Child welfare…it takes a special kind of person.
Staying Power!
A Supervisor’s Guide to
Child Welfare Staff Retention

A Product of the R&R Project
Child Welfare Staff Recruitment & Retention
An Evidence-Based Training Model

Jordan Institute for Families
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Staying Power! A Supervisor's Guide to Child Welfare Staff Retention
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Introduction

Welcome to Staying Power! A Supervisor’s Guide to Child Welfare Staff Retention. The result of a five year federally funded project to enhance the recruitment, selection and retention skills of child welfare supervisors, this supervisory curriculum is one of three resources and training components of the project, Child Welfare Staff Recruitment and Retention Project: An Evidence-Based Training Model (R&R Project). This introductory section presents the need and rationale for the curriculum, its unique contributions to child welfare staff retention, and specific suggestions for training delivery.

Background

Children, youth and families served by the public child welfare system deserve the best-qualified and most committed staff possible that can provide the rigorous, comprehensive services families need to ensure their children’s safety, permanence and well-being. Yet those most committed to helping children and families do not always continue working in child welfare. With an estimated national turnover rate between 20% and 40%, undesired exits of significant numbers of child welfare workers are a serious problem that hampers the ability of agencies to provide essential services to vulnerable families, youth and children (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003; U.S. GAO, 2003).

Child welfare supervisors are key to the development of a competent, stable child welfare workforce (McCarthy, 2003; Zlotnik et al., 2005). The training and professional development of supervisors, however, typically focus on the general process of supervision and not on specific skills of staff retention (Dickinson & Comstock, 2009). Important supervisory dimensions which impact retention include the affective role of supervisors—providing support, expressing approval and concern, and being warm and friendly in response to worker concerns (Dickinson & Perry, 2002)—as well as the ability of supervisors to help workers develop effective practice skills (Dickinson & Painter, 2009; Rycraft, 1994). Also contributing to the retention of workers in their units are supervisors who encourage continued professional growth and foster on-the-job learning through such organizational learning activities as peer mentoring and supervisory coaching (Landsman, 2001; Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998).

Evidence-based Retention Curriculum

These research-informed supervisory retention behaviors are the focus of this training curriculum. Our R&R Project research results also gave credible evidence about the importance of specific supervisory retention behaviors. For example, project findings show that North Carolina workers were less likely to intend to leave their jobs if they had realistic expectations about the nature of their jobs, felt their job assignments were congruent with their skills, and perceived their supervisors as being able to provide practice guidance and emotional support (Dickinson, Painter, & Lee, 2007). These worker perceptions are amenable to change when supervisors apply specific retention skills in their work. With these skills, supervisors have significant influence on the retention of workers in their units (Dickinson & Painter, 2009) and, in collaboration with other supervisors, on the agency’s climate.
Training Sessions
This curriculum comprises five half-day sessions and is designed to be delivered in two consecutive days, followed by two weeks or more of workplace retention activities, and a final half day of face-to-face training. The afternoon of the third day can be used for the delivery of *Staying Power! A Recruitment Toolkit*, another training and resources product of the R&R Project.

Each curriculum session begins with Outline and Trainer Notes that include session activity topics and checklists for handouts, equipment and materials, room set-up instructions and pre-session tasks. There is a reference list at this point in each session introduction.

Each session activity begins with learning objectives and lists materials for that activity, handouts, time of the activity and facilitator preparation. Copies of PowerPoint slides and notes to facilitators are interspersed with the instructions and content of the training activity. All of the materials and resources needed to deliver this supervisor retention training are available on a CD from the Jordan Institute for Families.

Making Changes to the Curriculum
The Jordan Institute for Families allows adaptation of this curriculum, *Staying Power! A Supervisor’s Guide to Child Welfare Staff Retention*. Please acknowledge the Jordan Institute and the Children's Bureau in any adapted materials.

Transfer of Learning Activities and Resources
Approximately six months after attending this training, supervisors in North Carolina participated in agency-based follow-up meetings with project trainers to discuss the training content and degree of success they had in applying retention skills with their units. During these half-day meetings, the trainers distributed resources that supervisors could use to remind themselves and their staff of retention principles and behaviors. These resources included the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Retention Reminder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tote Bag</td>
<td>Staying Power! Helping your staff put down roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candy Jar</td>
<td>STAY: It’s sweet having you here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock</td>
<td>Take time to care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perpetual Calendar</td>
<td>Daily reminder of a retention skill or adage from the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnet</td>
<td>Helping your staff put down roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Bottle</td>
<td>Refresh your stay efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clip</td>
<td>Keep staff together…use your STAY skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Session 1
The Context for Turnover and Retention of Child Welfare Staff

Outline and Trainer Notes
Activities for Session 1

Activity 1.1
Welcome and Introductions (45–60 minutes)

Activity 1.2
The Trends Game (45 minutes)

Activity 1.3
Turnover and Retention: Push and Pull Factors (45 minutes)

Activity 1.4
Your Current Retention Strategies (15 minutes)

(Total 165 minutes)

Handouts
- 1A Definitions: Organizational Climate & Culture
- 1B Workforce Trends
- 1C Workforce Priorities: Mobility and Motivation
- 1D Top 10 Push Factors: Why do people leave?
- 1E All Turnover Is Not The Same
- 1F Pull Factors: Promoting Retention
- 1G Inventory of Current Retention Strategies

Equipment and Material
- Name Tent for each participant
- LCD projector, computer, external speakers
- Flip chart pads and markers
- Handout folder for each participant
- 2 Index cards for each participant
- Half sheets of paper
- Sticky Wall and masking tape
Room Set Up and Pre-Session Tasks
- Mount Sticky Wall
- Hang signs
- Set up LCD projector
- Set up DVD
- Distribute markers and participant folders
- Set up flip charts and prepare pages as indicated in trainer notes
- Prepare the game board for the Trends Game

The Trends Game
Materials
- Four poster boards
- Printing paper
- Glue or double sided tape
- Scissors

Setting Up
- From the CD, print four sets of the game questions and cut them out. Place the questions on the poster board in a grid as shown below.
- From the CD, print four sets of the answers and cut them out.

The Trends Game
References


Welcome and Introductions  Activity 1.1

Learning Objectives

☐ Participants will learn more about other participants and the trainers and become more comfortable in the training environment.
☐ Participants will be able to differentiate the concepts of organizational “climate” and “culture” and identify factors for both which may be associated with staying or leaving the job.

Materials

☐ Flipchart and markers
☐ Index cards
☐ Participant folders

Handouts

☐ 1A Definitions: Organizational Climate & Culture

Time

45 to 60 minutes depending on the number of participants

Facilitator Preparation

☐ Give each participant 2 index cards and prepare 2 flip chart pages. Label one “Reasons I Stay…” and the other “Reasons for Leaving/Thinking About Leaving…”
☐ Place markers at each table so that participants can complete the name tents.
☐ Distribute participant folders containing registration forms (if necessary) and the training agendas. (Participants can use these folders to collect handouts.)
☐ Ensure that you have information about recruitment and retention that will be relevant to your participants. This information includes, for example, turnover rates in your state, vacancy rates, recruitment challenges, etc.

Procedure

Step 1: Introduction to the Curriculum and the Trainers

☐ Welcome participants to the training, A Supervisor’s Guide to Child Welfare Retention, and briefly introduce yourself and your co-trainer.

Retention is a significant issue throughout the nation. The federal government has issued reports about the retention crisis and funded research and demonstration projects to learn more about how to improve retention. This curriculum was developed by one of these projects that is based at the UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work, Jordan Institute for Families.

Note to facilitator: Provide background information about recruitment, retention, and turnover that will be pertinent for program participants.
Many approaches are needed to attract and keep a qualified workforce in child welfare. This curriculum focuses on the role of the supervisor and actions that the supervisor can take to become more retention-oriented.

Review the agenda and discuss plans and expectations for the first two days. Point out the dates and times for the final two days of the training.

Point out the bathrooms and break areas and review any logistical information that needs to be covered.

**Step 2: Group Norms**
- Engage participants in a discussion of guidelines that we will all follow during the training. For example, we may have a guideline about cell phones and beepers, start/stop times, confidentiality.
- Ask the group for guidelines and record their suggestions on a flip chart page.
- Once all the guidelines are recorded, ask if everyone will commit to abide by the items on the list.

**Note to facilitator:** Do not spend a lot of time developing an extensive list. Make sure you cover major areas and move on. You can always add more items if issues arise later.

**Step 3: Why You Stay or Leave (Icebreaker Activity)**
- Introduce the activity by discussing the concepts of organizational culture and climate. Refer to [Handout 1A](#).

  People often talk about culture and climate as if they are interchangeable and mean the same thing. Those who study organizational culture, however, distinguish between these two concepts. Culture is deeply embedded in an organization and can be both formal and informal.

  Climate, on the other hand, has more to do with the day-to-day experience of organizational life. It is our shared understanding about the work environment. As noted on the handout, climate may consist of collective perceptions about administrative support, worker autonomy, sufficiency of resources and similar issues.

  - Invite participants to list additional examples of agency climate.

  The importance of this distinction is:
  - Culture is very difficult to change
  - Climate can be influenced by the supervisor. In fact, climate can be different in different units of the agency.
  - Positive organizational climate is associated with higher job satisfaction and greater commitment to the organization.

  - Point out the index cards at each place and ask participants to reflect on their current positions as well as other jobs they may have held in the past.

  - On one side of the card list some of the organizational climate factors that caused them to leave or think about leaving. On the other side, write factors that make them want to stay in a position.
Allow a few minutes for participants to complete their cards. Then ask participants to introduce themselves to the group and give:
- Name
- Position
- Length of time in the current position
- Length of time with the agency
- Briefly share what is on the card (leave and stay factors)

Record participants’ reasons for staying or leaving on the flip chart pages that were prepared at the beginning of the session.

**Note to Facilitator:** Keep the flip chart pages for reference throughout the training since it is likely that participants will have mentioned many of the areas that will be addressed during the training.

After the introductions are completed, facilitate a discussion of the items on the flip chart. Summarize key themes from both charts. You will probably find that these themes align well with the push and pull factors that will be presented in the next section. Observe that participants already have valuable information that will help craft strategies to retain child welfare staff.

Typical lists include Stay Factors such as:
- Flexibility
- Continue to grow and learn
- Sense of accomplishment
- Supportive supervisor
- Great co-workers
- Benefit package

Leave Factors often include the following:
- Lack of support from supervisor
- No opportunities to learn new skills
- Can’t use the skills I have
- Don’t feel respected

Note that some factors will appear on both lists and these factors can have a strong influence on the climate and whether an individual thinks more about staying or leaving.
- Support from administration
- Relationship with co-workers
- Relationship with supervisors

**Note to Facilitator:** This is probably a good point for a break if you have a large group. Before announcing the break, ask the volunteer group maker to help assign 4 groups. Determine the groups before the break and ask participants to sit with their groups when they return. Be sure to point out where each group should sit (for example, the 1’s at one location, the 2’s at another, and so forth).
The Trends Game  Activity 1.2

Learning Objectives

- Participants will understand general workforce trends that affect the child welfare workforce.
- Participants will understand the differences between traditional and emergent workers.
- Participants will appreciate the need for organizations to develop strategies to respond to these trends and to worker differences.

Major Points

1. The workforce issues in child welfare are reflected in all other sectors of the workforce. Child welfare may be an extreme example and, given current trends, the situation may worsen.

2. Not only is the pool of skilled workers smaller relative to the number of jobs, but the types of workers have changed also. This change is not directly associated with age of the worker.

3. Emergent workers have different goals and are motivated differently than traditional workers. Emergent workers now represent the majority of those in the workforce.

4. Agencies must change in order to respond to these trends. What would make a social worker choose public child welfare instead of another practice setting?

Materials

- Trends Game Board and answers
- Game Prizes

Handouts

- 1B Workforce Trends
- 1C Workforce Priorities: Mobility and Motivation

Time

45 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Set up a game board and answers at four different tables in the training room.
- Before the session or while the groups are working prepare 4 flip chart pages to tally the scores:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group #</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Procedure**

**Step 1: Game Set Up**
- Divide participants into 4 groups. Each group will have a game board and answers. Point out the answers can be attached to the question. The correct answers are provided as well as some incorrect answers. Tell participants to use the knowledge they already have. Do not refer to training materials. *(Reminder to facilitator: You have not yet distributed the handouts.)*

**Step 2: Play the Game**
- Give the groups about 10-15 minutes to respond to the 15 questions on the game board. Monitor the groups and call time at about when most groups have completed the task.

**Step 3: Debrief the Game**
- Distribute participant handouts.
- Starting with Question 1, ask the groups to give their answers to each question. Discuss each question before moving to the next.
- If the groups have consensus on the answer, confirm that it is correct and give each group 1 point. Elaborate on the item, then continue to the next item.
- When the groups do not have consensus, ask each group to discuss the reasons for the answers they chose. You might ask other groups if anyone is persuaded to change their answers. Make it fun. Give the correct answer and discuss.
- Each facilitator should take an active role in debriefing the questions. For example, the first facilitator may debrief questions 1-4 and 9-12. The second facilitator may debrief the remaining items, 5-8 and 13-16.

1. **Growth rate of employment, 2006–2016.**
   - The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 10% growth rate in employment between 2006 and 2016 (increase of 15.6 million jobs). These jobs will be concentrated in the service-providing sector of the economy including educational services, health care, and social assistance. (www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.nr0.htm).
   - The number of jobs will grow faster than the number of workers therefore workers will have more choices about where to work. Employers will need to consider how to become the **employer of choice** in order to attract and keep skilled and talented workers.
   - The slowdown in the growth rate of the labor force is due in part to the aging and retiring of the baby boomer generation.

2. **Local and state government worker turnover rate. (Refer to Handout 1B)**
   - The average turnover rate for state and local government workers is about 9%. Child welfare turnover rates are often considerably higher than this average.

3. **Average tenure in front line child welfare positions.**
   - In 2000 and 2004, APHSA (American Public Human Services Association) conducted a national survey of child welfare agencies. The most recent survey included data from 42 states.

Average tenure in front line positions is very low, often 5 years or less. Retention strategies are critical for those in their early years of employment.

4. Highest turnover rate in DSS. (Slide 5)

According to 2004 data from the NC Office of State Personnel, the turnover rate is highest in Case Management and Investigations. Nationally, the turnover rate is highest for child protective services workers.

5. Statewide child welfare vacancy rate (Slide 5)

The same study by NC-OSP reported that the statewide vacancy rate is estimated at 31%. The annual child welfare staffing survey indicates similar vacancy rates translating into almost a third of child welfare positions that are vacant at any given time.

6. The percentage (%) of child welfare workers in North Carolina with less than 5 years of experience (Slide 5)

Emphasize the finding that 73% of North Carolina's child welfare workers have less than 5 years experience. Again, this highlights the need to target those in the early years of employment.

Most of the supervisors in the training may have many years experience in the field. This is an opportunity to point out the gap in experience. Many of the supervisors will retire in the next few years and take their experience and wisdom with them when they exit the workforce. The field does not have many people in the mid range of experience as most workers are new (i.e., less than five years) or very seasoned and considering retirement (bi-modal distribution, reverse bell curve).

7. Number of days needed to fill SW III/IV positions (Slide 5)

Typically, at least 71 days are needed to fill a SW III position.

Vacancies are staying open generally between 7-10 weeks. Source- Report: *Child welfare crisis compensation and classification study* http://www.osp.state.nc.us/ExternalHome/Group5/LocalGovmt/childwelfare.pdf (pg. 3)

8. 30% of social workers are over this age (HO 1B)

BLS data indicate that the social work workforce is older as compared to other occupations. Thirty percent (30%) are 55 and older.

Point out that we can expect an accelerated rate of retirement over the next several years.

9. Percentage of other occupations over this age (HO 1B)

In other occupations, an average of 13.9% of workers are 55 and older.
10. Social workers earn ___% less than other occupations (HO 1B)
   ▲ According to a study by an economist, social workers earn about 11% less
      than those in other service occupations.

11. Percentage of the overall workforce wanting to change jobs in the
    next 6 months (Refer to Handout 1C, Workforce Priorities: Mobility
    and Motivation, on page 3)
   ▲ Not only will we see changes in the supply of workers (quantity) but the type
      of workers will also change according to those who forecast workforce trends.
      The U.S. workforce is highly mobile: 35% plan to look for a new job in the
      next year.
   ▲ Employers tend to underestimate the number of employees who will leave,
      resulting in a costly disconnect since the average cost of a turnover, according
      to Spherion, is 1.5 times the salary of position to be replaced.
   ▲ If you want to give background on the source of this data, refer participants to
      the Spherion website. The URL is on the handout. Harris Interactive con-
      ducted the Spherion Emerging Workforce Study. The latest poll was in 2005.
      Previous polls were conducted in 1997, 1999, and 2003.

12. Child welfare turnover rate
   ▲ According to the APHSA study, the turnover rate in CPS in 2004 was 22.1%,
     up from 19.9% in 2000.

