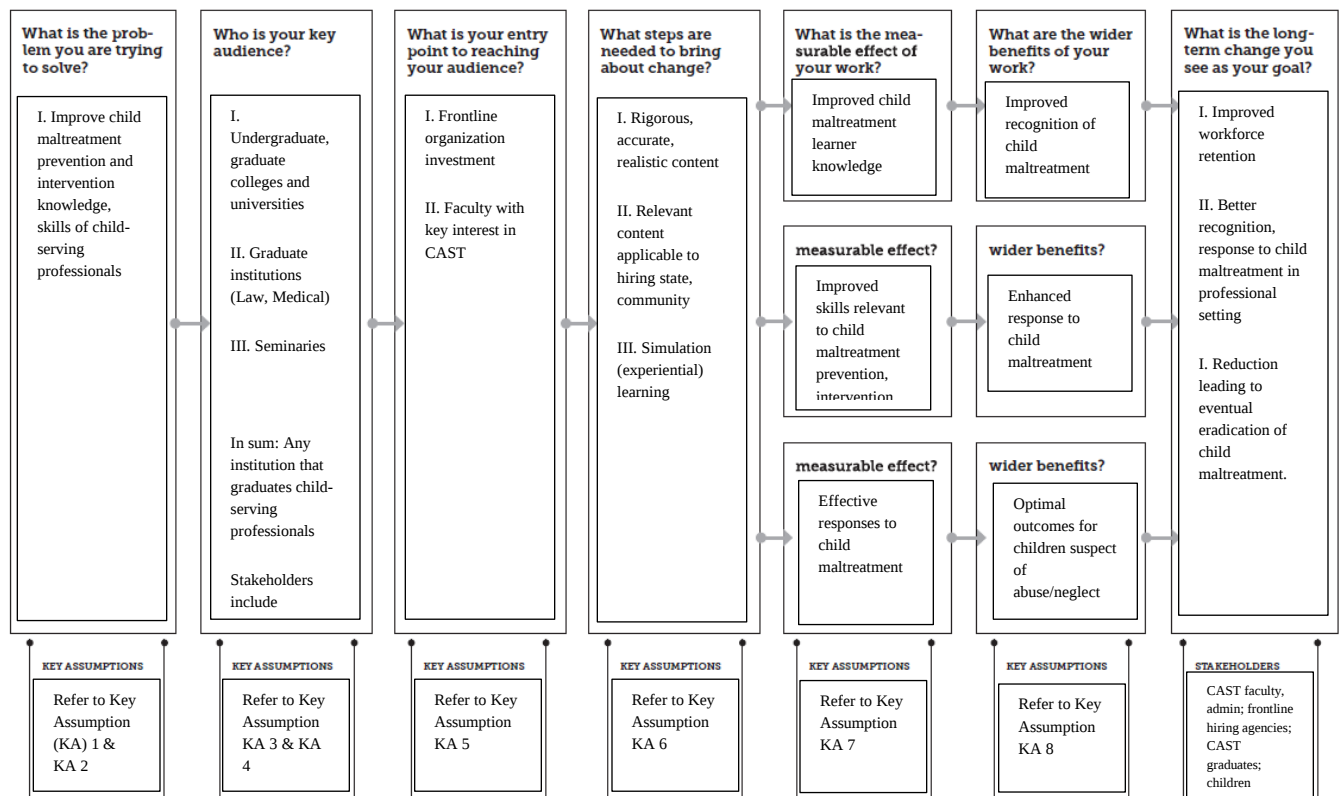


Child Advocacy Studies

Theory of Change Model



Definitions

A child-serving professional is defined as any individual who, in their occupational capacity, intersects with the life of a child and may therefore recognize the potential for or suspicions of child abuse and neglect in its various forms and respond in a professional capacity.

A frontline agency/organization is defined as any entity that engages in work intersecting with the life of a child (e.g. child protection, medicine) that will hire child-serving professionals.

Key Assumptions

1. Research shows higher education lacks sufficient child abuse & neglect (CAN) prevention/intervention content, yet colleges/universities claim to prepare graduates for child-serving careers.¹
2. Child maltreatment is a major contributor to child death, child injury, and adverse childhood experiences leading to negative psychological, physiological consequences to adults while perpetuating a cycle of violence.
3. CAST was developed in response to KA 1 at Winona State University and is an undergraduate and graduate curriculum. It was designed with learning outcomes that are centered around preparing future child protection and child serving professionals to adequately recognize, report, and respond to child maltreatment. Because the learning outcomes for each course are broad, they can be adapted to any learner population (e.g. medicine, education, social work).
 - a. Thus CAST programs may opt to use 1:1 Zero Abuse Project iterations of the major CAST courses (e.g. *Perspectives*, *Responding*, *Global*, or *Professional/Systems Response*) or they can integrate the learning outcomes into their own courses if the coursework and content closely parallels these fundamental courses.
4. Numerous studies have found that child-serving professionals have limited content engagement with child maltreatment concepts and as a result feel inadequately prepared to make mandated reports or effectively respond to child maltreatment, leading to worker overturn and burnout. Thus, CAST is necessary for any child-serving academic content area based on its ability to realistically prepare the learner for the frontlines of employment where they may encounter a child at-risk.²

