

Leveraging Federal Funding to Support Foster Parent Training

A resource for public child welfare and
University administrators



Andrea Hightower, M.S. FHD
Strategic Partnerships for Child Welfare Training
Arizona State University
August 2015



Contents

Introduction	2
Foster Parent Support: A National Perspective	4
Foster Parents as a Key Component of a High Functioning Child Welfare System	6
Federal Funding for Foster Parent Training	7
Expanding Resources through University based Title IV-E Partnerships	9
Call for Action	12
Step 1: Replicate Successful Partnerships that include Federal Title IV-E Participation	12
Step 2: Leverage University Investment	13
Step 3: Invite Philanthropic and Local Business Support	14
Step 4: Explore Additional Areas of Mutual Interest	16
References	19

Introduction

Faculty and researchers within academic institutions of higher learning hold in common with public child welfare the goals of providing high quality adult education and improving the lives of those living in their communities. Arizona State University (ASU) is no exception to this, declaring as their charter:

ASU is a comprehensive public research university, measured not by whom we exclude, but rather by whom we include and how they succeed; advancing research and discovery of public value; and assuming fundamental responsibility for the economic, social, cultural, and overall health of the communities it serves.

(Arizona State University, 2015)

Similarly, Arizona's Department of Child Safety (DCS) mission states:

DCS is a human service organization dedicated to achieving safety, well-being and permanency for children, youth and families through leadership and the provision of quality services in partnership with communities.

(Department of Child Safety, 2015)

Research highlights both a continued need for better foster parent training, as well as an association between enhanced foster parent training and desirable child welfare outcomes (Chamberlain et al., 1992; Cuddeback & Orme, 2001; Dorgan, 1974; Fees et al., 1998; Heller et

al., 2002; MacGregor et al., 2006; Murray et al., 2011; Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000; Whenan et al., 2009; Whiting et al., 2007; & Urquhart, 1989). ASU and DCS are well positioned to leverage significant investments made to date in the area of child welfare by extending supports to foster and adoptive parents through the creation of new educational and research projects administered through Title IV-E agreements.



- Federal guidelines allow for up to 75% federal funding participation for training provided to foster and adoptive parents, reducing the overall costs to the state of Arizona for provision of such services (Administration for Children and Families, 2007).
- Work performed in conjunction with a public research university further increases federal funding participation as federally recognized indirect rates are matched at 50% (Administration for Children and Families, 2007).
- A multi-year agreement currently exists between ASU and the Department of Child Safety which outlines a process for ASU to submit eligible expenditures for inclusion in the state's federal Title IV-E claims (Arizona State University, 2015).
- Federal Title IV-E guidelines allow private funding to be considered an eligible expenditure (Administration for Children and Families, 2007).

