



Background

The 2023-24 Community of Practice (CoP) brought together the inaugural cohort of 13 WSW students and their practicum/field instructors for a 2-part, 20 session virtual learning community followed by a 2-day, in-person retreat. Part 1 (sessions 1-10) covered systems-level models for addressing school-based behavioral healthcare needs in a social work context. Part 2 (sessions 11-20) explored innovations and interventions related to common topics in school social work practice. The retreat offered training on suicide prevention, adolescent anxiety intervention, and Educational Staff Associate Certificate training.

Evaluation Information: To measure the impact of the CoP, the Impact of Training and Technical Assistance (IOTTA) was collected during sessions 10 and 20. The IOTTA assesses participant competency and confidence in applying new skills, training organization, presenter credibility, and perceived impacts on participants' work. 20 responses were received at each time-point and aggregate ratings were analyzed. For the retreat, separate evaluations were used for each of the 3 trainings, in addition to a brief, post-retreat evaluation. 18 participants (13 WSW Students and 5 WSW Instructors) responded.

Findings

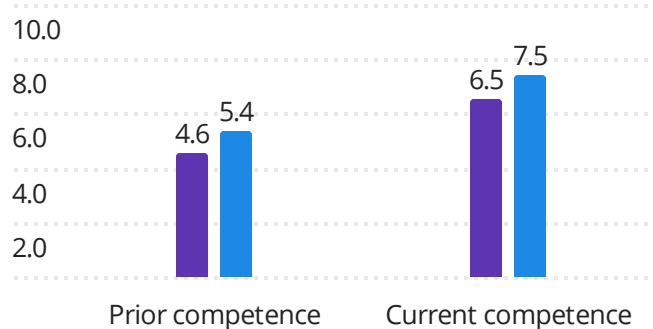
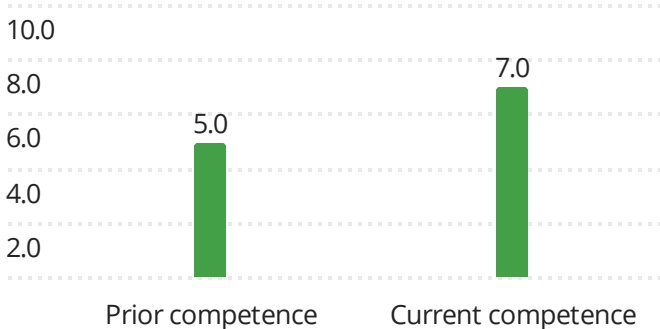
Aggregate results indicate participants found the CoP to be both high-quality and effective. On average, participants reported the CoP was **well organized (8.3/10)**, the learning objectives were **important to their current roles (7.9/10)**, the CoP was **delivered with inclusive methods (7.8/10)**, and they experienced **positive impacts to their work (1.9/3)**. They also reported **increasing competence with the materials and tools presented by 40%**. Additional breakout analyses were conducted to gauge differences between CoP part 1 and 2. As shown in the charts below, ratings for part 2 (blue) are typically higher than part 1 (purple). In open-ended comments, participants highlighted how the CoP enhanced their understanding of school behavioral health systems and increased confidence in their ability to make a larger impact within school systems and communities. For the retreat, responses indicate a similar level of satisfaction, with the length being rated "just right" (83% agreement) and the training topics "very helpful" (Average rating: 3.4 out of 4).

Selected item-level ratings, qualitative comments, and feedback about the retreat are presented below for additional review.

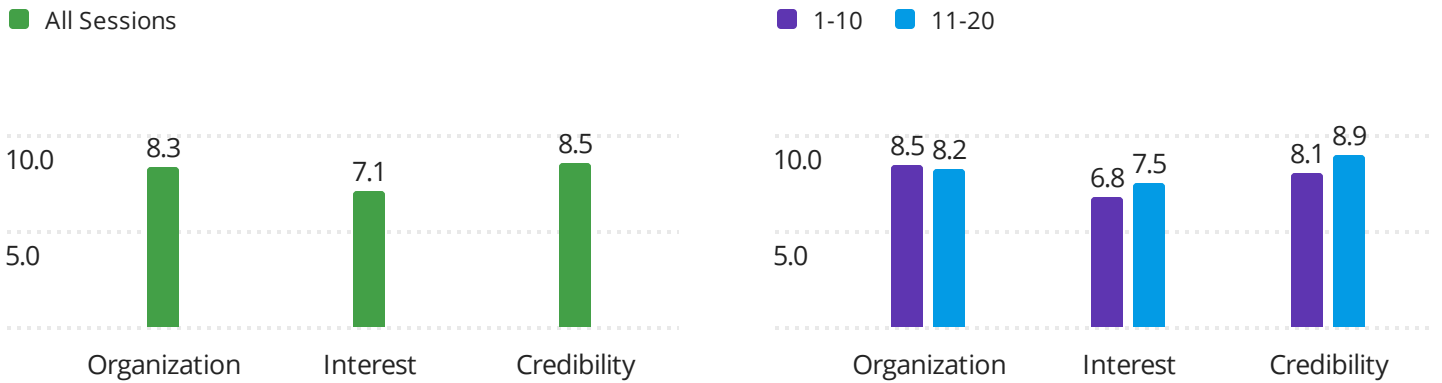
Competence Change *Prior competence: Before the CoP, what level of competence did you have with the information, tools, and/or skills described in the learning objectives? | Current competence: Given what you learned in the CoP, what do you think your level of competence with the information, tools, and/or skills described is now?*

