

Methodology

Evaluation design and data collection procedures

In 2013 an organizational culture and climate survey was administered to Child Protection Specialists (CPS) by the Center for Children, Families, and Workforce Development. This evaluation measured burnout, turnover, secondary trauma, and organizational culture and climate. The survey found that 75% of the workforce was actively looking for another job. The major barriers identified at that time were challenges with communication, a workplace climate that left workers feeling unsupported and replaceable, a need for better workplace incentives (i.e. better pay, promotions, etc.), and feelings overburdened by the workload (CITE).

To build on past evaluations we are proposing to a formative evaluation in the form of a needs assessment. This will allow us to assess if there have been in changes in since 2013 in workplace culture, burnout, secondary trauma, and organizational culture and climate. At this time we hypothesize there have not been significant changes due to the fact the turnover rate of these positions has remained at about 50% within the first 2 years of employment (CITE). The needs assessment will not only be assessing workplace culture satisfaction and perceptions but will also strive to explore the correlations between variables (i.e. length of time within the agency, region, age, gender, supervisor relationship, level of support, etc.).

The assessment will be created by staff from The Center and will include questions from their 2013 survey and questions generated from the literature. An example of the latter is a series of questions will be asked to assess the amount of time and support individual workers experience from their supervisors. There is a large amount of literature that has found a correlation between staff retention and supervisor support. At this time the goal is not to

prove or disprove that hypothesis but to establish a baseline of understanding staff and supervisors relationships in Montana. Another set of questions will seek to identify if there is a relationship between stratified groups based on length of employment. If a correlation is found this will guide the employment timeline placement (i.e. interventions at 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, and 18 months) for future professional development and staff support interventions. With restricted finances and possible budgetary cuts, it is important for administrators have increased capacity to set priorities based on staff needs. Also, by moving towards making decisions based on staff feedback has the possibility of validating staffs needs and fostering the development of a workplace culture that values the change process.

To collect data for this evaluation a paper surveys will be administered to a randomized sample of staff and supervisors from all six regions. The evaluation will be made in Qualtrics by staff of the Center for Children, Families, and Workforce Development (The Center). Once week before the evaluation is emailed to staff an email will be sent to all staff from the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services outlining the goals of the assessment. This email will also encourage participants to share openly and honestly about their experiences. In addition, the email will provide a brief introduce staff to The Center who will serve as the external evaluation organization with an explanation of the working relationship between the agencies. This is important to increase transparency around the purpose and collaborative nature of the evaluation process.

A week after the initial contact is made the randomly selected survey participants will receive an email with an overview of the assessment goals. This email will also include an explanation of how confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained, how this information will

be used, and a link to the Qualtrics survey. Two weeks after the initial email is sent a follow-up email will be sent that will thank individuals who have completed the survey and remind any individuals who would like to participate to do so by re-sharing the link. In the case that survey responses are lower than necessary for analysis to be completed a paper copy of the survey will be mailed all possible respondents. The instructions will ask individuals who have already filled out their survey to disregard and recycle the survey and will ask those who have not to return it in the stamped self-addressed envelope provided. Approximately two weeks following the paper evaluation mailed to staff a final email will be sent to inform participants they have 1 more week to participate in the study. This email will also outline an estimated timeline for the results and provide information on what information will be made available to the staff and how to access to access the findings.

Sampling design

The sampling design for this study will be probability sampling since every staff member within Child and Family Service Division (CFSD) has the opportunity to be selected as a member of the sample. The Center will be given an alphabetized list of the name and email address for current staff from the department head separated by region. From this list, a simple random sample using the proportional sample techniques. The researchers will use proportionate sampling to ensure representation of each region is proportionate to the workforce employed in each region. Additionally, random sampling methods will be used to select every seventh name from the entire staff list shared by CFSD. When researchers reach the end of the list they will return to the top of the list and count down to the seventh name again and again until they have reached their sample quota for each region.

A random sample is necessary to increase the rigor of the assessment. One possibility that could occur if organizational leadership or others are allowed to select participants is they may only opt for individuals with positive attitudes toward towards the agency to participate thus creating biased results. Using Dillman's (2014) sampling matrix to determine sample size the assessment will be sent to 200 participants. The minimum goal is to have about 143 respondents reply to the survey which is the minimum number of responses needed for the population size to fall within a 5% margin of error on all findings. Despite this the hope is to have a response rate of 60% or higher by increasing communication and implementing a secondary method of survey delivery (i.e. mail survey).