13. Moving up the ladder is the top priority for most workers today.
    (HO 1C)
   ▲ False
   ▲ The U.S. workforce has changing priorities: 86% cited work fulfillment and
     work/life balance as their top priority.
   ▲ Among employers, however, only 38% considered time and flexibility (the
     work/life balance) very important. These employers will be more successful at
     retaining workers.
   ▲ Explain that the study classified all workers into three different groups, based
     on their distinct set of workplace values and expectations: emergent, tradi-
     tional and migrating.
     – Emergent Workers take charge of their careers, want to learn new skills
       and embrace change.
     – Traditional Workers prefer job security and stability and like employers to
       pave their career path.
     – Migrating Workers have a mix of both emergent and traditional workplace values.
   ▲ Review the table pointing out differences between traditional and emergent
     workers.
   ▲ Point out that the number of emergent workers is expected to increase dramati-
     cally in the next few years. One implication of this shift is that employers will need
     to adopt management practices that are responsive to the expectations of emer-
     gent workers.
14. Emergent workers demonstrate loyalty to their jobs by ______ (HO 1C)
   ▲ Contributing to the mission of the agency
   ▲ Contrast the emergent approach to loyalty with the traditional approach.
   ▲ Review the table of the handout.
   ▲ Be sure and point out that being an Emergent or a Traditional is not related to age. More and more workers in the contemporary workforce are adopting emergent characteristics.
   ▲ Also point out that one is not “better” than the other. These are two different styles and supervisors need to be sensitive to the differing priorities and motivators for each style.

15. Emergent workers expect the agency to provide a career ladder. (HO 1C)
   ▲ False
   ▲ Contrast emergent approach to career advancement and the traditional approach.

Step 4: Discuss and Summarize
   ▲ Invite participants to comment on and share their observations about these data.
   ▲ Summarize key points:
     – Workforce development issues are prevalent in all sectors of the economy, not just in child welfare. The rate of job growth and fluctuations in the economy create many opportunities for employees to change positions and change career directions.
     – Reinforce the point made earlier that we need to attract and keep as many good social workers as possible since the talent pool will be limited due to the large number of retirements expected in the next decade and the decline in the number of people entering the profession.
     – If current trends continue, we will face serious challenges in child welfare resulting from the increasing need for skilled professionals at a time when the average age of social workers will lead to high rates of retirement and the number of new workers is less than the demand.
     – DSS will need to become an Employer of Choice and this requires an understanding of what motivates the workforce which is made up mostly of emergent workers.
     – The Employer of Choice will need to be an Emergent Employer that:
       1. Acknowledges the importance of work/life balance in retaining employees and therefore offers comprehensive work/life balance programs
       2. Promotes career and financial growth of employees
       3. Rewards workers for performance
       4. Regularly communicates with employees to understand the factors driving retention in the agency
     – The high turnover rate and relatively short tenure of child welfare staff cause significant investments in training and orientation of new workers. The organization loses the benefit of a veteran workforce that can help socialize new workers. Families and children also lose the benefit of an experienced workforce.

Thank all the game players and give “prizes” at the end of the game.
Turnover and Retention: Push and Pull Factors
Activity 1.3

Learning Objectives
- Participants will be able to describe both “push” and “pull” factors associated with retention.
- Participants will be able to distinguish preventable and unpreventable turnover.

Major Points
The section provides an overview of the literature on staff retention. The emphasis here is to help participants identify both push and pull factors they may be able to influence and therefore retain workers longer. This section also begins to introduce the vocabulary that will be used during the remainder of the training.

Materials
- Flip chart and markers.

Handouts
- 1D Top 10 Push Factors: Why Do People Leave?
- 1E All Turnover is Not the Same
- 1F Pull Factors: Promoting Retention
- 1G Inventory of Current Retention Strategies

Time
45 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
- Prepare 2 flip chart pages with the following titles:
  - Push Factors: Turnover
  - Pull Factors: Retention

Procedure
Step 1: Top Push Factors
- Refer participants to Handout 1D, Top 10 Push Factors: Why Do People Leave?, and inform participants that the list is derived from survey data (n=19,000) conducted by the Saratoga Institute and reveal the top reasons that staff leave positions.

- These reasons can be categorized in four groups
  - Need for trust
  - Need for hope
  - Need to feel a sense of self worth
  - Need to feel competent

- Give them a few minutes to read the list and then ask them if they would add anything to make the list more specific to child welfare.
1. Expectations not met
2. Mismatch between the person and the role
3. Mismatch between the person and the organizational culture
4. Insufficient opportunities for growth and advancement
5. Insufficient recognition or appreciation
6. Problems with direct manager/supervisor
7. Dissatisfaction with pay
8. Stress
9. Lack of work life balance
10. Loss of confidence in the organization, particularly the leadership

- Invite participant comments about these reasons.
- Ask participants working together (in small groups) to identify situations when they have encountered some of these factors. Remind participants about the confidentiality ground rule. Allow about 10 minutes for group discussion.
- Re-convene the full group and ask for an example to illustrate each factor.

**Step 2: Preventable and Unpreventable Turnover**

- It is possible to distinguish preventable and unpreventable turnover so that attention is targeted to those employees we are most likely to retain. Distribute **Handout 1E, All Turnover is Not the Same.**
- Draw participants’ attention to the handout and explain that looking at turnover as either avoidable or unavoidable is a first step to targeting retention strategies by focusing on those people who may be amenable to intervention.
- The left column represents those for whom there is a disappointment or a disconnect. Strong and effective recruitment and selection processes will reduce the number of new staff with unrealistic expectations. Focusing on retention can help supervisors know when someone is “at risk” so that actions can be initiated to prevent or delay undesirable turnover.
- The reasons in the middle column may be amenable to employer intervention. It is important to initiate communication to explore options. For example, an employee may decide to delay retirement or may be willing to continue working with a reduced schedule after a child is born.
- In the right column, the employer probably cannot intervene to prevent turnover.

**Step 3: What We Can Do About Retention—Pull Factors**

- The reasons people stay are not, as one might assume, simply the opposite of the reasons for leaving.
- There is a growing body of research-based literature that provides information about retention in child welfare.
- Refer participants to **Handout 1F: Pull Factors: Promoting Retention.**
Step 4: The Worker

- Observe that part of solving the turnover problem is hiring the right people. One arm of the project addresses recruitment and selection of child welfare staff. The focus on this curriculum is retention.
- Ask the group to think about the people that stay and who remain effective in their practice. What do these staff have in common? As participants respond, the co-facilitator can record answers on a flip chart page.
- Summarize, including the following key points from the literature:
  - **Education and Training**: Workers with MSW and BSW degrees tend to remain longer than those without. Those who have participated in a Title IVE Partnership during their social work education remain longer than MSWs and BSWs who were not participants.
  - **Sense of Mission and Investment**: Vision-orientation and belief in the mission of child welfare.
  - **Desire to Help**: Series of studies by Ellet highlight the desire to help as a critical variable. Worker wants to help vulnerable children and families.
  - **Self-Efficacy**: belief in their ability to make a difference in the lives of children and families.
  - The only objective variable is (Education & Training). Others have more to do with how a worker perceives self and the situation. (Note: these are the very things that may cause workers to become frustrated with the work and work setting).

Step 5: The Nature of the Work

- Ask the group now to think about the fit between the work itself and the social worker. Based on their experiences with social work, what is it about the work that may be a retention factor?
- List responses on the flip chart page.
- Summarize comments and include the following points from the literature:
  - **Realistic Job Preview (RJP)**: Present accurate portrayal of job and working conditions so that potential workers and new workers have a reasonable expectation of the actual work.
  - **Match**: Provide job tasks that suit the skills and interests of workers. Find a “goodness of fit” between the social worker and the job.
  - **Challenging work**: Include work assignments that staff find challenging and give them an opportunity to use skills.
  - **Diverse tasks**: Give opportunities for staff to perform a broad range of tasks.
  - **Autonomy/decision-making**: Support as much staff autonomy as the limits of bureaucracy allow. Provide opportunities for decision-making and problem-solving.

Step 6: Co-Workers

- Ask participants to discuss what it is about co-workers that might serve as a pull factor.
- Summarize their points and observe that we all have needs for affiliation and that supportive, competent co-workers are an important “pull” factor. This is discussed in the social work literature and is a major finding in the Gallup Organization study that will be discussed during the afternoon.
Step 7: Supervision
- Observe that study after study highlight the importance of the immediate supervisor in retaining staff.
- Explain that during the afternoon we will examine the supervisor role in greater depth.
- Review supervisory behaviors associated with retention and write key words on flip chart as you discuss that area:
  - **Practice Support**: Provide regular feedback on performance. Explore alternative service delivery approaches. Use own direct practice experience, knowledge and skills. Communicate case requirements and best practices. Foster teamwork effectiveness.
  - **Growth & Development**: Foster on-the-job learning. Assess the skill levels of workers and adjust their skill development and job challenges appropriately. Support worker in developing knowledge and skills.
  - **Mentoring**: Accessible & regular contact. Promote peer mentoring. Promote career development.
  - **Emotional Support**: Show approval. Express concern with welfare of staff. Provide support. Provide incentives and rewards. Help workers find and maintain work—life balance.

Step 8: The Workplace: Agency Climate
- Refer to flip chart with the term “agency climate” or show the slide with this title and explain that organizational climate generally refers to the collective attitude shared by employees about their work environment. (Note: Organizational culture refers to the social norms, values, and rules within an organization. Often the two terms are used interchangeably in the literature. Climate is considered more amenable to change while culture is considered more pervasive and less amenable to change).
- Ask participants what aspects of agency climate are associated with retention.
- Summarize participant responses and add any of the elements below that were not listed.
  ▲ **Clear vision & mission**
    - Emphasis on mission & values
    - Performance goals tied to agency mission
    - Family-centered
    - Team building orientation
    - Foster organizational commitment
  ▲ **Affirmation & recognition**
    - Demonstrate value & respect for employees
    - Strategies to enhance worker safety
    - Rewards for superior performance & effectiveness
    - Career Path that builds on worker skills
  ▲ **Learning organization orientation**
    - Fosters professional sharing & learning
    - Continuing education and credentialing
    - Educational leave
Step 9: The Agency and the Community

- Community engagement. When the agency is engaged in the community, others have a better understanding of the role and function of DSS, making it easier for workers to access and use resources.

- Positive perception of the agency in the community serves as both a recruitment and retention factor. Workers are attracted to and more likely to stay with organizations that are well regarded. Workers need to get positive rather than negative reactions someone asks, “Where do you work?” and the worker replies, “At DSS.”

Step 10: Summarize

- Given the complexities of this approach to retention, it is not difficult to see that there are multiple points of intervention, including:
  - Worker
  - Type of work and assignments
  - Collegial support
  - Supervisor and supervisory practices
  - Organizational climate
  - Community engagement
Current Strategies to Promote Retention  Activity 1.4

Learning Objective
Participants will be able to identify retention strategies in six domains: the worker, the work, the supervisor, supervisory practice, professional development & learning organization, and community.

Major Points
This section acknowledges that agencies may have existing strategies to address retention of staff. Sharing these strategies gives participants an opportunity to learn from each other. It also provides an opportunity to re-evaluate strategies that may have been developed for one purpose but can also be used for retention purposes.

Materials
- Sticky Wall
- Index cards or half sheets of paper
- Markers

Time
15-20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
- Mount sticky wall on a clear wall and attach labels for each of the pull factor categories: The Worker, The Work, Supervision/Supervisory Practice, Professional Development/Learning Organization, Climate, Community.

Procedure
Step 1: Set Up Activity
- Most agencies already have one or more strategies in place to address retention. The last step before lunch is to catalog some of these strategies.
- Distribute 3 half sheets of paper and a marker to each participant.
- Refer participants to Handout 1F and ask participants to write one current strategy for each of the categories listed.
- Ask participants to select 3 strategies to share with others and write one of the strategies on each half sheet using the marker. When the participant is finished, attach the strategy to the sticky wall under the category where it best fits.
- Allow about 5-7 minutes to complete the task.

Step 2: Debrief the Activity
- Read the items the participants have placed on the Sticky Wall, asking for elaboration as needed.
- Engage participants in a discussion about items of interest.
Briefly summarize major themes and point out that some of these strategies were developed for other reasons, for example employee recognition, but can also be used for retention.

Offer to collect forms and compile a master list of strategies that will be provided to participants later.

**Note to facilitator:** Modify the discussion as time permits. If the morning session is running late, you might ask participants to think about their strategies over lunch and place their items on the board by the beginning of the afternoon session.
Definitions

Organizational Culture
Organizational culture is defined as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. The organization's culture is the personality, values, and character of the organization. (Schein, 2004 Organizational Culture and Leadership, Third Edition, p 17.)

Organizational Climate
Organizational climate is a component of the organization's culture. Climate is defined as the collective perception that employees have of their work environment (Schneider, 1990). As defined by James and colleagues (James & James, 1989; James, James & Ashe, 1990; James & Jones, 1974; James & Sells, 1981), organizational climate is a collective perception of the work environment by the individuals within a common system. Climate, as such, is a stable organizational characteristic that is maintained over time and which gains considerable inertia as generations of workers come and go (Wiener, 1988). The climate itself may consist of salary, caseload, fellow employee trust, quality of supervision, how supportive the administration is of worker autonomy, and whether there are sufficient resources available to conduct one's work. The critical issue is that workers who perceive a positive organizational climate are those same workers who report higher job satisfaction and a greater commitment to their organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988; Glisson, 2000).
Workforce Trends

Workforce Trends in the United States


The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects a 10% growth rate in employment between 2006 and 2016. The highest growth rates will occur in:

- Education & health services
- Professional & business services

Projected labor shortage especially among skilled workers will lead to a “sellers” market for skilled workers.

Workforce Trends in Social Work

- 30% are 55 and older as compared to 13.9% across all occupations
- High growth occupation (greater than the 14.8% projected national average)
  (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004; Barth, 2001)
- Social workers earn about 11% less than those in other service occupations (Barth, 2001)
- Social workers have high commitment which may lead to “stickiness” & help depress wages (Barth, 2001)

Workforce Trends in Child Welfare

- Vacancies are staying open longer than in 2000.
- Vacancy rates for public child welfare workers are significantly higher than those of other state and local government workers.
- Average salaries are markedly lower than for nurses, teachers, police officers & fire fighters (APHSA, 2004).
  - To read the survey report, go to http://www.aphsa.org/Home/Doc/Workforce%20Report%202005.pdf

Workforce Trends in North Carolina

- 73% of employees with less than 5 years experience
- Statewide vacancy rate = 31%
- Turnover rates highest in Case Management and Investigations
- At least 71 days needed to fill a SW III position
  (North Carolina Office of State Personnel Study, 2004)
Workforce Priorities
Mobility and Motivation

U. S. Workforce

High mobility
- 35% plan to look for a new job in the next year

Changing priorities
- 86% cite work fulfillment & work/life balance as #1
- 35% cite being successful at work & moving up the ladder

What motivates workers?
- Traditional workers prefer job security and stability and like employers to pave their career path.
- Emergent workers take charge of their careers, want to learn new skills and embrace change.
- Migrating workers have a mix of both emergent and traditional workplace values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Traditional Worker</th>
<th>Emergent Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>Contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Change</td>
<td>Damaging to career</td>
<td>Vehicle for growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Path</td>
<td>Company responsibility to provide</td>
<td>Employee responsibility to pursue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement</td>
<td>Based on longevity</td>
<td>Based on performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Security</td>
<td>Required as a driver of commitment</td>
<td>Rejected as a driver of commitment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are you a traditional, an emergent, or a migrating worker?

An on-line self assessment tool can be found at the Spherion website: http://www.spherion.com/about_us/emerging_workforce/workers_defined.jsp
Top 10 Push Factors
Why do people leave?

1. Expectations not met
2. Mismatch between the person and the role
3. Mismatch between the person and the organizational culture
4. Insufficient opportunities for growth and advancement
5. Insufficient recognition or appreciation
6. Problems with direct manager/supervisor
7. Dissatisfaction with pay
8. Stress
9. Lack of work/life balance
10. Loss of confidence in the organization, particularly the leadership

**All Turnover is Not the Same**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer actions likely to prevent or delay turnover</th>
<th>Employer actions may prevent or delay turnover</th>
<th>Employer actions have little influence on turnover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expectations not met</td>
<td>• Commuting distance</td>
<td>• Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Few opportunities for growth and advancement</td>
<td>• Family needs</td>
<td>• Promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poor fit with job</td>
<td>• Additions to family</td>
<td>• Illness or disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Most of the factors on the “Top 10” list (see Handout 1D)</td>
<td>• Return to school</td>
<td>• Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong selection process</td>
<td>• Promotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Handout 1D reference is assumed to be present in the document.
Pull Factors
Promoting Retention

Characteristics of the Worker
- Education and training
- Sense of mission and investment
- Desire to help
- Self-efficacy

The Nature of the Work
- Realistic job preview
- Match/"Goodness of fit"
- Challenging work
- Diverse tasks
- Autonomy/decision-making

Co-Workers
- Need for affiliation
- Supportive and competent

Supervision
- Practice support
- Learning support
- Mentoring
- Emotional Support

The Workplace: Agency Climate
- Clear vision & mission
- Affirmation & recognition
- Learning organization orientation

The Agency and the Community
- Community engagement
- Positive perception of the agency
# Inventory of Current Retention Strategies

In the box to the right of each category below, please write one example of each strategy.

