



Trainer Code of Ethics

SALLY FITCH



Ethics are an important issue in any training program, including the OCWTP. Issues such as conflict of interest, inappropriate training behavior, abuse of training rules, cultural incompetence, and inappropriate conflict management, to name a few, create ethical questions about professional training development.

In 2003, recognizing the expanded role of human services training and development professionals, the National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) of the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) adopted a Code of Ethics. The code was collaboratively developed by professionals throughout the country; presented for feedback to NSDTA membership; and distributed at the recent NSDTA conference in Chicago. The 2004 publication, entitled, *The NSDTA Code of Ethics for Training and Development Professionals in Human Services*, can be downloaded at <http://nsdta.aphsa.org/resources.htm>

Over the course of the next year, we will present parts of the Code, along with compliance and non-compliance case scenarios.

The first part of the NSDTA Code of Ethics discusses the core values and principles of a human services training and development professional. The following information is taken directly from *The NSDTA Code of Ethics for Training and Development Professionals in Human Services: Case Scenarios and Training Implications* (2004).

The first core value involves assuring the well-being of others and avoiding actions that would cause harm.

Value: Beneficence and Non-maleficence

Above all else, training and development professionals should promote the well-being of others and avoid activities, interventions, and relationships that may bring others harm.

Since certain aspects of human services may involve risk of harm or discomfort to practitioners (e.g., working with violent clients), simulated training and development activities may also present a risk to training and development participants. The potential risk of harm or discomfort to a participant must be considered relative to the potential learning and development opportunity. Every effort should be made to ensure the physical and emotional safety and security of all participants.

Compliance Example - A youth worker trainer informed potential training participants prior to the training of the potential risks involved in participating in physical crisis management training (e.g., the possibility of clothes being torn and muscle strain). Prior to the training, the trainer planned for the prevention of physical and emotional injury to the learner. This prevention preparation included planning of the physical environment (e.g., providing sufficient space and mats for "take-downs"). The trainer also limited the number of participants to ensure that the participants could safely demonstrate and practice newly learned skills under the trainer's guidance. When planning for the training, the trainer met with program activity personnel and reviewed the training plan, jointly assessing the importance of the learning objectives relative to the risk to the learner. Concern was expressed regarding potential risk of physical injury for some of the staff who were "out of shape." Alternative learning activities along with a longer period of time for "successful completion of training" were considered for those who may not have been able to perform certain activities. Additional trainer assistants were also hired for "demonstration periods" to assure safe and successful learning of crucial crisis management skills.

Noncompliance Example - A training video-tape was mailed to each foster parent prior to receiving a child who experienced sexual abuse to help them better understand the special needs of the child. The video contained detailed accounts of sexual abuse by the survivors. The video had previously been used in the training of child protective services social workers and typically resulted in at least one participant crying and leaving the room. Due to the geographical distance from the training site of many of the foster parents and other logistical concerns, training personnel decided that the use of the mailed video was a cost-effective way to provide "training." The training personnel did not know if any of the foster parents had experienced sexual abuse themselves. No additional support for the foster parents before, during, or after the viewing of the video was provided.

The second core value addresses trainers' commitment to establishing a learning environment and promoting transfer of learning.

Value: Learning, Development, Self-Awareness, and Self-Actualization

Training and development professionals are committed to promoting the development of human services practitioners by facilitating knowledge acquisition, skill demonstration and practice; exploring values and attitudes; increasing self-awareness and metacognitive abilities; utilizing strategies to promote transfer of learning; and advocating for the development of learning organizations/communities. Training and development professionals also value the importance of ensuring their own learning, development, self-awareness, and self-actualization.

Compliance Example - During orientation training, a trainer at a mental health agency encourages new employees to think about how to get the most from their learning experiences (formal and informal). The trainer administers a learning style inventory to help participants become aware of their perceived learning styles. The trainer also provides suggestions to enhance learning during training and application of learning on the job.

Noncompliance Example - Concerned that a group of economic assistance workers were reluctant to demonstrate and practice needed assessment interviewing skills in the training, a trainer decided to show an "entertaining" video that illustrated poor interviewing techniques (e.g., what not to do) in a counseling setting instead of rehearsing the interviewing skills. Although the participants did not have the opportunity to demonstrate and practice the appropriate interviewing skills, they rated the trainer very highly on the training evaluation form.

The third core value recognizes trainers' leadership role. Trainers recognize their potential influence and take responsibility for their activities in promoting service to others.

