

**The Western Pennsylvania Training Collaborative**  
Memorandum of Understanding

**I. The mission of the Training Collaborative is to deliver effective competency-based training to ensure a consistently prepared workforce is in place within family serving agencies.**

**II. Desired results from the Training Collaborative by 2008.**

**A) SERVICES AND OUTCOMES** Training is in place that improves the skills integral to improving services and outcomes to children and families.

**B) BASIC COMPETENCIES**

1. Every staff person and supervisor of the founding organizations has been trained in a series of core-competencies that:
  - a) Enable supervisors to:
    - (1) Respectively and effectively prepare and support their staff on an on-going basis.
    - (2) Reinforce, teach, coach and evaluate the application of skills by direct service workers.
  - b) Enable staff to:
    - (1) Have skills to improve services and outcomes.
    - (2) Safely and respectfully serve individuals and/or families in various settings.
    - (3) Serve as advocate and resource within the family serving system and/or other support systems.
2. Staff have applied learning and been evaluated for those competencies that meet and/or exceed accreditation and regulatory standards.

**C) CONSISTENT TRAINING EXPERIENCE.**

1. The process for certifying trainers has been proven effective and institutionalized.
2. Training is being offered on a consistent basis by certified trainers.
3. The overall evaluation of the training collaborative confirms the consistency and quality of the training experience based on the standards and desired outcomes.

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**D) VALUE AND VIABILITY.** The project is thriving as measured by:

1. Collaborative partners have been able to reduce controllable turnover.
2. Participants perceive the training as useful and valuable in their work with children and families.
3. Peers and participants evaluate the quality and relevance of the training experience as above average.
4. The number of agencies – beyond the collaborative partners- participating in the training sessions has increased.
5. All fixed costs will be covered.
  - a) Participants in the training courses from partnering agencies will pay the direct expense for the training.
  - b) Participants from non-collaborative partnering agencies will pay the direct and indirect expense of training.
6. The business and training model works for the collaborative partners as concerns content, structure, and return on investment.
7. Existing knowledge and training assets of the collaborative partners are being capitalized upon.

**III. Collaborative Partners and Their Respective Roles:**

**A) Oversight Committee:** The collaborative partners, including the Western Pennsylvania Family Center (WPFC), comprise the Training Collaborative, and the Western Pennsylvania Family Center is the managing partner.

1. Responsibilities.
  - a) Offer advice to WPFC and establish policies.
  - b) Provide input in the development of the curricula and the level of qualifications needed for trainers.
  - c) Approve trainers based on certification.
  - d) Approval of the work plan and budget.
  - e) Approve expenses of \$1,000 and above.
  - f) Evaluate the WPFC as the lead agency on annual basis and put it in writing.
  - g) Authorize the evaluation of the Training Collaborative and review the results.

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- h) Develop and approve the annual fundraising plan and provide access to key funders as indicated in the plan.
  - i) Serve as the last element of recourse in resolving disputes between collaborative partners, trainers, participants, and other outside parties.
  - j) Assist in the marketing and publicizing the Training Collaborative
  - k) Use training materials for other purposes.
2. Each partner will designate two representatives and have one vote on all matters. Each partner will designate an alternate in those cases when the designated representatives are not available. Alternates are welcomed at meetings of the Partners, but each partner has only one vote.
  3. Consensus is the desired process for all issues. If no agreement can be reached, a vote will be taken. The majority will prevail.
  4. The partners will meet on a monthly basis. Meeting materials, including the agenda, will be distributed 10 days in advance.
  5. The oversight committee has the option of calling special meetings.
  6. Whenever feasible, all partners will vote on all matters.
  7. If a partner representative is not available, they will be responsible to vote on the matter by e-mail or voice mail within five days.
  8. If the partner representative is out of the area for an extended period of time, they will designate a representative to vote on behalf of the organization.
  9. In extreme circumstances, if the partner representative is not available, there is no designated alternate, and the project/work item is within the current scope and established priorities, a majority of the partners can approve an action; if the project/work item is outside the current scope, all the partners must approve the project.
  10. On matters affecting membership and financial risk, the executive of the agency must be the one to vote. This vote can be done by proxy, but he/she must sign the proxy.
- B) Western Pennsylvania Family Center- Lead Agency.
1. Project Management and Administrative Oversight.
    - a) Develop and manage the annual work plan and budget.

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2. Collaborative Management- Oversight committee and communication.
3. Fundraising- execute the fundraising plan.
4. Training.
  - a) Recruit and hire the staff and consultants.
  - b) Acquire equipment and training tools/resources.
  - c) Organize training logistics.
  - d) Recruit and identify trainers for approval by the partners.
  - e) Develop and administer the trainer and training certification process.

C) Collaborative Partners

1. Responsibilities

- a) Commits to Training Collaborative for 3 years
- b) Agrees to send all new clinical staff and supervisory personal to programs
- c) Identifies internal staff to become members of the Training Delivery Team
- d) Provides staff for focus groups, curriculum development, and planning activities
- e) Supports other agencies' training programs
- f) Shares training calendar
- g) Includes Training Collaborative as a line item in yearly budget
- h) Pays fees on time
- i) Participates in a timely manner in evaluation process (financial, assessment data)
- j) Commits to improvement and constant assessment of collaborative processes

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- k) Demonstrates courage to change organization
- k) Demonstrates willingness to innovate
- l) Integrates training into organizational culture
- m) Pays equivilant to investments
- n) Joins Essential Learning

**IV. Values**

- Confidentiality, “what we say here, stays here”
- Commitment of time and energy to ensure the success of the venture
- Continuous process of defining and measuring quality training and its impact
- Emphasis is on skill-based training
- Each organization receives recognition and equal billing
- All partners work to maintain the relationships within collaborative
- Collaborative is a venue for exploration and discussion about professionalism in the field

**V. Supplemental Elements of this Operating Agreement Include:**

- A) Criteria for selecting and certifying trainers will be developed by WPFC and approved by the oversight committee. First consideration will always be given to trainers on staff of the partnering organization; however, those selections will never compromise quality. The oversight committee will resolve disputes on trainer selections.
- B) No new partner will be added to the collaborative until all partners agree.
- C) Formal review of this agreement by the partners will be undertaken every year.
- D) Suggested modifications to the agreement or the work plan need to be made in writing and discussed among the partners. A vote of all partners is necessary to modify the agreement.
- E) When a partner agrees to participate in the collaborative, they agree to stay with the collaborative for three years.
- F) Should circumstances change and a partner determines it is imperative that they withdraw from the collaborative, their departure shall not negatively disadvantage the remaining partners – the remaining partners and the Training Collaborative must remain whole.

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- G) Should one partner withdraw from the collaborative, the assets of the collaborative will remain with the collaborative and are equally owned by the collaborative, including the curriculum.
  
- H) Partners entering the collaborative after July 1, 2005 agree to provide financing
  - 1. \$3,500 one-time fee (This includes set up fees for Essential Learning.)
  - 2. \$50 for each staff member as an annual fee
  
- I) The logic model is agreed to by the partners and reflects the overall approach and timing of the initiative.

**Approvals:**

This Operating Agreement will be approved by the designated representatives and the board president of each collaborative partner.

Name:

Name:

Position:

Position:

Organization:

Signature and date:

Signature and date: