



UAA UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

Child Welfare Academy

Annual Report

July 2018 – June 2019





ACADEMY OVERVIEW

The Child Welfare Academy (CWA) provides training and technical assistance to the State of Alaska, Office of Children's Services (OCS). CWA also contracts with other organizations, as requested, to provide a variety of training and facilitation needs in the area of child welfare.

MISSION

The Child Welfare Academy trains, develops and supports Alaskans to assure children are safe, youth thrive, and families are strong. We work to develop professionals so that they may be competent and compassionate.

CORE VALUES

Respect: We respect and honor all peoples' dignity with compassion.

Trauma Informed: Our curricula and training is trauma informed.

Excellence: Through research, collaboration, adaptability and creativity.





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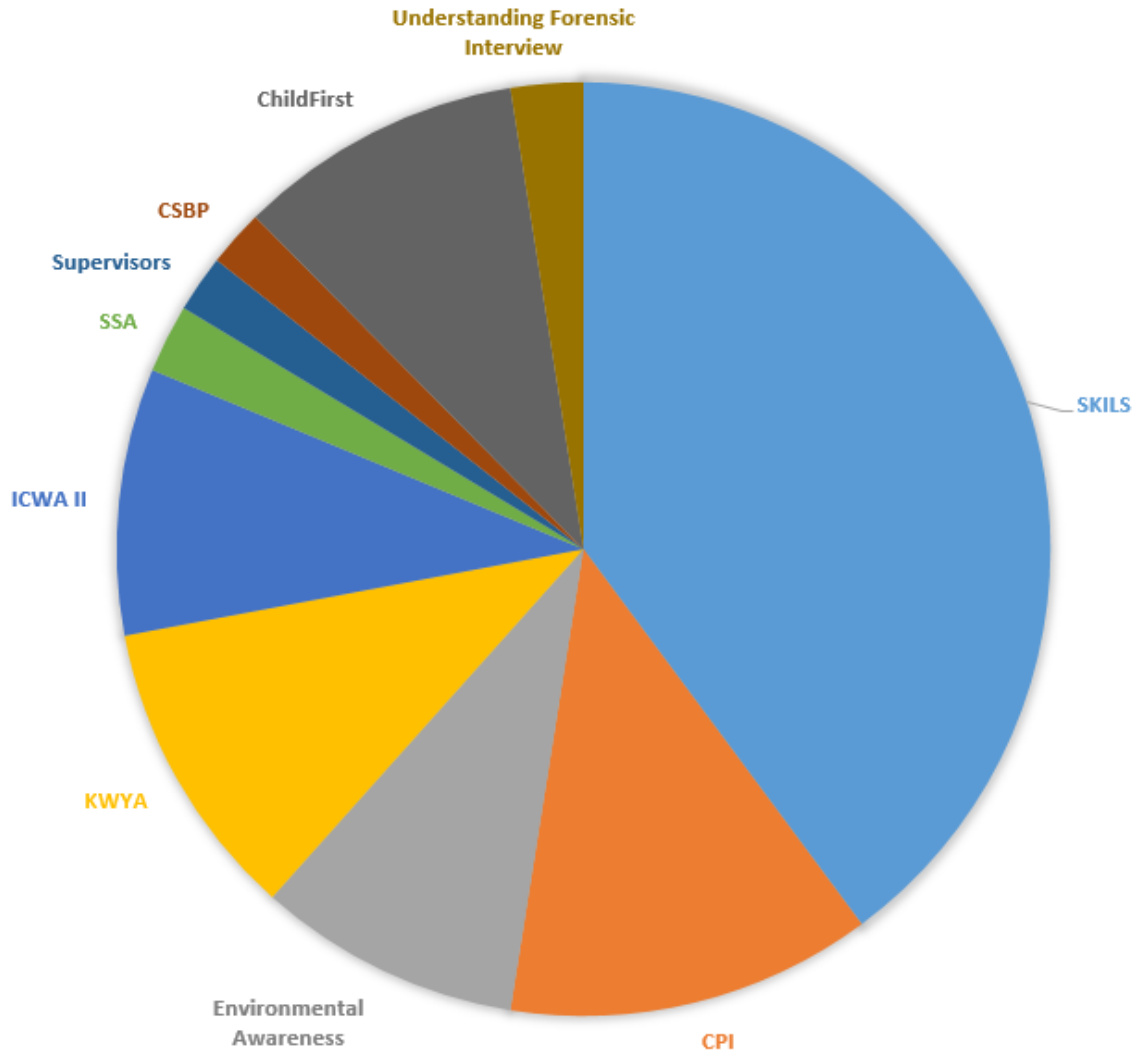


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Training Summary

»» **261** Training Days Delivered ««

From July 2018 to June 2019, the Child Welfare Academy delivered 261 training days to child welfare professionals throughout Alaska. Here are charts that show number of participants by training events.



OCS Participants, SKILS for New Workers	302
OCS Participants, Other Training	350
Tribal & Community Partners, SKILS for New Workers	4
Tribal & Community Partners, Other Training	136
Total Completed Training Days	261
Total Contact Hours	18,197



Training Calendar: July 2018 – June 2019



EVENT	DATES	LOCATION
131 SKILS IA	July 9-20	Anchorage
133 SKILS FS	July 9-27	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	July 18	Anchorage
580 CSBP	August - December	Anchorage
231 Advanced SKILS I	August 13-18	Anchorage
233 Advanced SKILS II	August 20-24	Anchorage
247 Understanding the Forensic Interview	August 28-30	Anchorage
131 SKILS IA	September 10-21	Anchorage
133 SKILS FS	September 10-28	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	September 19	Anchorage
231 Advanced SKILS I	October 1-5	Anchorage
235 KWYA	October 4-5	Sitka
233 Advanced SKILS II	October 8-12	Anchorage
237 ChildFirst	October 22-26	Anchorage
131 SKILS IA	October 29-November 9	Anchorage
133 SKILS FS	October 29-November 16	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	November 7	Anchorage
140 SSA Training	December 10-14	Anchorage
229 ICWA II	December 11-12	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	December 12	Anchorage
580 CSBP	January - May	Anchorage
231 Advanced SKILS I	January 21-25	Anchorage
161 SKILS	January 7-18	Anchorage
229 ICWA II	January 17-18	Bethel
233 Advanced SKILS II	January 28-Feb 1	Anchorage
237 ChildFirst	January 28-Feb 1	Fairbanks
235 KWYA	February 7-8	Anchorage
231 Advanced SKILS I	February 11-15	Anchorage
233 Advanced SKILS II	February 18-22	Anchorage
229 ICWA II	February 20-21	Anchorage

Training Calendar: July 2018 – June 2019

EVENT	DATES	LOCATION
161 SKILS	March 4-15	Anchorage
554 Supervisors Training	March 26-29	Anchorage
235 KWYA	March 28-29	Juneau
161 SKILS	April 8-19	Anchorage
162 SKILS	April 15-26	Anchorage
285 CPI	April 18	Anchorage
172 SKILS: FS Refresher	April 23-24	Anchorage
237 ChildFirst	April 29-May 3	Anchorage
235 KWYA	May 2-3	Anchorage
555 Supervisors Training	May 20-22	Anchorage
235 KWYA	May 21-22	Wasilla
229 ICWA II	May 28-29	Anchorage
161 SKILS	June 3-14	Anchorage
285 CPI	June 6	Anchorage
162 SKILS	June 3-14	Anchorage
229 ICWA II	June 11-12	Juneau
163 SKILS	June 17-21	Anchorage

WEBINAR TOPICS	DATES
HB151 Permanency Relative Search and Independent Living Changes	August 23
IA Updates and changes	August 28
Competency Based Evaluation	September 24-25
CWA Training	February 12
Webinar for OCS Staff Supporting & Communicating with Foster Parents	May 14
Recognizing Child Abuse	May 1



Standards, Knowledge, and Insight Leading to Success (SKILS)



Last fiscal year, new legislation went into effect, creating new mandates and expanded funding for the Office of Children’s Services. In order to meet the needs of an evolving child welfare system, the Child Welfare Academy enhanced and restructured SKILS training. During this process, CWA invited feedback from OCS leadership, front line workers and other stakeholders, with the goal of enhancing core training to help create a workforce capable of improving outcomes for children, families and the State of Alaska. Throughout the curriculum, application of adult learning theory led to development of experiential learning opportunities such as simulations and integrative application of practice model concepts with increasingly technical case scenarios.

In order to improve learning outcomes for new workers, the former two or three week core training (for IA or FS workers, respectively) is now six weeks for all workers, with sessions distributed over the workers’ initial year of employment. Some courses are now offered more frequently--up to 10 times per year--so that OCS staff do not need to wait for an extended amount of time before they begin learning how to do the critical work that their positions require. An OCS worker’s training journey begins with two weeks of basic Initial Assessment/Family Services training, followed by two weeks of expanded core training culminating in one week of advanced caseworker training. The sixth week of training was under development during this reporting year and is anticipated to begin in FY 2019-2020. The sixth week of training will be customized to meet the identified learning needs of new workers rounding out their first year in each region. This training will provide a cost savings to OCS through a combination of onsite training in the regions and distance delivery. The format also seeks to enhance ongoing learning by enlisting Supervisory staff in training activities. Although designed to meet the specific learning needs of first-year staff as they complete core training, the sixth week will also enhance practice consistency and ongoing development needs by including all workers in a region. As the new curriculum is being implemented, the process of fine-tuning and adapting the training continues, in order to provide a learning experience that is realistic and relevant.

