

Supervisors as Safety Decision Makers

A MULTI-STATE PROJECT

This unique project is funded and directed by four states. A Steering Committee comprised of staff from the states is responsible for oversight of the project and approval of the products of the project. The state partners are:

- ☑ Alabama
- ☑ Louisiana
- ☑ South Dakota
- ☑ Wisconsin

STEERING COMMITTEE

Connie Klick, WI, Chair

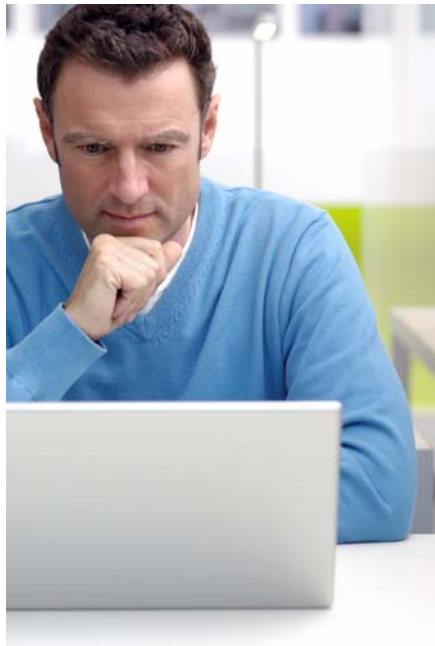
Cindy Phillips, LA

Sue Ash, AL

Pamela Bennett, SD

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Wayne Holder



The Child Protective Services (CPS) supervisor is the single most important factor for improving the delivery of safety intervention. The CPS supervisor holds tremendous influence over worker performance. The influence a supervisor has with respect to worker understanding and proficiency of safety intervention begins from the moment a new worker walks through the door of an agency and continues throughout the worker's CPS career.

The importance of the supervisory role in consulting and overseeing child safety decision making is more important than the actual practice occurring among CPS workers.

This project exists because of the recognition that CPS supervisors must be experts in safety decision making.

Supervisors as Safety Decision Makers is a project funded by four states to develop a rigorous competency building program that focuses exclusively on safety intervention concepts essential to effective safety intervention and safety decision making. The program is currently being designed by ACTION for Child Protection and is anticipated to be completed by the fall of 2008. The program will combine 24 hours of on site classroom learning with 90 hours of off site individualized assignments over a four month period.

A major feature of the program will be the facilitated hands-on approach to supporting mastery.

What Four States Think a Rigorous Supervisor Program Must Be

- ✘ Extensive focus on essential safety practices and decisions
- ✘ Means for measuring demonstrated ability to judge safety decision making
- ✘ Opportunities that require acceptable articulation and justification of safety decision making
- ✘ Concentrated and rigorous case related experiences
- ✘ Demanding and challenging individual learning encounters
- ✘ Communication that establishes the learner's proficiency
- ✘ Confidence building and self-assurance regarding one's expertise

PROJECT HISTORY

In 2004 ACTION was asked by child welfare leaders in Wisconsin to develop a rigorous "boot camp" training program for supervisors devoted to safety decision making. As discussions continued, it became apparent that such a program could be appealing to other states as well. In the spring of 2005, a meeting of child welfare professionals from various states was convened in Washington, DC to consider the prospects of pursuing a multi-state project. That group concluded the need was great, and the challenge to create a multi-state project was formidable. In 2006 ACTION and key leaders from Wisconsin and Alabama continued promoting the idea and conceptualizing how the program could be designed. In 2007 a meeting was convened in Portland, OR at the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. The meeting included interested states which numbered ten at the time and representatives of the Children's Bureau. The objective of the meeting was to clarify the purpose of this effort in comparison to other supervisor training programs and to seek commitment from states to continue. In the fall of 2007, four states (that had been highly motivated from the onset) agreed to pursue individual contracts with ACTION to form the project which officially began January 2008.

Program Description



Supervisors as Safety Decision Makers will be a comprehensive and intensive learning program directed at individual mastery of safety concepts essential to effective safety decision making. Eighty percent of the program will be implemented off site at participants' job locations. Participants will be grouped in learning teams. Each team will have eight participants. Each team will be led by two expert facilitators. In addition, each facilitator will work directly with four participants providing guided consultation during all off site assignments. The program will contain two areas: *Identifying and Responding to Present Danger* and *Identifying and Responding to Impending Danger*.

The specific methods for building participant expertise and mastery in safety decision making will include: individual and group exercise, video demonstration and analysis, case review and analysis, literature review, individual and group consultation, writing and actual real-life application experiences. Individual learning accountability will be emphasized.

Program Objectives

- Participants recognize, articulate and demonstrate possession of comprehensive knowledge and technical skill related to safety decision making.
- Participants understand and persuasively communicate safety concepts and criteria.
- Participants recognize and can explain how safety concepts, criteria and standards are applied at specific points in the safety intervention process.
- Participants analyze and perform critical thinking related to case practice situations independently.
- Participants successfully demonstrate proficiency in information analysis, safety assessment, and safety planning and safety management.

HALLMARK FEATURES OF PROGRAM

Individualized
Accountability
Intensive
Focused on Present and
Impending Danger
Consultation Support



925 6th Street NW
Unit 4
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Phone 505.345-2500