

OHIO CHILD WELFARE TRAINING PROGRAM

Diversity Standards for Learning Activities

All learning activities of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program are designed to promote child welfare practice that is responsive to diversity. Child welfare practice that is responsive to diversity considers the multi-dimensional aspects of people; how values, beliefs, attitudes, and traditions influence behavior; the understanding of dynamics of specific cultures; and the ability to use this knowledge to work productively with people from diverse backgrounds. It is essential that facilitators provide information in their workshops regarding diversity issues, at least at the awareness and understanding levels. Facilitators can help participants understand the role diversity plays in their work and the reaction of others; and explore participants' belief systems that may create value dilemmas and affect their decision-making. The OCWTP has developed a set of standards to help facilitators, IHS, and RTC staff develop learning activities that reflect responsiveness to diversity. The standards are included here to assist you in developing your learning activities.

1. Basic Definitions and Terminology

Standard: The learning activity develops trainees' awareness and knowledge about particular diversity concepts and terms as they apply to the content being trained.

Criteria:

- Uses common diversity terms accurately and defines them for trainees (e.g., diversity, culture, cultural competence, stereotypes, ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, ethnicity, or pluralism)
- Defines how diversity concepts apply to the particular content being trained, such as, "Why is culture important in child development?"

2. Self-Awareness and Understanding

Standard 1: The learning activity helps trainees recognize and acknowledge potential discomfort when talking about diversity and creates opportunities for participants to discuss diversity issues in a safe and

supportive training environment.

Criteria:

- Challenges people to think about their own values, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors as they compare and contrast them with others
- Creates a safe atmosphere within which to discuss diversity

Standard 2: The learning activity reinforces the concept that one's own diverse background and experience influence one's values, attitudes, and perceptions of others, and that the understanding of one's own diversity is a prerequisite to working effectively with diverse people.

Criteria:

- Helps trainees gain knowledge about their own multi-dimensional identity and how it affects their preconceptions of normalcy and dysfunction
- Provides trainees with opportunities to consider and share information about their own diverse backgrounds, values, etc.
- Provides opportunities for trainees to identify similarities and differences in their values, attitudes, and perspectives about the topic being trained
- Stresses that, despite apparent differences, trainees share commonalities

Standard 3: The learning activity affirms that culture and diversity are an important force in determining the course of a person's physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and overall development.

Criteria:

- Helps trainees look at diversity to explain why people are the way they are and behave the way they do, and helps them better understand how development can vary greatly
- Helps trainees differentiate between stereotyping about group behaviors and knowing about general group characteristics

3. The Role of Diversity

Standard 1: The learning activity should reinforce the concept that diversity is complex and extends beyond culture, race, gender, and ethnicity or national origin.

Criteria:

- Helps trainees define diversity in a real and practical manner
- Discusses diversity components, such as culture, gender, language, sexual orientation, economic systems, political systems, social/interpersonal factors, and religion, among others

Standard 2: The learning activity reinforces the fact that cultural competence does not solely focus on “minority groups,” but is a concept that involves all peoples.

Criteria:

- Uses examples from a variety of diverse groups and perspectives
- Helps separate diversity factors from non-diversity issues in areas such as case preparation and intervention.

4. Training Practices and Methods

Standard 1: The learning activity reinforces understanding of the perspectives of diverse groups regarding the topic area by using a variety of means throughout the learning activity to present diversity issues, such as case examples, trainee handouts, and describing relevant field practices.

Criteria:

- Audio-visual materials consistently represent (and accurately portray) diverse groups
- Discussion questions and dialogues should challenge trainees to always consider diversity issues
- Suggestions are provided on how to apply learnings in at least two diverse settings

- Case examples and practice exercises incorporate approaches and strategies across diverse populations
- Interactive exercises are used by trainees and modeled by the facilitator

Standard 2: The learning activity presents a range and diversity of viewpoints about the topic being trained.

Criteria:

- Utilizes information from a variety of publications and resources that illuminate other viewpoints and address knowledge and practices oriented toward working with diverse groups

Standard 3: Content should be consistent with and reinforce OCWTP competencies related to diversity.

Criteria:

- Identifies relevant and appropriate OCWTP cultural competencies that will support and enhance, as these are appropriate to the topic or module being trained

5. Skills Acquisition and Field Application

Standard 1: The learning activity helps identify culturally relevant ways to deliver supportive and other special services to children and families.

Criteria:

- Information is presented on how basic principles of the curriculum can be applied to at least two different diverse groups; for instance, presenting childrearing patterns as practiced among two or more distinct population groups
- Facilitator provides opportunities for trainees to reflect on the application of diversity concepts.