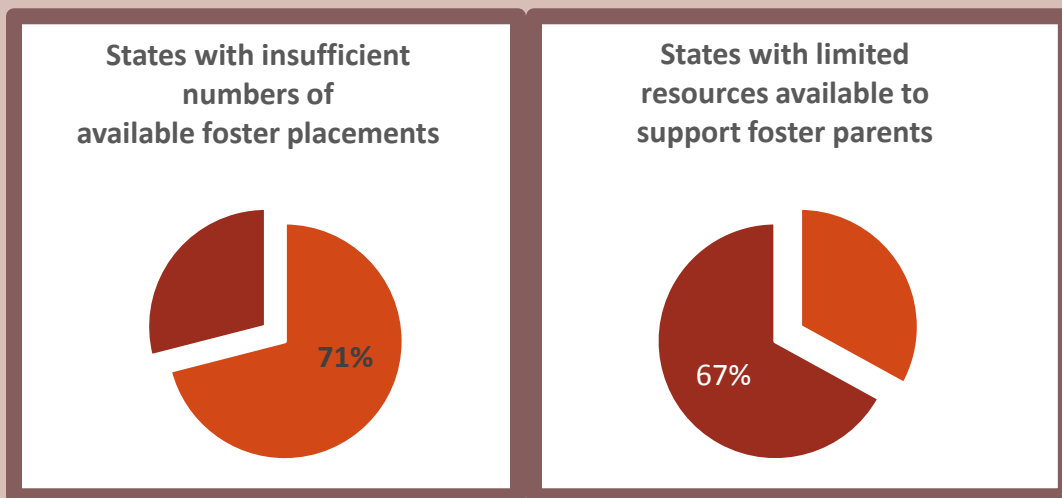


Foster Parent Support: A National Perspective

Federal Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) provide a national perspective on the performance of state child welfare systems including specific examination of state practices regarding training for both child welfare staff and for foster and adoptive parents (Milner & Hornsby, 2004). While most of the 52 child welfare jurisdictions received positive ratings on foster and adoptive parent training activities, problems were noted with the lack of training requirements, access to training sessions, and the quality of training programs (Milner & Hornsby, 2004). The official report, (Administration for Children and Families, 2004) found common challenges across jurisdictions including 1) scarcity of appropriate placement options for children with developmental disabilities or with severe behavior problems; 2) inconsistent provision of services to foster parents to prevent placement disruptions; and 3) foster care placements based on availability rather than matching of a child with a home best suited to meet his or her needs.

In 2010, the Administration for Children and Families conducted second round CFSRs to reassess progress in these and other outcome areas. Despite the passing of six years and concerted efforts by states to improve, no significant progress was found in timely achievement of permanency and stability in foster care placements, and no state received a positive rating in

this area (Administration for Children and Families, 2011). In fact, thirty-seven states struggled with an insufficient number of available foster placements, particularly for children with special care needs or severe behavior problems. In addition, 17 States had limited resources available to support foster parents (Administration for Children and Families, 2011).



Foster Parents as a Key Component of a High Functioning Child Welfare System

Several studies have found that effective pre-service training leads to more successful outcomes for foster parents and for the children in their care (e.g., Chamberlain, Moreland, & Reid, 1992; Dorgan, 1974; Fees et al., 1998; Urquhart, 1989), greater foster parent satisfaction (Fees et al., 1998), enhanced foster parent well-being, and an increased willingness to support children in connecting with their biological family (Sanchirico & Jablonka, 2000; Whenan, Oxlad, & Lushington, 2009). Prospective foster parents in Arizona are required to complete a pre-service training during the licensure process (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015). This training includes instructions on working with the child welfare agency and biological family, as well as basics about parenting children in care, and providing for the children in their care. It also provides knowledge, support, resources, and connection with other foster parents (Burry, 1999; Chamberlain, Moreland, & Reid, 1992; Fees et al., 1998). Arizona foster parents are also expected to participate in 6 hours of on-going training each year in accordance with their licensing agency requirements and the age and needs of the children in the home as well as the interests of the foster parents (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015).



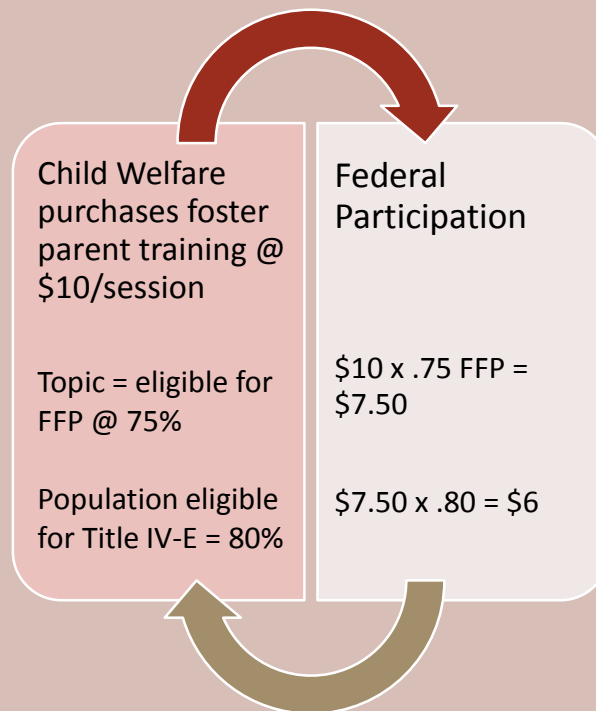
Unfortunately, despite evidence that shows the correlation between foster parent training and attainment of child welfare goals, research also indicates that foster parents face challenges related to managing children's difficult behavior, collaborating with the legal and child welfare system, and understanding and accessing medical, health, and educational systems and services (Heller, Smyke, & Boris, 2002). Studies have also indicated that foster parents often do not feel adequately prepared after initial pre-service training (Cuddeback & Orme, 2001; MacGregor et al., 2006). Studies continue to highlight the need for additional training and training options (Murray, Tarren-Sweeney, & France, 2011; Whiting, Huber, & Koech, 2007).

