

Seventh Annual

2004

**National
Human
Services
Training
Evaluation
Symposium**

Proceedings
Proceedings
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May 26–28, 2004

University of California, Berkeley



Co-sponsored by
the California Social Work Education Center
(CalSWEC), the California Department
of Social Services, the National Staff
Development and Training Association of the
American Public Human Services Association,
and the American Humane Association

**Proceedings
of the
Seventh Annual
National Human Services
Training Evaluation Symposium**

The material in this volume is based on presentations and discussions at the Seventh Annual National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium, held May 26–28, 2004, at the University of California, Berkeley.

*This volume is also available online at
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The evaluation symposium would not happen every year without the guidance and work of the Steering Committee. This year's members included Anita Barbee, Jane Berdie, Dale Curry, David Foster, Michelle Graef, Henry Ilian, Phyllis Jeroslow, Robin Leake, Chris Mathias, Cindy Parry, E. Douglas Pratt, Leslie Zeitler, and myself.

I would especially like to thank Leslie Zeitler, who provided overall coordination of the symposium this year. Other CalSWEC staff who were indispensable to the planning and implementation of the symposium included Rebecca Paris, Michelle Henderson, Loraine Park, Monica Asfura, and Terry Jackson. Karen Ringuette, Loraine Park, and Michelle Henderson provided great assistance as co-editors of the proceedings.

Finally, thanks to all of the presenters and participants in this year's symposium. You have all helped to advance the field of training evaluation with your insights and discussion.

Barrett Johnson, *LCSW*
Regional Training Academy Coordinator
CalSWEC
Editor of the *Proceedings*

	Introduction

Like many of you, during the period leading up to the 2004 symposium, I spent a great deal of time contemplating the role of training in the federal review process, and how training and training evaluation fit into the state's Program Improvement Plan (PIP). I used to break out in a sweat worrying that training either would not have enough emphasis in the PIP, or—even worse—that it would be perceived as the answer to every problem.

It strikes me that there are several similarities between our work at the symposium every year and the larger work of the CFSR/PIP process—and of improving child welfare services generally. These are the things I see in common:

First, we move toward outcomes, but don't lose sight of processes. The CFSR process focuses on outcomes for children and families, but most of the work in achieving those outcomes is about effectively improving the processes involved in serving families. Similarly, at the symposium each year, we try to strike a balance between moving toward evaluating outcomes, and improving our ability to evaluate the process of knowledge and skill delivery in training. In 2003, we talked extensively about building a chain of evidence that links training to improved outcomes for children and families. In 2004, virtually all the presentations struck this balance.

Second, improved data collection and evaluation create more transparency in the work we do. Here in California we now have the CFSR reports, the PIP, and all the outcome data for each county on the Internet. Soon we will have public documents that replicate the PIP process for each county, through our own state CFSR. The county plans will also be approved by each county board of supervisors. Whether we are ready or not, the public is about to learn a great deal more about what we do. The culture of the symposium likewise encourages transparency about our work; we share what we are working on, problems and challenges, as well as triumphs. The discussion sections of the proceedings summarize the input and questions from the whole group.

Third, both the CFSR process and this symposium take a broad perspective while simultaneously promoting change at the local level. For those who work in a county-administered system with state oversight (like California), this is an especially familiar theme. Similarly, while the national symposium convenes experts from around the country to share ideas about evaluation and build connections, the knowledge and expertise of these participants benefits our local training systems.

Each year when I read and edit the articles and proceedings for the symposium, I realize just how relevant and applicable this unique forum is to my work. I hope that the proceedings are as useful to each of you, and prompt many new thoughts and ideas.

Barrett Johnson, *LCSW*
Regional Training Academy Coordinator
CalSWEC
Editor of the *Proceedings*

	Discussion: Keynote—Training as an Avenue to Support Practice Improvement

Wednesday, May 26, 2004, 7:15–8:30 p.m.
Wayne Stevenson, M.S.W., Keynote Speaker

Wayne Stevenson delivered the symposium’s keynote address, *Training as an Avenue to Support Practice Improvement*. The discussion following his presentation focused on management of the change process; the history, role, and organization of Pennsylvania’s training community; and involvement of fiscal staff in the change process.

Topics of Discussion

I. Managing the Change Process:

- A critical element of creating cultural change was the strategic planning and visioning process. All the players were brought together to develop the strategic plan, which was cross-walked with the PIP and is revisited on a quarterly basis. Quarterly meetings are focused on an issue that is reinforced through a newsletter and trainings.
- Growing leadership at the state and county level has been another essential piece of the cultural change. County workers, who know the realities of working at the county level, were recruited into positions in the state. These experienced leaders are now developing and interpreting policies.
- Stevenson pointed out that the social work value of *beginning where the client is* is an essential element of the change process. Valuing one another and what each individual brings to the table cannot be undermined. Social workers in leadership positions need to remember whom they are engaging. Once leaders identify and value the perspective of the individuals they are engaging, they can begin to show others that change is possible. But before

the change process can occur, leaders need to demonstrate this critical social work value.

- Stevenson stated that as a leader advocating for change, he was sometimes required to focus on a group's strengths and ignore some of its deficits. Stevenson found that while some county leaders were not interested in changing the system, many of them wanted to improve the system and have families attain better outcomes. Focusing on those who resisted change might mean losing the other audience, so he focused on the leaders who were ready for change.
- Having other leaders support changes requires personal capital. Stevenson expressed that he initially lost a lot of personal capital when he moved from the county to the state. But slowly he regained credibility when county leaders saw his drive to support their work and improve the system.

II. Pennsylvania's Training Community:

- The counties initiated the training program in Pennsylvania. County administrators contended that combining state money with the federal IV-E training dollars would provide enough funds to develop a county-based training program. The training program was located at a state university with eight regional training centers located throughout the state. The curriculum was largely based on the Ohio model, but administrators and trainers in Pennsylvania began tailoring the curriculum to meet their needs.
- Having the training program located at a school that did not have a school of social work was problematic. When this was identified as an issue, the training contract was awarded to the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, which allowed social work values to be infused into the training program.
- The eight regional training centers use the same training and practice standards. The training unit is currently working with the American Humane Association (AHA) to create tools to develop and evaluate skills. These tools will assess the transfer of learning (TOL) and skill development.
- The training program in Pennsylvania serves an array of functions in addition to providing training, such as housing the Center for Excellence and facilitating work groups. A

symposium participant expressed curiosity about why the decision was made to utilize the training program in such a manner. Stevenson stated that a third party was necessary to facilitate discussions between the state and the county. The training program was crucial when they began implementing the change process and is still brought in when they reach roadblocks.

III. Involving Fiscal Staff in the Change Process:

- Stevenson stressed the importance of bringing fiscal staff into the change process. These staff members possess knowledge about how funding can be used. Tapping into this knowledge allows you to find creative ways of funding programs. If fiscal staff members are not familiar with the type of services your agency is providing, they cannot develop the resources needed to support those programs.
- There are a number of proposals that would create more restrictions on how IV-E funds can be used and change the match required for funding. County and state employees, especially fiscal staff, can also play a role in managing resources by advocating for more control over IV-E rules and regulations.