SKILS 161. The first two weeks of training focus on practice model basics. The first week covers Initial Assessment (IA) and the second week moves into Family Services (FS) essentials. ORCA training is incorporated throughout the training to connect to the online ORCA Help Desk training they receive prior to SKILS 161. Trainers demonstrate the steps in ORCA utilizing a mock case in Narcissus throughout SKILS 161 and participants are able to practice documentation skills in the classroom. Trainers provide feedback on the documentation for participants. Participants receive one full day of legal training for new caseworkers.

SKILS 162 is two weeks of core training for front line caseworkers within their first year of hire with OCS. This training takes place four times per year. Prerequisites for 162 are completion of SKILS 161 and time in the field as a case-carrying worker supported by supervisory coaching and/or mentorship. The time in the field is an important foundation upon which SKILS 162 builds, with specialized topics such as Trauma Informed Care, Substance Use Disorders, Mental Health, ICWA, Permanency, Worker Safety, Resiliency, and Domestic Violence. This training seeks to strengthen practice model expertise through application with increasingly advanced scenarios. During this training, CWA hosts a Foster Parent Panel, Youth Panel, and ICWA Panel. This provides participants with the opportunity to learn about the experiences of panel members and to reflect on the implications of their practice in the lives of children, families and Tribes.

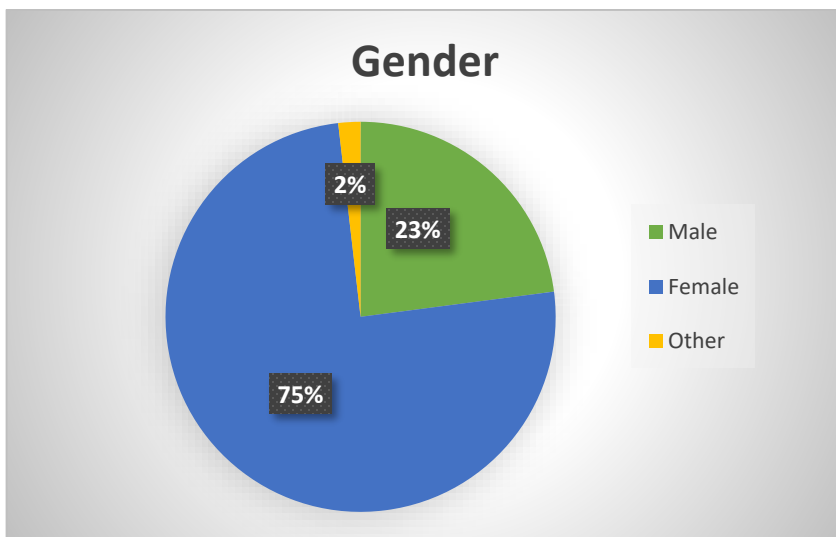
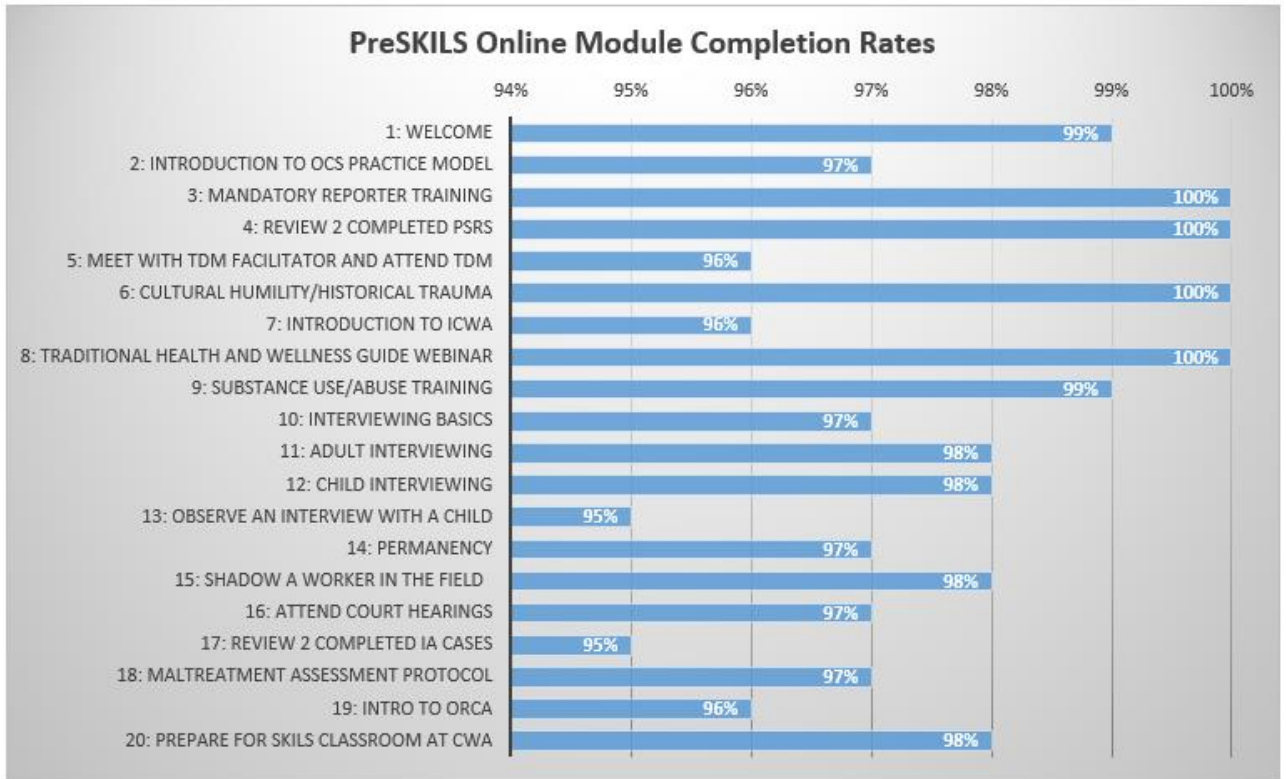
SKILS 163 is the final week of classroom training, with specialized training on topics such as Cultural Humility, Historical Trauma, Child Welfare Ethics and Advocacy and Casework with Vulnerable Populations. Participants get an in-depth look at a case through the quality assurance (QA) review process so they gain a better understanding of the QA process and the relevance of the data. SKILS 163 includes a day of advanced legal training. During 163, CWA hosts a panel of parents and caregivers who are or were involved with OCS. Participants are able to hear the parent's perspective about what caseworkers have done that helped them be successful or not. The in-depth, interactive training builds on the foundation the workers received in SKILS 161 and 162 and provides additional learning and professional development. SKILS 163 occurs three times per year.

Overall, the feedback from the evaluations of SKILS was very positive. Caseworkers like the variety of training activities, discussions, the interactive style of the training and the trainers. The caseworkers also indicated that they like the tools and guides to assist them in their work, going systematically through the life of one case, and the insights they gain from the different panels. Here is a sampling of SKILS participant feedback:

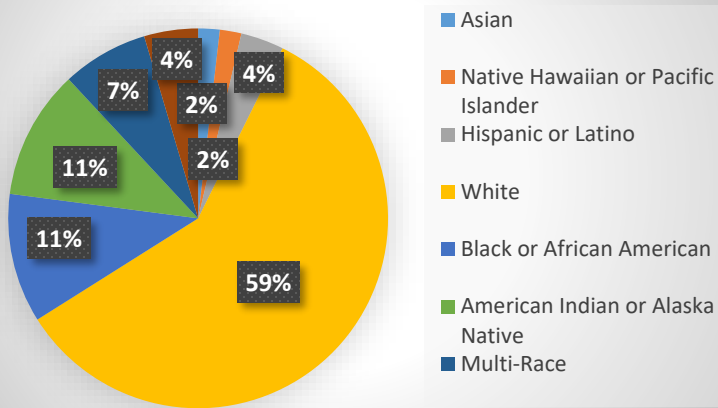
- *Great info on ethics & the 1800 number*
- *Case Planning is a learned skill so the practice is helping me make better case plans & be more confident in my skills to do this.*
- *This helps me know the terminology, steps, criteria, etc. SW's use to determine how cases proceed.*
- *This training helped me better understand the importance of taking care of myself & what to expect of my supervisor.*
- *It gave me a better perspective to the challenges that parents go through and their time in OCS.*
- *I will apply what I have used by practicing skills with the cases I am assigned, staffing with my supervisor and mentor and learning from these opportunities as well as my coworkers feedback.*
- *It was a good change of pace seeing multiple trainers present. Each had unique style & delivery that kept it interesting.*
- *I will apply all of the material to my monthly visits.*
- *Review of ICWA is always useful.*
- *The FFC panel was great! The parent panel was wonderful!!!*



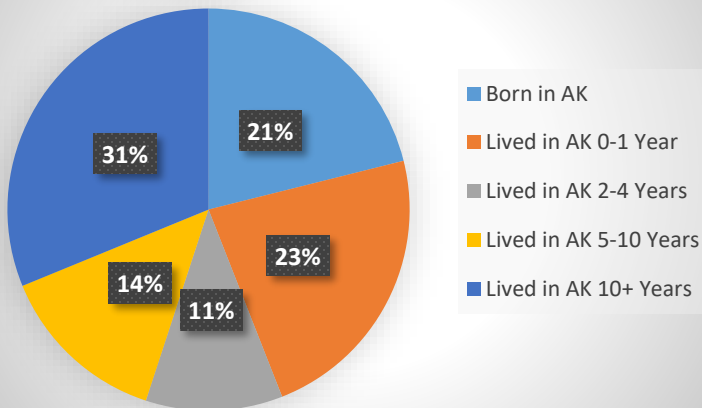
Online Module & Demographic Information. New workers are required to come to SKILS having taken 20 online modules in the BLC. The following charts indicate each module's completion rate along with workers' demographic information. Demographic percentages are based on attendees who completed the survey.



