DMCPS Internal Document

Initial Assessment Specialist Certification (IASC) Program Syllabus

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SUMMARY

The Purpose of this Initial Assessment Specialist Certification (IASC) Program syllabus is to outline the entire program that needs to be completed by all Initial Assessment Specialists (IAS) hired by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS). All changes to this outline will be documented and change details and dates will be added to the IASC Program Syllabus: Change Log. It is highly recommended that changes to this program be made no more than once annually, unless compelling circumstances exist.

The purpose of this training is to prepare all new DMCPS IAS' to fulfill their CPS/child welfare responsibilities at a basic level of proficiency in accordance with the Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards, Access and Initial Assessment (IA) Standards and Wisconsin Children's Code. New staff will receive structured written feedback with plans for improvement as needed as well as verbal feedback from trainers, training staff and supervisors. All documentation related to the completion of Skills Assessments and Assignments shall be kept in the employees training folder.

The DMCPS Certification program is supported through a partnership between the DMCPS and Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS). This plan includes training for new hires and existing staff for the purposes of certification, recertification and ongoing professional development and education.

Related Resources:

DMCPS Initial Assessment Specialist Certification Policy, IA 4.00
DMCPS Initial Assessment Specialist Certification Change Log

Online Modules

Module	Description
Pre-service	Pre-Service online modules.
Mandated Reporter	Online modules for a person who is required by Chapter 48 of the Wisconsin Statutes or Executive Order 54 to report suspected child maltreatment.
e-WiSACWIS	Facilitates a tour of the EWiSACWIS database used by Wisconsin Child Welfare Professionals. Introduces how to generate documents, navigate, and search within the system.

WiLearn Elements

Training	Description
Culturally Responsible Practice	Review the cultural competence standards that guide our practice, explore ways that cultural differences and biases can impact our practice, and discuss strategies to work with families in a culturally responsible manner.
Trauma Informed Practice	Explore how families experience trauma, discuss strategies to recognize the signs of traumatic stress, and identify tools to help regulate distress using trauma informed practices.
Understanding Child Protective Services Case Process	Define the values and principles that drive child welfare practice in Wisconsin, explore how they are reflected at Access, Initial Assessment and Ongoing Services, and discuss how they guide our work with families.
Engaging Families	Examine and apply the Six Principles of Partnership, discuss the importance of effective engagement to develop a trusting relationship with the families with whom we work, and explore how our judgements and biases impact the helper-authority continuum in our work with families.
Case Practice with American Indian Tribes	Explore the impact of historical trauma and loss on Native American families, review ICWA and WICWA requirements, and discuss ways to strengthen our practice with Indian children, families, and tribes.
Areas of Assessment in Child Protective Services	Apply engagement-focused and trauma-informed practice techniques to help elicit relevant and sufficient information, explore how gathering information about parental protective capacities and the areas of assessment help to support decision-making, and plan for interviews with children, families, and others.
Critical Thinking in Child Protective Services	Examine the critical thinking process, apply the critical thinking process to objectively make decisions and formulate recommendations, discuss how to engage with the family in the decision-making process, and practice documenting gathered information.

Family-Centered Decision Making	Examine decision making as a continuous process where changing circumstances are monitored for their impact on safety and consider the relevant and sufficient information that is needed for current decision making.

WCWPDS Trainings

Training	Description
Safety in CPS: Present Danger	This training will describe and apply the process for assessing Present Danger Threats and examine the list of standardized threats.
Safety in CPS: Impending Danger	This training will describe and apply the process for assessing Impending Danger Threats and examine the list of standardized threats, danger threshold criteria, as well as safety analysis and safety planning.

DMCPS Trainings

Training	Description
Car Seat Safety	Provides education on car seat laws and best practice for safest transport.
Present Danger & Protective Planning	Offers opportunity to assess for Present Danger, develop and implement a Protective Plan.
Impending Danger & In-Home Services (IHS)	Provides an overview of the forms and technical requirements for when IIHS are implemented.
Temporary Physical Custody (TPC)	Provides a foundational understanding of the steps and actions needed during the TPC process.
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)- Substantiating Child Maltreatment	Provides an understanding of history of CAPTA, the types of maltreatment, how to document the information gathered to support a decision and how to determine credibility and the minimum burden of proof.
Professionalism	Provides expectations of professional accountability, communication, customer service, interpersonal skills, decision-making/judgement, and equity/inclusion.
Domestic Violence (DV)	Provides an overview of what DV is and is not, an overview of the dynamics in violent relationships, and assessing for safety when DV is of concern.
Information Collection	Provides an overview of the information collection process in Child Protection Services and the importance of utilizing standards.
Initial Assessment	This course is designed to provide a solid foundation of the purpose and approach of IA casework and use and requirements of the Standards.