	Planning the National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training

Mary Elizabeth Collins, *Ph.D.*

Abstract

This article describes the conceptual framework and data collection plan for the National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training. This federally funded evaluation includes two parts: (1) a Cross-site Evaluation of Nine Grantees and (2) a Series of National Studies on the Value of Training Interventions for the child welfare and social work education fields (including a comprehensive literature review, a survey of child welfare administrators, and a survey of schools of social work). Numerous data collection and analysis activities are planned to provide information about the role of child welfare training in effective child welfare practice. The long-term goal of this evaluation is to produce knowledge that is useful to practice and results in improved outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Introduction

The overall evaluation plan has been divided into two parts; all data collection activities are organized within them. The first part consists of **Cross-Site Evaluation of Grantees**. A cluster of grantee projects was selected for the study. All of them focused on developing worker skills for assisting youth to prepare for independent living and were funded in 2000–2003. Data collection methods include: surveying project staff, their child welfare collaborators, and trainees; assessing training materials and products; and conducting a secondary analysis of the sites' evaluation data. The second part of the overall evaluation plan consists of **Three National Studies on the Value of Training Interventions** for the child welfare and social work education fields. Components are (1) completing a comprehensive, state-of-

the-art literature review (of child welfare and other types of training, evaluations and outcomes), (2) conducting a phone survey of administrators in state/county/ tribal child welfare agencies, and (3) collecting written survey data of faculty and deans of schools of social work.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding this study is illustrated in Figure 1. The far left column identifies contextual factors that are likely to impact the implementation of project activities, as well as project outcomes and outcomes for children, youth, and families. Some of these contextual activities are characteristics of the state or county agency, the relationship with the Children’s Bureau, characteristics and issues within the grantee organization, and state-level issues.

The second column identifies many of the project activities in which grantees engaged. Broad categories of these activities include: developing materials, delivering training, involving youth, evaluating the project, disseminating project findings and materials, and developing collaborations. It is not expected that all projects engaged in all activities, but this list identifies most major categories.

The third column identifies training outcomes. Although each project had its own identified training outcomes, broad categories of outcomes common to many projects included: improvements in skills of workers, supervisors, and trainers; a more youth-focused agency culture; advances in knowledge development; and institutionalization of training curricula and collaborative relationships.

The “cluster outcomes” column represents larger and more institutionalized change, including improvements in agency practice, schools of social work, the child welfare field, and the youth development field. The last column identifies the ultimate goal of federally funded training project activities—the improvement in child, youth, and family safety, permanence, and well-being.

The conceptual model identifies a gap between the individual project outcomes and the cluster outcomes. This gap is of central interest to the evaluation. An assumption of the evaluation is that there is difficulty in individual training projects moving from the attainment of individual project outcomes to the attainment of

more general, long-term outcomes (i.e., advancements in the field and improvements in client well-being). To understand this gap in greater detail the evaluation has included three national studies: a literature review, a survey of schools of social work, and a survey of child welfare administrators. These national studies were designed to answer questions that will aid in further development of child welfare training.

Evaluation Questions

The key evaluation questions for the Cross-Site Evaluation of Grantees include:

- What is the site context of projects that may impact their ability to affect outcomes?
- How did grantees implement projects (i.e., involvement of youth, development of materials, and deliver of training)?
- To what extent did projects achieve immediate training outcomes (i.e., knowledge, skill, attitude)?
- How are context and project activities related to outcomes for youth?

The key evaluation questions for the Three National Studies of Child Welfare Training (Survey of Child Welfare Administrators, Survey of Schools of Social Work, and Comprehensive Literature Review) are the following:

- What is the value of child welfare training to achieving outcomes in child welfare practice?
- How might child welfare training be improved to better achieve outcomes in child welfare practice?

Method: Cross-site Evaluation

A multiple case study design will be used to conduct the Cross-site Evaluation. Each grantee project will be examined independently through a variety of data collection methods. Cross-site analysis will then examine both commonalities among and factors unique to the cluster of projects. Several data collection activities will be conducted for each grantee case study: (1) on-site qualitative interviews with key project staff, (2) on-site observation of project activities, (3) secondary analysis of training evaluation data from each site, (4) content analysis of products produced from each project, and (5) follow-up phone surveys of previous training participants.

Two project personnel will conduct a two-to-three-day site visit to each of the grantees, scheduled at the convenience of grantee

sites. During the site visit, staff will conduct in-depth interviews with key project personnel and observe on-going project activities. Open-ended qualitative interviews will occur with representatives of each of four types of respondents:

- grantee personnel (e.g., project director, curricula developer, trainer, evaluator),
- public child welfare personnel (e.g., collaborators on the project),
- young adults who worked on the projects, and
- additional personnel (e.g., other child welfare training experts in the project setting).

The majority of these respondent categories, with the exception of “young adults who worked on projects,” are professional personnel likely to be familiar with the wide variety of child welfare, training, and evaluation issues that are the focus of the interview. The underlying philosophy of all projects was positive youth development, one principle of which is that youth should be involved in the design of projects that are meant to serve them.

Observations will be made of any on-going training activities at the site. These activities might be the fully developed training program or pieces of it that have since been adapted for on-going use in the public child welfare agency or in other venues.

Prior to and after the site visit, we will collect additional data via content analysis of products produced from each project, secondary analysis of training evaluation data from each site, and follow-up phone surveys of previous training participants.

Content analysis procedures will be used to analyze the products produced by the grantees (e.g., curricula, videos, monographs) using conceptual/thematic categories. Also, brief summaries of the training curricula will be written. These summaries will describe the length, target audience, and structure (modules and activities) of the curricula.

Secondary analysis of evaluation data will be conducted with information provided by each project. This will include raw data and data available in final reports. Although projects varied in the type of evaluation data that was collected, the majority of projects collected pre-test/post-test quantitative data to measure participants’ satisfaction with the training, knowledge gain, and attitude change.

Follow-up phone surveys will be conducted with training participants who had previously participated in training sessions

during the three years of the project's operation. To conduct these surveys we will ask site personnel to distribute an informational letter to all previous training participants. The letter will explain the study and request that individuals call in to a project phone line to complete a brief survey.

Method: Three National Studies of Child Welfare Training

The Survey of Child Welfare Administrators will involve a phone survey of public child welfare administrators knowledgeable about child welfare issues in their state/county/tribe.

Approximately 30 jurisdictions will be selected for inclusion in the study. Within each jurisdiction a "senior administrator most knowledgeable about child welfare training in the agency" will be selected for a 30-minute phone interview. Topics in the interview will include: impact of child welfare training on agency practice, strengths and weaknesses of current/past training activities, and suggestions for further development of child welfare training.

