



Bi-Annual Report

January 1 – June 30, 2017

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Child Welfare Academy (CWA) trains, develops and supports Alaskans to assure children are safe, youth thrive, and families are strong.

To accomplish our mission, we:

- Provide state of the art training guided by the OCS Practice Model
- Develop and evaluate curriculum
- Work in collaboration with related disciplines and community partners
- Support positive outcomes for children and families

OUR STAFF

Tammy Sandoval, MSW, Director, tkandoval@alaska.edu

Tom McRoberts, MSW, Trainer, tpmcroberts@alaska.edu

Cory Bryant, MSW, Trainer, cbryant7@alaska.edu

Valerie Dudley, Trainer, vdudley@alaska.edu

Amanda Metivier, MSW, Youth Education Coordinator, almetivier@alaska.edu

Marianne Mahon, Fiscal & Operations Manager, mmahon@alaska.edu

Lisa Tanga, Training Coordinator, lktanga@alaska.edu

Christine Mojica, Grant Coordinator, ckmojica@alaska.edu

Rachel Bedsworth, Student Worker, rbedsworth@alaska.edu

"A society's soul is best revealed in how it treats its children."

~ Nelson Mandela

TRAINING SUMMARY

Summary of Services provided by the Child Welfare Academy January-June 2017	
Participants in Attendance	356
OCS	213
Other Community Partners	143
Tribal Partners	79
Completed Training Days	103
Contact Hours	6,054

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and INSIGHT LEADING TO SUCCESS (SKILS)

Over the last six months, CWA staff have been busy fine-tuning and updating SKILS. The big shift from protective capacities to protective factors, so successful last year, was further developed in the SKILS curriculum. With the addition of training activities, especially around interviewing, case planning, and goal writing in Family Services, workers graduate from SKILS more prepared to write case plans that are practical and family-centered.

We have also responded to several changes in OCS practice to include changes in the initial assessment process and safety planning. Along with revising curriculum, we added activities on laptops to help workers experience documentation as they would in ORCA. In addition, we structured the flow of training to match the flow of documentation in ORCA.

In general, SKILS has become an increasingly intricate training that uses state of the art adult learning theories to inform best training practices. Our adult and child interviewing training are good examples of this type of high quality training. Workers first encounter interview training online, where they learn about interview strategies and see examples of interviews. Then, when they arrive at SKILS, they revisit the same concepts in a small team, and begin to think through how to apply interview strategies to real cases. To reinforce these strategies, they conduct an interview with an actor in a simulation lab, receiving and giving feedback from peers. Interview training is just one example of the CWAs dedication to helping the new worker not only understand but apply the many different aspects of child protection practice.

Our Blended Learning Community (BLC) continues to be an importation foundation to SKILS. Through the online trainings developed by CWA, and on the job training, workers have not only a structured way to prepare for training, but activities that help them better acclimate to their work environment. By collaborating with OCS, CWA ensures that almost 100 percent of all new workers complete this onboarding process. They arrive at SKILS with a good beginning knowledge of their roles, the practice

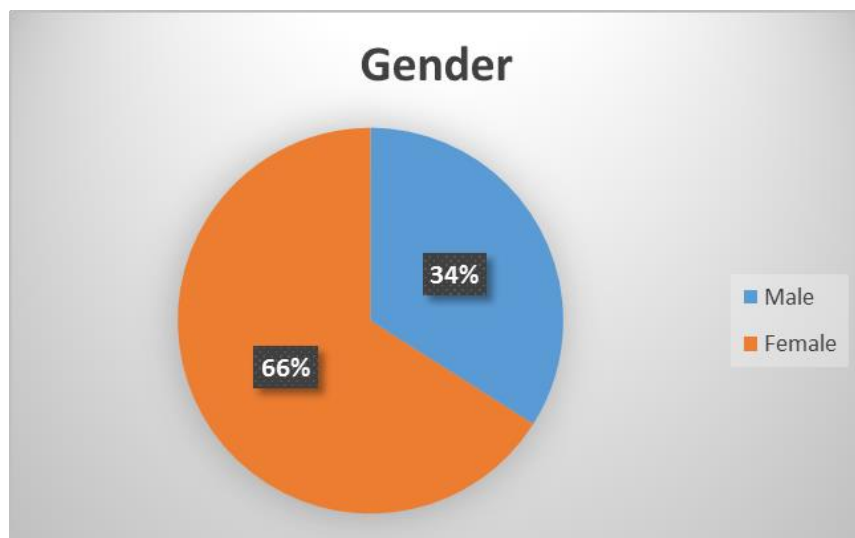
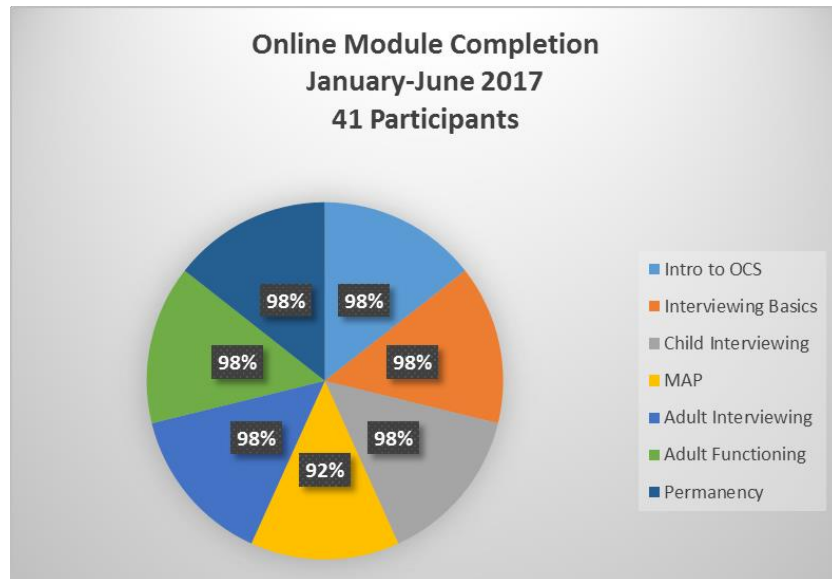
model, and important policies. They are then ready to begin to apply these concepts to case examples provided in training. Over the last six months, the CWA has continued to refine the BLC. We are excited to begin adding training that workers will receive after they leave SKILS, to continue their professional development and reinforce transfer of learning.

