

Advanced practice certificate in child mental health and trauma: Competencies (121)

Module one: Practice principles for child mental health

M1W1: Guiding principles for working with children

Through this week's content, you will develop understandings of:

- 1.1.1 Infant and child mental health, including risk and protective factors.
- 1.1.2 The context of children's social and emotional wellbeing through the lens of the 'whole child'.
- 1.1.3 The 'passive to active' practice perspective shift, which acknowledges children's responses to their social and emotional environments.
- 1.1.4 The 'naïve to knowledgeable' practice perspective shift, which prioritises children's preferences, choice and collaboration in all professional engagement.
- 1.1.5 The 'recipients to contributors' practice perspective shift, which recognises children's developmentally appropriate contributions to understandings of the problems and solutions in their own lives.
- 1.1.6 The 'categories to complex' practice perspective shift, which acknowledges the importance of detailed understandings of children's unique cultural, family, social and emotional circumstances.
- 1.1.7 The 'top-down to bottom-up' practice perspective shift, which places the responsibility on practitioners and organisations to cater for children's varied and unique presentations.

M1W2: Guiding principles for working with parents

Through this week's content, you will develop understandings of:

- 1.2.1 Entry points and opportunities that are available in all engagements with parents, so that the mental health needs of children are always considered.
- 1.2.2 Parent-sensitive and child-focused practice that allows for dual recognition of the experiences of adversities of both parents and children.
- 1.2.3 The five domains of the PERCS Conversation Guide and its application to practice with parents in adult-focused or family services, (when children are not present during professional engagement).
- 1.2.4 The parent-child relationship and how to engage in non-shaming conversations with parents about their hopes and concerns for their relationship with their child.
- 1.2.5 Parental mental health literacy and how it can be supported through a consideration of their children's emotions and behaviours, including what these behaviours and emotions might be communicating.
- 1.2.6 Safe and consistent routines as a protective factor in children's lives and the importance of talking about routines with parents.

1.2.7 Parental mental health literacy relating to what children are communicating through their words, body language and actions.

1.2.8 The protective influence of community, family and social supports for children and how they can be accessed by parents.

M1W3: Trauma-informed principles for working with children

Through this week's content, you will develop understandings of:

1.3.1 The principles of safety and transparency and how they ensure that disclosures of trauma are met with supportive, calm and believing responses.

1.3.2 The principles of collaboration and choice, which ensure children are seen as the experts in their own lives, choosing what, when and how they disclose information about their lives.

1.3.3 The principle of context, which promotes the need for power to be made overt for children so that they can challenge assumptions of self-blame, secrecy and shame.

1.3.4 The principle of cultural safety and the need to respect the cultural context of trauma, healing and recovery for each individual child and their family.

M1W4: Guiding principles for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families

Through this week's content, you will develop understandings of:

1.4.1 The practice considerations that arise from the ongoing impact of colonisation and historical experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when working with children, parents or families.

1.4.2 The impact of stigma and discrimination and how to address it in work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, parents and families in ways that enhance engagement.

1.4.3 The importance of cultural reflection when working with a different culture to your own.

Module two: Engaging with parents and families

M2W1: Social and emotional wellbeing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

2.1.1 Include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principles of social and emotional wellbeing as it applies to children, parents and families.

2.1.2 Incorporate the holistic provision of care into practice, including the connections of culture, Country, spirituality and kinship.

2.1.3 Promote referrals and connections with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) or Aboriginal-led programs to facilitate the provision of culturally appropriate support.

M2W2: Working with culturally diverse families

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 2.2.1 Enquire about the family's cultural context as a way to focus on children's social and emotional wellbeing.
- 2.2.2 Demonstrate an awareness of how practitioners' own culture and biases can shape assumptions, theories, beliefs and language about children, families, parenting and mental health and wellbeing.
- 2.2.3 Recognise that parents, children and families are valuable sources of cultural knowledge and experts in the responses and strategies they have used to overcome problems they are facing.
- 2.2.4 Regularly include cultural reflection when working with a different culture to your own.

M2W3: Establishing collaboration with parents

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 2.3.1 Create entry points into conversations with parents that focus on their children's social and emotional wellbeing.
- 2.3.2 Identify and overcome barriers to parents discussing their children's social and emotional wellbeing.
- 2.3.3 Acknowledge the hardship, shame and stigma that parents have experienced throughout their lives.
- 2.3.4 Support a description of parents' resistance and response to the effects of hardships and adversities in their lives.
- 2.3.5 Support descriptions of parenting values and hopes, including understanding actions that have supported these values.