There are a few ethical considerations to take into account in regards to the sample population. One such consideration is around consent for participation. Despite administering consent forms to each staff member that explain how staff members may opt to not participate, staff members may experience perceived pressure to participate in the research study from supervisors, managers, and departments heads. Extra efforts should be taken and communicated to all participants about the efforts that will be taken to remove identifying factors and keep all responses anonymous. One such way the research team can do this is by programming Qualtrics to not track IP addresses of responses and confidential. In addition, access to survey data will be limited to the research team and all results will be de-identified before being presented to any stakeholders.

Another ethical consideration is that this initial survey is limited only to employees within the child welfare systems. To better assess the program, it may be worth adding additional stakeholders and expanding the assessment in the future. Future stakeholders that

could be assessed are members of the Montana Legislature, the Governor's Office, young people who have aged out of these systems of care, families who have been engaged in child protection, and children and youth currently receiving services. There are additional challenges and ethical considerations that will need to be assessed for each of those stakeholder groups.

Description of subjects

Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) currently employs 382 employees statewide. The employees are broken into 6 regions across 147,000 square miles. Within those 6 regions there are currently 37 CFSD offices across the state of Montana, including one in Glasgow on the Fort Peck Reservation. All other federally recognized tribes child protective services are referred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs as is required by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). About 40 full time equivalent staff work in the Central Office. The Central Office is broken into 3 internal departments which are the Program Bureau (administers oversight of federal and state laws, policies, and procedures), the Fiscal and Operations Bureau (oversees development and monitoring of all budgetary expenses and appropriations), and Training Unit (develops, implements, and evaluates ongoing professional development and staff retention).

Centralized Intake Unit has 23 full time equivalent staff. Centralized Intake was created in 2002 (Legislative Audit Division, 2015) and before that time local CFSD office received and assess all the calls from their local area. The role of Centralized Intake Unit is to field all public reports of child abuse and neglect in the state. The Centralized Intake team oversees the 24/7 hotline for the state of Montana and in 2016 they fielded 35,226 calls (). Of those calls they entered 18,702 reports that required 9,154 investigations which led to 2,130 youth being placed in care outside of their home.

An additional 319 full time equivalents are representative of the Regional Field Services Unit. These staff are responsible for all facets of the direct practice and interactions with children and families. Frontline workers holding the title of Child Protection Specialist are broken into workers who engage in either the initial investigation of a report of maltreatment and ongoing workers who assume the case at the time of adjudication. These workers are then supervised by a Child Protection Specialist Supervisor (CPSS). Often, these CPSS oversee a unit of workers representative of both investigative and ongoing workers. However, there is no standardized manner in which each field office implements these specialized roles or allotment to supervisors and this may vary depending on the individual office. Under the Title IV-E program, the state has also created a specialized unit for difficult to place children who the state has permanent legal custody of. The Intensive Services Unit (ISU) maintains a small caseload and has frequent communication with their clients in attempts to secure permanency for these children.

According to the job description for CPS in the state of Montana, the minimum requirements for hire include a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in psychology, social work, or a related field. It is also required the applicant have two years' experience working with children and families. It is indicated that other experience may be considered on a case by case basis (State of Montana Careers, 2017). Subjects of this study would be anticipated to possess at least this minimum standard of education and experience.

Description of instrumentation

The instrument that will be used to gather data in this assessment will be a survey (see Appendix 1). This survey will be created and administered through Qualtrics. Qualtrics will

ensure anonymity of the respondents, secure protection all answers, and will ensure that each question is presented in an accessible format. The survey will consist of NUMBER questions that will primarily be seeking to gain more insight into the behavior and attitude of participants.

