NIRN
THE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH NETWORK

Examples of Training Materials Outline

Teaching-Family Association Policy: Training of Family Specialists (1992)

PURPOSE:

1. To define the content and format of the Preservice Workshop including the required sections and behavior rehearsals.
2. To define the qualifications of a Preservice Workshop trainer.
3. To define and describe relevant Family Specialist in-service training.

POLICY:

The Teaching-Family Association supports the development, implementation and evaluation of intensive, short-term, home-based treatment programs for children and families. To facilitate the humane and effective treatment of children and families in the context of their homes, schools, and communities, it is the Teaching-Family Association policy that:

1, A Preservice Workshop shall be offered to all Family Specialists by qualified trainers and completed before work begins with a family;

2. The content of the workshop closely reflects the description outlined in the procedures of this policy;

3. Family Specialists will have the opportunity to participate in specialized in-service training to facilitate and promote their professional development.

PROCEDURES:

To provide clear descriptions of and guidelines for the Family Specialist Preservice Workshop, trainer qualifications and in-service training.

I. Content of the Preservice Workshop

A. The following descriptions are a broad outline of the topic areas to be in a Family Specialist Preservice Workshop and constitute the core curriculum for Family Specialist training at each Site.

Introduction to the Teaching-Family Model

An overview of the origins of the Teaching-Family Model that develops a historical context for program development and describes the evolution of the Teaching-Family technology.

Introduction and Philosophy of Home-Based Services

A general overview of home-based services will be offered. The philosophy of the program will include the following concepts: i.e., all individuals have the right to be a part of their family, treatment must be offered in a way that fits the family context, and the least intrusive measures should be utilized to maintain the family unit. The program philosophy emphasizes a hopeful, positive, and persistent approach to solving problems. The concept of creating partnerships with parents while simultaneously promoting the self-sufficiency of the family unit is the core of all therapeutic interventions in the program.

Contextual Therapy

An ecological approach that says all treatment must be offered to the family in their home, school and community. Treatment fits the family in a way that empowers parents, addresses the presenting problems, and maximizes the generalization of new skills across numerous settings.

Professionalism

This section includes a discussion of confidentiality issues, ethical guidelines concerning family work, family rights, personal presentation in families and in other systems, definition of the Family Specialist role, and teaches the skill of giving and receiving feedback.

Teaching Skills

The basic teaching skills are taught with accompanying behavior rehearsals in the following areas: observing and describing behavior, indirect information gathering skills, rationales, the teaching interaction, effective praise, reactive teaching, proactive teaching, and conceptual teaching (e.g., EDUCATES).

Behavior Analysis

Functional behavioral analysis is taught as a framework for treatment planning and implementation. Analytical thinking is emphasized in learning the application of behavioral principles and learning theory and in understanding motivation system techniques.

Treatment/Service Planning

Treatment planning encompasses a broad range of family goals and skill curricula. The presenting problems, referral issues, family goals (personal rationale), and assessment of the family's strengths provide direction for the treatment plan and intervention. Additionally, comprehensive services are offered to families where necessary.

The appropriate alternative behaviors are conceptualized into goal statements. The goals are defined in terms of relevant skills and a description of desirable behaviors. Clarity, specificity, and manageability are the hallmarks of effective treatment planning.

Relationship Development

This section includes discussion on how to fit into a family, empathy and listening skills, and how to engage a family using a hopeful, positive and non judgmental approach.

Counselling

Counselling skills, dealing with feelings, attending to emotional content, and using counselling as a springboard to teaching are the major concept areas in this section.

Rational Problem-Solving

Participants are taught the steps to rational problem-solving i.e., SODAS-F (situation, options, disadvantages and advantages of the key options, solution, follow up). These procedures are then broadened to help parents build personal insight over time and identify solutions that are functional for themselves and their families.

Clinical Judgment

Clinical judgment is the precise and effective application of a Family Specialist's repertoire of skills in response to the stimulus conditions preceding any interaction or event in a family. This section provides the foundation for acquiring clinical judgment. The goal is to introduce the Family Specialist to the idea of doing "the right thing at the right time," Engaging in functional analysis of all the interactions between family members and the Family Specialist provides the necessary information on which to base purposeful treatment decisions and orchestrate the treatment intervention toward goal attainment.

Crisis Interventions

Program policies and procedures are outlined to promote an effective response to crisis and to ensure clear communication and safety of the family and the Family Specialist. Specific strategies should be offered to help the Family Specialist respond therapeutically to a crisis situation and to help the family learn from the experience.

Networking/Family Advocacy

Strategies and techniques that promote and facilitate community supports and activities for families are offered. Family Specialists are taught to feel comfortable acting in the capacity of case manager and as a liaison for families as the situation demands. Self-advocacy skills and the ability to be an "educated" consumer of services (e.g., giving and receiving feedback, accessing community resources, assertiveness) are an important component of this section.

Recordkeeping

All required methods of recordkeeping (e.g., forms, notes, plans, reports, and letters) are to be clearly explained and demonstrated.

II. Preservice Workshop Format

A. The Family Specialist Preservice Workshop shall consist of both lectures and skill-based behavior rehearsals. The workshop will provide a minimum of 35 hours of instruction with a significant emphasis on behavior rehearsal to ensure adequate skill acquisition.

B. Behavior rehearsals will have a trainer-to-participant ratio sufficient to ensure skill acquisition.

C. The workshop participants will have the opportunity to offer written feedback after each workshop section.

D. Documentation of the Preservice Workshop will include a training record listing trainers, observers, and participants as well as a compilation of all workshop feedback.

III. Trainer Qualifications

A. A Preservice Workshop trainer is considered qualified by reaching acceptable Site standards on all training expectations in the presence of a qualified evaluator. Verbal and written feedback will be offered to the qualifying trainer until the standard is reached. The qualifying trainer shall have the opportunity to observe and co-present or practice ("dry run") each individual section before receiving feedback on a solo presentation. The trainer should have a practitioner background in the Teaching-Family Model.

IV. In-Service Training for Family Specialists

A. In-service training is necessary to enhance and promote the professional development of the Family Specialist. In-service training is defined as the opportunity for the staff to develop professionally and to add to the knowledge base of the program. Each Site will determine the topics of learning needed to increase both the program knowledge base and the Family Specialist's expertise. In recognition of program innovation and evolution, Family Specialist expertise and a general program needs assessment, the following are to be considered to be appropriate in-service activities.

1. Program technology meetings provide an opportunity for the staff to focus on program issues, family treatment issues, and personal lifestyle issues and allow new information and learning to enhance the evolution of program systems and knowledge base.
2. Presentations by Family Specialists and/or Site staff on special topics relevant to family work.
3. Guest speakers specializing in an area of expertise relevant to family work.

B. In-service training should occur no less than once every two months.