

IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE

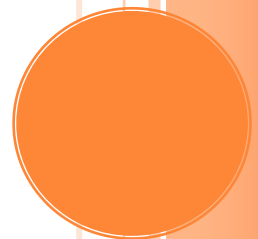
Final Report

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IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE

FINAL REPORT

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IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE

FINAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Improving Recruitment and Retention in Public Child Welfare was a five-year project of the University of Iowa School of Social Work (UI-SSW) in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS). The University of Iowa's project developed, implemented, and evaluated training statewide for Iowa's public child welfare supervisors; developed and implemented a child welfare specialization for BSW and MSW students; and began to disseminate project results and training materials through a variety of activities.

Supervisor training

The focus of Iowa's training project was developing, implementing, and evaluating a curriculum for supervisors and mid-level managers in Iowa's public child welfare agency. This emphasis was driven by a considerable body of research identifying supportive supervision as a key factor affecting the job satisfaction, commitment, and retention of child welfare workers. This

focus was also driven by workforce changes and agency redesign that had occurred shortly before the project began, and by the absence of training for supervisors. Key activities included the following:

Project advisory committee that met on a monthly basis over the five years of the project to provide guidance, assist in developing the training objectives, focus, format, and to review curricula and training exercises.

Focus groups conducted with supervisors in each service area around the state to obtain their perspectives on the strengths and challenges of their job and to get their input into needed training content.

Supervisor competencies were developed and revised through a multi-stage process, using developmental work that IDHS had begun prior to the project, data that emerged from the focus group, and competencies from existing curricula. These competencies were revised and refined, shared with the advisory committee for further review, and with the service area managers who oversee field operations throughout the state. The process culminated with all supervisors completing self-assessments on each competency along two dimensions: 1) their degree of perceived need for skill development; and 2) the perceived importance of each competency to their job. These competencies began to form the basis for the curriculum.

Baseline employee survey: An on-line statewide workforce survey was developed and administered to the entire public child welfare workforce. The child welfare survey contained a variety of items pertaining to employees'

perceptions of their job and the workplace, as well as demographic and human capital (education and employment) items. The response rate was 59%. Results indicated that while supervisors and administrators demonstrated higher scores on some aspects of work that are consistent with their positions of authority, there were more areas in which their perceptions were no different from line staff. Survey results also show that the supervisors and administrators had, on average, long tenure with the Department and relatively few held the MSW degree.

Supervisor training: The multi-phased supervisory curriculum was designed to engage supervisors at all career stages in honing skills as reflective practitioners in organizational leadership and supervision. The supervisory curriculum provides theoretical foundation, concrete application, and emphasis on the improvement of client outcomes through enhanced organizational effectiveness. Material is presented in the context of a comprehensive model of child welfare supervision, acknowledging the various roles of the supervisor in the unit (administration, education, consultation, counseling and evaluation), the contextual factors influencing supervision (e.g., law, policy, economic conditions, and political realities), and the role of the supervisor in the organization (advocating for resources for staff and clients, negotiating relationships with community providers, and responding to client and community concerns).

Our approach to curriculum development is based on sound principles of adult learning, emphasizing practical application of useful concepts and best practices, using case-based applications and providing adequate time for collegial interaction. The training integrated measurable outcomes and learning objectives and supported the IDHS practice model and redesign initiatives. Supervisors were provided tools for self-assessment of their own supervisory behaviors as well as detailed task analyses of worker competencies which could help them develop individual and unit plans with their staff. We also developed easy to use resources to share with staff and provide supplemental reference materials and web-based resources for use in direct on-the-job application.

Developing the curricula proceeded through a process of drafting learning objectives, content areas, and proposed activities, followed by review and feedback by the project advisory committee. The training participants were divided into four groups of varied geographic areas, a format that the supervisors preferred over regionally based training. Each training module was piloted with one group and was immediately followed by revisions based on trainee feedback and evaluation data before being offered to the other three. The final curriculum includes the following six modules:

- Module I: Contemporary Child Welfare Supervisory Practice
- Module II: Developing Human Resources through Supervision
- Module III: Case Practice Supervision

- Module IV: Clinical Practice Supervision
- Module V: Promoting Safety and Resilience
- Module VI: Leadership Skills for Child Welfare Supervision

The trainings consisted of a combination of lecture and large group activities, and smaller workshops in which participants had choices over which ones to attend. As one component of the training for case practice supervision, a subgroup of the training committee created a DVD in which two DHS staff volunteered to demonstrate a role of play of supervision using remediative versus strength-based reflective supervision. Workshops included such topics as: employment interviewing for success, managing a diverse staff, understanding learning styles, addressing underperformance, generational issues in the workplace, supervising culturally competent practice, designing in-service programs, supervising an impaired worker, professional writing for child welfare practice and supervision, and critical thinking for safe case closure.

Supervisor to caseworker training: Supervision is the primary source of education for casework practice. Supervisors fulfill their educative role in a variety of ways and formats, including individual and group supervision and presenting formal in-service training. Our supervisor training systematized these approaches and formats into a formal *supervision program*. We taught supervisors how to create their own supervision programs for educating their staff, using a large variety of supervisor-to-

worker training tools, strategies and templates which we introduced in our statewide supervisor trainings.

First, we developed a set of worker competencies and tools that allowed supervisors to assess workers' individual educational needs across five domains (first Human Relations, including cultural competence, effective use of supervision, and professional development; in later modules, Case Practice; Clinical Practice, Adapting to Change, and Managing Stress/Safety). Next we showed the supervisors how to use the unit assessments to find additional resources for worker education within the team and to decide whether to address education needs through individual or group methods. We introduced a simple tool for assessing workers' learning styles and taught supervisors to teach in two different workshops: Understanding Learning Styles and Designing In-Service Programs.

We continued to add to the supervisor-to-worker teaching toolkit in a number of ways, teaching one-on-one reflective supervision skills through demonstrations, role plays and DVDs; providing formats for reflective questions, various types of group supervision, including brief case presentation and focused supervision, and live observation; creating a number of staff activities around diversity, including Diversity Bingo, Primary and Secondary Diversity Wheel, and cultural competence self-assessments; creating a variety of tools for educating line staff through clinical supervision, including PowerPoints and extensive handouts on Child

and Adult Mental Health, and tools for case management and decision-making with substance affected families; providing tools for assessing workers' risk of secondary trauma and vicarious traumatization, and methods for reducing stress and assessing workplace safety.

A number of supervisors reported that they used the tools in staff in-service trainings, and we fulfilled a number of requests to send our PowerPoint presentations for supervisor in-service use. This approach to the supervisor-to-worker training worked well for our statewide approach. The project toolkit is posted on our website, www.uiowa.edu/~nrcfcp.

An additional opportunity to reinforce supervisor-to-worker training was afforded by a second federal child welfare training grant that the University of Iowa received, a grant to provide training to public child welfare supervisors in the area of youth transitioning out of care. This grant began with the development and implementation of statewide supervisor training in this specific content area. We provided a leadership opportunity for supervisors by involving them closely in planning and implementing trainings for caseworkers and community partners in their respective service areas. Supervisors participated in their local trainings as hosts of the event, as training co-facilitators, and as supports for their workers.

Child welfare specialization

The recruitment and retention project's second goal was to increase and sustain professionally educated social workers in Iowa's child welfare

system. We developed a specialized field of practice for MSW students and a parallel concentration for BSW students. The specialization involves a program of study including courses in child welfare, family violence, substance abuse, family law, domestic violence, and child welfare practicum placements.

Three new child welfare courses were developed: Child Welfare Policy and Practice, a survey course that provides an overview of key child welfare legislation and service components; Clinical Issues in Child Welfare, a graduate level course intended to provide practitioners with a deeper understand of such content areas as the developmental and psychological consequences of child maltreatment, adult and child mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence; and Child Welfare Supervision, a graduate level course that focuses on the role of strength-based supervision in improving outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system, and on developing the skills necessary for effective child welfare supervision

Dissemination

A variety of dissemination activities have been completed to date and more are planned after the project's completion. We have presented the program and results of the recruitment and retention project at numerous national conferences and meetings. Two journal articles have been published thus far, and more are planned. One, Supporting Supervisors to Improve Recruitment and Retention, was published in *Child Welfare* (Landsman,

2007). The second, Pathways to Organizational Commitment, was published in *Administration in Social Work* (Landsman, 2008) and received the Slavin-Patti Award for Scholarly Excellence in 2008.

We have posted electronic materials from the recruitment and retention training on our newly designed website, www.uiowa.edu/~nrcfcp and have begun to respond to inquiries from the field. Materials are also being sent to the Child Welfare Information Gateway for broad dissemination. We have modified the supervisor training for private providers in Iowa and have conducted training with these providers. We have also modified this training to improve recruitment and retention in family development programs in Iowa.

Evaluation

Evaluation of training found high levels of attendance by supervisors and high levels of satisfaction with the content and usefulness of the training. Analysis of knowledge tests administered pre and post-training demonstrated significant knowledge gains. Analysis of self-reported use of skills taught in the training demonstrated significant increases in utilization when measured at six month follow-ups.

Turnover of various types (desirable, preventable, and non-preventable), as well as job change data, were compiled on a quarterly basis and analyzed. Findings indicated that among those individual employed at the beginning of the project, annual turnover rates ranged from 94 to 97%,

which is quite high. Although there is some variation in retention across service areas, no service area experienced an annual turnover rate lower than 90%. We also found that there is a considerable amount of job change taking place within the organization. These changes pose some interesting dilemmas for child welfare agencies. Individuals often seek positions to achieve a better fit with their skills and interests, or to advance professionally, while others are re-assigned based on agency need. Job changes may also share some of the negative effects of turnover, in terms of interrupting services to children and families and for those demoted in position, lowering morale. These findings suggest that similar to differentiating between types of turnover, further understand of the effects of types of retention may be warranted.

IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE

Final Report

Introduction to the Project

Improving Recruitment and Retention in Public Child Welfare was a five-year project of the University of Iowa School of Social Work (UI-SSW) in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS). This was one of eight universities funded in 2003 by the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to address the needs of public child welfare agencies for a high quality, stable workforce. The University of Iowa's project developed, implemented, and evaluated training statewide for Iowa's public child welfare supervisors; developed and implemented a child welfare specialization for BSW and MSW students; and began to disseminate project results and training materials through a variety of activities.

Need for the Project

In proposing this project, we drew from the existing literature on the child welfare workforce and the long-standing issue of high turnover.

Difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff in public child welfare agencies have long been noted as among the most vexing challenges to effective child welfare practice (Russell, 1987; Alwon & Reitz, 2000; Pecora et al., 2000; Child Welfare League of America, 2001). In the past two key approaches had dominated training efforts to remedy these problems.