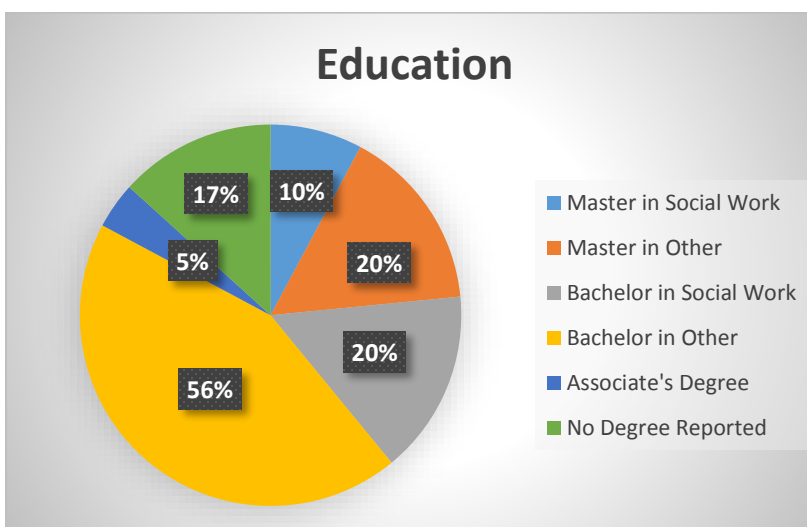
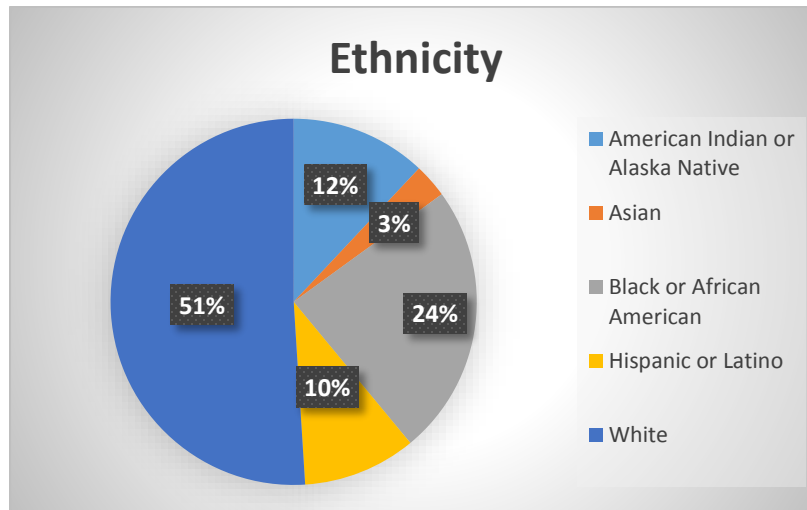
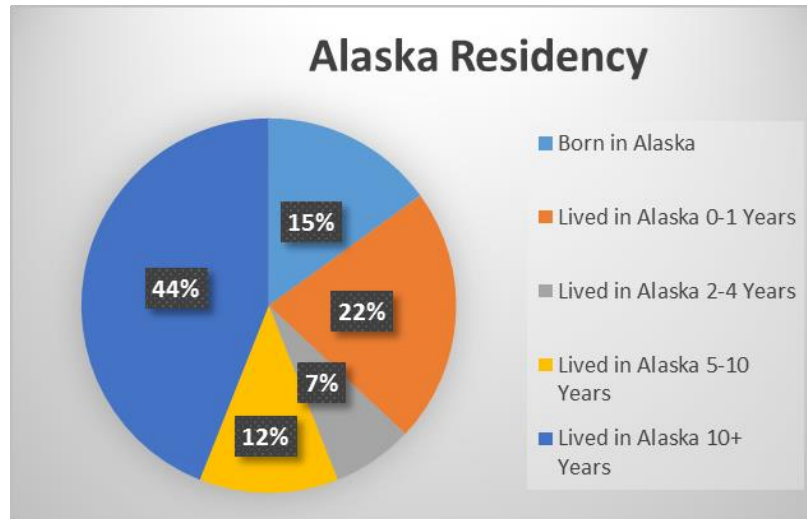
At the end of each week of SKILS, participants provided feedback on how SKILS helped them prepare for working with families, how they will apply what they learned, and on the trainers style and delivery. Overall, feedback is very positive with participants consistently noting that they appreciated practicing using practice model guides with a case example, preparing for and conduction a videotaped mock interview, and the overall quality and consistency of the information delivered from the trainers.

Sampling of SKILS that participants found helpful:

- The content and materials prepared me with the practical hands-on opportunity to implement what I've been learning.
- The SKILS and desk manuals (and sample case file and Safety Threats guide) are very user friendly and will be used often.
- Materials prepared me to be able to identify present and impending danger in different situations and be able to know the differences.
- Each day I will try to use my resource guides to ensure that I am following protocol.
- I felt the trainers did a great job facilitating activities and lectures in a meaningful and applicable way. More specifically, the activities promote information retention in that we applied the concepts we learned to actual scenarios.
- The trainers were/are lovely, people who transform others through wit and wisdom.
- Every new topic is something I was unaware of. So much good information.
- I will carry the lessons with me every day. I will use wrap around services and kindness in my interactions in Family Service.
- I have learned how important it is to accept every case like you are helping a human being better yet a family member get through a hard time of their life
- Awesome job to all the trainers. It was a long training but I felt engaged the whole time.
- I've heard from some individuals that SKILS was a waste of time, but I found it enlightening and insightful. More than I could've imagined.
- It definitely helped me put all the IA process into the right order. I feel A LOT more confident when it comes to the IA process
- I learned the process expected of me. I was informed of the skills/attitude necessary to do my job effectively.
- I will use the protective factors and OARS the most to engage w/ families
- Role playing interviews were important to learning how to do an effective interview. The slide shows and in-class activities were great for visual learners.
- By knowing the requirements and process of our job, my training helps prepare me for this job.

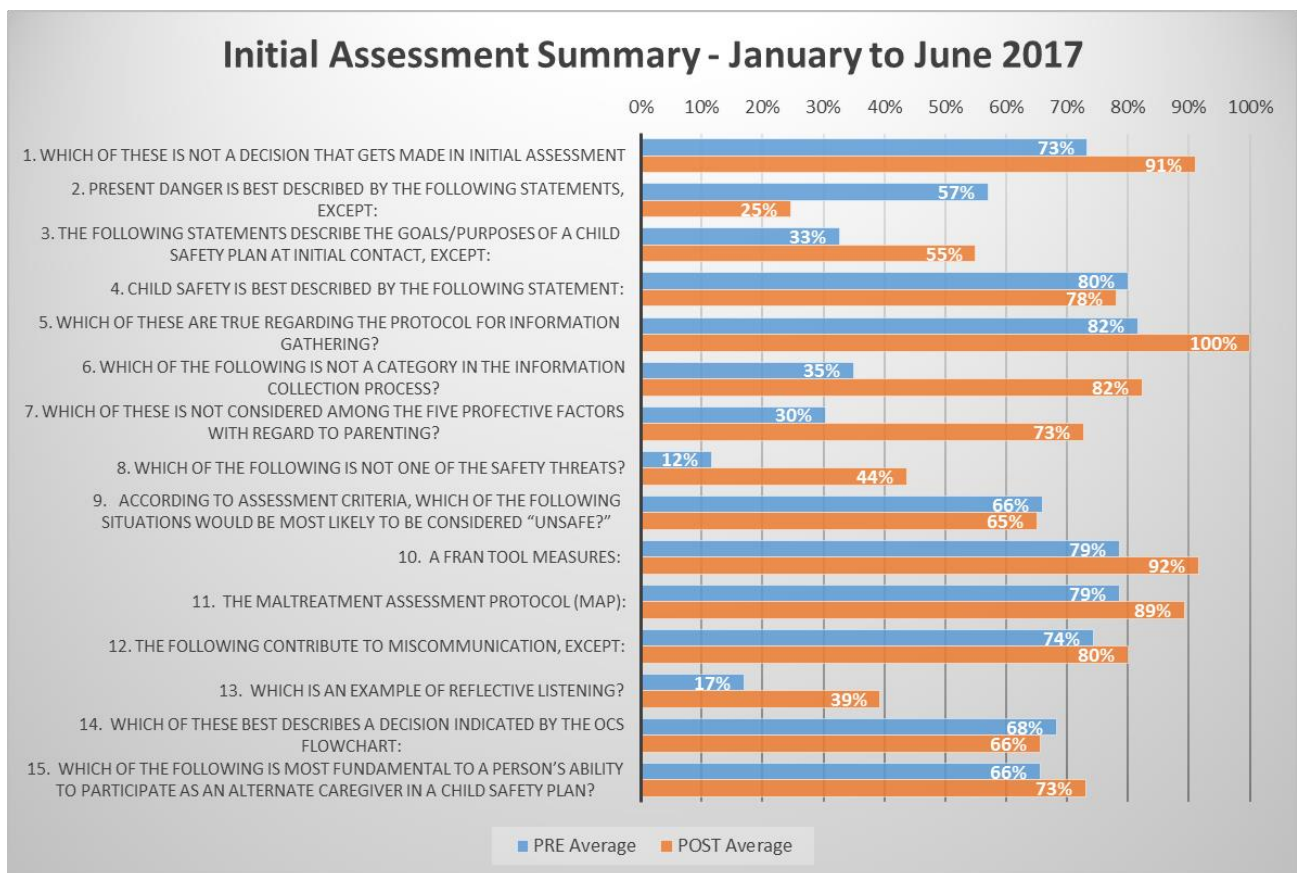
New workers are required to come to SKILS having taken seven online modules. The chart below show the completion rates along with demographic information.



