

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

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CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 111

FUNDAMENTALS OF FAMILY-CENTERED CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Skill Sets

111-01: Ability to conduct child welfare practice in a manner that is consistent with fundamental child welfare values and philosophy

111-02: Ability to identify children who have been physically abused, neglected, sexually abused or emotionally maltreated

111-03: Ability to approach and relate to families in a culturally respectful and sensitive manner

111-04: Ability to work within a community-based system of child protection and family support

Skill Set 111-01: Ability to conduct child welfare practice in a manner consistent with fundamental child welfare values and philosophy

Comp. No.	Competency Description
111-01-001	Knows the dilemmas inherent in child welfare practice and the need for informed professional judgment when making child protection decisions
111-01-002	Knows the core values that underlie child welfare's mission of protecting children from maltreatment and ensuring their safety in stable, permanent families
111-01-003	Knows the defining characteristics of a family-centered approach to child welfare and child protection
111-01-004	Knows the professional values and ethics that support a family-centered approach to child welfare services
111-01-005	Knows the historical and philosophical evolution of child welfare practice and how this has influenced current practice
111-01-006	Understands the potential tensions between the rights and interests of parents and the rights and interests of children in child protective services
111-01-007	Understands child welfare's responsibility to make reasonable efforts to prevent placement, to reunify children with their families, and to find permanent families for children who cannot go home
111-01-008	Understands how a family-centered approach to child protection must consider and balance the rights of maltreated children and of their families
111-01-009	Understands how engaging, empowering, and strengthening immediate and extended families can help prevent removal and placement of children
111-01-010	Understands the commonalities, differences, and most appropriate uses of family centered services, family preservation, and intensive home based service programs
111-01-011	Knows how a family-centered approach to engage and involve birth families, relatives, and foster/adoptive families in assuring safety and permanence for children

111-01-012	Can use a family-centered approach to engage and involve birth families, relatives, and foster/adoptive families in assuring safety and permanence for children
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Skill Set 111-02: Ability to identify children who have been physically abused, neglected, sexually abused, or emotionally maltreated
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
111-02-001	Knows the importance of screening and intake as the first steps in identifying children at high risk of maltreatment
111-02-002	Knows the importance of information collected at screening to make decisions about case opening, priority assignment, investigation, and case transfer
111-02-003	Knows the types of referrals and reports that should be transferred to community providers rather than opened by the child welfare agency
111-02-004	Knows the philosophical and practical issues that complicate identification of parental behaviors as child maltreatment
111-02-005	Knows the legal and operational definitions of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, dependency, endangerment, emotional maltreatment, children in need of protective services (CHIPS), and child abuse/neglect in out-of-home care
111-02-006	Knows the provisions of federal laws governing child welfare practice including Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (96-272), Multi Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA), Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and the state laws that implement their provisions
111-02-007	Knows the physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment
111-02-008	Knows interpersonal and family dynamics commonly associated with physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment
111-02-009	Knows the effects of environmental conditions and social factors that contribute to physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment
111-02-010	Knows behavioral and emotional indicators of parental mental illness, emotional problems, family violence, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities, and how these can contribute to child maltreatment
111-02-011	Knows criteria to determine when a family's poverty or homelessness may increase risk or contribute to neglect
111-02-012	Knows criteria to differentiate accidental from inflicted injury to children
111-02-013	Understands how unsafe home and community environments may affect a family's ability to provide safe care for their children
111-02-014	Understands types of parenting practices that can contribute to child maltreatment and increase risk of harm to children
111-02-015	Knows strategies to observe, interview, and assess children to gather information about their health and well being
111-02-016	Can gather, analyze, and compile information from different sources to determine whether a child has been maltreated, the type and scope of maltreatment, and the most likely contributing factors

Skill Set 111-03: Ability to approach and relate to families in a culturally respectful and sensitive manner	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
111-03-001	Knows definitions and fundamental concepts of culture, diversity, and culturally responsive practice
111-03-002	Knows the common elements, institutions, and dynamics that form the foundation of all cultures
111-03-003	Understands the contribution of personal and organizational bias, poverty, and other social factors on the over-representation of minority children and families in the child welfare system (disproportionality)
111-03-004	Understands the importance of locating reliable sources of information regarding individual cultural groups
111-03-005	Understands how ethnocentrism, lack of knowledge, and reliance on stereotypes can contribute to intercultural conflicts and miscommunication
111-03-006	Understands how peoples' cultural background affects their values, identity, behaviors, perceptions and assessments of others, and communication styles
111-03-007	Understands how cultural differences in parenting and child care practices can complicate the assessment of child maltreatment
111-03-008	Understands how different overt behaviors and cultural practices can be expressions of common fundamental values
111-03-009	Understands how some culturally approved parenting practices may be harmful to children
111-03-010	Knows how to locate reliable informants and other resources to gather accurate information about a culture or a group
111-03-011	Can recognize one's own areas of potential bias and knows how to prevent this from affecting judgments about and relationships with families
111-03-012	Can establish rapport and relationships with individuals and families from diverse cultural backgrounds
111-03-013	Can conduct accurate assessments of risk, family strengths and family needs in diverse families, and provide services in a culturally responsive manner

Skill Set 111-04: Ability to work within a community-based system of child protection and family support	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
111-04-001	Knows the roles and responsibilities of the child welfare agency in a community-based approach to child protection and family support
111-04-002	Knows the roles and responsibilities of other community agencies, professionals, and service providers involved in child protection and family support
111-04-003	Understands the necessity of involving community leaders and community members in protecting children and supporting families
111-04-004	Knows how to collaborate with community agencies and service providers to plan and coordinate services to families and children