**Strategies that target…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The worker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Supervisory practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Professional development and learning organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Other aspects of agency climate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Growth rate of employment 2006-2016

Local and state government worker turnover rate...
Average tenure in front line child welfare positions...

Place the answer here

Highest turnover rate in DSS...

Place the answer here
The percentage (%) of child welfare workers with less than 5 years of experience in North Carolina.
30 percent of social workers are over this age...

Number of days needed to fill SW III/IV positions...

Place the answer here
Social workers earn ___ percent less than other service occupations...

Percent of other occupations over this age...

Place the answer here
Percentage of overall workforce wanting to change jobs in the next 6 months...

Child welfare turnover rate

Place the answer here

Place the answer here
Moving up the ladder is the top priority for most workers today.

Emergent workers demonstrate loyalty to their jobs by ______

Place the answer here
Emergent workers expect the agency to provide a career ladder.
Five years or less: 31 percent
15 percent

73 percent
11 percent
9 percent

55+ ? 75 percent
46 percent

10 percent F CPS F

T

Cut on the dotted lines
Session 2
The Supervisor: Staying Power! Facilitator

Outline and Trainer Notes

Activities for Session 1

Activity 2.1
The High Costs of Turnover (25 minutes)

Activity 2.2
The Retention-Oriented Supervisor (20 minutes)

Activity 2.3
Supervisors Trump Agencies: Findings from the Gallup Study (40 minutes)

Activity 2.4
Stages of Worker Development (75 minutes)

(Total 160 minutes)

Handouts

- 2A The Retention Oriented Supervisor: Worksheet for Professional Development
- 2B Staying Power! Where Do I Stand?
- 2C Staying Power! An Employee Perspective
- 2D Stages of Child Welfare Worker Development
- 2E Instructions for Worker Developmental Stage Exercise
- 2F Marla and the Marellis
- 2G1-2G4 Marla at Four Stages
- 2H Working with Marla
- 2I The Dialogue

Equipment and Material

- LCD projector
- Flip chart pads and markers
- DVD: When the Child Speaks
- Sticky wall and masking tape
- Critical Question (half page handout)
- DVD Player & Monitor
References


The High Costs of Turnover  Activity 2.1

Learning Objective
Participants will be able to identify the impact of turnover for agencies, children, and families.

Materials
- Flip chart and markers.
- DVD
- Signs with quotes about child welfare workforce issues

Time
25 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
- Post the quotation signs on walls around the room so that participants can see them.

A stable and highly skilled child welfare workforce is necessary to effectively provide child welfare services that meet federal goals. However, large caseloads and worker turnover delay the time of investigations and limit the frequency of worker visits with children, hampering agencies’ attainment of key federal safety and permanency outcomes.

—U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), 2003

…the greatest concerns for the child welfare field are the increasing number of children needing services and the lack of qualified staff.

—Child Welfare League of America, 2002

But once the staff is chosen what else can we do?
- Arrange for suitable salaries and salary increases
- Provide opportunities for further training
- Provide opportunities for advancement
- Enhance the prestige of the job
- Value professional training

—Viola Mitchell, The Visiting Teacher as Social Worker, Better Times (The Welfare Magazine published by the Welfare Council of NYC), 1936

Procedure

Step 1: Introduction
- Refer to the quotation signs that you posted earlier. These statements from U.S. General Accounting Office and the Child Welfare League of America are reminders of the significance of workforce issues at a national level.
- Referring to the 3rd quote, note that even in 1936 the profession struggled with some of the same issues and used some of the same strategies.
- Earlier, we discussed this issue from an agency perspective (focusing on supply


and demand issues, employer of choice) but it is even more important to think about the impact of worker turnover on child and family outcomes.

- Turnover affects our clients, the agency and the community.

**Step 2: Impact of Turnover (discussion)**

- Turnover also affects the agency and the remaining staff. Initiate a discussion of some of these effects and record responses on a flip chart. Possible responses include the following:
  - High caseloads for remaining workers
  - Decreased morale for those remaining
  - Insufficient time to do assessments
  - Disrupted continuity of services for children and families
  - Lack of timeliness of investigations
  - Limited frequency of visits with children
  - Increased stress for the supervisor who must find and orient new staff
  - Impaired capacity to meet federal outcomes
  - More turnover

- In addition, turnover is a significant resource drain for agencies:
  - For example, one agency conservatively estimated that each CPS vacancy cost the agency $10,000 (in 1995 dollars) (Graef & Hill, 2000).
  - A more recent study from New York estimated the cost at $25,000 per position. (Lawson & Claiborne, 2005).
  - Both these estimates may be low. The Saratoga Institute suggests that the cost of turnover is 150% of the salary (Saratoga, pg. 3).

**Step 3: Show DVD—When the Child Speaks: Impact of Caseworker Turnover on Children and Youth**

- Introduce a 15-minute DVD video produced at the University of Southern Maine. This video, filmed and edited by a youth in care who appears in the second part, contains interviews with youth talking about their experience of worker turnover. Their personal experiences are supported by research evidence.

**Step 4: Debrief the DVD**

- Participants often have a strong reaction to the DVD. Allow time for participants to share their feelings and thoughts. Sometimes participants share stories from their own practice (I thought I would stay longer, but…). Discuss ways to use the DVD to sensitize others (staff, administration, funders, etc.) to the human costs of turnover.

**Step 5: Summarize**

- Child welfare outcomes for children and families are closely linked to having a stable and qualified workforce. Safety, permanence, and well-being are adversely affected when the workforce lacks stability.
When turnover is reduced, families have better outcomes and organizational resources can be allocated for retention strategies rather than continuously dealing with the costs associated with high turnover.

The high turnover rate and relatively short tenure of child welfare staff cause significant investments in training and orientation of new workers. The organization loses the benefit of a veteran workforce that can help socialize new workers. Families and children also lose the benefit of an experienced workforce.
The Retention-Oriented Supervisor  Activity 2.2

Learning Objective
Participants will identify the characteristics, roles and responsibilities of a retention-focused supervisor.

Materials
[ ] Flip chart pages and markers

Handouts
[ ] 2A  The Retention-Oriented Supervisor

Time
20 minutes

Procedure

Step 1: Introduce the Activity
[ ] Introduce the activity by discussing the many roles and responsibilities of supervisors. Supervisors are accountable for child and family outcomes, they have to maintain relationships with other agencies, they are responsible for monitoring work assignment and work flow, they conduct staff evaluations…. Invite participants to share other areas of responsibility.

[ ] Acknowledge that supervision is the ultimate balancing act. Supervisors have to balance the needs of management and the needs of staff. They must be family centered and child focused. They have to attend to process as well as attend to task achievement. While balancing all of this, it is a challenge to also focus on retention of staff. The irony is that the allocation of time, energy, and resources to retention can pay off in other parts of the supervisor’s work. When staff stay longer and gain the experience to be more effective in their work, the supervisor has more available time since there is not as much need for intensive engagement with new staff.

Step 2: Organize Small Groups
[ ] Divide participants into small groups of 3-5 members each. Give each member a copy of Handout 2A: The Retention-Oriented Supervisor. Give each group a flip chart page and markers.

[ ] Provide the following instructions to set up the activity.

△ Think about a supervisor you have known or observed who has a low rate of turnover in her unit. This might be yourself or someone else. This supervisor may be skilled in many arenas but for this exercise think specifically about how this supervisor works with staff. Staff members in this supervisor’s unit are very productive and seem to have high levels of job satisfaction. You are aware that this supervisor has very few vacancies.
What are the supervisory characteristics, behaviors, and skills that contribute to what you observe? Work with your small group to develop a profile of this supervisor.

Use words, pictures, or symbols as you wish. Put your supervisor profile on the flip chart page and be prepared to share your profile with the full group.

You will have 10 minutes to complete your group profile.

**Step 3**
- Alert the group when they have 5 minutes remaining and at the 1-minute mark. Reconvene the full group and ask each small group to report on their work.

**Step 4: Debrief the Activity**
- After all the small groups have reported, facilitate a discussion about the profiles. Ask participants the following questions:
  - What are some of the themes that you see in these profiles?
    - Look for clusters of behaviors, roles or responsibilities that support the three major functions associated with supervision: practice support, emotional support, and support for development of knowledge and skills (learning support).
  - What helps to carry out these roles and responsibilities?
    - Encourage participants to talk about skill sets that are helpful, e.g., time management, ability to multitask, access to a support system, having good practice skills, etc.
    - Participants may also consider resources that support the roles and responsibilities they have described, e.g., access to internal or external staff development opportunities, travel funds, resources for reward and recognition activities, veteran staff who can serve as mentors, etc.
    - Explore the role that a supportive administration might play. Encourage participants to discuss what they would need from management in order to strengthen their capacity to be retention-oriented supervisors.
  - What are barriers?
    - Consider internal barriers such as belief system (this is not my job as a supervisor, a supervisor cannot influence this problem, a salary increase is the answer), need for skill development in some areas, etc.
    - Also consider other barriers such as lack of administrative support (this is not a priority in my agency), lack of resources, etc.

**Step 5: Application**
- Ask participants to reflect on the work they have just done and think about their own supervisory practice. Use the Handout to record notes for an individualized professional development plan. Inform participants that this worksheet is private and they will not be asked to share with the full group. Allow about 3-5 minutes for this part of the activity.
Step 6: Summarize

- Reiterate significant supervisory responsibilities that are associated with retention:
  - Providing guidance about practice (the technical side)
  - Focusing on professional development of staff (coaching & mentoring)
  - Providing emotional support

- Remind participants that these skill areas were introduced during the morning session (pull factors) and we will continue to examine them throughout the training.

- Supervisors have many responsibilities and need skills in many areas. These areas are the skills sets most closely associated with retention in the research literature.
Supervisors Trump Agencies: Findings from the Gallup Study  Activity 2.3

Learning Objectives

☑ Participants will appreciate the significance of the supervisor for staff retention.
☑ Participants will understand an employee-centered perspective on job satisfaction.
☑ Participants will identify strategies to increase job satisfaction leading to reduced turnover.

Materials

☑ Flip chart and markers
☑ Sticky Board
☑ Half sheets of paper and markers for each small group

Handouts

☑ 2B  Staying Power! Where Do I Stand?
☑ 2C  Staying Power! An Employee Perspective

Time

40 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

☑ Make copies of Handouts 2B and 2C for each participant.
☑ Mount Sticky Board on wall.
☑ Prepare half sheets.
☑ Prepare a flip chart page with the title Gallup Questions. List the numbers 1 -12 so that you can record the “votes” for each item.

Procedure

Step 1

☑ Inform participants that we will continue to examine the role of supervisors but now from an employee perspective.
☑ Distribute Handout 2B: Where Do I Stand?
☑ Explain that these 12 questions are derived from a study by the Gallup Organization. Provide the following background information on the study:

During the last 25 years the Gallup Organization has collected data (survey and focus group) about employee perceptions of management practices. Using a variety of statistical techniques, they distilled 12 critical questions that distinguished companies.

Step 2

☑ Ask participants to do two tasks. First, answer the questions in terms of their own position as an employee who also has a supervisor. Answer each question on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 indicating Strong Disagreement and 4 Strong Agreement.
Then, circle the questions most closely linked with retention.

- Note that the answers are private and not collected by the facilitators.
- Allow about 5 minutes for this part of the activity.

**Step 3**

- Invite participants to share their reactions and thoughts about the questions
- The Gallup research team found that those companies with more employees rating the questions as “4” (very high) on a Likert scale had better outcomes than those with fewer employees giving a very high rating to the questions. These 12 questions are linked with productivity, profitability, employee retention, and customer satisfaction. Even though these outcomes are stated in business terms, they are relevant to human services agencies.

**Step 4**

- Using the prepared flip chart, ask for a show of hands to determine how many people rated an item as strongly associated with retention. Record the number of “votes” on the flip chart page.
- Point out those items listed on the handout that are most strongly linked with employee retention (items 1, 2, 3, 5, 7).
- Emphasize that these areas are most closely associated with supervisory practice according to the Gallup analysis.
- Discuss the differences between the items the participants selected and those identified in the Gallup study.

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In this last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a close friend at work?
11. In the last six months has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

- Point out that the questions are arranged hierarchically (like Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs) from questions 1 and 2 being most basic to questions 10-12 focusing on affiliation and fulfillment. Use this to think about what each staff person may need. A worker needs to understand expectations and have the resources necessary to do the job (questions 1 and 2). These are prerequisites for employees to do their best every day (question 3). When resources are lacking, a supervisor may need to help a worker accept that she/he did her best given the constraints due to lack of resources or lack of clear expectations. Also recognize that the disappointment from not being...
able to do one's best may constitute a trigger event for the disengagement process.

**Step 5**

- Explain that the Gallup research team further examined the data. When they looked more closely within companies, they found that when an employee responded more positively to the 12 questions, that person was also likely to work in a high performing unit within the company. In addition, employees rated the questions differently depending on which unit they were in. Emphasize that sometimes, the objective conditions were the same and only the supervisor was different. Therefore, we are getting data about employee perceptions or how the employee experiences the organizational unit.

- Gallup concluded that the immediate manager (in our case, the supervisor) is the more powerful influence on how the employee experiences the organization. Adequate pay, benefits, working conditions, etc. are important BUT, all things being equal, it is the supervisor who is the critical player influencing the experience of culture for each person. The organization has not one climate but multiple climates (as many as it has units).

- Give participants an opportunity to react to this emphasis on the role of the supervisor. This may link back to the discussion in the previous activity when they elaborated on the characteristics of the supervisor with low turnover in his/her unit.

**Step 6**

- Ask participants to work with a partner to complete Handout 2C by listing **supervisory actions** that might influence how staff answer each of the questions. Assign several items to each group so that the groups are working on different items.

- Distribute paper and markers to each group and instruct the recorder in each group to write each action on one half sheet of paper. Instruct group members to try and agree on 1 or 2 strategies for each of the assigned questions. Allow 10 minutes for this part of the activity.

- Alert the groups when they have about 3 minutes remaining. When they complete the task, ask them to place their responses under the corresponding number on the Sticky Board.

- Ask the group to post their half sheets on the sticky wall once they have completed the assignment. Offer to prepare aggregate responses and distribute them to participants.

- Have each group present their strategies and facilitate a discussion about the responses that have been posted. Note similarities in the group responses, themes, differences, innovative ideas, etc.

- Offer to prepare aggregate responses and distribute them to participants.

**Step 7**

- Invite participants to discuss how they might use this information in their own practice.
**Stages of Worker Development**  
**Activity 2.4**

**Learning Objectives**

- Participants will be able to apply a developmental approach to supervision.
- Participants will identify supervisory techniques for each stage of development.

**Handouts**

- 2D  Stages of Worker Development
- 2E  Instructions for Worker Developmental Stage Exercise
- 2F  Marla and the Marellis
- 2G1-2G4  Marla at Four Stages
- 2H  Working with Marla
- 2I  The Dialogue

**Time**

25 minutes

**Facilitator Preparation**

- Prepare 4 flip chart pages with the following words written at the top of each page:
  - High anxiety stage (Day 1–6 months)
  - Make it or break it stage (1–6 months)
  - Basic skills stage (6+ months)
  - Relative independence

**Procedure**

**Step 1**

- Explain that one way of looking at the needs of workers is to consider their stage of development. Refer participants to Handout D “Stages of Child Welfare Worker Development” and lead a discussion about the four stages and the worker characteristics associated with them. Explain that not all workers fall into these stages or the associated characteristics but that there is enough of a pattern that it warrants consideration when strategizing about how to supervise workers. The characteristics of the various stages can suggest what a worker may need from a supervisor.

- Ask for some suggestions about how supervisors might respond to various stages, e.g., a relatively independent worker may need mostly a sounding board for problem solving whereas a less experienced person may need more active participation by the supervisor.

**Step 2**

- Explain that we are going to do an exercise to explore each of these stages and to brainstorm some strategies for supervising workers in them. Each of four groups will focus on a worker in one of the four stages. Put the participants in four groups, assigning each one of the four stages:
1. High Anxiety (Day 1 – 6 months)
2. Make it or Break It (Months 1– 6)
3. Basic Skills (6 Months +)
4. Relative Independence

**Step 3**
- Explain that each group will script a 3 minute role play between a supervisor and a worker in the assigned developmental stage. They will present the role play to the group as a whole. The purposes of the role play are to:
  - show common issues for workers in the stage and
  - show how a supervisor can help a worker in the stage to make decisions and develop strategies for working with families.

All four groups will work from the same case scenario (Handout F: “Marla and the Marellis”).

**Step 4**
- Explain that there are several steps that each group will follow. These are listed on Handout E: “Instructions for Worker Developmental Stage Exercise”. Briefly go over these. Explain that they should now read about the Marellis on Handout F and also the description of their worker (ONLY their worker) on Handout G: “Marla at Four Stages.”

**Step 5**
- Give the participants about 20 minutes to develop their background material and record this on Handout H: “Working with Marla”. Then each group should prepare a script (Handout I: The Dialogue) illustrating the supervisor’s approach with Marla.