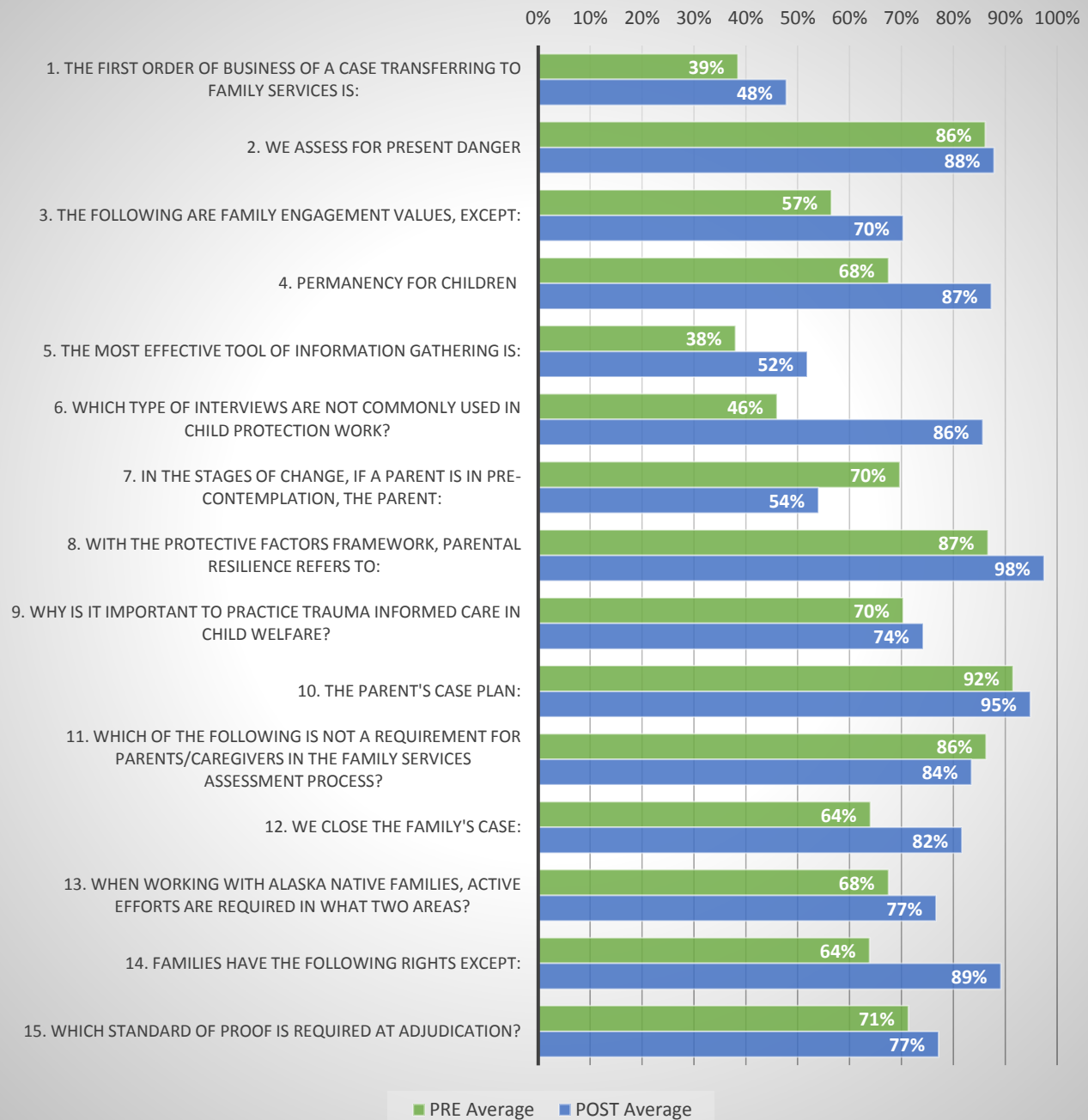


Measuring the Effectiveness of SKILS

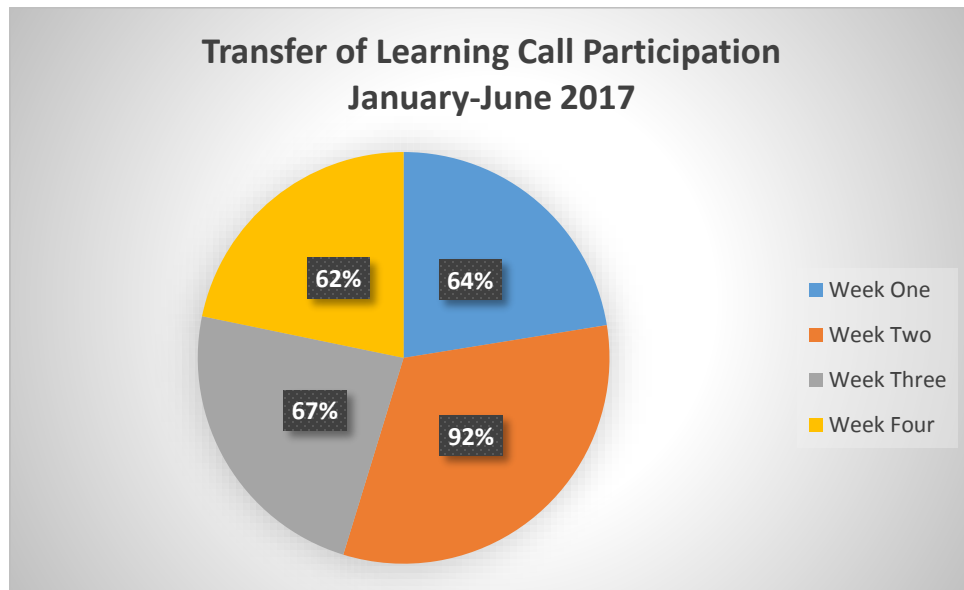
In the fall of last year, the CWA implemented a pretest and posttest for SKILS Week 131 Initial Assessments and SKILS 133 Family Services. The test measures knowledge of the worker before SKILS then contrasts it with knowledge gained through the training. The test covers basic concepts trained in SKILS with the intent to provide us with information on areas of growth for the learner as well as opportunities for changes or improvements in training. As results have been analyzed, we have eliminated questions that data indicated were too easy to answer in the pretest as well as making difficult questions both clearer and more direct. The charts below reflect significant improvement in scores from the pretest to the posttest which suggests workers have a better understanding of many important concepts associated with field practice.



Family Services Summary - January to June 2017



CWA continues to provide weekly Transfer of Learning (TOL) calls the month after new workers have attended SKILS. TOL calls help to transfer the learning in the classroom to practice in the field.



There are two modules of worker safety taught in SKILS, Environmental Awareness and Crisis Prevention Intervention. Below are the workers' responses to the training of these two modules.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS - 41 Participants			
Dates: January - June 2017			
Q#	QUESTIONS	RATING	PERCENTAGES
Q1	Rate the trainer:	5- Excellent	69%
		4- Good	23%
		3- Average	8%
		2- Fair	0%
		1- Poor	0%
100%			
Q2	Rate the content:	5- Excellent	50%
		4- Good	42%
		3- Average	8%
		2- Fair	0%
		1- Poor	0%
100%			
Q3	Rate the training methods:	5- Excellent	46%
		4- Good	46%
		3- Average	8%
		2- Fair	0%
		1- Poor	0%
100%			
Q4	Rate the location’s contribution to the training experience:	5- Excellent	58%
		4- Good	34%
		3- Average	8%
		2- Fair	0%
		1- Poor	0%
100%			
Q5	Rate the extent to which this workshop was pertinent to your job:	5- Excellent	65%
		4- Good	31%
		3- Average	4%
		2- Fair	0%
		1- Poor	0%
100%			
Q6	Rate the training workshop/experience overall:	5- Excellent	61%
		4- Good	31%
		3- Average	8%
		2- Fair	0%
		1- Poor	0%
100%			

Note: Averages are based on those who answered the questions.

