



CWEC Child Welfare Education Collaborative

Policy and Procedure Manual
October 2024



Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services

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Introduction

Overview of the Child Welfare Education Collaborative

The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Reform Act of 1980 authorized Title IV-E training funds, which allow federal reimbursement for the cost of training and educating child welfare workers in BSW and MSW programs. The Act encouraged state/university partnerships to educate and elevate the professional skills of case workers and those interested in working in public child welfare.

NCDHHS-Division of Social Services (NCDSS) is working collaboratively with North Carolina Universities/Colleges to administer The Child Welfare Education Collaborative (CWEC) to prepare undergraduate and graduate social work students for careers in public child welfare. The program is one strategy to address the need for a qualified and committed workforce to serve the state's vulnerable children and their families.

CWEC is for individuals who are dedicated to a career in public child welfare social work. The Program provides a tuition waiver and stipend to students who are selected through the application and interview process and committed to working for a county DSS agency for at least one-year post-graduation. The Waiver Program does not offer financial assistance but allows BSW and MSW students to complete the requirements for NCDSS Pre-Service Training while enrolled in school. The processes outlined in this manual apply to all CWEC students unless otherwise noted.

Mission and Goals

Mission

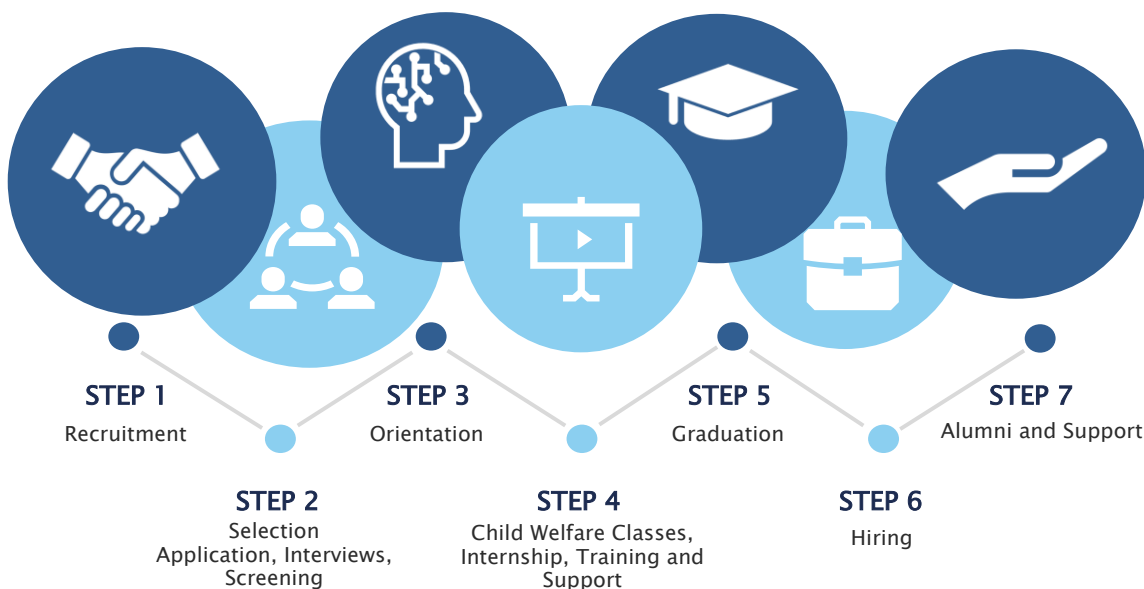
The mission of the North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative (CWEC) is to strengthen the public child welfare workforce in North Carolina, thus improving outcomes for families and children.

Goals

- To develop and maintain strong partnerships with all involved parties to provide the best educational experience for CWEC students.
- To provide educational support to students who are interested in working in public child welfare in North Carolina upon graduation.
- To deliver a unique opportunity for CWEC students to complete the required North Carolina child welfare pre-service training while earning a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) or Master of Social Work (MSW) degree.
- To provide students with real work experience through specialized field placements at county departments of social services (DSS).
- To invest in the CWEC program to strengthen the child welfare workforce and their ability to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.

Overview of the Steps in the Child Welfare Education Collaborative Program

North Carolina Child Welfare Education Collaborative
Scholars Program



Roles and Responsibilities

Table 1. Child Welfare Education Collaborative Roles and Responsibilities

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with their university to get general information about CWEC • Obtain approval from their university to submit CWEC application • Visit the CWEC website to familiarize themselves with the CWEC process • Attend orientation and complete the FERPA (release of information) form • Complete all required coursework, forms, and training • Contact the DSS of their choice to apply for a child welfare field placement • Complete an application and interview process for field placement • Submit to criminal background and drug screen prior to internship approval. • Comply with DSS policies and expectations • Complete all internship requirements • Fulfill program work requirement (for CWEC Scholars)
Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit and orient students to program • Interview and recommend students for CWEC program

Table 1. Child Welfare Education Collaborative Roles and Responsibilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek NCDSS approval of recommended applicants and students • Serve as a resource and coordinator for CWEC Students • Incorporate NCDSS Pre-Service Training Curriculum in required child welfare courses • Submit a curriculum analysis to NCDSS that outlines how students will fulfill Pre-Service Training requirements through coursework • Ensure on-the-job training/transfer of learning activities from Pre-Service are completed by students at internship sites • Ensure students complete all CWEC program requirements including attending required orientation, training, curricula, internships, activities, and all required coursework • Establish and maintain relationships with county DSS offices for internship sites
<p>NCDHHS-Division of Social Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support universities in developing recruitment materials • Approve university recruitment materials • Send reminders to universities of upcoming application periods • Co-host Q&A sessions for potential students • Review applications and select candidates for interviews • Notify universities of selected applicants • Participate on interview panels • Approve final selection of candidates • Provide universities material for orientation • Provide universities Pre-Service training curriculum and competencies. • Review and approve child welfare courses • Request annual updates to curriculum and re-review if needed. • Provide universities with notification of changes to Pre-Service training. • Work with universities to establish CWEC field education standards
<p>University of North Carolina Chapel-Hill Family and Children’s Resource Program (FCRP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make UNC's Gateway (web-based system) available to NC DSS, University Partners, and CWEC current and prospective students for submission of continuation review and application forms. • Authorize NCSWlearn.org accounts for CWEC students who are currently in practicum placement in a County DSS child welfare unit. • Offer supplemental trainings

