



**400:  
Using Ethics to Guide Casework & Decision Making**

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**For  
The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program**

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## **400: Using Ethics to Guide Casework & Decision – Making (6 hours)**

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## 400: Using Ethics to Guide Casework & Decision – Making (6 hours)

Section Name	Estimated Time	Key Concepts	Resources Used
<b>Section I:</b> Welcome & Introductions	45 minutes	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b>            Lecture/Large Group Discussion/Pre-Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief overview of workshop; review of rules and other housekeeping issues (name tents; 15 minute rule; bathroom locations; cell phones; etc.).</li> <li>• Inform the group that each participant is being provided with a copy of the Code of Ethics of the NASW, which they will be permitted to keep at the end of the training.</li> <li>• <b>Walk-around survey:</b></li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p><b>Trainer Note: Using Appendix #1 (Walk-Around Survey Questions)</b> as an example for a prepared flip chart or the Pre-Printed Posters. Trainees use a marker to put a ● or X or ✓ on the line to indicate their agreement /disagreement with the statement.</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Clients have the right to self-determination.</li> <li>2) Confidentiality should be protected.</li> <li>3) Children &amp; youth have a right to a permanent family.</li> <li>4) Parents have strengths that can be used to provide safety, permanence &amp; well-being for their children.</li> <li>5) Dual relationships should always be avoided between child welfare professionals and clients.</li> <li>6) Dual relationships should always be avoided between child welfare professionals and their supervisors &amp; managers.</li> <li>7) Physical contact is not appropriate between child welfare professionals &amp; clients.</li> <li>8) It is OK to accept a token gift from a referral source as a “thank you” for the referral.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brief introductions &amp; workshop overview:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During introductions, ask each person to share a comment about one of the walk-around survey questions. It does NOT have to be a revealing of where they marked their position!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Appendix #1: Walk-Around Survey Questions (flip charts or Pre-Printed Posters displayed throughout the room) NASW Code of Ethics booklets (1 for each participant) Handout # 1: Learning Objectives (1 page) Handout # 2: Agenda (1 page) Handout # 3: Pre-Test (1 page) Appendix #2: Pre-Test Answer Key (1 page) Overhead #1: Learning Objectives (1 page) Overhead #2: Agenda (1 page) Name Tents Idea Catcher Pencils, Pens, Markers

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- As time allows, the trainer may comment on observations about one or more of the survey questions; for example, the one with the most agreement indicated or the one with the widest variation of answers or one where the trainer's personal answer agrees or disagrees with the majority of the group.
- Display **Overhead #1: Learning Objectives** and call attention to or distribute **Handout #1: Learning Objectives**
- Display **Overhead #2: Agenda** and call attention to or distribute **Handout #2: Agenda**
- Call attention to or distribute **Handout #3: Pre-Test** (See **Appendix #2: Pre-Test Answer Key**)
  - Indicate that answers to the Pre-Test will be shared when the material is covered in the training.
  - Offer to review the answers to the Pre-Test at the end of the session prior to the taking of the Post-Test.
- Identification of participant needs/expectations and practice challenges by trainee go-round sharing and optional listing on flipchart

**Notes:**

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<p><b>Section II:</b> Introduction to Ethics &amp; Values</p>	<p>1 hour</p>	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b> Videotape/lecture/Individual and small group activity/Large group discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Videotape: “Professional Choices: Ethics at Work” (25 minutes)</b>—produced by NASW; offers an introduction to ethics (stop the tape before the section on the ethical decision-making framework as the framework presented in the video is NOT the framework used in this training session)</li> <li>• Ask group to define “ethics” and differentiate ethics from “values”</li> <li>• Offer definitions of “ethics” as “standards of right conduct.” Display <b>Overheads 3, 4, &amp; 5: Ethics Definitions.</b></li> <li>• Briefly review the history of the NASW Code of Ethics (introduced by Mary Ellen Richmond in 1920’s (Display <b>Overhead #6: Mary Richmond)</b>)</li> <li>• Ask trainees to share examples of how personal values and the child welfare mission are reflected in the Code of Ethics</li> </ul> <p><b>Related Concepts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NASW Code is the most widely accepted code of ethics for social workers in the US</li> <li>▪ Some agencies have their own code of ethics patterned after this Code</li> <li>▪ PA DPW does not have a specific Code of Ethics for child welfare professionals</li> <li>▪ Code of Ethics is a guide; not a law</li> <li>▪ Violations of Code can result in revocation of licensing for individual social worker</li> <li>▪ Core Professional Values that inform the Code include (from Tom Beauchamp &amp; James Childress in Reamer):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compassion</li> <li>▪ Discernment</li> <li>▪ Trustworthiness</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Videotape: “Professional Choices: Ethics at Work”          Overhead #3: Ethics Definition (Corey) (1 page)          Overhead #4: Ethics Definition (Potts) (1 page)          Overhead #5: Ethics Definition (Gambrill) (1 page)          Overhead #6: The Code of Ethics (Mary Richmond) (1 page)          NASW Code of Ethics booklet</p>
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- Integrity
- Conscientiousness
- Autonomy
- Nonmaleficence
- Beneficence
- Justice
- Related key ethical considerations include:
  - Informed Consent
  - Confidentiality
  - Empowerment
- Values conflicts can arise from religious convictions, cultural norms, political perspectives

