

# CONTACT

FALL  
2009

VOL. I  
No. 3

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM SPIN®USA

THE NATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR SPIN VIDEO HOME TRAINING® AND SPIN VIDEO INTERACTION GUIDANCE®

## CCTA Uses SPIN®VIG AS CORE TOOL FOR ITS NEW LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Central California Training Academy at California State University Fresno has developed a range of programs with SPIN USA over several years (thanks, in large part, to various grants from the Stuart Foundation). Most recently, CCTA began integrating SPIN Video Interaction Guidance® for Leadership Development into their emerging Leadership Institute. David Foster, Director of the Academy, explains that this decision to utilize SPIN VIG within the Academy as a key tool for developing current future leaders was based on a long history with SPIN USA and the "excellent success that we've had in using the SPIN VIG model to develop training capacity and our own leaders".

To David "it's all about expanding CCTA's capacity to offer the strongest, most effective leadership and supervisory training & coaching to the counties it serves." The foundation for doing this was already laid through prior initiatives, which certified the first few cadres of SPIN VIG coaches. Impressed with their impact and recognizing the serious need to develop the next generation of child welfare leaders, CCTA decided to expand its own capacity to train additional SPIN VIG coaches &

sought a new round of funding from the Stuart Foundation to do so.

With this round of funding from the Stuart Foundation, trainer and practitioner certifications are creating a strong and expanded capacity within CCTA to develop and strengthen the leadership skills of the next generation of child welfare supervisors, managers and directors.

For Patty Poulsen, a certified SPIN VIG coach, the versatility of the Collaborative Agenda Setting™ Process

and the strong base that SPIN builds to support the varying responsibilities and functions of directors, managers & supervisors in different arenas are what makes this tool so successful. Margaret Jackson, who has been

involved with this initiative since its inception and who has specific interest & expertise in issues of disproportionality sees SPIN VIG as vital tool for that work as well. She explains that trying to address disproportionality is so difficult because of the controversial, deeply rooted and institutionalized racial and social biases that exist. SPIN is a "very effective tool for reflective supervision...that provides you [the coach] with [a means] of doing that difficult work,

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*Staff at CCTA receiving SPIN VIG training*



Inside this edition of **CONTACT**...

- Staff Development & Supervision: Using VIG to improve model fidelity in home visitation program
- Message from the President: A Solution to the Problem

### Leadership Team

Jane Nestel-Patt, M.Ed., *President/CEO, Master Trainer*

Terri Pease, Ph.D., *Director of Research, Master Trainer*

Sarah Guidi, *Program Coordinator, Assistant to the President*

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giving supervisors the skills that enable and empower them to have those difficult conversations & a tool to help them see & reflect on their successes".

Judy, who is a member of the Leadership Team at CCTA, observes "no matter who you're working with or what you're working on, I think that by promoting positive outcomes and morale [you get] a return on your investment". For Judy, SPIN's strengths-based philosophy and methodology makes it a critical piece of the success of the Leadership Institute. Paralleling this idea is David's expansive plan to target potential leaders and develop their leadership skills early using SPIN, so that in the future the Academy helps build a cadre of qualified professionals who can successfully serve as the next generation of child welfare leaders.



CCTA's capacity to disseminate the SPIN VIG method beyond the Academy is already apparent in Tulare County, where Juliet Webb is currently being certified as a SPIN VIG Coach. "Strengths-based supervision leads to strengths-based practice...you can enhance [staff's] skills as managers and leaders and by doing that...they grow and get better and better because they see the good in what they do and they continue to repeat those activities". Her success with the "real-world application" of SPIN in her own role as a manager and supervisor fuels her desire to see SPIN integrated throughout her agency and in surrounding counties so that all managers and supervisors can share her success and enthusiasm.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Jane Nestel-Patt  
President/CEO

**W**hy has the sum total of the data on the numbers of vulnerable youth not changed in nearly a century? Why are we still failing to deliver programs

and services that actually move national outcomes & data for vulnerable youth in a positive direction?

Does it mean that "outstanding programs and practices" are mere illusions? Does it mean that we really don't know what works? The truth is that "outstanding programs and practices" really do exist and we really do know what works. The research, as well as the anecdotal evidence, is quite clear. *Why, then, do we continue to fail so abysmally?*

Simply put, we are missing the boat on HOW to effectively replicate and implement programs and services that work.

**The problem:** In all endeavors there are two kinds of problems—the technical problems & the human problems.

With technical problems, we have a general sense that we can fix

them ourselves or find others with specialized expertise to figure it out. But when the problems are linked to human factors, we often believe they involve immutable personality or character factors beyond our control.

Today, research across disciplines is revealing that these human factors are critical to achieving success in all arenas, from education and child welfare to business and government: HOW leaders lead, HOW teachers teach, HOW staff are supervised & developed, HOW parents parent.

These are the factors that determine how effectively a program is implemented or outcomes are replicated. In other words, human interactions are the fuel, the platform, the substrate upon which all success is built. Most institutions, however, lack the expertise or methods for impacting these human factors.

**The Solution:** Specific methods that directly target HOW we do our work - not just what we are supposed to do.

Being a brilliant mathematician, for example, does not make one a brilliant math teacher.

The key element that impacts other's learning is NOT content

knowledge, instead it is the nature and quality of the interactions -- the ability to engage, motivate and increase the persistence and efficacy of the learner -- and these factors are MODEL and DISCIPLINE INDEPENDENT. In other words, the outcome of WHAT we do is only determined by HOW effectively we do it. It is HOW we teach, lead, train, supervise & parent that has the greatest impact on learning, growth, development, leadership, & ultimately, change.

