Its benefits have proven immeasurable to my staff, colleagues, and certainly to families and children."

Janice Kaup, a Butler County CSB intake worker, states, "The training provided through SWORTC is excellent! I have gained so much knowledge and skill throughout the numerous trainings that I have taken, and I appreciate the variety of workshops."

Contact Information

The OCWTP Mission

The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program promotes the delivery of high quality, culturally responsive, family-centered services to children who have experienced or are at risk of abuse, neglect, or dependency, and their families.

We provide competency-based training primarily to the public agency professionals, caregivers, and adoptive parents who serve them.

We collaborate with other service providers to promote the delivery of competency-based training.

We advocate for public policy and practice standards that reflect best child welfare practice.



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