



Mr. Greg Lawrence, Chair  
 Standing Committee on Human Services  
 Room 105 Legislative Building  
 2405 Legislative Drive  
 REGINA SK S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Lawrence:

On June 21 and 22, 2016, I agreed to follow up to requests and questions raised by the Standing Committee on Human Services when it considered the 2016-17 Estimates for the Ministry of Social Services. The following provides responses to these requests and questions:

**1. What is the staff turnover rate for Child and Family Services?**

The rate of staff turnover in Child and Family Services was **11.4%** (51 employees) for fiscal year 2015-16.

**2. What is the number of Aboriginal Management staff in Child and Family Services?**

Staff self-declare as Aboriginal. Many staff do not self-declare and therefore the numbers recorded in the Human Resources system are incomplete. The number of Aboriginal management staff that have self-declared in Child and Family Services is **6 employees**, or 10.71%.

**3. What is the number of cases of Supports for 16/17 year olds over the past 5 years?**

	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Actuals</i>	<i>Actuals</i>
<b>16 / 17 Year Olds, at June 30</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>Caseload*</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>149</b>

\*Statistics are taken from LINKIN and include Emergency Services, Preventive Services, and Section 10 signed Ongoing Services for 16-17-year-old clients.

As reported on June 21, 2016, there were 146 youth in the category of "Section 10 signed Ongoing Services" for the 2015-16 fiscal year. A more fulsome answer would also include the other categories where youth aged 16/17 are supported. The above table includes all categories of youth receiving supports for 16/17 year olds.

**4. What are the specific case numbers for Eagles Nest and Ranch Ehrlo?**

Home	At May 31-16	2016-17 Budget		
		Program Maintenance and Support	CBO Funding	Total
Ranch Ehrlo	108	97	12	109
Eagle's Nest	96	62	28	90

The numbers provided on June 21, 2016 were for spaces funded through Program Maintenance and Support allocation only. These numbers are inclusive of all spaces regardless of funding method.

**5. What is the average number of children per foster care home?**

As of May 31, 2016, there were **approximately 2.5** foster children per foster home on average.

It is difficult to state an 'average' number of foster children per foster home, as each foster home and the children placed within it feature their own unique circumstances and challenges. While the number can be calculated, it is not representative of the entire picture with respect to the foster care continuum.

**6. Clarification on whether 80% of children in care have only two moves.**

Results from the 2015 Program File Reviews of the three Ministry Service Areas and 16 of the 17 First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies indicate that 85% of children in the care of the Ministry lived in either one or two placements. Eighty percent of children in the care of First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies lived in either one or two placements.

**7. What is the average wait time for calls to the Client Service Centre?**

In May 2016 the average wait times for the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) and Transitional Employment Program (TEA) was 19 minutes. For the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program the average wait time was 1.4 minutes. For the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES) and Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement (SRHS) programs the average wait time was 8.5 minutes.

**8. In 2016-17, it indicates that a performance measure would be to have 2 per cent or less of the population enrolled in the SAID program, and less than 3 per cent of the provincial population of zero- to 64-year-olds living off reserve to be enrolled in SAP and TEA program by March 31st, 2020. What is the percentage of people in Saskatchewan using these programs now, when we look at the amount of people and what their percentages are?**

The dependency rates for SAP/TEA and SAID, respectively, as of March 31, 2016, are as follows:

- SAP/TEA: **3.73%**

- SAID: 1.93%

## 9. What are the details of all modules of PRIDE training?

Please see the following attachments for details on the modules of PRIDE training:

- Appendix A: Ministry of Social Services Children's Services Manual: Section 4.4.6: Foster Parent Training
- Appendix B: PRIDE Preservice Training: Description of Sessions
- Appendix C: PRIDE Core (Inservice) Training: Description of Sessions
- Appendix D: We Have to Know Where We Have Been to Know Where We Are Going: Aboriginal People of Saskatchewan

Sincerely,

Donna Harpauer

cc. Members of Standing Committee on Human Services  
Nicole Rancourt, Deputy Chair, Prince Albert Northcote  
Tina Beaudry-Mellor, MLA, Regina University  
Dan D'Autremont, MLA, Cannington  
Muhammad Fiaz, MLA, Regina Pasqua  
Roger Parent, MLA, Saskatoon Meewasin  
Nadine Wilson, MLA, Saskatchewan Rivers  
Greg Miller, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Social Services  
Karri Kempf, Director, Legislation and Information Management



**Section 4.4.6: Foster Parent Training****4.0 OUT-OF-HOME CARE RESOURCES****4.4.6 Foster Parent Training****Policy**

The Ministry must ensure foster parents are trained to understand child welfare services, needs of children and families and basic safety procedures.