The Survey of Deans and Faculty in Schools of Social Work will be conducted via a mail-in survey. To conduct the survey we will obtain a listing of all BSW and MSW programs from the Council on Social Work Education and stratify the list according to institutional type (public, private) and program (BSW, MSW, BSW/MSW). Survey topics will include: current involvement of the school in child welfare training, perceived impact of federally funded training projects on child welfare practice, perceived impact of these training projects on schools of social work, and strengths and challenges in the current system of child welfare training funding. We are also exploring the possibility of expanding this survey to include other educational programs in addition to social work.

The comprehensive literature review on child welfare training will involve several sources of information, including: computerized abstracts of journals, references of useful articles, government and other clearinghouses, and on-line listserv inquiries. Among the topics to be covered in the literature review are the following: conceptual frameworks (transfer of training, adult learning models), structure of training (including partnerships), type of training (in-service, pre-service, and professional training), implementation issues, evaluation of training, etc.

Dissemination and Utilization

Key target audiences for the evaluation findings include: the Children's Bureau, members of the grantee cluster, state/county/tribal child welfare agencies, schools of social work and other university-based educational programs, and professional organizations (social work, child welfare, and training). A series of materials will be produced which will include monograph(s) for the Children's Bureau with recommendations related to the following: future development of child welfare training grant programs, grant application processes, curricula development processes, choice of target audiences, structure and content of training sessions, role of schools of social work, collaboration with child welfare agencies, mechanisms for institutionalizing training outcomes, guidance for future grantees to measure training outcomes, training responses to the Children and Family Services Reviews, etc.

Two other reports will be produced: one for child welfare administrators and one for deans and directors of schools of social work. The administrator report will make recommendations for enhancing the impact of training on practice and for melding policy and administrative supports for training. The report for deans and directors will make recommendations for enhancing links between schools and child welfare, including curricula and field innovations.

Other materials to be produced will include: a report for child welfare administrators with recommendations for enhancing the impact of training on practice, and policy and administrative supports for training; and a report for deans of schools of social work with recommendations for enhancing links between schools and child welfare curricula and field innovations. Additionally, we will produce conference presentations and journal articles to reach the larger field.

Methodological Challenges

We identified three specific methodological challenges to conducting the Cross-site Evaluation of Grantees. First, grantees utilized various approaches to conduct their projects and may have targeted a variety of audiences, emphasized different training methods and skills, and aimed to achieve various outcomes. In order to deal with this, a multiple case study approach was used. This provides the opportunity to document individual variation and

to understand each project on its own merits. We have also identified broad conceptual categories of contextual factors, project activities, and outcomes (as identified in our conceptual model). This will allow for cross-case analysis of some common elements of projects.

The second challenge was measuring client outcomes. Two approaches will be used to address this challenge. First, we will produce a series of logic models for each project. Use of the logic model will help us to explore the theoretical linkage between project activities and outcomes. Second, we will conduct a follow-up phone survey with training participants or supervisors. In this survey we will ask for specific examples regarding the impact of training on practice and resulting impact on clients. To the extent that trainees can provide detailed examples, this will provide some indication of the potential impact on outcomes.

The third major methodological challenge was the post-hoc nature of the evaluation. Projects had already been implemented and most concluded by the time the evaluation began. To address this challenge we will assess project results against project plans and also observe any ongoing activities resulting from the project. These ongoing activities might include continued training, youth advisory boards, or social work courses with youth development content.

Conclusion

Despite the methodological challenges, the National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training has great potential to produce needed knowledge that will help improve child welfare training efforts and, consequently, outcomes for children, youth, and families. Numerous data collection activities are being undertaken to provide the fullest picture and richest data possible to shed light on the current status of the field. Additionally, the evaluation team is engaged in ongoing collaboration in the design, conduct, and eventual interpretation of findings to insure their validity and utilization for improving practice.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS	TRAINING PROJECT ACTIVITIES	INDIVIDUAL PROJECT OUTCOMES		CLUSTER OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
<p>State Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of collaboration Level of personnel involved Organizational constraints Training policies Project match with agency need Children and Family Service Reviews <p>Children's Bureau</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFP Grantees' meeting 	<p>Develop Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricular development skills <p>Deliver Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainer skill Number of trainees Cost Effectiveness <p>Involve Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning training Delivering Training Other 	<p>Worker Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge Attitude Behavior <p>Supervisor Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge Attitude Behavior <p>Training of Trainers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge Attitude Behavior <p>Agency Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth focused <p>Impact on Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skill development Empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature Review Survey of Schools of Social Work Survey of Child Welfare Administrators 	<p>Improvement In Agency Practice</p> <p>Improvement In School Of Social Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth-focused curricula <p>Improvements in the Child Welfare Field (private agencies, ancillary agencies, child advocacy organizations)</p> <p>Improvement in the Positive Youth Development Field</p>	<p>Improvement In Child, Youth, And Family Well-being</p>

<p>Grantees' Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of support • Experience with CWT • Seniority of project staff <p>State-Level Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politics • Funding • Regulations and laws • County, Tribe or community issues <p>Other (media, role of technology)</p>	<p>Evaluation of Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process • Outcome <p>Disseminate Findings and Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Articles/reports • Curricula/tapes <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development <p>Other Project Activities</p>	<p>Knowledge Development (evaluation)</p> <p>Knowledge Sharing (dissemination)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalization of curricula <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalization of collaboration <p>Other Outcomes</p>
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<p>Other Outcomes</p>	
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	Discussion

Thursday, May 27, 2004, 9:30–10:30 a.m.
Mary Elizabeth Collins, *M.S.W., Ph.D.*, Presenter
Robin Leake, *Ph.D.*, Facilitator

Following Mary Elizabeth Collins' presentation on the *National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training*, the discussion began with inquiries about how sampling decisions were made. The focus then shifted to the role of schools of social work in child welfare training. Questions were raised about the conceptual model and the methods of measurement. The dialogue ended with a discussion of the value inherent in large national studies such as the evaluation project.

Topics of Discussion

I. Sample Selection:

The group discussed the rationale behind the sampling frame selected for the survey of child welfare administrators.

- A participant asked why front-line caseworkers were not included in the survey. Collins stated that she would have liked to include the perspective of front line workers, but methodological concerns and feasibility issues were barriers to surveying front line caseworkers.
- The group cautioned that selection of administrators to be surveyed must be done carefully. Initially, the research team that designed the national evaluation conceptualized interviewing one senior administrator from each state who is knowledgeable about child welfare training. The team realized that training programs in some states are very complicated and might require interviewing more than one person. The research team plans to obtain assistance in identifying the right individual(s) to survey through the grantee cluster and other investigations.

- A participant suggested that the researchers contact state administrators to help identify the state's leaders in child welfare training.

