



# COMMON GROUND

A FORUM FOR SHARING IDEAS, OPINIONS, AND INNOVATIONS IN CHILD WELFARE TRAINING

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## YOUR IMPORTANCE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE OCWTP

In 20 years the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program has grown far beyond offering CORE, and Specialized and Related trainings. Competencies have increased; curriculum has changed to meet new needs and times; training sessions have increased; and training populations have expanded. With this growth and change, a multitude of new trainers have been brought into the system. It is a daunting task to bring child welfare workers up to speed in a world that doesn't stand still. Trainers have a difficult job. They have to be multi-talented: facilitators, educators, listeners, coaches, technological wizards, current in their fields of expertise, and the list goes on. It is not easy to show proper appreciation of their skills, but the OCWTP made this attempt at the 2006 Trainer Event.

The theme of this year's event was "What's in Your Toolbox?" designed to make trainers aware of the importance of being current in training methods and skills.

In the opening session, Sally Cooper talked about five topics of significant importance to the OCWTP: the model framework for training strategies; the increased use of technology in training; non-classroom training strategies; the need for OCWTP trainers to be evidence-based practitioners; and the OCWTP's cultural competence work team and future direction.

Keynote speaker, Erik Olson, described the increasing engagement and participation in training through the use of the Classroom Performance System (CPS), a technology the OCWTP is incorporating into its Core training modules. Trainers were given an opportunity to use the CPS system and experience first-hand how using CPS makes training more dynamic and interactive.

Trainers were acknowledged by ODJFS Assistant Deputy Director, Tom Roelant, who talked about the task of training and complimented the OCWTP trainers on the quality, quantity, and importance of the service they provide. To augment continuing education, a variety of workshops were presented in the afternoon. *Ethics in the Online Environment* was presented by Tom Erney. Sally Fitch trained skill-building strategies for trainers; and Erik Olson lectured on ways to incorporate CPS technology in training presentations. Opportunities to brainstorm with other trainers occurred via "cracker-barrel sessions." Skills and tips included dealing

Keynote Speaker, Erik Olson working with trainers



with difficult participants, ways to efficiently and effectively engage participants, and ways for trainers to manage the common pitfalls of travel (see *On Being a Road Warrior*, pg 2).

### Award Winners:

Jayne Schooler  
and  
Jim Still-Pepper



Jayne Schooler, in recognition of the high quality, ethical, and family-centered training she provides to child welfare professionals throughout the state, was presented with the 2006 Linda Pope Award. Jim Still-Pepper was presented with the 2006 Rising Star Award, as a trainer who exhibits exemplary skills and content expertise in workshop delivery. William Kirby, recently retired, was recognized for his years of dedication and assistance in developing training workshops.

## On Being A Road Warrior:

### Taking Care of Yourself, Family, and Training

Renee Resnik

Here are some of the many ways to make life easier on the training road:

#### *Taking Care of Training*

In or outside of your home RTC you are a visitor. Do everything you can to make sure that you are always welcome.

Confirm material and equipment needs with the RTC in advance, making sure you have access to their equipment (including log in & password), and someone onsite for technical assistance. Check all equipment before you start, and leave the room the way you found it when you leave. Ask for directions on your first visit; an advance trial run to the center ensures timeliness. Ask about policies and procedures relevant to training in their centers. Learn about the issues and culture of the individuals you will be training to make content relevant to the learner's needs. Make a list of what you need to take to avoid forgetting something important. Draw a timeline of each training day to help with pacing; include notes on items needed for each section.

#### *Take Care of Self*

Before you hit the road, take care of family and business to avoid personal distractions. Address diet, exercise and sleep needs. Pay attention to what and where you will eat, and plan to exercise. Take your walking shoes and clothing to take advantage of opportunities to exercise or get out and walk. Take earplugs and eyeshades to block out noise and light. Be good to yourself. Do something fun or of interest to you in the evening. Don't necessarily use hotel time for work. Make your hotel room feel more like home with family photos, and fresh flowers. You can use the flowers to enhance the training room or as a prize on the last day of training.