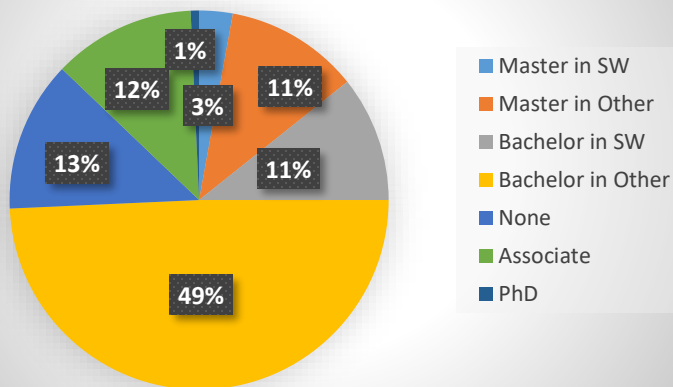
Ethnicity



Alaska Residency

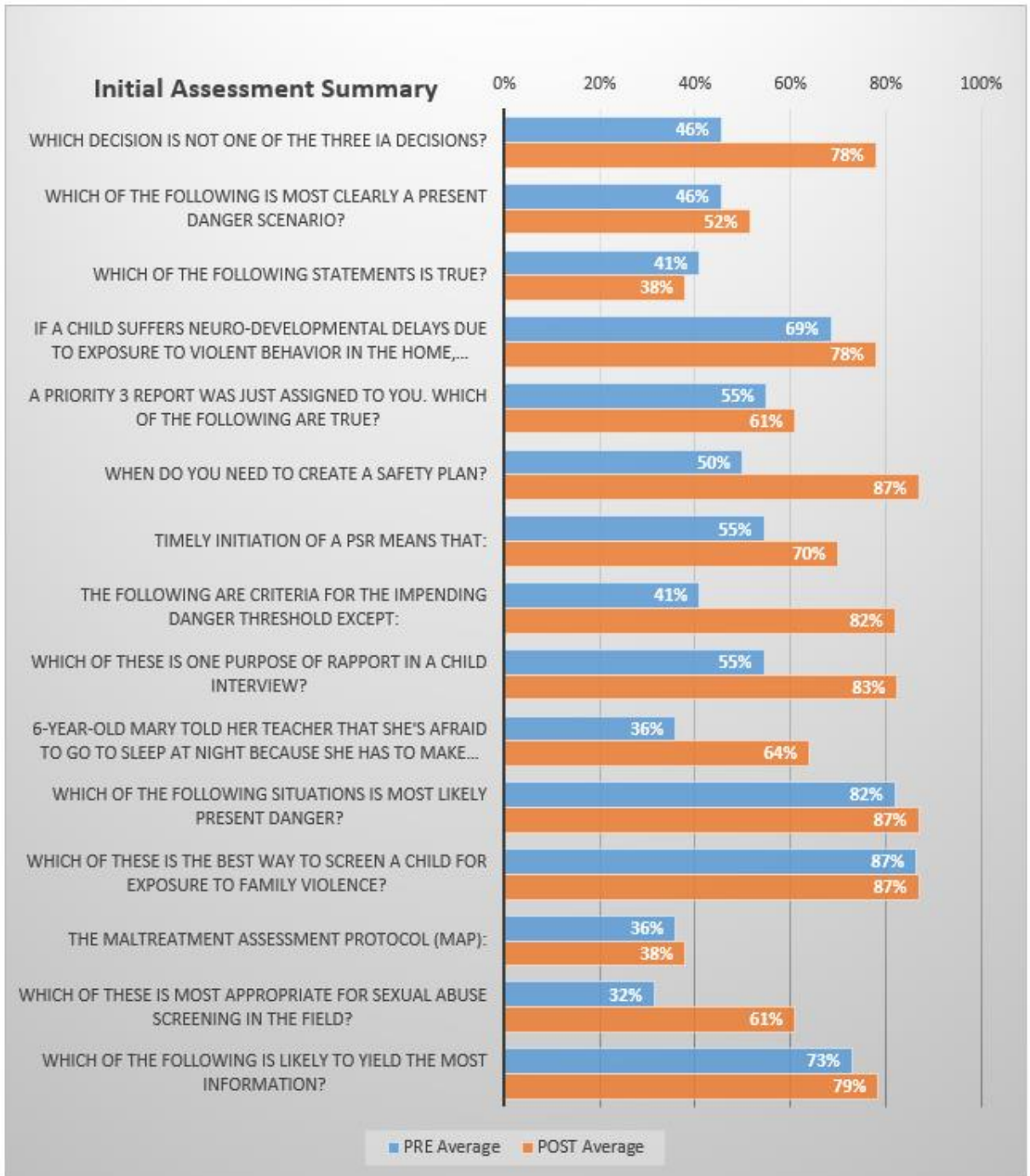


Education





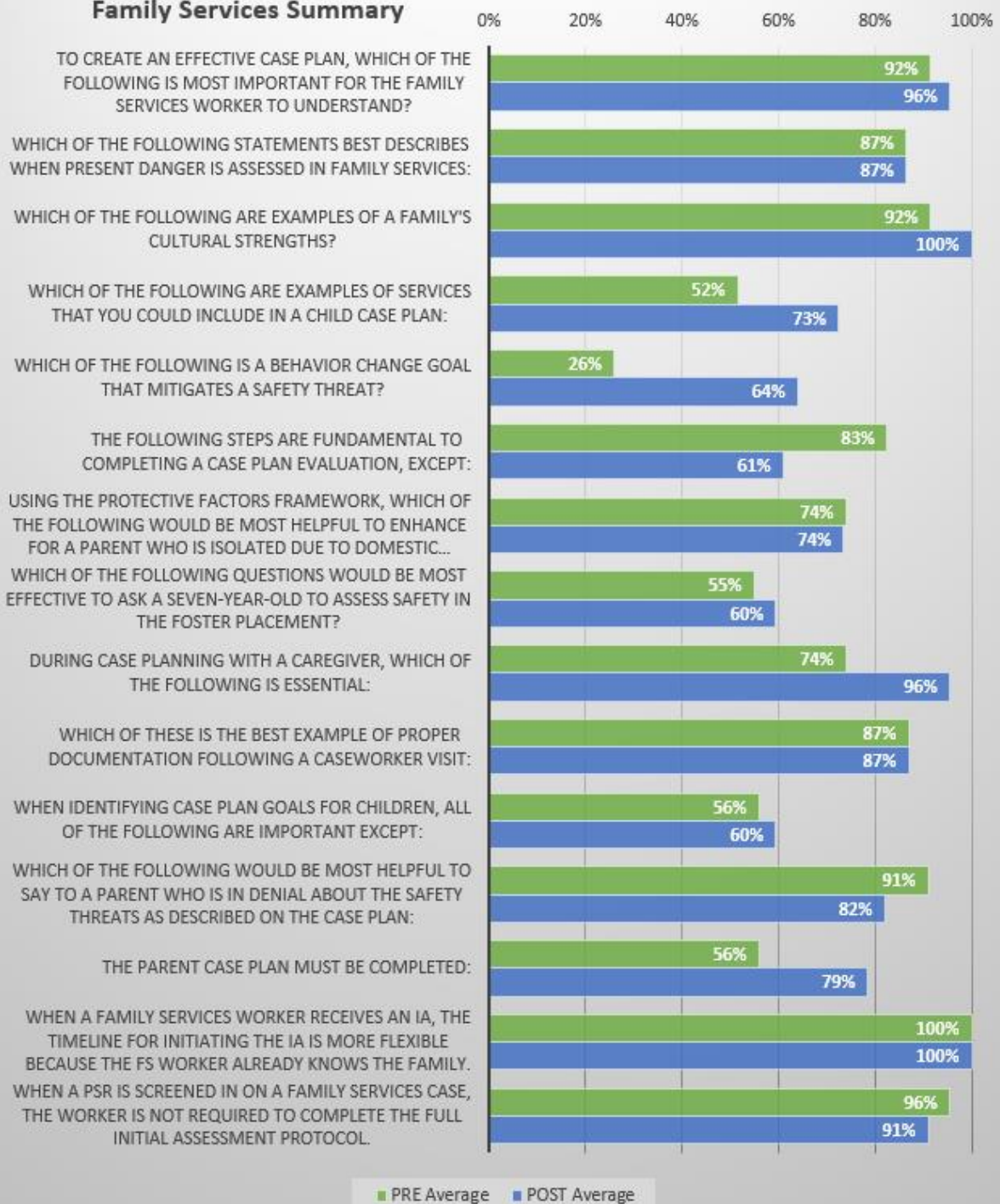
Measuring the Effectiveness of SKILS. CWA uses a pre- and post-test for SKILS to measure caseworkers' knowledge before SKILS and then compares it with knowledge gained through training. The data is useful for evaluating curriculum and identifying areas for monitoring and reinforcement by the mentors as they begin their work with each cohort. Recently, this evaluation tool was updated at the request of OCS and following IA and FS assessment charts show the results.



