

# Utah State University/DCFS Field Education Partnership

IV-E Roundtable Conference  
May 2018

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## Background

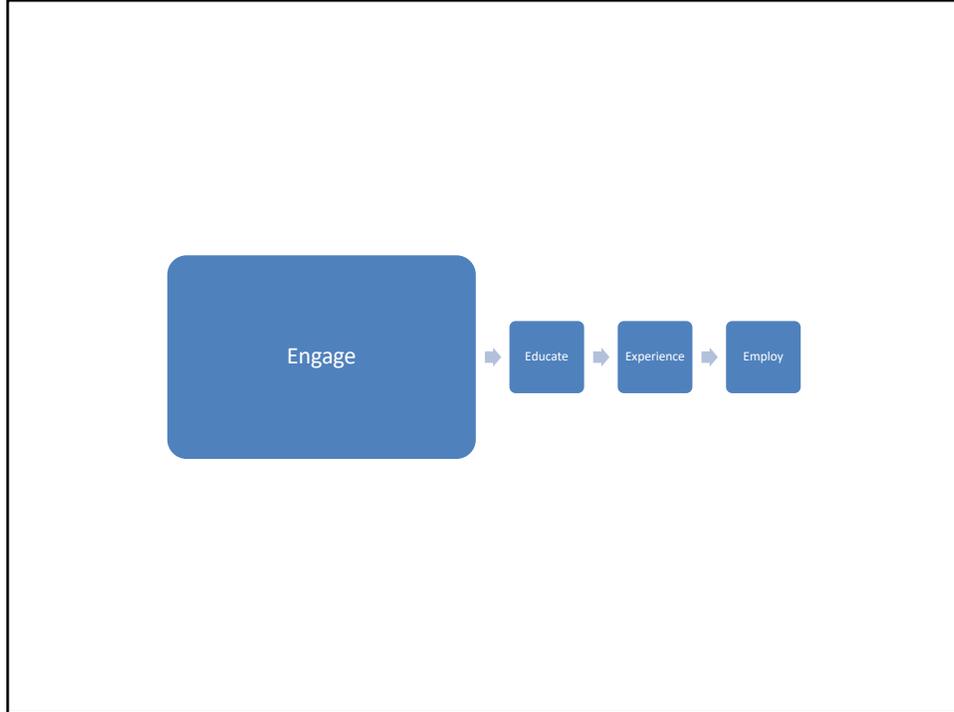
- Need for professionalized CW staff
  - Public child welfare staff must possess higher knowledge and skill levels if they are to be effective.
  - If effective services are to be delivered, professionals who have appropriate educational and training backgrounds and have the necessary values, knowledge and skills to serve culturally and ethnically diverse client populations are needed at all levels of the child welfare system.
  - Unfortunately, many staff are not adequately prepared for the difficult work.
  - The difficult working conditions found within the public child welfare system have resulted in high staff turnover.

## Stemming the Turnover Tide

- The USU-DCFS Partnership aims to reduce turnover by preparing BSW graduates for the “real thing.”

## Program Process





## Engage with Money

### Stipends

#### **BSW Stipends \$6700 (senior yr)**

- 12-mo. Commitment
- Released if not offered job w/in 90 days

- **MSW Stipends \$6250 (2 semester, 3 yrs)**

- Must already be a DCFS employee
- 24-mo. Commitment

## Engage with Information

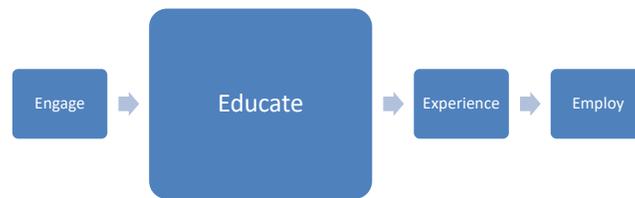
- Informational Meetings
  - Held in the spring in conjunction with practicum placement process
    - DCFS representative guest lectures

## Engage with Personal Connection

- Practicum Fair
  - Held every spring
  - “speed dating” concept
  - DCFS sends representative
  - Current practicum students participate
- Interviews
  - Student meets with DCFS representative

## Engage with Pre-Placement Activities

- Background Checks
- Training
- Clarify Expectations



## Educate via SW Courses

### Core BSW Courses

- HBSE/Theory
- Practice: individuals, groups, organizations and communities
- Policy & Research

## Educate via Child Welfare Courses

### CW Electives (BSW)

- Child Welfare: Overview of Policies and Practices
- Forensic Child Welfare
- Child Abuse and Neglect (several options)

– IV-E Students must take 2 CW electives

## Educate via the Child Welfare Integrative Seminar

Emphasis of the seminar is placed on child welfare practice perspectives both from the vantage point of the professional as well as understanding the experience of the child or family that is being helped.



## Educate via Multiple Delivery Options



### ONLINE

Classes that are designed to be taken online.



### HYBRID

Online courses with set times for participation.



### BROADCAST

Classes that are broadcast to campus classrooms.



### FACE-TO-FACE

Traditional classes taken in campus classrooms.

# USU Locations in Utah



## Experience via the Child Welfare Practicum

Students have an opportunity to develop, refine and apply generalist practice knowledge, skills, and values while working under supervision in an agency serving children, youth, or families impacted by child welfare law, policy and practice.



## Experience via the Child Welfare Practicum

The ***overall goal*** is for the student to be involved in the prevention, assessment, or treatment of children and families experiencing, or at-risk of, child abuse, neglect, or dependency.

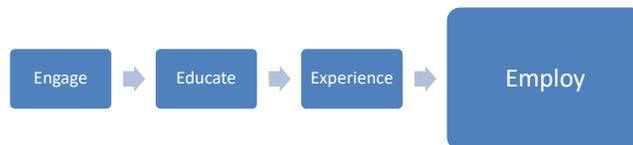


## Experience via the Child Welfare Practicum



We place students with DCFS and its partners including:

- Family Support Centers
- Guardian Ad Litem
- Children's Justice Centers
- Juvenile Court
- Juvenile Justice
- Others



## Employment via Collaboration

USU and DCFS partner to help students navigate the employment process.

- Coaching Session with DCFS Representative
  - Application Tips
  - Interview Advice
  - Negotiation Tips



## Employment via Collaboration

- USU and DCFS partner to work through ongoing challenges such as:
  - Hiring Freezes
  - HR policies
  - Awareness of IV-E
  - Turnover
  - Resistance to interns



easier said  
than done

## Outcomes

- **Focus Group Results**

- Focus group results consistently indicated student satisfaction with the program.
- They appreciate receiving instruction highly specific to their future employment and greatly valued their practicum placements.
- Some students dislike being separated from the other social work students for practicum seminar. They argued that they were missing out on learning about other agencies and resources in the area from their classmates who were placed in non-CW agencies.

## Outcomes

- **Alumni Survey**

- Share your thoughts about the practicum aspect of the traineeship. How helpful (or not) was this experience in preparing you for the work you do?
  - “The practicum for me was very beneficial, as I participated with DCFS, where I now currently work. When I did my practicum, I was able to see what took place at DCFS, and I got to see the many different types of work that takes place. I worked with a permanency worker, who works with families on a long-term basis, and I was able to see the process that took place. I also did some CPS work, so I was familiar with both aspects of DCFS. When I went to interview for my job, I was able to say that I had past experience, and that I was aware of the different types of jobs in DCFS.”

## Outcomes

- **Job placement**
  - Most years nearly all students get an interview, the vast majority are offered positions.
  - About 50% working for DCFS at follow-up (2-3 years). Another 25% working for allied agencies. About 20% deferred until MSW completed.