

## SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES

### INTRODUCTION

From its beginnings, social work has been linked to work with families – to an approach focused on family relationships. This is fundamentally because the family is difficult to replace as a context for generating identity and models for relationships with other people. Social work with families involves analysis of the family structure and of the life cycle of the family, studying changes in family models (divorce, step-families, single-parent families, etc.).

It also offers a framework for evaluating family structure wherein the general objective is understanding relationship patterns, taking into account the influence of the family system itself, to: promote changes to dysfunctional patterns; assist in adaptation to different phases of the family life cycle; explore alternative patterns; seek alternatives in conflict management; assist in adaptation to new roles; and much more.

### COMPETENCIES

- Know and understand the different theoretical and methodological perspectives regarding social work with families.
- Know and understand the concept and dimensions of family structure.
- Be able to assimilate and integrate the new family models and the challenges they imply for intervention with families.
- Be able to analyse the nature of family difficulties according to the development stage they are experiencing.
- Be able to analyse the complexity of the different organizational contexts in which interventions with families are carried out.
- Consolidate the ability to integrate and distinguish theoretical, operational and methodological aspects from personal ones in preparing a diagnosis and designing an intervention and corresponding process.
- Ability to integrate a balance between empowerment, social control and possible conflicts of interest within analyses and intervention designs, in specific work contexts when the family does not make the initial request.
- Have the ability to clearly and accurately transmit, both verbally and in writing, the social diagnosis and intervention design, both to family and to members of the professional team, and possibly to decision-making entities.

### CONTENT

1. Historical context of origin and evolution of social work with families.
2. Theoretical and methodological perspectives in social work with families.
3. Theoretical-practical bases for analysis of family structure and cycle.
4. Analysis of professional system: families, organizations and professionals.
5. Analysis and contextualization of demands in different organizational contexts and situations, including: intra-family violence; families with multiple problems; loss; disability; addictions; divorce; step-families and single-parent families; fostering and adoption; immigration; and cultural diversity.