111-04-005	Can advocate on behalf of families and children to help them gain access to and sustain services from neighborhood and community resources
111-04-006	Can collaborate with Community Action Centers, law enforcement, hospitals, and other community professionals in implementing interdisciplinary responses to child maltreatment

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 112 FUNDAMENTALS OF ENGAGING FAMILIES

Skill Sets

112-01: Ability to integrate casework methods with the exercise of protective authority to ensure children's safety

112-02: Ability to use casework relationship to engage and empower families to collaborate with the agency

112-03: Ability to engage and communicate with families within their own cultural context

112-04: Ability to conduct individual and family group interviews

Skill Set 112-01: Ability to integrate casework methods with the exercise of protective authority, to ensure children's safety

Comp. No.	Competency Description
112-01-001	Knows the characteristics, benefits, and limitations of a collaborative casework approach and protective authority approach to child protection
112-01-002	Understands dilemmas posed by a caseworker's dual responsibilities as an empowering child and family advocate(enabler) and a strong protective authority (enforcer)
112-01-003	Understands the importance and benefits of using the least intrusive level of authority needed to protect children
112-01-004	Knows strategies to engage and empower families while retaining necessary levels of protective authority to ensure child safety
112-01-005	Can communicate the agency's mandate to ensure children's safety, and outline the agency's expectations for parents in a respectful and supportive manner
112-01-006	Can flexibly integrate engagement and enforcement strategies in a manner most appropriate for each family's unique circumstances

Skill Set 112-02: Ability to use casework relationship to engage and empower families to collaborate with the agency

Comp. No.	Competency Description
112-02-001	Knows how social work values and principles apply to casework relationships, including respecting each family's dignity, culture, individuality, and right to self-determination
112-02-002	Knows the role and characteristics of a casework relationship in family-centered child protection
112-02-003	Knows caseworker attitudes and behaviors that can help family members develop trust and confidence in the caseworker.

112-02-004	Knows barriers in child welfare settings that can interfere with developing relationships with family members
112-02-005	Understands the concept of family empowerment and how a trusting and collaborative casework relationship can often motivate and sustain productive change in a family
112-02-006	Understands how fear, uncertainty, and other feelings may be expressed by families as hostility, aggressive behavior, withdrawal, denial of problems, and resistance
112-02-007	Can assess and determine the sources of hostility and resistance in individual families.
112-02-008	Can use casework and interviewing strategies to promote development of a collaborative family/caseworker relationship.
112-02-009	Can use casework strategies to help families deal with their anger and fear and become invested in change activities.

Skill Set 112-03: Ability to engage and communicate with families within their own cultural context

Comp. No.	Competency Description
112-03-001	Understands how cultural factors, including verbal and non-verbal communication styles, can create misunderstandings and misjudgments by family members and caseworkers.
112-03-002	Knows the difficulties in establishing open communication with families whose knowledge of English is limited, and knows how and when to involve interpreters.
112-03-003	Knows how cultural rules regarding male/female relationships or relationships with outsiders may affect family members' relationship with the caseworker.
112-03-004	Knows how to identify barriers to relationship development in each family and can apply culturally appropriate strategies to overcome them
112-03-005	Can establish rapport and relationships with families from a variety of diverse cultures and backgrounds

Skill Set 112-04: Ability to conduct individual and family group interviews

Comp. No.	Competency Description
112-04-001	Recognizes interviews as the principal means of implementing the helping process
112-04-002	Knows the importance of establishing a purpose for each interview, of communicating this purpose to family members, and of selecting the best interview strategies to achieve it.
112-04-003	Knows the definitions and characteristics of "content" and "process" in casework, and the importance of eliciting and discussing process-level issues to assure a thorough and accurate assessment
112-04-004	Knows the appropriate standards and limits for disclosing personal information to family members during an interview
112-04-005	Understands how a collaborative casework relationship can enhance the effectiveness of an interview and increase the accuracy of communications
112-04-006	Knows interviewing strategies to help family members comfortably express and discuss their feelings, concerns, and opinions.

112-04-007	Knows interviewing strategies to deal with conflict, respond to hostile or accusatory statements, or confront family members who are reluctant to deal with critical issues
112-04-008	Knows how to observe, explore, and interpret nonverbal communications, including tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and choice of words.
112-04-009	Can empower family members to discuss and agree upon objectives for each interview.
112-04-010	Can develop interview questions and responses to guide the direction of an interview to achieve its stated purpose
112-04-011	Can flexibly select or modify interviewing strategies in response to family members' reactions and contributions
112-04-012	Can summarize discussion to restate or reaffirm conclusions and decisions made during an interview.

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 113

LEGAL ASPECTS OF CHILD PROTECTION

Skill Sets

113-01: Ability to use the juvenile court to protect children from maltreatment and to assure permanency within legally established time frames.

113-02: Ability to gather, prepare, and document case information for court

113-03: Ability to testify in juvenile court hearings

Skill Set 113-01: Ability to access the juvenile court to protect children from maltreatment and to assure permanency within legally established time frames	
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
113-01-001	Knows the importance of adhering to the provisions of federal and state statutes and rules in child welfare casework
113-01-002	Knows legal protections afforded to families and children by juvenile court intervention, and the potential detrimental consequences if legal procedures are not followed
113-01-003	Knows Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code definitions for various forms of child maltreatment
113-01-004	Knows the unique role and responsibility of the juvenile court system in the child protection system
113-01-005	Knows the legal rights of children, parents, and caregivers in child welfare court actions, including parents' rights to due process, freedom from search and seizure without a warrant, and equal protection under the law
113-01-006	Knows roles and responsibilities of all parties in child protection proceedings in the juvenile court
113-01-007	Understands the purpose and processes of different types of juvenile court hearings and their associated casework responsibilities
113-01-008	Understands the types and purpose of juvenile court dispositions for abused, neglected, and dependent children and the caseworker's responsibilities in each
113-01-009	Understands the criteria to determine when and what kind of court action to file in a case, and the joint role of caseworkers and prosecutors in making this decision
113-01-010	Understands how insufficient or inaccurate knowledge about a family's needs and strengths can influence recommendations to the court and contribute to disproportionality in the child welfare system
113-01-011	Understands the circumstances under which a case disposition of Permanent Planned Living Arrangement (PPLA) can be considered