Sampling of Environmental Awareness Participant Responses:

- The real world applications of situations awareness
- Learning specifics of dealing w/ AK wildlife
- Active shooter
- It was very interactive

CRISIS PREVENTION INSTITUTE - 41 Participants			
Dates: January - June 2017			
Q#	QUESTIONS	RATING	PERCENTAGES
Q1	Use nonverbal techniques to prevent acting-out behavior.	5- Strongly Agree	67%
		4- Agree	29%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	0%
		2- Disagree	0%
		1- Strongly Disagree	4%
100%			
Q2	Implement verbal de-escalation strategies, such as limit setting.	5- Strongly Agree	75%
		4- Agree	21%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	0%
		2- Disagree	0%
		1- Strongly Disagree	4%
100%			
Q3	Make use of CPI's Principles of Personal Safety to avoid injury to all involved in a crisis situation.	5- Strongly Agree	54%
		4- Agree	34%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	8%
		2- Disagree	0%
		1- Strongly Disagree	4%
100%			
Q4	Use safe physical intervention procedures as a last resort when a person is a danger to self or others.	5- Strongly Agree	54%
		4- Agree	34%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	8%
		2- Disagree	0%
		1- Strongly Disagree	4%
100%			
Q5	Build Therapeutic Rapport with acting-out individuals after a crisis is over.	5- Strongly Agree	70%
		4- Agree	15%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	5%
		2- Disagree	5%
		1- Strongly Disagree	5%
100%			

Q#	QUESTIONS	RATING	PERCENTAGES
Q6	Applied the course content to a variety of examples.	5- Strongly Agree	75%
		4- Agree	17%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	4%
		2- Disagree	4%
		1- Strongly Disagree	0%
100%			
Q7	Stimulated interest in the subject matter.	5- Strongly Agree	79%
		4- Agree	13%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	4%
		2- Disagree	4%
		1- Strongly Disagree	0%
100%			
Q8	Created an enjoyable learning atmosphere.	5- Strongly Agree	79%
		4- Agree	17%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	0%
		2- Disagree	4%
		1- Strongly Disagree	0%
100%			
Q9	Emphasized the philosophy of Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security SM .	5- Strongly Agree	75%
		4- Agree	13%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	8%
		2- Disagree	4%
		1- Strongly Disagree	0%
100%			
Q10	The program content was relevant to my needs.	5- Strongly Agree	62%
		4- Agree	30%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	0%
		2- Disagree	4%
		1- Strongly Disagree	4%
100%			
Q11	How would you rate the web-based portion?	5- Strongly Agree	64%
		4- Agree	29%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	7%
		2- Disagree	0%
		1- Strongly Disagree	0%
100%			

Q#	QUESTIONS	RATING	PERCENTAGES
Q12	How would you rate the classroom-based portion?	5- Strongly Agree	79%
		4- Agree	21%
		3- Neither Agree, Nor Disagree	0%
		2- Disagree	0%
		1- Strongly Disagree	0%
			100%
Q13	How would you rate the program overall?	5- Highest	70%
		4	22%
		3	4%
		2	0%
		1- Lowest	4%
			100%

Note: Averages are based on those who answered the questions.

Sampling of Crisis Prevention Intervention Participant Responses:

- Have learned more strategies
- Feel more confident
- Feel more comfortable confronting contentious situations at work
- Learned helpful self-defense techniques

TRAINING and TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The chart below represents the training and technical assistance that has been completed from July 1 to June 30, 2017.

ARO REGION	TOPIC	TIME	DATE	TRAINER
Anchorage	FRAN	1.5 hr	8/2/2016	Cory
Anchorage	FRAN	1.5 hr	8/3/2016	Cory
Anchorage	Emotional Intelligence	1 day	10/11/2016	Cory/ Tom
Anchorage	Screening for Sexual Abuse in the Field	1 hr	2/23/2017	Cory
Anchorage	Child Interviewing Techniques	2 hr	2/24/2017	Cory
Anchorage	Intake Training	1 day	5/17/2017	Tom/Lindsay Bothe
ARO Total days:		3		
SCRO REGION	TOPIC	TIME	DATE	TRAINER
Kenai	FSA 2.0	1/2 day	7/20/2016	Tammy
Homer	FSA 2.0	1/2 day	7/27/2016	Tammy
Wasilla	FSA 2.0	1/2 day	9/15/2016	Tom
Wasilla	Training Goals Using Values & Coaching to Supervise	1/2 day	3/28/2017	Tom
SCRO Total days:		2		
NRO REGION	TOPIC	TIME	DATE	TRAINER
Nome	FSA 2.0	1/2 day	10/25/2016	Tammy
Fairbanks	Leadership/Strategic Planning	1/2 day	4/10/2017	Tammy
Nome	Protective Factors/Timelines/Case Planning	1 day	4/17-4/18/17	Tom
NRO Total days:		2		
SERO REGION	TOPIC	TIME	DATE	TRAINER
Juneau	Leadership Retreat	1 day	4/17/2017	Tammy
Juneau	IA Team Building/FS Safety	1 day	4/18/2017	Tammy
Sitka	FSA 2.0/Case Planning	2 days	4/19-4/20/17	Tammy
Ketchikan	Prep for CFSR in May	1 day	4/21/2017	Tammy
SERO Total days:		5		
WRO REGION	TOPIC	TIME	DATE	TRAINER
Bethel	Trauma-Informed Care	1 day	10/5/2016	Cory
Bethel	Protective Factors/Timelines/Case Planning	1 day	2/16/2017	Tom/Val
Bethel	Case Planning w/ PF	1 day	6/28/2017	Tom
Bethel	Case Planning Progress & Eval	1 day	6/29/2017	Tom
WRO Total days:		4		