Table 1. Child Welfare Education Collaborative Roles and Responsibilities

County Departments of Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide child welfare internship opportunities in Assessments, In Home Services and Permanency Planning program areas • Train staff on the CWEC program and the roles and responsibilities of county Field Supervisors and Task Supervisors • Develop an internal process for screening and selecting interns to include criminal background or drug screens. • Communicate with university liaisons to assist with identifying students' strengths and areas of interest • Work with universities and students to ensure all components of learning agreements are completed • Support students by proactively addressing secondary traumatic stress
North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and strengthen the efforts of the CWEC program by working jointly with NCDSS, University Partners and local agencies • Serve as a liaison to the university/college Field Directors and the County Field Instructors • Increase the number of social work students interested in a child welfare education, field placements at a county child welfare agency, and a career in child welfare • Provide counties with technical support to assure high-quality placements and productive learning environments throughout the year • Develop a field director's handbook to be distributed to the NCDSS, FCRP and University partners • In partnership with NCDSS, provide County Field Directors Training at least once per semester, Fall and Spring • Develop a roster of statewide DSS placement opportunities prior to the Fall, Spring semesters, and Summer sessions. The roster will include CWEC approved placements only (CPS Assessments, In-Home and Permanency Planning)

Student Recruitment

University partners are responsible for promoting and recruiting students to apply to the Child Welfare Education Collaborative (CWEC). NCDSS will send reminders of upcoming application periods to university partners. University partners may collaborate with NCDSS to develop a CWEC brochure for dissemination to potential collaborative students. NCDSS and university partners will cohost two virtual CWEC Question and Answer sessions a year. These sessions will occur in the spring and fall prior to the application deadline for the following semester.

All materials and Question and Answer sessions will direct applicants to the CWEC website (<https://cwec.web.unc.edu/>) for additional information.

It is strongly recommended that universities collaborate with county DSS agencies to plan and advertise recruitment events.

Student Selection

Application Process

Table 2. Application Process Overview

	Task	Process
1.	Approval to Apply	Interested applicants contact their University Liaison for approval to apply to CWEC
2.	Apply Online	Students with approval will apply via the Collaborative Gateway: gateway.unc.edu
3.	Follow Up	A week prior to the application deadline, universities will check the application status of approved students in the Collaborative Gateway and follow up with students who received approval and have not completed the application
4.	Confirmation	An email confirmation is generated when applications are submitted successfully
5.	Application Review and Interview Notification	NCDSS will review and approve applicants within two weeks of the submission deadline. Applicants will be notified via email of the outcome within 3 weeks and approved applicants will receive guidance on the next steps in the interview process.

Step 1: Approval to Apply

Students interested in participating in CWEC must contact their University Liaison for approval prior to submitting their application. A list of participating universities and contact information for liaisons is located on the CWEC website.

Step 2: Apply On-Line

Once students have approval from their university, they will apply via the Collaborative Gateway: gateway.unc.edu.

- BSW Applications for the Fall semester are due by the second Friday of February.
- BSW Applications for the Spring semester are due by the fourth Monday of September.
- MSW and Advance Standing Applications for the Fall semester are due by the second Friday in March
- MSW and Advance Standing Applications for the Spring semester are due by the second Friday in October

Step 3: Follow-Up

A week prior to the application deadline, universities will check the application status of approved students in the Collaborative Gateway and follow up with students who received approval and have

not completed the application. Universities will offer support to prospective applicants by answering questions or providing available resources.

Step 4: Confirmation

Applicants will receive confirmation via email once their application is successfully submitted.

Step 5: Application Review and Interview Notification

NCDSS will review, approve applicants, and notify universities of decisions within two weeks of the submission deadline. Universities will then notify applicants via email of the outcome and approved applicants will receive guidance on the next steps in the interview process. All notices will be sent within three weeks after the application due date to students and NCDSS will be copied on correspondence for record keeping.

Eligibility Criteria

The collaborative is available to students enrolled in a BSW or MSW social work program formally affiliated with the Collaborative who are committed to pursuing a career in public child welfare. There are 21 North Carolina university schools of social work affiliated with the Collaborative. Applicants must receive approval to apply through their University Liaison. Contact information for each university is located on the CWEC website or by clicking the school’s link below.

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/child-welfare-services/child-welfare-education-collaborative-cwec>

Table 3. Affiliated Schools

CWEC Colleges and Universities		
<u>Appalachian State*</u>	<u>Johnson C. Smith University</u>	UNC Chapel Hill**
<u>Barton College</u>	<u>Mars Hill University</u>	<u>UNC Charlotte</u>
<u>Bennett College</u>	<u>Methodist University</u>	<u>UNC Greensboro</u>
Campbell University**	<u>NC A&T University*</u>	UNC Pembroke**
<u>East Carolina University*</u>	NC Central University**	UNC Wilmington**
Elizabeth City State University**	<u>NC State University</u>	<u>Western Carolina</u>
<u>Fayetteville State University</u>	Shaw University**	

*Stipend Innovation Zone **Inactive for academic year 2024-25

Screening

The University will review all applicants within one week of the application deadline. The university will screen applicants based on enrollment status in a BSW or MSW social work program in their university, approval to apply from the university liaison, application responses, commitment to work in child welfare after graduation, resume, and three reference letters. Approved application packets will be sent to NCDSS one week after the CWEC application due date. NCDSS will make a final decision

after screening the packets based on the same screening criteria. NCDSS will send their final approved list of applicants to the universities within one week of receiving applications. The university will contact approved applicants to set up their interview within three weeks after the CWEC application due date. They will follow the CWEC Interview Scheduling Call Script (see Appendix A). It is critical to remind the interviewee of the work commitment after graduation and to prepare them to identify their top three choices for internship sites. The university will schedule the preferred candidate interviews within (7) business days after approval.

Interview Process

Scheduling

The university will send the student an email confirming the interview date and time within one business day of the CWEC Interviewing Scheduling Call. This email will provide basic information about the types of questions that will be asked, the competencies, writing sample, and a list of possible internship sites. This email will also direct the candidate to complete three tasks before the interview: watch the realistic job preview video, complete the Employee Self-Assessment, and select their top three internship sites. A calendar appointment will be sent immediately after the interview confirmation email.

