

**COUNTY OF**



**ALLEGHENY**

**RICH FITZGERALD**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

June 18, 2020

Dear Colleague:

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS), embarks on the Fourteenth year of the Credential for Strengths-based Workers' (SFW) Program. We lead the State in the number of credentialed workers and leaders. Currently there are 1,122 people who have received their credential including 204 supervisors and administrators who have earned the Leadership Credential. The trained staff comes from several different agencies with some who have found it so useful, they've made it a requirement.

As a DHS provider, you have probably heard about the many positive changes that we have been incorporating into our work. As a result of our renewed commitment to have a system that is more responsive to families, the SFW program has grown in its importance. It aligns with our Conferencing and Teaming practice, reinforcing a common philosophy and language in our work with families and individuals across disciplines. Your staff will experience a tangible, strengths-based approach designed to help families reach their goals and attain a healthy self-reliance and interdependence with their communities. Individual credentialed workers have reported greater professional opportunities, a higher level of satisfaction and confidence in their work, and enhanced work relationships, both personal and professional. I encourage you to have the direct service staff and supervisors from your agency enroll in one of the four upcoming SFW classes and the one Leadership class.

The Leadership Credential for Strengths-based Family Work (LSFW) training provides agency leaders and supervisors with practical ways to support their workers as they practice their new approach with families and to develop partnerships that promote the use of family development principles and skills. I highly recommend participation in this level of training for you and/or your supervisory staff.

After successfully meeting the requirements of SFW or LSF, participants receive a credential that is increasingly recognized by professionals in the field of human services, as well as accepted by local colleges and universities for seven college credits.

Providers have demonstrated the high value they place on the principles of family development by incorporating them into their work with families and their supervision of staff; requiring or preferring candidates with an SFW in their hiring decisions; lending staff to be instructors and/or portfolio advisors for an SFW class; and donating space to hold SFW classes.

To learn more about the SFW and LSFW trainings, please refer to the enclosed information materials and/or call Eva Bey at (412) 350-5805. **Please note that the next sessions will be virtual as opposed to in-person trainings.** I look forward to hearing about your experiences as your agency staff engages in this exciting professional opportunity.

Sincerely,



Marc Cherna  
Director

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MARC CHERNA, DIRECTOR  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
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