

Responsibilities for Maintaining a Learning Environment

Orientation Reading

Because the field of child welfare is constantly changing, child welfare professionals must be constantly learning. As a result, developing agencies as active learning environments has become very important to PCSAs.

All staff have a responsibility to maintain and enhance a learning environment in their agency and unit.

Administrators

Administrators are responsible for:

- Setting expectations that the agency is a learning organization with an open, nurturing climate for self-development, learning, and feedback.
- Promoting the ongoing development of staff at all levels of the organization.
- Developing and maintaining an organizational culture which supports lifelong performance growth and learning in the team, unit or agency.
- Promoting organizational efforts to learn from other organizations and agencies.
- Providing for the development and allocation of resources to support skill building.

Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Engaging staff in the learning relationship.
- Using assessment information (such as the Individual Training needs Assessment, learning styles inventories, etc.) to jointly formulate developmental plans.
- Planning and supporting skill-building and transfer-of-learning interventions.
- Preparing staff to attend workshops through review of individual training needs assessments, review of workshop competencies, providing pre-training assignments, and meeting with staff prior to training to identify learning objectives.
- Supporting staff during training to assure their uninterrupted participation.
- Reviewing post-training action plans and providing reinforcement for skill application, and consequences and feedback when it does not occur.

- Planning and implementing coaching activities for the learner, based on assessment information as well as goals and objectives of the learner's developmental plan.
- Creating a safe learning environment to encourage staff to take risks when practicing new skills.
- Using case conferences and staff meetings to reinforce skills, provide supportive feedback concerning the application of practice standards, and provide clinical feedback relevant to reviewed cases.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Actively participating in the learning environment by seeking feedback from others, and seeking learning opportunities and available resources to support own development.
- Sharing new ideas and knowledge with others, providing peer mentoring when appropriate and giving developmental feedback to coworkers.
- Actively participating in joint assessment and planning to develop skills for assigned job tasks that include the completion of the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) and the development of action plans.
- Using and being receptive to developmental interventions including shadowing, coaching, mentoring and other skill-building activities.
- Providing feedback to supervisor regarding new knowledge and skills gained post training and participating in on-going assessment to identify performance gaps.
- Keeping abreast of current child welfare practice issues and ongoing changes in the child welfare profession.