SPIN USA's work provides a solution that solves the challenges of effective implementation & replication by focusing on the qualitative factors of performance, in any setting, to ensure that expected outcomes are achieved.

SPIN's methods work precisely because "they get to the core of the problem" and can be partnered with any program to improve the actual quality of practice, model fidelity & resultant outcomes.

Let us help you achieve your vision, mission and goals by focusing on the key skills and human factors that will strengthen your leadership, programs, services, and practice at every level of your organization.



## EYE ON: STAFF DEVELOPMENT & SUPERVISION

*SCO Selects SPIN®VIG for Staff Training & Development and SPIN®VHT for Parenting and Family Support as Key Tools for Improving Model Fidelity in their Home Visitation Program & Strengthening Programs, Services and Outcomes for the families they serve.*

Starting in September, 2005 as part of the agency's participation in a research project, SCO's staff in their Parent Child Home Program began routinely videotaping their visits with families. Before long, they had amassed an extraordinary library of tapes of actual home visiting practice at SCO. Supervisors and managers knew that those tapes were a "gold mine" of invaluable data and that they held enormous potential as a tool for staff training.

Director of The Parent-Child Home Program and Baby & Me at SCO, Sharmeela Mediratta, explains, "we'd known for a long time that we had video that had a lot of really valuable [information and resources] on it, but we weren't sure how to best pinpoint [exactly what information and resources] would be useful and then how to effectively organize those moments into a useful training tool, then we heard of SPIN"



SPIN had the perfect solution "The SPIN VIG model," she said, "organizes the way we look at tapes...and provides a language and structure for talking about their content and uses that content in a very targeted way to improve practice and model fidelity."

Concurrently, SCO has also chosen to implement SPIN's Video Home Training Program as a direct service model which strengthens parenting and family functioning by expanding parents' capacities to positively nurture & support their children's development.

Debbie Davidson, a supervisor in SCO's Parent Child Home Program is currently enrolled in the certification program for SPIN VIG for Staff Development and Supervision. Although Debbie has begun by using SPIN VIG directly with only two of the home visitors she supervises, she has found that the impact of the model has already exceeded her expectations. Because the staff receiving SPIN coaching share their excitement and the ideas, language and concepts they are learning with colleagues during staff meetings, Debbie has noticed that

" the language and concepts of the model have transferred to the other staff [who do not received direct SPIN coaching]...who use it in their work as well with tremendous impact on programs and services more broadly."

Besides the adoption of a new way of talking about the quality of their interactions with their families, Debbie has also noticed a change in the way all of her home visitors are thinking about the progression of their work with families. SPIN helps "them to think about goals for their families & where they want to go next" Debbie notes, as she discusses how her home visitors now approach their families' development considering a thoughtful and purposeful trajectory toward progress, growth and change based on the families' own goals and the program's goals.

This goal-oriented, developmental approach parallels the 14-18 month SPIN certification process. Although the training process initially seemed long to her, Sharmeela has "come to value the investment in training & practice over time as a way of solidifying the implementation of something new and ensuring that it is fully integrated into the program and practice ". By the time Debbie has completed her 14 months of training and certification, the method will be an integral part of her normal supervision practice.

SCO is an agency that values & understands the theoretical underpinnings of strengths-based work and is committed to finding models that enable staff to actually adopt and integrate asset-based analyses and intervention strategies. As a result, SPIN VIG and VHT have been become invaluable tools at SCO. The model provides a structure, language & systematic way to analyze & talk about strengths; the video provides a concrete medium for identifying and viewing those strengths; and the methodology provides a framework for building on those strengths to expand skills and improve practice, model fidelity and outcomes -- a win-win for all.



### WHO WE ARE:

*We are a non-profit, national training institute specializing in strengths-based models that nurture, empower and transform human performance™.*

*Our asset-based training/coaching methodology and program models improve practice and performance in education and child welfare so that outcomes for children, youth, & families improve.*



### WHAT WE DO:

*Our evidence-based work teaches what many believe cannot be taught—that set of "intangible" skills that are often called "gifts". These are the "gifts" of inspiring leaders, brilliant teachers, great mentors, and nurturing parents. Our powerful, innovative training method helps individuals identify and develop the very specific, concrete, and measurable skills that create such "giftedness".*

*For over 20 years, SPIN methodology has given the "gift" of effective leadership, skillful teaching, and nurturing parenting to those who work in or lead the institutions that serve our most vulnerable children and families.*

### WE SPECIALIZE IN:

- ✓ Family support/intervention and parenting programs (mandated services, mental health & family services, teen parent services).
- ✓ Teacher training (early care and education, after-school programs, research—to—practice knowledge transfer, reflective supervision).
- ✓ Staff training and development (residential treatment, group homes, day treatment, day school settings).
- ✓ Supervisory training (child welfare and education).
- ✓ Leadership development (management training and executive coaching in child welfare and education).

*“Strengths-based supervision leads to strengths-based practice...[SPIN VIG] is a real parallel process...it happens in real practice, using examples from your actual work.”*

**Juliet Webb**  
Division Manager  
Child Welfare Services  
Tulare County HHS, CA

*“SPIN lets people see themselves putting into action the strategies they are learning through SPIN training...you go beyond just reading or talking about these concepts, now you actually see yourself using them successfully in day-to-day practice”*

**Margaret Jackson**  
Field-Based Trainer  
Central California Training Academy  
Fresno, CA

## In Their Own Words

*“SPIN gives you the opportunity to focus on...and enhance the moments when [staff] are drawing out and using family strengths.”*

**Debbie Davidson**  
Supervisor  
Parent-Child Home Program  
SCO Family of Services  
Brooklyn, NY



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