

Why Training Standards?

The Association for Specialists in Group Work established its training standards:

- *To describe minimum competencies in group work that all counselors should be expected to meet;*
- *To establish a baseline standard for group work competency that all programs in counseling should provide for all graduates of their programs;*
- *To provide group work competency criteria to guide self-evaluation;*
- *To provide guidance to counselor training programs in the construction of their curricula for graduate programs in counseling;*
- *To promote broader, cross-discipline understanding and application of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values deemed necessary to competent group work practice.*

The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) was founded to promote quality in group work training, practice, and research both nationally and internationally. A division of the American Counseling Association (ACA), ASGW numbers among its members group workers and group work educators from diverse disciplines.

ASGW seeks to enhance the practice of counseling through the use of group process; to provide a forum for examining innovative group practice; to foster dignity and diversity in groups; and to model effective group practice.

For further information about the ASGW standards for training in group work, diversity competence and best practices in group work, or specializations in work group facilitation, group psychoeducation, group counseling, or group psychotherapy, visit our website:

<http://www.asgw.org>



The Association for Specialists in Group Work

A Division of the American Counseling Association

What every counselor must know about groups

Core training for group workers



Core Group Work Competencies

Association for Specialists in Group Work

Nature and Scope of Practice

Knowledge of:

- the nature of group work
- theories of group work
- research literature in group work

Skill in:

- preparing a professional disclosure statement
- applying theoretical concepts and scientific findings

Assessment of Group Members and the Social Systems in Which they Live and Work

Knowledge of:

- principles of assessment of group functioning
- use of personal contextual factors in interpreting behavior of members in a group

Skill in:

- observing and identifying group
- observing the personal characteristics of individual members in a group
- developing hypotheses about the behavior of group members employing contextual factors (in interpretation of individual and group data

Planning Group Interventions

Knowledge of:

- environmental contexts which affect planning for group interventions
- the impact of group member diversity
- principles of planning for group work

Skill in:

- collaborative consultation
- planning for a group work activity

Implementation of Group Interventions

Knowledge of:

- principles of group formation
- principles for effective performance of group leadership functions
- therapeutic factors within group work
- principles of group dynamics

Skills in:

- encouraging participation of group members
- attending to, describing, acknowledging, confronting, understanding, and responding empathically to group member behavior, statements, and themes
- eliciting information from and imparting information to group members
- providing appropriate self-disclosure
- maintaining group focus
- giving and receiving feedback in a group setting

Leadership and Co-Leadership

Knowledge of:

- group leadership styles and approaches
- group work methods
- principles of collaborative group processing

Skill in:

- engaging in reflective evaluation of one's personal leadership style
- working cooperatively with a co-leader and/or group members
- engaging in collaborative group processing.

Evaluation

Knowledge of:

- methods for evaluating group process
- methods for evaluating outcomes

Skill in:

- contributing to evaluation activities during group participation
- engaging in self-evaluation of personally selected performance goals

Ethical Practice, Best Practice, Diversity-Competent Practice

Knowledge of:

- ethical considerations unique to group work