**Notes:**

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<p><b>Section III:</b> Ethical Issues, Obligations, Values, &amp; Principles</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">45 minutes</p>	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b> Small group activities; large group discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #7: Code of Ethics: Issues</b> and call attention to or distribute <b>Handout #4: Ethical Issues &amp; Obligations.</b></li> <li>• Ask for examples of each of the three kinds of issues covered in NASW Code: (Flipchart)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social worker’s mistakes</li> <li>• difficult ethical decisions/dilemmas</li> <li>• social worker misconduct</li> </ul> <p>This could be done by assigning each issue to a small group and asking each group to identify and discuss an example related to one or more of the ethical obligations, or assigning one of the ethical obligations to each of 4 groups and asking them to choose an example of one or more of the 3 kinds of ethical issues.</p> </li> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #8: Our Ethical Obligations</b> and call attention to <b>Handout #4: Ethical Issues &amp; Obligations.</b></li> <li>• Review ethical obligations of beneficence, nonmaleficence, self-determination &amp; justice (write each term on a flipchart page or strip and post around room)</li> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #9: Code of Ethics: Core Values</b> and review.</li> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #10: Code of Ethics: Core Values &amp; Principles</b> and call attention to or distribute <b>Handout #5: Core Values &amp; Principles from the Code of Ethics.</b></li> <li>• Reviewing Overhead #10 review definitions and examples of each of the six values of social work &amp; related ethical principles:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service: primary goal is to help people in need</li> <li>• Social Justice: challenge injustice</li> <li>• Dignity &amp; Worth of Person: respect (cultural competence)</li> <li>• Importance of Human Relationships: central focus</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Handout #4: Ethical Issues &amp; Obligations (1 page)            Handout #5: Core Values &amp; Principles from the Code of Ethics (1 page)            Handout#6: Ethical Situations (2 pages)            Overhead #7: Code of Ethics: Issues (1 page)            Overhead #8: Our Ethical Obligations (1 page)            Overhead #9: Code of Ethics: Values (1 page)            Overhead #10: Code of Ethics: Core Values &amp; Ethical Principles (2 pages)            Appendix #3: Ethical Situations Key (1 page)            NASW Code of Ethics Booklet</p>
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- Integrity: trustworthiness
- Competence: work only in area of skill; seek professional development

Ask each table to review one of the cases on **Handout #6: (Ethical Situations)**; identifying the value and ethical principle from the NASW Code (remind them NOT to get into discussion about the dilemma or suggestion possible solutions; have each small group share their work with the large group and supplement their discussion as necessary to cover key points or to correct misinformation.)

Refer to **Appendix #3: Ethical Situations Answer Key** in order to review the answers with the group.