CWEC Interview Protocol

CWEC has a structured interview process to promote consistency across participating colleges and universities. The interview is designed to help the applicant and interview team determine if the CWEC program is a good fit for the applicant. It also assesses the applicant's commitment to social work practice in child welfare after graduation. All interviews will follow the CWEC Interview Protocol (CIP), which includes pre-work for applicants and guidelines for the actual interview.

As CWEC is a partnership between universities, NCDSS, and local DSS agencies, interview panels will include:

- NCDSS representative
- Local county DSS leader
- University representative

All panelists will be trained in the CWEC interview process. See Appendix B for detailed expectations of panelists.

Table 4. CWEC Interview Protocol

Component	Time	Description
Applicant Preparation		
<u>Realistic Job Preview Video</u>	30 minutes (applicant only)	Encourage the applicant to watch a realistic job preview video before the face-to-face interview. The video depicts a "day in the life" of a frontline child welfare social worker and includes professionals who discuss the rewards and challenges of the work in public child welfare.
Employee Self-Assessment	10 minutes (applicant only)	During the interview, confirmed that the candidate had an opportunity to complete the self-assessment. The scores are for the candidate only.

Table 4. CWEC Interview Protocol

Component	Time	Description
Interview		
In-Basket Scenario	20 minutes	Each applicant will respond to one in-basket scenario by providing a brief written rationale for the ranking of the most important and least important tasks. Members of the interview panel will discuss the written rationales for the in-basket decisions made by the applicant. See Appendix C for In-Basket Scenarios.
Review of Interview Questions	15 minutes	Each applicant will receive a copy of the CWEC Interview Questions 15 minutes prior to the start of the interview. They can take notes and utilize the notes as prompts in the interview. The candidate must return the CWEC Interview Questions to panel members at the close of the interview.
Competency Based Structured Interview	30-40 minutes	Standard CWEC Interview questions used in all interviews. See Appendix D.

Preparing for the Interview

Interviews will be held virtually. The university representative will serve as the lead panelist.

In advance of the interview, students will receive a link to the virtual interview and applicant packets including:

- Description of the interview process
- Copy of the In-Basket Scenario with instructions
- Field Placement Preference form

In advance of the interview, the lead panelist is responsible for

- Setting up a virtual platform to hold the interview (For example, Zoom)
- Ensuring applicant packets are complete and students have access to a computer, writing utensils and a private area to complete the pre-work
- Providing the interview questions to the student 15 minutes before the interview
- Securing a private location to conduct the interview
- Eliminating distractions (e.g., cell phones)
- Dividing interview responsibilities and questions among panel members

Establishing and Communicating Procedures

At the beginning of the interview, the lead panelist is responsible for

- Facilitating introductions of panelist and applicant
- Explaining the purpose and format of the interview
- Explaining confidentiality

- Addressing applicant questions regarding the process

Conducting the Interview

During the interview, all panel members are responsible for

- Ensuring the protocol is followed and all questions are asked
- Asking follow-up questions as needed if applicant responses are not clear
- Evaluating student responses on a score sheet
- Ensuring they have a working camera that is on during the entirety of the interview.
- Maintaining eye contact and demonstrating active listening
- Not interrupting the applicant

Closing the Interview

To conclude the interview, panel members will

- Allow applicants to ask questions about the program
- Explain next steps in the process, including timeframes and how decisions are communicated
- Provide contact information for NCDSS as an additional resource
- Collect field placement preferences, the In-Basket scenario, and interview questions
- Thank the applicant for their time and participation

Scoring and Ranking Interviews

- Panelists individually score responses to each interview question and are encouraged to make notes during the interview to support their scores. See Appendix E for Interview Question and Scoring Sheet.
- After all individual ratings are completed, the panel briefly discusses each category and arrives at a mutually agreed upon score. This score with the group's comments will be recorded in the Interview Summary Report (See Appendix F)
- The panel will then assign a rank to each applicant. The rank is based on the panel's assessment of the applicants "fit" for traineeship award and on a scale of one to five. High rank would reflect the panel's assessment of the applicant's commitment to work in child welfare and the applicant's potential to successfully meet the requirements of the Collaborative.
- The rank is added to the Interview Summary Report, which is signed by all panelists and included in the applicant's file. be signed by all panelists and become part of the application file.
- The lead panelist will document the scores from all interviews on the CWEC Interview Final Ranking sheet and return all interview materials and completed protocols to NCDSS. (See Appendix G for Interview Final Ranking Sheet.)

Final Screening

Reference Checks

The university is responsible for checking applicant references. When reference checks are complete, the university will do a final review of the preferred candidate's packet making sure all documents are included and will verify the students BSW or MSW program status. They will send the preferred candidates' packets to NCDSS for review and approval.

Notification

Upon approval from NCDSS, universities will notify selected applicants of their acceptance into the CWEC program. Notifications will include information about next steps and program orientation.

Background Check and Drug Screens

CWEC students must be able to pass drug screens and criminal background checks as part of the internship application process. Requirements related to drug screens and criminal background checks should be addressed at orientation and are included in the student agreement.

Orientation

Each university will hold an orientation session every semester for new CWEC students. The Orientation Session should include the following:

- Overview of the CWEC Scholars Program goals and objectives
- Review of Roles and Responsibilities for CWEC key players including student responsibilities
- Review of CWEC Scholars Program Student Checklist, including required courses and internship expectations
- Performance expectations
- Question and Answers

The University CWEC Liaison is responsible for facilitating the orientation session for each new class of students. Local DSS leaders and CWEC alum should be invited to speak and network at the orientation session.

Schools must ensure Scholar recipients sign the Student Agreement during the orientation session. Copies of all Student Agreements must be uploaded into the student's file and sent to NCDSS.

Curriculum

All CWEC participants are required to complete two child welfare specific courses as a part of the program and to satisfy the requirements for pre-service training. Universities are responsible for ensuring the content covered in NCDSS Pre-Service Foundations Training and Core Training is reflected in the two, child welfare specific courses.

Child Welfare Track

To support student preparation for a career in child welfare, participating universities will define a “Child Welfare Track” within their BSW and/or MSW programs. The Child Welfare Track should include courses required by the university and suggested electives that are most relevant to skills and competencies needed as a frontline child welfare social worker. The University CWEC Liaison will maintain updated documentation of the courses considered part of The Child Welfare Track. This information will be sent to students upon acceptance into the program and reviewed during individual meetings with the University CWEC Liaison prior to course registration each semester.

