Request for Applications
Training for Adoption Competency

Overview

We are pleased to announce the opportunity for child and family serving agencies in Massachusetts to apply for the Training for Adoption Competency (TAC). TAC is a nationally recognized program developed by the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.). It is jointly sponsored here in Massachusetts by the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE), Child & Family Services/Adoption Journeys and Walker. The goal of this offering is to support capacity development for adoption competency in child and family serving agencies in Massachusetts. Successful applicants will send up to three (but no less than two) clinical staff, including one clinical supervisor, to participate in the yearlong TAC training in which they will develop the critical competencies needed to provide quality mental health services to those whose lives have been touched by adoption. The TAC is being offered free of charge to participating agencies, with generous support from the Children’s Behavioral Health Knowledge Center.

The TAC is a 12-session (72-hour) competency based training program followed by a 6-month clinical case consultation program for licensed or license eligible mental health clinicians who provide pre- and post-adoption services to prospective adoptive parents, birth parents, adopted persons, and adoptive and kinship families, and caretakers of foster children waiting for adoption. Trainees will participate in a full day training once per month. Beginning in September 2017 through August 2018. We anticipate that between four to six agencies will be selected to have 2-3 clinicians from their staff trained, with a maximum of twelve agency clinicians in total. In order to enhance organizational capacity in this competency, one of the trainees from each agency must be a supervisor.

Eligibility

Eligible Agencies

Eligible applicants are child and family serving organizations that deliver behavioral health services to children and families including residential treatment services, outpatient treatment, CBHI services, and child and family treatment services through contracts with DMH and DCF.

Staff Participant Requirements:

- Master's degree in social work, a counseling field or other related discipline
- A current professional license or under clinical supervision in preparation for licensure in Social Work, Counseling or Psychology
- Experience or interest in working with adopted individuals of all ages, adoptive families and birth families
- Agencies will select up to three clinicians, one of whom must be a clinical supervisor.
• The clinicians selected by their agency will complete individual applications for submission with the agency application.
• As part of the selection process, the applications of the individuals proposed by the agency will be reviewed by Adoption Journeys, Walker and the Children’s Behavioral Health Knowledge Center to insure that TAC participant criteria are met.

Training for Adoption Competency

The TAC. The TAC, developed by the Center for Adoption Support and Education, is an evidence-informed training program that provides licensed mental health professionals with the knowledge, skills and values they need to provide adoption competent mental health services. This standardized, manualized training curriculum has been developed in collaboration with national experts in the field of child welfare, adoption and mental health and is designed to provide professionals in the mental health and child welfare fields with the clinical knowledge and skills they need to effectively serve the adoption kinship network.

Why the TAC is Needed. Research shows that children who are adopted may face particular challenges to healthy adjustment. Among adopted children who have had traumatic experiences of abuse and neglect, it is not uncommon to see challenging behavioral and emotional responses. For all adopted children, there are issues of grief and loss and identity development that are layered onto the normal developmental tasks of childhood and adolescence. Many adopted children’s emotional issues are complex, and adoptive parents often identify these issues as the primary contributors to family stressors post-adoption. Access to adoption-competent mental health services is a critical factor in promoting positive outcomes for these children and their adoptive families and the success of their adoptions. The need for adoption competent mental health services continues to grow. There are over 2.1 million adopted children in the United States. Over the past five years, more than 250,000 children have been adopted from the US foster care system; more than 50,000 children adopted internationally by US families; and an estimated 70,000 infants domestically adopted in the US. Significant numbers of these children and their families need, and frequently, are not able to find adoption competent clinicians.

The Benefits for Clinicians. Rigorous evaluations of the TAC show that on pre-/post-training tests that compare the performance of TAC students to comparably qualified professionals not enrolled in the training, TAC students scored an average 39 points higher on post-tests than the control group. All TAC completers to date report change in at least two of the six defined aspects of practice; 62.94 percent report change in all five individual clinical aspects; and 53.08 percent report change in programming and services at the organizational level. TAC completers will be listed on the Center for Adoption Support and Education website (http://adoptionsupport.org/) in their Directory of Adoption Competent Professional.