Measuring the Effectiveness of SKILS.



Family Services Summary

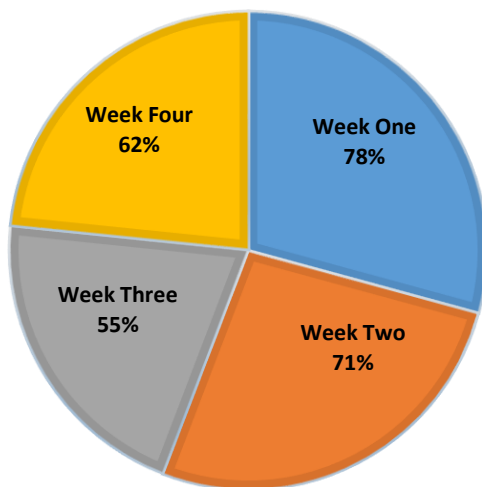


SKILS Transfer of Learning Calls (TOL). CWA is dedicated to assisting OCS with taking what new Protective Services Specialist (PSS) staff learn in the classroom and transferring this to the field. TOLs occur four Fridays after new workers complete SKILS 161. They attend calls with a focus on the practice model. Workers are assigned a topic to discuss and relate specific cases they have to these topics and how this works in the field.

In the past year, a group of supervisors and mentors provided the expertise on these calls with the assigned topics. CWA coordinates, schedules, provides teleconferencing and maintains records of attendance for these calls. Changes have occurred in the TOLs including the mentors taking over all of the facilitation and guidance to new PSSs on these calls. Topics are decided based on data collected from the pretest and posttest that PSSs complete in training, the analysis completed on them by CWA, and from feedback from classroom observation from CWA trainers. CWA continues to provide the coordination, scheduling, teleconferencing and record maintenance for these calls. These scheduling continues to be on Friday mornings for two hours.

Below is the worker attendance data on the four Fridays after SKILS 161.

TRANSFER OF LEARNING CALL PARTICIPATION JULY 2018 - JUNE 2019



Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI). This module is part of the worker safety taught in SKILS. Below are the workers’ responses using the program-specific evaluation and feedback.

Please rate the following areas:						Total
	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	
Use nonverbal techniques to prevent acting-out behavior.	1%	1%	4%	31%	62%	100%
Implement verbal de-escalation strategies, such as limit setting.	1%	1%	12%	40%	46%	100%
Make use of CPI's Principles of Personal Safety to avoid injury to all involved in a crisis situation.	5%	2%	11%	21%	60%	100%
Use safe physical intervention procedures as a last resort when a person is a danger to self or others.	5%	2%	7%	30%	55%	100%
Build Therapeutic Rapport with acting-out individuals after a crisis is over.	2%	2%	4%	29%	62%	100%
Applied the course content to a variety of examples.	0%	1%	4%	19%	76%	100%
Stimulated interest in the subject matter.	0%	2%	2%	26%	70%	100%
Created an enjoyable learning atmosphere.	0%	1%	3%	19%	77%	100%
Emphasized the philosophy of Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security SM .	0%	0%	2%	19%	78%	100%
The program content was relevant to my needs.	1%	2%	10%	18%	69%	100%
How would you rate the program overall?	1%	1%	13%	27%	57%	100%

- *I learned how to defend myself & keep others safe.*
- *I learned the importance of remaining calm, acknowledge behavior and provide space in deescalating a client.*
- *I have a better understanding of how to deescalate situation.*
- *I feel better able to work in the field in a safe and constructive manner.*
- *I feel like I have a much better grasp on dealing with confrontational people.*
- *This helps give a better understanding when dealing with aggressive or angry clients.*
- *This was good, but I feel in our line of work it's useless.*
- *I enjoyed this skill overall.*

Training & Technical Assistance Liaisons. This fiscal year, a CWA trainer was assigned to each of the regions as their liaison. Each trainer was responsible for connecting with the leadership for that region and working to identify the Training & Technical Assistance needs of the staff. Then, the CWA trainer with expertise on the specific topics provided subsequent training. The following are the liaison assignments and training delivered:

Anchorage Region: Elsie Boudreau
 Southcentral Region: Tracey Eason
 Western Region: Vanessa Verigin
 Northern Region: Jessica Ulrich
 Southeast Region: Cory Bryant



Region	Date	Topic	Hours	Trainer (s)
ARO - Anchorage				
Anchorage	Sep 04	Case Planning	1.25	Vanessa Verigin
Anchorage	Sep 20	Quality Caseworker Visits	1.25	Vanessa Verigin
ARO Total Hours:			2.5	
SCRO - Southcentral				
Wasilla	Mar 21	Safe Zone	3	Vanessa Verigin
Wasilla	Mar 21	Family Violence	4	Vanessa Verigin
Kenai	May 29	IA Reboot	7	Cory Bryant
Kenai	May 30	FS Reboot	6.5	Cory Bryant
SCRO Total Hours:			20.5	
NRO - Northern				
Fairbanks	Feb 01	Leadership Team Consultation	3	Vanessa Verigin
Fairbanks	May 21	Trauma Informed Interviewing with Children	7	Jessica Ullrich
NRO Total Hours:			10	
WRO - Western				
Bethel	Jan 22	Family Violence	7	Vanessa Verigin
Bethel	Jan 23	Supervisor Training	7	Vanessa Verigin
Bethel	May 27	Strengthening Families Overview	6	Valerie Dudley
Bethel	May 28	IA Refresher	7	Valerie Dudley
Bethel	May 29	FS Refresher	7	Valerie Dudley
WRO Total Hours:			34	
SERO - Southeast				
Ketchikan	Aug 21	Understanding Sexual Abuse	7	Cory Bryant
Juneau	Apr 22	Strengthening Families Overview	2	Cory Bryant
Juneau	Apr 23-24	FS Reboot & IA Case Review	12	Cory Bryant
SERO Total Hours:			21	

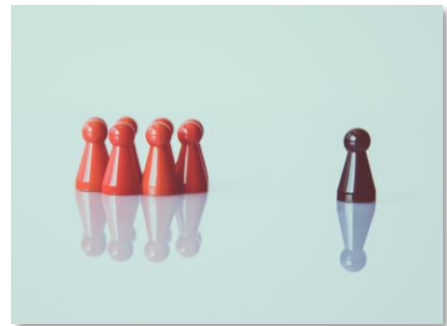
Supervisor Training

This year, one cohort of 15 supervisors completed Supervisor Training, facilitated by Cory Bryant and Vanessa Verigin. The 6-day training took place over two sessions in March and May. The first session was initially scheduled for December, but was delayed due to the earthquake. While the initial delay was a drawback for supervisors in need of the training, it provided an opportunity for additional participants to join. The resulting cohort seemed meant to be, with excellent group dynamics and peer relationships that supervisors will carry with them as they embark on their new roles.

Topics covered in this course included emotional intelligence and leadership, strategic planning, change management, conflict management and trauma-informed supervision. In response to agency needs, there was an emphasis on essential services, including utilization of data and effective messaging of priorities. Supervisors received an introduction to coaching followed by practice and feedback during simulations. Throughout the training, supervisors engaged in rigorous application of concepts, designing individualized action plans to enhance productivity, development and resilience in their units.