**Note to Facilitator:** Each group will work with Marla at a different stage of her development. Give one group Handout G1: Marla at Stage 1. Give another group Handout G2, etc. You will need at least four groups for this activity.

**Step 6**
- Call the groups to plenary. Facilitate each group reporting out by explaining their worker’s issues and the supervisory issues and then by enacting their role play. Process each briefly. Typically, groups will focus on Marla’s practice and supporting her emergent practice skills. Not many groups will address Marla’s adjustment to the agency. Use the discussion to make the point that the supervisor is always assessing practice knowledge and skills, performance, adjustment to the agency, learning needs and goals, and attitude/morale.
The Retention-Oriented Supervisor
Worksheet for Professional Development

1. Key points from the discussion in small group and full group.

2. My strengths as a retention-oriented supervisor.

3. What are areas that I might decide to strengthen?

4. What can I do to strengthen these areas? How can I build on my strengths?
**Staying Power!**
*Where Do I Stand?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In these last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Do I have a close friend at work?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. In the last six months has someone at work talked to me about my progress?</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

Staying Power!
An Employee Perspective

According to research conducted by the Gallup Organization, these questions measure the critical elements needed to attract, focus, and keep the most talented employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Needs</th>
<th>Critical Questions</th>
<th>Supervisor Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What do I get? | 1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?  
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right? | |
| What do I give? | 3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?  
4. In these last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?  
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?  
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development? | |
| Do I belong here? | 7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?  
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?  
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?  
10. Do I have a close friend at work? | |
| Can I grow here? | 11. In the last six months has someone at work talked to me about my progress?  
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow? | |

### Stages of Child Welfare Worker Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Worker Characteristics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High anxiety</strong></td>
<td>• Overwhelmed with everything they have to learn and to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 1 to 6 months</td>
<td>• May feel inadequate to perform necessary tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May be confused about their feelings toward abusive or neglectful parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May be confused about their own roles &amp; responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anxiety about life &amp; death decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May have positive feelings – enthusiasm, a sense of excitement, challenge</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make it or break it</strong></td>
<td>• Ambivalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–6 months (may overlap high anxiety stage)</td>
<td>• Familiar with job and questioning if this is a good fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some degree of confidence in concrete tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May still feel overwhelmed by less concrete tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May still have anxiety about certain roles and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic skills</strong></td>
<td>• Core competencies in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months +</td>
<td>• Recognition of need for more advanced or specialized skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More aware of obstacles to effective job performance (caseload size, paperwork time, lack of resources, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May desire less supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feelings of satisfaction and feeling of disillusionment may coexist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relative independence</strong></td>
<td>• Strong sense of confidence and competence regarding the knowledge, skills, and ability to perform the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capacity to identify problems and options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong sense of independence and autonomy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factors that affect how quickly they move through stages: educational background, previous social work or child welfare experience, preservice training, supervisory interventions.

Instructions for Worker Developmental Stage Exercise

1. Read the description of the Marelli family (Handout F) and the description of your worker stage (from Handout G).

2. Review what you know about Marla's stage of worker development from Handout D.

3. As a group, make a written list on Handout H, Part 1, of Marla's issues that reflect her developmental stage.

4. As a group, make a written list on Handout H, Part 2, of the strategies the supervisor could use that would reflect an understanding of Marla's stage issues.

5. As a group write a dialog on Handout I between Marla and the supervisor. Be sure the supervisor addresses the issues of Marla's developmental stage.

6. Assign four tasks within your group. These will be your tasks for the report out to the large group.
   a. Explain Marla's workers' developmental stage issues
   b. Explain the supervisory approaches that could help with these issues
   c. Read Marla's role of the scripted dialog
   d. Read the supervisor's role of the scripted dialog
Marla and the Marellis

You supervise a child welfare unit that works with families in which there has been child neglect and the children remain in their homes. Common service needs are for:

- Child care
- Parenting education and support
- Job readiness, job finding and employment support
- Interpersonal skills, e.g., for healthy relationships with partners/spouses, families of origin, and employers
- Father involvement
- GED, vocational training or higher education
- Substance abuse
- Mental health
- Domestic violence

Two weeks ago you assigned the Marelli family to Marla, a worker in your unit. The Marelli family consists of:

- Tiffany Marelli, age 22
- Rollie Marelli, age 4
- Ralphie Rodriguez, age 2
- Alex Rodriquez, age 26, father of Ralphie

The family came to the attention of the Department when Rollie and Ralphie wandered out of the yard into the street where they were seen by a neighbor who reported it to the police. The police found Tiffany and Alex in the house. Tiffany was asleep and Alex was smoking marijuana and drinking. Tiffany's subsequent Urine Analysis (UA) identified marijuana. However, only Alex was arrested for drug possession and is now re-incarcerated on parole violation; he likely will be out in three months. Alex and Tiffany have had an on-off relationship for three years. During that time the police have responded to two reports of domestic violence both of which involved minor injuries for Tiffany. Tiffany says she does not know where Rollie's father is as she has had no contact with him since she became pregnant.

Marla has met with Tiffany twice. Currently Tiffany is awaiting a full substance abuse assessment. She is on the waiting list for a job readiness program that will be about 30 hours per week. Both children recently began full time day care.

Tiffany’s Aunt Claudia drove 150 miles from her home to be part of Tiffany’s team meeting. She is critical of and frustrated with Tiffany, but she also is the only family member who is still involved in Tiffany’s life. Aunt Claudia raised Tiffany for several years when Tiffany's mother left her alone and Child Welfare became involved. Tiffany later moved to a group home after she stole from Aunt Claudia and her friends trashed the house while Claudia was at church. Tiffany and Claudia have had sporadic contact over the past five years.

Tiffany is quite angry about being involved in the Child Welfare system. She screamed at Marla “Child Welfare never helped me or my mom. You guys totally messed up my life—I got no education, no job, and nothing ever goes right for me—my boyfriend beats me up and I’m always broke. You social workers just moved me around my whole life and then dumped me out in the world with nothing. I hate everything you stand for. Just give me the day care for my kids and get me a job—then get the hell out of my life.”

Tiffany has made it clear that she will go along with Child Welfare only as much as she has to in order to keep her kids. Marla said to you “She is totally hostile to me. I think I’m taking the brunt of 20 years of rage that she’s built up.”

Marla soon will begin working with Tiffany and her family team (involving at least Aunt Claudia, a substance abuse counselor and a jobs counselor) on the case plan. Now you, the supervisor, are meeting with Marla to discuss this phase of the casework process.
Marla at Stage 1
High Anxiety

Marla, age 23, recently graduated with a BSW.
This is her first job although she had a field experience working in a group home for young adolescents.
She was enthusiastic when she started working six weeks ago. Since then she has had mixed reactions to her experiences.
After shadowing experienced workers, she told you that she sometimes feels quite intimidated by the adults and wonders if she should be assigned to a foster care unit so she could work with children and foster parents. She says she knew parents would be angry but she really doesn't know how to respond; she finds herself feeling flustered as well as angry at them for accepting so little responsibility for their children.
She said “I really wonder about the decision not to remove her kids—I mean, I think she must be really immature or else she would cooperate more with me. So, can we really expect her to take care of her kids? I don't even know how to begin this case plan with her to tell you the truth.”
Marla at Stage 2
Make It or Break It

Marla, age 23, has been working in your unit for five months. This is her first job after receiving a BSW, although she had a field experience working in a group home for young adolescents. Tiffany Marelli is the twelfth case you have assigned to her in which she has primary responsibility.

At first she was quite flustered about working with parents, particularly if they expressed anger. She has gotten more comfortable, but questions whether this is a good fit for her professionally. She says she might prefer working with children only.

She is skilled at documentation but less sure of herself in engaging adult family members. You have observed her several times and she is rather wooden and formal in your opinion, although not disrespectful. You have talked with her about this—she says that she feels her style of interacting helps her to stay focused on the tasks and lessens the chance that she will feel intimidated.

She told you “Many of the parents are older than I am and all of them are more street smart and they all know it—I just feel that being more formal is the best method for me.”
Marla at Stage 3
Basic Skills

Marla, age 24, has worked in your unit for one year. This is her first job after receiving a BSW, although she had a field experience working in a group home for young adolescents. She has a full case load and she does a better than average job of keeping up with documentation and meeting deadlines, although she frequently criticizes the processes and often makes suggestions for how to streamline them.

She generally is able to involve family members in assessment and planning and support them in working on their plans. However, in your opinion she continues to be rather wooden and formal with clients and is quick to interpret their anger as a sign of lack of cooperation and poor prognosis. This seems to be a reaction to how she first felt on the job—flustered and intimidated by clients’ anger.

Marla also is hanging out more with the cynics group at work and she makes jokes in unit meetings about how ironic it is that a social work agency seems to value their employees so little. She is annoyed that her recent request to receive agency funding to attend a week-long out-of-state training on chronic neglect was turned down.

She seems to be less forthcoming in supervisory sessions and recently told you “I know supervision is useful, but frankly, I’d like to spend more time trying to keep up with the paper work and less time talking about my cases. I really want to try to keep this job to 40 hours and that is hard to do with so many meetings.”
Marla at Stage 4
Relative Independence

Marla, age 27, has worked in your unit for nearly four years. This is her first job after receiving a BSW, although she had a field experience working in a group home for young adolescents.

When she first came to work for you, she was quite intimidated by clients’ anger and, probably to compensate, she developed an approach to working with families that you find rather wooden and formal. However, she is never disrespectful and you have never had to reassign one of her cases.

Marla is your best worker as far as adequate documentation and meeting deadlines. You have assigned other new workers to shadow her on these tasks and several workers have said that they better understand how to write case plans, reassessments, and closing summaries having read hers.

Marla prefers to work independently of almost everyone. She has said to you “I feel like I know how to do this job backwards and forwards. I know group meetings are supposed to be a good idea, but frankly I don’t see that much value in them—they take a lot of time that I could use more productively. This goes for all the family group meetings and unit meetings and other agency meetings. I know supervision is a good idea but mostly just for the first year or two on the job. That’s not to say I don’t appreciate your efforts, but, I’d like to move supervision meetings along more quickly. I just really need to free up some time for real work.”
Working with Marla

Worker Stage of Development___________________________________________

Part 1
What are the worker developmental stage issues for Marla as she works with Tiffany Marelli to develop the case plan?

Part 2
What are the supervisory strategies that would help Marla in working with Tiffany Marelli to develop the case plan?
The Dialogue
Use the format below to develop a dialogue that reflects the supervisor’s understanding of Marla’s developmental stage issues.

1 Supervisor

1 Marla

2 Supervisor

2 Marla

3 Supervisor

3 Marla

4 Supervisor

4 Marla

5 Supervisor

5 Marla
6 Supervisor

6 Marla

7 Supervisor

7 Marla

8 Supervisor

8 Marla

9 Supervisor

9 Marla

10 Supervisor
Session 3
Supporting Engagement: Staying Power! Strategies

Outline and Trainer Notes

Activities for Session 1

Activity 3.1
Welcome Back & Review (10 minutes)

Activity 3.2
The First Day at Your New Job (25 minutes)

Activity 3.3
Welcoming the Newcomer (60 minutes)

Activity 3.4
The Newcomer Interview (70 minutes)
(Total 165 minutes)

Handouts

- 3A The First Day at Your New Job
- 3B Factual Questions to Address During New Employee Orientation
- 3C Activities for Employee-Centered Engagement
- 3D The Newcomer Interview
- 3E1 Newcomer Interview – Natasha Newsome
- 3E2 Newcomer Interview – Odessa Oldman
- 3E3 Newcomer Interview – Supervisor Instructions
- 3E4 Newcomer Interview – Observer Instructions
References


Welcome Back and Review  Activity 3.1

Learning Objective
☐ Participants will review the material covered in sessions 1 and 2.

Materials
☐ Flip chart pages from sessions 1 and 2.

Time
10 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
None

Procedure

Step 1
☐ Using the flip chart pages and handouts, review the major topics covered in sessions 1 and 2.
☐ Invite participants to share any follow up questions or feedback on the topics and activities from sessions 1 and 2.
☐ Ask participants for additional ideas about making their workplaces “agencies of choice” in the highly competitive job market.

Step 2
☐ Provide an overview of the agenda for day 2. Session 3 will focus on employee engagement and Session 4 will focus on disengagement and re-engaging veteran staff.
The First Day at Your New Job  Activity 3.2

Learning Objective

- Participants will explore feelings associated with beginning a new job.

Handout

- 3A  The First Day at Your New Job

Time

20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Make copies of Handout 3A for each participant.

Procedure

Step 1

- Ask participants to take a few minutes and think about the last few new staff that joined their programs. Think about the characteristics of these people – prior experiences, age, education, etc.
- If one of the participants has recently begun a new position, think about the first day in the new role.

Step 2

- Distribute Handout 3A, The First Day at Your New Job, and ask participants to read the handout and take a few (1-2) minutes and think about how they might respond to the questions about the first day of work. The questions are as follows:
  - What are your thoughts and feelings as you prepare for your first day of work at DSS?
  - What are your impressions when you come to work the first time? As you walk through the door? As you find your desk?
  - How do you feel?
  - What do you hope will happen the first day?
  - At the end of the day when you tell your family and friends about the first day highlights, what will you say?

Step 3

- Give everyone a few minutes to experience this scenario. Have them make some notes about their thoughts, feelings, and any insights that may have come to them.
- In round robin style, ask participants to provide a word or phrase that responds to each question.
- Pay particular attention to the “end of the day” messages.

Step 4

- Summarize major points from the discussion paying particular attention to the messages at the end of the day and any insights they may have shared.
- Ask how many feel that they provide the type of first day experiences that affirm the decision to accept the job and leave the new employee feeling enthusiastic about the new position.
Welcoming the Newcomer  Activity 3.3

Learning Objectives
- Participants will appreciate the importance of orientation for connecting new staff with the organization.
- Participants will be aware of the components of organizational entry.
- Participants will be able to plan an orientation that responds to both facts and feelings.

Materials
- Flip chart and markers

Handouts
- 3B  Factual Questions to Address During New Employee Orientation
- 3C  Activities for Employee-Centered Engagement

Time
60 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
- Copy the handouts for each participant.

Procedure

Step 1
- Turnover is highest during the first few years of employment. For example, in North Carolina only 25% of new child welfare staff are still employed after 5 years. Increased attention to orientation and socialization of new staff can support increased retention rates.
- Remind participants of the APHSA study of the child welfare workforce and inform them that the study recommended new staff orientation as one significant retention strategy.
- Remind participants of their own “first days” and the significant role that orientation played in helping them become an “insider” rather than remaining an organizational “outsider.”
- Observe that our expectations may guide our behavior and the amount of energy we put into orientation. If we expect new staff to leave, we may adopt a “wait and see” attitude and not invest in building a relationship until the new worker settles in. On the other hand, if we expect the employee to stay, we will put more energy into facilitating a smooth entry into the workplace.
- Regardless of the agency’s formal orientation program (this may be done by the Human Resources Office) it is important that the supervisor also take an active role as an agent of orientation. The Gallup Study pointed out the importance of the immediate work unit in shaping how a staff person experiences the organization. The supervisor is responsible for orienting the newcomer to the unit. If there is no agency-wide orientation, the supervisor may also need to take responsibility for orienting the newcomer to the agency.
Step 2
- Orientation is one component of the organizational entry process. An effective entry process can be a significant step in turnover reduction. Organization entry is the process (not an event) of making sense of the new environment and learning how to function appropriately in that new environment. It includes both facts and feelings.
- Refer to the Organizational Entry PowerPoint slides and point out that organizational entry has 4 stages.
  - During the first 2 stages, recruitment and selection, attention is on how child welfare workers are similar to each other and different from the general population. We are looking at group characteristics, i.e., what makes a good child welfare worker?
  - In the next 2 stages, orientation and socialization, attention is on individual characteristics. The task is to begin sorting out how child welfare workers are different from each other so that you can respond to individual strengths and needs. You are also looking for opportunities to help each individual make positive connections with the work, the workplace, and each other.
- Point out that the focus for the remainder of this session is on orientation and socialization.

Step 3
- Ask participants how long it takes to get new workers up to speed? After someone says “a year,” ask if anyone thinks it takes longer than this. Continue until you get the longest time anyone wants to suggest.
- Inform participants that most literature suggests that it takes 6-12 months to get a new employee up to speed. Since child welfare positions are so complex, it may take longer. During this time the supervisor can plan a series of activities to facilitate orientation and socialization.

Step 4
- Orientation typical occurs during the first few days of employment and is typically the domain of the Human Resources Department. Engage participants in a discussion about typically orientation activities in their agencies.
- Observe that we communicate a metamessage in how we set up orientation activities. We convey our understanding about the relationship between the organization and the newcomer.
- Ask participants to consider the meta messages in version 1 and version 2.

Note to Facilitator: Deborah Tannen, a linguist, coined the term metamessage in her book, You Just Don’t Understand: Men and Women in Conversation (1990, Ballentine Books). A metamessage refers to what is communicated about relationships and attitudes toward each other, the occasion, and what we are saying. The choice of words and the body language may suggest the meaning or value given to the relationship.