II. The Role of Schools of Social Work in Child Welfare Training:

- The group also discussed the rationale for selecting schools of social work as the sample to be surveyed when most child welfare workers do not possess a social work degree. Participants wanted to know if the researchers planned to speak to people outside of the schools of social work.
- Collins stated that schools of social work were selected as one of the sample populations because the researchers wanted answers to questions such as: Why aren't schools of social work more involved in child welfare training?; Should they be?; Have schools of social work abandoned their mission?; If so, how can we get them more involved in child welfare?
- A participant pointed out that it would be interesting to examine the differences between training units housed within schools of social work and training organizations that are not affiliated with a school of social work.
- Some suggestions were made for the types of questions that should be asked to the schools of social work, including:
(1) What role would the school want to take in child welfare training? This response would provide a vision. (2) What supports are needed to actualize that vision? (3) How does child welfare training benefit the school? This last question would make explicit that a reciprocal relationship must exist between the schools and the child welfare system.
- A participant stated that schools of social work should be held accountable for child welfare training and education because these activities are historically rooted within schools of social work. In addition, contextual factors affecting schools of social work should be examined. For example, does child welfare training affect the curricula of the schools of social work?

III. Conceptual Model—The Fit Between the Evaluation of the Grantee Cluster & the Survey of Schools of Social Work and Child Welfare Administrators:

- Participants discussed concerns about the conceptual model and how the study of the grantee cluster and the surveys of the schools of social work and child welfare administrators fit together. Some participants did not see a natural connection between the two data collection efforts in the conceptual model and felt the study would be more cohesive if the national data collection efforts (of the schools of social work and child welfare administrators) were focused on testing hypotheses that were generated in the data collection of the grantee cluster.
- Collins stated that the federal government wanted a broader evaluation of the field of child welfare. A survey of the schools of social work, a survey of child welfare administrators, and a literature review were the data collection methods selected to offer a broader national perspective of child welfare. The purpose of conducting the national study was to bridge the individual project outcomes with cluster outcomes and short-term outcomes with long-term outcomes.

IV. Measurement:

- The researchers were interested in gathering evidence about whether any of the projects were successful in helping their state or county agencies become more youth focused. This data will be gathered qualitatively, so project staff, youth, and child welfare collaborators will be asked to explain how they implemented changes to the agency's culture. For example, if a project had been able to institutionalize a youth advisory board, this would indicate the agency's receptivity to the youth voice.
- The types of questions asked to define the nature of the agency's collaborative culture include: Who is involved in the effort?; What did they do?; How did get involved?; Is this a long-standing relationship or a new relationship? The types of questions the researchers plan to ask to understand training policies include: Is there a training unit?; What is the context of the training unit?; How long has the training unit been in existence?; What are the training policies—for in-service, pre-service, and specialized training? The

researchers are interested in understanding the context of the training programs and independent living programs.

- A symposium participant asked how the researchers planned to measure the long-term outcome of improvement in child, youth, and family well-being. Collins explained that this was a conceptual model, not an empirical model where information would need to be gathered for all the elements. The researchers felt it was important to put the long-term outcome of improving child, youth, and family well-being in their conceptual model in order to focus their work. As one of the funded grantees, they also put this long-term outcome in their project model in order to keep themselves focused on their long-term goal.

V. Evaluation of the Grantee Cluster:

- A participant expressed particular interest in two aspects of the grantee cluster evaluation. First, fairly early within the projects, the grantee cluster had discussed putting some effort into the development of embedded evaluations, particularly of skills. A participant expressed interest in learning more about the projects' experiences in developing, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of these embedded evaluations. The second identified area of interest was the independent living projects' experiences in involving clients in designing their curriculum.
- Collins stated that examining why some programs were able to better involve youth in their programs or integrate embedded evaluations into their projects would be interesting and valuable. Understanding the context, the skills of the project staff, and the tasks that were laid out in the proposal may be related to a project's level of accomplishment. These factors need to be documented and shared with others.

VI. The Value of Large National Assessments:

- A state administrator stated that the value of these national studies is to document cultural shifts and forecast future investment in independent living services. Additionally, he wanted to know more about the implications of the evaluation for these projects.

Discussion

- Another participant expressed interest in knowing the state of preparation for child welfare workers both from a professional and political level. Where have systems been successful in preparing individuals to do their job well and where have systems had less success?

	Discussion: The North American Certification Project

Thursday, May 27, 2004, 10:45–11:45 a.m.

Dale Curry, *Ph.D.*, *LCSW*, and David Thomas, *M.S.*, Presenters
Michelle I. Graef, *Ph.D.*, Facilitator

Dale Curry and David Thomas presented on *The North American Certification Project*. Discussion topics included: the validity of assessment instruments, the purpose and the ramification associated with testing, language and cultural issues associated with testing, the unintended consequences of testing such as parallel process, and the value of conducting job analyses.

Topics of Discussion

I. Validity of the Test

One focus of discussion was on the validity and utility of different types of testing.

- Participants expressed concerns that tests often assess knowledge rather than skills. Knowledge-based testing is not necessarily an indicator of a person's ability to perform on the job.
- Curry and Thomas also warned that tests are often used in settings for which they have not been validated.
- Mixed feelings were expressed by symposium participants about the stress associated with testing. While some participants expressed concern that individuals may not perform well due to testing anxiety, others thought that the ability to perform well and make critical decisions under stress was an unintended benefit associated with testing child welfare workers.
- Test developers and evaluators need to make thoughtful decisions around the language of testing. Calling the item a *test* rather than an *assessment* could induce more stress.
- Although participants agreed with the presenters that assessments such as the one presented are necessary in

order to professionalize the field, they underscored the importance of developing and selecting items that appear on such tests.

- Thomas expressed the need to be thoughtful in developing cutoff scores for tests (i.e., scores that participants must achieve in order to pass a given training or prove they are proficient). The existing literature and empirical research should be used to establish cutoff scores.

II. Purpose of Testing & Results of Testing

A discussion ensued about how assessments are framed.

- Are we advocating for high-stakes testing with individuals' employment on the line?; Should the results of testing be shared with the employee's supervisor?; What happens if an individual fails the test?; What degree of confidence is there that this is a valid assessment?; Do we have some ethical obligations as to how we use the results of testing?; Test developers, administrators, and evaluators need to communicate in advance how the assessment results will be used.
- Participants expressed concern about what evaluators do with the test results. The test presented by Curry and Thomas was part of a certification process. Some symposium participants supported the use of testing only if the results were used in a constructive manner to further coach employees and develop their skills; there was less support amongst participants for the use of high stakes testing that conditioned employment. Because we work in a field (social work) that propagates a strengths-based perspective, participants felt that testing should be used to reinforce learning and growth.

III Language and Cultural Issues Associated with Testing

- The group discussed whether written tests were a better indicator of reading comprehension rather than practice skills. Participants also expressed concerns about the ability of non-native speakers to perform well on such tests.
- Other participants felt it was important for individuals, such as child and youth care workers (the targets of the situational judgment test that was presented) and child welfare workers, to speak a common professional language.

Terminology used within a profession is beneficial during both crisis situations and for supervision.