M2W4: Exploring concerns with parents

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 2.4.1 Support parents to describe the effects of problems in their lives and the lives of their children.
- 2.4.2 Support parents to describe how the problem gets in the way of their parent-child relationship, or their hopes for their children.
- 2.4.3 Extend parents' understanding of when the effects of problems and adversities are most and least present for themselves and their children.
- 2.4.4 Increase understanding of strategies that parents have used to overcome problems and adversities, and to support their children's emotions and behaviours.

M2W5: Looking to the future with parents

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 2.5.1 Support children's social and wellbeing when adversities in their lives are most challenging.
- 2.5.2 Create reassuring and consistent routines for children.
- 2.5.3 Consistently support children's communication and meaning-making.
- 2.5.4 Consider children's support networks as a protective factor in their social and emotional wellbeing.

M2W6: Working with fathers using family and domestic violence

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 2.6.1 Recognise the effects of domestic and family violence on children's mental health.
- 2.6.2 Consider the importance of safety for children and partners when working with fathers who are using violence, control and/or coercion.
- 2.6.3 Help fathers to take responsibility for their behaviour by describing their parenting ethics and hopes.
- 2.6.4 Support fathers to describe how their violent, coercive and controlling behaviours contrast with their parenting values and hopes.
- 2.6.5 Support fathers to describe the effects of violence, coercion and control on the domains of their children's mental health.

M2W7: Working with mothers affected by violence

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 2.7.1 Engage with mothers in non-shaming ways that do not make them responsible for men's violence.
- 2.7.2 Support mothers to name the coercive, controlling or violent behaviours being experienced by them and their children.
- 2.7.3 Support mothers to describe the effects of violence, coercion and control on the domains of their children's mental health.
- 2.7.4 Support mothers to describe the strategies that they and their children have used to overcome or minimise the effects of coercion, control and violence.

Module three: Practice strategies for working with children (5–12 years)

M3W1: Applying social and emotional wellbeing principles with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.1.1 Applying curiosity in conversations about culture with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, parents and families.
- 3.1.2 Exploring the hopes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents have for their child's social and emotional wellbeing.
- 3.1.3 Incorporating strengths-based approaches to offer choice and empowerment to parents.

M3W2: Beginning your work with children

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.2.1 Deciding whether to meet with children and parents separately, together, or a combination of both.
- 3.2.2 Developing a shared understanding of the intent and purpose of consultations with children.
- 3.2.3 Having conversations with children about confidentiality and its limits in ways that help create a context of safety and trust.
- 3.2.4 Beginning to engage children to be active participants in your work together.
- 3.2.5 Collaborating with children.

M3W3: Helping children describe problems

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.3.1 Responding collaboratively when parents and children bring different descriptions of problems.
- 3.3.2 Enabling children to describe problems in their own terms and in ways that are meaningful and useful for them.
- 3.3.3 Ensuring problems are understood in the social context of children's lives as a way to lessen experiences of shame.
- 3.3.4 Paying active attention and responding to small cues in a child's play, body language or facial expressions.
- 3.3.5 Enabling children to describe their views on how problems are impacting their lives, including descriptions of the limits of its impact, with a focus on the role of children's strengths, skills and know-how.
- 3.3.6 Inviting children to describe why problems are problematic in ways that enable them to begin speaking about what is important to them.
- 3.3.7 Responding to children with complex communication needs.
- 3.3.8 Responding to children's distress and despair.

M3W4: Elevating children's strengths, skills, interests and values

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.4.1 Having conversations with children about their strengths, skills and know-how.
- 3.4.2 Utilising the 'best life' metaphor to explore children's strengths, skills, capabilities, interests, hopes, goals and what is important to them in their lives.
- 3.4.3 Providing children with the opportunity to consider and name their values.
- 3.4.4 Noticing children's acts of protest and resistance, exploring opportunities for new and useful meanings in their experiences, and helping them to see their life in different ways.

M3W5: Exploring supportive relationships

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.5.1 Elevating a child's supportive connections to reinforce a positive self-identity and mitigate the negative impacts of the problem.
- 3.5.2 Inviting supportive people in the child's life to contribute to the conversation and speak about the child's strengths, skills and know-how.
- 3.5.3 Collaboratively working with the child to build a team of significant people in their life to support them in responding to the problem.

M3W6: Reducing the influence of problems

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.6.1 Exploring how children's capabilities and interests can be transformed into useful ways of responding to problems.
- 3.6.2 Listening for and building on the child's existing competencies in responding to the problem.
- 3.6.3 Drawing on your own experience and knowledge in ways that lessen the risk of inadvertently disempowering the child, instead facilitating their participation and collaboration.
- 3.6.4 Assisting children and families to notice the progress they are making in responding to the problem.

M3W7: Further challenges when working with children

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.7.1 Reducing the discouragement of children and families in the face of setbacks or stalled progress.
- 3.7.2 Engaging with children and families when the consultation is not going well.
- 3.7.3 Responding when children are saying very little in a consultation.
- 3.7.4 Responding when children's language is limited as a result of abuse, neglect and other significant adversities.