Required Courses

Pre-Service Training: Child Welfare in North Carolina for new child welfare workers consist of online pre-work modules and instructor-led, classroom-based Core training.

Pre-Work Online e-Learning Modules

There are ten (10) total modules required as pre-work. These modules are a prerequisite to Pre-Service Training and a required component of the curriculum for CWEC students. The 10 e-learning modules include:

- The North Carolina Child Welfare Practice Standards Worker Training Series for:
 - 1) Assessing
 - 2) Communicating
 - 3) Engaging
 - 4) Implementing
 - 5) Planning
- The following e-learning:
 - 1) Introduction to North Carolina Child Welfare Script
 - 2) Child Welfare Process Overview
 - 3) Introduction to Human Development
 - 4) Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs
 - 5) History of Social Work and Child Welfare Legislation

Core Training Overview

Core training is required for all new child welfare staff, regardless of degree or experience. This course will provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of a child welfare social worker in North Carolina working with families throughout their involvement with the child welfare system. The course provides opportunities for skills-based learning labs. Core training includes 126 hours (18 days) of classroom-based training, completed over six consecutive weeks.

Throughout the pre-service training, learners will have the required homework assignments to be completed within prescribed timeframes.

In addition to classroom-based learning, students will be provided with on-the-job training at their field placements DSS agencies. During on-the-job training, supervisors will provide support to students through the completion of an observation tool, coaching, and during supervisory consultation.

Week One:

1. Child Welfare Overview, Roles, and Responsibilities
 - a. What is Our WHY?
 - b. Roles and Responsibilities
 - c. Identification of Child Abuse and Neglect
 - d. Mandated Reporting
2. Interviewing Skills Learning Lab
 - a. The Social Work Interview
3. Assessing Skills Learning Lab
 - a. Assessing in Child Welfare
4. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias
 - a. Self-Assessment of Bias
 - b. Cultural Humility and Considerations for Family Engagement
 - c. Inclusion
 - d. Institutional Racism in Child Welfare
 - e. Disproportionality in Child Welfare
 - f. Implicit Bias in Child Welfare
 - g. Equity and Equality
 - h. Culturally Diverse Services

Week Two:

1. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Bias (continued)
 - a. Considerations for LBTQIA+ Youth
2. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
 - a. Placement Preferences
 - b. Cultural Considerations
 - c. Family and Tribal Engagement
 - d. Notice to Tribes
3. Engaging Families through Family-Centered Practice
 - a. Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families
 - b. Using Family-Centered Practice to Engage Families Learning Lab
 - c. Using a Strengths-Based Perspective
 - d. Using a Strengths-Based Perspective Learning Lab
 - e. Courageous Conversations
 - f. Courageous Conversations Learning Lab
 - g. Conflict Resolution
 - h. Involving Fathers, Non-Resident Parents, and Relatives
 - i. Engaging Fathers Learning Lab
 - j. Engaging Incarcerated Parents Learning Lab
 - k. Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings
 - l. Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings Learning Lab

Week Three:

1. Engaging through Family-Centered Practice (continued)
 - a. Developing Goals with the Family
 - b. Family Services Agreements
 - c. Developing Goals with the Family Learning Lab
 - d. Preparing the Child and Family for Court
 - e. Family-Centered Practice Learning Lab
2. Quality Contacts
 - a. Why Quality is Important?
 - b. Preparation for Quality Contacts
 - c. Quality Contacts
 - d. Quality Contacts Learning Lab
3. Overview of Child Welfare Process: Part 1 Intake and CPS Assessments
 - a. Intake Process and Strategies
 - b. Intake Learning Lab
 - c. Overview of CPS Assessments
 - d. Safety vs. Risk
 - e. Caregiver Protective Capacities
 - f. Tools for Assessments
 - g. Safety Assessment
 - h. CPS Assessment Learning Lab

Week Four:

1. Overview of Child Welfare Process: Part 1 Intake and CPS Assessments (continued)
 - a. Safety Assessment (continued)
 - b. Safety Planning and Temporary Parental Safety Agreements
 - c. Additional Information to Support Assessment
 - d. Risk Assessment
 - e. Family Assessment of Strengths and Needs
 - f. Assessment Decisions
 - g. CPS Assessment Learning Lab
2. Overview of Child Welfare Processes, Part 2: In-Home Services
 - a. Engaging Families: In-Home Services
 - b. Engaging Families in In-Home Services Learning Lab
 - c. Developing and Monitoring In-Home Family Services Agreements (IH-FSA)
 - d. Interviewing for Strengths and Needs Learning Lab
 - e. In-Home Services: Safe Case Closure
 - f. Safe Case Closure Learning Lab

Week Five:

1. Overview of Child Welfare Process, Part 3: Permanency Planning Services
 - a. Placement
 - b. Preparing for Placement Learning Lab
 - c. Placement Learning Lab
 - d. Working with Relatives
 - e. Diligent Search Learning Lab
 - f. Caseworker Contacts
 - g. Family Time
 - h. Family Time Learning Lab
 - i. Shared Parenting

- j. Shared Parenting Learning Lab
- k. Permanency Planning Family Services Agreement
- l. Permanency and Permanency Planning
- m. Reunification Learning Lab
- n. Adoption Learning Lab

Week Six:

1. Overview of Child Welfare Process, Part 3: Permanency Planning Services (continued)
 - a. Permanency and Permanency Planning (continued)
 - b. Monitoring and Reassessment: Permanency Planning Family Services Agreement
 - c. Achieving Permanency and Safe Case Closure
 - d. Preparing Children for Permanency Learning Lab
2. Key Factors Impacting Families and Engaging Communities
 - a. Partnering with Community Services to Support Families
 - b. Addressing Biases and Assumptions Related to Domestic Violence, Substance Use, Child Sexual Abuse, and Human Trafficking
 - c. Engagement and Service Matching for Families Impacted by Substance Use Disorder
 - d. Engagement and Service Matching for Families Impacted by Domestic Violence
 - e. Engagement and Service Matching for Families Impacted by Mental Health Concerns
 - f. Engagement and Service Matching for Families Impacted by Sexual Abuse
 - g. Engagement and Service Matching for Families Impacted by Child Human Trafficking
3. Documentation
 - a. Quality Documentation
 - b. Confidentiality
 - c. Documentation Learning Lab
4. Self-Care and Worker Safety
 - a. Secondary Traumatic Stress and Vicarious Trauma
 - b. Worker Safety
 - c. Planning for Self-Care and Idea-Sharing