Federal Funding for Foster Parent Training

The federal government assists states with the costs of caring for children in foster care who have been removed from economically poor families through the Title IV-E program administered under the Social Security Act (Administration for Children and Families, 2012). This program is considered an open-ended entitlement which is unique as there is no upper limit or cap on the amount federal participation (FFP). As long as the state performs eligible work in line with the program regulations, the



federal government must contribute to the costs of those activities (Administration for Children and Families, 2011). Instead of operating as an up-front budget line item or grant, states must bear 100% of the costs of eligible work up front and submit claims to the federal government upon conclusion of the work in order to receive the resulting FFP (Administration for Children and Families, 2011).



Title IV-E Federal Guidelines allow for the inclusion of expenditures related to foster parent training within the state federal Title IV-E claim, and will participate in up to 75% of those

costs (Administration for Children and Families, 2007). The intent of federal support in these areas is to, “increase the ability of such current or prospective parents, guardians, staff members, institutions, attorneys and advocates to provide support and assistance to foster and adopted children, and children living with relative guardians whether incurred directly by the State or by contract” (Administration for Children and Families, 2007).

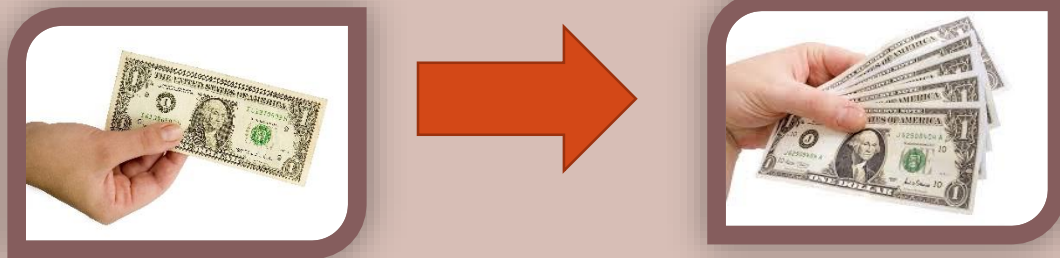
Reliance on state and/or local funding is greatly reduced when child welfare agencies are able to take full advantage of the benefits afforded to them under Title IV-E Federal Guidelines. This allows the state to provide greater supports and services at a much lower cost than if they relied solely on state and local funding. In the example provided on the prior page, an investment in foster parent training at \$10/session is offset by the return of federal funding participation of \$6.00 lowering the overall cost per session to only \$4/session.

Expanding Resources through University based Title IV-E Partnerships

Many state child welfare agencies and public universities have collaborated together in the education of social work students through Title IV-E interagency agreements/contracts (Zlotnik, 2003). Title IV-E partnerships formed quickly in response both to the overwhelming need of a highly skilled child welfare workforce, as well as to the willingness of partnership

between academia and state government to meet this need. As of 2003, examples of these types of partnership existed in 40 or more states (General Accounting Office).

