**Curriculum**

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**What’s New**

Texas training for newly hired employees and stipend students is changing. A job task analysis was completed to determine what caseworkers in each stage of service were doing, and what skills and information were needed to successfully do the tasks. The new training will focus on these core tasks and move from a theory or education based training to a skill based training focus. Some of the major changes include actual practice in the classroom utilizing tablet pc's; from 8-9 am students will review information and what needs to be completed and what will be covered daily. An on-line assessment is planned on a daily basis. The trainer will have access to assessment results to determine the BSD student's understanding of the previous day's content and the need for clarification or further information. This is an essential component since each day of curriculum builds on the previous day. Statewide implementation is scheduled for October 10, 2010, but Austin is currently doing a pilot of the new curriculum. Arkansas’s new employee training is run totally by the University. The University person developing the program and implementing the training works closely with the agency, but there have been numerous technical issues. A great deal of “learning by trial and error” has occurred. Concerns expressed that in Arkansas, new employees attending class with a full caseload despite the agreement that this is not to occur. New Mexico representative also discussed issues related to training and quality assurance. New Mexico will have four days of classroom based training and then one day of computer training every week.

**What’s Needed**

Look at the problems associated with the pilot of the new training curriculum. No built in way to handle class absences as well as no learning time in place for those areas of curriculum that need reinforcing. The pilot program is already running behind schedule as no flexibility is built into the training schedule. In Texas, stipend students do not have tablets to utilize in the training and this puts them at a disadvantage although they will supposedly be issues laptop computers to use. All states said that there have to be some rules implemented related to appropriate computer use during training. Also need to have the “buy in” of supervisory staff to support new employee learning as well as technical staff to assist with computer system updates so that there is access to updated cases and in sufficient numbers.

**What’s Next**

Arkansas has agreed to serve as a consultant for anyone interested in “what not to do with computer based training set-up”. Texas will provide feedback on what has worked and what does not work and problems that will impact the ability of stipend students to successfully complete the internship and training. Need better, ongoing communication regarding successful implementation steps initiated by each of the partnership members both from the agency and university perspective.