Training to improve *recruitment* had focused on providing financial incentives and traineeships for students to enter public child welfare careers, while training to improve *retention* had typically focused on training line staff in such topics as time management, stress reduction, self-care, and burnout prevention. The assumption was that if workers could be trained to cope more effectively with work overload, job stress, personal safety, and emotional exhaustion, they would be less likely to leave their jobs. Educational supports to allow public child welfare employees to attain social work degrees while employed had also been used as inducements to enhance retention, but these efforts have produced mixed results (Leighninger & Ellet, 1998), as many leave public child welfare after they have fulfilled their obligatory work requirements.

Absent from these approaches was serious consideration of why it was so difficult to engage social workers in the career specialization that is so widely touted as social work's fundamental domain – child welfare. As research on this subject has shifted from a focus on correlates of job satisfaction or turnover (Fryer, Miyoshi, & Thomas, 1989; Harrison, 1995), to

stress and burnout models (Harrison, 1980; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Um & Harrison, 1998), to examinations of the organizational contexts of child welfare practice (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Vinokur-Kaplan, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1994; Landsman, 2001), some of the reasons for, and potential solutions to, the recruitment and retention problems had begun to emerge.

Increasingly, workforce research was showing that that many of the factors that affect the ability to recruit and retain staff have more to do with supervision, organizational issues, and community support for public child welfare agencies than with characteristics and coping abilities of line staff (Landsman, 2001). Furthermore, many factors now identified as important to staff's intentions to join or stay in public child welfare—such as the amount and quality of support from supervisors and managers; the agency's reputation in the community; a clear vision and purpose of the agency's work; a work environment that values diversity, collegiality, and client empowerment; having a workload that permits competent job performance—are not under the control of line staff.

A substantial body of research has demonstrated the importance of supervision and supervisory support in promoting job satisfaction, commitment, and retention of child welfare employees (Curry, D., McCarragher, T., & Dellmann-Jenkins, M., 2005; Dickinson & Perry, 2002; Landsman, 2001; Mor Barak, Levin, Nissly, & Lane, 2006; Rycraft, 1994). Yet training resources for supervisors and managers have been in scarce supply.

There was clearly a need to address the complex factors that affect public child welfare agencies' ability to attract and keep the most qualified staff who deal with some of society's most challenging problems.

The need for such a training program was particularly acute in Iowa. Shortly before this project began in 2003, the state had endured a massive budget reduction by the state legislature, resulting in a near decimation of existing training resources and a re-organization that reduced the number of administrative staff by 118 positions. An additional 35 case management positions were left vacant due to fiscal conditions. Thirty-four of the ninety-nine county offices were open less than full time, with additional coverage provided by contiguous county offices. These changes left staff responsible for increasingly larger geographic areas and higher workloads, and for supervisors and managers, fewer opportunities for interaction among peers and with those under their supervision. Workloads in Iowa's public child welfare agencies, according to the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), were three times the national average at that time. Due to severe staff shortages and scheduling issues, the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS) discontinued the Public Child Welfare Traineeship Program, which used Title IV-E funds to support staff in earning the MSW degree at The University of Iowa.

Beyond the impacts of the budget cuts, Iowa had no training program for supervisors. Supervisors were almost completely drawn from among line

staff that moved into supervisory positions without any formal training relative to their new responsibilities. While the training program for line staff was well developed, with clearly defined competencies, a parallel set of competencies for supervisors had not been completed—this process was interrupted by the reorganization and budget cuts. Furthermore, there was no financial incentive for moving into a supervisory position, suggesting that those who choose this path did so either out of self-motivation or to get away from direct service. There was a strong need within IDHS to develop opportunities to assist line staff in making a positive transition to the supervisory role, and to enhance the skills of those already in supervisory positions, contributing to the retention of skilled and qualified staff.

An additional state-specific need was that of cultural competence training and related workforce diversity. Historically Iowa has been populated overwhelmingly by Euro-Americans. More recently, an influx of African American families—particularly in the larger cities and towns in the eastern parts of the state, the growth of the Latino population--especially in rural areas, and the more long-standing difficulties in working effectively with Native American consumers and tribal agencies, highlighted the need for training that is culturally responsive. Workforce diversity has not kept pace with the growth in the minority child welfare population. A stronger recruitment strategy that includes outreach efforts to diverse populations was needed.

While needs were high, Iowa's public child welfare agency was in an excellent position to make optimal use of a new training model and strategies for recruitment and retention. A newly appointed Director had a strong interest in shifting toward a focus on results, as indicated by Iowa's new initiative on "Better Results 4 Kids." The state legislature had directed IDHS to redesign the system in a way that provides incentives for services that result in safe and nurturing conditions for at-risk children and families. Thus the recruitment and retention project came at a time of high need and similarly high expectations for change.

Public child welfare agencies today face formidable challenges in recruiting and retaining staff. A GAO report (March 2003) concluded that difficulties in recruitment and retention are largely attributable to: low salaries; high caseloads and administrative burdens; lack of supervisory support; inadequate training; and risk of violence to workers. Research conducted by the principal investigator examined the effects of a variety of workplace factors, job stressors, and professional identification factors, on public child welfare employees' job satisfaction, commitment, and intent to stay (Landsman, 2001). This study identified the most important factors in retention as: *supervisory support, promotional opportunities, workload, organizational support, community support for the agency, and service orientation (belief in the value of child welfare work)*. In this multivariate model these variables were significantly more important than salary or job

safety, which were also included in the model.

There are other contemporary challenges to recruitment and retention. States today are struggling with massive budget deficits which (as in Iowa) had resulted in layoffs and hiring freezes, and which affected staff workloads. Strained agency resources tend to restrict services to those with the highest needs, and the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act demand greater and more intensive effort from line staff. Furthermore, the image of the public child welfare agency has continued to suffer, with highly publicized cases of lost foster children and child deaths while under state supervision. In short, the job of the public child welfare worker is growing more difficult in the face of decreasing incentives, job security, and status.

Approach

Iowa's recruitment and retention project had three goals, each with specific objectives: 1) to measurably improve IDHS's capacity for recruitment and retention of qualified employees; 2) to enhance the UI-SSW/IDHS partnership to measurably increase and sustain professionally educated social workers in IDHS; and 3) to improve recruitment and retention in public child welfare agencies nationally, through varied dissemination activities. The activities described in the following pages were implemented toward achieving these goals.

Statewide project advisory group

Beginning in the first quarter of the grant, we identified participants and began to convene a monthly meeting of a project advisory committee. The advisory committee included members of the IDHS training committee, which oversees all training initiatives in the public child welfare agency. The project advisory committee met on a monthly basis throughout the five years of the project. At least two meetings each year were face-to-face meetings held in Des Moines, a central location. The other meetings were conducted via telephone conference calls. At each monthly meeting progress on the recruitment and retention project was discussed. Meetings were used to make decisions about the direction of the curriculum and to review specific content and exercises as we developed the curriculum. Because the advisory committee was involved in all DHS training activities, we were able to anticipate scheduling conflicts and/or to coordinate our planned activities with other initiatives.

Focus groups

It was important to connect with the supervisors around the state, those individuals who would be the primary recipients of training. Child welfare supervisors in this state are highly experienced child welfare employees. Despite the fact that they had not received training specifically in supervision, many had extensive experience as supervisors. It was very

important to both honor their experience and to hear directly from them about training needs so that the products developed would address the most important issues applicable to their work.

The project team went about the work of this needs assessment by conducting focus groups with supervisors in each of the eight service areas around the state. The groups ranged in size from four to 11 participants each, with a total of 67 supervisors participating in the groups in total, representing 78% of all child welfare supervisors. A few key questions were posed to the groups with the objective of generating discussion to use in proposing a set of supervisor competencies and a preliminary outline for the supervisor training program. The focus group questions addressed three areas: 1) what is currently working well for public child welfare supervisors?; 2) what are the greatest challenges that supervisors are facing?; and 3) what specific content areas would be useful for them in a supervisory training program?

Following completion of the focus groups, which were audio-taped and transcribed, a content analysis was conducted to identify key themes, and a summary of findings was presented and disseminated it to all supervisors. This summary was kept to a limit of a little over two pages, in response to requests from the supervisors for a summary that would be brief and highlight major points. This information from the focus group was then used

as the basis for a draft of supervisor competencies. The focus group summary is included in the Appendix.

Supervisor competencies

Developing and revising supervisory competencies occurred through a multi-stage process. In creating a draft document of supervisor competencies, we considered the developmental work that IDHS had begun previously on supervisor competencies, work that had been interrupted by the budget cuts. In addition, the competencies that emerged from the focus group data were compared with those from pre-existing curricula for child welfare supervisors available from other child welfare organizations (such as the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC); the Child Welfare Partnership at Portland State University; and the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program). This triangulation process, using data from the focus groups, the earlier work on supervisor competencies, and competencies derived from pre-existing curricula, helped to establish the validity of the proposed competencies. These competencies were revised and refined, shared with the statewide training committee for further review and comment, and with the service area managers who oversee field operations throughout the state.

Transforming training needs into competencies provided direction for the program and moved the development of training from a deficit to a strength based approach. The competencies are organized into five general

areas, each of which contains a set of specific competencies. The general areas are: 1) Understanding and supervising within the organization, which concerns the supervisor's role within the organization; 2) Managing work through people: the human resources role, which deals with a variety of personnel and performance related tasks; 3) Social work supervisor as clinical supervisor, which focuses on the supervisor's important role in supporting and guiding effective practice; 4) Supervisor's role in public and community relations, which addresses strategies for improving the agency's image in the community, representing the agency in the community, handling stakeholder complaints, etc.; and 5) Supervisor's role in addressing personal stress and safety issues, which relates to both supervisors and their staff. Over time and through discussions about the content of clinical supervision, this third area was later split in two, with the first focusing on supervising case practice, and the second, on specialized clinical knowledge for supervisors.

The next step involved sharing the competencies with all supervisors and asking them to self-assess on each one, along two dimensions: 1) their degree of perceived need for skill development; and 2) the perceived importance of each competency to their job. This approach was adapted from the MidSouth Training Academy at the University of Arkansas—Little Rock's Supervisor Individual Training Needs Assessment (1996). The combination of perceived need and perceived importance produced a score for each competency, and these scores were used to help to prioritize areas of focus for

training. A report of this assessment is included in the Appendix.

Baseline employee survey

One of the project's early activities was developing and administering a statewide workforce survey to the entire public child welfare workforce. The child welfare survey contained a variety of items pertaining to employees' perceptions of their job and the workplace, as well as demographic and human capital (education and employment) items. Most of the survey questions were derived from well-established scales used in previous workforce research on a variety of occupations and work settings, including public child welfare. Several scales and individual items were developed by the Principal Investigator, with input from IDHS employees. The survey was constructed in an on-line format, and was divided into six sections which allowed individuals to complete and submit sections as their time permitted. Prior to administering the survey, the instrument was reviewed by IDHS employees and pre-tested by the project advisory committee.