Feedback from the training was positive, with student comments further illustrating the value of simulation and real-world application of concepts. When asked which aspects of the course were particularly helpful, supervisors said:

- *Learning the concepts, discussing it then creating team and individual plans that we can take back to the office & implement in a meaningful way.*
- *Emotional intelligence.*
- *It helped reinforce what I need to do back in the office with my unit.*
- *The activities were great and the group collaboration made it an excellent learning environment.*
- *The transfer of learning-using activities to practice ideas for working with our units.*
- *Knowledgeable & relatable trainers; kept it fun & active.*
- *Activities-hands on application that can be easily transferred at the office and fun.*
- *Positive narratives and other handouts on the thumb drive that help explain the daily topics. I also thought the activity outside was amazing.*
- *Breaking down problem areas within my unit, putting an action plan in place.*



Social Services Associate (SSA)

CWA delivered SSA training in December 2018. Based on feedback, an additional day was added to this training to incorporate more in-depth training around the areas including the Protective Factor Framework, Family Engagement, Culture, and Trauma Informed Care. Eighteen participants traveled to Anchorage from various areas of the state. These cohort of learners spent time learning about topics such as the OCS Practice Model, family contact, child functioning, and worker safety. The participants incorporated information from their work experiences to enrich the learning environment especially around discussions about how trauma affects family contact and child behavior. Participants learned and practiced strategies to respond to difficult behaviors during family contact. Through hands-on activities, lecture, role-play, and group discussion, participants gained a better understanding of their role within the agency and best practices around working with children and families.



Sampling of participant feedback:

- I think that each day of this training was helpful. I feel my skills will be stronger with in doing my job. I feel I can provide all that is needed and more. This has given me more goals for this job within myself.*
- All of the information was great but veering topics made it hard. I really enjoyed the trauma training. It was very informative.*
- I would recommend going the CPI training end of week and do the test a separate day.*

A total of 17 participants completed SSA training and below is an average rating chart based on those who submitted evaluations:

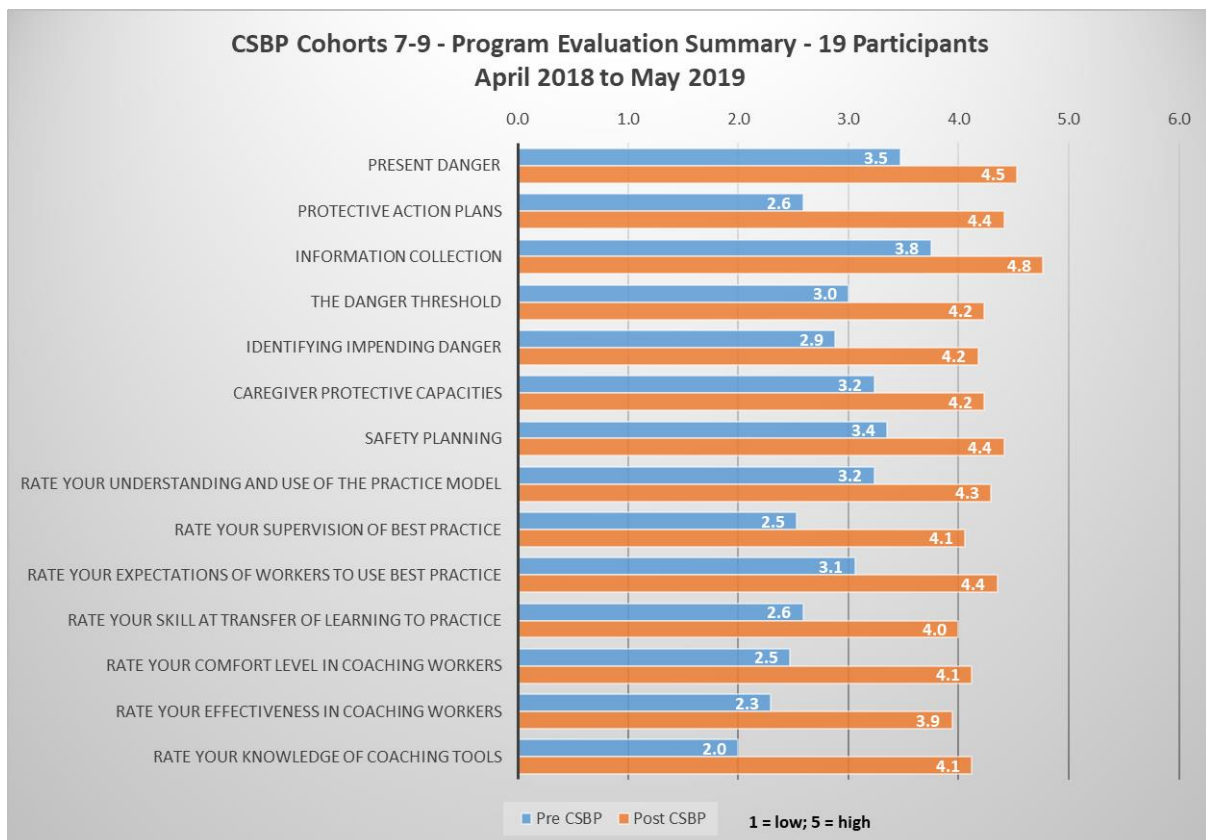
Please rate the Training in the following areas:	Low ← → High				
	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate the importance of the topics covered in class to your job?	0%	0%	0%	27%	73%
Overall, what was your level of satisfaction with the sessions?	0%	0%	0%	45%	55%
Rate your level of confidence in applying what you learned to your job.	0%	9%	9%	27%	55%

Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice (CSBP)

Three cohorts were completed in this reporting period, including a mentor cohort, a new supervisors cohort and a veteran supervisors, along with two TDM facilitators and two QA group. Each group had unique experiences and offered suggestions about how to take the work back to the field and to their individual practice. There continues to be a gap between what is learned in the program to institutionalized knowledge and use over time. Several new ideas were shared and will be implemented with the next new supervisors' cohort.



A brief analysis of the last three cohorts self-reports indicate that participants thought the program was very valuable to their ability to supervise, coach and use tools with their staff related to the practice model. See chart below for more specifics.



Service Array: Child Advocacy Centers(CACs)/ Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT)

With the support of OCS, CWA continues its work with Multidisciplinary Teams and Child Advocacy Centers across the State to provide training and technical assistance. During the past year, CWA completed following:

- **Technical assistance to the Bethel CAC.** This work focused on creating and updating written protocols to assist the CAC and the team process and procedure. Additionally, the CWA provided in person meeting facilitation to help the CAC address gaps as they move forward towards Accreditation through the National Children's Alliance (September 2018). Additional telephonic assistance focused on forensic interviewing peer review, protocol development, weather and flight difficulties in serving families in the surrounding villages, improving the case review process and coaching the new Director in her role.
- **Site visit with the Juneau CAC, S.A.F.E. Child Advocacy Center.** This was a one-day visit in June 2018 that involved meetings with multiple team members on the functioning of the CAC, relationships, confidentiality and the National Standards for Accreditation. The report for this visit was finalized by the OCS Social Services Program Manager and submitted to the CAC.
- **Two-day site visit with the Fairbanks CAC and Stevie's Place.** CWA and OCS coordinated this visit to discuss additional funding in June 2019. This trip also included meetings with multiple Team members about the functioning of the CAC, relationships, confidentiality and the National Standards for Accreditation. The report was drafted for review and sent to the OCS Social Services Program Manager and later provided to the CAC and to their parent agency.
- **Critical incident debrief.** CWA provided a debrief called a Healing Circle for 25 staff members of an elementary school in Wasilla after a teacher was arrested for sexual abuse of students.
- **Community Café in Wasilla.** This event was held in April to support the community in their continued responses to recent sexual abuse cases. Two CWA trainers provided this opportunity with the support of ROCK MAT-SU. Although the numbers in attendance were small, a discussion about how to engage others in this movement assisted those present to continue to fight for the safety of their children.
- **One-day training in Ketchikan.** In August, CWA delivered this training on child sexual abuse and unexplained physical injuries to small children.



Service Array continued:

- **Development of a CAC.** The OCS Supervisor in Sitka requested information of a CAC in their community and CWA provided guidance and next steps.
- **Half-day strategic conversation.** CWA facilitated a meeting with the Fairbanks CAC, Stevie's Place, and OCS due to significant conflicts that had risen over the past couple of years with no resolution. Each organization came out with agreements on next steps to continue their work together.
- **Education on CACs.** CWA met with two Mental Health Trust staff to connect them with other CAC advocates to assist in possible funding opportunities for CACs by the Trust.
- **Copper Center CAC two-day training in Valdez.** The focus of this training held in May was to revise and establish protocols with MDT input in order to clarify how cases work throughout the system. Much time was spent on cases that are not following protocol and understanding the concerns in order to get to solutions. In addition, the Assistant Attorney General assigned to the MDT provided a presentation on corroborative evidence in child abuse cases.
- **Alaska Children's Alliance (ACA).** CWA worked collaboratively with ACA to provide training and technical assistance. The ACA coordinator participated in several of the onsite trainings that occurred during this period with funding from CWA.
- **2018 Statewide Child Maltreatment Conference.** CWA was a member on the planning committee and the forensic interviewing sub-committee for this conference held in Anchorage last November.
- **Utqiagvik CAC.** This center was managed by the Police Department who requested assistance due to changes in administration, including a notice given to the CAC that their center would be closing. Telephonic support was given in attempt to keep the CAC open but without success. Outreach was provided to guide the new administration to consider the implications to the community closing the CAC would have.
- Continued outreach to the CACs across the state.





