Caregiver ASK (Areas of Skills and Knowledge)

Throughout all Caregiver Areas of Skills and Knowledge, we emphasize the importance of understanding and responding to each child and family’s race and ethnicity, culture, Tribal affiliation, spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical or developmental ability, and fundamental need for safety, permanency, and well-being. We also emphasize understanding and responding to the impact of trauma on children and their families.

We define a child’s family as the family as defined by the child, which may include biological family, adoptive family, kith, kin etc.

We define caregiver as any certified foster parent, including relatives, general applicants, Tribal providers, child specific providers, adoptive parents, and guardians.

1.) How do I parent a child who has experienced trauma?
   a. Understand how history, behavior and needs are related to previous trauma.
   b. Understand how trauma can impact relationships.
   c. Understand the impact of separation, placement changes, and inconsistent living environments.
   d. Understand how a trauma informed approach to parenting benefits and supports children.
   e. Understand the impact of trauma on child behavior and development.
   f. Understand the nature and extent of sex abuse and impact on children and families.
   g. Develop a trauma informed equity lens regarding sexual and gender identity.
   h. Understand the concept of triggers and how to proactively address them.
   i. Understand behavior as a form communication and the need behind it.
   j. Understand why physical punishment is not a good solution for children, especially those with trauma histories.
   k. Understand why a child who has experienced trauma may not display behaviors that match their chronological age.
   l. Understand allowable discipline techniques, including agency rules related to discipline.
   m. Understand the importance of setting realistic boundaries, expectations and rules.
   n. Understand how to use a strength based approaches to parenting.
   o. Know and be able to apply the CANS to behavioral interventions.
   p. Know the difference between discipline, punishment, parenting, behavior modification, and supporting pro-social behaviors.

Note to Reviewers: We would like all areas of skills and knowledge to: *Have an emphasis on relationship
*Be inclusive of all children (ID/DD, children of color, special medical needs, etc)
*Be written in common language
*Be written in strengths based language
*Include Standards & Rule where applicable
*Include race equity and trauma informed lenses
q. Be aware of the behavioral responses that can be associated with the stages of adjustment in placements.

r. Aware of parenting approaches such as Trust Based Relationship Intervention and Collaborative Problem Solving as possible resources to help parent a child who has experienced trauma.

2.) How do I parent in a way that is equitable and inclusive? (formerly Racial Equity category)
   a. Understand what it means to have an equity lens
   b. Understand the use of foster care in the United States as a tool to separate children of color from their culture, language, etc.
   c. Understand implicit bias’s you may hold and how they impact your parenting or interactions with families
   d. Understand the history of racism in Oregon and its impact on families of color
   e. Understand disproportionality of over-represented children of color in the child welfare system.
   f. Understand the trauma created by system involvement and related equity issues.

3.) How can I be culturally responsive as a caregiver? (formerly Cultural Responsiveness category)
   a. Understand and appreciate that different people see the world in different ways.
   b. Know the difference between race, culture and ethnicity.
   c. Respect the race, cultural identities, spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, disabilities, and national origin of all children or youth.
   d. Understand the ways your cultural background, values, beliefs, and standards may be different from each child’s and their family.
   e. Understand how differences in cultural background, values, beliefs, and standards can affect a child’s ability to adjust to your home.
   f. Understand importance of maintaining a child’s connection to their tribe, culture and community.
   g. Be aware that you may need to teach a child to navigate the world with an understanding of the way the world sees them [?]
   h. Seek to understand how race, ethnicity, and culture may be expressed by children and their families.