The Benefits for Employers. TAC-trained clinicians respond to the growing need for adoption competent mental health services among adoptive families and adopted adolescents and adults. Having highly skilled, adoption competent clinicians on staff enhances the agency’s image and reputation – attracting increasing numbers of adoptive family referrals with a resulting positive impact on revenue. Research shows that adoptive families are significantly more likely to choose a well-trained adoption competent therapist over one who is not. Well-trained clinicians

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experience greater job satisfaction and higher levels of motivation and are more likely to remain in their positions, reducing employee turnover. Specially-trained adoption-competent clinicians support their agencies in risk management by bringing quality, evidence-based clinical practices to their work.

Course Description

The TAC is a 12-session (72-hour) competency based training program followed by a 6-month clinical case consultation program. Eleven modules are classroom- based and one module is completed at-home. Each module combines information sharing, written handouts and resources, and experiential learning, including case studies, role plays, and introspective work. Following the last class, there are six 2-hour group case consultation sessions held monthly. Graduates of the TAC receive a certificate of completion and national recognition through posting on the Center for Adoption Support and Education's website.

Training Content: Twelve Modules of the TAC

1. Introduction to Adoption History, Law and Process. (At-home module)
2. Introduction to Adoption Competent Mental Health Practice
3. Clinical Issues in Planning, Preparing for and Supporting Adoption
4. Clinical Issues in Providing Therapeutic Services: Grief, Loss, and Separation
5. Trauma and Brain Neurobiology
6. Attachment
7. Adopted Adolescents and Identity Formation
8. Clinical Issues in Working with Birth and Adoptive Families
10. Openness in Adoption
11. Race and Ethnicity in Adoption
12. Integrating Adoption Competencies: Knowledge, Skills and Values: TAC Final Project

Outcomes: What does the research say about the TAC?

- Program completers have superior performance on pre-/post-tests compared with a contrast group of non-TAC trained clinicians.
- Trainees have substantially improved performance on all core adoption competencies.
- TAC learning is transferred to practice across six domains of clinical practice.
- There are high levels of training delivery fidelity, quality, and relevance.
- At the conclusion of the training, 88% of students report either having substantial understanding of the core competencies or having mastered the core competencies with the ability to explain to others.

Continuing Education Credit

Continuing Education Credit Applications will be submitted to the National Association of Social Workers, to the Massachusetts Psychological Association, to Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association and to the Family Development Associate/CE Certifications for

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LMFTs. Each trainee will earn up to 72 CEU credits. *(NASW 69 CEU’s approved; LMHC 72 CEU’s approved).*

**TAC Trainers**

The TAC trainers for this series are Patricia Cedrone LMHC, MBA, Senior Director of Behavioral Health and Community Programs at Walker, and Nancy Solow LICSW, Regional Manager of the Adoption Journeys program.

**Key Dates for TAC**

The project is organized into three phases: (1) Agency Application (2) Staff Training (3) Case Consultation. Case consultation sessions will be scheduled by the trainers and participants during the first few classroom sessions. The key dates associated with these phases are below.

**Application Phase (April-June 2017)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Release</td>
<td>May 1, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question and Answer conference call: Phone number: 1-888-757-2790 Guest: 983098</td>
<td>4PM Monday May 15, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies intending to apply file a Notice of Intent by email to Nancy Solow at <a href="mailto:nsolow@cfservices.org">nsolow@cfservices.org</a></td>
<td>June 5, 2017 By 5:00 pm EDT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applications Due Electronically to: Nancy Solow at <a href="mailto:nsolow@cfservices.org">nsolow@cfservices.org</a></td>
<td>June 15, 2017 By 5:00 pm EDT</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Applicants Notified of Decision via Email</td>
<td>July 21, 2017</td>
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Questions about the RFA should be asked during the Q & A. Questions about the application or its submission should be directed to: Nancy Solow at nsolow@cfservices.org. When submitting an application electronically put “TAC Application” in the email subject line. Agencies will receive an email reply within 24 business hours confirming receipt of the application. Agencies should contact Nancy Solow at nsolow@cfservices.org if a confirmation is not received. **Only those agencies that receive an electronic confirmation are considered during the review process.**

**Training Phase (September 2017 – August 2018)**

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<th>Event</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>All trainees</td>
<td>September 2017</td>
<td>In-home module to be completed prior to module 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>All trainees</td>
<td>9AM-4PM October 11, 2017</td>
<td>Children’s Friend 20 Cedar Street Worcester, MA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>All trainees</td>
<td>9AM-4PM November 8, 2017</td>
<td>Children’s Friend 20 Cedar Street Worcester, MA</td>
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Consultation Phase (September 2018 – February 2019)
Following the last class, there are six 2-hour group case consultation sessions. The consultation schedule and format will be arranged during the first few training sessions.

