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Toolkit Offers Training on Psychotropic Meds Administration to Foster Care Population

August 14, 2017

The [Psychotropic Medication Toolkit](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit>) is among the latest in CalSWEC's series of toolkits that addresses various statewide child welfare initiatives.

The [California Department of Social Services \(CDSS\)](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/) (<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/>) wanted this toolkit to serve as a central dissemination method for curriculum materials, says Project Manager Shay O'Brien.

"Because the [Guidelines for the Use of Psychotropic Medication with Children and Youth in Foster Care](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf/ca_guidelines_1.pdf) (http://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/pdf/ca_guidelines_1.pdf), CDSS's primary document on this topic, is regularly revised, it wanted a place where it and all relevant documents could be kept and updated regularly," she explains.

[See All of CalSWECs Toolkits](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits>)

Along with these guidelines, the [Psychotropic Medication Toolkit](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit>) provides access to the most current curriculum, both [classroom](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit/classroom-curriculum) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit/classroom-curriculum>) and [eLearning](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit/elearning) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit/elearning>), of the mandated training for the administration of psychotropic medication to children and youth in foster care in California, as well as other pertinent materials and resources. The toolkit will also list upcoming events and [relevant news and announcements](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit/latest-news) (<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/psychotropic-medication-toolkit/latest-news>).

[Senate Bill 238](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB238) (https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB238), signed into law by Governor Brown on October 6, 2015, stipulates that certain professionals and others who work with children and youth in foster care should be trained in the important topics related to the administration of psychotropic medication.

Specifically, training about psychotropic medication and trauma as related to children and youth in foster care, along with information about behavioral health and substance use, is to be provided to:

- group home administrators,
- foster parents,
- child welfare social workers,
- probation officers,
- public health nurses,
- dependency court judges and attorneys,
- court appointed counsel, and
- special advocates.

Background

S.B. 238 is among several laws to improve mental health services in foster care. These laws make explicit that children and youth in foster care, along with their families and representatives, must be allowed to provide input into whether or not psychotropic medication is part of their treatment plan.

The regulations resulted after several media reports and studies revealed that the rate of psychotropic medication prescriptions for children and youth in foster care is higher than the general population, with an alarming number having been prescribed multiple potent classes of drugs to be taken simultaneously.



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