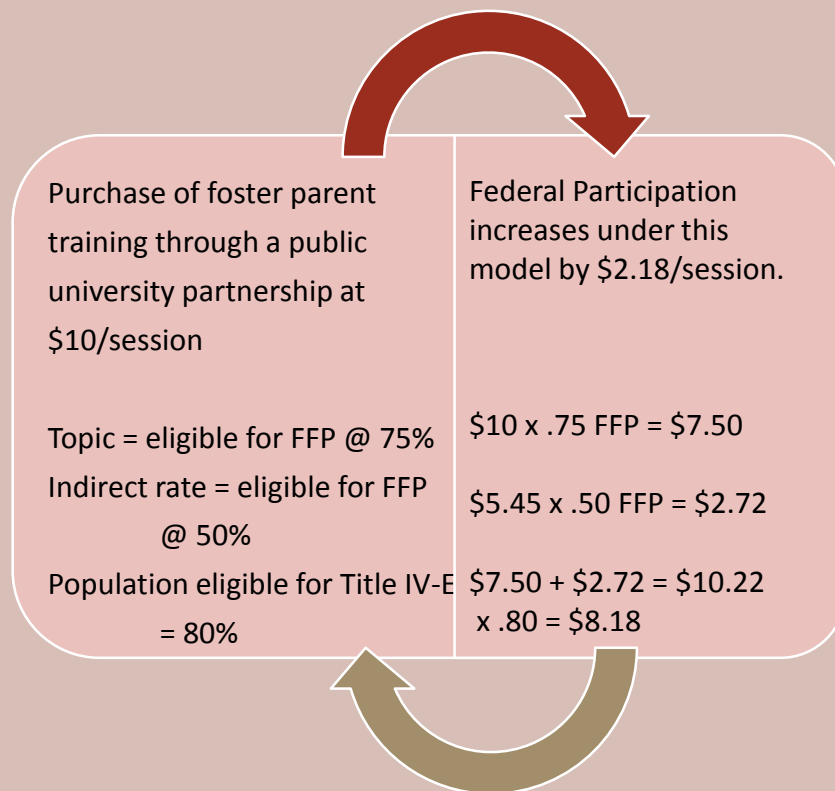
Although federal Title IV-E regulations allow for the inclusion of additional activities above and beyond social work education, a review of university partnerships concluded that many were not taking advantage of eligible expenses, including those focused on technical assistance, research expertise, evaluation, and consultation on curriculum development (Rheume, Collins & Amodeo, 2011). A number of independent consultants and nationally recognized experts in child welfare funding are urging child welfare agencies to consider additional Title IV-E agreements with public universities in order to increase federal participation in child welfare endeavors including training of foster and adoptive parents (Valentine, 2012).



From a purely financial perspective, work performed in partnership with universities has the capacity to increase the amount of federal funding because the University federally recognized indirect costs may be included in the state's Title IV-E claim (Administration for

Children and Families, 2007). In many cases, University Indirect rates increase the eligible expenditures by as much as 50%. Currently the federally recognized indirect rate for Arizona State University is 54.5% for on-campus activities and 26% for off-campus activities (Arizona State University, 2015).

Continuing from the previous example, utilizing a Title IV-E partnership model to deliver the same training increases FFP by almost 22%, further reducing the overall financial burden on state funding to only \$1.82 for each \$10.00 training session vs. \$4.00 in the child welfare model.



Call to Action

Step 1: Replicate Successful Partnerships

Given the long history of successful partnership between Arizona State University and the Department of Child Safety, expanding the current educational and research focus to include support to foster and adoptive parents is timely. Valentine (2012), a national expert and consultant on federal funding, highlights this opportunity, “Public universities and community colleges, in partnership with these child welfare partners, can now use investment in their current training programs to leverage new IV-E training reimbursement” (p. 6).

Arizona State University and the Department of Child Safety have worked closely together since 1978 in administering BSW and MSW educational stipend programs funded through Title IV-E agreement (Arizona State University, 2015). Additionally, ASU’s Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy has worked in partnership with the Department of Child Safety’s internal training unit since 2011 in the areas of training development, delivery, and system assessment all of which are considered eligible activities for Title IV-E participation (Arizona State University, 2015).



Step 2: Leverage University Investment

Changes to Title IV-E regulations expanded what are considered eligible training audiences, expanded eligible training topics, and increased federal percentages of participation with the passage of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Government Printing Office, 2008). Child Welfare agencies and Universities should carefully review those changes in order to identify any new qualifying expenditures for inclusion into their existing Title IV-E agreements, increasing the states Federal Title IV-E claims and thereby increasing the federal participation. Step 4, on page 16, provides more information on the wide array of eligible audiences and training topics that may be of mutual interest to child welfare agencies and public universities.

Arizona State University recently entered into a multi-year agreement with the Department of Child Safety which outlines the processes and procedures for identifying university expenditures eligible for Title IV-E funding, how to report those expenditures for inclusion within the state's federal Title IV-E claims, and how resulting federal participation will be returned to the university to sustain future child welfare work (Arizona State University, 2015). In the first quarter claim for 2015, Arizona's federal Title IV-E claim increased its eligible



expenditures by over \$1 million which will result in the generation of approximately \$250,000 FFP. An additional \$70,000 of FFP is expected from eligible activities conducted by Arizona State University from April 1, 2015 through June 20, 2015 (Arizona State University, 2015).