- A participant inquired about the diversity within the panel of experts that developed the test items. The presenters stated that the panel was not reflective of the diversity of the client population or staff; this was a concern and efforts were made to increase the diversity of the panel. Additional experts in the field were brought in to review particular items and competencies. It is anticipated that testing will help identify missing areas or biases within the exam.

IV. Parallel Process

- A participant pointed out that utilizing methods such as high-stakes testing might reinforce the types of relationships that we do not want caseworkers to have with their clients. The presenters confirmed that there are some inherent factors in the assessment process that can get in the way of other goals that social worker evaluators might have.

V. Job Analysis

- The importance of conducting a job analysis was highlighted by a participant. A job analysis will identify required job functions and the skills needed to perform the job well. The participant felt that it would be necessary to conduct a job analysis before developing items for tests. The presenters conducted a modified job analysis where experts from the U.S. and Canada defined what child and youth care workers are currently doing (on the job) and what they should be doing. Curry and Thomas confirmed that the courts have reinforced the participant's opinions expressed above. The courts have stated that when developing certification exams, items testing information that could easily be accessed on the job should not be included on the exam.

	The Efficacy of the Focus Group Method for Evaluating Performance Sustainability after Outcome-Based Training

E. Douglas Pratt, *D.S.W., LCSW*

Abstract

This article explicates the adaptation of the focus group method for evaluating performance sustainability after outcome-based training. Examples taken from several evaluations illustrate the process, with particular focus on 1) a facilitation protocol, 2) co-facilitation strategies, and 3) inherent advantages of the method for responding to idiosyncratic group challenges. Findings are that the process can enhance candor among participants and yield exceptional insights for improving training and development, with economy of time and money. Utilizing focus groups in tandem with at least one other evaluation method is advised.

Purpose

Focus groups have been a formal method of child and family service evaluation since Alabama and external consultants developed the comprehensive “Quality Service Review” outcomes methodology in 1992 (Foster, 2001). While the focus group method has also been used in training evaluation methodology, its strategic use for evaluating skill outcomes is in the early stages of formalization. This paper reports an effective adaptation of the focus group method in the evaluation of skill outcomes.

Specifically, this paper describes an adaptation of the focus group method for evaluating performance sustainability after outcome-based training. This is accomplished by explaining the use of a protocol and facilitation strategies, challenges, benefits, and limitations of the method. This analysis is based on several evaluations of basic casework skills trainings, and primarily on an evaluation of training for an advanced method.

The evaluations of basic casework skills training were comprehensive and utilized multiple methods, including focus group. In contrast, the advanced training evaluation was limited by funding constraints and used only focus groups, considered by our client to be the most cost-efficient way to extract the richest data. In both applications of the focus group (FG) method, facilitation experiences were similar. However, the more heuristic examples of strategic facilitation emerged from the limited methodology of the advanced method training evaluation.

Background

In its sixth year of development at the time of the evaluation, a community partnership in a medium-size city had substantially implemented an advanced social group work method, the Family Team Meeting Process (FTMP). FTMP is a strategy for building individualized family support teams, and developing family leadership of their team, based on exceptionally close collaboration across traditional agency boundaries. At the time of this evaluation, the community partnership had trained and mentored about seventy experienced generalist practitioners from various child and family agencies. They had been facilitating FTMP for varying lengths of time ranging from several months to about four years.

The community partnership's development and its outcomes had been longitudinally evaluated using the Quality Service Review (QSR). These evaluations had demonstrated that child and family status as well as system performance were improving, partly as a result of several training curricula strategically designed to support community-based, family-centered practice. Based on the community partnership's demonstrated effectiveness, the strategic outcome of our FTMP evaluation had been identified as:

“We will have a training and development plan that builds on our current FTMP training to enhance the ability of FTMP Facilitators¹ to integrate domestic violence best practice with child welfare best practice in FTMP.”

The Evaluation Design

The initial evaluation question had been, *“How can we build on the skill-strengths of trained, experienced FTMP co-facilitators*

¹ FTMP requires co-facilitation by a trained lead facilitator and a trained supporting facilitator. For word-economy, this paper uses the word “Facilitator.” The reader is encouraged to infer both co-facilitation roles.

to meet their development needs for adapting the FTMP for families at risk of domestic violence?” The assumption that most co-facilitators had sustained most of the FTMP training skills was unquestioned, perhaps because of the positive QSR progress measures, and perhaps because careful use of slim resources made more rigorous inquiry moot for our client. FG was the sole evaluation method, chosen for its potential to mine depth and detail with economy. Serendipitously, the flexibility of the method enabled us to compensate somewhat for this lack of design rigor.

FTMP facilitators were convened in two focus groups (N=39). Facilitators had been told the purpose of the FG was to learn about their FTMP successes and challenges, skill strengths and needs, in order to help begin planning specialized training and development for facilitation when a risk of domestic violence is possible.

The Evaluation Method

Midway in discussion with the first FG, it became clear that the tacit assumption was weak; some FTMP outcome skills appeared to have degraded, and some FTMP procedures seemed to have been compromised. The interactive and hermeneutic parameters of the FG method enabled the FG facilitators to immediately incorporate this unanticipated finding into the process. A second research question, with implications for the planned outcome of the evaluation, was included ad hoc: *“To what extent have experienced practitioners, with outcome-based training in this advanced method, sustained the core abilities and target skills?”*

This and other examples of the FG process described below help illustrate the abstract but practical principle of focus group facilitation: the method is the process and process is everything.

Focus Group Process

Focus group data collection is hermeneutic. That is, it focuses on the meaning of trainees’ experiences as they apply in practice the outcome skills specified in the training curriculum. *“The meaning of trainees’ experiences”* includes their skill strengths and needs, as well as their conceptual integration of skills with the model of practice. For example, integration in family-centered practice might be indicated by their description of how they’ve uniquely timed and combined engagement skills to individualize a family or client in their situation.

Four FG facilitation objectives and a written “Focus Group Facilitation Protocol” (*see Appendix A*) guided our FG facilitation

and helped ensure that the evaluation would conform to generally accepted standards of the qualitative research community. The four FG facilitation objectives were:

Objective 1: Focus the participants on their personal practice experiences to identify what that experience means for them as well as what seemed to work effectively.

Objective 2: Identify how they acquired the effective skills and strategies they describe.

Objective 3: Identify the challenges they've experienced applying their skills in practice.

Objective 4: Identify how the training (and in some cases how on-the-job mentoring, supervision, peer consultation, or additional training and development methods) could enhance their effectiveness.

We developed the *Focus Group Facilitation Protocol* specifically for this evaluation, because we had not co-facilitated with each other before this evaluation. The FG co-facilitation skills and strategies we used to address each objective, and how we responded to challenges are described below.

Facilitation Objective 1. We focused participants on their personal practice experiences to identify what their experience meant for them, as well as what skills from training seemed to work effectively. After brief introductions, including our two recorders in the back of the room, we confirmed with participants their best understanding of the focus group purpose. We were prepared to clarify or renegotiate discrepant expectations.