113-01-012	Understands the provisions of federal and state laws regarding reasonable efforts to prevent out-of-home placement of children
113-01-013	Understands family and case circumstances in which a waiver of reasonable efforts may be considered, and the necessary juvenile court processes to obtain a waiver
113-01-014	Knows how to collaborate with Court Appointed Special Advocacy (CASAs) and Guardians ad Litem (GALs) to serve the best interests of children in the court system
113-01-015	Can use Ohio Revised Code definitions to determine the type of child maltreatment in a family and when to involve juvenile court
113-01-016	Can initiate and follow through with the appropriate juvenile court actions to assure children's safety
113-01-017	Can collaborate with juvenile court personnel and the prosecuting or agency attorney in court actions on behalf of children

Skill Set 113-02: Ability to gather, prepare, and document case information for court	
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
113-02-001	Knows the liabilities for children and families of poorly organized, incomplete or inaccurate case documentation
113-02-002	Knows the penalties and liabilities for agencies and workers of submitting falsified documents, case notes, or case plans to the court
113-02-003	Knows the applicable juvenile court rules of evidence for child protection cases
113-02-004	Knows the caseworker's responsibilities in locating and contacting absent biological parents and putative fathers for court actions
113-02-005	Knows what types of evidence must be gathered, documented and maintained in family case records to support court proceedings
113-02-006	Understands the importance of documenting casework efforts to reunify families while concurrently developing and filing a supplemental case plan for permanence
113-02-007	Understands the importance of documenting efforts to protect parents' constitutional rights during casework activities
113-02-008	Understands how case documentation is used in legal proceedings, including custody hearings
113-02-009	Knows how to use data gathering strategies that protect evidence during investigations
113-02-010	Knows how to follow procedures required by statute and policy so that evidence will be admissible to the court
113-02-011	Knows how to collaborate with prosecuting attorneys to prepare case documentation for filing and presentation to the court
113-02-012	Can write case notes and documentation that will be admissible and effective in court actions
113-02-013	Can apply rules of evidence in gathering information and preparing documentation to submit the juvenile court

Skill Set 113-03: Ability to testify in juvenile court hearings	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
113-03-001	Knows the importance of a calm and confident demeanor, professional physical appearance, and appropriate use of language when testifying in juvenile court hearings
113-03-002	Knows the fundamental rules of evidence, including hearsay, exceptions to hearsay and proper use of case notes
113-03-003	Knows how to apply rules of evidence to testimony in individual cases, and how to choose information that will support the case filing
113-03-004	Knows strategies to present concise descriptions of facts and avoid presenting more detailed information than is warranted
113-03-005	Knows strategies to respond to direct questioning and to cross-examination
113-03-006	Can present well organized, relevant information during court testimony and cross-examination

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 114

FUNDAMENTALS OF ASSESSMENT IN CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Skill Sets

114-01: Ability to determine the level of immediate and future risk of abuse or neglect to children

114-02: Ability to conduct comprehensive family assessments for purposes of case planning and service delivery

114-03: Ability to design and implement safety plans to protect children at immediate danger of serious harm

Skill Set 114-01: Ability to determine the level of immediate and future risk of abuse or neglect to children	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
114-01-001	Knows the purpose of risk assessment in assessing child maltreatment allegations and determining children's safety
114-01-002	Understands the importance of using formal risk assessment technologies to increase the validity of conclusions about risk
114-01-003	Understands the components, strengths and limitations of risk assessment instruments and technologies
114-01-004	Understands how safety assessment fits within the continuum of risk assessment strategies.
114-01-005	Understands the individual, family and environmental factors often associated with increased risk of maltreatment to children
114-01-006	Understands individual, family, and environmental strengths that can often mitigate risk and protect children from maltreatment
114-01-007	Understands the complex interactions of risk contributors and protective factors in creating an overall estimate of risk
114-01-008	Knows what information must be gathered when screening an initial referral to identify children who may be at imminent risk of serious harm.
114-01-009	Knows strategies to gather information from immediate and extended family members about contributors to risk and protective factors in the family.
114-01-010	Knows how to elicit information from key informants, case records, community professionals and other sources to expand and verify information collected from family members
114-01-011	Can conduct individual and family interviews to gather and verify information about risk factors present in the family and their environment
114-01-012	Can use standardized risk assessment tools to accurately estimate and document the risk of future harm for a child

114-01-013	Can identify strengths and resources in the immediate and extended family, neighborhood, and community that can mitigate risk
114-01-014	Can use information about present risk factors to establish an appropriate level of priority and urgency for an intake or initial family assessment