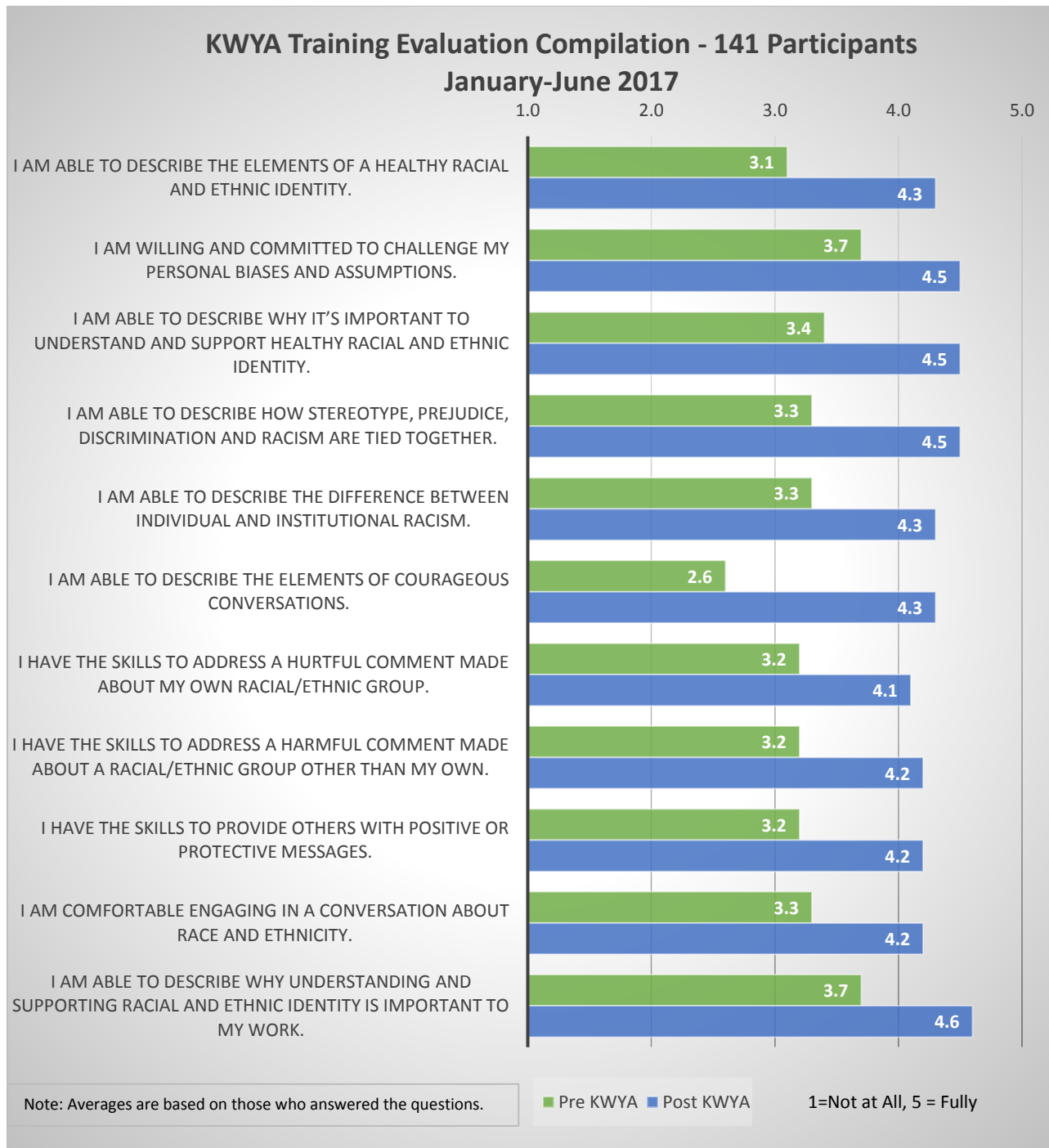
KNOWING WHO YOU ARE (KWYA) WORKSHOPS

The first half of 2017 proved to be very busy for Alaska's KWYA program. During this time, the steering committee and curriculum working group finalized, then piloted our curriculum updates. Changes included: minor changes on many of the modules, three new modules added, and several modules deleted. While the workshop objectives have remained the same, we found at the piloted sites that these changes take the discussion to a deeper level of racial equity exploration.

During this reporting period, 185 participants were trained in the following 8 locations: Nome, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Anchorage (2), Kodiak, Palmer, and Kenai. Much of the success of Alaska's KWYA program is in thanks to our Tribal and community partners who continue to collaborate with CWA and OCS to recruit participants, offer training space, and facilitate the workshop.

Additionally, the steering committee is gearing up to host a KWYA Facilitator Training August 15-17 in Anchorage. Held every 2-3 years, this training of facilitators will effectively double our current network of statewide KWYA facilitators from 20 to 41. We are thrilled to see commitment to the KWYA program from Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKDS), Alaska Center for Resource Families (ACRF), Nome's Community Alcohol Safety Team (CAST) Coalition, Kawerak, Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC), CWA and OCS.

As always, KWYA workshops are open to State and Tribal child welfare workers, community partners, and service providers. If it has been awhile since you have been to a workshop (several years or more) we invite to attend again. Watch for workshops to be scheduled following the Facilitator Training.



Sampling of KWYA Participant Responses:

- This group was very open, honest, and vulnerable. The facilitators encouraged this and it was successful.
- It was delivered in a very comfortable environment.
- The facilitators' willingness to share and be open and vulnerable made it easy to do the same.

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT (ICWA) TRAINING

CWA has continued to partner with Regional ICWA Specialists and Tribal partners to deliver ICWA Training in each of the five OCS regions.

ICWA I (4 hours) is to be completed after a worker participates in SKILS training and in the first 6 months of hire. This training is delivered by the Regional ICWA Specialist depending on each region's needs and sometimes varies from one-on-one to a group setting. The focus of ICWA I has been Active Efforts and Placement Preferences. We have since added the topic of Diligent Relative Searches in an effort to stress the importance of identifying and notifying relatives as early as possible after a child being removed from the home.

ICWA II (2-days) training was held in Fairbanks (Feb 23-24), Bethel (April 13-14), Anchorage (June 12-13), and Juneau (June 21-22). We continue to encourage Tribal partners to attend ICWA II and sit side-by-side OCS workers to encourage relationship building and collaboration. We saw this happen during several of our trainings and OCS workers often comment on how meaningful and helpful it is to have Tribal workers in attendance.

Sampling of ICWA II Participant Responses:

- I enjoyed the discussions (open-ended) about different concepts being taught. I think allowing the class to participate w/ real examples & the real life examples brought to the table are very helpful.
- Real world examples and exercises on how we can use what we learned in our day to day.
- The activities were very helpful to learn how to apply ICWA in different scenarios that we encounter as social workers.

SUPERVISOR TRAINING

Based on feedback from previous cohorts, changes were made to the second part of new supervisors' core training. The curriculum now focuses on reviewing the coaching techniques that were taught during the first session, conflict management, change management, results oriented culture, managing using data, strategic planning, trauma and brain development, team development, and revising emotional intelligence in how it relates to the supervisory role.

There were two new activities added to this session as well; ORCA Report Manager training and to end the session, development of an individual learning plan. Evaluations indicated most participants appreciated the team development, strategic planning, conflict management and emotional intelligence. Participants requested more training on secondary trauma and to add the ORCA Report Manager to the first session so they get that sooner in their development. Licensing supervisors indicated ORCA Report Manager was not as helpful to them.

Supervisor Training Feedback - 12 Participants					
Dates: February 14-16, 2017					
Please rate the Training in the following areas:	Low				High
	1	2	3	4	5
Rate your understanding of the topics covered in class.	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%
The learning activities helped prepare me to do my job.	0%	0%	0%	42%	58%
Rate your initial ability to apply what you learned to your job.	0%	0%	8%	34%	58%

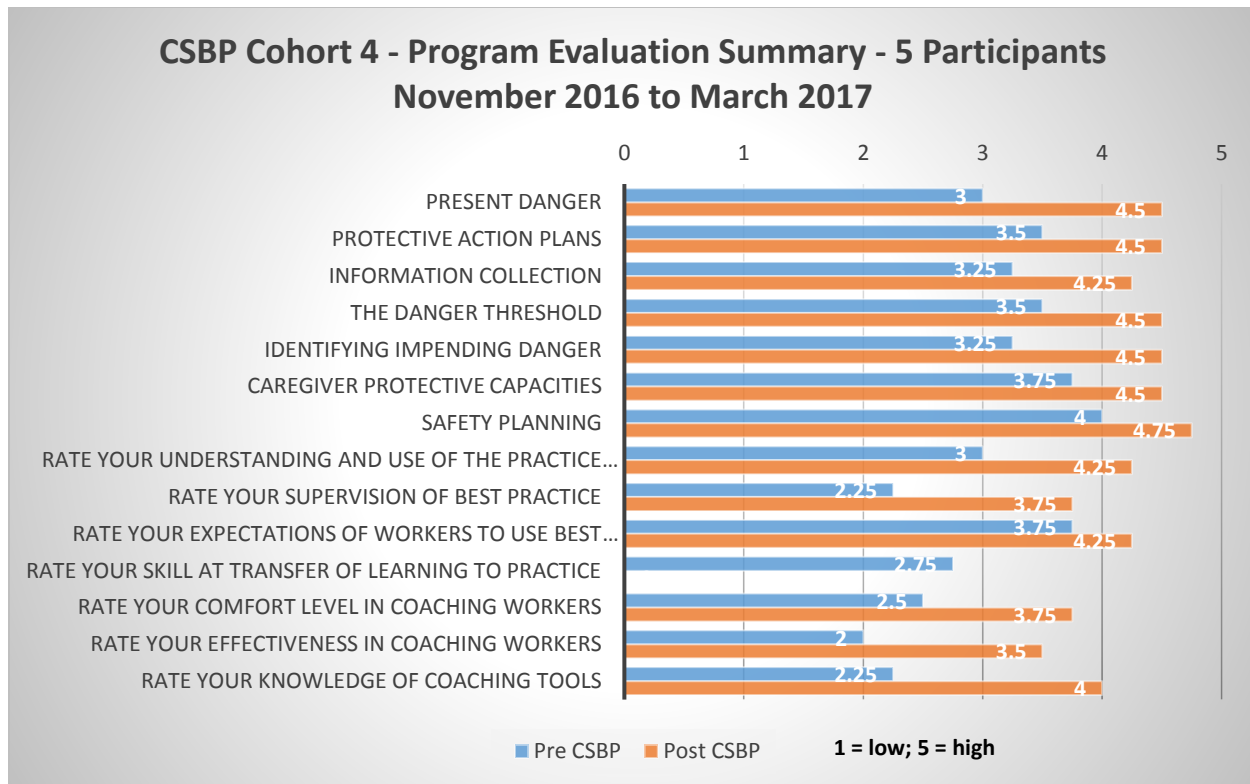
Sampling of Supervisor Training Participant Responses:

- I liked staffing problems w/ my peers b/c I learned how they handle issues & am able to take that info & use it myself. Conflict management was most helpful.
- I loved Team Development – I have not learned about the stages prior. Really helps.
- I appreciate the information and ideas to enhance my team leadership skills.

COACHING SUPERVISORS TO BEST PRACTICE (CSBP)

The CSBP program graduated another cohort during this review period. This cohort was different than the usual cohort of supervisors, in that the majority of participants were specialists within OCS. There were two permanency planning specialists, an ICWA specialist, a mentor and a supervisor. The group presented new opportunities for the CSBP program to effect other areas of OCS practice and procedures. While there were concerns over the amount of work required of the program, all participants indicated the program was valuable and helpful to their jobs. As in all other cohorts, coaching was highly regarded as being the most helpful to the learning process. Learners reported that the program vastly improved their knowledge of the practice model, they acquired new tools when working with staff, slowed down when making decisions, and helped to feel and be seen as a leader and the ability to cover for supervisors when needed. Additionally, learners indicated they have more respect for the decision-making tools, more awareness of possible bias when working with families, how to improve their documentation and feel more organized thinking. Learners said they now have a better understanding of how ICWA and the practice model work together, how to use coaching as another tool in their work with other staff, and overall how helpful the face to face workshops were to talk through cases using the practice model. It was suggested that managers also go through the program, that there be more face to face time and that everyone in OCS use the same language and process to make decisions.

For the first time, managers of the cohort participants were interviewed. They reported the learners seem to have a greater understanding of the supervisor's role which in turn has resulted in increased empathy and patience as well as the learners being more positive and appreciative of the process. Time was noted as a concern but other than that, all feedback was nothing but positive.



CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS/MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS (CAC/MDT)

The CWA continues its work with MDTs and CACs across the State to provide training and technical assistance. During this six-month period, the following work was completed:

- CWA continued to work with the Utqiagvik/Barrow MDT in their response to child maltreatment. When invited, CWA staff attended the MDT meetings telephonically and worked with the CAC Coordinator to help with start-up issues as they arose. CWA had bi-monthly calls with the Coordinator assisting with a grant application and updating protocols. Additionally, CWA provided outreach to other MDT members including the Chief of Police in Utqiagvik/Barrow to identify concerns or issues on the MDT. A request was made for training law enforcement and other first responders who are called when a report of child maltreatment is first made. This training will be an on-sight training facilitated by a retired Law Enforcement person who specialized in crimes against children and by CWA staff, to help establish protocols for first responders. While in Utqiagvik, the training team will also meet with the MDT to work on MDT roles for new staff and finalize protocols. This three-day training is scheduled for fall of 2017. The Utqiagvik CAC is making significant strides in their quest to open their doors. Their forensic interviewing equipment has been installed; they have obtained funding for a forensic nurse as well as additional equipment. CWA will continue working with this MDT.
- CWA has been working with the Kotzebue CAC and has a scheduled in-person meeting in August 2017. The agenda for this technical assistance request was to help the CAC with the following: differences between advocacy in shelter and at CACs, protocol review including Point Hope's concerns with the North Slope Borough Police Department, NCAttrak data collection system, and attend an MDT meeting and Case Review and provide feedback and insight into their processes.

- CWA co-facilitated a New Director Orientation for those CAC Managers and Directors new to their position within the past two years. The 1.5 day training in May covered the National Children's Alliance (NCA) Standards for Accreditation as well as topics including Leadership, Conflict Management and Community Involvement in CACs.
- CWA coordinated and co-facilitated the Annual OCS/CAC Grantee Meeting. This 1.5 day meeting was adjacent to the New Director Orientation in May. OCS representatives provided updates on OCS policy and practice on the following topics:
 - Runaway Youth
 - Centralized Intake
 - ICWA Regulations

The new Executive Director for the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault attended the meeting to be present for the discussion on Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Centers. Other topics discussed were data and reporting; youth with sexual behavior problems and resiliency. Follow up work on standardization of youth surveys has been completed by CWA and dispersed for use by the CACs.

- Outreach was provided to the Fairbanks CAC with a plan to assist them in their application to the National Children's Alliance for Accreditation is continuing. CWA will review the application for Fairbanks as well as visit the CAC to do a walk through prior to their site visit with NCA to help them identify any gaps. Application completion goal is fall 2017.
- CWA toured the Dillingham CAC, April 10th, and provided technical assistance regarding program issues. This CAC is doing great work especially in their education and outreach.
- CWA provided telephonic outreach to the Juneau CAC regarding their upcoming National Children's Alliance re-accreditation visit and lack of MOU with one of their partner agencies.
- CWA continues to work with OCS, ACA and two representatives from CACs to identify, clarify and revise reporting standards that are consistent for all CACs. CWA facilitates these meetings, scheduling, agendas, taking notes, etc. as well as provides insight and input. Calls are monthly.
- CWA is providing technical assistance to the Bethel CAC Interim Director. This work focuses on addressing to enable them to meet the NCA Standards for Accreditation.
- CWA is working with CAC and MDT representatives to address the system response to youth with problematic sexual behaviors. CWA facilitates these meetings, scheduling, agendas, taking notes, etc. as well as provides insight and input. Calls are every six weeks.

ChildFirst™ Alaska

CWA is a partner in ChildFirst™ Alaska as a member of the Leadership Team, co-coordinator of the program and has a trainer that is certified ChildFirst™ Alaska trainer. CWA coordinates the monthly meetings for the Leadership Team and provides notes to the group. One ChildFirst™ Alaska training was held on April 2017 in Anchorage. CWA provided coordination for this training including administrative assistance. Twenty-nine professionals attended with representation across the state.

CWA attended the National ChildFirst™ Conference called VIP Summit in June of 2017. CWA also participates the National Child First™ quarterly calls and updates for all ChildFirst™ States.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES ALASKA

The UAA Child Welfare Academy (CWA) received funding from the State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Strengthening Families Alaska program to support Alaska's role in Strengthening Families™, a growing national movement that uses the Protective Factors Framework to develop innovative programs across the country.

Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed, strength-based approach to helping families reduce stress, address risk factors, and promote healthy development. The overarching goal is the promotion of child and family well-being. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors that help families succeed and thrive, even in the face of risk and challenges:

- **Parental resilience**- Managing both general life and parenting stress and functioning well when faced with stressors, challenges, or adversity; the outcome is positive change and growth
- **Social connections**- Having healthy, sustained relationships with people, institutions, the community, or a force great than oneself
- **Knowledge of parenting and child development**-Understanding the unique aspects of child development; implementing developmentally and contextually appropriate best parenting practices
- **Concrete support in times of need**- Identifying, seeking, accessing, advocating for, and receiving needed adult, child, and family services; receiving a quality of service designed to preserve parents' dignity and promote healthy development
- **Social and emotional competence of children**- Providing an environment and experiences that enable the child to form close and secure adult and peer relationships, and to experience, regulate, and express emotions

Research shows that when parents develop protective factors the risk of child maltreatment is greatly reduced, child development is improved and families are stronger.

Harper Browne, C. (2014, September) *The Strengthening Families approach and Protective Factors Framework: Branching out and reaching deeper*. Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Social Policy

The Strengthening Families approach is grounded in seven foundational ideas:

1. **The two generation approach**- promoting young children's healthy development by developing the capabilities and resources of parents or caregivers
2. **A consideration of culture**-investigating, understanding, and appreciating cultural differences and commonalities in parenting beliefs, values, expectations, practices and child-rearing goals; being attuned to cultural competence and cultural humility
3. **The strengths-base perspective**-appreciating and highlighting the set of relationships and processes that support and protect families and family members, especially during times of adversity and change

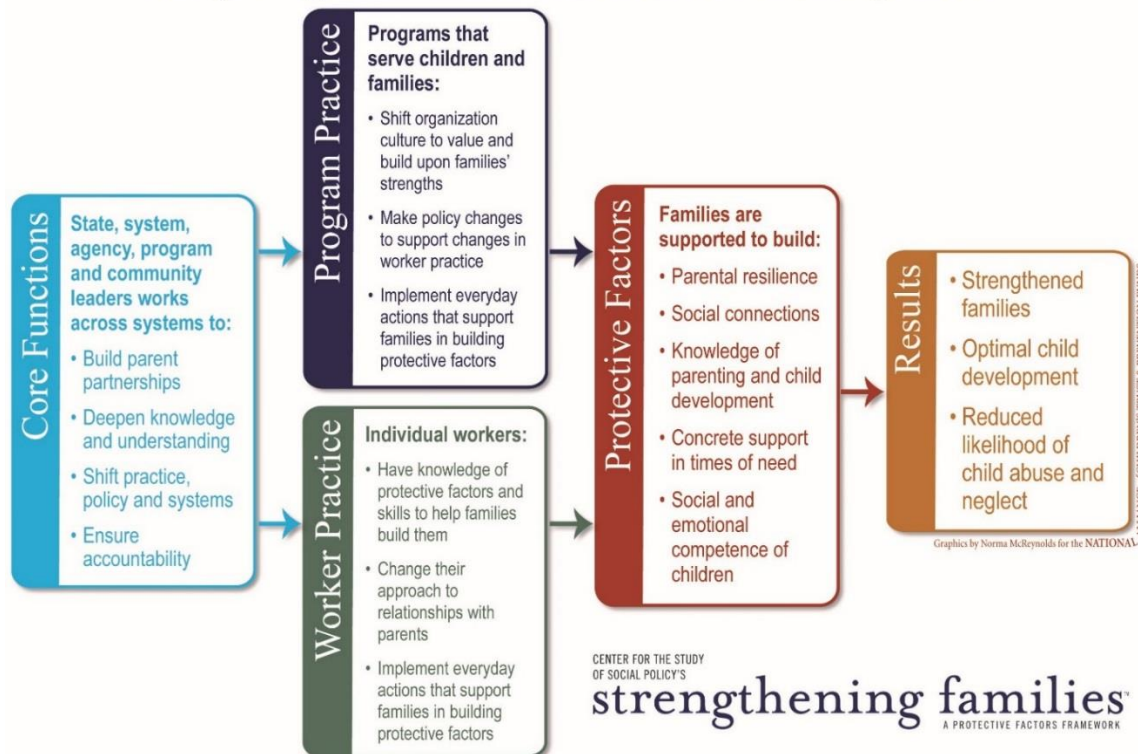
4. **The biology of stress**-understanding the neurobiological impacts of adverse childhood experiences and how supportive parenting and positive relationships can foster positive adaptation
5. **Resilience theory**-supporting the potential to rebound from adversity strengthened and more resourceful
6. **A focus on well-being**-focusing on the healthy development and well-being for all families; healthy family relationships and attachment to a caring and reliable adult
7. **The nature of risk and protective factors**-acknowledging the individual, relational, community, and societal factors that must be addressed in order to promote healthy child, adult, and family well-being

The Strengthening Families approach:

- Benefits ALL families
- Builds on family strengths, buffers risk, and promotes better outcomes
- Can be implemented through small but significant changes in everyday actions
- Builds on and can become a part of existing programs, strategies, systems and community opportunities
- Is grounded in research, practice and implementation knowledge



The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model



FY17 IMPLEMENTATION

CWA continued the work to expand the use of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework in programs and communities across the state of Alaska with special concentration on the three Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) locations of focus – Norton Sound, Kodiak Island, and the Mat-Su Borough.

Several paths of implementation were utilized:

1. Engaging local communities and programs in discussions about the usefulness and appropriateness of this framework in their regions
2. Intensive trainings on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework
3. Ongoing technical assistance
4. Representing Strengthening Families Alaska with related projects
5. Developing and distributing Strengthening Families Alaska materials
6. Providing Learning Network teleconferences
7. Mini-grants

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS

In FY17 Strengthening Families was identified in Alaska's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) federal grant as one of two approaches to improve developmental outcomes for young children. With the new ECCS grant focus, CWA expanded their extensive work in the Norton Sound Region to include Kodiak Island and the Mat-Su Borough.

In FY15 and FY16, CWA worked with several communities in the Norton Sound region to implement Strengthening Families. By FY17 a good foundation had been built through community meetings, training, technical assistance and mini-grants to communities and agencies. Some work had also been done in the Mat-Su Valley. In FY16, CWA provided a regional training for the communities of Talkeetna, Willow & Trapper Creek in partnership with the Sunshine Health Clinic. R.O.C.K. Mat-Su had selected the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework as an approach around which a regional prevention plan could be built to advance resilience in families and prevent maltreatment. Kodiak had some exposure to Strengthening Families through the Infant Learning Program and early care and learning programs.



To renew commitment in the ECCS regions and support the new federal ECCS grant efforts, CWA began by providing intensive two-day trainings in Nome, Kodiak, and Wasilla using the curriculum developed by the National Alliance of Children's Trusts. The local ECCS staff in each region helped to identify and engage local participants. These trainings were conducted in fall 2016 and follow-up meetings were held in spring 2017. Local staff assisted CWA with the logistics and facilitation of the follow-up meetings. Communities were enthusiastic about embedding Strengthening Families in their community and spent time discussing and planning how to move this work forward.





An ECCS Coordinators meeting was held in June at the CWA to support the work in the three regions and plan for FY18.

TWO-DAY INTENSIVE TRAININGS

In FY17, several two-day intensive trainings (in addition to the ECCS regions) were provided using the curriculum developed by the National Alliance of Children's Trusts and Prevention Funds. The groups receiving training included:

- ❖ **Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault**
- ❖ **Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health** and community partners including Stone Soup Group, Southcentral Foundation, the Center for Human Development, A2P2
- ❖ **Bethel Community Agencies-** AVCP Head Start, AVCP ICWA, AVCP Tribal Justice, YKHC Fit Program, YKHC Developmental Disabilities Program, Office of Children's Services, Division of Juvenile Justice





❖ **RurAL CAP Head Start Family Advocates**

- ❖ **Behavioral Health Aides** – The training was provided at the annual Behavioral Health Aide Forum. Thirty BHAs from around the state participated.