We affirmed the usual clients' and subjects' confidentiality. To demonstrate respect for their professionalism and to build trust and mutuality, we asked participants to alert the group before they began sharing information about a client family, colleague, their organization, or a community partner that they felt must be kept confidential within the group.

Strategic Trust-Building

To further build trust, we began by expressing interest in their successes. We asked participants to take three minutes to write some notes about an effective use of their FTMP skills. We encouraged them to write whatever came to mind, regarding spontaneous ideas as important information about the meaning of their experience. We then asked some to share their experience of success.

Regression Toward the Negative

We were prepared for participants to describe their effective use of a skill briefly; to quickly add “but...,” and to begin describing how they hadn’t really been very effective. We’ve encountered this natural regression toward the negative early in most FGs when we planfully mirror the strengths approach. We consistently reassured groups that we’d come back to their challenges, but that we first wanted to know how they had contributed to the increasing effectiveness of the partnership. We regard this strengths-first strategy as trust building and also as a reinforcing parallel process with their strengths-based model of practice. Consistently focusing first on strengths enhanced, rather than squelched, the quality and depth of what participants shared about challenges, their development needs, and what they may have defined as their skill weaknesses or barriers to performance.

Strategic Use of Questions

To help participants explore the specifics of what they had done effectively in practice, we began with the broadest open-ended questions and gradually focused exploration with more specific solution-focused questions, using closed-ended questions as a last option. At first, some participants appeared a bit confused or anxious with exploration for behavioral specifics, so we asked with genuine interest if this line of questioning seemed unusual. Some said it was and we communicated empathy for their response, explained briefly that we wanted to show respect for their experience, and to do so we wanted to picture as accurately as possible what their experiences looked like.

We reiterated that we were looking for behaviorally specific examples. We elicited circumstantial details about each example of effectiveness, such as the level of maltreatment risk and whether a person at risk of abusing a partner was in or out of the household. We reinforced participant responses, quoting their key words and phrases on newsprint. This visual reinforcement of their own words stimulated the thinking of the group and encouraged others to contribute.

Strategic Co-Facilitation

We used a prearranged system of FG co-facilitation cues to synchronize our respective co-facilitation roles. For example, the FG facilitator leading a discussion paraphrased, clarified, then summarized each respondent’s comments, emphasizing the respondent’s own wording. The supporting focus group facilitator

knew to write on newsprint only the lead facilitator's paraphrase, including the participant's key words, only after the participant confirmed it. Observer-recorders at the back of the room took more detailed notes using laptop computers.

Facilitation Objective 2. To identify how they acquired the effective skills and strategies they described, we began by reviewing the newsprint notes recorded for Objective 1, then asked the group to think about how they learned these strategies or skills. Our FG protocol prepared us with a range of exploration questions:

- What helped you develop effective skills and strategies?
How did that help?
- What in the formal classroom training helped you? How was it helpful?
- How have your peers helped you acquire these skills or strategies?
- How have you gotten feedback? From your supervisor, a Specialist or Consultant, or from a mentoring co-facilitator?
- What kind of feedback was most helpful?
- Your own life experience with friends, relatives...how has that helped?
- Observation? Reading? Video? What other resources helped?

We strategically helped the group explore the responses of individuals to these questions. That is, we asked for others' similar experiences and different experiences. We got a good sense for how much they had learned in their training, and how much they had learned after training from supervision and from co-facilitation with an experienced facilitator.

Discovering Some Degradation of Skills

We found degradation of a few core skills and compromise of one step of the FTMP. The FG method enabled group exploration of what these outcome lacunae meant. We learned part of the degradation was systemic, and in a sense systematic. That is, participants described how some experienced co-facilitators and supervisors who mentored newly trained co-facilitators, routinely abbreviated some essential FTMP procedures under the severe time pressures common in child welfare.

For example, preparation interviews necessary for all FTMP participants were provided in many cases only to the caretaking adults. Also, instead of the expected co-facilitation, itself a core outcome skill in the training, many FTMPs were led by one trained

facilitator. In addition, we found some degradation of the curriculum and training (discussed below with Objective 4). Partnership leaders and trainers later corroborated these reported compromises.

Facilitation Objective 3. We helped participants explain challenges, surprises, and barriers to the development of their co-facilitation competence. Maintaining a strengths-based, solution-focused parallel process with their model of practice, we conscientiously avoided terms such as “weakness” or “failure” or “problem”. Instead, we explored their responses to carefully-worded questions listed in our Focus Group Facilitation Protocol such as:

- What do you know now that you wish you’d known before you began facilitating?
- What skills do you wish you had been able to use when you co-facilitated your first few FTMPs?
- What differences did you find between what the training led you to expect, and what the community partnership really expects of co-facilitators?
- What have you struggled with in FTMP Preparation Interviews?
- What surprises have come up in FTMPs?
- What do you do if you suspect an urgent safety risk, but no one is willing to discuss it?
- What happens when the family minimizes risk and resists safety planning?
- What do you wish the training could do differently so the FTMP could be more effective?

Example: A Co-Facilitation Faux Pas

Our preparation using the protocol enhanced our ability to think on our feet, a core ability for FG co-facilitation. Our co-facilitation did fall out of sync when one of us realized well before the other that the group was revealing that some of the FTMP outcome skills were not being used. In three ways, the FG method and the protocol enabled our spontaneous accommodation and recovery from this faux pas:

1. The hermeneutic possibilities are unlimited by hypotheses or assumptions;
2. *Tabula rasa facilitation* enables more candid responses from participants, and modifications of the facilitation plan *in medias res*;

3. The protocol is a working agreement for FG co-facilitators and becomes the touchstone when improvisational accommodation is necessary.

The lead focus group facilitator, who was also one of the curriculum designers and trainers, realized first that some outcome skills were not being used. This facilitator exploited the *tabula rasa* principle of facilitation. That is, when FG facilitators suspend their prior understanding of the subject (becoming like a blank slate), they are open to deeper understanding of what participant perceptions mean. In this situation, the lead facilitator assumed the *faux-naïf* role (see television's "Columbo" for the prototype) and continued to explore participants' examples and frustrations in situations where the appropriate FTMP core skills had been underutilized.

For example, we carefully explored what family minimization and denial meant to the focus group participants, knowing that one of the specific training skill outcomes was "Four Steps for Reframing and Joining with Resistance." The essence of this particular reframe skill is that resistant behaviors represent vulnerability and a need for more control. The lead facilitator, using the *faux-naïf* role, allowed himself to be genuinely curious when he asked, "*What's going on with your families when they minimize their own risk?*"

Using the Group as the Tool

Participants described a number of concrete examples of the increased vulnerabilities, fears, and potential losses women and families understandably face if they disclose DV. As participants described their examples, several candidly expressed deep frustration with families' resistant behaviors.