Skill Set 114-02: Ability to conduct comprehensive family assessments for purposes of case planning and service delivery	
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
114-02-001	Knows the importance of a holistic approach to family assessment that addresses contributors to maltreatment, family strengths/protective capacities, and family needs.
114-02-002	Knows the liabilities and potential dangers to children of basing case plans and services on an insufficient or inaccurate assessment.
114-02-003	Knows the importance of conducting assessments in collaboration with family members to increase the depth, accuracy, and relevance of assessment findings
114-02-004	Knows the full range of individual, family, and environmental problems, strengths, and resources to be addressed in a child welfare family assessment
114-02-005	Understands how family needs, problems, and environmental conditions may interact to increase the potential for recurrences of child maltreatment
114-02-006	Understands how protective capacities, including family resilience, coping skills, and intrafamilial and community supports, can help families prevent recurrences of maltreatment
114-02-007	Understands how cultural factors and differences in parenting practices can complicate a family assessment and potentially lead to inaccurate conclusions about families
114-02-008	Understands the benefits of using open-ended interview strategies to engage families and to obtain more thorough and accurate assessment information.
114-02-009	Understands how preconceived expectations, misjudgments based on insufficient information, and worker ethnocentrism may bias a worker's interpretation of individual and family behavior, attitudes, and communications.
114-02-010	Understands the potential harm to families and children of drawing conclusions based on inaccurate or insufficient information
114-02-011	Understands the importance of documenting thorough, summarized case assessment information in the family's case record
114-02-012	Knows how to select and sequence activities to maximize family members' comfort and participation in the assessment
114-02-013	Can analyze, compare, and integrate assessment information from various sources, test the accuracy of information, and draw relevant conclusions upon which to base case decisions.
114-02-014	Can help families identify specific risk factors that may contribute to or sustain child maltreatment in the family
114-02-015	Can help families identify personal and family strengths, extended family networks, and community/neighborhood resources to ensure children's safety and promote constructive change
114-02-016	Can document assessment findings and conclusions in a thorough, summarized assessment report

Skill Set 114-03: Ability to design and implement safety plans to protect children at immediate danger of serious harm	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
114-03-001	Knows the role and importance of safety planning in child welfare practice.
114-03-002	Knows the necessary components of a safety plan and how it differs from a case plan to guide service delivery
114-03-003	Understands concepts of reasonable efforts and placement prevention and how these affect safety planning
114-03-004	Knows how to engage and involve immediate and extended family members in safety planning activities
114-03-005	Knows how to build on the strengths and protective capacities of family members in safety planning.
114-03-006	Knows how to access agency and community supportive services and resources to help keep children safe in their own families
114-03-007	Knows how to determine when an emergency, out-of-home placement is the only viable option to ensure children's safety
114-03-008	Knows how to determine when removal of the perpetrator from the home is the most appropriate safety plan for a child.
114-03-009	Can work jointly with families to develop and implement a safety plan to protect children at high risk of immediate serious harm
114-03-010	Can plan and use in-home supportive services to prevent out-of-home care placement

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 115 FUNDAMENTALS OF INVESTIGATIONS

Skill Sets

115-01: Ability to screen referrals to determine the level of priority for agency response

115-02: Ability to use a family-centered approach when conducting child maltreatment investigations

115-03: Ability to plan, coordinate, and conduct investigations in collaboration with community partners

Skill Set 115-01: Ability to screen referrals to determine the level of priority for agency response	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
115-01-001	Understands dynamics that may prevent reporters from providing detailed information about a family's situation
115-01-002	Knows interview strategies to encourage and assist reporters to provide detailed, accurate information about the child(ren) and family being reported.
115-01-003	Knows the relevant criteria to be used when screening referrals of different types, and the appropriate priority level for different presenting needs and referral concerns
115-01-004	Can gather sufficient information about prior maltreatment, child's current condition, the family's situation, and indicators of imminent risk to establish the priority level for agency response.
115-01-005	Can determine which referrals should be accepted for investigation, which should be referred for assessment or to alternative providers, and which should be closed at the screening level.

Skill Set 115-02: Ability to use a family-centered approach when conducting child maltreatment investigations	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
115-02-001	Knows the importance of establishing rapport with family members from the first telephone or face-to-face contact
115-02-002	Understands how to consider cultural factors when developing a plan for an investigation
115-02-003	Understands dynamics that can reduce family members' willingness to provide information about their situation to the investigating caseworker
115-02-004	Understands issues related to parents' constitutional rights and how to respect those rights during investigations
115-02-005	Knows how to reduce resistance and engage family members during investigative interviews

115-02-006	Knows how to link families with community or agency services at the time of the investigation to assure children’s safety and prevent out-of-home placement
115-02-007	Can model a casework relationship, communicate respect, and keep family members involved and invested while completing an investigation.
115-02-008	Can access a range of neighborhood and community service resources to provide immediate child protection and/or support for the family.

Skill Set 115-03: Ability to plan, coordinate, and conduct investigations in collaboration with community partners	
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
115-03-001	Knows the purpose, goals, and objectives of a child maltreatment investigation and the criteria to determine if an investigation is warranted.
115-03-002	Knows the importance of using information obtained during the screening interview to plan an approach for an investigation.
115-03-003	Knows the benefits of using a formal, interagency and interdisciplinary approach to child maltreatment investigations
115-03-004	Knows the child welfare agency’s role and responsibilities when collaborating with child advocacy centers (CACs) and multi-disciplinary teams during child maltreatment investigations
115-03-005	Knows when to involve law enforcement and the respective roles of the police and child protection worker in an investigation
115-03-006	Knows how safety assessment, risk assessment, and safety planning are integrated into the investigation
115-03-007	Knows strategies to ensure a caseworker’s safety during an investigation
115-03-008	Knows how to determine who should be interviewed and the types of information to be gathered from each informant.
115-03-009	Knows the purpose of structured protocols and forensic interviewing methods to maximize the accuracy and admissibility of evidence gathered during the investigation.
115-03-010	Knows the circumstances when it is appropriate to interview children at school prior to interviewing the child’s parent(s)
115-03-011	Knows how to gather, compile and record investigation data so that findings may be used as evidence in a court proceeding.
115-03-012	Knows how to determine the sequence, timing, and location of investigation interviews.
115-03-013	Can gather relevant information from family members, alleged child victims, extended family, and other collateral contacts during an investigation to support or refute referral allegations
115-03-014	Can coordinate the agency’s investigation activities with other members of interdisciplinary child maltreatment teams.

