

Texas Child Protective Services Specialist Competencies

PRACTICE COMPETENCIES

<p>PROCESS COMPETENCY</p> <p>A process competency refers to a general approach to practice that can be observed in a CPS Specialist's interactions with children, families, and safety networks.</p>	<p>Specialty Field I and II, Core and Specialty Classroom (Core Knowledge Assessment)</p> <p><i>Weeks 1-8 for INV & FBSS</i> <i>Weeks 1-9 for CVS</i></p>	<p>Specialty Field III (Evaluation/Assessment at end of specialty)</p> <p><i>Weeks 9-12 for INV & FBSS</i> <i>Weeks 10-13 for CVSS</i></p>	<p>ADVANCING PRACTICE (Evaluation at 6 months)</p>	<p>CONTINUOUS LEARNING (Evaluation at 9 months)</p>
<p>ENGAGING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulates how family engagement is critical to achieving safety, permanency, and well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can identify basic strategies for engaging children and families. Clarifies for children and families the role and responsibilities of caseworker and agency. Understands and appreciates the different views, expertise and experience of others; takes into account the perspectives of other individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks families about times when safety occurs as rigorously as when it doesn't occur. Demonstrates ability to hold the safety bottom line with families while developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with them. Delivers age appropriate explanations to children about why CPS is involved with the family. Asks children about their wishes and concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds plans with children, families and safety networks that leverage already occurring protective actions. Allows families to provide input into the help they seek. Offers families choices when possible.

TEAMING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the need to expand the child's safety network beyond caregivers and to other adults who care about the child and can participate in day to day safety of the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews caregivers to identify individuals who may be supportive of the caregiver and/or child. Interviews children to identify individuals who may be supportive of the child and/or caregiver. Facilitates initial and follow-up meetings with members of the safety network to share information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes safety network members regularly in planning. Builds shared understanding among safety network members on how the network will work together to ensure child safety. Generates agreement from the safety network to support the safety plan. Ensures the voice of the child is clear in safety network meetings. Includes people who will have long-term relationships with the child and family, in addition to service providers, in the safety network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiates the varying positions of all members of the safety network and builds shared agreements. Builds a shared vision of what safety will look like in the family. Elicits from safety network members both the strengths and challenges of the safety network in carrying out the plans. Brainstorms ways to address challenges with the safety network Encourages routine communication between members of the safety network.
ASSESSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulates safety concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses assessment tools accurately. Identifies own biases and is willing to challenge one's own thinking. Regularly seeks new information from a variety of sources to revise assessments. Makes judgments based on factual information vs. assumptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes assessments that are based on unbiased, rigorous information seeking. Asks children, families, and safety networks about times when safety does occur as a method to obtain balanced information. Uses questions with children, families, and collaterals that elicit lots of details. Describes danger and the impact on the child in behavioral terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares wishes and concerns of children with caregivers and safety networks so everyone has complete information. Uses safety networks as a means to perform continuous assessment.
PLANNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulates components of a goal (expected outcome, tasks to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-creates plans with children, families, and safety networks. Writes goals that include each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritizes tasks based on more immediate dangers to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates plans that build on times when safety is

	<p>completed, who is responsible, and when).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers ways to ensure personal safety in addition to safety of children and families during interviews and other meetings. 	<p>the identified components of a goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops plans to achieve goals that describe the presence of a protective action vs. the absence of a problem. Develops plans that address day-to-day dangers to the child. 	<p>the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops plans that include contingencies for when/if the plan doesn't work. • Joins child, family, and safety network goals with CPS goals when possible. 	<p>occurring in the family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invites families to develop their own plans so long as the CPS safety bottom line is ensured. • Includes the child or a spokesperson for the child in all planning. • Develops plans that will likely be sustained by the caregiver, family and safety network over time.
INTERVENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates what an intervention is and the variety of interventions CPS might use under which circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes people who are not the child's caregivers in intervention plans. • Explains interventions to children and families in a way that the children can understand. • Maintains and develops a child's connection to others, including the child's caregivers and other people who are not the child's caregivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates to children, families, and safety networks what CPS will need to happen before the intervention can conclude. • Sequences tasks so that families can manage them effectively. • Designs interventions that build communication and connectedness between people involved in the case. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps caregivers come to an understanding of the impact of their behaviors on their children. • Helps caregivers connect what they learn from interventions to what protective actions they can take to address danger. • Creates opportunities for caregivers to demonstrate those new behaviors over time.
EVALUATING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates personal responsibility for outcomes in a case. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors whether caregivers are following through on plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines safety in the family in measurable ways. • Logically connects interventions to our goals. • Regularly evaluates plans jointly with children, families, and members of the safety network. • Develops new strategies when plans are proven ineffective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes assessments based on caregiver behavioral changes and not on participation or compliance with services. • Demonstrates self-evaluation throughout the life of every case.