The lead facilitator briefly empathized with their frustration, then tested their ability to assess resistance and to use the "four-step reframe" for joining with resistance. He framed a paraphrase that included the training definition of resistance and posed it as a clarification: "*So it's vulnerability or a need for more control that keeps some women or families from openly discussing the seriousness of the DV risk?*"

Participants were quiet for nearly ten seconds. Some re-explained their examples but clearly, the group could not confirm this clarification. Possibly their hesitance was the intellectual challenge to recall and describe resistance behaviors they'd encountered, and at the same time recall their ability to reframe

resistance. However, if most had been regularly using the four-step reframe for joining with resistance, it's likely someone in the group would have acknowledged the reframe, explicit as it was in the lead facilitator's clarification question.

Assessment In Medias Res

Possibly the barrier to connecting their experiences with resistance to the four-step reframe was the emotional challenge of re-experiencing in the focus group the feelings of frustration they'd felt with some resistant families. This would suggest development needs for: 1) enhanced empathy skills in assessing, 2) skills for managing their reactions to resistance, or 3) integrating these skills with the four-step reframe for joining with resistance.

To further test the two possible meanings of group hesitancy, the lead facilitator asked them if they recalled the four-step reframe for joining with resistance from their training. Instead of answering this directly, a few re-explained their examples until one participant said that most FTMP facilitators try to talk families into admitting there is a serious DV risk. The body language of the group at this point suggested relief that this participant had finally said what they had not wanted to say.

Immediately after the FGs, we processed our experience. Then we analyzed the detailed notes the recorders had made. We concluded that the development need regarding skills with resistance was probably a need to integrate 1) empathy skills and 2) skill managing their reactions to resistance with 3) the four-step reframe for joining with resistance.

Trusting Our Own Process

As they develop their skills, newer FG facilitators sometimes have a hard time trusting the process. During the hermeneutic exploration described above, the supporting FG co-facilitator became anxious and inadvertently surrendered the group-centered facilitation role. That is, the supporting facilitator, more experienced with DV but less experienced with the FTMP training outcomes, did not pick-up on the lead FG facilitator's use of *faux-naïf*. In this moment of confusion, the supporting facilitator briefly "became" a participant, turned to, and answered one of the lead facilitator's exploration questions *for the group*. The lead facilitator maintained the *faux-naïf* role, and responded to the supporting facilitator by:

- Paraphrasing the co-facilitator's answers, then
- Turning to the group and asking them, "What's your reaction to what you just heard?"

The lead facilitator's ad hoc accommodation helped the supporting facilitator recover the *tabula rasa* mode while maintaining continuity with the group process. We processed our faux pas after this first FG. Supporting each other's roles more effectively in the second focus group, we found corroboration of the FTMP compromise and similar though less severe skill degradation.

Facilitation Objective 4. We helped participants explain how the classroom training, mentoring, supervision, peer consultation, or other training and development methods could enhance their effectiveness. Strategically we helped the group explore the responses of individuals by asking the group, "Who's had similar experiences?" and "Who's had different or less successful experiences?" We also asked for specific examples of how training and development (T&D) methods had been helpful in the past.

The FG participants agreed that the training had been more practical than academic. They said their trainers had spoken from their own experience as FTMP facilitators and had focused on how to use behaviorally specific engagement and group skills at each stage of FTMP. Though the curriculum had been abbreviated from three days to two, participants did not seem to have a strong opinion about the length of the training. They all seemed to value the opportunity they had after the training to co-facilitate with an experienced lead facilitator. In addition, they made a number of recommendations for enhancing the core training and crafting DV-specific follow-up training.

Serendipitous Findings

Focus group participants recommended formal guidelines, such as guidelines for managing surprise disclosure of DV risk during a Family Team Meeting, should be added to the core FTMP training or be included in a DV-specific follow-up training. Surprisingly, some of their recommendations were to add content that had been in the core FTMP training curriculum. For example, they suggested FTMP training should include how co-facilitators could do preparation together before a Family Team Meeting and when and how to include children in a meeting. Serendipitous findings

such as these helped us consider the possible impact of the shortened training on skill outcomes.

Summary and Implications

The Use of Resources

Evaluation methods, such as observation of FTMP co-facilitation, or individual interviews with FTMP co-facilitators and client families, would have cost two evaluators, conservatively, about twenty data-collection hours each in this example. In contrast, the focus group method cost two facilitators eight data-collection hours each, and did not preclude some observation, individual interviews, or the use of a quantitative method such as a survey.

Facilitation Strategies and Skills

As this example demonstrates, the focus group process appears to enhance candor among participants. The co-facilitation skills and strategies that seem to enhance the efficacy of the focus group process include:

1. Using a facilitation protocol crafted specifically for the evaluation;
2. Following a working agreement that explicates co-facilitation roles and strategies;
3. Building trust by demonstrating respect and eliciting mutuality from the outset;
4. Beginning with strengths, and deferring problems until strengths are understood;
5. Using open-ended and solution-focused questions, and the *faux-naïf* role as *tabula rasa* skills.

Preparation for Facilitation

We continue to learn from our focus groups that co-facilitators' mutual preparation is *sine qua non*. Preparation includes:

- Thorough knowledge of curriculum outcomes and training activities;
- Personal experience with the model of practice;
- Explicit exchange of co-facilitation wants and offers, based on a mutual understanding of each other's focus group facilitation strengths and development needs.

In many states we are finding that the interactive and hermeneutic parameters of the focus group method can yield exceptional insights useful for improved training and development, with economy of time and money. Effective co-facilitation

requires careful preparations, supported by a facilitation protocol, an individualized working agreement, and competence with specific co-facilitation skills and strategies. Using focus group in tandem with at least one other evaluation method is advised.

Bibliography

Foster, R. et al. (2001). *Quality Service Review*, Human Systems and Outcomes, Tallahassee, FL.

This paper is based on the author's experience facilitating QSR and QSR focus groups, and helping refine QSR methodology since 1995. As a report on the adaptation of focus group method for training evaluation, this paper does not report evaluation results except when a finding helps illustrate the methodology.

Appendix A

PROTOCOL FOR CO-FACILITATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP PROCESS

FOCUS GROUP PURPOSE:

This community partnership has over six years collaboration experience and more than sixty experienced human service professionals with advanced training in facilitation of the Family Team Meeting Process (FTMP). Family Team Meeting Process has been effective in building individual family support systems with teamwork across traditional agency boundaries.

When there is risk of spouse abuse (“domestic violence,” or “DV”), FTMP co-facilitators and community partners in the FTMP need specialized strategies to individualize FTMP in ways that integrate the best practice of DV specialists with that of child welfare specialists.

We'll use focus group (FG) as the method for 1) identifying the current performance strengths and needs of facilitators based on skills taught in FTMP training, and for 2) identifying the opportunities and possible strategies for integrating child welfare and DV best practices.

OUTCOME:

The community partnership will have a DV-FTMP Training and Development (T&D) plan within several weeks following the Report of the FTMP Facilitation Strengths-Needs Evaluation. This plan will build upon current FTMP Training and development methods to enhance the ability of Facilitators and community partners to integrate DV best practice with child welfare best practice in FTM processes.