#### *Taking Care of Family and Home*

You may be leaving, but family members and beloved pets are staying home and may require your consideration before you go. Arrange and document kids' transportation so everyone knows who is to be where and when. List and assign responsibility for tasks while you are gone and leave an itinerary. You may want to cook and freeze meals so that family members are not left fending for themselves. Schedule times for "check in" calls, and leave emergency numbers. Upon returning home, share what you did while you were gone, leaving stressors and complaints in the past. Your family is interested in what you do; after all, you are a role model!

## Keeping You in the Know . . .

### Trainer Responsibilities:

The OCWTP is in the process of reviewing trainer-related policies. The full policies will become available once approved by the OCWTP Central Steering Committee.

Below are some of the highlights:

- Turn your handouts of non-standardized workshops in to the RTC's at least four weeks in advance
- Keep your handouts of non-standardized workshops to 20 pages per participant for the first day and 10 pages thereafter
- Obtain prior approval from the RTC director for any guest speaker or co-trainer
- Respect client confidentiality during your workshops and remind your participants to do the same.

Stay tuned to future announcements of the finalized OCWTP trainer-related policies. Questions contact Kelley, [kgruber@IHS-trainet.com](mailto:kgruber@IHS-trainet.com) or Lois, [lojjean@aol.com](mailto:lojjean@aol.com).

**We honor our trainers  
again in 2007  
at the annual  
Trainer Event on  
March 12, 2007.**



Renee Resnik at the Trainer Event

## REGIONAL NEWS

### CORTC

There have been two recent staff changes at the Central Ohio Regional Training Center. The RTC welcomes Lydia Holloway as their newest staff person. She will provide clerical support to the Foster Care Training Program. We congratulate Teresa Coffey, who successfully launched the library at CORTC, on her promotion within Franklin County Children Services.

### ECORTC

Staff member, Connie McVey and her husband Terry, announced the coming marriage of their daughters! Natalie Knowlton (Data Entry) will soon celebrate her first grandchild.

ECORTC's host agency, Guernsey County Children Services, unveiled the Guernsey County Child Advocacy Center building on August 5, 2006. This state-of-the-art building is located in the same campus area and features two safe rooms for child interviews as well as a multi-purpose area, office, and multi-media room for videotaping. The multi-media equipment was donated by the Rotary Club, and over \$100,000 was donated by Women Interested in Children. The site is specifically designed to mitigate the trauma to children and to provide multi-disciplinary teams tools to lessen the impact of interviews on the child.

### SWORTC

In February, SWORTC's Training Coordinator, LaDonna Johnson's daughter, India was admitted to Cincinnati Children's Medical Hospital to treat a series of serious medical conditions. During her nearly two-month stay, India underwent three major surgeries and countless surgical procedures. Listed in critical condition for most of her time there, India was treated round-the-clock by the pediatricians and nursing staff in the Intensive Care Unit. On March 28, 2006, India was released. She is making great progress and has returned to school full time. The Johnsons send their thanks and appreciation for the overwhelming expressions of support, kind words, thoughts and cards.

### NCORTC

Back by popular demand, the NCORTC and the Cuyahoga County Department of Children & Family Services announce their second annual Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Caregiver Training Conference: *A Home Away From Home*, hosted by Myers University's Chester

Hall, 3921 Chester Avenue, Cleveland, Oh 44114.

Trainers from the NCORTC region are asked to encourage caregivers to mark their calendars for May 18 - 20, 2006. The conference will feature 38 training classes, including 31 NEW classes. Training topics will include behavior management, disciplinary techniques, adoption issues, gang awareness, wellness, fostering teens, primary families, kinship care, and many, many more. Foster parents can register by calling the 24-Hour automated foster parent training registration line at (216) 881-2022.

For additional information contact Eddie Lebron at (216) 881-5390 or Sonya McLoyd at (216) 881-4048.

### NEORTC

Phil Washington received the NEORTC 2006 Trainer of the Year Award. Phil has trained over 75 sessions of standardized curriculum and has developed trainings related to adolescents, single parents and fathers. In 2002, Phil developed "Mother's Paramour as Caretaker: Is It Safe?" for the NEORTC in response to a spike in the number of child deaths and serious injuries at the hands of mothers' boyfriends in the region during 2001.