**Standards**

- Foster families must successfully complete the following training requirements prior to approval of their home and placement of children:
  - PRIDE (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education) Pre-Service sessions 1 - 9 (27 hours) (see Practice Guidelines for complete list of PRIDE Pre-Service training sessions);
  - Saskatchewan Aboriginal Culture Component (3 hours).
- Foster families must successfully complete the following training requirements after their home has been approved:
  - PRIDE Core In-Service modules 1 & 2 (mandatory training - 21 hours);
  - Standard First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Level B) recognized by Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety (17 hours);
  - FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) (mandatory training - 3 hours);
  - PRIDE Core In-Service modules 3 - 12 as determined by the foster family and their resource worker, based on the PRIDE Family Development Plan (see Practice Guidelines for complete list of PRIDE Core In-Service modules);
  - Standard First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Level B) **recertification** recognized by Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety **every three years** (9 hours).
- Families accepting medically fragile children must complete Standard First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Level B) prior to placement of children in their home.
- Additional training, including Advanced and Specialized modules, will be provided based on the PRIDE Family Development Plan agreed upon by the Ministry and the foster family and approved by the Ministry.

**Section 4.4.6: Foster Parent Training**

## Procedures

1. During Pre-Service training, workers and foster family trainers will monitor for actions or statements that may raise concerns about the foster family's capacity to provide safe, quality care or willingness to accept Ministry practice and policy.
2. Observations must be documented and form part of the Mutual Family Assessment/Home study.
3. Any concerns must be followed up with the family and documented in the Mutual Family Assessment/Homestudy report.
4. Upon approval of a foster home, the home will be classified as Intern status for a period of one year.
5. Foster parents will be classified as Practitioners upon completion of one year of service. They must complete the following training within the first year or as soon as possible thereafter:
  - PRIDE Core In-Service mandatory modules 1 and 2;
  - Standard First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Level B) recognized by Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety (17 hours)
  - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training.
6. Foster families will be required to complete additional PRIDE Core In-Service training modules each year as determined in their Annual Review/Family Development Plan completed jointly with their Resource worker.
7. Foster parents must be recertified in Standard First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Level B) by an approved training provider recognized by Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety every three years following original certification.

## Practice Guidelines

It is important that foster families are able to demonstrate an understanding of new knowledge and the ability and willingness to incorporate the training into their work as a foster family. Applicants must demonstrate both knowledge and application of the training content.

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## Section 4.4.6: Foster Parent Training

Five core competencies are referenced throughout the PRIDE training:

- Protecting and nurturing children;
- Meeting children's developmental needs and addressing developmental delays;
- Supporting relationships between children and their families;
- Connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
- Working as a member of a professional team.

**The PRIDE training program consists of:**

- Pre-service Sessions
- Core In-service Modules

### **PRIDE Pre-Service Training Sessions**

- Connecting with PRIDE
- Teamwork toward Permanence
- Meeting Developmental Needs: Attachment
- Meeting Developmental Needs: Loss
- Strengthening Family Relationships
- Meeting Developmental Needs: Discipline
- Continuing Family Relationships
- Planning for Change
- Taking PRIDE – Making an Informed Decision

### **PRIDE Core In-Service Training Modules**

- The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children at Risk
- Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture, and Meet Developmental Needs
- Addressing Developmental Issues Related to Sexuality
- Responding to the Signs and Symptoms of Sexual Abuse
- Supporting Relationships Between Children and their Families
- Working as a Professional Team Member
- Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity
- Promoting Permanency Outcomes
- Managing the Fostering Experience
- Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children and their Families
- Understanding and Promoting Infant and Child Development
- Understanding and Promoting Pre-teen Development



# **P · R · I · D · E**

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**PARENT RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATION**

## **Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE**

### **Preservice Training**

### **Description of Sessions**

**Child Welfare League of America, Washington, D.C.**

## **Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE**

### **OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS**

#### **Session One: Connecting with PRIDE**

Session One seeks to connect participants with the Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE program. Participants are informed about the program's purpose, and how the preservice training connects with assessment, selection, licensing and certification. The competencies necessary for successful fostering and adopting are reviewed, and they are connected to the PRIDE preservice sessions and the mutual assessment process. Standard features of the sessions are introduced including the PRIDE Connections (activities designed to integrate classroom learning with life experience as part of the assessment process), Making a Difference! (stories that highlight the rewards of fostering and adopting), and You Need to Know! (resource material to meet at-home learning objectives). Participants are introduced to definitions of family foster care and adoption, how children and families get referred for services, and the challenges and rewards of fostering and adopting. A feature of Session One is a video that dramatically portrays an overview of the fostering and adopting experiences.