Court Preparedness

Training	Description

Basic Intake Worker Training	Provides IAS with the basic knowledge to take and hold a child/juvenile in custody and timelines that must be adhered to during the intake process, as specified in state statutes.
Court Preparedness	Provides IAS with an overview of court etiquette and basic legal procedures encountered in the role of an IAS.

Mentor Topics

Training	Description
Work Web	Navigation through the DCF Intranet to locate job aids, policies, and resources.
Random Moment of Time Study (RMTS)	Introduces new workers to the Random Moment of Time Study and its importance for our work.
Interpreters	Informs new workers of interpreter services used by DMCPS and tips for working with an interpreter.
Time Management	Provides new workers with information on the daily activities of an IAS and information on organization to work effectively.
Initial Assessment Documentation Tips	Provides information on the IA documents and the expectation for information, grammar, and analysis of information.
Interview Protocol	Educates new staff on the protocol for interviewing those involved in both Primary and Secondary cases, per IA Standards.
Joint Protocol	Educates new workers on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Child Abuse Review Team (CART) and ability to share information.
Worker Safety	Provides new workers with general tips for worker safety.
Child Interviews	Informs new workers on Access and IA Standards regarding legal rights to interview a child, how to prepare for child interviews, introductions during child interviews, and reducing child anxiety during interviews.
Field Documents and Community Resources	Introduces new workers to community resources and forms commonly used during the IA process.
Family Case Transfer Meetings (FCTM)	Discusses the process of a FCTM and the IAS' role in its facilitation in accordance with Ongoing Standards.
Birth to 3	Provides new workers with an overview of the Birth to 3 Program.
Medical Evaluation & Forensic Interviews	Provides information on when medical evaluations and forensic interviews should occur and how to obtain consent.
Child Development	Provides new workers with a basic understanding of child development.
Indian Child Welfare Act/ Wisconsin Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA/WICWA)	Provides new workers with a basic understanding of the ICWA/WICWA acts and the implications they have on CPS work.

Crisis Intervention	Provides a framework of how to engage with families and deescalate agitated individuals.
Writing an Initial Assessment (IA)	Provides a structure to the areas of assessment, information needed, and required analysis of information.
Independent Investigations	Provides an overview of the intent of the Independent Investigation and the process/procedure.

Practica

Training	Description
Engaging	Provides participants the opportunity to role play the different engaging skills/tools learned in Engaging training.
Safety	Provides participants with the opportunity to practice the application of the child protective service safety intervention concepts.
IA	Provides participants the opportunity to role play and explain their role, purpose and an explanation of the IA process to a client. As well as collect information through engagement.
Court Practica	IAS provides testimony during a mock trial on their safety decision making which lead to TPC.

Skills Assessments

Training	Description
Safety	Oral presentation and assessment of safety- related case information to a panel.
Engagement	Oral demonstration of engagement and interviewing skills with an actor in front of a panel.
Field Assessment	Application of Safety Concerns, Information Collection and Engagement with clients on Initial Assessment Case.

Assignments

Training	Description
Shadowing Reflection	IAS reflects on their professional biases and how this may impact them during interactions with families.
Professional Integrity Presentation	IAS will select a topic related to the Social Work Code of Ethics, Cultural Competency, Family Systems Theory, or Professional Identity, to present to the Professional Development Section.
Protective Plan	IAS will develop a Protective Plan on a training case.
TPC Legal Document	IAS will complete a legal document to support TPC.

Cases

Training	Description
IA Primary Case	IAS will take the lead with engagement, information collection and safety analysis with the support of IAS-Senior/Advanced.

Recertification

The goal of the re-certification process is to ensure that Certified IAS' maintain a basic level of proficiency through regular trainings and refreshers. Each IAS must complete at least 30 hours of professional development during each two-year cycle after two years of employment OR each two-year cycle following the social work certification timelines (odd years).

Each Certified IAS must attend Car Seat Safety, Safety Booster, Ethics and Boundaries as well as any other related trainings to ensure for compliance with DCF 43.

Training	Description
Car Seat Safety	Provides education on car seat laws and best practice for safest transport.
Safety Booster	Refresher on safety decision making model.
Ethics and Boundaries	Curriculum to support professionalism and integrity when working with children and families.
Culturally Responsible Practice	Curriculum relevant to a culturally responsive workforce.