Phil will be honored at the Annual Liaison Retreat October 6, 2006 at the Brushwood Shelter, Furnace Run Park, Richfield OH. He will present a three hour training; OCWTP trainers are invited to attend this event.

### ARE YOU IN THE LOOP?

Join the OCWTP's new trainer listserv to receive instant email updates on OCWTP policies, initiatives, and training opportunities.

To subscribe, contact Kathy Kelley ([kkelley@ihs-trainet.com](mailto:kkelley@ihs-trainet.com)) today with your current email address.

## SAVE THESE DATES:

### ... Presentation Skills

June 7-9, 2006

### ... Curriculum Development

May 3-4, 2006

### ... Culture and Diversity

May 22-23, and June 5-6, 2006

### ... Transfer of Learning

April 25, 2006

### ... Skill-Building Learning Lab

June 8, 2006

### ... PowerPoint

June 13, 2006

### ... Classroom Performance System

June 9, 2006

September 1, 2006

December 8, 2006

The Classroom Performance System TOT's will be held from 10:00-2:00. Laptops are encouraged, but not required. There will be room for 10 people per class. Trainers can register for TOT's by e-mailing Debra Sparrow at [dsparrow@ihs-trainet.com](mailto:dsparrow@ihs-trainet.com)

## ATTENTION PRESERVICE TRAINERS

After taking *Cultural Issues in Placement* during the Preservice training, many participants ask for additional resources. Preservice trainers are encouraged to refer participants to the OCWTP web page where they will find a *Cultural Resource Guide*. The guide includes articles, books for parents and children, and workbook/activity books for children. Participants can access the resource guide by going to <http://www.OCWTP.com>; click the *Trainings* link, click the *Adoption* link, click the *Adoption Tools* link; scroll down to *Cultural Issues in Permanency Planning*; and click on *Cultural Resource Guide*.

## MEPA Corner

In 1994, Congress enacted the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) and amended it through the Interethnic Adoption Provisions (IEP) in 1996. Today, we refer to the act as MEPA, as amended. The Act prohibits agency practices that delay permanency for children or discourage applicants from becoming foster and adoptive parents based upon race, color, or national origin (RCNO). For additional information go to this link: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/mepa94/mepachp2.htm>

### QUESTION:

"I have a four year old African-American child who is legally free for adoption. His mother, a regular church-goer, is requesting the agency to place her son with a family of the Apostolic faith. Eight family resources are available. The only one that is Apostolic happens to be African-American. Can the agency honor the birthmother's request, and would honoring her request be a violation of MEPA?"

### ODJFS RESPONSE:

The agency should not make a placement based upon religious preference alone. However, the agency can consider this birthmother's specific request as long as it is not viewed as a proxy for "race". The agency should explain to the birthmother that it is not permitted to discriminate based on RCNO in determining adoptive placements. During the matching staffing, the agency must consider all of the special needs of the child. The need for the child to be raised Apostolic may be one of the lowest priorities of all the child's special needs. The agency must also consider a family's ability to meet all of the child's special needs. The agency must follow OAC rule 5101:2-48-16 when documenting the placement decision.

Look for additional questions and responses about MEPA in the next *Common Ground*. Submit your questions to Charlotte Osterman at [costerman@ihs-trainet.com](mailto:costerman@ihs-trainet.com).

**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:  
Susan Yingling  
IHS  
1706 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, OH 43203

FAX 614/251-6005;  
EMAIL: [syingling@ihs-trainet.com](mailto:syingling@ihs-trainet.com)

### EDITORIAL STAFF:

Sandra Aska  
Sally Fitch  
Susan Yingling

[WWW.OCWTP.COM](http://WWW.OCWTP.COM)

## Institute for Human Services

State Coordinator  
Ohio Child Welfare Training Program  
1706 E. Broad St.  
Columbus OH 43203

[WWW.OCWTP.COM](http://WWW.OCWTP.COM)

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