4.) What do I need to know about human growth & development? (formerly Human Growth & Development)
   a. Understand basic human development from birth to adulthood.
   b. Understand sexual development.
   c. Understand the impact of trauma on development and behavior.
   d. Understand the physical, developmental, social and mental health needs of children at different stages in life.
e. Understand how to build age appropriate and safe environments
f. Understand resiliency and how you can contribute to developing resiliency in children and youth.
g. Understand the changing roles and responsibilities for children and youth as they develop (e.g. going to movies with friends, Reasonable and Prudent Parenting, being able to babysit)
h. Be aware of the impact of drug and alcohol exposure (e.g. FASD, neurodevelopment).
i. Understand the unique needs of 18-21-year old’s, including transitioning to adulthood
j. Be aware of common mental health diagnoses children have and how you can support them.

5.) **What are my roles and responsibilities as a Caregiver?**
   a. Understand the state expectations of certified foster parents and common challenges caregivers face.
   b. Know how to develop a shared understanding of being part of the child welfare system team.
   c. Know how to access, connect to, and coordinate resources and services.
   d. Understand the temporary nature of foster care.
   e. Understand what caregivers can do in their role and where to seek answers to questions.
   f. Be aware of local resources available.
   g. Know how to advocate and be a voice for children in your care, including in the court process, Citizen Review Board (CRB), Independent Education Plans (IEP), case planning, Family Decision Meetings
   h. Develop a basic understanding of how to access and navigate service systems specific to the children in your home.
   i. Know how to effectively communicate with all child welfare system partners.
   j. Be aware of the expectations regarding posting and accountability of the Sibling Bill of Rights, Foster Parent Bill of Rights and Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

6.) **What do I need to know about the child welfare system? (formerly Child Welfare System Basics)**
   a. Understand the history of foster care in the United States
   c. Understand rules related to refugee and immigrant children.
   d. Understand the roles of system partners, including the Citizen Review Board (CRB), Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), attorneys, Tribes, and other parties to the case.
   e. Understand the differences and similarities between general applicants, relatives, guardians and adoptive parents.
f. Understand the court processes and timelines, including hearings, types and frequency.

g. Understand the different roles in child welfare, including the difference between certifiers and caseworkers.

h. Be aware of the rules and policies surrounding the Sibling Bill of Rights, Foster Parent Bill of Rights and Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

i. Understand the supports potentially available to foster parents, including respite care, visitation plans, case plans, etc.

j. Understand the different meetings that caregivers should be included in as a participant in the case, including Family Decision Meetings and Life Meetings.

k. Know three goals of child welfare: safety, permanency, well-being

l. Know the rules for having a safe environment for children in their placements.

m. Understand the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard

7.) How can I best support the well-being of my family? (formerly Well-being of Caregiving Family)

a. Know how to use available resources and support networks to support your needs.

b. Know how to prepare to welcome children, including the impact on your family, regular self-care, and any ground work regarding family basics (rooms, space, rules, etc.)

c. Understand how to develop safe emotional boundaries for your and all members of your family.

d. Know how to support your own family through the challenges of caregiving, especially loss and grief, crisis management, and transitions.

e. Know how to develop a support system and maintain balance.

f. Understand the importance of consistency and boundaries as a caregiver.

g. Understand the impact on your own children by having DHS children placed in your home.

h. Understand trauma stewardship, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress.

i. Develop a plan to maintain balance with expectations, rules, feelings and perspectives.

8.) How do I Best Support the Children and Youth That Enter My Home? (formerly Supporting Children and Youth):

a. Understand how to recognize the unique social, emotional, and physical well-being needs of each child or youth

b. Understand when and how to develop a plan and gain appropriate supports to meet the unique needs of each child or youth.
c. Know how to use all available community resources to support children, including but not limited to: educational, mental health, medical, cultural opportunities, identity development opportunities, extracurricular activities.

d. Know how to talk about hard things unique to children in foster care, like permanency plans, things they may have heard in court, etc.

e. Be aware of permanency issues throughout the life of a child welfare case.

f. Be aware of the benefits of mentoring and coaching a child's family.

g. Understand the range options you have to communicate and team with a child's family.

h. Understand roles and responsibilities of all people involved with each child or youth.

i. Understand the importance of attachment and the impact on children when healthy attachments are not developed.

j. Be aware of the reciprocal roles of families (shared parenting).

k. Respect how the child or youth feels about their family and how they want to refer to them.

l. Understand the importance of supporting the child's relationship with their family through connections, visitation, communication and involvement.

m. Be aware of the importance of, and provide opportunities that enhance the positive self-concept and understanding of heritage of the child or young adult.