In advance of the survey, the Director of the Iowa Department of Human Services sent two electronic email messages to staff alerting them to the survey and requesting their participation. Following these preliminary notifications, an email message including a link to the survey website was distributed to employees, followed by two subsequent reminders with links to the survey website. Out of 856 employees to whom the survey was distributed, 18 were eliminated because they were no longer employed with

the Department by the time the survey was distributed, resulting in a sample population of 838. Of these 838 individuals 497 responded, for a response rate of 59%. While this percentage represents an acceptable response rate, a higher rate of participation would have allowed for greater confidence that the results are representative of the population of Iowa's public child welfare employees. Demographic comparisons between the responders and non-responders indicate that the groups are similar in terms of age, gender, position, and locale.

Survey results indicate that the child welfare workforce is predominantly Caucasian (96%) and not of Hispanic origin (98%), with few African-American (n=9, 2%), American Indians (n=1, .2%), and a small number of individuals who described themselves as "other" (n=8, 1.8%). The majority (80%) are female, and there are no proportional demographic differences between line supervisors and social work administrators (supervisors of front line supervisors) and line staff. About 47% hold a bachelor's degree in social work and nine percent (a total of 35 staff) have an MSW degree, with a greater proportion of supervisors and administrators having the MSW than line workers ($p=.025$, Fisher's Exact Test). Thirteen respondents indicated that they were currently working toward an educational degree, three of whom were earning the MSW and one, the BSW. As expected, supervisors and administrators had longer tenure with the

Department, an average of 20.79 years ($SD = 8.21$) compared with 11.59 years ($SD = 8.90$) among line workers [$t(435)=7.11, p<.01$].

Comparing supervisory and social work administrative staff's ($n=53$) responses with line workers ($n=384$), few significant differences were identified in their perceptions of the work environment. Supervisors and administrators scored higher than line workers on scales measuring empowerment [$t(435)=2.46, p<.05$], organizational citizenship behaviors [$t(435)=4.57, p<.001$], decision-making in the organization [$t(435)=13.57, p<.001$], perceived fairness in criteria for promotions [$t(435)=4.16, p<.001$] and perceived fairness in the distribution of rewards [$t(435)=2.99, p<.01$]. However, supervisors and administrators scored lower than line workers on perceived support from coworkers [$t(435)=2.56, p<.05$]. No differences were found in many other aspects of organizational climate, including autonomy, perceived organizational and community support, job security, communication, opportunities for promotion and professional development, orientation to service, and role ambiguity, nor were there significant differences between supervisors/administrators and line workers in their job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, or intentions to stay in the Department.

These results reveal that while supervisors and administrators demonstrated higher scores on some aspects of work that are consistent with their positions of authority, there were more areas in which their perceptions

were no different from line staff. Survey results also show that the supervisors and administrators had, on average, long tenure with the Department and relatively few held the MSW degree. The predominance of Caucasian and non-Hispanic staff suggested that content on diversity would make an important contribution to the training program. (A report containing additional survey results is included in the Appendix.)

Curriculum for supervisors

Our approach to curriculum development is rooted in a conceptual framework that is based on ecological, social exchange, empowerment, and social structural theories of work and organizations, and on the research and practice experience of the key project staff.

The ecological approach understands that individuals function in the context of their environments, which in the case of employees is their workplace and in the case of organizations, the larger community environment which may differ in rural and urban settings (Landsman, 2002). The ecological approach suggests that individual workers are affected by the functioning of their work organizations, which in turn are affected by the environment in which the organizations exist. Therefore all levels—individual, organization, and environment—are important to understanding recruitment and retention.

Social exchange theory as applied to organizations views intra-organizational relationships, such as those between workers and their supervisors, as social exchanges (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger et al.,1986). From this perspective, supportive interactions produce reciprocity and organizational citizenship behaviors (Morrison 1996; Hopkins, 2002). Strong reciprocal positive relationships between perceived support from the organization and employee commitment to the organization has also been empirically documented (Cheung, 2000). Social exchange theory suggests the importance of strengthening intra-organizational relationships.

Empowerment has described as a multi-level construct, applicable at the individual, organizational, and community levels, with most research focused on the individual level (Zimmerman, 2000). There is a conceptual distinction between empowering and empowered organizations (Gerschick, Israel & Checkoway, 1990; Zimmerman, 2000), with the former those that help to produce empowered individuals and the latter, those that influence the larger systems around them. A training program designed to recruit and retain staff should strive to fulfill both functions.

Sociological research on work and organizations has made important contributions to understanding the ways in which organizational structures influence the development of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and intentions to stay or leave (Mueller, Wallace, & Price, 1992). Pioneering work by Lincoln and Kalleberg (1985; 1990) suggests that

organizations can modify aspects of the work environment—such as work conditions, employee decision-making authority, levels of support, and workloads-- in such ways as to strengthen employee commitment. The Principal Investigator's research on commitment in public child welfare (Landsman, 2001) is based on such a structural approach. Curriculum development incorporated elements of each of these theoretical perspectives, as they all are clearly relevant to the factors that research and practice have identified as affecting recruitment and retention.

The multi-phased supervisory curriculum was designed to engage supervisors at all career stages in honing skills as reflective practitioners in organizational leadership and supervision. The supervisory curriculum provides theoretical foundation, concrete application, and emphasis on the improvement of client outcomes through enhanced organizational effectiveness. Material is presented in the context of a comprehensive model of child welfare supervision, acknowledging the various roles of the supervisor in the unit (administration, education, consultation, counseling and evaluation), the contextual factors influencing supervision (e.g., law, policy, economic conditions, and political realities), and the role of the supervisor in the organization (advocating for resources for staff and clients, negotiating relationships with community providers, and responding to client and community concerns).

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- Module V: Promoting Safety and Resilience
- Module VI: Leadership Skills for Child Welfare Supervision

The trainings consisted of a combination of lecture and large group activities, and smaller workshops in which participants had choices over which ones to attend. As one component of the training for case practice supervision, a subgroup of the training committee created a DVD in which two DHS staff volunteered to demonstrate a role of play of supervision using remediative versus strength-based reflective supervision. Workshops included such topics as: employment interviewing for success, managing a diverse staff, understanding learning styles, addressing underperformance, generational issues in the workplace, supervising culturally competent practice, designing in-service programs, supervising an impaired worker, professional writing for child welfare practice and supervision, and critical thinking for safe case closure.

The creation and implementation of the curriculum *Committed to Excellence through Supervision* was a developmental process. The first four modules of the supervisory curriculum were delivered five times to Iowa's public child welfare supervisors – to the first four cohorts of supervisors, and later to new supervisors. Module V, Promoting Safety and Resilience, and Module VI, Leadership Skills for Supervision, was delivered four times. In addition, excerpts from all five modules have been trained to other

supervisory groups, including Iowa’s income maintenance supervisors, family support supervisors and, most recently, supervisors from private child welfare provider agencies. After each iteration of the training, we continued to improve our materials and training methods based on our experience. Therefore, the final curriculum product reflects our best thinking on the material and varies in some respects from the original Iowa curriculum.

For example, we spent a considerable amount of time in the initial delivery of Module I explicating the theoretical underpinnings of our Model of Supervision. It worked well enough with the first four cohorts because many of the supervisors in attendance had participated in focus groups and work groups as the model was being created, and they were excited to see the final products. We subsequently decided that this is a rather dry way to begin a training program with a new group with whom we haven’t already build rapport. Therefore, we have moved some of the more “theoretical” slides into an optional introductory presentation which might be more appropriate for presentation to an audience of child welfare policymakers, the training director and advisory groups, quality assurance staff, etc. In place of the theoretical material, we added an exercise entitled “Super’ visor”, which asks groups to create newsprint renditions of the necessary qualities of a good supervisor.

Supervisor to caseworker training

Supervision is the primary source of education for casework practice.

Supervisors fulfill their educative role in a variety of ways and formats, including individual and group supervision and presenting formal in-service training. Our supervisor training systematized these approaches and formats into a formal *supervision program*. We taught supervisors how to create their own supervision programs for educating their staff, using a large variety of supervisor-to-worker training tools, strategies and templates which we introduced in our statewide supervisor trainings.

First, we developed a set of worker competencies and tools that allowed supervisors to assess workers' individual educational needs across five domains (first Human Relations, including cultural competence, effective use of supervision, and professional development; in later modules, Case Practice; Clinical Practice, Adapting to Change, and Managing Stress/Safety). Next we showed the supervisors how to use the unit assessments to find additional resources for worker education within the team and to decide whether to address education needs through individual or group methods. We introduced a simple tool for assessing workers' learning styles and taught supervisors to teach in two different workshops: Understanding Learning Styles and Designing In-Service Programs. Having laid the groundwork in the first two modules, we continued to add to the supervisor-to-worker teaching toolkit in a number of ways:

- We taught one-on-one reflective supervision skills through demonstrations, role plays and DVDs (Module III)

- We provided formats for reflective questions, various types of group supervision, including brief case presentation and focused supervision, and live observation. (Module III; Supervision Manual)
- We created a number of staff activities around diversity, including Diversity Bingo, Primary and Secondary Diversity Wheel, and cultural competence self-assessments (Modules II and III)
- We created a variety of tools for educating line staff through clinical supervision (Module IV), including PowerPoints and extensive handouts on Child and Adult Mental Health, and tools for case management and decision-making with substance affected families.
- We provided tools for assessing workers' risk of secondary trauma and vicarious traumatization, demonstrated and distributed copies of breathing and other stress reducing exercises for supervisor to introduce to their staff, distributed a workplace safety assessment and a template for a safety in-service. (Module V)

A number of supervisors reported that they used the tools in staff in-service trainings, and we fulfilled a number of requests to send our PowerPoint presentations for supervisor in-service use. This approach to the supervisor-to-worker training worked well for our statewide approach. The project toolkit is posted on our website, www.uiowa.edu/~nrcfcp.

An additional opportunity to reinforce supervisor-to-worker training was afforded by a second federal child welfare training grant that the University of Iowa received, a grant to provide training to public child welfare supervisors in the area of youth transitioning out of care. This grant began with the development and implementation of statewide supervisor training in this specific content area. We provided a leadership opportunity for supervisors by involving them closely in planning and implementing trainings for caseworkers and community partners in their respective service areas. Supervisors participated in their local trainings as hosts of the event, as training co-facilitators, and as supports for their workers.

