

PROJECT BRIEF

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

THE CLIENT

The Louisiana Child Welfare Training Academy (LCWTA) is a partnership between the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Pelican Center for Children and Families, and the University Alliance comprised of seven university partners within the public schools of Social Work in Louisiana. The University Alliance members include Southeastern Louisiana University (lead), Northwestern State University, Southern University Baton Rouge, Southern University New Orleans, Grambling University, Louisiana State University, and the University of Louisiana at Monroe. The mission of LCWTA is to ensure that child welfare staff and stakeholders have a fundamental and shared base of knowledge and skills necessary to intervene within the child welfare system effectively. LCWTA accomplishes this goal by providing both live and online in-service training and professional development opportunities to its community.

THE NEED

Child welfare workers must understand the importance of actively engaging with families to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families in the child welfare system. Child welfare workers also need an environment to practice their engagement skills before fieldwork.

THE SOLUTION

Learning Sciences' instructional design and production team worked with LCWTA to develop a virtual instructor-led class entitled Elements of Engagement. This two-day course consisted of virtual discussion sessions, self-assessments, scenario-based eLearning cases, self-paced article



reviews, reflection activities, and pre- and post-course examinations. Learning Sciences created all self-paced eLearning content. This included three video branch modules that allowed participants to test their engagement skills in field-based case scenarios safely. Participants received immediate feedback for each choice they made in the scenarios to reinforce engagement principles. Five eLearning modules were also developed that included on topic review articles. Participants were asked pre-review questions before each article was presented. Participants were then directed to read the articles. A post knowledge check was included for each article to check participant comprehension.

Learning Sciences' LMS experts consulted with LCWTA to design a virtual curriculum in their Moodle Learning Management System to track all participants' learning activities within the course. Special notice was given to not only how participants would be able to access content, but how their progress would be reported in the LMS.

THE SUCCESS

LCWTA is currently piloting this program and will be launching it in the fourth quarter of 2020. LCWTA has asked Learning Sciences to provide additional services to develop similar programs for their community.

