

## Introduction

The State of Alabama Core Child Welfare Competencies were developed in a step by step process which included input from the Higher Education Consortium on Child Welfare, State Department of Human Resources workers, child welfare faculty from accredited social work programs around the state, child welfare consumers, and multi-systems partners. The following child welfare core competencies are based on many assumptions and underlying competencies that all students graduating from an accredited social work program need to provide best practice to families and children. The students are family/client focused, they work in collaboration with other team members, they have a focus on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, and they are objective and use evidence based practice. These assumptions and underlying competencies are critical to the application of the knowledge and skills acquired through the core competencies of the curriculum.

## Alabama Child Welfare Core Principals

The core child welfare principals that guide the practice of child welfare workers are influenced by the R.C. Consent Decree. These principals are as follows:

1. A child should be helped to stay with and return to his family, so long as his health and safety are not in jeopardy.
2. When a child cannot be safely returned to his family, support services must be provided to his new, permanent home.
3. Individualized services should be provided to the child and to the family unit as a whole. The assistance plan should address both the family's strengths and needs.
4. Services should be provided to children and families in a manner that keeps disruptions to a minimum, in the least restrictive environment possible.

## **CORE CHILD WELFARE COMPETENCIES**

### 1. Knowledge of Human Development

The student will demonstrate the

1.1 Ability to identify and describe the stages of human development across the lifespan

1.2 Ability to identify and describe variations in human development across the lifespan

### 2. Knowledge of Abuse and Neglect

The student will demonstrate the

2.1 Ability to recognize and accurately ID indicators of abuse and neglect.

2.2 Ability to identify dynamics that can lead to abuse and neglect.

2.3 Ability to identify the impact of abuse and neglect on individuals, families and the community

### 3. Knowledge of Services

The student will demonstrate the

3.1 Ability to identify necessary services/resources

3.2 Ability to access formal and informal service/resource providers

### 4. Knowledge of Policy

The student will demonstrate an

4.1 Understanding of the implication and application of policy at all levels of decision making (agency, state, federal)

5. Knowledge of Systems Theory

The student will demonstrate

- 5.1 Knowledge and application of systems theory to individuals, families, communities using a Person-in-Environment perspective

6. Knowledge of Strengths Based Perspective

The student will demonstrate the\an

- 6.1 Ability to apply the philosophy and tools necessary to practice from a strengths based perspective
- 6.2 Understanding of self care and its implication practice

7. Knowledge of Role as Social Work

The student will demonstrate the\an

- 7.1 Understanding of the social workers role as an advocate in multiple settings
- 7.2 Ability to communicate role with children, families and multi system providers

8. Knowledge and Application of Evidence Based Practice

9. Understanding of Cultural Competence

The student will demonstrate the\an

- 9.1 Sensitivity to differences in client culture, ethnicity and sexual orientation
- 9.2 Ability to recognize cultural strengths in families that can be used as building blocks for providing needed services.
- 9.3 Application of culturally relevant practice which supports best practice with children and families.

10. Understanding of Crisis Intervention

The student will demonstrate the

10.1 Ability to recognize a crisis

10.2 Ability to manage crisis situation effectively

11. Knowledge Social Work Values and Ethics

The student will demonstrate the\an

11.1 Understanding of value base of the profession and practices according to its ethical standards and principles

12. Communication Skills

The student will demonstrate the\an

12.1 Ability to engage with children, families, and multi-system partners.

12.2 Ability to interview children, families, and multi system providers.

12.3 Proficiency in active listening skills and interpersonal skills

12.4 Proficiency in verbal and written communication that includes the ability to comprehend, prioritize, and disseminate information to “all parties”.

13. Assessment Skills

The student will demonstrate the

13.1 Ability to observe and communicate strengths and needs in children families, and community systems

13.2 Ability to use communication and assessment skills to draw conclusions, make decisions and design and implement interventions

13.3 Ability to use identified strengths and needs in planning for solutions

13.4 Ability to understand that assessment is an on-going and comprehensive process

14. Organizational and Technology Skills

The student will demonstrate the\an

14.1 Understanding of how organizations function and the time lines associated with organizations

14.2 Understanding of how organizational priorities impact a worker's ability to carry out job related responsibilities

14.3 Understanding of how technology impacts practice