Internships

Identifying Counties for Internship Opportunities

The North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS) is responsible for collaborating with County DSS agencies and CWEC University partners to identify field placement opportunities for students by:

- Assisting University Field Directors in locating county child welfare field placements that are available
- Maintaining/updating the DSS counties Field Instructor Contact List
- Maintaining/updating the university/college Field Director Contact List. Share both twice annually with CWEC University partners and County DSS agencies.
- Developing and delivering training curriculum for County Field Instructors in conjunction with the universities/colleges, county agencies and NCDSS
- Providing assistance and information to CWEC and NCDSS as available and upon request including collecting and sharing information regarding the issues and needs of student interns
- Facilitating at least one planning meeting annually with every accredited BSW and MSW program preferably on campus or by virtual communication, and/or small regional group meetings to increase communications and shared information
- Providing counties with technical support to assure high quality placements and productive learning environments throughout the year

Transfer of Learning Tool

The Pre-Service Transfer of Learning (TOL) tool is a comprehensive and collaborative activity for University and County DSS Field Directors/Supervisors and student interns to work together in identifying student goals, knowledge gained, and priorities for further development throughout the CWEC training process. In four distinct steps, the student interns and field directors/supervisors will highlight their goals and action plan related to participating in training, reflect on lessons and outstanding questions, and create an action plan to support student growth and enhance supervisor skills. The tool should be started prior to beginning field placement and re-visited on an ongoing basis to assess growth and re-prioritize actions for development.

Part A: Field Placement Preparation

Prior to Field Placement, the student and field directors/supervisors should meet to complete Part A: Field Placement Preparation. The student and field directors/supervisors will discuss their goals for participation in field training and develop a plan to meet those goals through pre-work, other opportunities for learning, and support for addressing anticipated barriers.

Part B: Student Reflections During Training

The students will document their thoughts, top takeaways, and outstanding questions regarding each section throughout the field training.

Part C: Planning for Post-Field Training Debrief with Field Directors/Supervisors

The student considers the takeaways and questions they identified in each section and creates a framework to transfer those takeaways and questions into an action plan.

Part D: Post-Field Training Debrief with Field Director/Supervisor

Provides an opportunity for the field directors/supervisors and students to determine a specific plan of action to answer outstanding questions and to further support worker training.

Student Training and Support

Students are encouraged to participate in NCDSS trainings, conferences, and/or webinars while participating in the CWEC Program to gain knowledge, skills in NCDSS child welfare legislation, policies, and practice standards.

Supplemental Trainings

- The Child Welfare Trauma course will be offered once during the fall and spring semesters.
- The Law Day Event is held each year which strengthens CWEC students' ability to navigate child welfare laws in North Carolina and put that knowledge to practice via a mock trial event.

Graduation and Hiring

Graduation

All participating Schools of Social Work will identify students who have successfully completed CWEC requirements and are eligible for graduation. A list of these students must be submitted to NCDSS at least 14 days prior to graduation. Upon final approval, NCDSS will issue CWEC certificates of completion and medallions to the schools for distribution to the graduating students.

Hiring

There are many child welfare career opportunities available in North Carolina. CWEC graduates are educated and well trained to become child welfare workers at local departments of social services. Employment opportunities can be found at <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/childwelfareworks>. NCDSS strongly recommends that local DSS agencies give preference to CWEC graduates during their recruitment and selection process.

NCDSS and NCACDSS can provide additional support to students, if desired.

Alumni Support (under development)

Tracking

Appendix A: Interview Call Script

CWEC Interview Scheduling Call Script		
	Script:	Note:
Introduction	Hello, may I speak to <u>applicant name</u> ? I am <u>your name</u> from <u>university name</u> . My role at the university is <u>role</u> and I am calling about the Child Welfare Education Collaborative. Is this a good time to talk? You should have received an email indicating that your application for the program was screened for the next step, an interview. Congratulations!	If it is not a good time to talk, schedule another call as soon as possible.
Overview of CWEC	CWEC is a traineeship for future child welfare workers in BSW or MSW programs. It has prepared over 1,500 highly qualified social workers committed to work at County DSS agencies. Child Welfare Pre-service training is integrated into coursework and field placements. Students complete mandatory pre-service training for DSS prior to graduating. It is important to understand that CWEC is a commitment to working in child welfare after graduation. Do you have any questions about CWEC or this commitment?	Do not forget to reiterate the commitment to working in child welfare after graduation. Be prepared to answer questions or find answers if unknown.
Schedule	We have the <u>following dates and times</u> available for an interview. What date and time works best for you?	It may be helpful to have a few alternate dates.
Interview Preparation	In preparation for the interview, you will receive a follow up email that will include competencies for the interview and a calendar invite. Please be prepared to identify your three top internship site preferences. A list of possible sites will be included in the confirmation email.	Do not forget to prepare them to identify their three top internship sites at the interview.
Closing	This is a great opportunity. I am excited to talk to you further about this prospect and your future. In closing, your CWEC interview is set for <u>date and time</u> . You will receive an interview confirmation email with further details and a calendar appointment. Do you have any final questions? Excellent, if you need any assistance in the interim, please contact me <u>at this email address or phone number</u> .	

Appendix B: Interview Panelist Expectations

- The panelist representing the university will take the lead in coordinating and leading the interview, including welcome.
- Complete Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training specific to the interview process prior to conducting interviews.
- The NCDSS representative, County DSS leader, and the universities will make sure that all sites maintain a diverse pool of panelists (at least 6 for each type of panelist and for each site).
- Provide information and request that candidates watch the Realistic Job Preview (RJP) video and complete an Employee Self-Assessment before the interview.
- Prepare applicants for the interview including times, logistics, and information on who they will be interviewing.
- Ensure that the interview panels are promptly convened to interview screened applicants within (7) business days from the CWEC Interview Scheduling Call.
- Panelists will rotate asking interview questions.
- Ensure fairness and equity in interviewing all referred candidates.
- Consistently implement the CWEC interview process.