Value: Human Service Leadership

Training and development professionals recognize the importance of providing leadership in human services through training and development activities. Training and development professionals also recognize their potential influence and take responsibility for their activities in promoting service to others.

Compliance Example - A training and development researcher who explored factors affecting the transfer of learning of employment counselors presented her results at a conference attended by state and federal policy-makers. One week after her presentation, she mailed the participants a "user friendly" pamphlet that clearly indicated potential policy changes based on her research that could improve transfer of learning of employment counselors resulting in better services to the unemployed. The researcher enclosed her business card along with an offer of additional assistance if requested.

Noncompliance Example - Several workshop participants in elderly care training complained to the trainer and other participants that the "administration" was not concerned about the care of the elderly. Even though a few of the other workshop participants indicated that some of the complaints were not entirely accurate, the trainer permitted the participants to "vent" during the training for 20 minutes. The trainer finally redirected the discussion back to the scheduled training by sympathizing with the "complainers" stating "it's too bad that there is nothing I can do, I just do the training. We better get to the next section so that we will have time for a break."



IHS Welcomes New FAK Training Consultant, Leslie Ahmadi

IHS is pleased to introduce Dr. Leslie Ahmadi as the new training consultant in foster, adoptive, and kinship care for the OCWTP.

Formerly a college professor in Spanish, English as a foreign language, and cross-cultural communication, Dr. Ahmadi has a Ph.D. in foreign language and culture education from The Ohio State University, and an M.A. in Spanish from the University of North Carolina.. Her passion in these areas led her to live and work for several years in Latin America and the Middle East, and has profoundly influenced both her personal and professional life. She has accrued more than 20 years of national and international experience as a language coach and cross-cultural trainer, preparing individuals and families for "the overseas experience."

Leslie became known to IHS in 2002, when she became certified with the OCWTP as a trainer of Spanish and cross-cultural skills for caseworkers servicing the needs of children and families from the Spanish-speaking world.

In her current role as training consultant, Leslie feels a genuine affinity with OCWTP for its commitment to promote and develop cultural competence through its training program. At the same time, she feels privileged to work on behalf of children and caregivers facing the inevitable transition of new placements.

Having crossed international cultural boundaries, she understands the readjustment required when family values, expectations, and behaviors shift.

To review the entire NSDTA Code of Ethics, go to: <http://nsdta.aphsa.org>

NEW LOCATION APRIL TOT:
Nan Beeler's April TOT on Curriculum Development has been changed from Columbus to Akron. If you have questions, please call Debra Sparrow: 614/251-6000.

Forrester Family Video,
used by OCWTP, receives
the *Quality in Training Award*
from NSDTA and APHSA

On November 2, 2004, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), and the Institute for Human Services (IHS) shared the *Quality in Training Award* presented by the National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) of the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) for the development of the *Forrester Family Video*. This award is presented annually to a training program or product that exemplifies the highest quality and integrity in public human service training. The award was presented as part of NSDTA's annual conference held this year in Chicago.

The *Forrester Family Video* is a dramatization of a case example, originally published in the *Field Guide to Child Welfare* authored by Drs. Ronald Hughes and Judith Rycus, illustrating the phases of casework, including engagement, relationship development, family assessment, and case planning.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Hughes stated :

“To provide a training program in CPS, driven by the systemic training needs of staff, is inherently a daunting task. As trainers and social work educators, we have a real responsibility to continue to reinforce this reality with both child welfare administrators and the general public. We need to tell them we cannot do social work without a social work education. We cannot train skills without first training knowledge. We cannot produce skilled practitioners without adequate time, resources, and support. We need to tell them not to ask us for simple solutions to complex problems. And, we need to tell them, when others do offer them simple solutions, they are most likely simplistic solutions and solicitous ones. This is why IHS is proud to be part of the development of the *Forrester Family Video*. The videotape is a developmental training tool that recognizes the time and effort required to both teach and learn the complex child welfare skills of engagement, assessment, case planning, and interviewing.”

Floyd Alwon, accepting the award for the CWLA, stated the *Field Guide To Child Welfare*, the source of the *Forrester Family Video*, “was arguably CWLA’s most significant publication ever, and the *Forrester Family Video* was an excellent example of how collaboration can work.”