#### **Session Two: Teamwork Toward Permanence**

This session introduces the importance of family relationships and the role that families play in supporting the child's identity, cultural identity, and self-esteem. Supporting connections and continuity are presented as major tasks in planning for permanency in children's lives. The need for teamwork is presented as a means to best meet the challenge of promoting permanence for children and families. The unique role of foster parents and adoptive parents as members of a professional team is introduced.

#### **Session Three: Meeting Developmental Needs—Attachment**

This session reviews the "basics" about child growth and development, the importance of bonding and attachment as a foundation for child growth and development, and how the life experiences of many children who enter family foster care impact on their growth and development. Special consideration is given to how the team, and in particular the foster parent and adoptive parent, can best meet developmental needs by building positive attachments.

#### **Session Four: Meeting Developmental Needs—Loss**

The impact of separation and loss on the child's growth and development are critical when looking at children in family foster care and adoption. Participants are helped to understand the types of losses children encounter prior to entering foster care, and how placement can compound and contribute further to the child's sense of loss. The stages of loss are introduced with a focus on how these impact the child's feelings and behaviors. Loss is presented as a universal issue. Foster families and adoptive families are asked to consider how they have approached losses in their lives, how they might approach the losses associated with fostering and adopting, and the degree to which they can be "loss managers" for children.

*(over)*

### **Session Five: Strengthening Family Relationships**

This session reintroduces the topic of how families promote identity, cultural identity, and self-esteem in children. The child welfare concept that children in placement should be reunified with their families whenever possible is addressed, as well as how the team can support reunification. The role of visiting in strengthening family relationships is explored. Concrete information regarding how to plan for visits, how to prepare children for visits, and how to handle reactions to visits is presented. The importance of families to children in the adoption process is discussed in terms of lifelong implications for identity and self-esteem.

### **Session Six: Meeting Developmental Needs—Discipline**

This session focuses on the challenges of instilling discipline in children. The content and activities address the competencies of protecting and nurturing children and meeting their developmental needs. Discipline is defined, the goals of effective discipline are identified, and the difference between discipline and punishment is illustrated. The agency's policy on discipline is reviewed and the negative effects of physical punishment are discussed. Participants learn about the knowledge, skills, and personal qualities essential for instilling discipline. The meaning of a child's behavior and the factors that influence behavior are explored. An overview of all the methods of discipline foster parents and adoptive parents can use to meet the goals of effective discipline as members of the team is provided.

### **Session Seven: Continuing Family Relationships**

This session looks at the different ways the team can work together to help connect children and youth to safe and nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime. An overview of the permanency planning goals is provided, starting with efforts to support families and reunify children with families and kin. Other goals, including adoption, long-term foster care, and independent living, are presented as ways to provide lifelong connections when children cannot grow up with their families.

### **Session Eight: Planning for Change**

The impact of placement on the foster or adoptive families is the focus of this session. The first hours, days, and weeks of a child's placement in the home are looked at from a practical level—what to expect, what to ask the caseworker, and how to talk to the child. The longer term impact of placement is also discussed including types of changes placement bring to the foster family or adoptive family. The notion that fostering and adopting is not without risks is highlighted through a discussion of abuse allegations. Use of the team for support and focus is emphasized.

### **Session Nine: Taking Pride: Making an Informed Decision**

This session provides an opportunity for foster parents and adoptive parents to learn first hand from some experienced members of the foster care team. A panel of foster parents, adoptive parents, caseworkers, and family members present their perspectives and answer participants' questions. Participants will reflect on their growth and development regarding the preservice competencies, and begin to make a final decision regarding their commitment to fostering or adopting.



# P · R · I · D · E

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PARENT RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATION

## Foster PRIDE Core (Inservice) Training

### Description of Sessions

**FOSTER PRIDE**

**FOSTER PARENT CORE TRAINING**

**An overview of the curriculum**

Foster PRIDE includes 12 modules, totaling 96 hours of training. A module may be comprised of one or more sessions. Each session is three hours in length. With the exception of Module 3 (which is three hours in length), all the modules include at least two sessions.

Referral and enrollment in a particular module should be based upon the outcome of the Family Development Plan (FDP) which is designed to identify the individual learning needs of each foster parent. Although each module "stands alone," foster parents must attend Module 1 prior to participating in any other module.