Table 5. Panelist Competencies in Recruitment and Screening Interviewees¹

Staff Selection Theory and Application	Understands the theories, techniques, and appropriate applications of staff selection.
Legal and Policy Issues	Knows and understands the basis in law and policy related to fair hiring and selection processes.
Criteria	Knows and uses valid, job-related criteria in the hiring and selection process.
Assessments	Knows and follows procedures for implementing multiple, job-related assessments to ensure validity and reliability.
Decision Making	Makes timely, logical decisions based on available data; maintains and/or explains positions when under pressure from others, confronting resistance if necessary; modifies decisions based on new information when appropriate.

¹ Competencies were highlighted in Screening and Selection of Child Welfare Staff and funded by grant #90CT112/02 US-DHHS Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau to Muskie School of Public Service and the University of Southern Maine's Child Welfare Training Institute

Table 5. Panelist Competencies in Recruitment and Screening Interviewees¹

Teamwork	Works with others to find a win/win resolution of differences; fosters collaboration among team members; shows the group process skills needed to get diverse groups of people to work together effectively to achieve a common goal.
Judgement	Reaches sound conclusions and makes reasonable decisions based on available information; maintains objectivity in handling difficult issues, events, or decisions.
Conceptual Thinking	Sees theoretical frameworks and incorporates learning from experience to guide analysis and practice; applies experience to interpret events, seeing crucial similarities and differences in the present and past situations.
Interpersonal Relations	Perceives strengths, needs, challenges, and feelings of others; understands and values diversity and different styles of perceiving, learning, communicating, and operating; possesses good listening skills; demonstrates trust, sensitivity, and mutual respect.

Appendix C: In-Basket Scenarios

In-Basket Scenario 1

Instructions:

Rank the following tasks in order of priority from 1 to 5 (highest priority is 1, lowest priority is 5) and provide a brief written rationale for your rankings.

Tasks	Ranking
1. Contact the parents of developmentally normal ten- and twelve-year-old siblings you interviewed at school earlier today regarding a recent report that they are being neglected by their parents when they are left home alone a few hours each after school.	
2. A message to return a call to the local elementary school social worker regarding two siblings in first and third grades who have had problems with lice for two to three months now. The school social worker also reports that the children are dirty and once again do not have their lunch money with them.	
3. File into case records, forms, case notes, and other paperwork that has accumulated since your last completed filing one week ago.	
4. Go with the newest worker in your unit as she removes children from their parents to place them into foster care. This is the new workers' first removal and the supervisor requested that you, as an experienced worker, assist and accompany her	
5. A note from your supervisor to come to see him/her when you get a chance to discuss a call from a client, who has complained that you, as the worker, broke confidentiality when you called a child's schoolteacher as a collateral contact on a report of child abuse.	

*In-Basket Scenario 2*Instructions:

Rank the following tasks in order of priority from 1 to 5 (highest priority is 1, lowest priority is 5) and provide a brief written rationale for your rankings.

Tasks	Ranking
1. Mr. and Ms. Petretti have recently divorced, and both are demanding full custody of their three children. You were the Petretti family caseworker until 9 months ago. You have a subpoena from the court that you testify in a custody hearing the day after tomorrow.	
2. A request from a supervisor to come see him/her when you get a chance to discuss some confusing notes you made in a case record that need to be cleared up before the case can be properly closed.	
3. Make a home visit with Ms. Taggart, the maternal grandmother of nine- and eleven-year-old girls whose father sexually abused them. The girls are currently placed with Ms. Taggart who has signed a safety plan with the agency. Ms. Taggart is charged with ensuring the children have no contact with their father and she is to supervise all visits with their mother. You now need to talk with her to be sure she is complying with the safety agreement.	
4. Return a call from a police officer who left a message saying you must report to him as soon as possible any information you have about a father in your caseload so that the office may locate him as there is currently a warrant out for his arrest for a DUI.	
5. Write and submit a 12-page court report to the judge due by the end of business today on the Jackson foster children.	

Appendix D: CWEC Interview Questions

Values Questions

- How did you arrive at the decision that you wanted to serve the child welfare population?
- What position (assessments, in-home, foster care/permanency) is most appealing to you and why?
- What experience (personal, education, and/or past experiences) and qualities do you have that you believe can contribute to your success in child welfare?
- Briefly describe a situation where you had to process an issue or concern with a person or persons of a different cultural and socioeconomic background from your own.

Behavioral Questions

- Tell us about a time or situation in which you demonstrated persistence, especially when faced with obstacles or distractions.
- Give an example of when you had to work with someone difficult to get along with. How did you handle interactions with that person? (e.g., work or school project, family events, etc.)
- Tell me about a time when you had to juggle several projects and or multiple responsibilities at the same time. How did you organize your time? What was the result?
- Tell me about the last time something significant didn't go according to plan at work or school. What was your role? What was the outcome?
- Can you give us an example of a situation where you have assumed lead responsibility for solving a problem without being asked?

Situational Questions

- Part of your responsibilities in child welfare include home visits. If a parent/caretaker is very unreceptive to your visit and becomes hostile and personally threatening, what would you do?
- You and your supervisor have staffed (discussed in detail) a case situation. Your supervisor directs you to take action with which you professionally and/or personally disagree. How would you handle this situation?
- Please explain how you ranked the in-basket items and why.

Closing Questions

- Where do you see yourself in 3-5 years and what are your career goals?

Appendix E: Interview Questions and Scoring Sheet

CWEC Interview Questions and Scoring Sheet

Applicant Name:	Date:
Panelist Name:	University:

Instructions

Evaluate the applicant's response to each question and assign a numeric rating to score each response. Use the following scale to score applicants:

1=unsatisfactory; 2= below average; 3=average; 4=above average; 5=exceptional

Total scores for each category in the "category summary" box.

Values Questions	
1. How did you arrive at the decision that you wanted to serve the child welfare population?	
Comments:	
Score:	
Higher scores: Experience with the population served; belief in the benefits of the system; awareness of system deficits and a wish to be involved in its improvement. Response is family-centered, child focused.	Lower scores: Love children and want to get them away from bad parents, little experience but thought it sounded interesting; need the stipend and the population seemed okay, extremely negative about system and wants to make it right.
2. What position (assessments, in-home, foster care, adoptions) is most appealing to you and why?	