Child welfare specialization

The recruitment and retention project's second goal was to increase and sustain professionally educated social workers in Iowa's child welfare system. Iowa's public child welfare agencies do not have serious problems filling vacant positions, but there is a dearth of MSW level practitioners in the public sector. This recruitment goal focused on enhancing opportunities for child welfare education within the University of Iowa's social work educational programs at both the Masters and Bachelors levels. We developed a specialized field of practice for MSW students and a parallel concentration for BSW students. The specialization involves a program of

study including courses in child welfare, family violence, substance abuse, family law, domestic violence, and child welfare practicum placements.

Master's Level

At the master's level, child welfare as a field of practice was designed for students interested in working in public and/or private child welfare agencies or organizations in direct service, supervisory, or administrative capacities. Students who elect a child welfare field of practice develop a plan of study which includes one or more child welfare courses, core courses either in the family centered or integrated concentrations, two of the five electives in issues relevant to child welfare, and practicum placements in child welfare agencies.

In addition to the requirements described here, students interested in specializing in child welfare are encouraged to seek additional opportunities to strengthen their knowledge in child welfare, including individual study classes with child welfare faculty, preparing a Master's Thesis in a topic related to child welfare, and conducting a research project (in their foundation research sequence) related to child welfare.

Required Advanced Courses (one or more)

Child Welfare Policy and Practice*

Social Work Practice with Children, Youth & Families

Child Welfare Supervision*

AND

Family Centered Theory and Practice I

Family Centered Theory and Practice II

Advanced Social Policy for Family Centered Practice

Advanced Practicum in Family Centered Practice

Advanced Practicum Seminar – Family Centered Practice

OR

Integrated Theory and Practice I

Integrated Theory and Practice II

Advanced Social Policy for Integrated Practice

Advanced Practicum in Integrated Practice

Advanced Practicum Seminar in Integrated Practice

Electives -must select at least two the five below

Clinical Issues in Child Welfare*

Substance Use and Abuse

Family Violence

Domestic Violence Intervention Strategies

Family Law

Additional electives in other departments (optional)

Child Development

The Adolescent and Young Adult

Juvenile Delinquency

* These three new child welfare courses were developed during the recruitment and retention project. Course outlines are included in the Appendix:

Child Welfare Policy and Practice: This is a survey course that provides an overview of child welfare legislation, various service components of the child welfare system from child protective investigation to the court system, placement prevention, foster family and group care, adoption, and special topics such as the child welfare workforce, disproportionality, community partnerships, and family team meetings.. The course is open to both undergraduate and graduate students (with some different course expectations for graduate students).

Clinical Issues in Child Welfare: This is a graduate level course geared to current practitioners in the field. It was designed to provide child welfare practitioners, especially public child welfare practitioners, with a deeper understanding of clinical issues commonly encountered in their work with children and families. Issues covered in this course include the psychological and developmental consequences of child abuse or neglect, child and adult mental health, substance abuse, trauma in adults, and domestic violence. The course was developed and delivered first to DHS employees who were provided funding through a special legislative allotment.

Child Welfare Supervision: This is a graduate level course that focuses on the role of strength-based supervision in improving outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system, and on developing the skills necessary for effective child welfare supervision. This course represents an adaptation of the supervisor training from the recruitment and retention project to an academic format. The course includes both didactic and experiential components.

Bachelor's Level

The School of Social Work's bachelor's program in social work is generalist curriculum within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In the B.A. program in social work, students develop an interdisciplinary concentration rather than a field of practice. Through the recruitment and retention project we developed a concentration that allows students to focus on child welfare.

B.A. students interested in preparing for careers in child welfare services would develop a program that includes: 1) an interdisciplinary concentration of sociology, psychology, and/or education classes relevant to child welfare issues; 2) additional electives in the social work department that focus on critical issues in child welfare practice; and 3) a field placement in a child welfare agency, either the Department of Human Services or a private, non-profit child welfare agency.

1) Concentration:

The interdisciplinary concentration may include the following sociology courses: The American Family, Juvenile Delinquency, and Social Inequality; psychology courses including: Introduction to Child Development, Abnormal Psychology, Social and Personality Development, and Language Development; and education courses including: Child Development, The Adolescent and Young Adult, Parent-Child Relationships, and Characteristics of Disabilities.

2) Child welfare electives in the School of Social Work:

Beyond the concentration which consists of courses in other departments, students may enroll in additional elective social work classes that focus on critical issues in contemporary child welfare practice, including: Child Welfare Policy and Practice; Social Work Practice with Children, Youth & Families; Substance Use and Abuse; Family Violence; Domestic Violence Intervention Strategies; and Family Law.

3) Field placement:

BA students interested in preparing for child welfare careers are expected to do their field placement in a child welfare agency, either the Department of Human Services or a private, non-profit child welfare agency.

Dissemination activities

We began early dissemination of the project through presentations at several conferences and meetings, including the following:

- Evaluating Training to Improve Staff Retention. National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium, University of California, Berkeley (May 2004).
- Workforce Issues in Child Welfare. Society for Social Work and Research Annual Conference, Miami, FL (January 2005).
- Improving Recruitment and Retention in Public Child Welfare. Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, New York City (February 2005).
- Pathways to Organizational Commitment. Society for Social Work and Research Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA (January 2007).
- Supporting Child Welfare Supervisors to Improve Worker Retention. National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Portland, OR (April 2007).
- Staff retention in Child Welfare. 2nd Annual Regional Child Welfare Conference, Miami, FL (September 2007)
- Building a Model of Child Welfare Supervision. Children's Bureau Conference for States and Courts, Washington, D.C. (December 2007)

- Strengthening the child welfare workforce for improved child and family outcomes, North Dakota Children's Justice Symposium, Bismark, ND (July 2008)
- Workforce Development in a Rural Environment, North Dakota Children's Justice Symposium, Bismark, ND (July 2008)
- Supervising for Recruitment and Retention, Scaling the Summit Institute, Denver, CO (August 2008)

Two journal articles have been published thus far, and additional articles are in development and will be submitted for publication after the grant period. Listed below are the citations and abstracts from the published articles:

Landsman, M.J. (2007). Supporting supervisors to improve retention. *Child Welfare, 86 (2), 105-124.*

Abstract: Recent child welfare research has identified supervisors as key to retaining qualified and committed workers'. This paper describes implementation of a federally funded child welfare training initiative designed to improve worker retention largely through developing, implementing, and evaluating a statewide supervisor training program in a Midwestern state. Unique to this collaborative effort was involving all child welfare supervisors in identifying needed content components, developing competencies, and conducting self-assessments.

Landsman, M.J. (2008). Pathways to organizational commitment.

Administration in Social Work, 32(2), 105-132. [This article received the Slavin-Patti Award for Scholarly Excellence in 2008.]

Abstract: This study uses an attribution of employer responsibility framework to empirically examine how aspects of work and the work environment affect organizational commitment. The study estimates a structural equation model using data from a cross-sectional survey of child welfare employees within the Iowa Department of Human Services. Results support the existence of two pathways to organizational commitment. Work-related variables to which employees attribute greater employer responsibility affect employees' commitment through the social exchange mediator of perceived organizational support, while aspects of work to which employees attribute less employer responsibility affect commitment through job satisfaction. Supervisor support is unique in affecting commitment through both pathways.

Additional dissemination activities of our curricula are underway. We are posting the training manuals and supervisor's toolkit on our newly redesigned website: www.uiowa.edu/~nrc.fcp. Hard copies of these materials will be available upon request. We are also sending copies of these materials to the Child Welfare Information Gateway.

Evaluation

Evaluation of Training

The project developed an evaluation plan which attends to processes (implementation) and short, medium and long-term outcomes that are anticipated as a result of the project. Key issues for the process evaluation concerned the development of supervisor competencies, design of the training program around key competencies, and supervisor participation in training. The face and content validity of the supervisor competencies were evaluated through reviews by various stakeholders and through empirical analysis of self-assessment of competencies data.

Short term outcomes included 1) consumer satisfaction with training content and delivery; 2) increased knowledge in curriculum content from pretest to posttest 3) increased understanding of developmental strengths and needs of supervisees.

Training Satisfaction

Training participants were asked to complete a questionnaire evaluating their satisfaction with the training at the end of each training event. The questionnaire targeted satisfaction with plenary session and workshop session satisfaction. The satisfaction evaluation included the following general areas: presenters knowledge of the subject, clarity of the

presentation of information, encouragement of participation and sharing, the usefulness of training materials, the usefulness of training activities, the relevance of training content to diversity and cultural issues, the physical environment of the training facility, and training session overall.

Participants were asked to use a five point scale to rate their level of satisfaction on 8 items ranging from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent) and to also rate their level of satisfaction with the content specific workshops they attended.

Knowledge Pre and Post Tests

Knowledge tests were developed collaboratively by the curriculum development team, principal investigator, and the project evaluation team. Curriculum learning objectives were used to develop questions with foils which were then piloted during the first training sessions. Modifications were made based on analysis of the data and any changes to the curriculum prior to subsequent training sessions. Since trainees were given options of attending a variety of workshops, knowledge questions specific to individual workshops were included to assess differential impact of attending or not attending specific workshops. The pre-test was administered at the beginning of each training event with an explanation that the test served the purpose of gathering performance measures for evaluating the curriculum and trainer efficacy. Participants were informed prior to test taking that the test was designed for the purpose of measuring how well the information was delivered rather than as a test of the expertise of the participants. The post-

test was administered at the end of each training event along with a training satisfaction survey. The knowledge tests were revised and adapted between trainings to reflect changes in the curriculum and identification of test items that did not obtain sufficient reliability.

Behavioral Skills Assessment

The behavioral skills instrument was developed by the curriculum development and evaluation teams. Supervisory competencies were developed through analysis of the original focus group data, benchmarking supervisory competencies in other states, and a review of the literature. Indicators of behavioral skills and competencies were then identified for five functional areas of the child welfare supervision model: Administration, Education, Consultation, Counseling, Evaluation (Hamilton and Finnerty, 2005). Training participants completed the Behavioral Self-assessment pre-test at the same time as the Knowledge Pre-test. The Behavioral Self-assessments were gathered and scored by the evaluation staff at the training; results were provided to the supervisors. This provided immediate feedback regarding areas of strengths and challenges (areas where the instrument indicated that they focused their time and attention). Supervisors used their self-assessment to engage in dyadic conversations with peers.

Behavioral post-test self assessments were conducted in the service areas six months following training. The instruments were administered, completed and used to facilitate conversations regarding long-term retention

of training program content, structural barriers that impede effective supervision and requests for additional resources.

Results

Training Satisfaction Results

Participant satisfaction was measured following completion of each training module, using a self-administered questionnaire. While often criticized as an inadequate measure of training effectiveness, feedback from training participants was used to modify the format and delivery of the training, resulting in improved satisfaction over the course of four groups.

