The TAC . . . A National Movement To Create an Adoption Competent Mental Health Workforce

The TAC was developed by the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.) and is being implemented with the generous support of major national child welfare foundations in the United States. It is currently being implemented in twelve states with more states coming on board in 2015. Rigorous research is documenting its effectiveness in providing clinicians with the critical competencies they need to provide quality mental health services to those whose lives have been touched by adoption.

What does the research say about the TAC?

- TAC Program participants have superior performance on pre-/post-tests compared with a contrast group of non-TAC-trained clinicians
- Participants of the program have substantially improved performance on all core adoption competencies
- TAC learning is transferred to practice across six domains of clinical practice
- There are high levels of training delivery fidelity, quality and relevance

What Do Clinicians Say about the TAC?

“I think it has been an eye opening experience. I’m an adoptive mother, and I’ve worked with adoptive parents professionally. You start to think you know everything, and then you take this class and realize how little you know because new theories and therapists are being developed all the time.”

“Surprisingly to myself, probably the biggest takeaway I’ve had overall from the course thus far is related to self-awareness and my own personal views on adoption and each of the members of the adoption constellation (I’ve also learned this new wonderful phrase of “constellation” and make it a point to use it whenever possible ). I think I have a brand new, fresh level of empathy and perspective as I work with many of the adoptive parents I have on my caseload now.”

“It has humbled me to even be in this course -- even though I have done this work for many years and have personal experience in adoption! It has already challenged my entrenched views....but also validated much of what I either knew/suspected to be true. I am also reminded that my personal journey and the journey of any one client may not be the same for others.”

Where the TAC is Currently Being Implemented

- Catawba County Dept. of Social Services, Hickory, NC
- Commonwealth Catholic Charities, Richmond, VA
- Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, Richmond, VA
- Lilliput Children’s Services, Sacramento, CA
- University of Minnesota, Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, Minneapolis, MN
- Massachusetts Adoption and Exchange Association (MARE), Boston, MA
- Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Omaha, NE
- The Villages of Indiana, Indianapolis, IN
- Four Oaks, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, St. Louis, MO
- Right Turn, Omaha, NE
- Mississippi Children’s Home Services, Jackson, MS
- University of Connecticut School of Social Work, West Hartford, CT
- Montgomery County Dept. of Job & Family Services and ADAMHS Board for Montgomery County, Ohio

More About the TAC in Your Community:

TAC is available in the Dayton, Ohio area and is being provided in partnership by the Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services, ADAMHS Board for Montgomery County, Children have Option in Caring Environments (CHOICES) and Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley.

This location is in the process of selecting the third cohort of students for the TAC series beginning September 2015. Applications are being accepted until 8/14/15.

If you would like a TAC application or have questions about the TAC program, please contact Craig Rickett at 937-276-6515 or Tina Evers at 937-279-6656.

Learn even more about the TAC at:
http://adoptionsupport.org/index.php/the-tac-training-for-adoption-competency/
What is an “Adoption Competent Mental Health Professional”?
C.A.S.E, in collaboration with its National Advisory board, surveyed members of the adoption kinship network to develop a consensus-based definition of “adoption-competent mental health professional”. They identified the key qualities Adoption Competent Mental Health professionals have as being:

- The requisite professional education and professional licensure;
- A family-based, strengths-based, and evidence-based approach to working with adoptive families and birth families;
- Knowledge, clinical skills and experience in treating children with a history of abuse, neglect and/or trauma;
- Knowledge skills and experience in working with the adoptive families and birth families.

TAC was developed to create an Adoption Competent Mental Health Workforce.

What is the TAC?
The TAC is a 12-session (72 hours) competency-based training program followed by a 6-month case consultation program for licensed mental health clinicians who provide pre- and post-adoption services to prospective adoptive parents, birth parents, adopted persons, and adoptive and kinship families.

The long-term goals of TAC are:

- To increase families’ access to local adoption-competent mental health professionals;
- To improve the well-being of adopted youth and their families.

The Format of the TAC
Having 12 sessions, the first module is completed at-home with the next eleven modules being classroom-based, with the final class session providing participants an opportunity to fully integrate learning.

Each module combines information sharing, written handouts and resources, and experiential learning, including case studies, role plays, and introspective work.

At the end of the classroom sessions, all participants are eligible to receive a “Certificate of Attendance”

The Case Consultation Component:
For Masters Level Clinicians who would like to continue on to receive a “Certificate of Completion”, they will be asked to participate in six monthly sessions of case consultation following the classroom training.

The case consultation component will promote the integration of adoption competent knowledge, skills and values imparted throughout the training and strengthen participants’ ability to incorporate adoption competencies in their clinical practice. C.A.S.E provides the case consultations by phone and/or video conferencing.

Participants who receive a “Certificate of Completion” will also receive national recognition through a posting on the Center for Adoption Support and Education’s website.

Who has funded the TAC?
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
The Jockey Being Family Foundation
The Ralph and Eileen Swett Foundation

The TAC Modules
Module #1 Adoption History, Law and Process
Module #2 Introduction to Adoption Competent Mental Health Practice
Module #3 Clinical Issues in Planning, Preparing for and Supporting Adoption
Module #4 Clinical Issues in Providing Therapeutic Services: Grief, Loss and Separation
Module #5 Trauma and Brain Neurobiology
Module #6 Attachment
Module #7 Adopted Adolescents and Identity Development
Module #8 Clinical Issues in Working with Birth and Adoptive Families
Module #9 Clinical Work with Adoptive Families: Managing Challenging Behaviors
Module #10 Openness in Adoption
Module #11 Race and Ethnicity in Adoption
Module #12 Integrating Adoption Competencies: Knowledge, Skills and Values

What are the special features of the TAC?
Exclusively designed for mental health professionals
In-depth clinical focus
Competency-based
Very intensive: 72 hours classroom training and 6 month case consultation component
Standardized to ensure fidelity
Rigorous evaluation