



Caregiver Training

Course Descriptions

In-Service Training (Instructor Led)

Attachment, Regulation and Competency (ARC) Reflections – 7 sessions

ARC, or Attachment, Regulation and Competency, is a framework for working with children and youth who have experienced trauma and builds on the resilience of children, youth and families. ARC Reflections is an ARC-informed caregiver training curriculum that focusses on:

- Building healthy attachments among children or youth and caregivers
- Supporting children or youth in their ability to identify, understand, tolerate and shift emotional and physiological responses and experiences
- Supporting normative developmental competencies that may have been derailed by trauma exposure
- Integrating trauma experiences

***The sessions in the ARC series build on one another and must be taken in order.**

Child Intervention in Alberta

This training will help increase the caregiver's knowledge of the legislation, policy and practice supports that apply to the intervention work done in Alberta with children and their families. It will focus primarily on the aspects of Child Intervention that directly impact caregivers in their role caring for children and youth. It will explore practical applications through realistic scenarios and casework examples.

FASD: A Caregiver's Learning Series – 3 sessions

This learning module includes three sessions that will help caregivers understand Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and how to better support children/youth with FASD.

- **Session 1:** What is FASD. In this session, you will learn what FASD is and how prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) can impact the whole body, most importantly, the central nervous system, the brain and their many functions. They will also learn about the importance of how diagnosis, assessment, and ongoing support improve developmental outcomes for an individual with FASD.
- **Session 2:** In this session, caregivers will learn how prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) impacts development across the lifespan. They will explore the concept of dysmaturity, the importance of interpreting behavior, and why traditional caregiving strategies may not work with children/youth with FASD. To optimally support an individual with an FASD, our perspectives require a shift to understanding FASD as a brain-based disability.
- **Session 3:** Research shows that a stable home with caregivers who understand FASD and the importance of community advocacy, can have the most positive influence on a person with FASD. In this final session, caregivers will learn how emotional regulation, building good habits and creating competence support better outcomes for children/youth with FASD. Caregivers will also learn that research demonstrates how the five pillars of stability are necessary to support the children/youth with FASD in their care.

How to Observe, Record and Report

Documentation is an extremely important part of the work that we do in Children and Family Services. It is important that all documentation be timely, objective and detailed. Caregivers have the most interaction with the children and youth served by the Ministry and it is imperative that the observations and knowledge you have be recorded and shared with the child or youth's CI Practitioner.

Navigating Transitions

This 3-hour course is designed for caregivers aiming to strengthen their ability to support children and youth through a range of transitions. Participants will gain insights into what defines a transition, the emotional adjustment processes involved, and the specific impacts these transitions have on different age groups, from infants to young adults. Caregivers will be introduced to concepts that support them to be better prepared to help children and youth navigate transitions, promoting resilience and stability in their lives. Additionally, the course addresses how caregivers can manage their own emotional adjustments during transitions.

Nurturing Child and Youth Connections

Connections and relationships are important for everyone. Research shows how connections support a child's safety and well-being. Legislation recognizes the importance of these connections. As a caregiver you can help the children and youth in your care to maintain and build connections with the people who are important to them.

In this module you will explore through reflection and large group discussion:

- The importance of connections for the wellbeing of children and youth.
- Your role in helping the child or youth in your care to build relationships.
- Strategies to help you in your role.

Play: The Building Blocks of Development and Connection

Taking this course will empower caregivers with the knowledge and skills to support the play needs of children and youth who have experienced neglect and abuse. Caregivers will explore the critical role of play in development, focusing on how trauma impacts a child or youth's ability to engage in and benefit from play. Through playful activities, participants will learn how play builds the brain, fosters relationship connections, and equips children and youth with essential life tools.

Preserving Memories

This course explores the intricate process of memory development in children and youth, emphasizing the profound impact of experiences on memory formation. Participants will learn the significance of preserving memories to foster a sense of self and belonging throughout the lifespan. The course also addresses the unique challenges faced by children and youth in care regarding memory preservation and provides practical strategies for caregivers to support this crucial aspect of development.

Substance Use Awareness

This 3-hour facilitated module will educate caregivers on how to assess, prevent, and support children and youth who use substances. This will equip the caregiver to discuss substance use with children and youth and give them tools to prevent harm if someone in their care is using substances. If caregivers know why young people may try or use substances, it may help them have conversations about substance use, the risks and, if the youth choose to use, to reduce the possibility of harm.

Suicide Awareness

A caregiver may be the first person to observe cues or clues that a child/youth in care is at risk of suicide. It is important caregivers are aware of their role and the role of others on the casework team in addressing the risk of suicide. Caregivers need to be comfortable talking to children/youth about suicide. In this workshop, we explore the roles and responsibilities of the members in the caregiving team in preventing and responding to children/youth at risk of suicide. Caregivers will develop skills for talking with children/youth in their care about suicide and for supporting those impacted by suicide.