Results from training satisfaction surveys indicate that on overall ratings of training quality and relevance, most items yielded mean scores in the range of 4.0 – 4.7 (Modules I and II), 3.9-4.6 (Module III), 4.0 – 4.6 (Module IV), and 4.1 – 4.7 (Modules V-VI). Greater variability was found in ratings of individual workshops. Complete results on satisfaction ratings are included in the training evaluation summaries appended to this report.

Participants in the training provided comments on the forms in addition to ratings. Some exemplary quotes are listed below:

- I can immediately use the knowledge and handouts with my staff. It is extremely timely information. I can use the material to self evaluate my performance on an ongoing basis.
- The discussions with other supervisors are always extremely helpful. The worker evaluations are always helpful also, and I will also check and compare my last ratings.

- I could have made good use of this information in the early years of my supervisor work. I feel bad for the new supervisors who have already missed out.
- This has been a great opportunity to gain useful skills and knowledge about being an effective supervisor.
- The information on stress for workers is something that I need and it's something I will be able to utilize immediately upon return to the office next week.
- The handouts were particularly useful and I will be able to incorporate them into unit meetings to facilitate training,
- It reminded me how to work individually with my staff. I will definitely refer back to these materials
- [Stress, safety and leading change] are initial topics that are too often no addressed and have such large impact on daily work as well as work towards achievements towards organizational goals.
- Training helped me refocus on needs of each worker and developing a plan for each of them, as well as a vision for my work unit that I can control.
- Best training experience for this supervisor in 14 years of child protection work. Highly competent, skilled presenters and information highly relevant, well organized and appropriate level of material for experienced supervisors.

Satisfaction was generally reported to be greater among cohorts trained later than those trained in earlier sessions. This may be due in part to the fact that as trainings were delivered they were continually refined based on the feedback received and satisfaction was correlated with the quality of the instruction received. In all groups, satisfaction with the physical environment was reported as the single area of least satisfaction. Similar results were found in the comments provided in the comment section of the

survey. Comments such as the room was “too cold” or “too hot” were consistent across the cohorts in each of the trainings. Even after providing information to participants that they should dress in layers or bring sweaters there were still comments about the temperature of rooms. However, after providing the information about dressing in layers we did receive comments that indicated that participants appreciated the information and were “glad they brought sweaters” and jackets with them. The area in which participants rated the training as the most satisfactory was “Participation and sharing was encouraged.” Small group discussions were reported to be desirable and participants provided recommendations that the number of small group learning sessions be should be increased.

Results of the Knowledge Pre and Post Tests

Increased knowledge in training content was assessed through a comparison of pre and post knowledge tests developed for each training module. The pre-test was administered prior to the training and the posttest, immediately afterwards. While the one-group pretest-posttest design does not represent a rigorous method for establishing the causal impact of the training program on knowledge gain, this method did provide useful feedback on content areas in which knowledge gain is strongest and weakest. The evaluation found statistically significant improvement in knowledge scores from pretest to posttest in all trainings conducted, using the Wilcoxon Signed

Ranks Test (p=.000).

Modules I and II of the training curriculum focused on Human Resources. The table below presents the change demonstrated by participants who completed the Knowledge pretest and posttest following Module I and II training.

Table 1. Modules I-II Knowledge Test: Changes Pretest to Posttest

| Type of change for participants from pretest to posttest | Cohort 1 | | Cohort 2 | | Cohort 3 | | Cohort 4 | |
|--|-----------|-------|------------|-------|-------------|--------|-----------|-------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| number: | 25 | | 20* | | 23** | | 32 | |
| Improved + | 17 | 68.0% | 18 | 90.0% | 23 | 100.0% | 30 | 93.8% |
| No change ++ | 5 | 20.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 6.2% |
| Decreased +++ | 3 | 12.0% | 2 | 10.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Not included in this table: * for Cohort 2: 1 participant was missing the pretest ** for Cohort 3: 2 participants were missing the pretest, and 1 was missing the posttest | | | | | | | | |

+ Improved: posttest percent correct was greater than the pretest percent correct

++ No change: pretest percent correct was the same as posttest percent correct

+++ Decreased: posttest percent correct was less than the pretest percent correct

The results indicate that Cohorts 2, 3, and 4 showed more improvement from pretest to posttest (90%, 100% and 94% respectively) than Cohort 1 (68%). Revisions to the curriculum and to the knowledge test were made after each cohort training and these changes may account for some of the improvement both the training and the instrument.

Module III focused on Case Practice. The results in the table below show changes demonstrated by 79 Supervisors and 13 DHS administrators who completed both a pretest and posttest.

The results indicate that all four sessions had similar percentages of respondents who showed statistically significant improvement from pretest to posttest following the training. Overall, 77% of participants who completed both a knowledge pretest and posttest showed an increase in knowledge of Case Practice topics and issues.

Table 2. Module III Knowledge Test: Changes Pretest to Posttest

| Type of change from pretest to posttest | Session 1 | | Session 2 | | Session 3 | | Session 4 | | TOTALS | |
|---|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| number*: | 16 | | 20 | | 32 | | 24 | | 92 | |
| Improved + | 12 | 75.0** | 16 | 80.0** | 25 | 78.1** | 18 | 75.0** | 71 | 76.7** |
| No change ++ | 2 | 14.3 | 3 | 15.0 | 5 | 15.6 | 3 | 12.5 | 13 | 14.1 |
| Decreased +++ | 2 | 14.3 | 1 | 5.0 | 2 | 6.3 | 3 | 12.5 | 8 | 8.7 |

* Number who completed both a pretest and posttest

** significant difference: $p < .01$

+ Improved: posttest percent correct was greater than the pretest percent correct

++ No change: pretest percent correct was the same as posttest percent correct

+++ Decreased: posttest percent correct was less than the pretest percent correct

Module IV focused on Clinical Practice. The results of the knowledge pre and post tests are presented below in Table 3 and indicate that all four sessions had a statistically significant number of respondents - 90% or greater - who showed an increase in percent correct responses from pretest to posttest. Revisions to the curriculum and to the knowledge test were made after Sessions 1 and 2 to improve the training and the instrument.

Table 3. Module IV Knowledge Test: Changes Pretest to Posttest

| Type of change from pretest to posttest | Session 1 | | Session 2 | | Session 3 | | Session 4 | |
|---|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|---------|
| number*: | 20 | | 21 | | 34 | | 24 | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Improved + | 18 | 90.0** | 20 | 95.2** | 33 | 97.1** | 24 | 100.0** |
| No change ++ | 1 | 5.0 | 1 | 4.8 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Decreased +++ | 1 | 5.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 2.9 | 0 | 0.0 |

* Number who completed both a pretest and posttest

** significant difference: $p < .01$

+ Improved: posttest percent correct was greater than the pretest percent correct

++ No change: pretest percent correct was the same as posttest percent correct

+++ Decreased: posttest percent correct was less than the pretest percent correct

The results indicated that later training cohorts showed more improvement from knowledge pretest to posttest following the training than earlier cohorts. Revisions to the curriculum and to the knowledge tests were made after each cohort training, improving both the training and the reliability and validity of the test instrument.

Modules V and VI focus on Stress, Safety, Leading Positive Change, and Public and Community Relations. The results presented in Table 4,

below, indicate that each of the four sessions had a statistically significant number of respondents - 94% or greater - who showed an increase in percent correct responses from pretest to posttest. T-test results indicated a statistically significant increase ($p < .01$) from a mean percent correct at pretest of 39.9% to 75.8% at posttest.

Table 4. Modules V-VI Knowledge Test: Changes Pretest to Posttest

| Type of change from pretest to posttest | Session 1 | | Session 2 | | Session 3 | | Session 4 | |
|---|-----------|------|-----------|-----|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| number*: | 23 | | 18 | | 19 | | 32 | |
| Improved + | 23** | 100% | 17** | 94% | 19** | 100% | 32** | 100% |
| No change ++ | 0 | 0% | 1 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Decreased +++ | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |

* Number who completed both a pretest and posttest ** significant difference: $p < .01$

+ Improved: posttest percent correct was greater than the pretest percent correct

++ No change: pretest percent correct was the same as posttest percent correct

+++ Decreased: posttest percent correct was less than the pretest percent correct

Behavioral Skills

Medium-term outcomes for the project included: 1) increased utilization of skills and behaviors taught during the training; and 2) identification of factors facilitating use of skills and barriers to using these skills. The first outcome was measured through a pretest and posttest of supervisor behaviors specific to each training area. At the beginning of each training module, supervisors were asked to indicate the frequency with which they engage in a set of specific behaviors related to individual competencies. Approximately six months after the training they were asked to repeat this assessment, which indicates the extent to which the behavioral techniques taught in the training are being used with increased frequency. Barriers to using the skills were assessed through group discussions in which the ratings were processed.

This tool was developed to provide a systematic method for supervisors to assess staff on different task competencies, irrespective of their time on the job. The tool assesses task expertise rather than work experience, assesses staff's strengths and areas of growth, and permits a more efficient use of supervisor time and resources. The tool identifies characteristic behaviors of staff, for specific competencies, at the levels of trainee, novice, professional, and advanced professional, and describes the supervisor's role at each level. During the training program, supervisors were asked to assess their staff on specific competencies using this tool, and data were processed and returned

to the supervisors during the training for discussion.

The posttest assessment of Human Resource behavioral skills was scheduled for administration six months following the pretests which were conducted in late summer and fall of 2005. Convenience and time limitations led the evaluation team to administer these posttests at the closing of each of the Case Practice (Module III) training sessions during the first quarter of 2006. This allowed for all supervisors to complete the Human Resource Behavioral Skills Posttest 1 without additional contact and follow-up and within a training environment. A second follow-up assessment (Posttest 2) of Human Resource behavioral skills was administered at the beginning of the Clinical Practice (Module IV) training sessions during the first quarter of 2007, providing the opportunity for comparison over three time points. Case Practice (Module III) follow-up assessments were conducted during Clinical Practice (Module IV) and Module IV follow-up assessments were conducted during Module V. For the assessment of their own behavioral skills supervisors indicated how often they performed each task listed in the five function areas: administration, education, counseling, consultation, and evaluation. The response categories were: rarely (valued at 1), sometimes (valued at 2), often (valued at 3) and almost always (valued at 4). Values were totaled for each response to the tasks in each function, providing individual function scores. Tasks in the administration function pertained to how supervisors ensured an effective work environment that supported sound

supervision of services. In the education function, supervisors assessed their skills in facilitating acquisition and application of professional knowledge, values and skills. Counseling skills assessment included tasks that showed how supervisors identified and responded to the psychosocial needs of staff as they related to serving youth in transition. The list of consultation function tasks indicated how supervisors used professional knowledge to advise and guide services provided. Under the evaluation function, supervisors showed how they systematically assessed staff processes and products.