ChildFirst™ Alaska



ChildFirst™ Alaska is a nationally recognized protocol supported by current research and guided by best practice in the field of forensic interviewing. The Multidisciplinary Team is key to the success of this protocol, through it's role in ensuring the best interest of the child is paramount. The core purpose of ChildFirst™ Alaska is to provide training to help ensure legally defensible, non- traumatic child forensic interviews for both rural and urban Alaska.

The establishment and maintenance of ChildFirst™ Alaska takes a great deal of partnership and teaming with many organizations that work towards responding and preventing child maltreatment. This starts at the community level with Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) and is a joint effort with OCS, CWA, Alaska Children's Alliance, the State of Alaska Department of Public Safety, the State of Alaska Department of Law, Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Staff, and Multidisciplinary Team Members. CWA is also a member of the Leadership Team and has two certified ChildFirst™ Alaska trainers. During this fiscal year, CWA completed the following projects:

- Coordination and documentation of quarterly meetings for the Leadership Team.
- Quarterly calls with other ChildFirst™ states across the country to work collaboratively on integration of emerging research and needs of the field into curriculum updates. Pursuant to these meetings, CWA was responsible for making the resulting changes to the Alaskan curriculum.
- Creation of a three-day training called Understanding the Forensic Interview. This training is designed specifically for MDT members who will be observing forensic interviews. The purpose is to ensure understanding of the importance, components, and "flow" of forensic interviewing. This training is also for OCS workers who work in Family Services and may benefit from familiarization with child interview theory and basic techniques, but who do not need to conduct forensic interviews in the course of their work. The first 3- day training was held in August 2018, with 30 participants. Following this training, additional updates and adjustments were made to further enhance the training in order to best meet the needs of this group of trainees.
- Coordination of two ChildFirst™ Alaska training events: January 2019 in Fairbanks and May 2019 in Anchorage. Approximately 60 people attended these trainings.
- Management all training materials for ChildFirst™ Alaska training events and identification of appropriate video clips of real interviews for classroom use that meet protocol standards.
- Maintenance of the ChildFirst™ Alaska website.
- Using ChildFirst™ funds, one CWA trainer was able to attend the Annual Violence Intervention and Prevention Summit in February 2019. This was the National Conference for ChildFirst™ states across the country. Following the conference, this trainer shared information and resources with the leadership team. Additionally, some of the information gained at this conference has proven useful in development of SKILS 162 and 163.

Collaboration with Tribes



CWA developed a Tribal Identification Guide to help OCS workers understand the difference between a federally recognized Tribe, an Alaska Native Regional Corporation, a Village Corporation, Race/Ethnicity and Alaska Native Regional Non-Profits. The hope is that this guide will assist OCS workers with correctly identifying and noticing Tribes early on in a case. Tribal/State leaders reviewed the document and now all OCS workers receive this guide in SKILS 161 training.

The Child Welfare Academy was delighted to deliver contract training for Kawerak and Nome Eskimo Community in November and April. Jessica Saniguq Ullrich (member of Nome Eskimo Community) was able to provide the requested trainings in Nome. Training topics included family engagement, de-escalation, suicide prevention and a condensed version of SKILS. What is important to note is that Tribal workers not only provide direct services within their communities to promote safety and wellbeing, they also maintain lifelong relationships with children and families. At the CWA, we promote the belief that partnerships with Tribes is best practice.

CWA updated SKILS 162 curriculum to include a full day of ICWA training. Many Tribal partners and ICWA Specialists graciously provided input and feedback on what CWA could do to improve this training curriculum for new OCS staff. ICWA training in SKILS now includes a Tribal panel discussion when Tribal workers are available to participate. Feedback from OCS workers so far has been resoundingly positive. The CWA is grateful for the collaboration we have had with Tribes and hopes to continue to grow this capacity for further collaboration in the future.



Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Training



OCS and CWA decided to incorporate ICWA I into the two-week SKILS 162 course this past fiscal year. Instead of workers attending ICWA I training in their different regions, they received one full day dedicated to ICWA when they returned to CWA to complete SKILS 162.

A popular addition to this training was the ICWA Panel where three or four Tribal representatives were invited to share about their role and tips for working with Tribes in regards to child welfare. When attendees were asked what aspect of this class they found particularly helpful, they said:

- *The discussion between ICWA and OCS workers*
- *Learning the terminology*
- *Open discussions, lecture*
- *The history, as well as how fare we've come in practice at OCS*
- *Importance of complying & embracing ICWA & best ways to work with families & it is the law & not optional & state courts recognizing AI/AN children tribe.*

A total of 60 workers completed ICWA training and below is an average rating chart based on those who submitted evaluations:

Please rate the Training in the following areas:	Low ←————→ High				
	1	2	3	4	5
Rate your understanding of the topics covered in this two-day class.	0%	2%	10%	43%	45%
The learning activities helped prepare me to do my job.	0%	3%	15%	24%	58%
Rate your initial ability to apply what you learned in this two-day class to your job.	0%	0%	12%	41%	47%

ICWA II will continue to be offered in each region and co-trained by a Regional ICWA Specialist and a Tribal Partner. There is also an open invitation to Tribal partners to attend this training side-by-side State child welfare workers in an effort to encourage collaboration and relationship building while attending this two-day training.

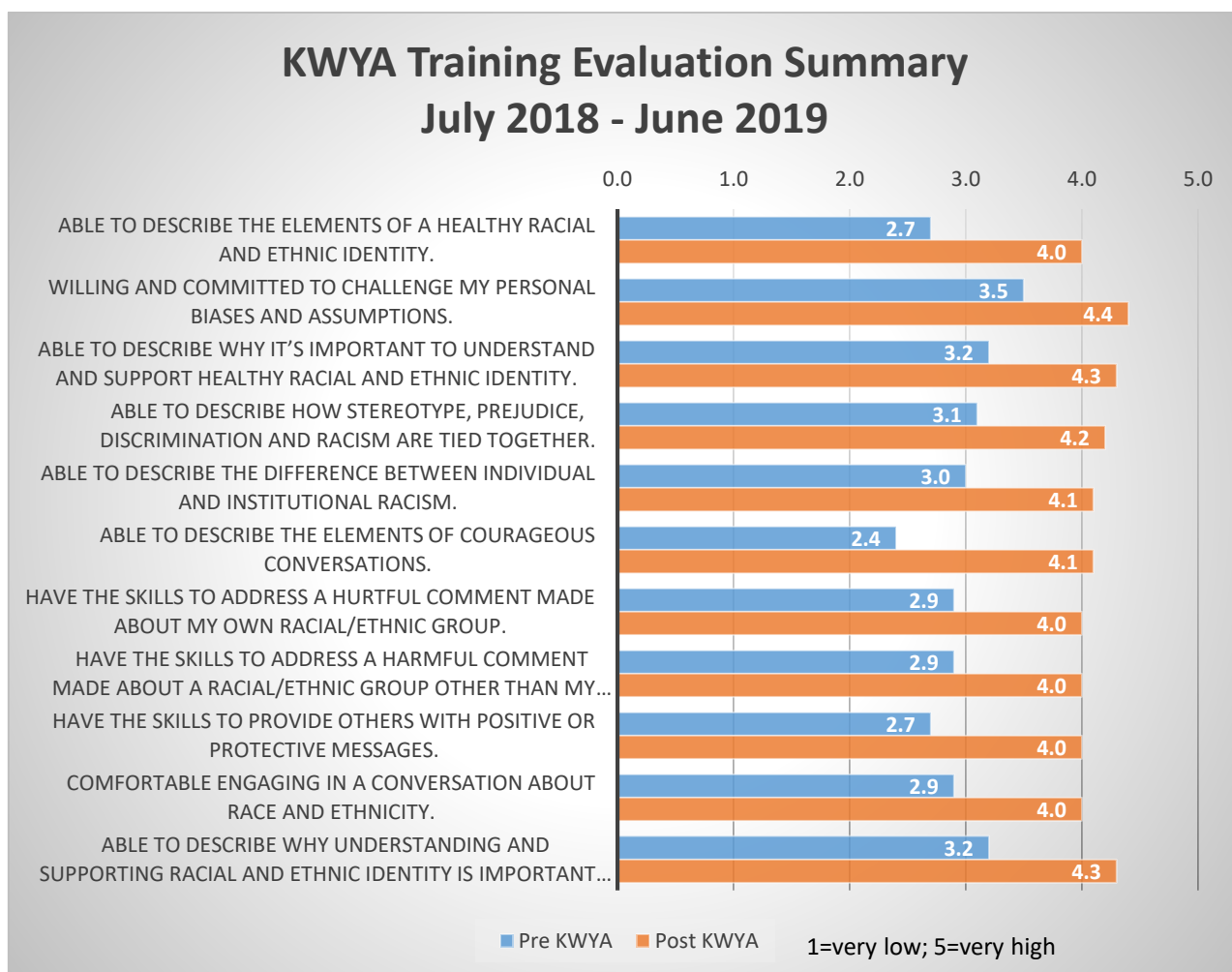
Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) Workshops

This past year, CWA delivered five KWYA Workshops across the state with a total of 88 participants. And because the curriculum updates introduced in 2017 have taken full effect, CWA has continued to receive positive feedback from the attendees:

- *I really enjoyed the training despite having it (and a handful of other similar type) before. Though I was already comfortable in many of the areas I still experienced a lot of growth and challenges.*
- *I think all of the group work was very beneficial. It was helpful to talk things out and see different perspectives.*
- *The environment was created safely and made me feel comfortable sharing.*



Here is an average rating chart based on those who submitted evaluations:



To further keep the statewide KWYA network strong, CWA held a 3-day KWYA facilitator training in February in Anchorage. As a result, ten new facilitators were added to the statewide group and they represented diverse organizations: OCS, CWA, BBNA, UAF, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Fairbanks Native Association, Nome Community Center, and Kawerak.