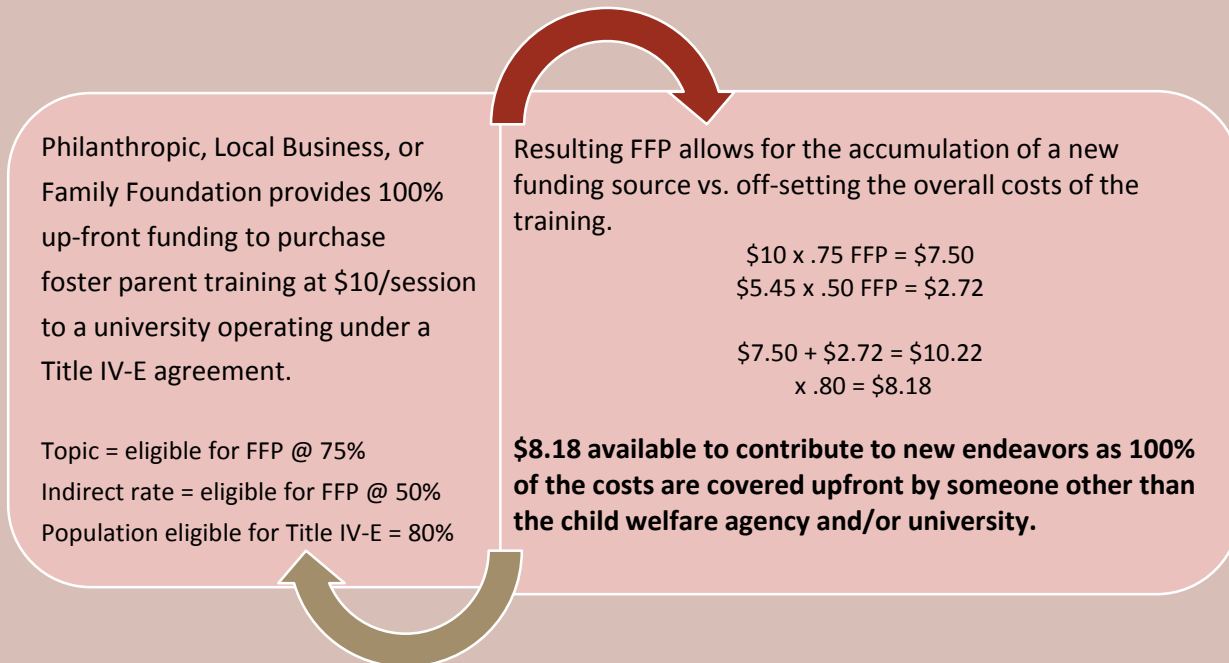
Step 3: Invite Philanthropic and Local Business Support

Title IV-E regulations allow for private funds to be included as eligible expenditures within the state's Federal Title IV-E claim when "transferred to the state or local agency and under its administrative control; donated without restriction of which would require their use for the training of a particular individual or at particular facilities or institutions; and do not revert to the donors facility or use" (Government Printing Office, Section 235.66, 2008). This provides the opportunity to invite other parties 'to the table' to collaborate in mutual areas of interest while further expanding the funding

The University of Washington's, Partners for Our Children serves as a model for consideration of how to build partnership between state, academic and philanthropy to support the field of child welfare. Initial funding from both the state child welfare agency, and a private



philanthropic family “birthed” a new research center which was supported by university administrative and operational supports. Currently the state child welfare agency does not provide any state funding to the center, instead a Title IV-E agreement extends FFP to the center for eligible projects which they have secured funding upfront funding (B. de Haan, personal



communication, various dates, 2009 through 2012). Interest in the Partners for Our Children model of sustainability has grown in recent years and a number of local and national foundations have joined in investing in Title IV-E eligible work as it is a smart investment due to the resulting federal participation and built in sustainability it offers to the philanthropic community (B. de Haan, personal communication, various dates, 2009 through 2012).