Overall participants showed higher utilization of skills at follow-up compared to pre-test and consultation skills were rated higher than other behavioral skill function areas. More detailed results for each module can be found in the training evaluation summaries appended to this report.

Longer-term outcomes of interest to this project are those that refer to change in factors that are related to retention as well as actual employee retention and job changes. Changes in perceptions of the support from supervisor, agency, and community, ambiguity in job roles, job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and intentions to stay or leave were to be examined through a follow-up online employee survey. Unfortunately, administration of this follow-up survey could not be completed as planned during the project period. Around the time that the survey was going to be administered, a number of events occurred. The Director of IDHS left the agency, an interim director was appointed, the economic recession led to

considerable uncertainty about possible layoffs in the state agency, and an unrelated situation with a state institution resulted in the interim director leaving the agency not long after he had assumed the position. A new director was hired, but in light of all of this turmoil, the evaluation team thought it would be important to wait until the situation was stable before attempting to survey employees about their work situation. The survey has been launched, but results are not available for analysis for this report. Analysis of the survey data will be completed in the near future and results disseminated through journal publications and conference presentations.

Workforce Retention

The evaluation team gathered data on job changes and turnover within DHS, including promotions and transfers within and across county offices. These data were used to evaluate the degree to which the goal of improving retention was reached, taking into account turnover that is attributable to retirements, promotions and transfers.

One of the goals of the project was to retain social workers in IDHS child welfare positions. At the beginning of the project 861 members of the workforce were employed in child welfare positions. Over the life of the project 82 percent (701 of 861) of those employed at the beginning of the project remained employed by IDHS. The average annual retention rate (the number employed at the end of the year who were employed at the beginning of the year among those employed when the project began) was 95 percent.

Retention ranged from 93.8 percent in 2007 to 97 percent in 2008 (in 2009, 99 percent were retained though data were only available for one quarter in 2009). Figure 1 illustrates the retention rates by year among those who were employed when the project began.

Figure 1: Percent Retained Over the Life of the Project by Year

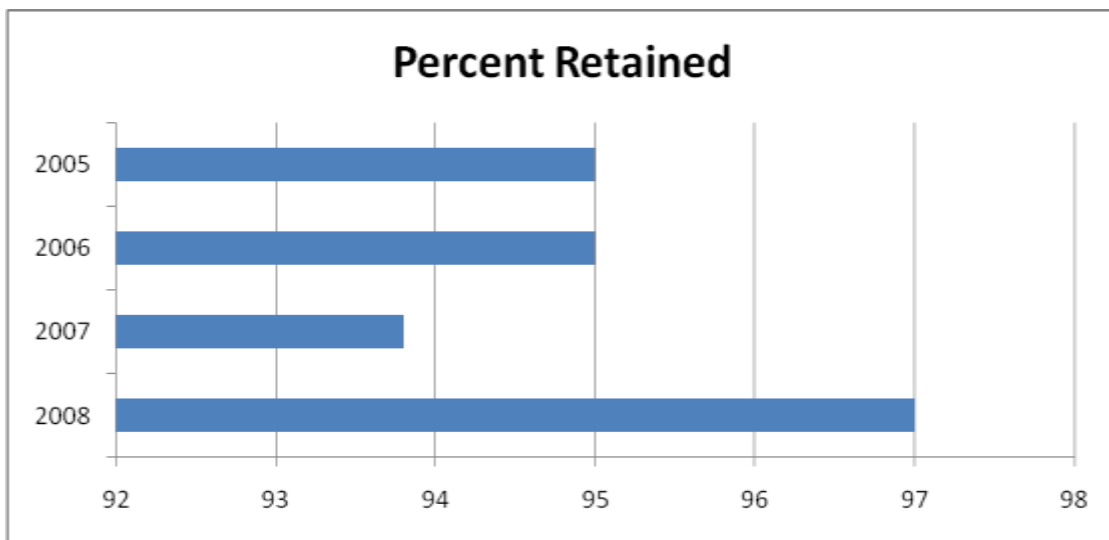


Table 5 presents the actual percentages of employees retained for each year.

Table 5: Number and Percent of Employees Retained by Year

| | Employees | Percentage |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 2008 | 707 | 97.0% |
| 2007 | 729 | 93.8% |
| 2006 | 777 | 95.0% |
| 2005 | 818 | 95.0% |
| 2004 | 861 | |

The project served all eight service areas throughout the state. Figure 2 illustrates the number employed and retained annually for each of the service areas. The retention rates are discussed further.

Figure 2: Number Retained by Service Area

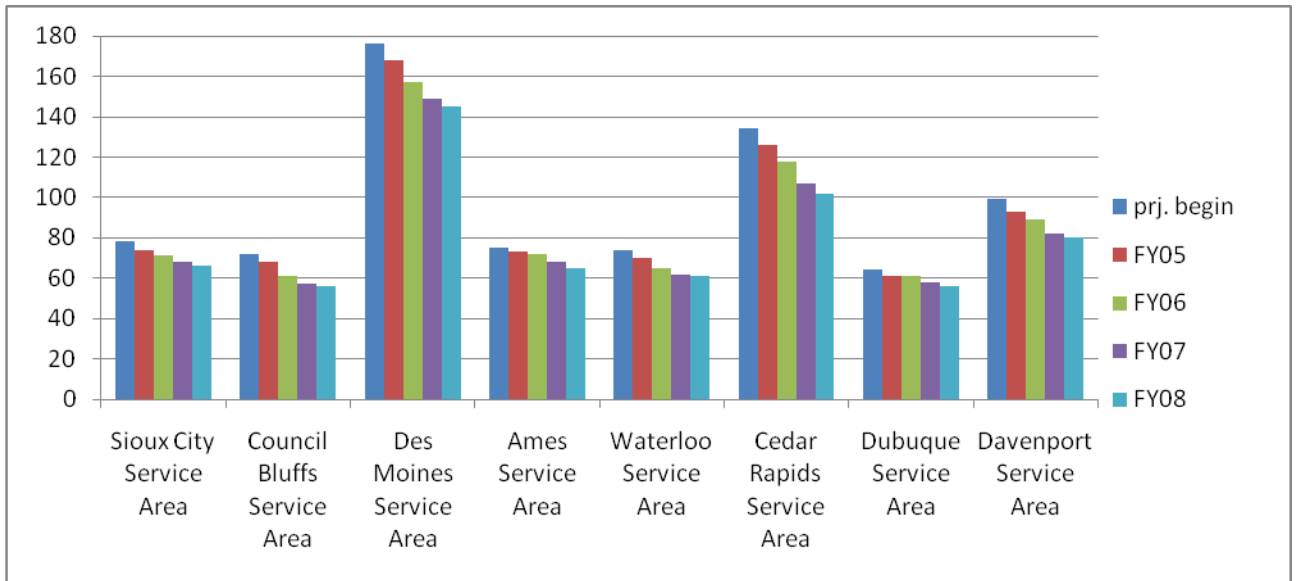


Table 6 presents the number retained annually for each service area in the state. The average annual retention rate for those employed in the service areas was 95.6. There were 772 employed in the service areas at project beginning and at project end there were 631. For the life of the project, the overall (5 year) retention rate was 82 percent when calculated based on 772 employed in the service areas at the beginning of the project and 631 at the end of the project.

Table 6. Number Retained by Service Area

| | prj. begin | FY05 | FY06 | FY07 | FY08 |
|-----------------------------|------------|------|------|------|------|
| Sioux City Service Area | 78 | 74 | 71 | 68 | 66 |
| Council Bluffs Service Area | 72 | 68 | 61 | 57 | 56 |
| Des Moines Service Area | 176 | 168 | 157 | 149 | 145 |
| Ames Service Area | 75 | 73 | 72 | 68 | 65 |
| Waterloo Service Area | 74 | 70 | 65 | 62 | 61 |
| Cedar Rapids Service Area | 134 | 126 | 118 | 107 | 102 |
| Dubuque Service Area | 64 | 61 | 61 | 58 | 56 |
| Davenport Service Area | 99 | 93 | 89 | 82 | 80 |

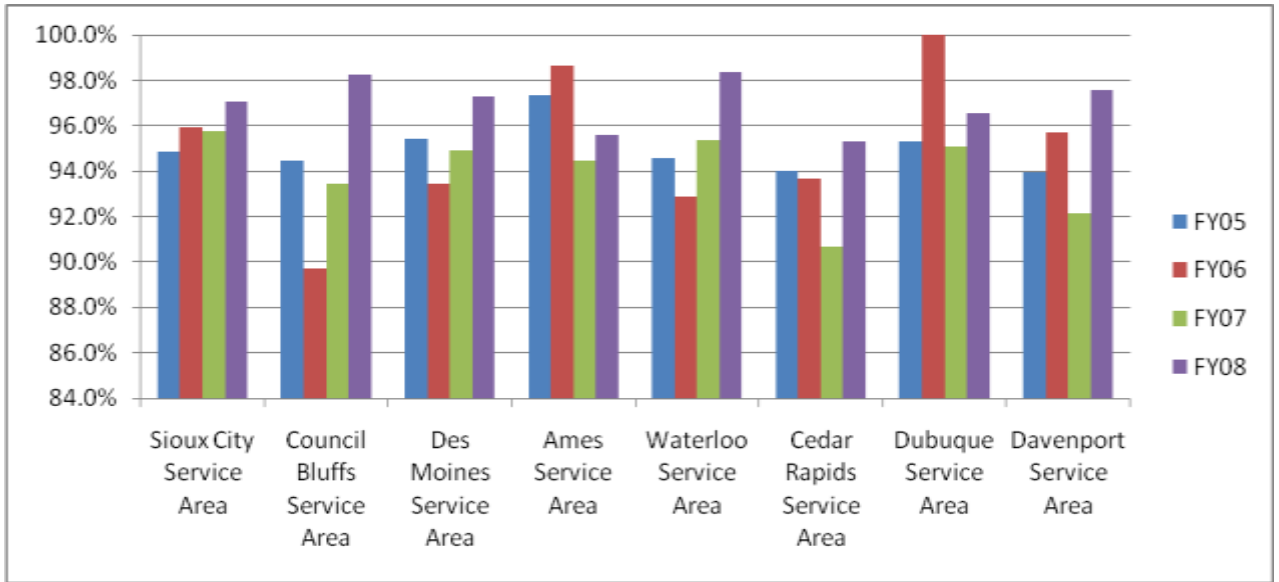
Table 7 presents the retention rate for each service area by each state fiscal year 2005 through 2008. The average annual retention rate was 95.6 percent.