In addition to their participation in classroom-style inservice training, the foster parents' learning needs identified during the FDP may be addressed through other available educational supports. These include consultations with agency staff from particular program areas, with foster parent support specialists, and with representatives from local human service agencies having expertise in such areas as: health, education, mental health, alcohol and other drug treatment/prevention, early child development, legal services, etc. Print materials (books, magazines, pamphlets, articles, etc.) videos, self-instructional materials and site visits to service organizations are also methods for advancing foster parents' level of knowledge and skills.

Resource materials, assembled in PRIDEbooks and issued to participants, are an important component of each module. These materials include printed content and worksheets used during each session, and information which can be used at home as an ongoing resource. A special feature of this Core Training is the use of *Taking PRIDE Activities*. These are "at-home activities" which provide opportunities for foster parents to practice what they learned in training and/or to prepare them for learning new information in future sessions.

**\* This Resource does not contain a reference to, or description of the following two modules that are scheduled to be available by 2/1/05:**

**Module 11: Understanding and Promoting Infant and Child Development (6 hours)**  
**Module 12: Understanding and Promoting Pre-Teen and Teen Development (6 hours)**

## **FOSTER PRIDE**

### **FOSTER PARENT CORE TRAINING**

**MODULE 1: THE FOUNDATION FOR MEETING THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN AT RISK (12 hours)**

- Session One      Understanding and Assessing Self-Esteem
- Session Two      Building Self-Esteem and Understanding Behavior
- Session Three      Communicating with Children and Youth (Part I)
- Session Four      Communicating with Children and Youth (Part II)

**MODULE 2: USING DISCIPLINE TO PROTECT, NURTURE, AND MEET DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS (9 hours)**

- Session One      Promoting Positive Behavior
- Session Two      Promoting Self-Responsibility and Responding to Unacceptable Behavior
- Session Three      Responding to the Challenges

**MODULE 3: ADDRESSING DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES RELATED TO SEXUALITY (3 hours)**

**MODULE 4: RESPONDING TO THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE (6 hours)**

- Session One      Understanding Sexual Abuse
- Session Two      Responding to the Issues of Sexual Abuse

**MODULE 5: SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES (9 hours)**

- Session One      Respecting and Supporting Child/Birth Family Ties
- Session Two      Supporting Contacts Between Children and Their Families
- Session Three      Becoming Partners in Parenting

## **MODULE 1: THE FOUNDATION FOR MEETING THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN AT RISK (12 hours)**

The knowledge and skills developed during the four sessions of this module are critical to successfully fulfilling the foster parent role. The foundation competencies addressed pertain to assessing and building children's self-esteem, understanding behavior, and developing effective interpersonal skills. These sessions are designed to illustrate how to connect one's understanding of self-esteem and the meaning of behavior to the use of effective communication skills and the disciplinary process.

Session One examines the meanings of self-concept and self-esteem and the factors that affect their development. The reasons why children in need of family foster care are at risk in the area of self-esteem and the importance of assessing children's self-esteem in order to be competent in meeting their developmental needs are discussed. Participants engage in an activity designed to enhance their ability to assess the self-esteem of children in their care.

The second session explores ways to build a child's self-esteem and examines the meaning of behavior. Participants become aware of the conditions essential for positive self-esteem and learn how to create these conditions for children in their care. The relationship between self-esteem and behavior is described and an activity illustrates how behavior is a means to meeting specific needs. The *Taking PRIDE Activity* provides an opportunity for foster parents to practice building the four conditions for positive self-esteem and identifying the needs a child in their care is attempting to meet through his/her behavior.

Sessions Three and Four are devoted to building participants' interpersonal and communication skills. Because effective communication is so vital to carrying out the tasks of protecting and nurturing children, meeting their developmental needs, supporting their relationships with their families, promoting permanency outcomes, and working as a member of a professional team, foster parents engage in many activities related to building their communication skills.

In Session Three participants reflect upon their personal experiences with communication, identify roadblocks to effective communication, and explore ways to promote effective communication. Session Four examines nonverbal communication, demonstrates attending behaviors as a way of being and involved listener, identifies ways to encourage children to talk with them, and provides an opportunity for foster parents to practice the skills of reflective listening and questioning.

## **MODULE 2: USING DISCIPLINE TO PROTECT, NURTURE AND MEET DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS (9 hours)**

The purpose of Module 2 is to increase the participants' understanding of the importance of discipline in meeting developmental needs and to provide some concrete techniques and skills they can use to manage behavior effectively. Building on the concepts presented and skills developed in Module 1, the three sessions in this module focus on proactive and reactive approaches to using discipline to protect, nurture and advance children's development.