9.) What do I need to know about family conditions and dynamics common in families who become involved with child welfare?

a. Understand common issues a child's family may have experienced, or are experiencing now.

b. Understand the impacts of generational system involvement, generational poverty.

10.) How Can I Support Healthy Transitions for children and youth?

a. Know how to navigate the first 24 hours with a new child in your home

b. Understand the impact of loss and grief.

c. Understand the various types of transitions children and youth experience, and your role in them.

d. Understand the impact of all transitions on your family as well.

e. Know how to support trauma informed, developmentally appropriate transitions.

f. Know the stages of adjustment in placements.

g. Understand youth transition needs and resources available to youth on track to age out of foster care.

h. Understand unique needs of youth 18-21, and your role in supporting their transition to independence.

i. Understand what healthy and supported transition could look like for a youth in your home, and what you willing and able to commit to for future support of the young adult.
j. Know how to model for youth what it means to be an adult and engage them in skill building
1.7.1.1 Identified Stakeholders for Caregiver Training Redesign
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For **in-person vetting**, there will be 2 standard processes: Presentation or Work Session. Work Session includes a facilitated discussion to actively engage participants in process of revising the CASK. Presentation includes a brief overview followed by Q&A, with the ask for participants to provide written feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Group</th>
<th>First</th>
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<th>How</th>
<th>When/where</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABlenet ERG</td>
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<td>Action for Advocacy</td>
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<td><strong>BEST ERG</strong></td>
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<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Sampson-Grier</td>
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<td>District Managers and Program Managers</td>
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<td>Every Child</td>
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<td>Family Reunification Program Participants</td>
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<td>In-Person?</td>
<td>4/26 Professional Development Day</td>
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<td>Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>July 10th 9 Tribes OR ICWA Aug. 8th</td>
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<td>Jackson County Foster Parent Association</td>
<td>Sharon</td>
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<td>Lane County Foster Parent Association</td>
<td>Cheri</td>
<td>Curry</td>
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1.7.1.1 Identified Stakeholders for Caregiver Training Redesign
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Group</th>
<th>First</th>
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<td>Linn County Foster Parent Association</td>
<td>Jen-Linn</td>
<td>O'Connell</td>
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<td>Marion, Polk, &amp; Yamhill Foster Parent Association</td>
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<td>Multnomah Youth Advisory</td>
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<td>Oregon Community Programs</td>
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<td>Lisa</td>
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<td>Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center</td>
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<td>Oregon Social Learning Center</td>
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<td>Parent Advisory Council</td>
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<td>Polk Youth Services</td>
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<td>PRIDE ERG</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSU Child Welfare Partnership Trainers</td>
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### Identified Stakeholders for Caregiver Training Redesign

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<tr>
<td>State Child Welfare Program Managers</td>
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<td>In-person, Presentation</td>
<td>July 17th</td>
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<td>Unified Plan Steering Team</td>
<td>Nathan</td>
<td>Rix</td>
<td>In-person, Presentation</td>
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<td>Washington County LGBTQ – SSA’s, Staff, Support team</td>
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<td>Youth, Rights, and Justice</td>
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**Additional Discussion Needed**

- Tribal Child Welfare Program Staff
- Native Teen Gathering?
- Maple Star Pilot program trainers?
- DHS Child Welfare Staff – Certifiers, Trainers, Caseworkers, SSA’s
- Service Providers/Nonprofits
- All current foster parents in email system?
- Individual foster parents – (via: Robyn Marshall,

- Individual youth – (via: Nicole Stapp,

- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Community - OEMS
As part of the information gathering work that the Caregiver Training Re-Design did, a survey was developed for caregivers regarding their training needs. The survey was available both in English and Spanish and could be completed online or on paper. Responses were received between January and March 2018.

