Center for Adoption Support and Education

The Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) assessment-based certificate has 20 training centers across the country and over 2,500 graduates. TAC attained ACAP accreditation in November 2020.

nurture.
inspire.
empower.

C.A.S.E. is a national leader transforming the mental health of the Adoption, Foster, and Kinship Community. Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) is the nation's premiere assessment-based certificate program for training mental health practitioners and developing adoption competency skills.

Adoptive parents report challenges finding therapists who understand their children's needs. Most clinicians don't receive advanced training on the unique needs of this population. Through classroom and remote instruction, as well as clinical case consultation, TAC students master key clinical skills that support adopted children and their foster, adoptive and kinship families. This results in a cadre of highly trained, exceptionally qualified therapists who can help these families thrive.

"Accreditation added that extra layer of 'oh, we're not just a training, we really are an assessment-based certificate program.' We have 25 years of expertise in adoption competency that has come to fruition through this assessment- based certificate program. It's building on the years of direct mental health service that we were providing to families—and still provide the families—that went into the development of the training. That's pretty impressive."

Dawn Wilson
Director of the Training Institute
Center for Adoption Support and Education

WHY C.A.S.E. SOUGHT ACCREDITATION

C.A.S.E. recognized that accreditation provides a recognized and rigorous standard that distinguishes the TAC program from certification. With many training programs erroneously marketing themselves as a certification, ACAP accreditation provides quality benchmarks for assessment-based certificate programs to set themselves apart. Accreditation ensures the TAC program meets recognized standards, similar to those required for universities or hospitals, thereby providing more credibility and assurance of quality. Moreover, accreditation is a strategic move to demonstrate commitment to high standards and continuous improvement, which will likely appeal to funders and stakeholders.

HOW C.A.S.E. PREPARED FOR ACCREDITATION

1 Prior to starting the accreditation process, C.A.S.E. conducted extensive research into credentialing and certification options. This involved a literature search and consultation to determine the best standards to follow. The decision to pursue accreditation under the ICE 1100 Standard was based on this research and recommendations from their consultant.

2 The consultant's support was vital in managing the extensive workflows of the accreditation process, helping the team balance accreditation tasks with their daily responsibilities. Their expertise streamlined operations, prioritized activities, and ensured no critical tasks were overlooked, contributing to the process's successful completion without disrupting regular work.

3 The accreditation process necessitated meticulous documentation not only as part of the accreditation application, but also as part of the annual report for accredited programs. C.A.S.E. was able to build on existing systematic approaches to tracking and reporting changes to the TAC program. This created a more organized record-keeping system, which is crucial for compliance and program continuity.

4 To transition from a training program to an assessment-based certificate program, C.A.S.E. designed a new summative assessment. By passing the assessment, program stakeholders know that those who earn the certificate have met a defined and rigorous standard of learning.

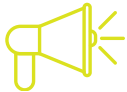# Center for Adoption Support and Education

THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

The accreditation process collectively contributes to strengthening the organization's position in the field, improving operational efficiency, and enhancing the perceived value of the TAC program.

Accreditation can help satisfy funding needs because the TAC program has demonstrated a commitment to high standards and quality.

Accreditation provides a unique marketing angle, as the TAC program can claim to be the only accredited assessment-based certificate program focusing on adoption competency. This distinction helps them stand out in the field and provides a competitive advantage.

The accreditation process improved administrative procedures, notably with an LMS for managing course materials, attendance, and certificate issuance. The annual reporting requirement also prompted C.A.S.E. to systematize TAC program documentation, including the participant manual, onboarding guide, policies, procedures, and program changes. This thorough documentation supports ICE 1100 Standards compliance and preserves institutional knowledge.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR C.A.S.E.

In addition to reaccreditation in 2025, C.A.S.E. is creating an association for TAC professionals to provide ongoing networking and continuing education opportunities. While continuing education is not a required component of the certificate, the TAC program is a gateway to supporting ongoing professional development and maintaining engagement with certificate holders. They also aim to embark on a concerted marketing campaign to promote the TAC program and their status as the only accredited assessment-based certificate program in adoption competency.

"From the inception of TAC, C.A.S.E. aligned a rigorous evaluation protocol and ensured the curriculum was delivered with the highest level of fidelity to position this training as evidenced-based, which we achieved through the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse as our first goal and then allocated significant resources to elevate its level of quality to meet the ICE Accreditation standards. We remain committed to ensuring that our professional community has access to the highest quality of adoption competency training in the country."

Debbie B. Riley LCMFT
CEO, Center for Adoption Support and Education and Developer of Training for Adoption Competency

Institute for Credentialing Excellence

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