Session One establishes the goals of effective discipline, clarifies the difference between discipline and punishment, and provides an opportunity for participants to assess their strengths and needs related to the personal qualities essential for instilling discipline. This session introduces the range of available disciplinary techniques which is comprised of the three categories: "promoting positive behavior," "promoting self-control," and "responding to lack of control." The use of rewards, praise, the special gift of encouragement, and planned ignoring are the skills covered as part of the first category of techniques.

The focus of Session Two is on developing participants' knowledge and skills related to the techniques in the next two categories of the "Range of Disciplinary Techniques." The importance of planning, preparation and establishing expectations as ways to promote self-control is emphasized. Suggestions are offered for modifying the environment and establishing rules. Participants assess the rules in operation within their families, practice using "I-messages" and natural and logical consequences, and learn some basic guidelines for using time out.

Session Three provides an opportunity for foster parents to apply the disciplinary techniques learned in the previous sessions to children's behaviors which have been commonly identified as being problematic to caregivers. After reviewing the factors that may influence the effectiveness of discipline, participants are introduced to the "Problem-Solving Machine," a process used to meet children's behavioral challenges. Several activities are structured to facilitate the use of problem solving in response to such common behaviors as tantrums, lying, stealing, withdrawing, anger, destructiveness, jealousy, etc. Participants also practice using disciplinary skills to respond to the behavioral challenges they deal with in their families.

### **MODULE 3: ADDRESSING DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES RELATED TO SEXUALITY (3 hours)**

This module, consisting of one three-hour session, provides information on normal sexual development and behavior in children and youth, identifies factors that indicate problematic sexual behavior, and outlines techniques for educating children about sexuality.

After participants become aware of normal sexual development and behaviors of pre-schoolers, latency-aged children and adolescents, they learn to differentiate normal from symptomatic sexual behaviors. A group activity is used to assist foster parents in examining their values and attitudes regarding sexuality and to increase their understanding of the effect of values and attitudes on their capacity to deal effectively with developmental issues related to sexuality.

The last half of the module offers participants techniques for facilitating healthy sexual development in children and youth and for responding to children's sexuality-related questions and behaviors, and provides methods for educating children about sexuality and sexual abuse.

## **MODULE 4: RESPONDING TO THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE (6 hours)**

This module consists of two sessions. The first session is intended to increase the participants' understanding of sexual abuse, while second session is focused on assisting foster parents to respond effectively to the issues of sexual abuse.

Session One includes activities designed to explore participants' feelings about sexual abuse, to enhance their ability to recognize signs and symptoms of possible sexual abuse, and to develop their capacity to respond to disclosures of sexual abuse. Also, foster parents learn about the behaviors that constitute child sexual abuse, gain insight into why and how sexual abuse occurs, and develop an understanding of the relationship between sexual abuse and other forms of child victimization.

Session Two promotes the foster parents' ability to respond to the issues of sexual abuse. Participants are acquainted with factors that affect the impact that sexual abuse has on children and the problems commonly displayed by children who have been sexually abused. The steps to therapeutic parenting are explained, the ways foster parents can help the healing process are identified, and the key points to remember in providing care to children who have behavior problems related to fear/anxiety, anger, and sexuality are discussed.

## **MODULE 5: SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES (9 hours)**

The goals of the three sessions in this module are to help foster parents understand the importance of the child's family relationships, to develop their skills to support these relationships, and to provide ways for participants to share the parenting role and to help birth parents.

Session One offers participants ideas on how to manage diversity between children, their birth families, and foster families and how to respect the child's culture, traditions, and routines. Methods for helping children manage attachment and loyalty conflicts and issues related to the roles of siblings, extended family or kin, and friends are also covered in this first session.

Session Two provides foster parents with an understanding of the importance of supporting family relationships and ways to work with the family foster care team to meet the child's needs for family connections through visits and other contacts. Information on the goals of visits from each person's perspective and issues related to the location, frequency, and length of visits is discussed. Participants learn ways to prepare children for their family visits, to provide support during and after visits, and how to support contacts other than visits.

Session Three focuses specifically on the concept of "Partners in Parenting." After steps in the process of developing partnerships are presented, participants learn about the skills necessary to implement this concept and acquire information on how to share the parenting role and to support and help birth families.

## **MODULE 6: WORKING AS A PROFESSIONAL TEAM MEMBER (9 hours)**

The purpose of this module is to provide foster parents with an understanding of the professional team in working on behalf of children and families. The three sessions include information and skill development related to teamwork, the tasks of foster parents as professional team members, and conflict management.