Table 7. Percent Retained by Service Area

| | FY05 | FY06 | FY07 | FY08 |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Sioux City Service Area | 94.9% | 95.9% | 95.8% | 97.1% |
| Council Bluffs Service Area | 94.4% | 89.7% | 93.4% | 98.2% |
| Des Moines Service Area | 95.5% | 93.5% | 94.9% | 97.3% |
| Ames Service Area | 97.3% | 98.6% | 94.4% | 95.6% |
| Waterloo Service Area | 94.6% | 92.9% | 95.4% | 98.4% |
| Cedar Rapids Service Area | 94.0% | 93.7% | 90.7% | 95.3% |
| Dubuque Service Area | 95.3% | 100.0% | 95.1% | 96.6% |
| Davenport Service Area | 93.9% | 95.7% | 92.1% | 97.6% |

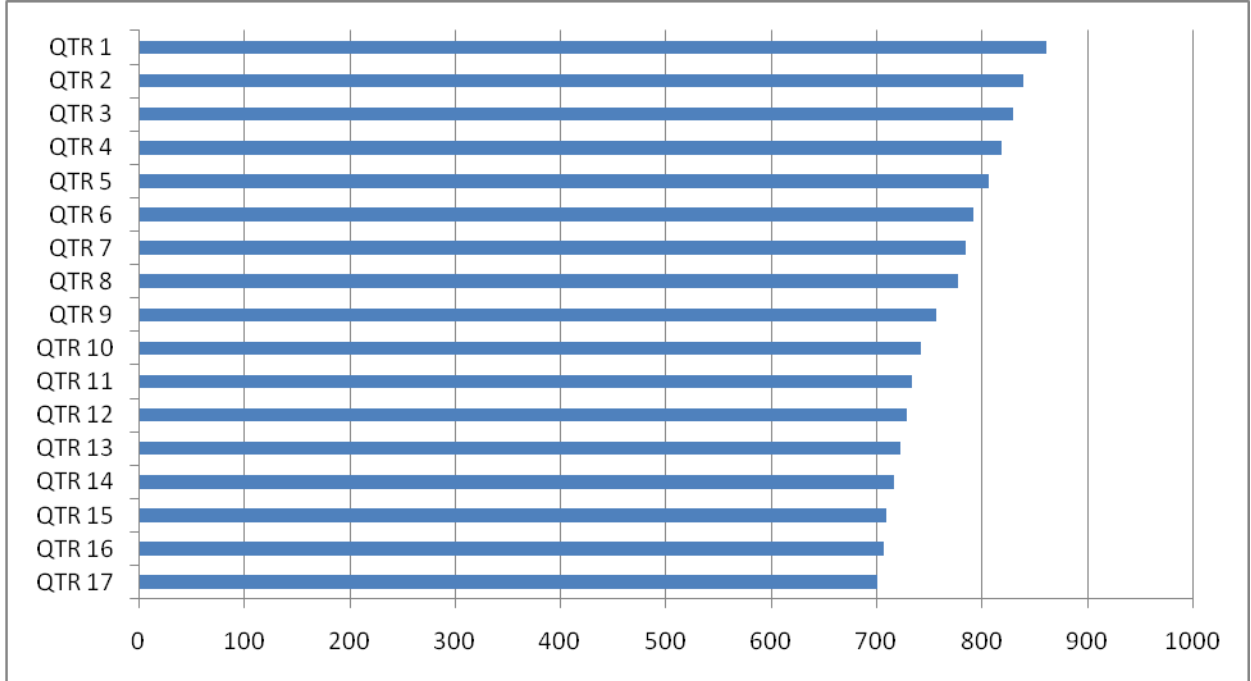
Figure 3 illustrates the retention rate for each service area for each state fiscal year 2005 through 2008.

Figure 3: Percent Retained by Service Area by Fiscal Year



To illustrate the retention trend during the project period, Figure 4 illustrates retention by each quarter. Of the 861 employed when the project began, the average quarterly loss was 10 employees per quarter. The figure below illustrates the retention rates by quarter among those who were employed when the project began.

Figure 4. Retention by Quarter



Among the 160 who left employment, 10 were considered “desirable” resulting from dismissals for cause and 44 were considered “not preventable” (their departures were due to factors such as health reasons, retirement, death, layoff etc. In further analyses these departures may be considered to reduce the already low turnover rate achieved during the project period.) Ninety-six leavers were considered “preventable.” Reasons for departure among the 96 include “to take a better job,” “moving,” “stay home,” or for “personal reasons.” Ten individuals left but no reason was provided.

This left a total of 701 individuals who remained with IDHS, of whom 399 stayed in the same position throughout the study period. The other 302

changed positions: 94 were promoted, 20 demoted, 21 reclassified, and 167 transferred laterally. These data are depicted in Table 8.

Table 8. Types of Retention Outcomes

| Outcome | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Desirable | 10 | 1.2 |
| Preventable | 96 | 11.1 |
| Not Preventable | 44 | 5.1 |
| Left-no reason given | 10 | 1.2 |
| Changed position | 302 | 35.1 |
| Stayed in position | 399 | 46.3 |
| Total | 861 | 100 |

New Hires

Up to now the discussion has focused on those who were employed at the beginning of the project. Employment began during the project for 378 additional employees. Table 9 presents the number employed by the quarter of the project in which their employment began. The table shows that during the first quarter there were 861 who were employed as the project began.

During quarter 2 there were 21 new hires, in quarter 3 there were 12 new employees, in quarter 4 there 19 new employees, in quarter 5 there were 27 new employees, in quarter 6 there were 32 new employees, in quarter 7 there were 10 new employees, in quarter 8 there were 12 new employees, in quarter 9 there were 16 new employees, in quarter 10 there were 32 new employees, in quarter 11 there were 42 new employees, in quarter 12 there were 26 new employees, in quarter 12 there were 24 new employees in quarter 12 there were 51 new employees, in quarter 12 there were 22 new employees, in quarter 12 there were 21 new employees, in quarter 12 there were 11 new employees, in quarter 13 there were 24 new employees, in quarter 14 there were 51 new employees, in quarter 15 there were 22 new employees, in quarter 16 there were 21 new employees and in quarter 17 there were 11 new employees.

Table 9. Quarter of Employment

| Quarter of Employment | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------------------|----|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1 | 861 | 63.0 | 69.2 | 69.2 |
| | 2 | 21 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 70.8 |
| | 3 | 12 | .9 | 1.0 | 71.8 |
| | 4 | 19 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 73.3 |
| | 5 | 27 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 75.5 |
| | 6 | 32 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 78.1 |
| | 7 | 10 | .7 | .8 | 78.9 |
| | 8 | 12 | .9 | 1.0 | 79.8 |
| | 9 | 16 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 81.1 |
| | 10 | 32 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 83.7 |
| | 11 | 42 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 87.1 |
| | 12 | 26 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 89.2 |
| | 13 | 24 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 91.1 |
| | 14 | 51 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 95.2 |
| | 15 | 22 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 96.9 |
| | 16 | 21 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 98.6 |
| | 17 | 11 | .8 | .9 | 99.5 |
| NA | 6 | .4 | .5 | 100.0 | |
| Total | | 1245 | 91.1 | 100.0 | |

Of course those hired later in the project period had fewer months (quarters) to be on the job but it is important to consider their pattern of staying and leaving among those who were employed after the project began as well as those employed at the beginning of the project. One measure to consider is the modal length of stay which indicates the number of quarters with the highest frequency. Table 10 shows that the mode was the same as the number of quarters possible to be employed at for each cohort; once hired they tended to stay. The mean (average) is affected by extreme scores more than the median or mode. For example, those hired who left right away will affect the mean more than other measures of central tendency such as the median or mode. Length of time on the job for those employed at the beginning of the project is discussed above. Table 4.5 shows the number hired by quarter and length of stay by cohort (quarter hired).

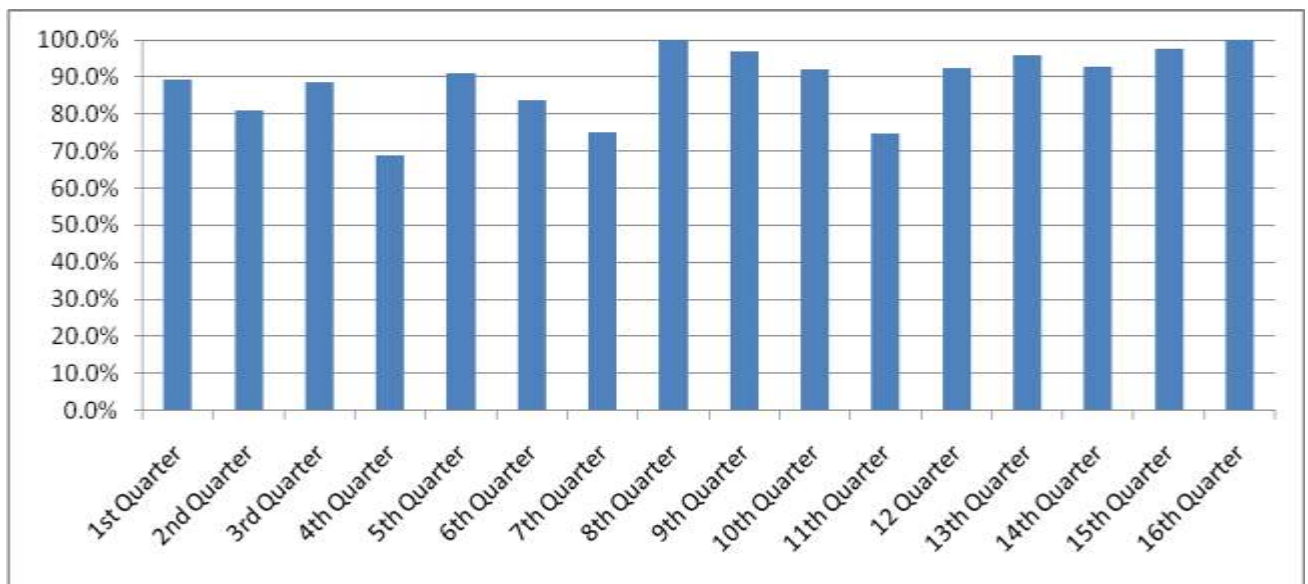
Table 10. Length of Employment by Quarter Hired

| | Mean | Median | Mode | Std.Dev. | N |
|--------------|-------|--------|-------|----------|----|
| 2nd Quarter | 12.76 | 16.00 | 16.00 | 5.513 | 21 |
| 3rd Quarter | 13.25 | 15.00 | 15.00 | 4.224 | 12 |
| 4th Quarter | 9.47 | 14.00 | 14.00 | 5.561 | 19 |
| 5th Quarter | 11.74 | 13.00 | 13.00 | 3.008 | 27 |
| 6th Quarter | 9.94 | 12.00 | 12.00 | 3.835 | 32 |
| 7th Quarter | 8.10 | 11.00 | 11.00 | 3.784 | 10 |
| 8th Quarter | 10.00 | 10.00 | 10.00 | .000 | 12 |
| 9th Quarter | 8.69 | 9.00 | 9.00 | 1.250 | 16 |
| 10th Quarter | 7.25 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 1.814 | 32 |
| 11th Quarter | 5.14 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 2.600 | 42 |
| 12 Quarter | 5.50 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 1.449 | 26 |
| 13th Quarter | 4.75 | 5.00 | 5.00 | .847 | 24 |
| 14th Quarter | 3.63 | 4.00 | 4.00 | .916 | 51 |
| 15th Quarter | 2.86 | 3.00 | 3.00 | .468 | 22 |
| 16th Quarter | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | .000 | 21 |
| 17th Quarter | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | .000 | 11 |

Figure 5 illustrates the percentage of possible subsequent quarters employed by quarter in which hired. What the data tell us is that those

employed after the 7th quarter had generally higher lengths of stay than those who were hired in earlier quarters. The mean percentage of quarters employed for those hired during the 7th quarter or later was 91.7 percent. For those hired prior to the 7th quarter the mean percentage of quarters employed by quarter hired was 82.7 percent. The data indicate that for those hired after the project began, those hired later in the project tended to stay longer than those hired earlier in the project period.