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 116

FUNDAMENTALS OF CASE PLANNING AND FAMILY-CENTERED CASEWORK

Skill Sets

116-01: Ability to develop and help families implement case plans that address high priority needs, build on family strengths, and reduce recurrences of maltreatment

116-02: Ability to work collaboratively with families and service providers to plan and coordinate services

116-03: Ability to use permanency planning activities, including supplemental planning, to ensure placement stability

116-04: Ability to complete case documentation and organize and maintain family case records.

Skill Set 116-01: Ability to develop and help families implement case plans that address high priority needs, build on family strengths, and reduce recurrences of maltreatment

Comp. No.	Competency Description
116-01-001	Knows the potentially destructive effects on children and families of vague, incomplete and non-individualized case plans
116-01-002	Knows the importance of involving family members in all phases of case plan development
116-01-003	Knows the proper sequence of steps in the case planning process
116-01-004	Knows the difference between case goals, objectives, and activities
116-01-005	Knows criteria upon which to prioritize family needs and case goals and objectives
116-01-006	Knows the benefits of formally documenting case plans in each family's case record
116-01-007	Understands how case plans are used as the agency's formal negotiated agreement with families to guide, monitor, and evaluate change and goal achievement
116-01-008	Understands how case objectives are derived from information gathered during the risk, safety, and family assessments
116-01-009	Understands the importance of identifying culturally relevant service providers and engaging families to help choose service providers and resources
116-01-010	Understands how case plan documents are used in legal and court processes, and their importance in supporting the agency's legal position
116-01-011	Understands how ineffective case planning can promote premature or inappropriate case closure
116-01-012	Understands how periodic case reassessment can document changes and assure the continued relevance of services and activities
116-01-013	Knows strategies that facilitate full involvement of immediate and extended family members in case plan development
116-01-014	Knows how to develop case objectives that reflect needed changes in underlying conditions that increase risk and contribute to maltreatment.

116-01-015	Knows how to help families identify and access relevant services from the child welfare agency, service providers, and other entities in the family's neighborhood and community
116-01-016	Knows how to write case plans in language that can be easily understood by family members
116-01-017	Knows how to help families identify culturally responsive and knowledgeable service providers in their own community
116-01-018	Knows how to select and use specific interviewing strategies that facilitate case plan development
116-01-019	Knows engagement and supportive casework strategies to help families remain motivated over time to complete case plan activities.
116-01-020	Knows strategies to involve families and service providers in ongoing case review, reassessment, and revision of case plans
116-01-021	Knows criteria to determine when objectives have been met and a case can safely be closed
116-01-022	Knows how to link families with ongoing support to help them sustain gains after case closure and prevent reopening of cases
116-01-023	Can use case planning activities as a means of involving and empowering immediate and extended families to address their children's safety and permanency needs.
116-01-024	Can use case plans as a monitoring tool to chart progress and promote continued work toward jointly identified goals.
116-01-025	Can use formal case plan reviews as a tool to promote family group conferencing and collaboration with service providers.
116-01-026	Can use case plans as a tool to chart and monitor mandated time lines and prevent children from becoming lost in the system.
116-01-027	Can use case plans as a feedback tool for families to help them recognize their successes and guide continued work toward change.

Skill Set 116-02 Ability to work collaboratively with families and service providers to plan and coordinate services	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
116-02-001	Knows the primary responsibilities and activities of a case manager.
116-02-002	Knows the types of formal and informal neighborhood and community resources that can be accessed to support and serve families
116-02-003	Knows the liabilities of referring families for services without following up to coordinate and evaluate services
116-02-004	Knows intra- and inter-agency, community, and cultural barriers that may prevent families from accessing or benefiting from services
116-02-005	Understands the value of home visits to learn about extended family supports and available services and resources in a family's neighborhood and community
116-02-006	Understands the importance of exploring family members' recommendations of culturally responsive service providers in their communities

116-02-007	Understands the caseworker's responsibility to be an advocate for families and children to ensure access to needed services
116-02-008	Understands the importance of coordinating services delivered by multiple service providers and the difficulties experienced by families when services are not well coordinated
116-02-009	Understands the caseworker's responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of services provided by other agencies or providers
116-02-010	Can enable families and service providers to work as a team to ensure children's safety and permanence
116-02-011	Can identify and help families access formal and informal neighborhood and community services that best meet their individual needs
116-02-012	Can empower family members to fulfill case plan objectives and reassess their accomplishments
116-02-013	Can advocate on behalf of families to eliminate barriers and to coordinate services provided by neighborhood and community-based providers

Skill Set 116-03: Ability to use permanency planning activities, including supplemental planning, to ensure placement stability

Comp. No.	Competency Description
116-03-001	Knows the purpose of supplemental case planning in achieving timely permanence for children
116-03-002	Knows the importance of beginning permanency planning at the time of first contact with a family
116-03-003	Knows the circumstances when a formal supplemental case plan should be developed
116-03-004	Knows the necessary elements that should be included in a supplemental case plan
116-03-005	Understands the dynamics of family members' discomfort and resistance when asked to consider alternative permanent placements for their children
116-03-006	Knows strategies to introduce a discussion of permanency issues during the family assessment and to empower immediate and extended family members to consider potential permanency solutions.
116-03-007	Can discuss permanency issues and alternative permanent placement options without communicating a lack of commitment to reunification
116-03-008	Can determine when the supplemental case plan should become the primary focus of casework activities

Skill Set 116-04 Ability to complete case documentation and organize and maintain family case records.