Step 4: Explore Additional Areas of Mutual Interest

While this proposal has centered on improving the supports available to foster parents through University Title IV-E agreements with public child welfare, federal regulations recognize a wide variety of audiences and additional topics as outlined below (Administration for Children and Families, 2007). Exciting opportunities exist for child welfare agencies and public universities to fulfill their respective missions while bringing significant new funding sources to mutual topics of interest through the establishment of new Title IV-E partnership agreements.

ALLOWABLE TRAINING AUDIENCES

45 CFR 1356.60(b) states that allowable training audiences include:

- Training personnel employed or preparing for employment by the State or local agency administering the plan, and;
- Providing short-term training (including travel and per diem expenses) to current or prospective foster or adoptive parents and the members of the state licensed or approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving title IV-E assistance.

OR those additional audiences made eligible for training by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008:

- CASA volunteers,
- contracted child placement providers,
- members of the staff of abuse and neglect courts, agency attorneys, attorneys representing children or parents, guardians ad litem, and other court-appointed special advocates representing children in court proceedings.

OR if recognized in the state Title IV-B plan as an “approved Child Welfare Agency for the purposes of IV-E training:

- staff of Mental Health, Public Health, School social workers & private family service staff.

Title IV-E Allowable Training Activities

Foster Care Assistance Program - Section 474(3)(A) of the Social Security Act and 45 CFR 1356.60

Allowable activities for which a 75% match rate may be claimed under 45 CFR Part 1356.60	
1	Eligibility determinations and re-determinations
2	Fair hearings and appeals
3	Rate setting
4	Referral to services
5	Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations
6	Placement of the child
7	Development of the case plan
8	Case reviews
9	Case management and supervision
10	Recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions

Closely related activities for which a 75% match rate may be claimed under 45 CFR 1356.60	
11	Social work practice, such as a family centered practice and social work methods, including interviewing and assessment
12	Cultural competency related to children and families
13	Title IV-E policies and procedures
14	Child abuse and neglect issues, such as the impact of child abuse and neglect on a child, and general overviews of the issues involved in child abuse and neglect investigations, if the training is not related to how to conduct an investigation of child abuse and neglect
15	Permanency planning, including using kinship care as a resource for children involved with the child welfare system
16	General substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues related to children and families in the child welfare system, if the training is not related to providing treatment or services
17	Effects of separation, grief and loss, child development, and visitation
18	Communication skills required to work with children and families

19	Activities designed to preserve, strengthen, and reunify a family, if the training is not related to providing treatment or services
20	Assessments to determine whether a situation requires a child's removal from the home, if the training is not related directly to conducting a child abuse and neglect investigation. Training on how to conduct specialized assessments, such as psychiatric, medical, or educational assessments, are not permitted
21	Ethics training associated with a Title IV-E state plan requirement, such as the confidentiality requirements in <u>§471(a)(8)</u> of the Social Security Act
22	Contract negotiation, monitoring, or voucher processing related to the Title IV-E program
23	The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), or other child welfare automated system functionality that is closely related to allowable administrative activities in accordance with <u>45 CFR §1356.60(d)</u> that the State of Arizona has chosen to claim as Title IV-E training, rather than as SACWIS developmental or operational costs (see AT-ACF-OISM-001)
24	Independent living and the issues confronting adolescents preparing for independent living consistent with <u>§477(b)(3)(D)</u> of the Social Security Act and the Child Welfare Policy Manual (CWPM), Section 3.1H, Q/A #1
25	Foster care candidate determinations and pre-placement activities directed toward reasonable efforts in <u>471(a)(15)</u> of the Social Security Act, if the training is not related to providing a service
26	Training on referrals to services, not how to perform the service
27	Grievance procedures
28	Negotiation and review of adoption assistance agreements
29	Post-placement management of subsidy payments
30	Home studies
31	A proportionate share of the development and use of adoption exchanges

Activities for which a 50 % match rate may be claimed under 45 CFR 1356.60	
Must be allocated proportionally across all benefiting programs (May include Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, Title IV-B, Subparts 1 and 2)	
32	State agency personnel policies and procedures: acquiring additional knowledge and skill to meet changes such as enactment of new legislation, development of new policies, or shift in program emphasis (see 45 CFR 235.61(b))
33	Job performance enhancement skills (for example, writing, basic computer skills, time management): enabling employees to reinforce their basic knowledge and develop the required skills for the performance of specific functions.
34	First aid, CPR, or facility security training
35	General supervisory skills or other generic skills needed to perform specific jobs training
36	Ethics unrelated to the Title IV-E state plan
37	Team building and stress management training
38	Safe driving