Session One defines a professional team and teamwork and identifies the skills required by members of the family foster care team. Information is provided on the steps of, and essential principles for, effective decision making and an overview of permanency goals is presented in relation to decision-making criteria. Participants learn how to utilize their role and expertise in the service planning and administrative case review process.

After discussing the meaning of "professionalism" in family foster care, Session Two focuses on the many responsibilities attached to being a professional. These include advocating for children; maintaining confidentiality; accessing the service appeal system when necessary; helping children document their history; and pursuing one's own professional development.

The activities in Session Three are designed to provide foster parents with an understanding of the function of conflict within the team and their personal style in dealing with conflict, and to assist them in developing conflict management skills. In addition to identifying their own style of conflict management, participants learn the skills used in collaboration and apply these skills to a conflict situation.

## **MODULE 7: PROMOTING CHILDREN'S PERSONAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY (6 hours)**

Session One provides participants with an understanding of the importance of valuing and making a commitment to cultural competence and ways to work with the family foster care team to promote positive self-esteem through respecting, advancing and sharing children's cultural norms and traditions.

After a discussion of the meaning of culture, cultural competence, the impact of culture on the participants' lives and the reasons why children in need of family foster care are at risk in the area of self-esteem and cultural identity, the session focuses on the foster family's role in helping children achieve a positive cultural identity. Participants acquire information about steps they can take to learn about the cultural norms of children in their care. They engage in activities designed to increase their ability to use the community to support children's cultural identity, to incorporate the child's culture and traditions into daily life, to manage diverse traditions in the family, and to help assure positive special occasions within the foster family.

The overall goal of Session Two entitled, "Helping Children Develop Lifebooks" is to demonstrate how Lifebooks can be used with children to record their life stories in a way that promotes a positive sense of identity and self-esteem.

Building on their understanding of how Lifebooks contribute to the child's self-esteem, identity and the maintenance of connections, participants learn about a variety of ways to approach the interactive process involved in developing a Lifebook with children. They practice concrete ways to discuss sensitive issues with children and identify and record positive aspects of a child's history. To illustrate that the Lifebook involves a process and a product, participants begin planning a Lifebook for a child living with their family.

## **MODULE 8: PROMOTING PERMANENCY OUTCOMES (12 hours)**

The intent of the four sessions in this module is to provide participants with a foundation for understanding permanency planning practice and to assist them in helping children and families achieve the desired permanency outcomes.

Session One begins with a discussion of the concept of permanency and how a sense of security, belonging and continuity serve as the foundation for permanency for children in family foster care and with an examination of the risks to children from temporary placements or multiple moves. Then, a case study is used to illustrate the problems with traditional (sequential) permanency planning. The important provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), the key components of concurrent planning, and the role of a permanency planning family are presented. The session concludes by revisiting the same case study to examine the benefits and challenges of concurrent planning for children, birth families, and foster families.

The primary focus of Session Two is on permanency goals and how members of the child welfare team can work together to achieve the goal that will give the child the best opportunity for legal and emotional security, a sense of belonging, and continuity of connections. Participants engage in an activity to examine the benefits and challenges associated with each permanency goal and become familiar with the individual considerations for choosing a permanency goal for a specific child. Content and activities are designed to enable participants to identify the possible feelings that children and families might have about each goal, and to understand the potential conflict between the agency and the foster parent when choosing a permanency goal. The last part of the session is dedicated to helping participants understand the special needs of youth as they approach emancipation from the foster care system and to heighten their awareness of their agency's independent living programs.

The primary focus of Session Three is on the role of foster parents in helping children make the transition from family foster care to a permanent family, either through reunification or placement in an adoptive family. Several small and large group activities are used to develop participants' awareness of the perspectives, feelings, and behaviors that children, birth families and foster parents experience in relation to the reunification process. A discussion of what foster parents can do to manage their own and other's feelings and behaviors during the reunification process follows these activities. The second part of this session focuses on transitioning children from foster families to adoptive families. Content and activities are designed to assist participants with understanding the

tasks related to carrying out an adoptive placement plan, explaining the role of the foster parent to the child when the foster parent decides not to adopt or when the foster parent does make the commitment to be the child's forever family, and ways to manage the feelings of all involved in the adoption process.

The focus of the fourth and last session of this module is on the goal of providing children with permanency through foster parent adoption. After an in depth discussion of the definition of adoption, including the differences between adoption and family foster care, participants identify the questions that need to be addressed in order for foster parents to make an informed decision about adoption. Case scenarios are used to highlight the issue of making the decision to adopt and a checklist is reviewed for the same purpose. Adoption as a "lifelong process" is discussed along with the topics of openness in adoption, the normal crises in adoption, the supports and services available after adoption and adoption subsidy.