- Summarize by observing that version one is agency-centered and version two is employee-centered. Acknowledge the different feeling behind the two messages.
- Effective orientation needs to balance agency needs and interests with those of the employee.
Step 5
- Observe that orientation is a process of making sense of the new environment and that includes both facts and feelings. Veteran staff can be engaged in helping plan a unit or team-level orientation process that responds to the day to day information that new staff need in order to be successful.
- At the factual level, a supervisor can help new employees with who, what, where, when, why and how questions. Refer to Handout 3B and briefly discuss the questions listed.

Step 6
- Stress levels are often very high when a new employee engages with the agency. Discuss some of the sources of stress from a newcomer perspective.
- Beginning during orientation and continuing throughout the socialization process, supervisors can help reduce stress by providing realistic job information and encouraging retention of new employees.
  - **Provide realistic information about job disappointments and stresses.** Current staff can help to identify typical, job-related stressors that the newcomer will encounter. Some stressors are easier to anticipate. For example, many workers identify removal and placement of a child to be stressful. Encourage staff to help identify these predictable stressors as well as hidden stressors. Explain these typical stressors to newcomers so that they can anticipate the situation, prepare themselves, and test coping strategies. Normalizing the experience of stressors for newcomers reduces the chances that they will feel overwhelmed when encountering these stressors. Newcomers need to know how they might feel during the entry stage as well as what they might expect as they adjust to the new position. It is important that they also get information about what to do to manage these feelings.
  - **Provide general support and reassurance.** Once the stressors are identified it is important to provide both individual and group time to reflect on the feelings and behaviors associated with the stressors. This includes offering social support to the newcomer and providing factual information about the situations they will encounter. This may provide a teachable moment, e.g., considering the child removal example, provide information about the outcomes in your county when children are removed.
  - **Help newcomers learn coping skills.** Discussion of the stressors prior to the actual experiences of them also provides opportunities to demonstrate and rehearse coping skills.
  - **Teach self control of thoughts and feelings.** The supervisor can help each new staff member identify which stressors might be most significant for that person. Once identified, the newcomer and supervisor can work together to develop individualized strategies to cope with these stressors.
  - **Point out that some of the stressors are those listed earlier as triggers for disengagement.** Emphasize that a realistic approach means helping new staff know what to anticipate, normalizing their feelings and helping them learn the skills that others have found useful to survive and thrive in the work unit. This is a capacity building approach.
- Socialization, the fourth part of the organizational entry process, begins immediately and continues at least during the first year of employment. While orientation is more immediate and focused, socialization is an on-going process that is
concerned with helping newcomers conform to the organization.

- Not only is socialization on-going, but many people are involved in socialization: the supervisor, co-workers, support staff, families, etc. These people all convey messages about “how things are done around here.”
- Important agency values and norms are transmitted by socialization processes. Newcomers learn about the mission, philosophy, and core values of the agency. They also learn about agency norms such as time management, dress, and timeliness of paperwork. During orientation they learned the expectations. But, it is during the socialization process that they learn how the agency interprets and reinforces values and norms.
- Socialization changes the newcomer who begins to accept the role of child welfare worker as it is interpreted by the agency. The immediate work unit is also influenced by the newcomer and may adapt to accommodate him or her.

- Briefly discuss the objectives of orientation and divide participants into small groups of 3-5 members and distribute Handout 3C. Also give each group a flip chart page and markers.
- Inform the group that they will have 20 minutes to design ideal orientation and socialization programs for their own unit or team.
- If an item list on the handout is addressed in the general orientation, note that this is the case and whether this item also needs to be addressed in the unit orientation.
- Ask the group to describe the program on the flip chart and select a spokesperson to present their ideal program to the full group.

**Step 7**
- Reconvene the full group and ask for group reports
- Facilitate a discussion about the themes in the reports.
- Ask participants if such an orientation program is feasible for them? What are barriers and facilitators? What difference (if any) might result from such a program?

**Step 8**
- Conclude by acknowledging that the discussion has focused on orientation as an activity for newcomers. Many of the orientation principles discussed also apply when the agency introduces new ways of doing the work (welfare reform initiatives) or when someone takes on a new role within the organization.
The Newcomer Interview: Building on Strengths

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to conduct a strengths based interview with new staff in order to share mutual expectations and identify staff learning and career development needs.

Handouts

- The Newcomer Interview
- Newcomer Interview – Natasha Newsome
- Newcomer Interview – Odessa Oldman
- Newcomer Interview – Supervisor Instructions
- Newcomer Interview – Observer Instructions

Time

70 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Make a copy of Handout 3D for each participant.
- Prepare enough copies of Handout 3E so that 1/3 of the group will have Observer Instructions, 1/3 will have Supervisor Instructions, 1/6 will have Scenario One and 1/6 will have Scenario Two. Copy each 3E handout on a different colored paper if possible.

Procedure

Step 1

- Ask participants how they learn about the strengths, goals, and aspirations of new staff.
- Record responses on flip chart.

Step 2

- Explain that the Newcomer Interview is conducted with newly employed staff during the first week or two after employment. This interview provides an opportunity to revisit some of the questions that might have been covered during the selection interview. The purpose of the interview at this stage is staff development rather than selection. The newcomer may share more at this stage when selection is no longer an issue.
- Identify the multiple purposes of the interview. In addition to identifying strengths, this interview can help uncover expectations and begin to clarify any misperceptions staff may have about the agency and the work. During the newcomer interview, the supervisor can begin to get an understanding of the new employee’s professional goals and discuss how the new position can help the new staff member work toward those goals. This interview also sets the stage for later Stay Interviews.
- Simply put, the supervisor is getting to know the new worker and helping the new worker become familiar with the agency. This provides the newcomer with information to affirm their job choice.
The Newcomer Interview strategy relates to 8 of the 12 Gallup Study questions including 3 of the questions that are closely linked with supervisory behavior. These questions are listed below for reference.

1. **Do I know what is expected of me at work?**
2. **At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?**
3. **Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?**
4. **Is there someone at work who encourages my development?**
5. **Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?**
6. **In the last six months has someone at work talked to me about my progress?**
7. **This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?**

**Step 3**
- Distribute Handout 3D and review with participants.
- Facilitate a discussion about the usefulness of the Newcomer Interview.
- Invite participants to add some of their favorite questions. Write their responses on a flip chart page.

**Step 4**
- Conduct an exercise to let participants develop a staff development plan with a new staff member based on hypothetical answers to the newcomer interview.
- Divide participants into triads and ask the participants to decide who will take each role: newcomer, supervisor, and observer.
- Ask the supervisors to raise their hands and distribute the instructions (Handout 3E3). Do the same with the observers (Handout 3E4).
- Ask the newcomers to raise their hands and give half of them Scenario One and the other half Scenario Two.
- Allow a minute or two for participants to read their instructions. Then ask them to do a role play newcomer interview using the basic information given in the instructions. The objectives of the interview are to clarify expectations, discover strengths, identify learning needs, and begin to form a staff development plan using the information acquired in the interview and any other information the supervisor may have.
- Allow 20 minutes for this part of the activity.

**Step 5**
- Give participants about 10 minutes in their triads to debrief the activity with each other. How did it feel to be the newcomer? The Supervisor? Ask the observer to share feedback. What was most challenging?

**Step 6**
- Reconvene the full group and ask participants to share insights they discovered in their triads. Invite them to talk about how they might use this in the agency.
- Point out that this is another example of parallel process. The supervisor is modeling how to identify strengths and needs and engage in mutual planning. This will help staff learn how to do this with families.
The First Day at Your New Job

Imagine that you are a typical new child welfare worker in your agency. You get up and begin your morning routine…

1. What are your thoughts and feelings as you prepare for your first day of work at DSS?

2. What are your impressions when you come to work the first time? As you walk through the door? As you find your desk?

3. How do you feel?

4. What do you hope will happen the first day?

5. At the end of the day when you tell your family and friends about the first day highlights, what will you say?
Factual Questions to Address During New Employee Orientation

Who
  Can I go to for help?
  Do I report to?
  Do I interact with?

What
  Are the job requirements?
  Are my supervisor’s expectations?
  Are the performance standards?
  Is the structure of the agency and the child welfare unit?
  Are the opportunities to develop knowledge and skills?
  Are the policies and procedures regarding matters such as dress, sickness, vacation, working hours, lunch, expense reports, etc?

Where
  Should I park?
  Is my desk/office?
  Will I find the restrooms, break room, files, equipment, supplies, manuals, etc?

When
  Should I report to work each day?
  Do I go to lunch?
  Can I expect to leave?
  Will I be paid?
  Will I be evaluated?

Why
  Do we have “this” procedure?

How
  Do I operate the telephone and other equipment?
  Do I fit in this team?
  Do I use supervisory time?
  Will I be trained?
  Will I be evaluated?
## Activities for Employee-Centered Engagement

Consider each of the objectives listed in column one. In columns 2 and 3, list some activities that might respond to this objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would you do to...?</th>
<th>1st Month</th>
<th>6th Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Build commitment to the agency’s mission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Promote positive attitudes about the work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Save time for the supervisor &amp; reduce training time</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Promote open communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Promote sense of belonging</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Reduce anxiety &amp; stress of starting a new job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Confirm the job decision</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Clarify expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Build confidence in the ability to do the job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Provide general support and reassurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Help worker learn coping skills</td>
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</table>
The *Staying Power!* Newcomer Interview

**Purposes**

- To engage a new staff member in a discussion about strengths and expectations for the new position
- To create an opportunity to tailor work expectations and development plans to increase the opportunities for success
- To clarify misconceptions
- To set the stage for future stay interviews

**When**

During the first 2–4 weeks in the office

**Possible questions**

1. Based on your experiences in the job so far, what have you learned about your strengths?

2. How are things the same or different than you thought they would be?

3. Of all the things you have done so far, what has been most challenging?

4. What is confusing for you at this point?

5. What talents or skills would you most like to use in your new position?

6. What talents or skills would you like to develop more?

7. Given what you know about the job so far, what most appeals to you? What concerns you most?

8. How is our working relationship going so far?

List additional questions in the space below:
Newcomer Interview Scenarios
Scenario One

Name: Natasha Newsome
Age: 26

Background

You are a recent graduate of the local university where you majored in social work. This is your first position since completing your BSW a few months ago. You took a child welfare course offered by your social work program and your field placement was with a foster care social worker in a nearby county. You are excited about the new position in THIS County and feel well-prepared for the work. You expected to have more time to work with the youth assigned to you and have lots of creative ideas. You notice, however, that other staff seem to spend a lot of time in their offices doing paperwork.

Next time you meet with your supervisor, you want to introduce one of your new ideas for working with youth. You also want to ask for time off since your oldest child has a field trip with her preschool class.

You delayed accepting a new position immediately after graduation because you wanted time with your family. In fact, your greatest concern about the new position is how you will balance the needs of your school age children and the expectations of the position. You feel fortunate to have a job near where you live so that you do not have a long commuting time. During the job interview you did not talk very much about your hopes for balancing family and work responsibilities.

So far, the first week is going well. You like your supervisor and your co-workers. Your supervisor is accessible and you look forward to your next individual meeting with her.
Newcomer Interview Scenarios
Scenario Two

Name: Odessa Oldman
Age: 33

Background
You are delighted to land a job in child welfare at your local Department of Social Services. You were concerned that you might not be able to find a position that allowed you to build on your 2 years of child welfare practice in a nearby state. You hear that this state is quite progressive and emphasizes best practices in child welfare. You look forward to developing your knowledge and skills. You imagine that one day you might direct child welfare services in your community. Of course, you think that before you can achieve your dream, you will probably need to return to school for a graduate degree. You are thinking about timing for the return to school. Meanwhile, you hope to get as much experience as possible. You are looking forward to the next meeting with your supervisor so that you can tell her about your two weeks on the job. You also wonder if you should bring up your career plans at this stage. If possible, you would like to begin the MSW program in the fall.
Newcomer Interview Scenarios
Supervisor Instructions

After two weeks on the job, your newest staff member has completed orientation with the human resources department and you have spent some time with her also. You are pleased that you were able to hire someone with experience in child welfare and hope that you will be able to keep your new worker for a few years. You planned an appointment with her to conduct a newcomer interview. Your tasks are to discover her strengths and learning needs and begin to formulate a staff development plan with your new worker.

You will interview one of the following new staff:

**Natasha Newsome, age 26**
Natasha recently graduated from the local university where she earned a BSW. She took a child welfare course and did her field placement in foster care at another county DSS located about 30 miles away from where she lives.

**Odessa Oldman, age 33**
Odessa recently moved to the community from a nearby state. She has 2 years child welfare experience in that state and you are delighted to get a new worker with experience.
Newcomer Interview Scenarios
Observer Instructions

Please write your observations by answering the questions below.

1. How did the supervisor set up the interview and establish rapport?

2. What did the supervisor do to identify strengths?

3. How did the supervisor elicit and then clarify misconceptions about the job?

4. How did the supervisor discover learning needs?

5. How did the supervisor engage the new worker in outlining the staff development plan?

6. Strengths you observed:
Session 4
Supporting Development: More Staying Power! Strategies

Outline and Trainer Notes

Activities for Session 4

Activity 4.1
The Disengagement Process (25 minutes)

Activity 4.2
The Staying Power! Interview: Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup (45 minutes)

Activity 4.3
The Staying Power! Interview with Individuals (40 minutes)

Activity 4.4
Coaching for Performance (30 minutes)

Activity 4.5
Two Paradigms for Supervision (20 minutes)

Activity 4.6
Homework Assignment (5 minutes)

(Total 165 minutes)

Handouts
☐ 4A The Disengagement Process
☐ 4B The Staying Power! Interview: Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup
☐ 4C The Staying Power! Interview with Individuals
☐ 4D Examples of Stay Interview Questions
☐ 4E Coaching for Performance
☐ 4F Two Paradigms for Child Welfare Supervision
☐ 4G Assessing Supervisors’ Use of Paradigm Characteristics
References


The Disengagement Process  Activity 4.1

Learning Objective
❖ Participants will be able to identify some of the warning signs of employee disengagement.

Handouts
❖ 4A  The Disengagement Process

Time
30 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
❖ Make copies of Handout 4A for each participant.
❖ Prepare 2 flip chart pages with the following text: Signs of Disengagement

Procedure
Step 1
❖ Engagement (Session 3) is important with new employees. It is important also to attend to the needs of seasoned employees in order to prevent disengagement that may lead to turnover.
❖ Refer to the Spherion Study (Session 1) and remind participants of the finding that almost half the workers in their study wanted to change jobs within 6 months, and three quarters, within 12 months.
❖ Ask to what extent participants think this might be true for child welfare staff.

Step 2
❖ Ask participants about the signs they might observe that let them know that someone may be thinking about changing jobs or disengaging.
❖ Write responses on a flip chart. Expect participants to list such things as absenteeism, stress-related illnesses, increased negativity/cynicism, withdrawal, work starts to pile up and quality of work decreases, etc.

Step 3
❖ Facilitate a discussion about the list participants generated. What does this list tell them? Do they observe any trends or clusters?
❖ Ask participants how soon before departure are the signs evident?
❖ What are some of the ways they have seen supervisors respond to the signs of disengagement?
❖ Does someone display the signs of disengagement and not leave? If participants say that this occurs, follow up by asking if the person remained disengaged or was the staff person re-energized. Those who remain disengaged may be among those in the “desirable turnover” cell we looked at in Session 1. Those who became re-engaged may have responded positively to an intervention.
Step 4

- Distribute Handout 4A and review with participants as a summary to the discussion.
- Emphasize that leaving a job (turnover) is a process not an event. It can take days, months, or years.
- Observe that something – a stimulus of some kind – often triggers the process. Something may occur in the initial days of employment that causes a new worker to question the decision to accept the job. A new worker may get overwhelmed and not feel supported and subsequently question if she is in the right job for her. Or an experienced worker may be passed over for promotion and feel that her work is unappreciated or unacceptable.
- Ask participants to think about trigger events and record their responses on a flip chart page. (Responses might include: disappointment in the work, job is not as expected, change in supervisor, reassignment, perception that evaluation is unfair, being asked to do something unethical, etc.).
- Point out that since disengagement is a process there are opportunities for intervention to interrupt each step of the process. The process has two phases, Deliberation (thinking about leaving) and Action (actively leaving), so it is possible to reverse the process, especially in the deliberation stages.
- In order to intervene in a way that interrupts the disengagement process, supervisors must first be attuned to staff and identify the early warning signs. The specific intervention will depend on what has triggered disengagement for a specific worker. Use examples of trigger events generated by participants and facilitate a discussion about how a supervisor might respond to such an event.
- Summarize the discussion and emphasize that during the remainder of the training we will talk about strategies to prevent disengagement as well as support re-engagement among those who are already in the withdrawal process.
- Note that some staff disengage and remain employed. Observe that this may be a situation in which turnover is desirable if the person cannot be re-engaged with the agency.
The Staying Power! Interview: Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup  Activity 4.2

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to use the “miracle question” to engage a group in developing a collective vision to improve workplace climate.
- Participants will be able to use “scaling” to assess work unit functioning.

Materials

- Miracle question script
- Two signs (8.5 x 11) with the number “1” on one sign and the number “10” on the other.
- At least 2 colored sticky dot labels for each participant

Handouts

- 4B The Staying Power! Interview: Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup.

