



OVERVIEW OF ALASKA'S CHILD IN NEED OF AID CURRICULUM

History

The Child in Need of Aid Curriculum is a project of the Alaska Court Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP monitors and improves the way the court system handles child in need of aid (CINA) cases, and enhances coordination between the court system and other agencies and Tribes involved in CINA cases. Members of the CIP Committee include judges, tribal representatives, and state agency representatives involved in child welfare from around the state. For more information about the CIP, please to go to courts.alaska.gov/cip/.

In 2011, the CIP's Education Subcommittee formed a work group to develop a multi-disciplinary core training curriculum for CINA attorneys, tribal and child advocates, caseworkers, and judges. The philosophy of the work group was that, in order to understand the child welfare process as a whole, CINA case participants should have a foundation of core knowledge in a broad array of legal and other subject areas relevant to CINA cases. After some research, the work group discovered Colorado's Training Wheel Curricula, which was very close to what we envisioned. With Colorado CIP's permission, the work group and private contractors adapted or - in many instances - completely rewrote Colorado's training modules to reflect Alaska law, culture and practice. All of Alaska's training modules have been piloted to statewide multi-disciplinary groups and finalized with feedback from the pilot groups. In all, the curriculum project took six years to complete.

Training Modules

Alaska's CINA Curriculum consists of 10 training modules. The Base Camp legal modules (CINA Laws, Roles & Responsibilities, Practices & Procedures) have been combined into a three-day training; the other modules ascending Denali (the Indian

Child Welfare Act, Community & Culture, Family Well-Being, Services & Resources, Creative Advocacy, Information-sharing, and Education Law & Advocacy) are each one-day trainings. The idea behind our Denali logo is that participants who reach the summit by completing all the modules will have a bird's-eye view of the child welfare process and will be at the peak of their performance.

The training modules are a combination of lecture and interactive discussions. A case about a hypothetical family runs through all of the modules so that participants can apply their knowledge to practical case situations. The opportunity for meaningful discussions with CINA participants from different disciplines and from different areas of the state have proved to be one of the most important benefits of this training format.

A brief description of each module is contained on the following page.

More Information

The training modules are designed to be delivered by a person or a team with substantial knowledge in the subject matter. The modules can be delivered to a statewide or a regional audience. All of the materials necessary to deliver a training (including power points, curriculum notes, handouts, and facilitator instructions) are available by application through the CIP.

For questions about the CINA Curriculum or how to organize a training in your region, please contact Mara Rabinowitz (mrabinowitz@akcourts.us or 907-264-0879) or Hanley Robinson (hrobinson@akcourts.us or 907-264-8232).

CINA CURRICULUM TRAINING MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

CINA Laws, Roles & Responsibilities, Practices & Procedures (3 Days)

The three legal modules, which have been combined into a three-day training, will provide an understanding of the laws governing Child in Need of Aid cases, the roles and responsibilities of the legal participants, and the court and agency practices and procedures.

Indian Child Welfare Act (1 Day)

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) module will provide an understanding of the historical context of ICWA, the substantive provisions of ICWA, and strategies for ensuring that ICWA is implemented.

Community & Culture (1 Day)

The Community & Culture module will increase awareness and knowledge of issues related to culture and bias, and how these issues influence interactions, services, treatment and decisions in child welfare. The training will also help stakeholders identify practice issues related to working with families that are culturally different from themselves.

Family Well-Being (1 Day)

The Family Well-Being module will provide stakeholders in the child welfare system with a basic understanding of child development, family dynamics and the impacts of abuse and neglect on children, youth and families.

Services & Resources (1 Day)

The Services & Resources module will provide an understanding of how to identify the service needs for families, how to access available services in the community, and how to use existing resources if services are not readily available.

Information Sharing (1 Day)

The Information Sharing module will provide a substantive understanding of the types of records and other information generated and gathered within the child welfare system, and the laws governing their access and dissemination.

Creative Advocacy in CINA Cases (1 Day)

The Creative Advocacy in CINA Cases module will provide participants with the tools for obtaining successful outcomes in CINA cases in a timely manner outside the courtroom or with minimal litigation.

Education Law & Advocacy (1 Day)

The Education Law module will provide stakeholders with an understanding of the unique educational needs and rights of children in state custody and to empower them with an ability to promote positive school experiences as an integral part of the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and youth.