

**Strengthening Families: Assessing and
Planning for the Safety of Children Ages
Birth - 5 years**

ALC Executive Summary - 2025

Overview

The Applied Learning Communities (ALCs), launched in 2019, facilitate dialogue and resource sharing among Child Welfare (CW) professionals across the state. In recent years, a transfer-of-learning approach has encouraged supervisors and lead workers to examine a specific policy area, identify supplementary skills CW professionals may need to support practice, develop learning materials, and use them in their agencies to train and build skills with workforce members. Recommendations for improvements at the local and state levels in policy, training, and eWiSACWIS are then made to the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

**The 2025 topic was Strengthening Families:
Assessing and Planning for the Safety of Children
Ages Birth - 5 years**

Parent Partners from the Parents Supporting Parents Program were part of the facilitation team and provided insights on engaging families in safety planning.

Six Modules

Module 1: Social and Emotional Development

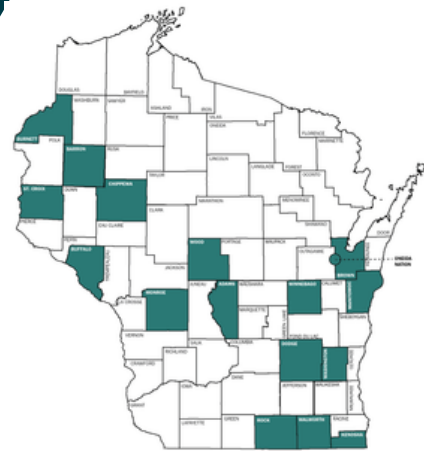
Module 2: Physical Development, Environment, and Safety

Module 3: Assessing Caregiver Mental Health

Module 4: Assessing Interpersonal Violence in the Family

Module 5: Assessing Caregiver Substance Use

Module 6: Sustaining Change & Ending CPS Involvement



**17 local child welfare agencies
76 supervisors and designees
represented at the ALCs**

Learning Objectives

- Enhance understanding of strategies to assess infants and young children with limited communication abilities.
- Foster an environment of curiosity and respect toward different familial practices.
- Enhance practice skills in safety assessment and planning for young children.
- Increase skill set in collaborative family planning.
- Practice family rehearsal safety planning.
- Use the Parent Caregiver Protective Capacities in family case planning.

Transfer of Learning Resources

The Applied Learning Communities again provided a Transfer of Learning (TOL) experience. The six asynchronous learning modules are on the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS) website as [learning aids](#). These resources can be accessed by anyone for team meetings, individual learning sessions, or as a reference tool for the CW professionals.

Recommendations

The recommendations are listed below. A more detailed description is available in the ALC Full Report.

Local Recommendations

1. Strengthen safety assessments for children ages birth - 5 years through training and practice tools to support more developmentally informed safety decisions for infants and young children.
2. Promote a shared understanding with the family using concrete examples of how protective capacities need to be strengthened and what they would look like when the children are safe.
3. Increase family voice in safety planning and decision-making by strengthening engagement and centering their perspectives so families feel respected and meaningfully co-create practical responses that keep children safe.

State Recommendations

1. Expand and align training opportunities for CW professionals and supervisors to assess and plan for the safety of young children.
2. Strengthen the use of Parent/Caregiver Protective Capacities by providing clear guidance and learning opportunities to help CW professionals consistently identify, explain, and use PPCs as a transparent, collaborative tool with families across all stages of involvement.