¹ Woodtli, M.A., & Breslin, E.T. (2002). Violence-related content in the nursing curriculum: a follow-up national survey. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 41(8), 340-8.; Hatlevig, J. 2006. Research conducted at Winona State University. See also Vieth, V. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts. 2012. Retrieved from: <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/12-5-23ViethTestimony.pdf>; Stephens R., & Walker D. (2015). Addressing Intimate Partner Violence in White Evangelical and Fundamental Churches. In: Johnson A. (eds) *Religion and Men's Violence Against Women*. Springer, New York, NY.; Douglas, E. M. & Serino, P. J. (2013). The Extent of Evidence-Based Information About Child Maltreatment Fatalities in Social Science Textbooks. *Journal of Evidence Based Social Work*: 10(5). <https://doi.org/10.1080/15433714.2012.759839>; Kisse, J. L., Isaacson, L. J., & Miller-Perrin, C. (2014). An Analysis of Child Maltreatment Content in Introductory Psychology Textbooks. *Journal of Aggression Maltreatment & Trauma*: 23(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2014.878891>; Brand, B. L., Kumar, S. A., & McEwen, L. E. (2019). Coverage of Child Maltreatment and Adult Trauma in Graduate Psychopathology Textbooks. *Psychological Trauma Theory Research Practice and Policy*: 11(8). <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000454>.

² Reaves, B. A. (2013). State and Local Law Enforcement Training Academies, 2013. U.S. Department of Justice. <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/slleta13.pdf>; University of Illinois. (2004). Summary of Key Findings from a National Survey of Dependency Court Judges. https://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/legacy/uploadedfiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/reports/foster_care_reform/fosteringresults070104.pdf; Kenny, M. C. & Abreu, R. L. (2015) Training Mental Health Professionals in Child Sexual Abuse: Curricular Guidelines. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*: 24:5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2015.1042185>; Dichter ME, Teitelman A, Klusaritz H, Maurer DM, Cronholm PF, & Doubeni CA. (2018). Trauma-Informed Care Training in Family Medicine Residency Programs: Results from a CERA Survey. *Family Medicine*:50(8):617-622. <https://doi.org/10.22454/FamMed.2018.505481>; Butts, A.N. (2014). Mandated reporting and child maltreatment: training and experiences of Minnesota teachers. Masters of Social Work Clinical Research Papers: St. Catherine University. https://sophia.stkate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1300&context=msw_papers; Children's Bureau. (2018). Child Maltreatment 2018. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2018.pdf>; Berlanda, S.,

5. Access to college/university faculty able to implement CAST usually comes in the form of professional conferences or virtual training events centered around the curriculum. Typically, the access point to a given institution for deploying CAST comes in one of two forms:
 - a. Frontline professionals from child-serving/child protection organizations (e.g. child advocacy centers, child protection services, physicians) recognize the gap in learning that CAST could fill and engage with postsecondary/graduate institution faculty and leadership to foster collaboration with Zero Abuse Project to implement CAST.
 - b. Faculty directly learn about the curriculum through Zero Abuse Project outreach, marketing, and professional engagements and collaborate with Zero Abuse Project to implement CAST.
6. For CAST content to be effective in improving knowledge and skills, it must be updated with frontline organization investment (e.g. agency officials acting as subject matter experts, instructors, or sitting on curricular committees). The content must reflect best practices and policies in the field in alignment with the student's profession and in conjunction with state or local policy (a blanket CAST response cannot be uniform due to the fluidity in definitions, criteria, and statutes surrounding child maltreatment).³ CAST learning must entail the use of some form of experiential learning, ideally using simulations adapted from realistic situations they may encounter in their professional lives, as this is the most effective means of incorporating information and skills into one's knowledge base.⁴
7. Assessment must be performed to examine qualitative growth of knowledge, skills, and response outcomes in the classroom. Through pre/post assessment of students, CAST faculty should be able to examine growth in child maltreatment knowledge and skills relevant to intervening in suspect cases in a professional capacity. Through simulation-based learning and assessment thereof, CAST students should demonstrate best practice responses to scenarios depicting child abuse and/or neglect using the knowledge and skills gleaned from CAST coursework.
8. The underlying assumption of the benefits of CAST arise from the basic tenants of postsecondary education and its goal to empower learners with advance knowledge to make them more successful in their occupation of choice. If a learner truly demonstrates enhanced knowledge, skills, and response to child maltreatment scenarios in a CAST learning environment, then those academic benefits should in turn translate into occupational merits that ultimately lead to better outcomes for children and improve the overall socioeconomic welfare of the communities that are served by these CAST-empowered professionals. Studies on CAST graduate outcomes and responses to child maltreatment, alongside employer surveys of CAST impact on employee performance, should naturally be utilized to qualitatively and quantitatively measure the impact and extent of the overall intended benefits of CAST beyond the classroom and in the workforce.

Pedrazza, M., Trifiletti, E., & Fraizzoli, M. (2017). Dissatisfaction in Child Welfare and Its Role in Predicting Self-Efficacy and Satisfaction at Work: A Mixed-Method Research. *BioMed research international*, 2017, 5249619. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2017/5249619>; Lynne, E.G., Gifford, E.J., Evans, K.E., and Rosch, J.B. (2015). Barriers to reporting child maltreatment. *North Carolina Medical Journal*, 76(1). 13-18.

³ Child Welfare Information Gateway. 2020. State Laws on Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/can/reporting/>.

⁴ Anderson, H.M. No Date. Dale's Cone of Experience. Retrieved from https://www.queensu.ca/teachingandlearning/modules/active/documents/Dales_Cone_of_Experience_summary.pdf.