## **MODULE 9: MANAGING THE FOSTERING EXPERIENCE (6 hours)**

This module examines the impact of placement on one's family by devoting one session to exploring ways to help foster families manage the changes, transitions, and challenges presented by the fostering role and another session to helping participants manage the impact of abuse and neglect allegations.

Session One explores the impact that fostering has on family operations, relationships within the family, and relationships outside the family. A five-step process for managing the impact of placement on family operations is presented and participants learn ways to maintain and strengthen marital, parent-child, and sibling relationships. The last part of this session is structured to assist foster families with maintaining and building connections to the "community."

Session Two pertains to one of the most difficult situations that may occur in fostering—managing the impact of abuse and/or neglect allegations. The focus of this session is not on whether abuse did or did not happen or whether families are "guilty" or "innocent." Rather, emphasis is placed on the importance of being prepared, informed, and active in working toward managing the experience of abuse allegations. Also, the premise of this training is that these reports cannot be totally prevented.

Participants learn about the importance of advance preparation and examine the ten steps for dealing with abuse/neglect allegations. A special feature of this session is the inclusion of two "expert presentations." The first presentation, delivered by an expert on child protection policy and its application to foster family allegations, details how the investigation is conducted, timelines, circumstances under which children are removed, and how and when families are notified of the outcome. The second presentation, conducted by an expert on support services to foster families, outlines the agency philosophy regarding supports, provides an overview of available supports, explains how to access support services, and provides information to help foster families access appropriate resources.

## **MODULE 10: UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY ON CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES (15 hours) \*(under revision as of 12/20/04)**

This module, comprised of five sessions and featuring three videos, provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the effects of chemical dependency on children and their families. The overall focus of this module is on: the characteristics and classifications of alcohol and other drugs; child welfare trends associated with AOD abuse; the effects of chemical dependency on the child and the family system; the relationship between AOD abuse and child abuse and neglect; the developmental implications of prenatal exposure on infants and young children; and the foster family's role, as part of the team, in working with chemically involved birth families and supporting recovery.

Session One provides an opportunity for foster parents to examine their attitudes and feelings about chemically involved parents and their children and to assess the strengths and challenges they may face in caring for children from chemically involved families. Participants learn about the factors that place individuals at risk of AOD problems and the protective factors that may be called upon to promote recovery. After viewing and discussing a video intended to increase their understanding of AOD, a definition of chemical dependency is offered.

Session Two reviews the current trends of AOD usage and provides an overview of the physical and psychological effects of alcohol and other drugs. Specific stimulants and depressants, selected by the group from the "Classification of Substances," are discussed through an in-depth presentation. Participants are shown how to use a comprehensive compilation of resource information on all the other drugs back home as a desk reference. They learn about the process of dependency, relapse, and recovery and have an opportunity to apply their understanding of this process to case vignettes.

In Session Three, participants learn about the effect of chemical abuse and dependency on the individual and on the family system. After viewing and discussing a video on children of substance abusers, participants examine key issues for children of chemically dependent families, and learn about resiliency, some helpful suggestions for working with children affected by chemically dependent family systems, and the effects of chemical dependency on parenting.

