

## National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI)

### Frequently Asked Questions about NTI Web-Based Training

#### General Interest:

##### **What is NTI?**

NTI is a five year federally-funded cooperative agreement (Grant #90CO1121) awarded to the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.) in 2014 by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of this training initiative is to develop and pilot two foundational, state of art, web-based trainings to enhance the capacity of child welfare and mental health professionals to effectively address the complex mental health needs of children moving to permanency through adoption or guardianship. NTI seeks to enhance casework and clinical practices to improve wellbeing and long-term stability outcomes for children and families.

##### **Who developed the NTI training?**

The Center for Adoption Education and Support (C.A.S.E.) was created in 1998 to provide post-adoption counseling and education services to families in Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Washington, D.C. C.A.S.E. is a private, non-profit mental health adoption services agency. C.A.S.E. envisions that everyone touched by foster care and adoption has access to the adoption-competent support necessary to navigate their lifelong journey.

C.A.S.E. leads a core team of experts in curriculum development, web-based production, and evaluation to oversee the development of the NTI trainings and works collaboratively with an advisory group of nationally recognized experts in child welfare and mental health, including foster and adoptive parents and former foster youth to develop the competencies that provide the foundation for the curriculum. A number of partnerships are also in place to provide subject matter expertise and support for training implementation and dissemination. For more information on the NTI's core team, national advisory group and strategic partnerships, please visit the NTI page at [www.adoptionsupport.org](http://www.adoptionsupport.org).

##### **Which states are involved in the NTI pilot? Can other states still join the pilot project?**

Eight states are participating in the pilot: California, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington. We are also actively reaching out to federally recognized tribes in these states to identify tribal partners for participation. While state selection for the pilot has already been made, the NTI staff is interested in working with additional states in preparation for the national launch of these trainings in 2019. For more information on any aspect of NTI, contact Dawn Wilson via [wilson@adoptionsupport.org](mailto:wilson@adoptionsupport.org).

##### **Why does NTI include 2 different web based training courses?**

Child welfare and mental health systems each play an important role in impacting outcomes for families experiencing adoption and guardianship. Each field has its own perspective and mandates. One of the goals of NTI is to help bridge understanding and improve collaboration between professionals. Towards that end, the two curriculums are closely aligned and based on similar competencies. They both cover the same core issues and include guidance on collaborating with other professionals. The Child Welfare Professional curriculum is focused on assessment and casework practices that workers can use in the field. The Mental Health Practitioner curriculum is more clinical in nature; it is focused on assessment, treatment planning and evidence supported interventions. Both courses are designed for professionals to use in their work with children/youth, parent/guardians and families.

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### **Is a demo available for the NTI web-based training?**

Absolutely. A demonstration video is available on the *About NTI* webpage. Visit our website at [www.adoptionssupport.org/nti](http://www.adoptionssupport.org/nti).

### **Is there a cost to participate?**

There is no cost to enroll in and complete the training. Certificates of completion and CEUs are also provided to participants who successfully complete the training at no cost to participants.

### **How is this curriculum different from the Training for Adoption Competence (TAC)?**

NTI offers two foundational web-based trainings: a 20-hour training for child welfare professionals and a 25-hour training for mental health practitioners. Both focus on the behavioral and mental health needs of children experiencing adoption or guardianship. They are designed to teach specific casework and clinical practices effective in addressing these needs.

TAC is a 72-hour in-person training designed for master's level, licensed clinicians that includes classroom and remote instruction as well as clinical case consultation. TAC students master 18 areas of knowledge, values and skills that are critical to adoption-competent mental health services.

## **Target Users**

### **Who might be an appropriate user of the Child Welfare Professional web based training?**

The course is designed for any staff working or contracting with a state, tribal or territory's child welfare system. Target users for this training include staff from state or county offices as well as subcontracted agencies working with children and families as they navigate the child protective, foster care, adoption, and post permanency services. In addition, staff who represent foster and adoptive parents, foster youth, or foster youth alumni organizations that provide support to the child welfare system will also find the material in this curriculum useful.