Supporting Sexual and Gender Diverse Children and Youth

It is important for caregivers to understand Children and Family Services policies for supporting sexual and gender diverse (SGD) children and youth. Participants will learn to apply inclusive language and terminology that promotes a respectful caregiving environment. The course will also cover the unique risks to the safety and well-being of SGD children and youth, and offer strategies for creating a safe, welcoming home that supports their growth and identity. Additionally, learners will explore ways to nurture both existing and new connections for SGD children and youth in their care, enhancing their sense of belonging and well-being.

Understanding Sexual Abuse and Managing Disclosures

Some children and youth in care may have experienced a range of sexual abuse and/or exposure to sexual behaviors of others (which is a form of sexual abuse). Sexual abuse can be a complex issue. In this module, caregivers will be provided information about sexual abuse and the impact it has on children, youth and families. In addition, participants will learn how to respond to and report disclosures of sexual abuse in a way that supports the child or youth, while also protecting the integrity of any potential evidence and investigation. Lastly, the important role of caregivers in helping children and youth understand and heal from their experience of sexual abuse is explored.

Understanding Self-Harm Behaviour

This course provides an essential understanding of self-harm, including its definition, risk factors, and the individuals who are most susceptible. Participants will explore the cycle of self-harm, motivations behind the behavior, and how to recognize the various forms and warning signs. The course emphasizes trauma-informed approaches to supporting children and youth who self-harm, ensuring sensitive and effective care. Additionally, it covers how to access appropriate resources and follow established protocols during a self-harm incident, empowering participants to respond effectively and responsibly.

Walking Together: Supporting Indigenous Cultural Connections

This 3-hour experiential workshop will provide you with the tools and confidence you need to engage children and youth in your care with their culture and community in meaningful ways. This workshop will be co-facilitated by an Elder or Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, and you will have the opportunity to experience a variety of Indigenous cultural practices and learn about Indigenous worldviews.

Your Role on the Child's Case Team

Caregiving is, by design, a temporary situation and most children and youth today do not stay permanently in a kinship or foster home. By helping caregivers see a more complete picture of their role, they will have a better understanding and appreciation of the roles of the other members of the child's team. This course is designed to equip caregivers with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively collaborate and ensure the safety, well-being, and connection of children and youth in their care. Participants will learn about the roles and responsibilities of each team member, the critical competencies required for caregivers, and strategies for building strong relationships and addressing conflicts within the team.

Foundations of Caregiver Support for Caregivers Part 2

Foundations of Caregiver Support provides essential knowledge for caregivers to enhance their skills to provide for the developmental needs of the infants, children, and youth they care for. This three-hour workshop builds on what participants learned in the Foundations of Caregiver Support eLearning. This session provides an opportunity for caregivers to grow their skills in providing trauma informed care.

In-Service Training (e-Learning)

Caring for Indigenous Children and Youth

This important session provides an introduction to the historical and current experiences of Indigenous communities, families, children and youth to better understand the needs of Indigenous children in-care. Participants are introduced to important Legislation including: Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act and An Act Respecting First Nations, Metis Children, Youth and Families.

Participants will begin to learn about Indigenous worldviews and the impact of colonial history and historical trauma on these worldviews. Participants will learn about trauma-informed caregiving and be introduced to practical strategies for use when caring for children with trauma-histories.

Meaningful cultural connections are explored as a crucial means to promote healing, resilience, and identity. Potential caregivers are encouraged to reflect on how they can best support these meaningful cultural connections and whether they are prepared to do this for the children and youth who may come into their care.

*Please note this course is considered an equivalency to the 'Colonization, Historic Trauma and Healing' course

Foundations of Caregiver Support for Caregivers Part 1

Most children involved with Children and Family Services have experienced events that can cause trauma. Trauma can impact a child's development in different ways. This may include the development of important skills they will use for the rest of their lives. This training for both caregivers and staff will support shared understanding of how to support the healthy development, safety, well-being and connection of children in care who are affected by trauma.

Lifelong Connections

This comprehensive 3-hour eLearning supports caregivers in creating and maintaining lifelong relationships for children and youth in care. Throughout the course, participants will explore key connection areas - relational, physical, cultural, and legal - through the lens of Child Intervention Practice Principles. This course introduces 10 core strategies for lifelong connections, highlights the caregiver's role, and emphasizes practices that support identity, stability, and belonging.

Safe Babies

As a caregiver, it is important to know about the unique needs of babies, toddlers and preschoolers. The purpose of this series is to provide you, as a caregiver, with understanding of safe infant care, which includes the knowledge, skills, and confidence to care for vulnerable infants who may have been prenatally exposed to toxins and maternal stress.

Weathering the Storm- Tools for Positive Emotional Regulation

This 2 hour eLearning will provide caregivers with strategies and tools to de-escalate behaviour. Focusing on the importance of relationships and recognizing the signs that emotions are escalating, this training will identify how to respond to challenging situations using active listening skills. It will also demonstrate how to use de-escalation techniques consistent with policy when situations do escalate. Scenarios will illustrate how to regulate, relate, and reason in a variety of situations to support safety and well-being for the child and the caregiver.