Comp. No.	Competency Description
116-04-001	Knows the importance of timely, accurate case documentation for agency accountability

116-04-002	Knows multiple types, purposes and uses of case documentation
116-04-003	Knows the scope and type of information that should be gathered from community service providers for inclusion in the case record
116-04-004	Understands how inaccurate or insufficient case documentation contributes to service ineffectiveness
116-04-005	Knows what information can be provided to other service providers to promote open communication and collaboration in planning and service delivery, without violating peoples' rights to privacy.
116-04-006	Knows how to use summarized case documentation, including risk assessments, safety assessments, and case plans to guide supervisory case reviews and periodic formal case review conferences (Semi-Annual Administrative Reviews)
116-04-007	Can write and integrate summarized, concise, and timely assessment and case plan information, and other supporting documentation into the case record
116-04-008	Can use computerized data collection and management systems where these are available

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 117

FUNDAMENTALS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY-CENTERED CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Skill Sets

117-01: Ability to identify indicators of age-appropriate development in all domains for children of varying ages

117-02: Ability to recognize indicators of developmental delays, disabilities, illness and other conditions that can affect children's development

117-03: Ability to help families access community resources to address children's developmental needs

117-04: Ability to help parents/caregivers use parenting strategies that meet their children's developmental needs

117-05: Ability to promote and sustain healthy attachments between children and their families or caregivers

117-01: Ability to identify indicators of age-appropriate development in all domains for children of varying ages

Comp. No.	Competency Description
117-01-001	Knows the caseworker's role as an advocate to promote healthy development of children served by the agency
117-01-002	Knows the combined effects of heredity (genetics and maturation) and environment in shaping children's development
117-01-003	Knows the essential prerequisites for healthy child development
117-01-004	Knows how "normal" development is determined and assessed
117-01-005	Knows the difference between chronological age and developmental age
117-01-006	Knows characteristics of the primary developmental domains (physical, social, emotional, cognitive) and their sub-domains
117-01-007	Knows stages, processes and milestones of normal development of infants (age birth - 1 year) in all domains
117-01-008	Knows stages, processes and milestones of normal development of toddlers (age 1-3 years) in all domains
117-01-009	Knows stages, processes and milestones of normal development of preschool children (age 3-5 years) in all domains
117-01-010	Knows stages, processes and milestones of normal development of school-age children (age 5-11 years) in all domains

117-01-011	Knows stages, processes and milestones of normal development of preadolescent children (age 11-13) in all domains
117-01-012	Knows stages, processes and milestones of normal development of adolescents (age 13-18) in all domains
117-01-013	Understands how development can be influenced by culture, and how a misinterpretation of cultural factors may reduce the accuracy of a developmental assessment
117-01-014	Understands how development in each developmental domain influences development in the other domains
117-01-015	Knows how to observe children's behavior and gather information about their developmental level from family members and other sources
117-01-016	Can determine a child's approximate developmental age in each domain

117-02: Ability to recognize indicators of developmental delays, disabilities, illness and other conditions that impact children's development

Comp. No.	Competency Description
117-02-001	Knows the profound negative effects of child maltreatment on children's health and development
117-02-002	Knows the worker's responsibility to screen children for untreated illnesses, developmental delays and disabilities, and how to arrange assessment, diagnosis, and remedial services
117-02-003	Knows the potential negative effects of maltreatment and separation trauma on the formation and maintenance of attachment in children
117-02-004	Knows the potential effects of maltreatment on development of children ages birth through adolescence
117-02-005	Knows physical and behavioral indicators of developmental delays and patterns of abnormal development
117-02-006	Knows indicators of behavioral and developmental conditions commonly seen in children who have been maltreated
117-02-007	Understands how children's behavior problems may be symptoms of underlying developmental delays or emotional disturbance, and also contribute to abuse or neglect
117-02-008	Knows how to observe children's behavior and ask relevant questions to identify early indicators of developmental delay or disability
117-02-009	Can assess children's behavior and development and identify inconsistencies between chronological and developmental age
117-02-010	Can recognize primary indicators of common developmental conditions and disabilities associated with child maltreatment
117-02-011	Can use assessment data to identify and prioritize children's developmental or treatment needs, and write case plan objectives that address these needs

117-03: Ability to help families access appropriate community resources to address children's developmental needs	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
117-03-001	Knows caseworker's role as case manager to help families access services to promote healthy development of children
117-03-002	Knows the range and types of services needed by children with developmental delays, disabilities and behavior disorders, and their families
117-03-003	Knows service providers, and funding options in a family's home community to deliver special services for children with developmental delays or disabilities
117-03-004	Understands the importance of interagency collaboration and eliminating inter-system and funding barriers when serving children with developmental disabilities and their families.
117-03-005	Knows strategies to encourage collaboration between service providers and family members to identify children's needs, plan and deliver services, and evaluate outcomes
117-03-006	Can design and implement a developmental or remedial case plan that meets children's special developmental needs