Suicide Prevention



Between 2012-2017, suicide was Alaska's leading cause of death among Alaskans age 10-64, with the highest rates occurring in southwest and northern regions. All CWA trainers and Office of Youth Empowerment leaders became certified instructors of the Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) suicide prevention curriculum. This nationally based curriculum provides gatekeepers with action steps they can take to recognize warning signs, intervene, and develop strategies to prevent suicide. The premise is that everyone is a gatekeeper: relatives, friends, neighbors, teachers, ministers, doctors, caseworkers, health aides, and many others. We hope to assist community efforts to prevent suicide, especially among the most vulnerable populations that interface with the Office of Children's Services.

CWA also purchased the rights to show a powerful documentary that addresses suicide in Alaska Native communities called, *We Breathe Again*. This documentary follows four Alaska Native people that have faced intergenerational trauma and suicide, and instills hope for personal and community level healing.

Our first suicide prevention training was conducted in Nome, Alaska through a training contract with Nome Eskimo Community. Approximately 30 people attended the training and had positive remarks despite the difficulty of the subject in a community that has faced recent loss.



Safe Zone

CWA provided training and technical assistance to two regions seeking to develop safe, inclusive spaces, improve workforce knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues and/or improve service delivery with LGBTQ+ youth and families. SafeZone training is a fun and interactive training that is used widely in academic and community settings.

For OCS purposes, CWA adapted content to meet the unique needs of child welfare professionals. Trainees received information on the disproportionate safety, permanency and wellbeing outcomes for this population. Best practices information created by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and Lambda Legal were included. Based on the needs of requesting regions, content was hand-selected to help build competency and reduce the vulnerability of this population within the OCS system.



Staff Advisory Board

CWA provided consultation and technical assistance towards the establishment of a Staff Advisory Board. This entity serves to channel ideas, experiences and expertise of front line staff to inform policy and management decisions.

In September, representatives from each region convened at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage for a two-day meeting with CWA providing facilitation. During this session, the group drew from their collective experience on the front lines of child welfare in Alaska to develop a vision and charter. The group selected two co-chairs who practiced facilitating in their new roles with CWA support on day two. After consulting with state office and identifying a PSM liaison, the board embarked on its work by identifying initial priorities and brainstorming solutions.

After the Board began having regular sessions, CWA stepped back from its initial consulting role. However, the Academy will continue to be available to provide support and technical assistance as needed. This may be necessary in the coming year, particularly given the impact to the Board of staff promotions and turnover.



Vitality Boost

Vitality Boost is a new program CWA started offering this year. It is one-day workshop modeled after *Be Strong Families Parent Cafes*, an engaging peer-to-peer discussion process to help re-energize and refocus people on who they are and why they do the work they do. Vitality Boost allows for self-reflection in the six domains of our lives: Physical Vitality, Mental & Emotional Vitality, Spiritual Vitality, Financial Vitality, Environmental Vitality, and Social Vitality

Workers within the OCS Anchorage and Fairbanks offices were the pilot groups. And the feedback from the 35 participants was positive as 80% of them believed Vitality Boost pertained to their work. Plus, more than half of the group stated they would make changes as a result of this training and were inspired to improve their self-care activities.



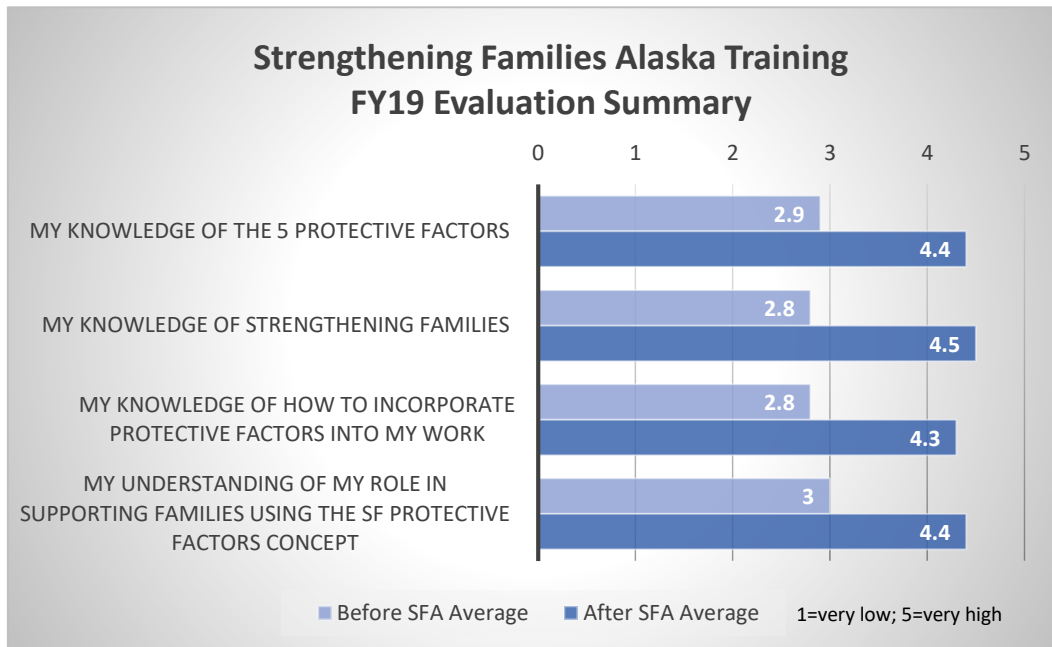
Sampling of participant feedback:

- *I enjoyed spend the extra time on each domain - & doing the self-evaluation. I also liked doing the action plan.*
- *I appreciate the self-reflection and opportunity to explore and share with my peers.*
- *Sharing – getting to know co-workers and our common struggles & solutions/ideas*
- *Allowed workers to view complex retention issues from other perspectives*
- *Encouragement to think about myself & take care of myself*



Strengthening Families™ Alaska (SFA)

CWA provided nine 2-day training events and presented at several conferences and meetings as requested. The chart below represents increased knowledge after the training from an average of 234 responses.



SFA participants have consistently reported on really enjoying the training, seeing the need for the education, and understanding how enhancing a parent’s protective factors can strengthen families. In the June 2019 training, an invitation was extended to participants interested in fully embedding the protective factors for deeper training and technical assistance, in an effort to transfer the learning into program practice.

Sampling of participant feedback:

- The training provided more in-depth review of the model from a different perspective. I understand the model more so & appreciate the positive, strengths based approach the model provides.*
- This workshop made me re-evaluate dealing with families and how I can make changes at my organization.*



Furthermore, CWA contracted with Stellar Group to evaluate both the two day Strengthening Families™ training and also how the protective factors were being implemented within OCS case planning practice within the Wasilla office. Report results were both shared with OCS at the time of release.

The National Criminal Justice Training Center (NCJTC) of Fox Valley Technical College Contract

CWA is in its fourth year of providing training and technical assistance to grantees of the Office of Victims of Crime. During this fiscal year, CWA collaborated with NCJTC to offer a three-day training for all Alaska grantees in August 2018 called the Alaska Summit. CWA Trainers assisted with all preparations as well as provided three presentations on the following topics:

- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Child Advocacy Center Roles of MDT Members
- Historical Trauma

In March of 2019, two CWA trainers travelled to Red Cliff Wisconsin to provide three days of training and technical assistance to the Red Cliff Indian Child Welfare Child Protection Team and their community partners. Topics included the implications of child abuse and neglect, methamphetamine use and abuse, mandatory child abuse reporting, childhood trauma and ACES, trauma informed care and team building. This training was well-received by the tribe and community.



Office of Youth Empowerment (OYE)



OYE is a partnership of CWA and Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) to provide a continuous spectrum of educational and support services to empower current and former foster youth throughout the state. Since the launch of OYE, hundreds of current and former foster youth have participated in youth lead training, leadership opportunities, education and employment training, and the development of critical life skills:

Speakers Bureau. Foster youth professionally trained in facilitation, public speaking, and leadership skills to coordinate foster youth presentations for their peers, child welfare staff, caregivers, legal parties and the community.

- OYE hosted over 30 foster youth led trainings across the state.
- Foster Youth and alumni participate in, “Youth Empowerment,” days in Juneau and Fairbanks to learn about services and further develop their own skills in leadership and public speaking.
- OYE hosted facilitation training and leadership development opportunities for the new Statewide Youth Leadership Board for FFCA.