Time

45 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Clear space so that participants can stand in a line. Post one sign on the wall at either end of the line.
- Review the script for the miracle question.
- Make sufficient copies of Handout 4B, The Staying Power! Interview: Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup, for each participant.

Procedure

Step 1

- Alert participants that you are going to change gears and ask them to relax in their seats and think about the strange question you will pose to them.

Imagine that while you are asleep tonight, a miracle happens. The miracle is that your team or unit is the best place to work that you could imagine. However, because you are asleep, you don’t know that the miracle has happened. So, when you wake up tomorrow morning and come to work, what will be different that will let you know that a miracle has happened that your team or unit is a great place to work? What are you and your workers doing? What do you hear them saying? What posters and notices are on the walls and office doors? What memos do you have on your desk? What other signs of the miracle do you see and hear?

- Speak slowly and gently in a soft voice.
- Use frequent pauses, allowing participants time to absorb the question and process their experiences through the different parts of the question.
Since the question asks for a description of the future, be sure to use future-oriented words: What would be different? What will be the sign of the miracle?

### Step 2
- Give participants a few minutes to think about their miracles then engage the group in a discussion about their miracles. As participants share elements of the miracle, write responses on a flip chart.
  - Probe and ask follow up questions as participants share their responses. For example, if a participant says better communication, ask what that person noticed or observed that indicated better communication. Be as concrete as possible. Write the specific behavior on the flipchart, not the concept.
  - Continue, round robin style, until all the elements of the miracle have been shared.
  - Allow the group time to discuss their observations about the collective miracle.
    - Does anyone see anything that is left out?
    - Does this have enough detail that we can all agree that this is a better place to work?

### Step 3
- Use the scaling question to assess current conditions in the work unit. Point out the signs you posted earlier and ask participants to stand along an imaginary line indicating the number of their response to the question below.

  On a scale of one to ten (ten being that the miracle has happened now in our agency and one being just the opposite), where would you say we are as a team (or work unit)?

### Step 4
- Ask participants to share the numbers they picked and talk about what aspects of the miracle they currently see in their teams. After everyone has a turn, invite the group to return to their seats.
- Discourage participants from challenging perceptions shared by others during this phase of the exercise.

### Step 5
- Next, ask participants what they will see if the team is just one number higher than it is now. Engage the group in a brief discussion of these ideas.
- Distribute sticky dot labels to each participate and ask them to vote by placing their dots next to the items they want to see accomplished in order to move their team one level higher than it is now.
- Once everyone has voted, announce the ideas receiving most votes and explain that these are the ideas that would be developed further by the team. That is, the supervisor and team would develop an implementation plan for these ideas.
Step 6
- Debrief activity with the group.
  - What happened when you began to think about the miracle?
  - Did you screen the parts of the miracle that you were willing to share with the group?
  - What happened when you were asked to scale the extent to which your miracle is currently in place?
  - How can you use this approach with your work group?
  - Summarize key themes from the discussion. Encourage participants to use this activity with their teams and identify this as a form of “stay interview” with a group.
  - Remind participants that one of the “messages” from the first day is to target supervisory interventions and strategies to the needs of specific groups of workers. This activity offers one method to engage the group in creating a collective vision for a more positive work climate.
  - Give each participant a copy of Handout 4B, The Staying Power! Interview: Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup. Discuss how this activity might be used with staff.
The Staying Power! Interview with Individuals
Activity 4.3

Learning Objective
✓ Participants will be able to conduct a “stay interview” with staff.

Materials
✓ Flip chart and markers

Handouts
✓ 4C  The Staying Power! Interview with Individuals
✓ 4D  Examples of Stay Interview Questions

Time
20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
✓ Make copies of Handout 4C and 4D for each participant.

Procedure (or Instructions)

Step 1
✓ Ask participants to raise their hands if their agencies conduct exit interviews when someone resigns. Elicit examples of typical exit interview questions. Ask how exit interview data are used by the agency.
✓ Exit interview data are usually more beneficial for the employees that remain and do not usually prevent the resignation.
✓ **Explain that the Stay Interview is the opposite of the Exit Interview.** Instead of waiting until an employee is leaving and asking “is there anything we could have done to keep you?” – ask early when you might actually be able to respond and delay or prevent the resignation.
✓ Point out that an individual stay interview provides an opportunity to connect with individuals and learn more about what will increase job satisfaction for that person.

Step 2
✓ Distribute and review **Handout 4C**, The Staying Power! Interview with Individuals.
✓ Emphasize that this type of discussion may not be easy and the supervisor will need to prepare staff for this discussion. Staff may not trust the supervisor’s motive in initiating the discussion or may be cynical about the possibility of change.
✓ The following are examples of Stay Interview questions:
  ▲ **Use the miracle question:** Imagine that while you are asleep tonight, a miracle happens. The miracle is that this agency is the best place to work that you could imagine. However, because you are asleep, you don’t know that the miracle has happened. So, when you wake up tomorrow morning and come to work, what will be different that will let you know that a miracle has happened that this is a great place to work?
▲ What would be the one thing that, if it changed in your current role, would make you consider moving on?

▲ X, you are a valuable part of our team and I’m wondering: What will it take to keep you here? What might entice you to leave?

☐ Point out that the supervisor also needs to be willing to listen and be responsive to what staff share. Responsiveness requires a willingness to consider what the person needs or wants and also be willing to adjust assignments or make other changes to move in the direction of the expressed need. Responsiveness may also mean that the supervisor helps a staff person explore the “goodness of fit” between the individual’s professional needs and what can reasonably be expected in the agency.

☐ Ask participants to form dyads and generate possible interview questions for a stay interview. Ask each team to select their best question to write on a flip chart page to be shared with the full group. Tell the team to post the page to the wall when they complete the assignment. Allow about 5 minutes.

☐ Review the posted questions and initiate a discussion about possible interview questions.

☐ Distribute and discuss Handout 4D, Examples of Stay Interview Questions.

Note: This activity is adapted from Kaye, B. and Jordan-Evans, S. (2005).
Coaching for Performance  Activity 4.4

Learning Objective
☑ Participants will be able to describe the coaching process.

Handouts
☑ 4E  Coaching for Performance

Time
30 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
☑ Make copies of Handout 4E for each participant.

Note to Facilitator: Participants may ask you to distinguish between mentoring and coaching. The use of these terms in the literature is inconsistent and overlapping. In a general sense, mentoring in the broader term that refers to career development and acquiring the knowledge, skills, abilities, self-perception, and social networks needed to grow as a professional and advance in one’s career. Coaching, on the other hand, focuses on performance enhancement. Often coaching is used to respond to performance problems, but our intent in this curriculum is to use coaching as a tool to facilitate growth and strengthen practice skills. Coaches and mentors may use similar techniques, e.g., teaching and support, but toward different goals.

Procedure
Step 1
☑ Ask participants to think about coaches they know or may have observed. Maybe it was the sports coach or the choir director or an executive coach.
☑ Think about the actions or behaviors that constitute what we call coaching.
☑ The coach:
   ▶ Observes and gives guidance from the sidelines
   ▶ Monitors performance of individual players and the team as a whole
   ▶ Gives corrective feedback to individuals and to the team
   ▶ Provides moral support and encouragement
   ▶ Encourages players to try new moves
   ▶ Analyzes individual performance and games in order to make improvements
☑ Ask participants to add to this list.
☑ Coaching staff is like coaching in sports. The supervisor coach needs information about performance. This comes from the worker during supervisory meetings, direct observation, and reports from others (consumers, co-workers, etc.).
☑ Coaching is often seen as a negative behavior. It is included as part of a disciplinary action to respond to performance problems.
☑ Retention oriented supervisors reframe coaching and use it for growth as well as for remediation. The emergent worker (Session 1) wants to learn new skills. The Gallup Study tells us that workers with higher job satisfaction want to do their best every day, want someone to encourage their development at work, and want to
learn new skills.
Whitmore (2004) proposes a deceptively simple coaching model. Refer to **Handout 4E**.

The initial stage in the coaching process is to raise awareness about performance. When the worker is unaware of performance, she will not be able to make conscious decisions about how to act. For example, if the worker is not aware that getting at eye level when talking to children helps them be more responsive she may kneel sometimes and sometimes not. She may believe that the child’s reaction to her is random and not related to her behavior. By expressing interest and asking questions, the supervisor can focus the worker’s attention on her behavior and help the worker learn to self-monitor and use the behavior in a purposeful way. Berg and her colleagues refer to this as the supervisor expressing curiosity. The supervisor might ask questions such as:

- Wonder what caused the child to respond in that manner?
- Do you think that eye level contact had any effect on the interaction?

The supervisor can use leading questions (do you think…?) to focus the worker’s attention. The key point is that the worker is actively engaged and the supervisor is not telling the worker what to do/not do.

Once the worker is aware of her performance, the next issue is responsibility or the worker taking ownership of the issue. Continuing with the child interview example, the worker in this case may begin to think about what other interviewing techniques might be useful when working with children. The supervisor again uses questions to explore and guide. The objective at this point is to build investment in the worker so that she wants to learn more about interviewing children.

If the issue is a performance problem, however, the supervisor may require the worker to take corrective action. The worker is required to take responsibility in order to perform at a satisfactory level. The initiative comes from the supervisor who observes performance problems, but the worker still needs to become aware of the behavior that is a problem and still needs to take responsibility for addressing the problem.

The GROW model provides a structure which can be implemented during one or more coaching sessions.

- **Goal setting questions**
  - What outcome are you seeking? (to be able to develop rapport and get information from young children)
  - What are intermediate steps that can be taken?
  - What would you like to accomplish?

- **Reality check questions**
  - What is the present status or concern about the issue?
  - Who is concerned and why?
  - Is the goal critical to job performance?
  - How much control do you have over the outcome?
  - What obstacles need to be overcome to work on the goal (internal obstacles such as being afraid of children and external obstacles such as lack of training resources)

- **What options are available to work on the goal?**
  - What are all the different ways you can approach this issue? (Training,
reading, observing someone who does it well, etc.)
– What else could you do?
– Would you like some suggestions from me?
– What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?
▲ What will the worker do? What is the specific plan? Get a commitment.
– Which option(s) will you choose?
– What are the criteria for success?
– How will you implement the option?
– When will you start and finish each step?
– What resources do you need?
– How can I support you?
▲ Participants will recognize the parallel process. This is the process we have used in the training and the process they will encourage workers to use when making service plans with families.

The Handout 4E gives the URLs for two online assessments of coaching skills.
Two Supervisory Paradigms  Activity 4.5

Learning Objectives
- Participants will be able to identify the hallmarks of two supervisory paradigms.
- Participants will be able to use these paradigms to reflect on and/or plan for coaching language and behaviors with staff.

Materials
- Flip chart and markers for each small group

Handouts
- 4F  Two Paradigms for Child Welfare Supervision
- 4G  Assessing Supervisors’ Use of Paradigm Characteristics

Time
30 minutes

Facilitator Preparation
- Make a copy of Handouts 4F and 4G for each participant.
- Practice Dialogue 1 so that it sounds natural

Procedure
Step 1: Two Supervisor Paradigms
- Explain that two child welfare family centered practice social workers (Susan Kelly and Insoo Kim Berg) have studied various supervisor behaviors and goals that promote or inhibit worker-centered supervision and have divided them into two paradigms; we will call them “one” and “two”. Let’s look at this on Handout 4F “Two Paradigms for Child Welfare Supervision” which is modified from Berg and Kelly’s work. Take a few minutes to read it (allow three to four minutes).

- Ask them to comment on the differences, ensuring that points such as the following are drawn out:
  - The first paradigm is more supervisor-centered; the second is more worker-centered. Thinking about the previous unit and coaching: does one of these paradigms seem more coaching than the other?
  - The first paradigm is almost hyper vigilant and fearful about possible errors, while the second is more focused on helping workers learn, even from errors. The first connotes a set of circumstances in which a mistake could be eminent at any time and if it occurs, could be catastrophic. Would staff see this supervisor as a coach? The second paradigm implies that mistakes are part of learning and can be remediated if they occur.
  - The first promotes worker dependence on the supervisor; the second promotes worker belief in supervisory support and guidance. Think of a crutch versus a banister, a pair of glasses versus a flashlight. A coach more closely resembles a banister for her staff. Coaching is more like offering a staff member a flashlight to help them find their way. The assumption of the first is that the
worker is impaired in some way, while the assumption of the second is that the worker is capable and in a learning stage. (Ask them to brainstorm other metaphors.)

1. The first suggests that the necessary knowledge and practice wisdom come ONLY with years of experience, while the second suggests that the necessary knowledge and skill will develop faster if the worker tunes into and builds on his/her own strengths, thinks strategically, uses experiences for learning, and shares openly in problem-solving and other learning with people who have expertise, including the supervisor.

2. The first paradigm may subtly or unsubtly encourage the worker to share only what is “acceptable” and this may lead to glossing over important issues. The second encourages the worker to share what is really going on and to find workable approaches.

3. Supervision styles may promote parallel processes between workers and families. The kinds of issues discussed here may play out in similar paradigms of how the worker treats families.

**Step 2: What behaviors do you see?**

- Explain that supervisor BEHAVIORS promote these hallmarks and they may be subtle or overt. Sometimes a supervisor is a “very nice person” and really wants the worker to develop but, by force of habit, being over-worked or anxious, the supervisor falls too often into the first paradigm. For example, a supervisor may be under a lot of pressure from the agency to get case loads down and may resort to saying to the worker “You know, I’ve been going over your case file for the Jones and see that the family has had no subsequent reports, no crises in the past 3 months, and have used the help of the in-home worker effectively—they seem to meet our criteria for closure so I think it makes sense to close their case now.” The worker gets the picture that at least in this situation the supervisor is the one who makes the decisions, no matter what the worker thinks (#3). Ask them for one or two other examples, including how this can happen despite the supervisor’s better intentions.

**Step 3: Writing examples of behaviors for each hallmark.**

- Tell participants that we are going to identify one example of a supervisor behavior for each of the hallmarks. Assign one hallmark (1-12) to each participants (it is fine to have more than one participant for each hallmark). Ask each person to take a few minutes to write one example of a supervisor behavior that conveys the hallmark to the worker (must be what the supervisor says although they can comment on the non-verbal aspects of it). Ask them not to write any egregious and obvious behaviors if they have hallmarks 1-6. For instance, for number 6, don’t write “There is a reason that I’m the supervisor and you are the worker and so I want you to get out and see that child now.” (pointing finger) Also put a star or similar mark next to the behaviors you list that are indicative of coaching supervision.

- Give them a few minutes to write their example and then go around the room and have each read their hallmark and then their example. Don’t write it on the flip chart, but encourage each participant to write it (in full or in part) on their own handout. The goal is to be sure each participant has a sense of what each hallmark may look like behaviorally. Process each example briefly.
Step 4: What hallmarks do we see in a worker-supervisor interaction?
- Explain that the two trainers are now going to read a dialogue of a worker and a supervisor interaction. This dialog is an excerpt from a longer interaction. As they watch and listen to the dialog, they should be thinking about what hallmarks they see, i.e., which of the 12 hallmarks is relevant. After they watch the trainers, they will be given a copy of the dialog and as a group we will identify which paradigm is reflected in each of the supervisor’s lines.

Step 5: Read Handout 4F Dialogue 1.
- Two trainers read the first dialog aloud. Be sure to practice first and do not make a caricature of the supervisor – make the supervisor a decent person who is clearly interested in the worker no matter what the line is.

Step 6: What hallmarks did you see in the dialogue?
- Pass out Handout 4G Dialogue 1 and as a group go through the dialogue, line by line. For each supervisor comment, ask them what paradigm is reflected and solicit comments about the hallmarks they noticed. See the trainer sample below to identify the correct responses.

Supervision Paradigm 1: Hallmarks
1. Supervisor is the source of knowledge, the worker is the receptacle.
2. Worker might make a mistake, thus needs overseeing. Emphasis is more on prevention of mistakes, rather than developing skills.
3. Supervisor is responsible for the clients’ welfare and thus the ultimate decision maker.
4. Supervision is situation and problem specific (thus not promoting generalizing learning to new situations).
5. Authoritarian, hierarchical, linear.
6. Climate of deference or even fear of criticism may develop.

Supervision Paradigm 2: Hallmarks (help to identify areas for coaching, promote a coaching approach to interaction with staff)
7. Discovering worker competencies, in part by identifying and amplifying worker successes.
8. Using tentative, exploring, and supportive language.
9. Holding the worker responsible for his/her own learning.
10. Creating a climate of trust and safety in supervision.
11. Developing a collaborative relationship with the worker to problem solve and review results.
12. Using the worker’s knowledge and frame of reference to increase competency.
Dialogue 1

1 Supervisor I wanted to meet so I can catch up on what’s going on with the Maxwell family. This is the second time this family has come into our system and I want to be sure we are doing everything we can so that Ronnie's life stabilizes; I don't want to see him in foster care a year from now. **ONE (1, 3, 5)**

Worker I really think that the chances of Ronnie's dad getting it together are pretty low. I mean, he went through that 30 day inpatient program for alcoholism and just two months later he already has been picked up on a DUI.