<p>Comments:</p>	
<p>Score:</p>	
<p>Higher scores: Able to clearly discuss specific position and present why that position is appealing, high level of self-awareness, clearly presents why position is good fit.</p>	<p>Lower scores: Not sure if there is a specific position fit or them. Seems to like everything but cannot explain why.</p>
<p>3. What experience (personal, education, and/or past experiences) and qualities do you have that you believe can contribute to your success in child welfare?</p>	
<p>Comments:</p>	
<p>Score:</p>	
<p>Higher scores: Able to clearly discuss specific personal experience, education, and/or past experiences and draw a connection to how those experiences can contribute to their success in child welfare. List qualities that would promote best practice (i.e., cultural humility, strength-based) and time management.</p>	<p>Lower scores: Response is lacking focus and a specific connection between their experience and their potential success in child welfare. Unable to identify their own qualities that would promote success in child welfare.</p>
<p>4. Briefly describe a situation where you had to process an issue or concern with a person or persons of a different cultural and socioeconomic background from your own.</p>	
<p>Comments:</p>	
<p>Score:</p>	
<p>Higher scores: Growing level of self-awareness, willingness to ask for help from others of that culture, including</p>	<p>Lower scores: No experience with other cultures and no</p>

clients; ability and willingness to learn in creative ways; listen for ethnocentrism; previous experience with other cultures; interest in other cultures, sensitivity to language; avoidance of stereotypes, including socioeconomic strata or sexual orientation as well as race.	interest in gaining it; only knows examples of troubles with other races; no awareness of institutional racism, no acquaintances with people of other cultures.
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Total Score Values Questions:

Behavioral Questions

5. Tell us about a time or situation in which you demonstrated persistence, especially when faced with obstacles or distractions.

Comments:

Score:

Higher scores: Able to convey resilience when dealing with barriers or adversity. Demonstrates a positive attitude and determination.

Lower scores: Response does not demonstrate commitment nor a positive attitude rather their response suggests a defeatist attitude.

6. Give an example of when you had to work with someone difficult to get along with. How did you handle interactions with that person?

Comments:

Score:

Higher scores: Ability to describe a situation in which they were understanding of others, worked to establish common purpose, recognized other's strengths despite differences, and established a productive working

Lower scores: Unable to describe any such situation, avoidance of conflict at all costs; need to always be in control, use of power, seemingly unaware of his/her role in the situation, tasks unequally distributed, no mutual purpose

Score:	
Higher scores: Sharing more than basic requirements, doing something in the community; as a team member, going beyond what is required; enthusiasm; examples of offering to help others; level of initiative is significant.	Lower scores: No examples recalled; accomplishing strictly what is required in one's job description.
Total Score Behavioral Questions:	

Situational Questions	
10. Part of your responsibilities in child welfare include home visits. If a parent/caretaker is very unreceptive to your visit and becomes hostile and personally threatening, what would you do?	
Comments:	
Score:	
Higher scores: Displays an understanding for why parents might be initially hostile. Explains what de-escalation techniques they would use. Provides parent/caretaker with power, voice, and choice in the situation. Makes safety observations and takes precautions if necessary.	Lower scores: Unable to imagine such a situation, quickly labels individuals as hostile or non-compliant, avoidance of conflict at all costs; need to always be in control, use of power, and cannot provide clear actions they would take to de-escalate the situation.
11. You and your supervisor have staffed (discussed in detail) a case situation. Your supervisor directs you to take action with which you professionally and/or personally disagree. How would you handle this situation?	
Comments:	

Score:	
Higher scores: The candidate presents an ability to speak up, logically present their perspective, and preferred course of action. They present as confident and ethical.	Lower scores: Response lacks confidence, conviction, ethics, and an ability to present another course of action logically.
12. Please explain how you ranked the in-basket items and why.	
Comments:	
Score:	
Higher scores: Ranking reflects proper priorities. Factors such as safety, imminent risk, and relationship with community partners considered. Rationale for ranking is consistent with best practice.	Lower scores: Ranking demonstrates an inability to prioritize, and rationale does not consider safety, imminent risk, nor relationship with community partners. Priority ranking would demonstrate poor practice and leave children unsafe and at risk.
Total Score Situational Questions:	

Closing Question	
13. Where do you see yourself in 3-5 years and what are your career goals?	
Comments:	
Score:	

Higher scores: Sense of continuing in the child welfare field, commitment to the profession that appears to be genuine; consideration of growth in skills, possibly supervision or other DSS leadership positions.	Lower scores: Plan to leave child welfare as soon as payback time is complete; expresses strong interest in clinical social work, no sense of where he/she will be in 3-5 years.
Total Score Closing Question:	

In-Basket Scenario	
Review applicant's written response and consider answer to question 12 to score In-Basket Scenario	
Comments:	
Score:	
Higher scores: Ranking reflects proper priorities. Factors such as safety, imminent risk, and relationship with community partners considered. Rationale for ranking is consistent with best practice. Reasoning is clearly conveyed. Writing presents necessary information, is structured in a logical way, and includes minimal spelling and grammatical errors.	Lower scores: Ranking demonstrates an inability to prioritize, and rationale does not consider safety, imminent risk, nor relationship with community partners. Priority ranking would demonstrate poor practice and leave children unsafe and at risk. Writing lacks detail to explain reasoning, is unclear or hard to follow, contains multiple spelling and grammatical errors.
Total Score In-Basket Scenario:	

Appendix F: Interview Summary Report

CWEC Interview Summary Report

Instructions:

After all individual ratings have been completed, briefly discuss each question, and arrive at a mutually agreed upon score for each category of question. Record the score for each category in the table below with any comments. Add the scores for each category for the Total Score.
The panel also determines a rank for each applicant. The rank reflects the panel's assessment of the applicant's commitment to work in child welfare and the applicant's potential to successfully meet the requirements of the Collaborative. Applicants are ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 indicating low confidence that an applicant will be successful in the program and 5 indicating high confidence. The total score from the interview is a strong indicator, but NOT the sole determinant of rankings. Collaborative priorities or concerns about commitment to child welfare might be areas that could change a ranking.

Applicant Name: _____ Total Score: _____

Category	Score	Comments
Values Questions		
Behavioral Questions		
Situation Questions		
Closing Questions		
In-Basket Scenario		
Rank		

Recommendation: Yes, accept to program No, do not accept to program

Provide specific information regarding your recommendation (summary of applicant strengths and areas of professional development).