**Demographics**

**Respondent**
643 caregivers took the survey
- 72% were from urban counties and 24% from rural counties
- 90% identified as White
- 99% indicated their primary language is English

**Placement**
- 60% had 1-2 children placed in the past 12 months
- 23% were caring for a child eligible/receiving DD services

Age Ranges of the children they were caring for:
- 0-5: 63.3%
- 6 yrs - 12…: 46.2%
- 13 yrs -17…: 26.1%
- 18+: 5.4%

**Caregivers were asked if the children placed with them were different from them in the following ways:**

- **Sexual Orientation**
  - Yes: 12.7%
  - No: 87.3%

- **Religion**
  - Yes: 24.3%
  - No: 75.7%

- **Culture**
  - Yes: 23.6%
  - No: 76.4%

- **Race/Ethnicity**
  - Yes: 39.8%
  - No: 60.2%

**Foundations Training**

- **86% completed Foundations** within the last 5 years at the time of the survey.
- **About 70% did the training over several weeks**, while about 26% completed it over a weekend(s)
- **74% agreed that Foundations helped prepare them to be a caregiver**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Liked About Foundations</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic information about DHS Child Welfare</td>
<td>Provide more realistic information</td>
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<tr>
<td>What to expect as a foster parent</td>
<td>More comprehensive information in: Working with biological parents; Trauma-informed parenting; Behavior Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS Child Welfare policies, practices, and paperwork</td>
<td>Separate training for relative caregivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foster parent Panels</td>
<td>More foster parent panels, bio parents, foster youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hearing from foster youth and biological families</td>
<td>More information/support about self-care, respite, how caregiving can impact their biological children, and family dynamics</td>
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<td>More information about caring for teens</td>
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<td></td>
<td>More information about working with LGBTQ children/families and families of color</td>
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</table>
Ongoing Training

Training Preferences
- Caregivers indicated they were most likely to participate in training that is online pre-recorded training (87%) or in person (78%), but only about 12% had completed any training through the foster parent college (several indicated they did not know about it).
- 92% were comfortable using technology to participate in training (e.g. smart phone, computer, tablet)
- Of note is that the majority of the respondents completed this survey online

Barriers to Attending Training
- No child care available (26%) and not offered on days/times that they could attend (23)

Would Like (More) Training In
- Behavior management
- Mental health, substance misuse, and disability
- Navigating and advocating for appropriate services
- Working with DHS, including better understanding the legal process, expectations for caregivers, and improving communication with and responsiveness of DHS staff.
- Training specific to the needs of teens
- Working with biological families
- Cultural awareness

Recommendations for More Supportive & Welcoming Training Environments
- Need for childcare
- Provision of food and beverages
- Host at sites other than DHS, and ensuring comfortable room size, seating and temperature
- Smaller classes with greater opportunities to interact with, learn from, and provide/receive support from other caregivers
- More flexible and varied scheduling options; trainings in closer proximity to their home community; greater availability of online training

Agency Expectations of Caregivers
- 87% agreed that they knew what DHS-CW expectations are of them as a caregiver, to improve they suggested:
  - More communication
  - Clear expectations
  - Provide consistent information
  - Provide more written information regarding caregiving expectations
  - Include caregivers as “part of the team”

For a complete report of survey findings, please contact: Kirstin O’Dell (503)399-5152 or odellk@pdx.edu
As part of the information gathering work that the Caregiver Training Re-Design did, DHS-Child Welfare staff were sent an online survey to complete regarding caregiver training needs. Responses were received between December 2017 and February 2018.