References

- Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. (2007). *Federal child welfare policy manual*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/policy_dsp.jsp?citID=116#449
- Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. (2004). *General findings from the federal child and family services review*. Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/summary_of_the_results_of_the_2001_2004_cfsr.pdf)
- Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. (2012). *Title IV-E foster care*. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/title-ive-foster-care>
- Arizona State University. (2015). *Current F&A rate agreement*. Retrieved from: <https://researchadmin.asu.edu/fa>
- Arizona State University. (2015). *ASU charter and goals: 2015 and beyond*. Retrieved from <https://president.asu.edu/about/asucharter>
- Arizona State University. (2015). *Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy: Child welfare training program*. Retrieved from <https://cabhp.asu.edu/content/child-welfare-training-program>
- Burry, C. L. (1999). Evaluation of a training program for foster parents of infants with prenatal substance effects. *Child Welfare, 78(1)*, 197-214.
- Chamberlain, P., Moreland, S., & Reid, K. (1992). Enhanced services and stipends for foster parents: Effects on retention rates and outcomes for children. *Child Welfare, 71(5)*, 387-401.

- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2015). *State statute search: Arizona child welfare home study requirements for prospective foster parents*. Retrieved from: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state>
- Cuddeback, G. S., & Orme, J. G. (2001). Training and services for kinship and nonkinship foster families. *Child Welfare, 81*(6), 879-909.
- Department of Child Safety. (2015). Retrieved from <https://dcs.az.gov/about>
- Fees, B. S., Stockdale, D. F., Crase, S. J., Riggins-Caspers, K., Yates, A. M., Lekies, K. S., & Gillis-Arnold, R. (1998). Satisfaction with foster parenting: Assessment one year after training. *Children and Youth Services Review, 20*(4), 347-363.
- General Accounting Office. (2003). *Child welfare: Enhanced federal oversight of Title IV-B could provide states additional information to improve services*. Retrieved from <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03956.pdf>
- Government Printing Office. (2008). *Code of federal regulations, title 45, vol. 2* Retrieved from <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys>
- Heller, S. S., Smyke, A. T., & Boris, N. W. (2002). Very young foster children and foster families: Clinical challenges and interventions. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 23*(5), 555-575.
- MacGregor, T. E., Rodger, S., Cummings, A. L., & Leschied, A. W. (2006). The needs of foster parents: A qualitative Study of Motivation, Support, and retention. *Qualitative Social Work, 5*(3), 351-368.
- Milner, J. & Hornsby, W. (2004). Training of child welfare staff and providers: findings from the Child and Family Service Review. *Protecting Children, 19*, 4-14.

- Murray, L., Tarren-Sweeney, M., & France, K. (2011). Foster carer perceptions of support and training in the context of high burden of care. *Child & Family Social Work, 16*(2), 149-158.
- Rheume, H., Collins, M.E. & Amodeo, M. (2011). University/Agency IV-E partnerships for professional education and training: Perspectives from the states. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 5*(5), 481-500.
- Sanchirico, A., & Jablonka, K. (2000). Keeping foster children connected to their biological parents: The impact of foster parent training and support. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 17*(3), 185-203.
- Valentine, C. (2012). *Child welfare funding opportunities: Title IV-E and Medicaid*. Retrieved from [http:// firstfocus.org/resources/report/child-welfare-fundingopportunities-title-iv-e-and-medicaid/](http://firstfocus.org/resources/report/child-welfare-fundingopportunities-title-iv-e-and-medicaid/)
- Whenan, R., Oxlad, M., & Lushington, K. (2009). Factors associated with foster carer well-being, satisfaction and intention to continue providing out-of-home care. *Children and Youth Services Review, 31*(7), 752-760.
- Whiting, J., Hither, P., & Koech, A. (2007). Foster parent pre-service training programs: A content analysis of four common curricula. *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice, 20*(3), 64-72.
- Zlotnik, J. L. (2003). The use of Title IV-E training funds for social work education: An historical perspective. *Journal of Human Behavior and the Social Environment, 7*(1-2), 5-20.