### **For the Child Welfare Professional training, what additional content is provided for me as a supervisor?**

Child welfare supervisors receive an additional three hours of training, designed to help support staff in applying learning from the training in their daily work. A downloadable workbook provides supervisors with a variety of activities to choose from to use with their teams or staff individually. For modules 2-8, the most salient points or takeaways are summarized and guiding principles that provide the foundation for the module are highlighted. Suggestions are provided to help build or strengthen staff skills and to address common challenges supervisors may encounter from staff.

### **Who might be an appropriate user of the Mental Health Practitioner web based training?**

This course is designed for mental health practitioners whose work intersects with the child welfare system. Target users include professionals working for public children's mental health services or private agencies/individuals providing clinical behavioral health services to children and families who are in foster care, are adopted or in guardianship placements.

**For the Mental Health Practitioner training, is participation on the coaching/consultation calls required? Can I miss any?** The coaching calls are an important aspect of the Mental Health Practitioner curriculum as they provide the opportunity to use case studies to apply learning from the training to practice. Participants are required to complete 4 topical coaching sessions of their choice in order to receive the certificate of completion and CEU's.

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**I don't have time to participate in any training right now; can I sign up next year?**

If you wish to participate in the training and are living in one of the pilot states, please contact the Implementation Specialist in your state for scheduling information. Participation criteria and timelines are being set by pilot states. All sites completing the child welfare curriculum will be completed by December, 2017. All sites completing the mental health curriculum will be completed by January 2018. Once the pilot and evaluation are complete, the trainings will be made available to child welfare and mental health professionals in non-pilot states, tribes and territories.

**Are there any prerequisites or licensure required to take either training?**

There are no prerequisites or licensure requirements for either training.

**Do either of these training courses result in certification?**

Upon successful completion of each course, a certificate of completion and NASW approved CEU's will be issued.

**Do I need to have approval from anyone to enroll in the training?**

This depends on whether your pilot state implementation team requires staff to have supervisor approval to participate. In some cases, any interested staff person will have access to the training, in other cases only specific groups of staff or staff in assigned locations or jurisdictions will have approval to participate in the training. If you are unsure, you can contact the Implementation Specialist assigned to your state.

**What are the ways to access this training?**

The training is web-based and is produced in HTML5 and viewable on computer, tablets and smartphones.

**What accommodations are provided for persons with disabilities?**

During the pilot, The NTI trainings will be hosted on the University of Maryland's Institute for Innovation and Implementation Online Training Center website. In compliance with federal funding and Section 508 ([www.section508.gov](http://www.section508.gov)), the trainings are designed to be accessible to users with both hearing and sight impairments. Each lesson has the entire narrative available for users in the "Notes" tab. Users can open this document or print out a transcript to follow along with the presentation. The player also houses the narrative for each slide, allowing hearing impaired individuals the ability to read along with the presentation. This content is also compatible with screen reading software to accommodate users with sight impairments. In addition, all presentation content is narrated to provide audio for users with sight impairments.

**For general questions about NTI, who are the contact people?**

For pilot states, contact the assigned Implementation Specialist:

- Maine, Minnesota, Washington  
Lisa Maynard via [maynard@adoptionssupport.org](mailto:maynard@adoptionssupport.org)
- Illinois, South Carolina, Tennessee  
Mary Wichansky via [wichansky@adoptionssupport.org](mailto:wichansky@adoptionssupport.org)
- California, Oklahoma  
Emily Smith Goering via [goering@adoptionssupport.org](mailto:goering@adoptionssupport.org)

For other states or general questions, contact Dawn Wilson, NTI Director, [wilson@adoptionssupport.org](mailto:wilson@adoptionssupport.org) or Laura Arroyo, [arroyo@adoptionssupport.org](mailto:arroyo@adoptionssupport.org).

Rev. 01.2017

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