



DCF COVID-19 Daily Update Supporting Children, Families and Staff

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ACADEMY USING TECH FOR INTERACTIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

"We can't go back now that we know what we are capable of doing," says Director Tracy Davis

Life and work is very different during this COVID crisis. So, the Academy for Workforce Development Director Tracy Davis took the challenges of social distancing and remote work as an opportunity to creatively tap technology for a class delivered remotely to about 25 intake workers.

For the first time in late March, the Academy used Microsoft Teams to conduct an interactive learning session on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

"In these challenging times, its forced us to look at technology in a different way," Ms. Davis said. "We can't go back now that we know what we are capable of doing."

The intake workers - already armed with tablets that were previously provided to social workers through the Department's mobility project -- participated in the learning session using the teleconferencing platform Microsoft Teams. Teams permits all the participants to both be seen and heard live as well as submit comments and questions through a chat/text feature.

Louise Montemurro, Academy program supervisor, said it went very well and was well received by the participants.

"There is that opportunity to have face-to-face dialogue," Ms. Montemurro said. "It's like delivering the same content that we would offer at the Academy, but instead of having people physically there, it is all done remotely."

She said the trainers -- Dyshawn Thames and Laura Wilkerson -- did a wonderful job, especially as this was the first time Teams was used. "Participants thought it was well presented," Ms. Montemurro said of the feedback the Academy regularly solicits. "They got what they needed."

Ms. Davis said this initial experience will lead the Academy to push the use of technology forward. Please stay tuned for additional updates from the Academy and the innovative ways training will be delivered!

"We will definitely explore other classes that can be taught online," she said.