2 Supervisor Don't rush to judgment too quickly. I have seen many an alcoholic fall off the wagon after several rounds of treatment but then eventually get it together to stay sober. You will see this over time if you pay attention. **BOTH (1, 5, 6, 12)**

Worker So, you don't think I ought to be talking to him about a TPR or relinquishment?

3 Supervisor No, I don't, not yet. We are only at the third month of foster care and so we have several months to go. Our judge usually doesn't even want to consider a TPR before the 9 month point for older kids like Ronnie. **ONE(1)**

Worker OK, that's good to know. What do you think I ought to do?

4 Supervisor Well for right now it makes sense to see what the substance abuse evaluator says. Given this DUI, Ronnie's dad is going to have to get reassessed. **ONE (1)**

Worker OK, I’ll do that.

5 Supervisor Alright, let's do some brainstorming about what kinds of issues you might want to address with the substance abuse evaluator. _TWO (10, 11)_ **Coaching _**

Worker Well, I’m thinking about that the in-service training we had on Motivational Interviewing – and I know that's the main approach they are using at the substance abuse clinic now. So, I guess I should be asking about the factors that seem to be predictors of real change.

6 Supervisor: OK, great, I am not as familiar with this as you are – tell me about those. **TWO (7, 8)**

Worker Well, I know that the specific “change talk” that they look for has to do with commitment and implementation intentions, rather than factors such as desire and reasons to change.
7 Supervisor: Interesting. Given this framework, what might you talk to the counselor and Ronnie's father about? **TWO (8, 9, 12) Coaching**

Worker: One example would be his specific plan for staying sober over the next two weeks.

8 Supervisor: OK, that's a good example and it makes sense. **TWO (7, 8, 11)**
Wrap up and Homework Assignment  Activity 4.6

Note to Facilitator: Use the homework assignment if participants have a break between sessions 1-4 and session 5-8.

Learning Objective

- Participants will be able to identify at least one retention strategy to practice in the workplace.

Materials

None

Time

5 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Prepare a brief review of major strategies discussed during Sessions 1-4.
  - Gallup Questions
  - Relationship-focused Orientation
  - Newcomer Interview
  - Miracle Question
  - Stay Interview
  - Supervisor as a Coach

Procedure

- Review some of the retention perspectives and strategies that have been discussed during sessions 1-4.

- Ask participants to select at least one activity for a homework assignment. For example, participants might practice the newcomer interview, stay interview or use the miracle question with their team. The next training session will begin with a review of their experiences with the homework assignments.

Homework Assignment

Your Choice
The Disengagement Process

1. Question decision to accept the job
2. Think seriously about quitting
3. Try to change things
4. Resolve to quit
5. Consider the cost of quitting
6. Passively seek another job
7. Prepare to actively seek
8. Actively seek
9. Get new job offer
10. Quit to accept new job, or
11. Quit without a job, or
12. Stay and disengage

The *Staying Power!* Interview
Posing the Miracle Question with your Team or Workgroup

Use the miracle question.

Imagine that while you are asleep tonight, a miracle happens. The miracle is that this agency is the best place to work that you could imagine. However, because you are asleep, you don’t know that the miracle has happened. So, when you wake up tomorrow morning and come to work, what will be different that will let you know that a miracle has happened that this is a great place to work?

• Staff begin to identify elements of their own miracles. Write responses on newsprint for all to see. Use this process to come to agreement on what the miracle looks like for the group.

• Use the scaling question to assess current conditions and identify strategies to move closer to the miracle.

• On a scale of one to ten (ten being that the miracle has happened now in our agency and one being just the opposite), where would you say we are as a team?

• Ask staff to share the numbers they picked and what aspects of the miracle they currently see in the team?

• Next, ask staff what they will see if the team is just one number higher than it is now. Record responses on a flip chart and engage the team in a discussion of the strategies listed. As a group, select 1 or 2 strategies that have broad support.

• Ask the group to agree to work on these strategies for a specified time period (the next month, quarter). Assure them that they will have an opportunity to reassess the miracle at the end of this time. Discuss what it will take to implement these strategies.

The *Staying Power!* Interview with Individuals

**Purpose**
- An opportunity for supervisors to discover what individual staff value and what motivates each person to remain employed at the agency
- Helps the supervisor develop individualized strategies to respond to the “push” factors for each staff member
- Conveys to staff that the supervisor cares and that each staff member is valued and important

**What the supervisor needs**
- The ability to establish trust with workers
- The courage to hear things about yourself without becoming defensive
- Willingness to listen and thank people for their input
- Willingness to respond with empathy

**When? On a regular basis**
- When someone is first employed
- At the time of a performance review
- Each quarter
- When concerns arise

**How?**
- Arrange a time for the discussion

**Possible interview questions:**

**Possible responses:**
Examples of Stay Interview Questions

- What will keep you here? What will cause you to stay? What might entice you to leave?
- Are we fully using your talents and skills?
- Looking at your total compensation package, do you think that you are fairly compensated for the work you do? Why/why not?
- What would you like to be doing a year from now?
- Give an example of 1 or 2 specific incidents that make you want to stay at this job?
- What about this job makes you jump out of bed in the morning? Hit the snooze button?
- If you were to win the lottery and resign, what would you miss the most about this job?
- If you had a magic wand, what one thing would you change about this team?
- What would be the one thing about working here that would cause you to leave if it changed?
- What are you overdue for?
- If you were the boss/supervisor, what would you do differently?
- How does this job fit for you?
Coaching for Performance

“Coaching is unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.”

—John Whitmore

Coaching for Performance, 2004

Effective performance coaches:

- Know what is required to do the job well – knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- Gather information and observations to analyze performance
- Use questions to facilitate staff self-reflection about performance
- Listen to staff and help staff develop performance goals
- Develop a partnership with staff to facilitate growth and development.
- Consider each person’s learning style and stage of development
- Give feedback about performance

Sequence of Events during a coaching session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal setting questions</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What outcome are you seeking? (e.g., to be able to develop rapport and get information from young children)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What are intermediate steps that can be taken?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What would you like to accomplish?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>Reality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reality check questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What is the present status or concern about the issue?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Who is concerned and why?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Is the goal critical to job performance?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• How much control do you have over the outcome?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What obstacles need to be overcome to work on the goal (internal obstacles such as being afraid of children and external obstacles such as lack of training resources)?</td>
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</table>
### Options

**What options are available to work on the goal?**

- What are all the different ways you can approach this issue? (Training, reading, observing someone who does it well, etc.)
- What else could you do?
- Would you like some suggestions from me?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?

### Will

**What will the worker do? What is the specific plan?**

**Get a commitment.**

- Which option(s) will you choose?
- What are the criteria for success?
- How will you implement the option?
- When will you start and finish each step?
- What resources do you need?
- How can I support you?

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**Online Assessment Tools:**

Performance Coaching Self-Assessment  

Performance Coaching Assessment Worksheet  
http://www.envisioninc.com/resources/Performance_Coaching_Worksheet.pdf
Two Paradigms for Child Welfare Supervision

Supervision Paradigm 1—Hallmarks

1. Supervisor is the source of knowledge, the worker is the receptacle.

2. Worker might make a mistake, thus needs overseeing. Emphasis is more on prevention of mistakes, rather than developing skills and generalizing learning to new situations.

3. Supervisor is responsible for the clients’ welfare and thus the ultimate decision maker.

4. Supervision is situation and problem specific (thus not promoting generalizing learning to new situations)

5. Authoritarian, hierarchical, linear.

6. Climate of deference or even fear of criticism may develop.

Supervision Paradigm 2—Hallmarks

7. Discovering worker competencies, in part by identifying and amplifying worker successes.

8. Using tentative, exploring, and supportive language.

9. Holding the worker responsible for his/her own learning.

10. Creating a climate of trust and safety in supervision.

11. Developing a collaborative relationship with the worker to problem solve and review results.

12. Using the worker’s knowledge and frame of reference to increase competency.

Assessing Supervisors’ Use of Paradigm Characteristics

Instruction

Read the dialogue on the page below. For each of the supervisor’s lines, identify one or two hallmarks (from 1–12 on Handout 4F) that BEST reflect what the supervisor’s words represent.

Note: The supervisor may display hallmarks from one paradigm only or both.

Dialogue 1

1 Supervisor I wanted to meet so I can catch up about what’s going on with the Maxwell family. This is the second time this family has come into our system and I want to be sure we are doing everything we can so that Ronnie’s life stabilizes; I don’t want to see him in foster care a year from now. _____

Worker I really think that the chances of Ronnie’s dad getting it together are pretty low. I mean, he went through that 30 day inpatient program for alcoholism and just two months later he’s already been picked up on a DUI. _____

2 Supervisor Don’t rush to judgment too quickly. I have seen many an alcoholic fall off the wagon after several rounds of treatment but then eventually get it together to stay sober. You will see this over time if you pay attention. _____

Worker So, you don’t think I ought to be talking to him about a TPR or relinquishment? _____

3 Supervisor No, I don’t, not yet. We are only at the third month of foster care so we have several months to go. Our judge usually doesn’t even want to consider a TPR before the 9-month point for older kids like Ronnie. _____

Worker OK, that’s good to know. What do you think I ought to do? _____

4 Supervisor Well for right now it makes sense to see what the substance abuse evaluator says. Given this DUI, Ronnie’s dad is going to have to get reassessed. _____

Worker OK, I’ll do that. _____

5 Supervisor Alright, let’s do some brainstorming about what kinds of issues you might want to address with the substance abuse evaluator. _____

Worker Well, I’m thinking about that in-service training we had on Motivational Interviewing—and I know that’s the main approach they are using at the substance abuse clinic now. So, I guess I should be asking about factors that seem to be predictors of real change. _____

6 Supervisor: OK, great, I am not as familiar with this as you are—tell me some more about those. _____

Worker Well, I know that the specific “change talk” they look for has to do with commitment and implementation intentions, rather than factors such as desire and reasons to change. _____

7 Supervisor Interesting. Given this framework, what might you talk to the counselor and Ronnie’s father about? _____

Worker One example would be his specific plan for staying sober over the next two weeks. _____

8 Supervisor OK, that’s a good example and it really makes sense. _____
Session 5

Staying Power!
Resilience and Recognition

Outline and Trainer Notes

Activities for Session 5

Activity 5.1
Welcome and Homework Follow Up (20 minutes)

Activity 5.2
Stress, Burnout and Resilience (60 minutes)

Activity 5.3
Rewards and Recognition (25 minutes)

Activity 5.4
Individualized Retention Planning and Participant Action Planning
(60 minutes)

(Total 165 minutes)

Handouts

- 5A Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers
- 5B Small Group Discussion Questions
- 5C Defining Terms Related to Stress and Coping
- 5D 10 Ways to Build Resilience
- 5E Coping Strategies: Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and Burnout
- 5F Recognition and Reward File Cards
- 5G Supervising for Staying Power! The Six Steps for Retention
- 5H The Individual Action Plan to Promote Retention
References


Welcome Back and Homework Review  Activity 5.1

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to recall information presented in previous sessions.
- Participants will be able to identify potential reactions by self and others when implementing retention strategies.

Materials

None

Time

20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Prepare a summary to remind participants of the material discussed in Sessions 1-4. This is a good time to re-hang the flip chart pages generated by the participants, especially the reasons to leave/stay in a position.

Procedure

Step 1

- Briefly remind participants of the material and some of the group experiences from sessions 1-4. Invite participants to share follow up comments or questions.

Step 2

- Remind participants that they were asked to try at least one strategy during the break in the training. Invite them to share their experiences. What worked well? Were there any surprises? How did others react? What is the “take away” message based on these experiences?
Burnout, Secondary Trauma, and Resilience  Activity 5.2

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to identify the characteristics of burnout, secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, and resilience and how they relate to retention.

Participants will be able to identify individual and institutional strategies to reduce burnout and secondary trauma and promote resilience.

Handouts

- 5A  Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers
- 5B  Small Group Discussion Questions
- 5C  Defining Terms Related to Stress and Coping
- 5D  10 Ways to Build Resilience
- 5E  Coping Strategies: Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and Burnout

Time

60 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Make copies of Handouts 5A-5E for each participant
- Prepare 3 flip chart pages with sentence stems:
  - Indicators of burnout are…
  - Indicators of secondary trauma/compassion fatigue are…
  - Indicators of resilience are…

Procedure

Step 1: Introduction

Begin the discussion by pointing out that child welfare staff have a great deal of resilience. On a day to day basis staff are confronted with intense and distressing experiences that inevitably stir up emotional reactions and sometimes these reactions are intense. Supervision is one way to help workers cope with these intense reactions. Support within the agency is important since the requirements of confidentiality limit how much workers can reveal to family and others outside of the agency. A number of social science researchers have studied the effects of helping on the helper.

Distribute Handout 5A Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers. Ask participants to complete the 32 item questionnaire on the first page of the handout. The second page of the handout will help them score the questionnaire and page 3 will help them to interpret the scores. Allow about 10 minutes for participants to complete and score the questionnaire.

Divide participants into 3 or more small groups and give each group one of the flip chart pages prepared for the session and a copy of the discussion questions. Ask the small groups to first discuss their reactions to the self-assessment. Then, discuss the assigned term and complete the flip chart page to be shared with the group. Allow about 30 minutes for small group work.

Reconvene the full group and ask for reports. Facilitate a discussion about the
similarity and differences between Compassion Fatigue/Secondary Trauma and Burnout using the lists developed by each group. Make the following points during the discussion:

△ Emphasize that burnout and secondary trauma are similar in that both are characterized by physical, emotional, relational, and behavioral symptoms. The difference is that Secondary Trauma results from exposure to emotionally shocking or overwhelming material or situations. Burnout, on the other hand, is more related to stressors in the organizational environment, such as routine exposure to stressful events, chaotic work environments, dealing with insufficient resources for referral, the weight of decision-making, lack of organizational or community support for the work.

△ Repeated exposure to traumatic events can result in compassion fatigue. Failure to attend to secondary trauma can lead to burnout and eventual disengagement.

△ Emphasize that secondary trauma is considered a natural consequence of caring and not a deficit within the caregiver. Any caregiver can become overwhelmed.

△ In order to effectively intervene to support workers, it is helpful to distinguish between secondary trauma and burnout.

△ Resilience refers to the hardness of the human spirit and our ability to recover and carry on in the face of adversity.

△ Also emphasize that we can learn to strengthen our resilience.

- Discuss the Resilience flip chart page and distribute **Handouts 5C** and **5D**. Discuss signs of resilience as well as organizational and agency-based strategies to promote resilience. Bring out the following points during the discussion.

- Point out that it is important for organizations to foster an environment in which workers’ reactions to work-related stressors are normalized and accepted as real and legitimate. Coping with this stress, therefore, is both an individual and an organizational responsibility.

- The supervisor can encourage staff to identify and use personal stress management (self care) strategies including exercise, sufficient sleep, and good nutrition.

- Normalize discussion of the emotional impact of the work by allowing them to share their thoughts and feelings about it.

- Encourage staff to build resilience. The American Psychological Association offers an excellent resource guide at the APA website: http://help.apa.org/resilience/about/html. The resource includes 10 Ways to Build Resilience. The resilience literature underscores that resilience can be learned and developed in every person since it involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions. There is no resilience gene. Consider discussing resilience during a staff meeting as a way to teach staff about resilience and helping them to learn ways to build it in themselves and the families and children with whom they work.

- Organizational strategies include interventions such as crisis debriefing after a traumatic event has taken place to provide support and validation. Debriefing establishes a temporary setting where events are discussed and experiences are validated. The debriefing services should occur within 24 hours of the traumatic experience. It should be a structured interview, where caseworkers describe the trauma in detail and talk about the emotional and cognitive impact. The caseworker is provided with information about the expected effects of the trauma and suggestions for renewal. He or she is assisted in identifying immediate activities
and resources to cope more effectively. It also may be helpful to have someone from outside the unit or agency conduct debriefings.

- Recognize that it will take time to recover from a trauma. Offer ongoing or further support and validation to staff when a traumatic event occurs. Staff need to be able to express their feelings and have opportunities to talk about their thoughts. If intrusive thoughts extend beyond the trauma experience, caseworkers need to learn to anticipate and manage them effectively.

- Institute a trauma support group. Meetings should be regularly scheduled (e.g., at the same time twice a month) with the focus on the traumatic stress in workers’ lives.

- Initiate supportive activities on the unit level. For example, a practice could be started of coworkers’ helping with paperwork or assisting with home visits during particularly traumatic periods. Supervisors can establish flexible work schedules, including “mental health days” or days spent in the office not making home visits. Another option is to spend time in certain meetings discussing the personal side of work.

- Provide or encourage consultation with a religious or spiritual consultant to offer solace and counseling when children or fellow staff members die.

- Deliver training to create self-awareness regarding stress and how to manage it, how to understand the effects of trauma, and how to develop coping skills that enable staff to better manage trauma.
Recognition and Rewards  Activity 5.3

Learning Objective

Participants will be able to identify successful strategies to recognize and reward staff.

Materials

- Flip chart and markers
- Sticky Board

Handout

- 5F Reward and Recognition File Cards

Time

20 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Make a copy of Handout 5F for each participant. Cut each page in quarters to make card files.

