**Pre-Service Module: Child Abuse and Neglect**

**Section 1: Human Development**

**Section Learning Objectives**

By the end of Section 1: Human Development, child welfare professionals will be able to: of

* Appreciate how understanding human development connects with assessment and planning
* Understand and begin to identify “typical” development
* Be able to identify the four domains of development
* Have a basic knowledge of development in a child from infancy through adolescence
* Become familiar with brain development and how it affects learning

**Section Themes and Key Points**

Below is a summary of the themes and key points covered in this section. This summary is intended to remind learners of the key learning points addressed and assist supervisors/ coaches in understanding what was covered in order for them to guide and support the application of learning for new child welfare professionals related to this section.

1. This section explores the importance of having a working knowledge of human development and child maltreatment as essential to child welfare practice. Specific knowledge related to child development, the dynamics of maltreatment, signs of maltreatment, and considerations for children with disabilities assists in understanding abuse and/or neglect, accurately assessing family members strengths and challenges, and developing effective plans with families that will result in safe and permanent homes.
2. This section reviews the markers of typical child development to understand when a child or adolescent may have delays, how to best engage with children based on their development, and to understand whether abuse and/or neglect may have been a factor.

The following “Domains of Child and Adolescent Development” are introduced:

* **Physical:** development and growth of the child’s body, muscles, and senses
* **Cognitive:** thinking, use of memory, reasoning, concept development, problem solving, abstract thinking, and the understanding and use of language
* **Social:** interactions with other people and with groups of people, relationships, attachments, developing social and moral values
* **Emotional:** personal identity, self-esteem, trust, and autonomy; along with feelings and emotions that are appropriate for age and situation

1. This section also reviews developmental concerns and issues that might affect typical maturation or meeting developmental milestones. New child welfare professionals are directed to connect with supervisors with questions or concerns about a child’s development to assess and plan further.

**On-the-Job Application Activities**

Listed in this section is an optional transfer of training activity to support the learner in applying the knowledge acquired during the Child Abuse and Neglect: Human Development Pre-Service Module to their CPS roles and responsibilities.

This activity is optional and is provided only to aid the child welfare professional and supervisor/coach in supporting transfer of learning from pre-service to the agency. The child welfare professional, with input from their supervisor/coach, may choose to complete this activity or substitute in other activities.

The activity is described below, and a resource section to aid the post-activity supervisor/coach discussion with the child welfare professional follows the description of this activity.

**Option 1: Developmental Milestones Activity**

* How a child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about their development. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age. Review the CDC’s Developmental Milestones Resource Pages:
* <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/>
* <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
* Discuss how you might implement the various tools in practice to assist families with your supervisor or coach

**Resource for Option 1: Developmental Milestones Activity**

This resource section is provided to aid the post-activity supervisor/coach discussion with their child welfare professional after completion of Option 1 related to the Developmental Milestones Activity.

The CDC’s Developmental Milestones Resource Pages:

* <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/>
* <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

Milestone Tools can assist child welfare professionals to:

* Complement and support developmental screening
* Enhance individualized developmental support
* Help with making referrals
* Help parents better understand their child’s development
* Communicate with parents about their child’s progress
* Guide parents when there is a concern about their child’s development