

Supporting Best Practice

A Guide for the Selection of
Facilitators in
Child Protection
Training

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Introduction

This Guide was developed through industry consultation with members of the *Forum of Learning and Development in Child Protection*. The following agencies are represented on this Forum.

- NSW Health (Education Centre Against Violence)
- NSW Department of Community Services
- NSW Police
- NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- NSW Department of Education and Training
- Commission for Children and Young People
- NSW Department of Juvenile Justice
- NSW Ombudsman
- NSW Department of Sport and Recreation
- NSW Department of Corrective Services
- NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs
- Child Protection Learning and Development Coordination Unit
- Attorney General's Department
- Association of Children's Welfare Agencies
- Association of Independent Schools
- New South Wales Industry Training Advisory Board
- Network of Community Activities
- KU Children's Services
- Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat

1. Background

In 2000 the Child Protection CEO's endorsed the *Strategic Directions in Child Protection Learning and Development in NSW* prepared by the Commission for Children and Young People. This paper identified the need to improve the quality of learning and development providers:

“Only trainers with content expertise, relevant field experience and minimum adult education qualifications equivalent to the Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training or equivalent should facilitate learning and development activities”

A range of issues within the sector have informed the discussion about recommended industry standards for child protection training facilitators including:

- Training is an expensive resource and its effectiveness is directly linked to the facilitators skill and knowledge of both the learning process and the content area of the program;
- The processes involved in professional learning are complex and include the capacity to manage anxiety and resistance, and to challenge personal values and organisational and socio-cultural paradigms;
- The area of child protection is contentious, challenging and dynamic; accordingly the credibility and capacity of facilitators is dependent on informed, current and evidence-based knowledge and industry experience;
- Industry benchmarks will promote consistent best practice at an interagency level and ultimately service delivery to children, young people and families.

In December 2002, the Child Protection Learning and Development Coordination Unit (CPLDCU) was established to coordinate and respond to the proposed strategies outlined in the Strategic Directions paper. The CPLDCU developed the *Guide for the Selection of Facilitators in Child Protection* through a consultative and collaborative process with a wide range of government and nongovernment agencies across the sector.

2. Purpose

This Guide has been designed as a tool to assist organisations in the selection of child protection training facilitators. The use of this Guide is voluntary; its intent is to support, not inhibit agencies in delivering child protection training programs. The Guide can assist organisations:

- in the selection of internal staff to deliver in-house child protection training programs;
- in the selection of external consultants recruited to deliver core training programs;
- as the basis of a professional development tool for child protection facilitators.

This Guide acknowledges that agency managers and supervisors have a continuing responsibility to ensure their staff are aware of, and comply with, the roles and responsibility of the agency as set out in the *NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention 2000*.

3. Definitions

Training/Learning and Development

An organisationally initiated process intended to foster learning and competence throughout the workforce, in order to: meet the needs of service users; contribute towards organisational goals, and meet the professional development needs of individual staff (*Effective Staff Training in Social Care, Horwath & Morrison, 1999*).

Child Protection Services

Child protection services include a wide range of interventions and services that focus on the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children, young people, their families and communities. These services include early intervention and prevention, statutory child protection intervention, and therapeutic and out-of-home care support. Child protection services are not limited to direct service provision and can include a range of support and/or specialisation services eg. legal services.

Child Protection Facilitator

A child protection facilitator is someone who delivers face to face or distance learning in the area of child protection. Agencies use different terms to describe a child protection facilitator including 'trainer', 'consultant', 'facilitator', and 'learning and development officer'. The facilitator supports the learning process for individuals and/or a group.

Child Protection Training or Learning and Development

The delivery of specific training/learning and development programs with targeted outcomes that aim to enhance child protection interventions and services to children, young people and their families.

