

## **Child Welfare Case Manager Credential Development**

In the fall of 2006, the FCB was approached by Glen Casel, CEO, Community Based Care of Seminole, Inc. and Mike Watkins, CEO, Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc. to explore the possibility of creating a Child Welfare Case Manager (CWCM) credential in the state of Florida. Over the last several years, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) has embraced and moved to privatizing of child welfare services. In keeping with this transition, the child welfare training and testing system has also evolved to meet the specific needs of the community based care (CBC) providers. While the current program meets the entry-level training and testing needs of CBC providers, the FCB's CBC partners indicated a desire to explore the development of an additional level of certification that is specific to child welfare case managers.

The FCB worked with a panel of subject matter experts (SMEs) in the field of child welfare case management to determine the scope of practice. These SMEs were led through the role delineation process by the FCB. During the workshop, the SME panel defined the major performance domains and the associated tasks necessary for competent performance. Knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with each task were then identified. The FCB conducted an editorial and psychometric review of the listing of domains, tasks, and knowledge and prepared a survey to be distributed to a representative sample of incumbent CWCMs and those individuals who are knowledgeable regarding the profession and job role. The FCB and its CBC partners launched the validation survey and collected responses from a statistically significant portion of the incumbent population. FCB psychometricians conducted data analysis, established a valid and reliable examination blueprint, and developed the final RDS report. After the role delineation study was completed, the FCB and its CBC partners convened the SME panel and establish standards for the credential, including required education, training, work experience, and supervision.

The FCB is pleased to add Child Welfare Case Managers to our portfolio of professional certification programs. CWCMs fill a unique role among health and human services professional in providing quality care to consumers. The CWCM is often the primary person providing direct care to dependent children, their family members and caregivers. The role of the CWCM includes:

- Assessing the risk of future abuse, neglect and threatened harm by conducting individual and family group interviews
- Developing and implementing an individualized, family-centered, strengths-based case plan that is driven by the circumstances of the case and that meets the needs of the child(ren) and the family
- Providing culturally competent casework services and implementing ethical standards while conducting child welfare services
- Acting as a court liaison in accordance with state and federal laws on child abuse, abandonment, and neglect
- Writing clear, legible, and concise documents, reports and case information

The CWCM certification is a voluntary designation of professional competency. It is currently in grandfathering status from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009.