117-04: Ability to help parents/caregivers identify parenting strategies that meet their children's developmental needs	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
117-04-001	Knows age-appropriate expectations for children's behavior at different stages of development
117-04-002	Understands how age-appropriate children's behaviors can be misinterpreted and experienced as stressful by parents
117-04-003	Understands how stresses of parenting children with developmental or behavioral problems can contribute to child maltreatment
117-04-004	Understands how parenting strategies that involve power and coercion can contribute to maltreatment and to developmental, behavioral, and emotional problems in children
117-04-005	Understands how inconsistent parenting interventions and failure to establish and enforce structure or limits can worsen and sustain children's behavior problems
117-04-006	Understands the value of parent education, support groups, mentors, buddy systems, and respite services to help decrease stress experienced by parents or caregivers
117-04-007	Knows strategies to help parents develop realistic and age-appropriate expectations for their children's behavior as a means of preventing future maltreatment
117-04-008	Can guide parents to acquire parenting skills and behaviors that promote children's healthy development and reduce the risk of maltreatment

117-05: Ability to promote and sustain healthy attachments between children and their families or caregivers	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
117-05-001	Knows parenting practices that support the development of positive and secure attachments in children

117-05-002	Knows parenting practices that contribute to insecure or maladaptive attachment in children
117-05-003	Knows behavioral and emotional indicators of maladaptive attachment in children and their parents
117-05-004	Understands how consistency of caregivers, parenting interventions, situational stress, and children's temperaments interact over time to affect attachment
117-05-005	Understands the potential lifelong consequences of insecure or maladaptive attachment on children's development and mental health
117-05-006	Understands how child maltreatment at different ages and developmental stages can negatively affect attachment
117-05-007	Knows casework strategies to help parents and caregivers develop or strengthen attachments with children in their care
117-05-008	Can use observation and interviewing strategies to assess parent-child attachment.
117-05-009	Can help educate parents to promote the development of positive parent-child attachment
117-05-010	Can identify children with very disturbed or severely maladaptive attachment who need psychological treatment

CASEWORKER CORE COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 118

FUNDAMENTALS OF SEPARATION, PLACEMENT AND REUNIFICATION

Skill Sets

118-01: Ability to identify children and families suffering from separation-induced trauma

118-02: Ability to plan and implement placements that reduce stress, prevent trauma, and promote placement stability and permanence

118-03: Ability to keep parents and other family members involved with their children in placement

118-04: Ability to collaborate with and support foster and relative caregivers

118-05: Ability to work with families to promote reunification and placement stability

118-06: Ability to identify or develop alternative permanent homes for children

118-01: Ability to identify children and families suffering from separation-induced trauma	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
118-01-001	Knows the circumstances of placement that typically create stress and crisis for children and their families
118-01-002	Knows the typical behavioral indicators of stress and crisis in children of different ages, and in family members of placed children
118-01-003	Understands the caseworker's responsibility to minimize the trauma experienced by children and their families during placement
118-01-004	Understands the potential serious negative impact of separation, out-of-home placement and impermanence on attachment, child development and family emotional stability
118-01-005	Understands how children's developmental level affects their level of stress, their ability to cope, their perception of the experience, and their susceptibility to crisis
118-01-006	Understands how traumatic effects of separation may be displayed as anxiety, depression, regression, withdrawal and oppositional/defiant or destructive behavior
118-01-007	Knows strategies to reduce stress and strengthen coping capacity in children of different ages and developmental levels
118-01-008	Can identify children or family members in crisis and can determine when separation trauma is a significant contributor

118-02: Ability to plan and implement placements that reduce stress, prevent trauma, and promote placement stability and permanence for children	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
118-02-001	Knows agency and community factors that create pressure to remove children from their families in situations of alleged child maltreatment
118-02-002	Knows the potential benefits and liabilities of placing children with relatives / extended family members
118-02-003	Knows the factors to be considered when selecting the most appropriate placement setting for children
118-02-004	Knows what information must be communicated to foster and kinship caregivers to help them meet children's needs
118-02-005	Understands the rationale for placing siblings together and the potential traumatic consequences of separating them
118-02-006	Understands how children of different ages experience separation and placement and the implications for placement planning
118-02-007	Understands the concept of transitioning and the importance of structuring and staging placement activities to prevent crisis
118-02-008	Understands the value of involving parents and family members in identifying placement resources, preparing children, and accompanying children on pre-placement visits
118-02-009	Understands the benefits of foster and kinship caregivers as potential permanent placement resources for children in their care
118-02-010	Understands the need for immediate and frequent post-placement contact between children and families to prevent separation trauma
118-02-011	Knows how to conduct pre-placement decision-making meetings with families and other agency staff
118-02-012	Knows the necessary steps to fully prepare children, their families and foster/relative caregivers for placement
118-02-013	Knows how to help parents identify potential placement resources within the extended family network and neighborhood
118-02-014	Knows how to use crisis intervention methods during placements to reduce stress experienced by children and families and to strengthen their coping abilities.
118-02-015	Knows how to prepare kinship and foster caregivers for contact with members of a child's primary family during pre-placement visits to decrease stress for the child(ren) and family.
118-02-016	Knows how to maintain children's connections to their neighborhood, school, culture, and community while in placement.
118-02-017	Can weigh the potential trauma of separation and placement against the trauma of future maltreatment in their own homes when finalizing a decision to place a child.
118-02-018	Can implement short-term strategies that protect children in their own immediate or extended families while more permanent placement options are identified
118-02-019	Can implement emergency out-of-home placements that minimize trauma to the child and family

118-02-020	Can implement short-term strategies that protect children in their own immediate or extended families while more permanent placement options are identified
118-02-021	Can prepare children, family members, and caregivers to collaborate in transitioning children from their families into out-of-home care.
118-02-022	Can adjust placement activities and timing to minimize children's emotional distress.
118-02-023	Can help children express and constructively cope with their concerns, needs, and distress
118-02-024	Can help families identify potential short-term and permanent placement options for their children.