Managers and supervisors have responsibility for the provision of information about statutory responsibilities within their organisation. Child protection training/learning and development programs should be distinguished from the provision of information through processes such as:

- briefings
- team meetings
- updates
- guest speakers
- induction briefings
- staff supervision

An example of the provision of information (rather than child protection training) would be a manager informing staff of their additional reporting responsibilities under the following legislative requirements: *Ombudsman Act, 1974; Commission for Children and Young People, 1998; and the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998.*

4. Levels of Child Protection Training

There are two levels of Child Protection Training/Learning and Development distinguished, to reflect the different knowledge, skills and experience required by staff who work with children and young people across the child protection sector;

i). Level One Child Protection Training

Examples of level one child protection training include the following:

- “Identifying and Responding to Children and Young People at Risk of Harm” mapped to CHCCHILD1C from the Community Services Training Package
- Any training provided for mandatory reporters to assist them with their reporting responsibilities under the *Children and Young Person’s (Care and Protection) Act, 1998*

ii). Level Two Child Protection Training

Level two training uses the level one training as underpinning knowledge and builds on this foundation. This level of training focuses on particular child protection issues. Examples include:

- Physical Abuse and Neglect of Children (PANOC)
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Interviewing Children and Young People

Level two training is usually provided to staff who have specialist roles in child protection to enhance their knowledge and skills in child protection.

5. Using the Guide

The Guide has been developed as a support tool rather than imposing rigid standards or processes. While each organisation can use the Guide according to their specific requirements, the following information and options should be considered:

i). The two levels of training allow agencies to delineate criteria, and/or weighting, in accordance with the depth and complexity of the different training/learning and development programs delivered in that agency. For example, specific knowledge and expertise would be required to deliver a particular training program in Child Sexual Abuse.

The example included as *Appendix One: An example of evaluating facilitator knowledge and skills using weighted criteria for Level One* would address facilitator requirements to deliver the *Identifying and Responding to Children and Young People at Risk of Harm* training program.

ii). The examples of evidence that are listed against each of the four criteria (knowledge and skills) are not prescriptive. These examples are a guide for the applicant and the agency. The examples may evolve over time. Contextualisation by organisations will allow for a necessary level of responsiveness and flexibility.

iii). Each of the criteria (knowledge and skills) can be weighted to reflect the minimum standard for that criterion to be satisfied (ie. what they must have), and the preferred criteria which can be used to differentiate between facilitators. An example of weighted criteria is included in the Appendix at the end of the Guide.

iv). If the weighting option is used, a minimum number of points are recommended for each of the two levels before an individual is engaged to facilitate a training/learning and development program:

- Level One: 16 points
- Level Two: 24 points

v). Employers will also need to follow their legislative and policy/procedural requirements for engaging staff and contractors. In the case of contractors this may include a tendering process and includes a comparative selection based on value for money and availability as well as the screening protocols for the *Working with Children Check*.

vi). Industry trainers working for a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) will be expected to meet the facilitator criteria through the organisation's compliance with Standard 7.4 of the Australian Quality Training Guide (AQTF). The criteria listed within the Guide are consistent with the AQTF requirements.

6. The Criteria for Child Protection Facilitators : Level One

Criteria (Knowledge & Skills)	Examples/Guidance	Weighting (Optional) Recommended minimum points: 16
<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitation Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and application of adult learning principles • demonstration of inclusive learning practices • capacity to explore and challenge values and manage resistance 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (or equivalent) • Testimonials from learners, colleagues and/or supervisor outlining skills and experience as a facilitator 	<p><i>Min. required 6 out of 12 points</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Industry Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recent (within 2 years) experience in the relevant area of child protection and/or child protection learning and development facilitator experience 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job description that is confirmed by a supervisor and or employer (previous or current) • Resume that attests experiences as a facilitator that are confirmed by a supervisor or employer 	<p><i>Min. required 4 out of 6 points</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Working knowledge and understanding of NSW system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current NSW child protection legislation and policies • current systems and processes in the child protection sector : including reporting protocols • relevant policy and practice within the agency and of other complementary activities taking place in the agency 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed self paced learning guides on agency child protection policies and procedures • Testimony by supervisor/employer • Certified participation in relevant workshops 	<p><i>Min. required 6 out of 12 points</i></p>

