

CASE STUDY

IT Academy Supports the Department of Children's Services (DCS) Through Data Analytics and Systems Reporting Training

The Department of Children's Services (DCS) is Tennessee's public child welfare agency. The department investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect. They also administer the state's foster-care system and work to find permanency for the children and youth who come into its care, whether that is through reunification or adoption. Additionally, the Juvenile Justice division serves the youth who have been adjudicated delinquent and works closely with scores of private providers and community partners across the state.

CHALLENGE

Under Commissioner Bonnie Hommrich and DCS IT Leadership, DCS has focused on making information systems a strong part of the agency's strategy to support its mission.

The agency outlined three primary strategic objectives:

- Enhance the capacity of DCS staff to use and analyse data to inform and improve practices
- Collaborate between Child Welfare professionals and the Office of Information Technology to build and enhance effective data systems
- Incorporate DCS data systems with other resources to improve data-informed decision-making

One of the primary systems used in the management of DCS is the Tennessee Family and Child Tracking System (TFACTS). This statewide automated child welfare information system will be replacing more than ten legacy applications used by DCS. TFACTS will also synchronise with over six state and federal information systems, and continue to support Tennessee's compliance with the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) reporting.

The partnership of IT Academy and Learning Tree supported DCS IT professionals in meeting their mission by providing a series of Oracle database courses.

SOLUTION

The partnership of IT Academy and Learning Tree supported DCS IT professionals in meeting their mission by providing a series of Oracle database courses. These courses provided DCS employees with the skills to more effectively support and utilise TFACTS and other information systems.

The courses from IT Academy included:

- Oracle Database Introduction
- Oracle PL/SQL Programming
- Developing SQL Queries for Oracle Databases

With the right Oracle training, DCS employees were able to meet specific job roles and responsibilities, including:

- Providing system-wide reporting utilising real-time data
- Ensuring data integrity and user accountability
- Creating the necessary controls to prevent the duplication of data, and to reduce the risk of incorrect or invalid data
- Developing uniform data presentation
- Developing the necessary audit trail of all information entered, added, deleted, or modified
- Creating the required security to protect data integrity

DELIVERABLE

These improvements provided a strong foundation for DCS employees to be involved in the evolution of their database systems. The skills taught in each training course have been reinforced with post-course coaching sessions. In these sessions, DCS employees engaged with a subject matter expert to get real-world coaching and discussed the practical application of concepts.

ON A 4.0 SCALE...



Average score
of **CONTENT QUALITY**



Average score
of **INSTRUCTOR QUALITY**

RESULT

DCS will continue to be an extremely important agency to the State of Tennessee. IT Academy supported the growth of this agency's IT professionals by providing cutting-edge technology courseware to better support the children and families of the State. The knowledge, skills, and abilities developed by Learning Tree in IT Academy training programs helped the agency meet its mission of ensuring forever families for children and youth by delivering high-quality, evidence-based services in partnership with the community.



40%

**AVERAGE KNOWLEDGE
IMPROVEMENT PER INDIVIDUAL
TRAINING EVENT***

*Knowledge improvement based on IT employees' pre- and post-course exam scores



28%

**AVERAGE PERFORMANCE
IMPROVEMENT FROM SKILLS
LEARNED IN THE CLASSROOM***

*Results are an average of reported performance by attendees

POST-COURSE FEEDBACK FROM DCS EMPLOYEES

"Since returning to the office, I have been able to write much more advanced and improved queries."

– R. Pond
Information Systems Analyst III

"I have been able to better debug existing PL/SQL packages, procedures, and functions in our application. I have also written new functions and fixed defects on existing functions."

– S. Myers
Programmer/Analyst II

"Although I am not currently in the role of a Developer/Programmer in my current position, this course gave me great insight into the world of a Developer. I became familiar with the constraints and challenges of writing code."

– S. Clements
Senior Project Manager

"I learned how to enhance my ability to write efficient, complex queries. I write a lot of queries now, but we were pretty much self-taught from examples. I Learned so much more than expected!"

– P. Arnold
Programmer/Analyst Supervisor