118-03: : Ability to keep parents and other family members involved with their children in placement	
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
118-03-001	Understands the importance of sustaining children's attachments to parents, siblings, and extended family members while in placement
118-03-002	Knows the caseworker's role in empowering family members to remain involved with children in care and invested in permanency planning.
118-03-003	Understands how insufficient pre-placement preparation can increase family members' resistance to a placement plan
118-03-004	Understands how a caseworker's attitude about parents' involvement in placement planning can affect a family's willingness to become and stay involved
118-03-005	Understands how placement-induced separation trauma and grief in family members may manifest in angry, hostile, belligerent or withdrawn behavior.
118-03-006	Understands how removal of their children can affect a family's confidence, self-worth, and commitment to reunification
118-03-007	Knows strategies to strengthen and sustain children's attachments to family members while in placement
118-03-008	Can plan and support frequent visits between children in care and their families, and can address or eliminate barriers to visitation.
118-03-009	Can help families cope with problems that arise during visits, including children's emotional distress and behavior problems.
118-03-010	Can use family /child visits to model, reinforce, and support constructive parenting practices.
118-03-011	Can help family members express their anger and distress, and clarify and cope with their feelings
118-03-012	Can involve family members in ongoing reviews of placement plans and in making permanency decisions for their children.

118-04 Ability to collaborate with and support foster and relative caregivers	
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Comp. No.	Competency Description
118-04-001	Knows the importance of supportive services to foster and kinship caregivers to strengthen and sustain placements

118-04-002	Knows the benefits of including foster and kinship caregivers as members of the case planning and service delivery team
118-04-003	Knows the role of caregivers in assessment of children's needs, in planning services, and implementing case plan activities.
118-04-004	Understands how training, respite care, mentoring programs, support groups, and casework support for caregivers can strengthen and sustain placements.
118-04-005	Understands the special needs of families caring for children with emotional, behavioral, medical, or substance abuse problems
118-04-006	Understands how placement can create unexpected and distressing changes in the caregiving family and potentially threaten placement stability.
118-04-007	Understands the impact of grief and loss on caregiving families when children are returned home or adopted.
118-04-008	Understands the challenges for relative caregivers who may need to restrict or control access by parents of the children in their care
118-04-009	Can support caregiver involvement in all aspects of placement planning and empower caregivers to help make case decisions
118-04-010	Can engage and prepare caregivers to work directly with family members of children in care to achieve case plan objectives.
118-04-011	Can debrief and support foster and relative caregivers, children, and children's families after visits.
118-04-012	Can help caregivers manage conflicting feelings about supporting reunification while considering adoption or legal guardianship

118-05: Ability to work with families to promote reunification and placement stability	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
118-05-001	Knows the importance of reunification planning, preparation, and ongoing supportive services to stabilize the placement and prevent children from re-entering care
118-05-002	Knows the worker's responsibilities in helping families successfully complete case plan activities toward reunification
118-05-003	Knows the importance of teamwork and collaboration among community providers to achieve successful reunification
118-05-004	Knows the characteristics and elements of a well developed reunification plan
118-05-005	Knows factors typically associated with the re-neglect or re-abuse of children and their re-entry into foster care
118-05-006	Understands the psychological, environmental and social barriers to reunification and the importance of helping family members overcome these barriers
118-05-007	Understands factors that must be assessed to determine each family member's readiness for reunification, and the dynamics associated with low likelihood of successful reunification
118-05-008	Understands typical emotional reactions of parents whose children have been placed and how these may affect parent's behavior and willingness to pursue reunification

118-05-009	Understands how family visits can create emotional distress and trauma for children and family members
118-05-010	Understands the value of strengths-based and developmental models of intervention when pursuing reunification
118-05-011	Understands why parents might choose not to be reunited with their children.
118-05-012	Knows how to re-evaluate risk and child safety in preparation for and during reunification activities.
118-05-013	Knows the necessary steps to prepare families for the stresses and challenges they may face during reunification activities
118-05-014	Knows how to help families link with permanent support systems in their extended families and communities to assist them before, during, and after reunification.
118-05-015	Can keep families engaged and emotionally involved with their children during reunification and after children are returned home
118-05-016	Can assess family members' responses to visits and family contacts and use this information to modify reunification plans
118-05-017	Can help families anticipate areas of stress or conflict and design strategies to prevent or overcome challenges
118-05-018	Can determine when reunification is not an appropriate plan for a child or is not likely to succeed, and can communicate this to family members.

118-06: Ability to use supplemental case planning to develop alternative permanent homes for children who cannot be reunified with their families

Comp. No.	Competency Description
118-06-001	Knows the detrimental outcomes of impermanence and placement instability for children
118-06-002	Knows the range of permanency options available to children who cannot be reunited with their families
118-06-003	Knows criteria to select the most appropriate permanent placement for a child in care
118-06-004	Knows the importance of maintaining as much stability as possible in children's physical, social, cultural and psychological environments when choosing a permanent home
118-06-005	Knows the importance of asking family members to recommend potential permanent placements for their children and involving them in developing a permanency plan
118-06-006	Knows risks and disadvantages of Planned Permanency Living Arrangements (PPLA) as a permanent placement option for children in care
118-06-007	Understands the emotional and practical dilemmas faced by relative and foster caregivers in working toward reunification, when they have agreed to provide a permanent home for a child
118-06-008	Knows how to engage families to consider permanency options for their children without negating the importance of or the agency's commitment to promote reunification
118-06-009	Knows how to conduct a comprehensive assessment of children's developmental needs and use this information to select the most appropriate permanent home.

118-06-010	Can openly discuss with families the agency's commitment to achieving permanence for children within the time frames established by statute
118-06-011	Can help families develop permanent plans for their children when reunification is not possible.