7. The Criteria for Child Protection Facilitators: Level Two

Criteria (Knowledge & Skills)	Examples/Guidance	Weighting (Optional) Recommended minimum points: 24
<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitation Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and application of adult learning principles • demonstration of inclusive learning practices • capacity to explore and challenge values and manage resistance 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (or equivalent) • Testimonials from learners, colleagues and/or supervisor outlining skills and experience as a facilitator 	<p><i>Min. required 6 out of 12 points</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Industry Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recent (within 2 years) experience in the relevant area of child protection and/or child protection learning and development facilitator experience 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job description that is confirmed by a supervisor and or employer (previous or current) • Resume that attests experiences as a facilitator that are confirmed by a supervisor or employer 	<p><i>Min. required 4 out of 6 points</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Working knowledge and understanding of NSW system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current NSW child protection legislation and policies • current systems and processes in the child protection sector : including reporting protocols • relevant policy and practice within the agency and of other complementary activities taking place in the agency 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed self paced learning guides on agency child protection policies and procedures • Testimony by supervisor/employer • Certified participation in relevant workshops 	<p><i>Min. required 6 out of 12 points</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Extensive and current content knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of children and young people • indicators, dynamics and effects of the different types of abuse and neglect and associated practice implications • child and family focussed work practices, or where relevant, child focussed practice • specialised areas of expertise 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate or Postgraduate qualification in relevant human services field • Evidence of ongoing professional development • Evidence of professional expertise and supervisor's testimony • Published journal articles/books or research papers 	<p><i>Min. required 8 out of 12 points</i></p>

Appendix One: An Example of Evaluating Facilitator Knowledge and Skills using Weighted Criteria for Level One

Criteria	Examples of Evidence	Weighting	Scoring	
1. Facilitation Skills Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding and application of adult learning principles • demonstration of inclusive learning practices • capacity to explore and challenge values and manage resistance • knowledge of competency based assessment (when delivering accredited courses) 	Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (or equivalent) OR	6 points	Note: A maximum of 6 points can be earned in this section.	
	Unit BSZ404A: Train Small Groups	1 point		
	Unit BSZ407A: Deliver Training Sessions	1 point		
	Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment	1 point		
	AND/OR			
	Testimonial from learners outlining how you have facilitated their learning	1 point	Note: A maximum of 6 points can be earned in this section.	
	Testimonial from colleague and/or supervisor outlining your experience as a facilitator	2 points		
Resume that attests your experiences as a facilitator. Must be confirmed by a supervisor or employer (previous or current)	2 points			
Responses to case studies or examples that outline appropriate responses to managing groups and facilitating learning	2 points			
Job description that outlines that as part of your employment requirements you deliver training sessions. Must be confirmed by a supervisor and or employer (previous or current)	1 points			

Criteria	Examples of Evidence	Weighting	Scoring
2. Industry Experience Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recent (within 2 years) experience in the relevant area of child protection and/or child protection learning and development facilitator 	Resume that attests your recent experience in the relevant area of child protection. Must be confirmed by a supervisor or employer (previous or current)	2 points	Note: A maximum of 6 points can be earned in this section.
	Resume and testimonial from colleague and/or supervisor outlining your recent experience as a child protection facilitator	2 points	
	Job description/s that outlines your role and responsibility in the relevant area of child protection and/or child protection facilitator. Must be confirmed by a supervisor and or employer (previous or current)	2 points	
3. Working knowledge and understanding of NSW context Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> current NSW child protection legislation and policies including the NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention 2000 current systems and processes in the child protection sector understanding of organisations specific policies and procedures 	Completed self-paced learning guides on agency child protection policies and procedures (if available)	2 points	Note: A maximum of 12 points can be earned in this section.
	Testimony by supervisor/employer that outlines the applicant's application of child protection legislation, policy and procedure in their work practice	2 points	
	Literature review of child protection legislation, policies and procedures that demonstrates applied understanding	1 points	
	Certified participation in workshops. Certificates must outline the pieces of legislation covered during the workshop	1 points	
	Previous training/information sessions conducted by the applicant that have demonstrated this knowledge and understanding. Must be supported by referee verification	2 points	

Criteria	Examples of Evidence	Weighting	Scoring
3. (contd.) Working knowledge and understanding of NSW context	Minimum of 2 years experience as a child protection facilitator	2 point	
	Work experiences that reflect knowledge of current systems and processes in the child protection sector. Must be confirmed by a supervisor and or employer (previous or current)	2 points	
	Evidence of ongoing professional development and/or higher education in your area of expertise	2 point	
	Evidence of recent experience as a practitioner working with clients in this area of practice. Must be confirmed by a supervisor and or employer (previous or current)	2 points	
	Published journal articles/books or research papers that have been written by the applicant	2 points	
	Undergraduate or Postgraduate qualification in relevant human services field that verifies academic study of child abuse and neglect research and practice issues (eg. Social Work, Psychology, Social Science, Social Welfare, Early Childhood etc)	2 points	