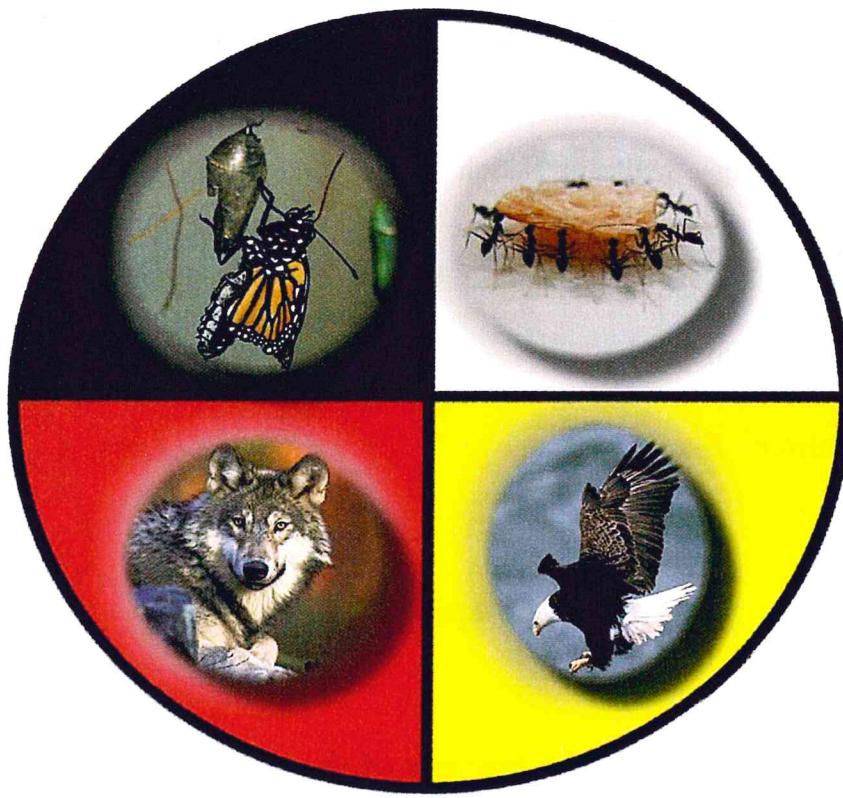
Session Four focuses on the specific challenges in parenting children affected by prenatal AOD exposure. Participants become familiar with the characteristics of chemically involved pregnant women, the effects of prenatal AOD exposure on infant development, and the long-term effects of prenatal AOD exposure. They learn ways to minimize risks and strengthen an infant's resiliency.

Session Five is designed to develop the participants' understanding of the needs and concerns of birth parents and to enhance their partnerships with parents. Foster parents engage in an activity that promotes their ability to respond to difficult situations that may arise with chemically involved parents and acquire ways to work as a member of a professional team working to support recovery in birth parents.



*“We Have To Know Where We Have Been  
To Know Where We Are Going”*

Aboriginal People of Saskatchewan



Prepared by Enola Kayseas

In celebration of the ongoing work between Aboriginal people of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Social Services we would like to acknowledge and thank all of the Elders who graciously shared their knowledge, wisdom and protocols

**We Have To Know Where We Have Been**

**To Know Where We Are Going**

Aboriginal People of Saskatchewan living document was designed and developed based on reciprocal relationships, good faith, good will and mutual respect and understanding to benefit ALL children of Saskatchewan

**Mary Lee – Cree Nation**

**Lorraine Yuzicappi – Dakota Nation**

**Vicki Wilson – Nakota Nation**

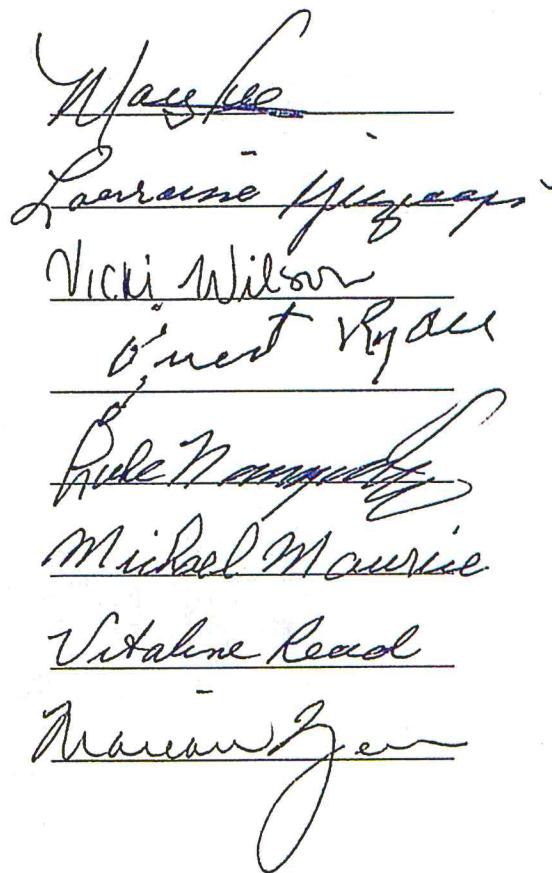
**Vincent Ryder – Lakota Nation**

**Luke Nanaquetung – Saulteaux Nation**

**Michael Maurice – Metis Nation**

**Vitaline Read – Dene Nation**

**Deputy Minister – Marian Zerr**



Handwritten signatures of the signatories, each with a corresponding horizontal line:

- Mary Lee
- Lorraine Yuzicappi
- Vicki Wilson
- Vincent Ryder
- Luke Nanaquetung
- Michael Maurice
- Vitaline Read
- Marian Zerr

**September 29, 2009**

**Coming full circle the journey of the past, present and future**

**WE NEED EACH OTHER**