Procedure

Step 1

- Remind participants that recognition is another factor positively associated with retention.
- In the Gallup study reviewed in an earlier session, one of the critical questions is:
  - In the last 7 days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
- Point out that we have discussed recognition throughout the training. This is a last chance to share specific ideas or techniques for employee recognition and reward.
- Ask participants to identify rewards or types of recognition they have experienced and that are meaningful to them. Record responses on a flip chart and point out the wide variety of responses. Observe that what is meaningful is highly individualized, and, therefore, supervisors need a variety of ways to provide recognition.
- Make the following key points about recognizing and rewarding staff:
  - Recognition is intended to let the staff person know that he or she has made a special contribution. Rather than a generic reward, tailor the reward or recognition so that it is meaningful to the recipient. A supervisor might consider offering choices (a menu of rewards).
  - A person whom the employee holds in high esteem gives the most meaningful rewards. This is likely to be someone who has opportunities to observe, directly or indirectly, the staff member’s work.
  - Meaningful recognition is timely (see Gallup question above). This serves as a reinforcer for the performance.
  - Effective use of rewards and recognition as a supervisory tool goes beyond “being nice or thoughtful” (e.g. bringing treats for the staff). Meaningful rewards are not routine, rather, they are contingent on performance. They are special. This is not to imply that they are infrequent. Rewards may be given
with frequency, yet they are clearly linked to performance.

▲ The reward should be feasible. It need not cost money and may, in fact, be a non-monetary form of recognition. It is not a reward, however, to give someone “time off” if the workload is such that the staff member cannot take the time.

Review the slide “What kinds of recognition do employees want?” These responses are based on a survey by an employee motivation expert. Make the following points:

▲ Supervisory engagement is critical. Employees want involvement, access, and time.

▲ Flexible work hours promote work-life balance.

▲ Learning and development opportunities are valued by emergent workers and help employees deal with the stress that can contribute to burnout.

▲ Basic praise can take many forms. Consider the recipient of the praise and which form is most meaningful to the recipient. For example, public praise of a shy person might create discomfort. This person may prefer written or electronic praise. Also, consider the comfort level of the giver. Do not use a form of praise if you are not comfortable.

**Step 2**

▲ Distribute several copies of **Handout 5F** (Reward and Recognition file cards) to each participant.

▲ Explain that recognition and rewards need not cost a great deal.

▲ Rewards and recognition should be meaningful to your staff.

▲ Recognize both personal and professional events.

▲ Think small; recognition and rewards can be used to reinforce the day-to-day accomplishments that are often overlooked. For example, someone who had an especially challenging day.

▲ Think large; different rewards and recognition can be provided for outstanding achievement.

**Step 3**

▲ Give participants 3-5 minutes to complete the file cards. Instruct them to post their file cards on the sticky board when they are finished.

**Step 4**

▲ Review what has been posted to the board.

▲ Invite participants to add other ideas by completing a card and posting it before the end of the session.

▲ Inform participants that you will send them the complete list of ideas after the training has ended.
Session 5—Activity 5.4

Individualized Retention Planning and Participant Action Planning  Activity 5.4

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to develop an individualized retention plan for each supervisee.
- Participants will be able to identify ways to apply “retention oriented practices” in the workplace.

Handouts

- 5G Supervising for Staying Power! The Six Steps of Retention
- 5H The Individual Action Plan to Promote Retention

Time

60 minutes

Facilitator Preparation

- Make copies of Handouts 5G and 5H for each participant.

Procedure

Step 1

- Observe that many topics have been discussed in the last few days and summarize the major points of discussion. Distribute Handout 5G as a review of the major topics that were presented during the training.

Step 2

- Ask participants to work individually to consider responses to the questions posed in the handout. Give them a few minutes to make personal notes then engage them in a discussion about each section. Elicit examples from the participants for each of the first three sections of the handout.
  - Scan the environment for push and pull factors
  - Supervisory self development
- Motivations of each worker.

Step 3

- Introduce action planning by facilitating a discussion about the challenges a supervisor may face in the effort to be more retention-oriented. Ask participants what it takes to be a retention-oriented supervisor.
  - What are the challenges?
  - What are the facilitators?
  - What are strategies to get what you need?
Step 4
- Distribute **Handout 5H** to participants and ask them to select at least 1 retention strategy that will be used when the participant returns to the agency. Complete the worksheet for that strategy.
- Give groups about 10 minutes to complete the assignment.

Step 5
- Reconvene the group and discuss and invite participants to share their experience in developing an action plan. What was difficult or challenging? What was easier? What kinds of resources and supports are needed? What barriers were identified?
### Session 5
**Handout A**

**ProQOL R-IV**  
**Professional Quality of Life Scale**  
**Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Subscales—Revision IV**

[Helping] people puts you in direct contact with their lives. As you probably have experienced, your compassion for those you [help] has both positive and negative aspects. We would like to ask you questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these characteristics in the **last 30 days**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0=Never</th>
<th>1=Rarely</th>
<th>2=A Few Times</th>
<th>3=Somewhat Often</th>
<th>4=Often</th>
<th>5=Very Often</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am happy.</td>
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<td>2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].</td>
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<td>3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.</td>
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<td>4. I feel connected to others.</td>
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<td>5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.</td>
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<td>6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].</td>
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<td>7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].</td>
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<td>8. I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].</td>
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<td>9. I think that I might have been “infected” by the traumatic stress of those I [help].</td>
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<td>10. I feel trapped by my work as a [helper].</td>
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<td>11. Because of my [helping], I have felt “on edge” about various things.</td>
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<td>12. I like my work as a [helper].</td>
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<td>13. I feel depressed as a result of my work as a [helper].</td>
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<td>14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].</td>
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<td>15. I have beliefs that sustain me.</td>
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<td>16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.</td>
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<td>17. I am the person I always wanted to be.</td>
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<td>18. My work makes me feel satisfied.</td>
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<td>19. Because of my work as a [helper], I feel exhausted.</td>
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<td>20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.</td>
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<td>21. I feel overwhelmed by the amount of work or the size of my case [work] load I have to deal with.</td>
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<td>22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.</td>
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<td>23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].</td>
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<td>24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].</td>
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<td>25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.</td>
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<td>26. I feel “bogged down” by the system.</td>
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<td>27. I have thoughts that I am a “success” as a [helper].</td>
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<td>28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.</td>
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<td>29. I am a very sensitive person.</td>
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<td>30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.</td>
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**Disclaimer**

This information is presented for educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for informed medical advice or training. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat a health problem without consulting a qualified health or mental health care provider. If you have concerns, contact your health care provider, mental health professional, or your community health center.

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**Self-scoring directions, if used as self-test**

1. Be certain you respond to all items.
2. On some items the scores need to be reversed. Next to your response write the reverse of that score (i.e. 0=0, 1=5, 2=4, 3=3). Reverse the scores on these 5 items ONLY: 1, 4, 15, 17 and 29. Please note that the value 0 is not reversed, as its value is always null.
3. Mark the items for scoring:
   - a. Put an X by the 10 items that form the Compassion Satisfaction Scale: 3, 6, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27, 30.
   - b. Put a check by the 10 items on the Burnout Scale: 1, 4, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 26, 29.
   - c. Circle the 10 items on the Trauma/Compassion Fatigue Scale: 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 23, 25, 28.
4. Add the numbers you wrote next to the items for each set of items and compare with the theoretical scores.
Recruit and Retention Project

Your Scores On The ProQOL: Professional Quality of Life Screening

For more information on the ProQOL, go to http://www.isu.edu/~bhstamm

**Based on your responses, your personal scores are below. If you have any concerns, you should discuss them with a physical or mental health care professional.**

**Compassion Satisfaction**

Compassion satisfaction is about the pleasure you derive from being able to do your work well. For example, you may feel like it is a pleasure to help others through your work. You may feel positively about your colleagues or your ability to contribute to the work setting or even the greater good of society. Higher scores on this scale represent a greater satisfaction related to your ability to be an effective caregiver in your job.

The average score is 37 (SD 7; alpha scale reliability .87). About 25% of people score higher than 42 and about 25% of people score below 33. If you are in the higher range, you probably derive a good deal of professional satisfaction from your position. If your scores are below 33, you may either find problems with your job, or there may be some other reason—for example, you might derive your satisfaction from activities other than your job.

**Burnout**

Most people have an intuitive idea of what burnout is. From the research perspective, burnout is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment. Higher scores on this scale mean that you are at higher risk for burnout.

The average score on the burnout scale is 22 (SD 6.0; alpha scale reliability .72). About 25% of people score above 27 and about 25% of people score below 18. If your score is below 18, this probably reflects positive feelings about your ability to be effective in your work. If you score above 27 you may wish to think about what at work makes you feel like you are not effective in your position. Your score may reflect your mood; perhaps you were having a “bad day” or are in need of some time off. If the high score persists or if it is reflective of other worries, it may be a cause for concern.

**Compassion Fatigue/Secondary Trauma**

Compassion fatigue (CF), also called secondary trauma (STS) and related to Vicarious Trauma (VT), is about your work-related, secondary exposure to extremely stressful events. For example, you may repeatedly hear stories about the traumatic things that happen to other people, commonly called VT. If your work puts you directly in the path of danger, such as being a soldier or humanitarian aide worker, this is not secondary exposure; your exposure is primary. However, if you are exposed to others’ traumatic events as a result of your work, such as in an emergency room or working with child protective services, this is secondary exposure. The symptoms of CF/STS are usually rapid in onset and
associated with a particular event. They may include being afraid, having difficulty sleeping, having images of the upsetting event pop into your mind, or avoiding things that remind you of the event. The average score on this scale is 13 (SD 6; alpha scale reliability .80). About 25% of people score below 8 and about 25% of people score above 17. If your score is above 17, you may want to take some time to think about what at work may be frightening to you or if there is some other reason for the elevated score. While higher scores do not mean that you do have a problem, they are an indication that you may want to examine how you feel about your work and your work environment. You may wish to discuss this with your supervisor, a colleague, or a health care professional.

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Small Group Discussion Questions

◊ Group 1: What does it take to be a resilient social worker in child welfare practice?
   • How do you know resilience when you see it? What are the characteristics of resilient staff and supervisors?
   • How can we strengthen resilience?
   • What are the personal and institutional factors that promote resilience?

◊ Group 2: What factors contribute to burnout of social workers in child welfare practice?
   • How do you know when someone is experiencing burnout?
   • If a worker is experiencing burnout, does that mean the worker cannot do the job?
   • Can burnout be prevented?
   • What can be done about burnout? By the individual? By the agency?

◊ Group 3: What factors contribute to secondary trauma/compassion fatigue among social workers in child welfare practice?
   • How do you know when someone is experiencing secondary trauma or compassion fatigue?
   • If a worker is experiencing secondary trauma or compassion fatigue, does that mean the worker cannot do the job?
   • Can secondary trauma or compassion fatigue be prevented?
   • What can be done about secondary trauma or compassion fatigue? By the individual? By the agency?
Defining Terms Related to Stress and Coping

**Burnout**
- Physical, emotional, and psychological exhaustion caused by long term involvement in emotionally disturbing situations
- A breakdown of psychological defenses that workers use to cope with intense job-related stressors
- Emerges gradually with exposure to ongoing job stressors

**Secondary Trauma**
- The stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person
- Can affect a person who is a professional, friend or family member
- Symptoms felt by the individual suffering from Secondary Traumatic Stress can be nearly identical to those of the primary victim he or she is trying to help.
  (National Resource Center on Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning)

**Compassion Fatigue**
- The formal caregiver’s reduced capacity or interest in being empathic due to repeated exposure to traumatic events and situations.

**Resilience**
- The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress
- "The ability to “bounce back” from difficult experiences"
Ten Ways to Build Resilience

1. **Make connections.** Good relationships with close family members, friends, or others are important. Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Some people find that being active in civic groups, faith-based organizations, or other local groups provides social support and can help with reclaiming hope. Assisting others in their time of need also can benefit the helper.

2. **Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.** You can’t change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events. Try looking beyond the present to how future circumstances may be a little better. Note any subtle ways in which you might already feel somewhat better as you deal with difficult situations.

3. **Accept that change is a part of living.** Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.

4. **Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals. Do something regularly -- even if it seems like a small accomplishment -- that enables you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, “What’s one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?”

5. **Take decisive actions.** Act on adverse situations as much as you can. Take decisive actions, rather than detaching completely from problems and stresses and wishing they would just go away.

6. **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship have reported better relationships, greater sense of strength even while feeling vulnerable, increased sense of self-worth, a more developed spirituality, and heightened appreciation for life.

7. **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts help build resilience.

8. **Keep things in perspective.** Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.

9. **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.

10. **Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly. Taking care of yourself helps to keep your mind and body primed to deal with situations that require resilience. Additional ways of strengthening resilience may be helpful. For example, some people write about their deepest thoughts and feelings related to trauma or other stressful events in their life. Meditation and spiritual practices help some people build connections and restore hope. The key is to identify ways that are likely to work well for you as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience.

Excerpt from the The Road To Resilience, a publication developed by the American Psychological Association. The full pamphlet is available on-line at http://www.apahelpcenter.org/featuredtopics/feature.php?id=6
Coping Strategies
Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and Burnout

To avoid burnout and to help staff deal effectively with the effects of secondary trauma, supervisors can:

Individual Interventions
- Stress management and coping skills
- Build resilience
- Talk about the emotional impact of the work

Organizational Interventions
- Conduct crisis debriefings after a traumatic event
- Provide on-going support and validation after a trauma
- Institute a trauma support group
- Initiate supportive activities on the unit level
- Provide a religious or spiritual consultant
- Train
Recognition and Reward File Cards

Timely recognition of good work is important for both morale and motivation. While financial compensation is important, many forms of reward and recognition do not require a large budget. Use the cards provided on the disk to identify creative, feasible, and meaningful ways to recognize staff and post them around the room to share with others.

Reward or Recognize Staff by…

Small tokens of appreciation
Supervising For *Staying Power!*
The Six Steps for Retention

**Step One: Scan the Environment—Understand the Baseline**
Analyze the PUSH and PULL Factors in your community, agency, and work unit.

1. What community factors affect recruitment and retention for your agency?
   a. Availability of workers
   b. Talent pool
   c. Competition from other organizations

2. What data are available about turnover and retention for the agency as a whole and for each unit in the agency?
   a. Recruitment data
   b. Retention data or turnover data
      i. Statistics
      ii. Exit interviews

3. What do the data suggest about targeting strategies for recruitment and retention? How can your agency become an “employer of choice?”

**Step Two: Supervisory Self Development – Understand Self**
Reflect on the supervisory skills linked with staff retention. Develop a plan to strengthen and use retention-oriented skills.

4. Do I have an appropriate balance of task and process skills in my practice as a supervisor? Do I need to strengthen or allocate more time to supervisory skills that support retention?

5. To what extent am I able to allocate time and attention to retention oriented supervisory practices?

6. What organizational support do I need to be more retention oriented in my practice?

7. What resources are available to support me as a supervisor?

**Step Three: Understand Your Unit and Staff**

8. Does my supervisory relationship with each staff person reflect individualized developmental needs, interests, motivations?

9. Do I have staff in the disengagement process? Can I intervene to interrupt the process?

10. Do I understand that what my team believes will improve workplace conditions?

11. Do I understand what each staff person needs in order to feel successful?

12. Am I aware of the career goals for each staff member that I supervise?

13. How would my staff answer if they were asked what I think about them? Do I give sufficient feedback to my staff?
Step Four: Develop Program and Individualized Retention Plans

14. Be clear about goals. How will you know if the plan is successful for the program and for the individual?

Step Five: Implement Plans

15. What planning time is needed?
16. Who needs to be prepared for implementation?
17. What resources are necessary?
18. How will progress be monitored?

Step 6: Assess Progress, Update Plans, Implement Updated Plans

19. Determine indicators of progress. How will you know if your plans are making a difference?
20. Fine tune the plans.
The Individual Action Plan to Promote Retention

Revisit your notes from the peer consultation session and from the various activities during the training. Develop or revise your personal action plan to enhance your capacity to supervise for retention.

1. What is the strategy?

2. What is the anticipated outcome or benefit from implementing this strategy?

3. What are the specific steps you will take to implement the strategy?

4. What are potential roadblocks or barriers?

5. What resources are needed?
   a. How will you acquire these resources?
   b. What will you do if the resources are not available?

6. Who else needs to be involved or be prepared for implementation of this strategy?

7. When will you begin working on this strategy?

8. How will you assess your progress?
Retention of well-qualified and committed child welfare workers has become a national crisis. In 2003, the US Children's Bureau funded the Jordan Institute for Families to conduct The R&R Project to help increase retention rates of child welfare workers in North Carolina.

The R&R Project identifies and implements strategies that influence recruitment, selection and retention of workers who will understand and embrace the challenges and opportunities of child welfare work.

This Staying Power! training curriculum, A Supervisor’s Guide to Child Welfare Staff Retention, has been developed by the R&R Project to help child welfare supervisors and managers learn skills that will increase their ability to retain qualified child welfare workers.

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Web: http://swc.unc.edu/jif/

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