Panelist Name: _____ Signature: _____

Panelist Name: _____ Signature: _____

Panelist Name: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix G: CWEC Interview Final Ranking Sheet

CWEC Interview Final Ranking Sheet

University:

Instructions:

Complete the table below using the Interview Summary Report for each applicant. In the final column indicate whether the panel recommends the applicant for the program.

Candidate Name	Values Score	Behavioral Score	Situational Score	Closing Score	In-Basket Scenario Score	Total Score	Rank	Recommend for program?

Lead Panelist: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix H: Employee Self-Assessment

Child Welfare Social Worker Self-Assessment Fit Checklist

(Adapted from ASU Child Welfare Education Program)

Review the items and check each item that fully describes you.

- _____ I can work with parents who have abused or neglected their children and provide them dignity and respect.
- _____ I believe that most parents love their children, that most children love their parents, and that even when abuse or neglect has occurred in the home in the past, once safety threats have been mitigated, the best place for children is with their families.
- _____ I understand that past experiences with trauma, loss, grief, and adversity can have a profound influence on people's current coping capacities and behaviors. I can place people's behaviors in this context.
- _____ I understand that structural racism creates oppressive experiences for people of color and that these experiences can create barriers in their ability to provide for their children. I can place people's actions or inactions in this context.
- _____ I enjoy hearing people's stories of their strengths and struggles.
- _____ I can work with children who have been severely abused and neglected. I can be fully present when they name and tell of their traumas, as well as recognize their resilience, individuality, and strength.
- _____ I am familiar enough with the needs of infants, toddlers, and children, that I could transport and care for them. I could maintain proper care and supervision of infants, children and adolescents even if they needed a diaper change, had lice, were throwing a tantrum, were rude to me, did not want my help, called me bad names, or smelled bad.
- _____ I can remain professional and calm even if someone yells at me or engages in behaviors that annoy me.
- _____ I have strong time management skills. I can identify priorities from among long lists of tasks and hold myself accountable to completing specific tasks within specific timeframes.
- _____ I am flexible and can adapt to changing priorities, both those of the agency I work for, and in the plans I had laid out for my work day.
- _____ I can accept not being able to get everything done and not knowing whether or not I did everything exactly right.
- _____ I enjoy working with a team to solve problems and I don't assume that I always know what's best for others.

- _____ If I have dependents, I also have supports in my life who could assist me if I had to work outside the normal work hours without much prior notice.
- _____ If I have experienced traumas in my own life, I have reconciled them to the degree that exposure to similar experiences would not overwhelm me or trigger unhealthy responses.
- _____ I enjoy working in a variety of environments, I am comfortable going from a formal court setting to a family's home who has a dirt floor. I don't want to just be in an office or sit behind a desk all day.
- _____ I would be willing to go to homes in low-income neighborhoods where there may be high crime rates. I could remain neutral in my affect when entering people's homes who have limited resources and may live very differently than I do.
- _____ I am accepting and appreciative of multicultural perspectives and family systems. I don't assume that the dominant culture's value system regarding parenting is the right or only acceptable way of parenting.
- _____ I am comfortable using a computer and can learn new software programs.
- _____ I can talk to people about very private and uncomfortable topics. I could talk with teens in foster care about condom use, or could talk to a parent about allegations against them of sexual abuse.
- _____ I am efficient and organized in my work. I have a method for tracking and managing information and to-do items. I have systems for organizing both hard copy and electronic documents.
- _____ I am assertive without being aggressive; I can advocate on behalf of families without alienating providers.
- _____ I am patient. I can work within a bureaucratic system and jump through the necessary hoops to get things done.
- _____ I have hope. I believe in people and believe that they can change when they have resources necessary and self-motivated to do so.
- _____ I can have hard conversations with people and can name and identify behaviors that need to change without being rude or judgmental while also being clear and firm.
- _____ I can express myself competently both through oral and written communication.
- _____ I believe that parents in poverty can love and care for their children. I don't believe that children would be better off if they were moved to a family with more financial resources.
- _____ I can be decisive when need be; in a crisis I could assess the situation, make a decision based on the safety and welfare of the individuals involved, and act on it without supervision or direction from others.

- _____ I understand and am prepared to spend as much time working with “paper” as with people. I am prepared to spend about half of my time documenting conversations, writing assessments, and completing forms.
- _____ I am willing to examine my implicit biases and make active efforts to mitigate them when working with people who are different from me based on race, ethnicity, national origin, socio-economic status, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and ability status.
- _____ I can talk about issues relating to racism, ethnocentrism, and classism even if they initially create discomfort in me.
- _____ When I am troubled by something or struggle with knowing what to do in a situation, I am comfortable seeking out supervision and/or consultation from others.
- _____ I do not believe my experiences with trauma and adversity can always be applied to other people who experienced similar ordeals. I am comfortable allowing people to respond, heal, and reconcile trauma in their own way, even if it is not what worked for me or is not how I responded.
- _____ I have a healthy personal life and sufficient healthy coping skills for me to handle daily exposure to stress and not allow it to consume me.
- _____ I am comfortable driving in all different conditions, including with crying babies or fighting siblings, at night, in heavy traffic, on unpaved roads, in rural areas, and in unfamiliar parts of town.
- _____ I can accept directives and act on them even if I do not wholly agree with them. I could remove a child or leave a child in a home if directed by my supervisor or manager to do so, even if I did not personally agree with that decision.
- _____ I have strong interpersonal social skills and enjoy the camaraderie of close connections with my co-workers and a close office unit.
- _____ With adequate supervision and consultation, I could handle the profound responsibility of making decisions about the constellations of families, about the best interests of children, and about children’s safety, sometimes with inadequate or insufficient information.

If you checked most of the items, you may enjoy the challenges and rewards of child welfare social work. If there were several items you did not check, you might want to further explore whether a career in child welfare is a good fit for you. You can speak with the Child Welfare Education Collaborative staff about those items and the degree to which they would affect your day to day work as a Child Welfare Social Worker. Please note that this self-assessment is a tool for your personal reflection, it is not necessarily predictive of your ability to succeed as a DSS Child Welfare Social Worker. **DO NOT submit this with your CWEC application.**