Figure 5: Length of Employment (in percent) by Quarter Hired



For those who began and left employment after the project began, 14 were considered “desirable” resulting from dismissals for cause. Fifty-four were considered “preventable;” their reasons for departure were resignations “to take a better job,” “move,” “go to school,” “dissatisfaction” or for “personal reasons.” No non-preventable turnover occurred among the new hires.

This left 310 new hired who remained with DHS through the remainder of the study period: 220 remained in the same position and 90 changed position by the end of data collection. Of the 90 who changed positions, 30 were promoted, 10 were demoted, one was reclassified, and 49 were lateral transferred. These data are illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11. Retention Outcomes – New Hires

| Outcome | Frequency | Valid Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Desirable | 14 | 3.7 |
| Preventable | 54 | 14.3 |
| Not Preventable | 0 | 0 |
| Changed position | 90 | 23.8 |
| Stayed in position | 220 | 58.2 |
| Total | 378 | 100 |

Among those who left and were considered “desirable” (dismissed for cause) the mean number of quarters employed was 2.5 indicating that terminations tend to occur earlier rather than later in the employment period. Of the 14 who were dismissed, 8 were hired in quarters 2 thru 6 and

6 were hired in quarters 10 thru 15, which indicates that dismissals were relatively evenly spread throughout the project.

Several conclusions can be drawn from these data. First and most notably, retention rates were fairly high throughout the study period. Among the individuals who were already employed when the project began, annual retention rates ranged from nearly 94% to 97%. When retention rates are this high, it is difficult to show improvement over time. Although there is some variation in retention across service areas, the differences are not dramatic. No service area experienced an annual turnover rate lower than 90% during any year of the study. Calculating annual turnover rates among the newer hires is more complicated than can be presented here, because individuals became employed at various time points and the denominator is variable.

A second conclusion is that there is a considerable amount of job change taking place within the organization. These changes pose some interesting dilemmas for child welfare agencies. Individuals often seek positions to achieve a better fit with their skills and interests, or to advance professionally, while others are re-assigned based on agency need. Job changes may also share some of the negative effects of turnover, in terms of interrupting services to children and families and for those demoted in position, lowering morale. These findings suggest that similar to

differentiating between types of turnover, further understand of the effects of types of retention may be warranted.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Iowa's recruitment and retention project has produced some important successes. First, Iowa DHS now has state-wide supervisor training teaching a comprehensive model of supervision. The training has had an impact on hiring practices (e.g., more Service Areas using behavioral based interview questions, realistic job preview) and enhanced the teaching role of supervisors. Supervisors use task analyses and the Developmental Planning and Support Tool to conduct regular formative evaluations. Supervisors use clinical supervision tools to increase worker competence and improve services to families.

Increased use of reflective supervision, supervision tools and in-service clinical teaching has strengthened workers' competency. While an intentional supervision practice takes more time up front, supervisors report that the improvements in worker skill and client outcomes are well worth the effort and result in less time spent in less enjoyable and productive tasks such as corrective actions. Our research tells us that supportive supervision also enhances the workers' perception of agency support and strengthens their commitment to the organization. Administrators report that the

supervisors' increased commitment to worker development aligns well with Iowa DHS's comprehensive practice change efforts. Training supervisors in cohorts has also resulted in increased peer support for supervisors.

We believe that our collaborative curriculum development process (focus groups, work groups, monthly advisory committee meetings) was key to getting an outstanding level of supervisor buy-in to the training. Throughout the project we used a collaborative process and with strong involvement from DHS staff, including the state's Training Coordinator, child welfare training committee and all levels of DHS from the start. We structured a multi-level review of curriculum with focus on the end users. We devoted the first year of the project to a very thorough assessment, and have continued to seek input from stakeholders on an ongoing basis. Conducting focus groups around the state, and involving as many supervisors as possible in this effort, was a critical step in gaining their buy-in for the project. A unique quality of our training program is that it was developed with input from supervisors who were the training participants. As we think about dissemination, we believe that the process may be as important as the product.

The training was also designed at the appropriate level – it focused on supervisory behaviors, shared the evidence base behind the training, and provided ample time for sharing among the supervisors. The newer supervisors gained a great deal from time spent with more experienced

supervisors across the state, and the experienced supervisors reported feeling re-energized by the focus on clinical supervision and the opportunity for peer support and mentoring.

We have used a parallel practice model of supervision, teaching strength-based supervision between supervisor and worker in order to facilitate strength based practice between workers and families. Strength based supervision relies more heavily on reflective questioning rather than directives. Our model of supervision is also a developmental model, in which supervisors help to facilitate workers' growth and development in autonomy, insight, and practice skills. As workers' skills increase, they are able to assume expertise in specific areas of practice and provide support to coworkers.

Self-assessment and self-awareness on the part of supervisors are critical to their own development and use of new supervision skills. Because the daily requirements of the job leave little "down time," the supervisor trainings have provided an opportunity for supervisors to focus on their own behaviors in a supportive learning environment. Supervisors value having time to spend interacting with and learning from their peers around the state, and there are few opportunities for them to do so. Our training programs have had this secondary benefit. We found that supervisors have especially appreciated the opportunity to learn about and talk about clinical and treatment issues. As public child welfare practice in our state had moved

much more toward case management/service brokering, supervisors had fewer opportunities to focus on these issues.

Time and again, supervisor trainees emphasized how much they valued the opportunity to share ideas with their peer supervisors from around the state. One lesson learned in the training is that sometimes “less is more”; i.e., if one can construct good questions to pose to supervisors, and skillfully facilitate discussion, this can generate learning that is just as important as the more formal training.

The Clinical Module proved to be a challenge in this regard. A subcommittee of the project advisory committee felt very strongly that they wanted one of the five sessions to be devoted to improving the knowledge base of supervisors on clinical issues. We followed their recommendations, but in retrospect, the training was too didactic. Therefore, we created a video product for the Adult Mental Health presentation and plan to do the same for the Child Mental Health presentation for future use in Iowa.

Evaluation of training activities found a very high rate of supervisor participation in training, significant knowledge gains in content taught in the training, as well as significant increases in the use of practice skills taught in training. The evaluation of worker retention data over the course of the project has found high rates of retention. We also found high rates of job changes within the agency, suggesting the need for further investigation

about different types of retention (promotion, demotion, lateral transfer) and their effects on agency climate and client outcomes.

To recruit the next generation of child welfare workers, we focused efforts on improving the University of Iowa's child welfare curriculum. We were able to develop a child welfare specialization for MSW students and a parallel child welfare concentration for BA social Work students at the University of Iowa. As part of the development of this specialization, we created three new child welfare focused courses: Child Welfare Policy and Practice, Clinical Issues in Child Welfare, and Child Welfare Supervision. These three courses represent a major enhancement to the social work program's previous child welfare curriculum. The ability to offer these courses on a regular basis will enhance the pool of qualified social work graduates prepared for child welfare careers.

We also faced some challenges over five years, and learned some valuable lessons. Our public child welfare agency has been in a constant state of flux since the beginning of the project--new initiatives, new policies, new training accompanying the many changes in practice and service delivery. We have worked to keep up with the changes, but it is a constant struggle, and one which has given us an appreciation for the work life of the supervisor, for whom adapting to constant change and assisting staff in the same process is an essential part of the job. On our part, it was important to maintain flexibility, particularly around scheduling and rescheduling

training in order to accommodate new high priority initiatives.

Another challenge that we faced early on was that caseloads for supervisors were very heavy, making it difficult for supervisors to practice much of what they learned in training. Fortunately over the course of the project, we saw some decrease in supervisor to caseworker ratios and in workers' caseloads. Another challenge was the aging of workforce, as a substantial percentage of Iowa's supervisors are nearing retirement age. The wage scale in some cases discourages those who might otherwise be interested in becoming supervisors from seeking these positions.

Some of the training topics generated considerable emotional response. This response was generally expressed as frustration with the organizational constraints to good supervision and practice. In the Module III pilot, we decided to set up an impromptu workshop entitled "Facilitated Discussion" to allow both for some venting of this frustration but more importantly to encourage sharing of ways to address these constraints.

In Module V, Promoting Safety and Resilience, participants in three of the four cohorts shared experiences such as recent child deaths on their caseload, traumatic assaults by clients, and frustrations with how organizational change processes had been managed. Fortunately we had set aside ample time to deal with some of these discussions; we wrote others on a 'message wall' to report out in another way; and we kept things relaxed by

regularly interspersing the day with brief relaxation exercises led by our trainer who is also a therapist.

Through the Improving Recruitment and Retention Project we have been able to build collaborative relationships with our public child welfare agency partners; develop, implement, and evaluation a conceptually solid training program to enhance the skills of child welfare supervisors and mid-level managers; produce useful tools for supervisors; contribute to the knowledge base on the child welfare workforce; and enhance the University of Iowa School of Social Work's child welfare curriculum to recruit the next generation of child welfare practitioners and supervisors. Our next steps are to continue dissemination of the project through training and publication.

Appendix

REFERENCES

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

SUPERVISOR COMPETENCIES / SELF-ASSESSMENTS

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MODULE II: DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH SUPERVISION

MODULE III: CASE PRACTICE SUPERVISION

MODULE IV: CLINICAL PRACTICE SUPERVISION

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MODULE VI: LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISION

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SUPPORTING SUPERVISORS TO IMPROVE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

PATHWAYS TO ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

TRAINING EVALUATION REPORTS

CHILD WELFARE POLICY AND PRACTICE

CLINICAL ISSUES IN CHILD WELFARE

CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISION

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