In-Service Training (PRIDE e-Learning)

Working in Collaboration with the Case Team

This module explains the concept of teamwork and how collaboration within the team ensures the best outcomes for children and youth in care. The first session focuses on the five steps of decision making and how to collaborate within the case team. It reviews the purpose and function of the various team meetings and supports a caregiver to understand their role, so they can support the case team in achieving safety, permanence and well-being for children and youth. The second session focuses on conflict, how conflicts can influence a team and how it can be beneficial to teamwork. It supports a caregiver to reflect on their own feelings and responses to conflict, so that while they are learning the different conflict management styles, the caregiver becomes aware of, and can work with their own conflict management style.

Promoting Children and Youth's Personal and Cultural Identity

This module discusses the importance of culture and making a commitment to cultural competence to support a child or youth's well-being. Caregivers will start by thinking about and recognizing their own culture, as well as by learning and reflecting on any cultural biases they may hold. This module reviews ways a caregiver can provide a home that promotes a child or youth's culture, and reviews ways to manage the diversity of children and youth in the home. The best ways to learn information about a child or youth's culture are discussed as well as the different ways to support the child or youth to maintain connections to their culture and community. Other important topics that are discussed include ways to avoid stereotyping a child or youth's culture, as well as supporting them when they face discrimination and racism.

Managing the Caregiving Experience

Caregivers will consider the changes that occur in the family when caring for children and youth who are under the care of Children and Family Services. Through a number of exercises, participants review how the relationships, both within and outside the family, can grow and change. Through the use of an ecomap, a family sculpting exercise and the concept of family operations, participants are encouraged to reflect on what type of changes each member of your family may experience and how to prepare for these changes, as well as learn to thrive while going through them.

Positive Discipline Strategies to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs

This eLearning focuses on understanding and promoting positive discipline when caring for children and youth. In the first session, participants reflect on their beliefs about discipline, learn the difference between discipline and punishment, and learn about prohibited practices within Children and Family Services. With that understanding, participants will then review what motivates behaviour and how meeting a child or youth's needs for connection supports the relationship for positive discipline. With this foundation in mind, the goals of effective discipline are reviewed, as well as a range of disciplinary techniques that promote positive behavior. Caregivers will review how to establish expectations and rules, as well as how to modify the environment for a child or youth's success and other discipline strategies, such as time ins. In session 3 the concept of the "problem solving machine" is introduced along with tips for learning how to use it to respond to the different challenges that may arise using a variety of discipline strategies introduced in the module.

Sexuality through the Ages and Stages

Through this session caregivers will learn the typical stages of sexual development in children and youth, develop an understanding of problematic sexual behaviour and learn when and how to talk to the child or youth's caseworker about their observations. This session discusses how to talk about the sensitive topic of sexuality with children and youth. Exercises in this training will support caregivers to reflect on some common myths about sexuality, and to separate those myths from

individual values and attitudes, ensuring a focus on the facts in conversations about sexuality. Through some scenarios participants will think about how to respond to a child or youth's questions about sexuality, all the way from pre-school to adolescence.

Supporting Relationships Between Children, Youth and their Families

In this module, caregivers learn how they can support a child or youth's connections to their families. The first session discusses separation and loss in the context of children and youth coming into care. It includes information on what caregivers can do to help a child or youth feel more comfortable with the transition into a new home, through incorporating and respecting a child or youth's routines, traditions and culture. This training discusses how to show respect for, and support connections with a child or youth's siblings. As well, the concept of loyalty conflicts is reviewed, with an emphasis on how caregivers can support a child or youth when they experience them. In the second session, caregivers learn how a child or youth's loss and grief is complicated and ever present. Other topics covered include how family time can support a child or youth in managing their grief, yet still have an impact on their emotions and behavioural responses, and what a caregiver can do to support the child or youth. This includes supporting many forms of contact, as well as what they can do before, during and after a child or youth's contact, or family time, that can be of benefit.

The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children and Youth

This module explains two foundational concepts of child wellbeing for children and youth. The first two sessions are focused on how to recognize and understand the importance of self-esteem and self-concept in a child or youth. Topics covered include; how to support a child or youth to build both self-esteem and self-concept in a positive way; how a caregiver can develop an understanding of some of the factors that influence self-esteem; how to recognize a child or youth's level of self-esteem, and recognizing that children and youth in care are at risk of low self-esteem and self-concept. Caregivers are presented with information on how to create a supportive and accepting environment that provides unconditional positive support, how to assist a child or youth in building upon their personal strengths, and how to help them develop their social relationships. This training also addresses how to promote a child or youth's positive sense of identity, cultural values, and supports participants in recognizing the link between meeting needs and behavior. The final two sessions focus on communication with children, youth and the case team. The sessions focus on components of the communication process and provide ways to improve communication. The sessions also discuss topics such as reflective listening, non-verbal communication, helpful questions vs unhelpful questions, and the importance of communication with children/youth in your care.

Provincial Caregiver Training Team

Contact Information

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