The survey will be broken into four sections which are Workplace Culture and Satisfaction, Workplace Values, Supervision and Support, Quantitative questions, and Demographic data. The Workplace Culture and Satisfaction questions will strive to assess workplace satisfaction that was created from a review of literature of common workplace strengths and challenges for CFSD workers. Workplace Values will strive to provide a more detailed examination of common workplace strengths and challenges. By having workers rank order each variable it will provide insight into the personal values of employees. Next, the Supervision and Support section provides employees the opportunity to assess their relationships with co-workers and supervisors. This section also creates the ordinal variables of number of hours supervised and number of years of supervisors experience. Follow this, there are 5 qualitative questions (detailed below) that workers will have the opportunity to provide more detailed feedback and additional information. Finally, this tool includes a section on basic demographic data.

Procedures for analyzing the data

The data for this project will be analyzed by the research team at the Center. A majority of the assessment data will be quantitative data that the team will use the statistical software SPSS. Descriptive statistics will be run on the nominal variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, region and job title. A frequency distribution of each variable will be first concluded to assess there are not significant errors with the data. In addition, we will correlation tests against

the ordinal variables of income, highest level of education, years of employment, current caseload, hours of supervision, and multiple job and workplace satisfaction variables.

In addition to the quantitative data, there will be qualitative information collected from the open-ended questions. The open ended questions are, 1) What does good supervision look like from the employee's perspective?, 2) What does good supervision look like from the supervisor's perspective?, 3) When you are experiencing stress at work, what are helpful things you need in a workplace?, 4) What would increase your desire to stay employed at CFSD?, and 5) Please provide additional thoughts and comments you were not asked about that would be beneficial for staff retention.

The research team will have two independent researchers code the narrative responses. Upon completion the team will reassemble with their research supervisor and discuss their findings. If significant difference are found the team will analyze each variable and will discuss why each researcher coded it that way. The team will then work to come up with a consensus based decision on the new code for those responses. Once coding is completed the two research coders will work together to complete a thematic analysis.

Once the analysis is completed the data will be consolidated in various formats for dissemination. The three possible reports that will be prepared are 1) a report with generalized findings to be made available to all CFSD employees, 2) a less generalized report with regional findings for CFSD and DPHHS staff, and 3) a short brief with visuals to be presented to the Montana Legislature during the 2019 session as needed.

Appendix 1: Introduction and Consent Form Sample

Research shows there is a relationship between job satisfaction and turnover. As you may know, turnover is currently a challenge faced by Child and Family Services Division. This study you are being asked to participate in is designed to explore the relationships between job satisfaction, mentorship, and intention on staying employed at CFSD.

This study is being conducted by Kim Spurzem, MSW Student and Shayna Chapein, MSW Student, under the supervision of Dr. Ryan Tolleson Knee, Director of the Center for Children, Families, and Workforce Development and Professor in the School of Social Work. This study has been approved and will be supervised by the Institutional Review Board for the University of Montana, Missoula Main Campus.

PURPOSE: This study seeks to explore the relationship between workplace support and job satisfaction for staff, supervisors, and supportive team members within Montana's CFSD.

DESCRIPTION: Your participation will take no more than 10 to 15 minutes to complete a survey of 25 questions. You were selected to participate in this study due to your employment status with Montana CFSD. You are just one of many members from your office, region, and state to partake in this study.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you chose at any point to refuse to participate there will be no penalty from your employer or the research team. Your withdrawal will be confidential and shall not result in penalty.

CONFIDENTIALITY: This is a confidential study and all information regarding who was selected to participate in this study and their results will be anonymized by design. This consent form will be kept in an online digital drive that is encrypted and only the research team will have access. All survey data will also be kept in this locked digital storage.

DURATION: The survey is expected to take approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

RISKS: There is no foreseen risks or discomforts for participating in this study. If you have discomfort you may contact either the research team or appropriate mental health services provided by your employer.

BENEFITS: The findings of the research project will be used to develop a retention plan for Child Protective Services Division. The findings will also help identify areas for future trainings, support, and professional development opportunities.

CONTACT: If you have questions about this research project or your rights, please contact Dr. Ryan Tolleson Knee at ryan.tollesonknee@umconnect.umt.edu.

RESULTS: The results of this study will be disseminated to all employees within one year.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT: I have read the information above, agree to participate in this study, and understand that I may withdraw at any time.

SIGN: Please check the box below if you agree to the conditions of this study and volunteer to participate.

I agree to participate in this study.