Quarterly Youth Leadership Retreats. OYE staff supported four statewide quarterly youth leadership retreats with FFCA where over 100 foster youth and alumni participated in Anchorage, Wasilla, and Juneau events where they engaged in life skills training, career readiness, higher education and college enrichment, and to develop skills in advocacy, public speaking and story sharing.

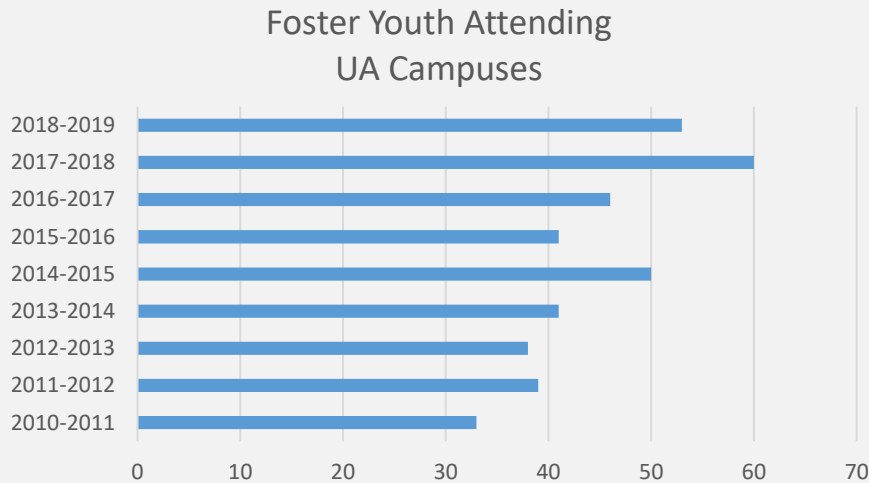
Laptops. FFCA matches current and former foster youth with laptops to support their education. This year, 37 youth were matched with laptops to complete schoolwork and maintain connections with family and friends.

Youth Thrive™. It is research-based model developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) that combines current science about adolescent brain development, trauma, resilience, and the importance of social connections into one framework for promoting young people’s well-being and healthy development. OYE and CWA staff facilitated two Youth Thrive™ trainings events in Anchorage and the Matsu Valley in which 43 child welfare professionals, youth, and community members participated.

Sampling of participant feedback:

- *Tammy and Amanda each have individual experiences that are extremely relevant to these topics. Everything we talked about applies directly to the work I do and there was a focus on applying these ideas to my daily work.*
- *Excellent training- made me more aware of the obstacles youth face and the ways supportive adults can help youth help themselves.*

Education and Training Voucher (ETV). The number of youth accessing ETV to pursue Post-Secondary Education and Training for financial assistance and academic support has significantly increased from 2004 to this year. In 2004-2010, six foster youth graduated from University of Alaska (UA) campuses. And from 2012-2019, there were 34 foster youth graduates. The chart below represents the number of foster youth accessing ETV at UA campuses since 2010.

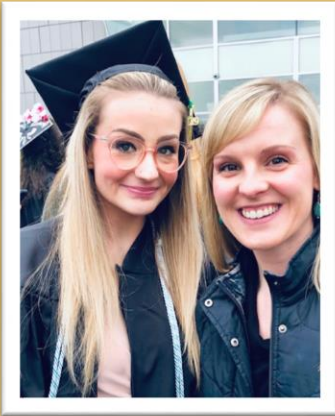


Program Highlights

- During our Annual Post-Secondary Education Conference, 37 foster youth participated in college readiness activities.
- Increased enrollment, including a record number last year with 60 students at UA Campuses, and 9 at outside schools.
- Students receive support to remain in campus housing year-round statewide to avoid homelessness through winter break and summer.
- Youth were able to remain in custody and live on campus because of HB27, adding an extra layer of support from OCS; students were able to go home for the holidays if they choose.
- Increased in the number of Presidential Foster Youth Tuition Waivers for UA students
- Additional 15 students accessed ETV to attend outside schools during the 2018-2019 Academic year with one graduate in Auto Diesel Mechanics from Universal Technical Institute in Arizona.

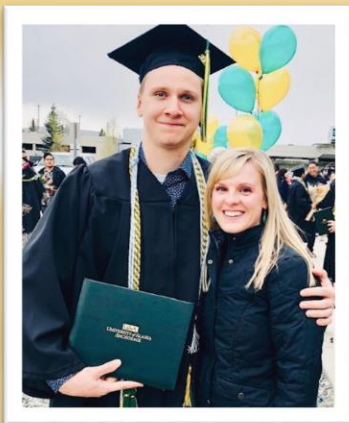


During the 2018-2019 Academic Year, 53 current and former foster youth attended UA. Six students graduated from degree and certificate programs in Engineering, Social Work, Logistics, Geomatics, and Medical Assisting. Here are testimonies from two latest graduates:



“FFCA provided me with the support and help in navigating the child welfare system, connected me to peer mentors, travel to the state capital to advocate for legislation, made secondary education a possibility through our partnership with the Child Welfare Academy, and aided in my development as a social work student. As I progress further into my education, I continue to share my story in hopes to advocate the importance of family violence, mental health care, post-secondary education, and the issues impacting our systems today.”

- Marissa Sweet, Bachelor of Social Work



“During my first years at UAA, I found it difficult to balance work with the challenging engineering classes. In the 2016 school year, I heard about ETV. After I applied for these funds, I was not only given much needed financial assistance but also academic and career advice that helped me make the most out of my time in college. Amanda Metivier and the amazing staff in her office helped me find summertime work in the engineering field and showed me how to be a more effective student during the school year. I could not have gotten where I am today without the ETV Program and Presidential Foster Youth Tuition Waiver. The ETV program has helped me complete my degree in Mechanical Engineering and pursue a career in Renewable Energy.”

- David Chamberlain, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

Congratulations Class of 2019!



Highlights



Leadership Coaching. Coaching is a process by which the coach creates structured, focused interaction with managers and uses appropriate strategies and tools to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the manager, making a positive impact on the organization. Coaching incorporates a systems approach with the idea that change from the top will trickle down to workers and then to families. With this method, CWA is coaching three licensing managers at the request of OCS, as was done in the past with PSMs.

MAKE IT HAPPEN! Webinars. Once a month from March to June 2019, our Strengthening Families™ Alaska program offered MAKE IT HAPPEN! webinars to agencies and community members who work with families and children. The webinars were hosted by Shirley Pittz with new guests each month. They highlighted the following programs around the state who were “making it happen” to embed the Protective Factors within their communities:

- Thread Alaska provides mini grants and technical assistance to childcare programs including 10-hour Strengthening Families™ mandatory training for early care and learning programs.
- OYE and CWA provide Youth Thrive™ training events that use the latest science to advance work with adolescents based on five protective and promotive factors for youth's well-being and success.
- Nome Community Center and Nenana Native Village use the Strong Parents Alaska (SPA) curriculum with their parent and community groups.

Strong Parents Alaska (SPA). The Anchorage School District, in partnership with Catholic Social Services, began a SPA group to enhance the wonderful work they are already doing with refugee families. CWA provided a trainer to provide brief technical assistance and facilitation modeling on one snowy Saturday morning in early December. The event took place not long after the earthquake, and it proved a timely opportunity to connect families with one another’s support.

Supporting and Communicating with Resource Families Webinar. To celebrate Foster Care Appreciation Month this past May, OCS Director Natalie Norberg requested a one-hour webinar on Supporting and Communicating with Resource Families for all OCS workers. The presentation utilized the Resource Family Bill of Rights as a platform to discuss how to work with foster families in a way that are supportive, empowering, and respectful. Panel members included Brian Headdings (foster and adoptive parent), Yurii Miller (OCS NRO/WRO/SERO Region Licensing Manager), Mindy Swisher (PSS IV with Northern Region OCS), and Aileen McInnis (Director of the Alaska Center for Resource Families). The panel covered each of the thirteen Rights, unpacking the meaning and intention behind each, and offering helpful practice hints from both a child protective services specialist and a foster parent point of view. The webinar was administered by CWA with a turnout over 150 workers. The recording is available under CWA’s web-based training list.

Highlights

Recognizing Child Abuse Webinar. As a way to provide assistance to OCS staff across the state in assessing injuries to children, CWA coordinated a webinar presented by Dr. Cathy Baldwin-Johnson called *Recognizing Child Abuse*. This training encompassed injuries to children: skin injuries, fractures, abdominal trauma, head injuries, strangulation and burns.

SKILS Webinar. To notify OCS supervisors of the changes made to SKILS because of new legislation, a webinar was presented by CWA and OCS Deputy Director Kim Guay. The topics covered were the following:

- Specifics for each of the first 5 weeks of SKILS 161, 162, and 163 training along with the annotated agendas for SKILS 161.
- Information on how to support new PSS' learning, including how to prepare them for SKILS 161, encouraging completion of PreSKILS requirements, and blocking out their calendars for SKILS 162 and 163.
- Mentor program information and the collaboration happening with CWA to assist in the transfer of learning from the classroom to the field.

These webinars may be viewed on the Child Welfare Academy website:

<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/school-of-social-work/child-welfare-academy/online-learning/webinars.cshtml>.

