

Missouri Department of Social Services

**Recommendations
for the
Missouri Department of Higher Education
Coordinated Plan Steering Committee**

January 29, 2015

Expand public sector - higher education partnerships to better prepare students to work in human service disciplines of child protection, juvenile offender rehabilitation and family support

- Collaborative approach to strengthen the state's human services workforce
- Incorporates educational and training elements geared toward building organizational capacity, operational effectiveness, leadership, worker satisfaction/retention
- Collaborative development of curricula
- Incorporates applied research and evaluation; development and promotion of best practices
- Traineeships based on the following principles:
 - Deliberate recruitment of student participants based on jointly-established criteria
 - Education and experiential learning focused on core competencies
 - Rotation through multiple field placements
 - Periodic learning cohort meetings
 - Gateway to employment
- DSS Children's Division is currently involved in two projects founded on this general model, one with UMKC and other with Missouri State

Targeted training or certificate programs to develop child welfare, juvenile rehabilitation and family support competencies in current employees and students

- Focused on specific skills and subject matter directly related to improved organizational performance, and outcomes
- Collaborative development of curricula; regular review and updating of curricula
- Current workforce professional development/continuing education opportunity
- Credit or non-credit course work

Support for vulnerable students for foster children (especially those aging out of the system) and youth encountering the juvenile justice who often lack the family and community supports

- Mentoring-type programs to help connect the student to the academic community and to provide guidance in managing practical issues of housing, health care, finances, etc.
- Coordinated and more substantial financial assistance especially for the foster youth who has aged out of the child welfare system