SIGNATURE

DATE

Appendix 2: CFSD Survey Sample

Thank you for participating in this study explore workplace culture and climate. Your input will help us to gain a better understanding of the experiences of Child and Family Service Division employees. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. At any point, you may stop and choose to not participate in this study. Your answers will remain anonymous and no one will know which individuals chose to complete or not complete the study. The information from this study will be compiled into a report that will be used to inform future professional and leadership development opportunities.

Workplace culture and satisfaction

On a Likert Scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree, please answer the following questions.

I find fulfillment in my job.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My job makes a positive difference in people’s lives.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
The workplace culture values being supportive of one another.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
The size of my current caseload is manageable.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I have been provided adequate training on how to manage stress and challenges.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I am provided with advanced learning opportunities.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
The personal and professional benefits of this job outweigh the stress and challenges.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I believe there is an opportunity for advancement in my position.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
When an employee leaves, my workload increases.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
When an employee leaves, the moral of the workplace decreases.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I often have thoughts of not wanting to go to work.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

I frequently feel frustrated at while at work.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My work leaves me feeling hopeless at least 1 day a week.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My work leaves me feeling hopeless a majority of the week.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I have had frequent thought about quitting my job in the past 6 months.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

Workplace Values

Use the following Likert scale to provide to rank order of priorities and workplace values. 1 is the least important and 5 is the most important.

The most important thing about my job is: 1 pay and salary 2 acknowledgement of good work 3 support when challenges arise 4 opportunities to learn and grow 5 relationships with coworkers

The largest stress in my job is: 1 caseload 2 number of hours worked 3 not supportive workplace culture 4 lack of support from coworkers 5 lack of support from supervisor

New employees need more support through: 1 being provided a realistic preview and explanation of job 2 longer ability to shadow others 3 smaller caseloads 4 long-term peer mentorship 5 routine supervision

The most important attribute of a supervisor is: 1 transparent communication 2 trust and rapport 3 respectful relationship 4 constructive feedback 5 support for personal growth

The most challenging attribute of a supervisor is: 1) lack of communication 2) lack of trust and rapport 3) disrespect in relationship 4) non-constructive feedback 5) not supportive of personal growth

Supervision and support

Use the Likert Scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree, please answer the following questions or fill in a number where asked.

My coworkers are helpful with job-related challenges.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My coworkers provide mentorship and peer supervision to one another.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I have skills to mentor and support my	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5

coworkers.	strongly agree
I am acknowledged for my efforts at work by my coworkers.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I receive regularly scheduled supervision.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
Please list how many hours a month of supervision do you receive (please fill in).	
My supervisor is helpful with job-related challenges.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My supervisor provides me with constructive feedback focused on personal improvement.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I am acknowledged for my efforts at work by my supervisor.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My supervisor provides mentorship and supervision to me.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
My coworkers are provided mentorship and supervision.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
Please list approximately how many years your supervisor has been employed at CFSD (please fill in).	
I am provided with constructive feedback to improve at my job.	
Supervisors are respected by coworkers.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree
I would turn down a promotion or advancement due to potential stress.	1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

- 1) What does good supervision look like from the employee's perspective?
- 2) What does good supervision look like from the supervisor's perspective?
- 3) When you are experiencing stress at work, what are helpful things you need in a workplace?
- 4) What would increase your desire to stay employed at CFSD?
- 5) Please provide additional thoughts and comments you were not asked about that would be beneficial for staff retention.

General Demographics

Please select the answer or fill in the blank that best represents you.

Gender (please fill in)	
Age (please fill in)	
Race/Ethnicity (please fill in)	
Highest level of education you have completed.	High school diploma Associates Bachelors in Social Work Bachelors in another field Masters in Social Work Masters in another field Doctorate
Category that best represents your current job title.	Frontline staff Caseworker Supervisor Coach
Salary range that best describes your annual income.	Less than \$10,000 \$10,000-\$19,999 \$20,000-\$29,999 \$30,000-\$39,999 \$40,000-\$49,999 \$50,000-\$59,999 \$60,000-\$69,999 \$70,000 or more
Your employment status.	Temporary Part-time Full-time
Years of employment at child welfare agency (please fill in).	
Which region do you work in?	Region 1 2 3 4 5 6

References

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