Selection Criteria

1. Agency meets the eligibility criteria for participation.
2. The application demonstrates a need related to serving children and families touched by adoption that this training series could address.
3. The agency proposes to include at least one clinical supervisor to participate in the training.
4. The individual clinicians applications are reviewed by Adoption Journeys and Walker and are determined to meet the following criteria:
   a. Master's degree in social work, a counseling field or other related discipline
   b. A current professional license or under clinical supervision in preparation for licensure in Social Work, Counseling or Psychology
   c. Experience or interest in working with adopted individuals of all ages, adoptive families and birth families
5. In selecting provider agencies for the training, the selection committee will consider the location of provider agencies as a factor in order to maximize the geographic distribution of participating agencies.
Training for Adoption Competency
Agency Application

Part I. Agency Information

Provider Agency Name: ___________________________________________________________

Legal Name (if different from above): ________________________________________________

Tax ID # ____________________________

Street Address: ______________________ City/Zip Code: _______________________________

Telephone: __________________________ ________________________________

CEO: __________________________________________________________

COO/Senior VP/Regional Director (as applicable): _________________________________

Primary contact for this Application: ______________________________________________

Contact Title: ______________________ E-mail: ______________________ Telephone: __________

Part II. Brief Narrative Response
(Total narrative response is limited to three (3) pages in 11-point font).

1. Provide a one-paragraph overview of your agency, including years in operation, mission/vision, and range of services.

2. Describe why your organization is interested in participating in this initiative. What challenges related to adoption does the organization as a whole face and what benefits from participation might occur?
3. Describe the rationale for selecting the staff who have been designated to participate.

Part V. Proposed Staff Participants

List below the tentatively identified staff participants in this initiative. It is understood that changes to these lists prior to the start of the project may occur for a variety of reasons.

1. Please indicate below the individuals your organization has tentatively identified to participate in this TAC series. The team must include at least one clinical supervisor.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position Title</th>
<th>Educational Background and license (if applicable)</th>
<th>Service Role</th>
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Part VII. Individual Applications

Please submit an individual application for each staff member proposed for the TAC. The individual application form is appended to this agency application.

Letter of Support from Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

A letter explicitly stating the organization’s commitment to full participation in this initiative on agency letterhead and signed by the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director of the organization must be included as an attachment to the application.
Training for Adoption Competency
Individual Registration & Application

Participant requirements:
• Master’s degree in social work, a counseling field or other related discipline
• A current professional license or under clinical supervision in preparation for licensure in Social Work, Counseling or Psychology
• Experience or interest in working with adopted individuals of all ages, adoptive families and birth families

TAC PROGRAM – REGISTRATION FORM
___ I would like to attend the Worcester TAC cohort that begins in September 2017:

Class Location: Child and Family Services, 20 Cedar Street, Worcester, MA 01609

NAME:
ADDRESS:
PHONE:
E-MAIL:
PRESENT EMPLOYER:

PROFESSIONAL LICENSE DISCIPLINE & License# (if applicable)
(up to 72 CEU credits pending separate approvals)

PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WITH THIS REGISTRATION FORM:
• Resume
• Personal statement: Please describe your current position, how you became interested in the field of adoption, what you hope to gain from the training, and how the training will impact your work. (one page or less)
• PROGRAM FEE – Not applicable. Scholarships supported by the Children’s Behavioral Health Knowledge Center.
• CE credits will be awarded upon completion of ALL modules.
  ○ NASW CEU’s, Mass Psych CE’s, LMHC CEU’s, LMFT CE’s approval in process

Submit electronically with your Agency’s application to: Nancy Solow at nsolow@cfservices.org

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