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

**Section 2: Dynamics of Maltreatment**

**Section Learning Objectives**

By the end of Section 2: Dynamics of Maltreatment, child welfare professionals will be able to:

* Develop a greater understanding of common risk factors and characteristics associated with child maltreatment
* Understand the protective factors that can mitigate the likelihood of abuse and/or neglect

**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 introduces the dynamics of maltreatment, including risk factors and characteristics associated with maltreatment. A greater understanding of risk factors can help child welfare professionals understand why maltreatment may occur within families and better assist in planning and intervention.

Four common risk factors associated with child abuse and neglect include:

* Parent/Caregiver Factors: personal characteristics and psychological well-being, history of maltreatment, substance use disorders, parental characteristics
* Family factors: family structure, domestic violence, stress
* Child factors: age, disability
* Environmental factors: social isolation, exposure to crime

While the factors discussed in this section are often present among families where maltreatment occurs, these factors do NOT necessarily lead to maltreatment and protective factors decrease risk.

1. This section reviews how maltreatment is categorized in Wisconsin:
* Physical abuse
* Neglect
* Sexual abuse
* Emotional abuse

Refer to the Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards - Appendix 5: Statutory Definitions of Abuse and Neglect for definitions.

* If you need to access a copy of the Access and Initial Assessment Standards, you can find them on the DCF website page: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy> in the “Standards” section. If you need help finding them, ask your supervisor/coach for assistance.

**On-the-Job Application Activities**

Listed in this section are optional transfer of training activities to support the learner in applying the knowledge acquired during the Child Abuse and Neglect: Dynamics of Maltreatment Pre-Service Module to their CPS roles and responsibilities.

These two activities are optional and are 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 all, some, or none of these activities or substitute in other activities.

**Option 1: Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report – Trends Activity**

* Go to the “Child Protective Services Reports and Dashboards” at the following link: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/reports>
* Click on the Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Reports tab
* Open the most recent Child Abuse and Neglect Report
* Locate Appendixes E through L
* Review your agency data
* Answer the following questions:

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| **What trends do you see in your agency surrounding the number of reports, substantiation rates, and types of abuse?** |
| **How can understanding these trends assist you in your work with families?** |

* + - Review and discuss your responses with your supervisor or coach

**Option 2: Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report – Race and Ethnicity Activity**

Over-representation of minority children and families in U.S. child protective services systems, relative to their prevalence in the U.S. population, has generated widespread concern in recent decades.

* Go to the “Child Protective Services Reports and Dashboards” at the following link: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/reports>
* Click on the Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Reports tab
* Open the most recent Child Abuse and Neglect Report
* In the Table of Content, locate the Victims section of the report
* Review the Race and Ethnicity data.
* Answer this question:

|  |
| --- |
| **What conclusions can you draw from the data?** |

* Review and discuss your conclusions with your supervisor or coach