Demographics

280 staff took the survey
69% were from urban counties, 30% were from rural, 1% were from central office
29% certification; 25% permanency/ongoing; 14% CPS
Over 50% of the staff have worked for child welfare 9 or more years

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities Caregivers Need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding of the DHS-Child Welfare System</th>
<th>Desirable Personal Characteristics of Caregivers: patience, flexibility, compassion/empathy, team player and good communicator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becoming Trauma-Informed; taking a child-centered approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parenting High-Need Children</td>
<td>Understand basic guidelines around Placement Adequacy and Safety (e.g., CPR/First Aid, transportation, clean home, etc.)</td>
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<td>effective behavior management strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>foundational knowledge in the area of child development</td>
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<tr>
<td>an understanding of attachment theory, styles, and disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working with Birth Families</td>
<td>Cultural responsiveness through demonstrating respect and appreciation of diverse cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health, addiction and disability issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Community Resources and Services</td>
<td>Understand the needs of youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Awareness, Self-Care and Access to Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barriers to Caregivers Receiving Training

- **Lack of child care** - failure of agency to provide or reimburse for child care; lack of availability of child care in some communities; Challenges finding child care for children with behavioral challenges
- **Amount of time required** on the part of caregivers - according to respondents, most caregivers are extremely busy with work, caregiving (often for multiple children) and numerous child appointments. The word “exhausted” was used to describe caregivers.
- **Training schedules often are not conducive to participation** may be offered too infrequently and/or at inconvenient times (e.g. conflicts with work schedules).
- **Training location** including needing to travel long distances and lack of transportation. Rural respondents were more than twice as likely as urban respondents to highlight this barrier.
82% of staff most familiar with Foundations training agreed that it helps prepare people to be caregivers.

The themes from all respondents about what they liked and thought could be improved in Foundations were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liked About Foundations</th>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic introduction to child abuse and neglect, trauma, and the needs of children placed in care.</td>
<td>It is too long and too dense for all of the information to be retained by participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a general overview of DHS-Child Welfare policies and procedures.</td>
<td>Provide more realistic, interactive, “hands-on” opportunities for learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuable opportunity to meet and hear about the firsthand experiences of current foster parents and begin making supportive peer connections</td>
<td>Need to present a realistic picture of caregiving and highlighted the importance of including youth and biological parent voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes information about working as a team with DHS-Child Welfare.</td>
<td>Increase accessibility by offering more flexible and easily-assimilated options for training, including: providing child care, breaking up into smaller “chunks”; online training; schedule more frequent and flexible times of day/days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes the importance of birth family.</td>
<td>Provide caregivers with a variety of supports and resources to better enable effective caregiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes cultural responsiveness. e.g., “valuing the child’s heritage;” “the importance of sensitivity to cultural differences.”</td>
<td>Include more training on culturally responsive caregiving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post Foundations training, staff indicated the need for 1) supplemental, more intensive training in Trauma-informed caregiving; Understanding the legal system and the life of a case; the reasons for and rationales driving DHS policies and practices; and Behavior management strategies and 2) a ‘refresher’ training for Foundations.

**Areas Caregivers Need the Most Ongoing Training**

- Trauma training— both in terms of understanding the effects of trauma on children, and in bringing a more trauma-informed approach to caregiving.
- Behavior Management- more comprehensive and trauma-informed training
- DHS policy and procedures

*It was recognized that this information is introduced in *Foundations*, but is inherently complex and challenging to assimilate.*

**Foundations Trainers**

22% of staff indicated they had trained Foundations in the last year. They had the following recommendations:

- Foundations needs updated and “professional looking” training materials, particularly videos.
- Provide child care for participating caregivers, as well as food and beverages
- Include more interactive approaches to training, informed by adult learning principles.
- Use dedicated trainers to train Foundations instead of rotating the responsibility between local branch staff
- Have more trainings and materials in languages other than English (primarily Spanish), as well more diverse trainers

For a complete report of survey findings, please contact: Kirstin O’Dell (503)399-5152 or odelk@pdx.edu