**Notes:**

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<p><b>Section IV:</b> Framework for Ethical Decision – Making</p>	<p>15 minutes</p>	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b> Lecture, Large Group Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #11: Ethical Decision-Making Steps</b> and call attention to or <b>distribute Handout #7: Ethical Decisions-Making Steps.</b></li> <li>• Present Ethical Decision-Making Steps:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the ethical dilemma (issues, values &amp; duties that conflict).</li> <li>2. Identify those likely to be affected by the decision (individuals, groups &amp; communities).</li> <li>3. Identify all viable courses of action, including benefits &amp; risks for each (for each individual, group &amp; community).</li> <li>4. Examine the pros &amp; cons for each course of action (consider code of ethics, laws, principles, morals, practice theories, personal values, cultural norms, etc.).</li> <li>5. Consult with experts &amp; colleagues.</li> <li>6. Make the decision, document decision-making process.</li> <li>7. Implement the decision.</li> <li>8. Monitor, evaluate &amp; document the outcomes.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p><b>Notes:</b></p>	<p>Handout #7: Ethical Decision – Making Steps (1 page) Overhead #11: Ethical Decision – Making Steps (2 pages)</p>
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<p><b>Section V:</b> Ethical Decision – Making Case Application</p>	<p>1 hour, 15 minutes</p>	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b> Individual/Small Group Activity/Large Group Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #12: Ethical Decision – Making Worksheet Instructions (Optional)</b> and call attention to or distribute <b>Handout #8: Ethical Decision – Making Worksheet.</b></li> <li>• Using the Ethical Decision – Making Steps with a case:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ask each table group to choose the case they want to work with and to notify you of their choice, preferably assuring diversity of topics and ethical principles/values)</li> <li>2) Optional step: Ask trainees to work independently and quietly to review the case material and to answer the questions on <b>Handout #8: Ethical Decision – Making Worksheet</b> without consulting their table mates.</li> <li>3) After about 20 minutes, signal the time for trainees to work with their small group to arrive at a consensus for each answer, if possible and to plan how they are going to share their ideas with the large group.</li> <li>4) Cross-reference the NASW Code of Ethics to identify whether there is a section in the Code of Ethics that addresses or discusses your decision.</li> <li>5) After 20-30 minutes, signal the small groups to create their visuals and/or to create the presentations to the large group.</li> <li>6) Allow 20 minutes for the creation of the presentation materials and/or practice.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p><b>Notes:</b></p>	<p>Handout #8: Ethical Decision – Making Worksheet (3 pages) Overhead #12: Ethical Decision – Making Worksheet Instructions (Optional) (1 page) NASW Code of Ethics booklet</p>
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<b>Section VI:</b> Ethical Decision – Making Presentations, & Discussions	1 hour	<b>Method of Presentation:</b> Large Group Discussion  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask each group to present their case, the ethical dilemma or issue, the stakeholder groups identified, the possible decisions, the pros &amp; cons of each, the consultation question(s), their tentative decision; unresolved issues.</li><li>• After each presentation, the trainer will ask clarifying questions and amend the presentation to correct misinformation or to add salient points for discussion, keeping track of the time allotted for each group and the whole activity.</li><li>• After all of the presentations (if time allows), the trainer will summarize the discussion or ask for the group to create bullet points for a flipchart that summarize their learning and identify any remaining/unanswered questions</li></ul> <b>Notes:</b>	None
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<p><b>Section VII:</b> Transfer of Learning.</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b> Action Planning and Transfer of Learning Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #13: Transfer of Learning Ideas</b> and call attention to or distribute <b>Handout #9: Transfer of Learning Worksheet or Action Plan</b>.</li> <li>• Ask each trainee to use <b>Handout #9: Transfer of Learning Worksheet or Action Plan</b> to identify how they plan to apply their learning from today to their work on the job.</li> <li>• Encourage at least one person from each table to share an idea from his/her worksheet.</li> <li>• Emphasize the importance of using the learning before losing the learning—within 48 hours of training.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes:</b></p>	<p>Handout #9: Transfer of Learning Worksheet or Action Plan (1 page) Overhead #13: Transfer of Learning Ideas (1 page)</p>
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<p><b>Section VIII:</b> Evaluation and Closing</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Method of Presentation:</b> Large group discussion//Individual activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call attention to or distribute <b>Handout #10: Bibliography</b> and discuss any of the resources you have brought into the room and have on display.</li> <li>• Review the Bibliography, highlighting key references and encouraging trainees to “read more about it.”</li> <li>• Display <b>Overhead #14: Evaluation &amp; Closing (Optional)</b>, which gives a list of prompts to complete the PACWT Evaluation Form and the Post-Test.</li> <li>• Ask trainees to complete the Post-test, using <b>Handout #11: Post-test</b>.</li> <li>• Review any questions &amp; answers that trainees have about the Post-test, using <b>Appendix #4: Post-test Answer Key</b>.</li> <li>• Dismiss the group with thanks for their participation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes:</b></p>	<p>Handout #10: Bibliography (1 page) Handout #11: Post-Test (1 page) Overhead #14: Evaluation &amp; Closing (optional) (1 page) Appendix #4: Post-Test Answer Key (1 page) Training Program Evaluation Form</p>
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