❖ **Community of St. Michael
Community of Hope Project**

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES TOOLKIT FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

The **All Alaska Pediatric Partnership (A2P2)** received a grant from the Alaska Children’s Trust to develop a “toolkit” and training focused on helping primary care providers embed the Strengthening Families approach in their work with families. A2P2 enlisted the assistance of CWA in this effort. Materials were developed and printed summarizing the approach and specifically addressing how Strengthening Families could be implemented in primary care settings. A two-hour training was developed and the toolkit was introduced at the **Pediatric Symposium** in November of 2017. Additional presentations were made in **Juneau** and **Fairbanks** and a statewide **Toolkit Webinar** was held for those practitioners unable to attend the training in person. The Toolkit for Primary Care Providers is available on the A2P2 website at <https://www.a2p2.org/>.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Strengthening Families Leadership Team is led by the ECCS Project Manager at the State of Alaska. CWA, an integral partner on the team, participated in the August 2016 Leadership Team Retreat and provided facilitation of the Leadership Team meetings in March and June of 2017. Leadership Team meetings provide an opportunity for key partners such as *thread*, A2P2, the University, Best Beginnings, the Office of Children’s Services, the Division of Public Health, and others to report on the work they are doing to embed Strengthening Families in their systems. Leadership Team members help to set the direction for the program and provide guidance on strategies and implementation.

ADVOCACY/SPREAD

CWA represented Strengthening Families Alaska at community meetings and advocated for its expansion whenever possible. Technical assistance was provided to sites and communities on an as needed basis.

MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION:

Strengthening Families Alaska **posters** were developed in partnership with representatives from the Nome area and were printed and distributed in FY16. In FY17 posters were developed and distributed for the western, southeast, and southcentral regions of Alaska.



A new **parent brochure** outlining the protective factors and ideas for strengthening your family was also developed and made available upon request.

PARENT GROUP PILOT PROJECTS

CWA offered a mini-grant to Nome Community Center to develop and pilot a new seven-week parenting group curriculum that focuses on the protective factors and uses a Parent Café approach. These pilots are being supported by a CWA led Development Committee made up of stakeholders interested in developing a user friendly model that can be replicated in other areas of the state. This work will continue into FY18 as the model is refined and finalized.

CERTIFIED TRAINERS/CAPACITY BUILDING

In FY17 six individuals were supported in becoming certified trainers in the Strengthening Families training curriculum developed by the National Alliance of Children’s Trusts and Prevention Funds. As enthusiasm for the Strengthening Families approach has grown and communities and providers have learned about the potential to use this framework as an “organizing approach” in their programs and across service systems, requests for training have multiplied. The Strengthening Families program will now be in a better position to respond to these requests.

EVALUATION

The training is highly interactive and many of the benefits come from participants sharing their own experiences both personal and professional. It is designed to help participants change the way they practice and interact with families and become more *intentional* in how they support the protective factors in all families. Feedback to the training has been very positive.



Participants report the training helped them to:

- Becoming aware of my own biases was eye opening for me, even though I thought I was open minded & accepting. I really enjoyed the transformation to Protective Factors as opposed to finding out or focusing on what's wrong.
- I can reframe risk into strengths-based approaches.
- It was a restoration even of my cultural values.

Participants were asked what additional information would be helpful. They suggested:

- As time goes on, connect with other programs/agencies in our region using this.
- I really appreciate the online tools/links that were provided. Thanks! I look forward to reviewing/using the home visiting self-assessment tool.
- Giving families positive feedback, the importance of taking time to do this for their kids too.

Some of the new ideas participants would like to try:

- Parenting class based on Protective Factors
- Put my advocates into a webinar, check out the APPS
- Using the assessment tool to find/understand questions I could be asking; remember 3 themes, 5 factors/culture/parents

Participants made some suggestions for improving the training such as:

- Ways to include training around children/adults with disabilities? A lot of this info applies to families that include an adult child w/ disabilities--they are still sometimes primary caregivers & decision makers for these individuals & are busily involved in their lives still
- I'm not sure what I would change. It all went very well. I was able to stay engaged--loved the activities & videos! Loved learning about new programs, resources, websites. Thank you! :)
- More conversations/interactions w/ the other participants.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ CWA staff attended the University of California at Davis National Coaching Conference and presented three separate workshops.
- ❖ National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College have entered into an agreement for CWA to provide technical assistance to grantees of the Office of Victims of Crime. The CWA co-facilitated a 2.5 day training for The Bristol Bay Native Association in April 2017. In June, CWA was a member of the faculty at the Tribal Faculty Development Workshop in Appleton Wisconsin.

ETV PROGRAM



Education and Training Voucher Program, Spring 2017

CWA has administered the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program for current and former foster youth enrolled in post-secondary education and training since 2012. Youth enrolled in the program receive case management services and financial assistance through ETV and the Foster Youth Tuition Waiver(s). The Youth Education Coordinator works with incoming students on the enrollment/admissions process, housing, medical and social emotional support, and coordinates the annual Foster Youth Education Conference.

Angel & Lisa Lie, UAF Human Services Graduates

Program Highlights

The ETV Program has shown an increased number of foster youth attending University of Alaska campuses statewide. Collaboration between the OCS Independent Living Program and the ETV Program allows for early identification of students. Below are just a few of the highlight from the 2016-2017 Academic Year:

- 46 foster enrolled at University of Alaska campuses throughout the state with 25 persisting from previous semesters and 21 enrolling for the first time.
- 46 students received an Education and Training Voucher award, 24 students received a Presidential Foster Youth Tuition Waiver from University of Alaska, and 21 students received an OCS Tuition Scholarship.
- A total of 5 students graduated with degrees in Human Services, Biological Sciences, and Welding.
- The ETV Program collaborated with UAA staff in various departments to sponsor a gift drive to collect holiday presents for students in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley.
- Since 2012, 123 students have received financial aid and 22 have graduated with college degrees and certificates.

Foster Youth Education Conference

The Child Welfare Academy recently hosted the annual Post-Secondary Education Conference. More than twenty youth from all over Alaska participated in the Conference to experience what college life is all about. Youth came to the conference to share their dreams of becoming engineers, nurses, artists, and even social workers! Youth stayed on campus at the University of Alaska Anchorage. They slept in dorms, ate in the commons, and sat in college classrooms. Youth heard from advisors, professors, financial aid officials, campus support programs, and gained first-hand knowledge of what being a student is all about. Each year, the Conference increases our youth's readiness to reach their goals, develop new skills, and prepare for their futures. The partnership between CWA and the OCS IL Program over the past five years has increased access to higher education and college completion rates throughout for foster youth throughout the state.



Outside the classrooms, the youth engaged in team-building activities such as go-kart racing and expressing their individualities by making fleece blankets. The blankets were theirs to keep as part of their college journey.

TRAINING CALENDAR

January - June 2017 Trainings		
Event	Dates	Location
131 SKILS IA	January 9-20	Anchorage
133 SKILS FS	January 9-27	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	January 18	Anchorage
235 Knowing Who You Are	January 25-26	Nome
555 Supervisor Training	February 14-16	Anchorage
235 Knowing Who You Are	February 21-22	Fairbanks
229 ICWA II	February 23-24	Fairbanks
235 Knowing Who You Are	February 28-March 1	Ketchikan
131 SKILS IA	March 6-17	Anchorage
133 SKILS FS	March 6-24	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	March 15	Anchorage
235 Knowing Who You Are	March 21-22	Anchorage
235 Knowing Who You Are	April 11-12	Bethel
229 ICWA II	April 13-14	Bethel
235 Knowing Who You Are	April 20-21	Kodiak
131 SKILS IA	May 1-12	Anchorage
133 SKILS FS	May 1-19	Anchorage
285 CPI & 287 Environmental Awareness	May 12	Anchorage
235 Knowing Who You Are	June 1-2	Wasilla
229 ICWA II	June 12-13	Anchorage
229 ICWA II	June 21-22	Juneau
235 Knowing Who You Are	June 27-28	Anchorage
235 Knowing Who You Are	June 27-28	Kenai