<p>CONTENT COMPETENCY</p> <p>A content competency refers to a specialized domain of knowledge that should be integrated into process competencies.</p>				
<p>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands and is able to identify power and control. • Distinguishes domestic violence from other types of violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends DV services to the adult victim, tell her what DV programs have to offer, and discuss any fears the adult victim has about the services. • Refers the DV perpetrator to a Batterer Intervention Program (BIP) or to individual therapy with a therapist knowledgeable about DV if a BIP is not available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly consults with domestic violence providers/advocates to assess danger to the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the knowledge and experiences of adult victims to create rigorous safety plans that keep the child and adult victim safe (separate from the batterer) when possible. • Creates separate case plans for the adult victim and batterer and avoids holding adult victim accountable for batterer's actions or inaction. • Seeks safe ways for adult victims to participate in case planning when the batterer/batterer's family will also be participating.
<p>MENTAL HEALTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can articulate symptoms of broad mental health diagnostic categories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is able to make appropriate referrals for crisis intervention, psychological and psychiatric evaluations. • Articulates mental health resilience factors and recovery process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses information from psychological and psychiatric evaluations to inform assessments of danger to the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops plans that create sustainable recovery environments.
<p>SUBSTANCE ABUSE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguishes between substance use, abuse and, and chemical dependency. • Articulates physical and behavioral warning signs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administers/makes referrals for a variety of drug screens available. • Makes referrals to community and contracted services available to treat substance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses information from substance abuse evaluations to inform assessments of danger to the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans that create sustainable recovery environments.

	of substance use and abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> abuse. Articulates substance abuse resiliency factors and recovery process. 		
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PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

COMPETENCY <i>(Assessed as part of the 6 month evaluation)</i>	ACTIVITY
UNDERSTANDING CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES FUNCTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates an understanding of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal and state law, regulations and rules for the operation of child protection programs. The statutory responsibility for reporting suspected abuse and neglect. The interdependence of each stage of service and how it impacts the outcomes for children and families. Roles and responsibilities of participants in the global child welfare system, including children, families, child protection, various courts, and other child/family serving agencies. Legal definitions and concepts, including ethics, and is able to apply the within the law to casework and judicial process. Variety of placement types and criteria for each.
ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is willing to accept and provide support and assistance from/to co-workers and supervisor. Begins to build and maintain effective working relationships across stages of service. Begins to build and maintain effective working relationships with external stakeholders.
FOLLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knows the specific policies and procedures related to assigned stage of service. Knows the specific policies and procedures related to the child welfare programs and their interrelationship with other related systems. Understands the policy requirements of ethical practice and the ramifications to staff and clients when this does not occur. Demonstrates adherence to following policy and best practice.
DOCUMENTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records observations accurately as part of case documentation, using specific quotes and precise behavioral descriptions of the danger and its impact on the child. Prepares clear, accurate, and appropriate written communications or documents. Knows information to be accumulated, analyzed and recorded; appropriate forms; relationship between documentation and accountability. Understands and is able to identify pertinent data for inclusion in case records and reports; organizing information in a clear and concise manner; writing summaries of assessments, case plan and other supporting data for the case record in a timely manner.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares court documents such as petitions, affidavits and court reports timely using formal language and files them in accordance with required timeframes.
<p>MANAGING TIME</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly re-assesses and re-prioritizes in order to focus attention on the most important tasks. • Acts quickly to solve problems and to get things done. • Uses technology, “to-do” lists or other tools to manage time, keep track of what needs to be done, and manage multiple, pressing job demands. • Demonstrate a comprehension of agency issued hardware and software tools by utilizing that knowledge and skill to better perform required duties. • Pays attention to and evaluates case progress; follows up to keep things on track (e.g., frequent communications with clients and supervisor) • Understanding of on-call procedures, contacts, etc. Manages time effectively, including when on-call