M3W8: Concluding your work

Through this week's content, you will develop practices for:

- 3.8.1. Supporting a child's skills and know-how for dealing with the problem in ways that can endure into the future.
- 3.8.2. Creating opportunities for children to share what they have found helpful in responding to problems with other children facing similar circumstances.
- 3.8.3 Concluding individual consultations with children and families in ways that are accountable, helpful and hopeful.
- 3.8.4. Ending your overall work with children and families in ways that are collaborative, acknowledging and accountable.

Module four: Responding to specific childhood presentations

M4W1: Responding to childhood trauma

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 4.1.1 Explore the connection between interpersonal trauma and mental health concerns for children throughout their lives.
- 4.1.2 Help children move beyond self-blame through a curiosity in their values, connections, skills and know-how.
- 4.1.3 Help children to understand the power differences between them and their abuser in relation to their size, knowledge, choice, language and ability.
- 4.1.4 Recognise and identify ways that children have resisted or protested against acts of abuse to keep themselves or others safe.

M4W2: Responding to childhood bullying

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 4.2.1 Recognise the prevalence and impacts of bullying on childhood mental health.
- 4.2.2 Elevate the positive connections of a child who is experiencing bullying.
- 4.2.3 Support children to make meaning of the bullying behaviour and the intended consequences of bullying.
- 4.2.4 Focus on children's values to help them to take a position on childhood bullying.

M4W3: Responding to critical incidents

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 4.3.1 Recognise and understand the prevalence and impacts of critical incidents on children's mental health.
- 4.3.2 Focus on children's skills and know-how in resisting the impacts of critical incidents, which helps support confidence in their recovery journeys.
- 4.3.3 Respond to children who describe acute or chronic distress or despair as a result of their negative experiences.
- 4.3.4 Help children to describe their problematic experiences and strategies they have used to overcome the effects of these experiences.

M4W4: Responding to autistic and ADHDer children

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 4.4.1 Recognise the importance of a neurodivergent-affirming approach when working with children.
- 4.4.2 Incorporate key neuro-affirming principles to work with children in ways that avoid stigmatisation.
- 4.4.3 Support children and parents to view some of the child's 'problematic' behaviour as protective responses to distress and attempts to communicate, rather than 'symptoms' of their autism or ADHD.
- 4.4.4 Support children to contribute to strategies that help them self-regulate and create the environments that best allow for learning, interacting and communicating.

Module five: Practice strategies for working with infants and toddlers (0–5 years)

M5W1: Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants, toddlers and families

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 5.1.1 Apply considerations of kinship and family relationships in work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- 5.1.2 Recognise the ancient, cultural birthing stories and wisdom that have been handed down to many Aboriginal parents.
- 5.1.3 Support children and families to address the impacts of individual and intergenerational trauma through therapeutic healing.

M5W2: A framework for promoting infant and toddler mental health

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 5.2.1 Acknowledge and recognise the domains of mental health for infants and toddlers.
- 5.2.2 Use the ally position to develop a trusting alliance with parents and to support their descriptions of their relationship with their child.
- 5.2.3 Use the advocate position to focus on the caregiving experiences, cues for connection, play and developmental transitions of infants and toddlers.
- 5.2.4 Use the awareness position to develop shared understandings with parents about developing their parent-child relationship.

M5W3: Practice strategies for assessment

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 5.3.1 Enable parents to connect with their own knowledge about their child and be curious about potential challenges to their capacity to provide sensitive and responsive care.
- 5.3.2 Use play as a way for infants and toddlers to share their feelings and to refine their understanding of the world.
- 5.3.3 Use specific techniques to support parents to consider what their infant's or toddler's play is communicating.
- 5.3.4 Include assessment conversations that focus on the parent-child relationship, which creates a space for parents' understanding, meaning-making and change.

M5W4: Practice strategies for formulation

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

- 5.4.1 Incorporate the '5Ps' model within formulation processes.
- 5.4.2 Use formulation processes to support parents' descriptions of their infant's or toddler's experiences of trauma or adversities.
- 5.4.3 Explore risk and protective factors in each infant's or toddler's family and community.
- 5.4.4 Support parents to respond to their toddler's behaviour as communication.

M5W5: Practice strategies for implementation

Through this week's content, you will develop practices that:

5.5.1 Encourage collaboration with parents to implement changes that best support the mental health of infants and toddlers.

5.5.2 Use non-stigmatising language to help parents increase confidence in making changes to support infant and toddler mental health.

5.5.3 Support parents to make plans to repair ruptures that have been created in their relationships with infants and toddlers.

5.5.4 Promote change through noticing and considering everyday moments with parents and their infant or toddler.