■ All Sessions

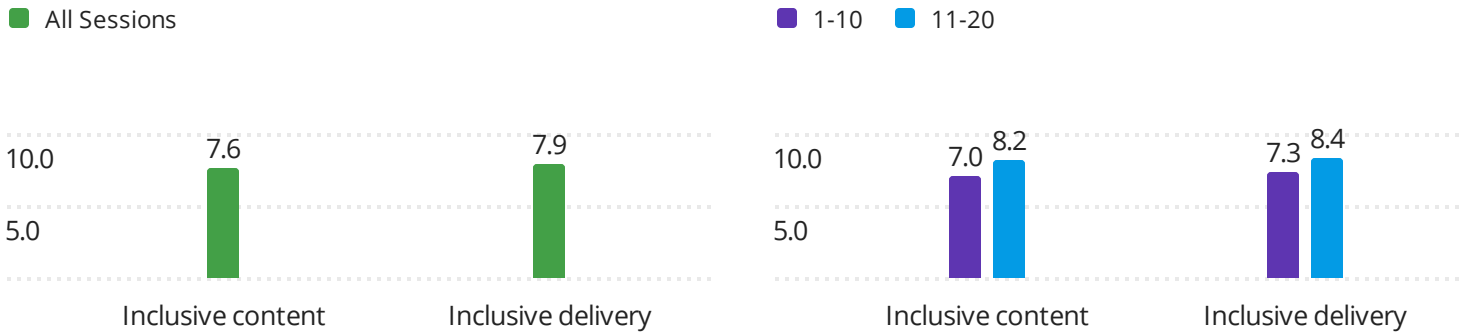
■ 1-10 ■ 11-20



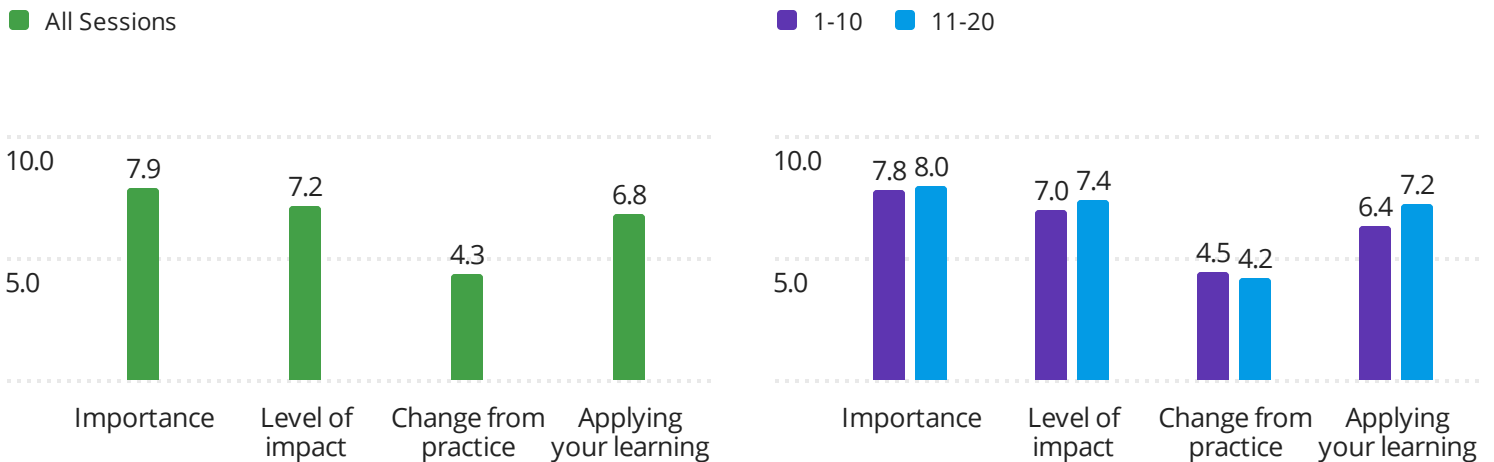
Training Quality Ratings *Organization: Overall, how well organized and coherent was the CoP? | Interest: Overall, did you find that the CoP held your attention? | Credibility: To what extent did you find the presenters credible in terms of being fully competent and having a high level of expertise relevant to helping CoP participants achieve the learning objectives?*