Maltreatment of Children by Their Substitute Caregivers

Amy Eaton

On rare occasions, children suffer maltreatment at the hands of their substitute caregiver. The national rate of repeat maltreatment of children in care is 0.57 percent. In Ohio, the rate is higher, at 0.59 percent, according to the Statewide Assessment data for Contract Year 2000, submitted in response to the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR).

Through the CFSR-PIP, ODJFS seeks to meet the national standard of 0.57 percent (indicated or substantiated neglect/child abuse by substitute caregiver) by December 2005. The Department will provide focused technical assistance to the two largest county agencies in the state, enforce caregiver training mandates, and address issues that impact the rate of maltreatment of children in care.

Item 2-B of the PIP identifies the Department’s action steps for reducing the rate of maltreatment of children in care, and progress is as follows:

- ODJFS has worked with Franklin and Cuyahoga counties to assess apparent issues regarding abuse and neglect reporting, and in responding to third-party investigations involving substitute caregivers.
- To ensure that training requirements are adhered to (particularly those involving discipline and use of restraint), foster care licensing staff continue to review foster parent and residential youth care employee records on an ongoing basis.
- The department supported the enactment of HB 117, which strengthens and clarifies new and existing caregiver training requirements. New OAC amendments were developed, and the formation of internal committees convened, in part to review pertinent regulations around caregiver training, particularly around behavior management, use of restraint, and abuse and neglect reporting. The department did not support HB 237 as originally intended, as HB 237 exceeded the realm of the PIP.

In 2005, the PIP calls for an analysis of information to determine the effectiveness of new and existing training requirements, and the effectiveness of the department’s monitoring efforts. To further promote the reduction of maltreatment in care, the department has increased expectations of public and private agencies to continuously monitor incidents of abuse or neglect in care, particularly those occurring in group homes and residential centers.

Ethics Training Requirement, and Additional Scheduled Training:

Trainers holding counselor and social work licenses through the Ohio State Counselor and Social Work Licensure Board should know the following:

Three hours of continuing education on ethical topics is required every renewal period, which is every two years. You do not need to take a three-hour block, but can accumulate training to equal three hours.

Training does not need to be strictly on ethics. You may take training on “ethical topics,” such as confidentiality, and count that as your ethics training.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS. . .

Culture/Diversity Training
February 3, 4; and 14, 15, 2005
May 19, 20; and June 6, 7

Presentation Skills
February 14-16
May 24-26

Curriculum Development
February 10, 11
April 7, 8 (Located in Akron)

TOL, May 9

Pre-TOT, May 10

Skill Building TOT, May 17

WE LEARN BY DOING, AND BY THE DOINGS OF OTHERS!

Renee Resnik

Since the time when I was a little girl, my mother kept telling me to “Think before you speak, Renee.” This advice echoed in my head at a Training of Trainers Presentation Skills Workshop, helping me learn an important lesson about how and when to use humor appropriately.

By day three, we were in tune with each other, and I was feeling pretty good about their progress and our rapport. During group project playback, one of the trainees made an out-of-context remark and I responded in what I thought was a humorous manner. The rest of the group laughed, and I felt pretty good about myself. It wasn't until after the session, I realize my offhanded attempt at humor triggered a visceral response on the part of the person on which it landed. He had taken what I said literally and was offended, hurt, and embarrassed.

Learning what I had done was a striking teachable moment. I assessed the situation and realized some interesting aspects of myself and my role as a trainer. They are as follows:

1. Culturally, I have acquired a very sarcastic, sometimes cutting sense of humor. Those who know me take it for what its worth. However, spending three days with the same people does not make for the kind of relationship in which I can assume someone would know that my sense of humor is not meant to be hurtful.

2. As trainers, we should not cross over the line of seeing ourselves as friends to trainees. We must maintain an ever-present professionalism. My mistake was crossing that line

3. Humor is an important part of training; however, humor must be appropriate to the situation and people involved.

I accepted responsibility for my action, and reached out to this individual offering a sincere apology. He graciously accepted. Now, when I use humor with a group, I do what Mom said, think before I speak. AND, I use this story in TOT in hopes of helping my learners avoid making this same mistake.

COMMON GROUND is designed to inform trainers in the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program about issues, events, and trade secrets that will enhance the work of trainers in the program. You are encouraged to speak out. The editorial staff invites guest columnists, suggestions about materials or useful techniques, and topics for discussion in future issues.

The Editorial Staff reserves the right to condense and edit all materials submitted for publication.

COMMON GROUND is published three times a year. Send your material for future issues to:

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