



ARMSU

TRAINING AND SUPPORT NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY ABORIGINAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN SA

March 2007

The table below shows the training and support needs identified through a survey of Aboriginal Children's Services in February 2007 and ARMSU's records of issues that Directors have raised in recent months.

The information has been divided into 4 main areas:

- Management and administration
- Children
- Families and community
- Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare (OHS&W)

The needs identified have then been split into 'support' needs and 'training' needs. For example, in the area of Management and Administration:

- Directors requested support with developing conflict resolution policies and procedures.
- There were also requests for training in conflict resolution.
- There was also a long list of issues and responsibilities where people felt they needed more information or information about where to go to find out more.
- Useful resources were also identified.

Issue	Support needs	Training needs
<p>Management and Administration</p> <p>Most frequent requests were for information about recruitment, compliance, and safety of children and staff.</p>	<p>Policy and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Critical incidents ➤ Grievances ➤ Emergency evacuation ➤ Conflict resolution ➤ Fees and penalties (e.g. late fees) <p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Surviving the changes to CDEP ➤ Duty of care ➤ Compliance requirements – OH&S, child protection, accountability, police checks, regulations ➤ How to access training to achieve qualifications ➤ Traineeships ➤ Quality assurance ➤ Managing finances, budgets, records ➤ First Aid requirements ➤ AGM information ➤ Funding submissions <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Job descriptions ➤ Employment contracts ➤ Interview procedures and questions ➤ Crèche guidelines ➤ Performance appraisal ➤ Support group for newly appointed Directors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conflict resolution ➤ Behaviour management ➤ Information about accounting procedures - for Directors ➤ Time management ➤ Compliance – who are we accountable to and how? ➤ Management committee roles and responsibilities

Issue	Support needs	Training needs
<p>Children</p> <p>Most frequent requests were for support in fostering children's learning and development and managing challenging behaviours. There was also particular interest in meeting children's physical and mental health needs.</p>	<p>Policy and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creating culturally appropriate play environments ➤ Behaviour management <p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creating culturally appropriate play environments ➤ Safe practice - excursions ➤ Duty of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recording observations ➤ Behaviour management ➤ Fostering children's curiosity ➤ Supporting children with disabilities ➤ Science activities and programs ➤ Including music in the program ➤ Food and nutrition ➤ Asthma ➤ Mental health ➤ Attachment ➤ Ear infections, hearing
<p>Families and community</p> <p>The role of family and community is central in Aboriginal cultures. The importance of an holistic approach incorporating care, education, health and well-being, to care of Aboriginal children cannot be overestimated.</p>	<p>Policy and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Priority of access ➤ Emergency care and family obligations <p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Management of bus service ➤ Effective communication with families and community ➤ Confidentiality ➤ Conflict of interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Celebrating cultural diversity ➤ Working more effectively with 'demanding' parents
<p>OHS&W</p> <p>The role and responsibilities of an Aboriginal children's services Director often goes much further than that described in a job description. Although this may be personally fulfilling and much appreciated by the community, the stress level can at times be difficult to bear, particularly when families and children are suffering.</p>	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Opportunities for peer support and information sharing ➤ Information about health, welfare and community supports and resources ➤ Support group for newly appointed Directors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stress management ➤ Learning to 'switch off' for 'me-time' ➤ Time management

Priorities

The table on the previous pages was presented at the Aboriginal Services Meeting held on 22nd March 2007 in Adelaide. The purpose was to provide feedback on the results of the survey and to discuss priorities.

Priority needs were identified by the service representatives as:

Requests for speakers at Aboriginal Services Meetings this year

- Working with demanding parents
- Staff rights and service rights re testing for drugs, health checks, police checks, and other compliance issues
- LHMU speaker re union
- Duty of care – what is our duty of care?
- Submission writing
- Programming for maths and sciences
- The role and responsibilities of the Director

Training/ workshops

- Behaviour management – for staff teams
- Management committee training – their role and responsibilities and their relationship with the Director
- How to mentor staff
- Supporting children with additional needs / special needs (0-5 years) – what are the indicators that extra help or intervention is needed?
- Staff appraisals; leader's performance appraisal
- Professional communication
- Working relationships
- Accounting for non-accountants / financial management (issues re travel when session presented as 3 x 4 hours over weeks)
- Weekend training? (some discussion, inconclusive)

Resources

- Staff contracts – all types, how to negotiate
- Occupational Health & Safety in plain language
- Staff appraisal made easy
- Managing money
- Mandatory reporting
- Looking after yourself

These requests will form the basis for planning for support for the services in 2007 / 2008. They will be reviewed at Aboriginal Services Meetings in July and October /November 2007 and early 2008.

Maureen McGuire
22nd March 2007