Training Inclusivity Ratings *Inclusive content: From your perspective, to what extent did this CoP address any racial, ethnic, and/or social justice concerns related to the CoP topic(s)? | Inclusive delivery: From your perspective, to what extent was the CoP delivered in a racially/ethnically/socially conscious manner?*



Practical Application Ratings *Importance: In your current role, how important is it for you to be competent in the information, tools, and/or skills described in the learning objectives? | Level of impact: What level of impact do you think that this CoP will contribute to in your work over the coming months? | Change from practice: How different is what you learned in this CoP from how you currently approach your work? | Applying your learning: How confident are you that you will be able to integrate the new information, tools and/or skills you learned from the CoP into your work within the next two months?*

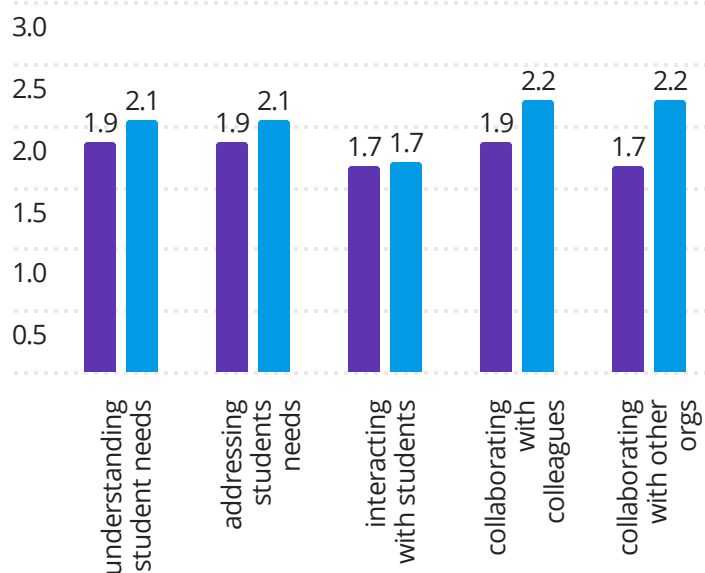
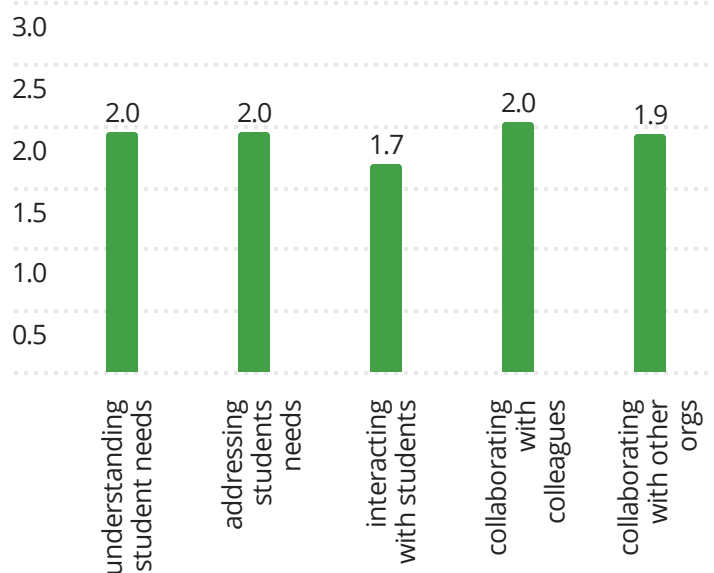


Type of impact *Type of impact: How will what you learned/gained from this CoP impact... How you understand students' needs | What you do to address students' needs | How you interact with students | How you collaborate with your colleagues | How you collaborate with other organizations in the community*

■ All Sessions

■ 1-10

■ 11-20



The information from the CoP I found most useful was...

Sessions 1-10: "I found the information provided each week incredibly helpful and enlightening. For me to fully understand something on the ground level, I need to see the whole picture, the overarching system. In school, we do not spend a concentrated amount of time on anything really, especially in an advanced generalist program. CoP provided insight into the not only students and families, but the schools, districts, Washington State and the country as a whole."

Sessions 11-20: "It would be impossible for me to list just one thing here. When I look back at the content of WSW, everything in the second half was profoundly useful. Working in a higher needs school, so much of my time and my colleagues time is centered around behavior. I looked forward to CoP each week, knowing that I would learn something that pertained to my role in schools. It was amazing! If anything I was disappointed when it was cut short or we didn't have time to discuss more."

During the CoP, I wish I received...

Sessions 1-10: "During the CoP, I believe I would have benefitted from more time to network with professionals. Maybe additional breakout rooms to just meet with the presenters."

Sessions 11-20: "I think it would be great to emphasize that every social worker in a school system may have a different set of job expectations than someone else. Some may do 504s, attendance, others may be purely behavioral support, while some are teaching small groups while helping with IEP supports. There are others that are purely clinical and that means they do something completely different. It is hard to pinpoint what we specifically do, because we do it all! :)"

Specific Impact: What, specifically, is the major impact you anticipate this CoP having on your work?

Sessions 1-10: “I cannot even begin to describe the impact that CoP and WSW has had on my work currently and the impact it will have on my work moving forward. It has a lit a fire inside of me, on a level I didn't know existed. As social workers, we often have that fire within us to fight for change, for justice, for humans. I have always been drawn to work with adolescents/teenagers. I never saw myself as someone who had the potential to make a real difference on a system level until now. My thoughts are realistic, I know that change does not happen quickly and it is often an uphill battle. But I feel inspired to start that journey uphill and know that I have the tools and support from this incredible professional group to do so. I really am so grateful.”

Sessions 11-20: “When I first started my graduate studies, I was primarily focused on the pursuit of my clinical license. I have always wanted to work with adolescents, teens and young adults. Being part of a school system has been my direction from the beginning. CoP has inspired me to pursue more than just working with individuals. It has given me the confidence and knowledge to believe I can have a much larger impact on how we work within our school systems and communities. As a social worker doing clinical work with students, my focus is the student. But CoP has given me additional insight to work with students inside multiple other systems that I didn't fully understand previously. Knowledge is power in this line of work. The more people you can connect with, the more resources you have available to help our students. We all need to be working smarter and TOGETHER to make real change. I am forever changed because of this experience with the WSW. Thank you for giving me this opportunity and hope there will continued connections made throughout my future work in schools.”

Retreat Feedback

Retreat Information: As noted above, the retreat included 3 distinct training sessions with unique evaluations. During the first day, 10 participants attended a 5-hour Educational Staff Associate (ESA) Certificate Training. This in-person training session was the conclusion of an asynchronous ESA course, provided by Tawni Barlow (Ed.S., M.Ed.). Day 1 participant roles included: 7 WSW students, 2 WSW practicum instructors, and 1 non-WSW MSW student. Day 2 began with a 3-hour Asking is Caring (AIC): Training for ESA Professionals in Suicide Prevention and Intervention, presented by Jenn Stuber (Ph.D.) and Tawni Barlow (Ed.S., M.Ed.). AIC was followed by a 2-hour First Approach Skills Training for Child & Adolescent Anxiety (FAST-A) session. This session focused on brief, exposure-based therapy and was provided by child and adolescent psychologist, Nathaniel John Jungbluth (Ph.D.). Day 2 participant roles included: 12 WSW students, 4 WSW practicum instructors, 6 WSW team members, and 2 WSW affiliates.

ESA Certificate Training Results: 4 participants responded to the brief post-training evaluation which asked the extent to which intended learning goals were achieved on a scale of: 0 “Not well at all” to 4 “Extremely well.” Overall, participants found the learning goals were very well met (average rating: 3/4).

AIC Training Results: After the training, all 14 respondents agreed they could help and intervene with a student at risk of suicide and the training increased their understanding of suicide. Additionally, 93% were satisfied with the training and over 90% said they are very likely to use what they learned. On a scale of 1 (complete beginner) to 10 (fully expert), respondents rated their prior knowledge an average of 5.5, which increased to 7.3 post-training—a 33% improvement.

FAST-A Training Results: 16 participants responded to the post-training evaluation which asked about their satisfaction with the training provided and their perception of the intervention. Results indicate participants found the training to be both satisfactory and impactful. Specifically, 100% of respondents: were satisfied with the training overall, believed they were better able to support youth with anxiety following this training, and are likely to use the resources and information provided. Additionally, participants perceived the intervention to be both usable (4.3/5) and appropriate (4.4/5).