METHOD:

Two FGs comprised of trained FTMP facilitators and co-facilitators, some with up to five years' experience and some with experience leading a few FTMs, will provide data. Data collection will target the meaning of their experiences with FTMP and families at risk for DV, and will identify their facilitation skill strengths, needs, and those of their community partners for supporting FTMP facilitation. This focus group protocol, designed to help us adhere to generally accepted standards of the qualitative research community, will guide our four facilitation objectives.

Process Notes and Content Notes support each of the four Facilitation Objectives, below.

OBJECTIVE 1.

Focus the participants on their personal FTMP experience; to identify what that experience means for them as well as what skills and strategies seem to work effectively.

PROCESS NOTES:

- 1) Brief introductions; housekeeping.
- 2) Confirm with participants the facilitators' best understanding of the FG purpose; review the four objectives;
- 3) Affirm usual client confidentiality, and ask participants to alert the group before they share system information that must be kept confidential within the FG.
- 4) Ask each participant to take three minutes to write some notes about an effective FTM with a family at risk for DV. Allow them to write whatever comes to mind; this is important information about the meaning of their experience.
- 5) Ask some to share their experience, helping participants describe what it meant for them.
- 6) Elicit details about the circumstances – level of risk; who was living in or out of the household; family wanted the person who maltreated included in the meeting or did not.
- 7) Record key words and phrases of participant responses.
- 8) The facilitator leading the discussion will clarify and paraphrase respondents' comments, and this is how the recording facilitator will know what to write on newsprint; observer-recorders will be taking detailed notes at the back of the room, using laptop computers.
- 9) Help participants explore what they did to help make the FTMP effective:
- 10) As you explore, begin with the broadest open-ended questions, and gradually focus exploration with more specific solution-focused questions. Use closed-ended questions as a last option.
- 11) If participants appear anxious with your exploration, ask with genuine interest if this line of questioning seems unusual. Communicate your empathy for their response, and explain briefly that you want to show respect for their experience and that you want to picture exactly what their experience has been. You may explain at some point that you're looking for behaviorally specific examples.
- 12) Elicit examples of different types of risk and different FTMP strategies: with both partners present; with only the person who was abused present; when the risk is discovered as a surprise in the Prep. Interviews or in the FTM, etc.

CONTENT NOTES:

- 1) Briefly, describe a successful FTM with a family at risk for maltreatment.
- 2) What made the FTM effective?
- 3) "What did that mean to you?" is a core question in the figurative sense, and can be asked literally.
- 4) What did you do in Preparation Interviews that helped?
- 5) ...when you were a FTM invitee being interviewed?
- 6) ...in preparation interview with the family?...with the person who maltreated a child...who abused their partner?
- 7) ...with the child or partner who was abused?
- 8) ...in the PREPARATION Interview's with relatives that helped?
- 9) ...with friends, neighbors, other informal supports;
- 10) ... with formal resources that helped?
- 11) What did you do in the FTM that helped?
- 12) How did you decide whether to exclude or include the person who abused in the FTM meeting?
- 13) How was the safety of the victim after the meeting planned for?

OBJECTIVE 2:

Identify how they acquired the skills and strategies they've described.

PROCESS NOTES:

1. Review the newsprint notes you recorded regarding Objective 1, then ask the group to think about how they learned these strategies or skills.
2. Explore for as many specific ways of acquiring or practicing the skills as possible.

CONTENT NOTES:

1. What helped you develop effective skills and strategies? ...how?
2. What in the formal classroom training helped you? From whom? When? How was it helpful?
3. How have your peers helped you acquire these skills or strategies?...how have you gotten feedback?
4. ...Coach-supervisor?
5. ...Specialist or Consultant?
6. Your own life experience?...with Friends? ...Relatives?
7. Observation?...Reading?...video? ...formal School?

OBJECTIVE 3:

Identify the challenges they've experienced in FTMP when there's risk of maltreatment.

PROCESS NOTES:

1. Help the group recall the challenges, surprises or barriers that have compromised the effectiveness of FTMP.
2. Explore the meaning of their experience; and probe for behavioral specifics.

CONTENT NOTES:

- 1) What have you struggled with in FTMP Prep? Interviews?
- 2) What do you do if you suspect risk of maltreatment but no one is acknowledging the risk?
- 3) What surprises have come up in FTM's?
- 4) What happens when the child or partner who's abused minimizes the risk and resists substantial safety planning?
- 5) What do you wish your community partners could do differently so the FTMP could be more effective?

OBJECTIVE 4:

Identify how FTMP training, supervision, peer consultation, or other training & development methods could enhance their Co-Facilitation skills and confidence working with families that have risk for child maltreatment, or for DV.

PROCESS NOTES:

- 1) **Distribute** FTM training agenda as a prompt (optional).
- 2) Ask them to try to picture some of the activities, and to make some notes about the activities that stand out in their memory.
- 3) Explore possible curriculum content
- 4) Explore other modes of development
- 5) Explore the meaning of their experience, and probe for behavioral specifics.

CONTENT NOTES:

1. What do you wish you had been able to do before you participated in your first few FTM's as an invited team member?
...Before your first Co-Facilitation?

2. What could be done differently in FTMP training to enhance new Facilitators' effectiveness?
3. What additional training or information do you need in order to facilitate a successful FTM when DV is a risk?
4. What handouts might help in training?
5. What skills or strategies could be demonstrated and practiced in training?
6. What kind of coaching do you need from a mentor...a supervisor...an experienced peer?...what do you most want to learn?
7. What other ways could community partners help new Facilitators?

	Discussion

Thursday, May 27, 2004, 1:00–2:00 p.m.
E. Douglas Pratt, *D.S.W., LCSW*, Presenter
Robin Leake, *Ph.D.*, Facilitator

E. Douglas Pratt presented an evaluation project entitled *The Efficacy of the Focus Group Method for Evaluating Performance Sustainability after Outcome-Based Training*. The discussion centered on how to collect representative data using focus groups, methods of data collection, the role of the focus group facilitator, and factors that contribute to a successful focus group.

Topics of Discussion

I. Collecting Representative Data Using Focus Groups:

The group raised the concern that information gathered in focus groups often conflicts with the results of written surveys. In fact, the minority voice in the focus group sometimes becomes mistaken as a majority voice. Symposium participants shared a number of strategies for differentiating between the minority voice and the majority voice using the focus group method:

- Conducting frequencies on the answers to the facilitator's questions can help differentiate the minority voice from the majority voice. Focus group facilitators must take measures to ensure that they are getting an accurate representation of the group. It is very easy to either cut off criticism of the training or let all complaints spill out and cloud the character of the data.
- Training evaluators in Ohio use the Classroom Performance System (CPS) in order to avoid the problem of mistaking the minority voice for the majority voice. The question is posed and everyone must respond before people are allowed to comment. This allows the evaluators to collect a frequency distribution first and then ask for

follow-up comments. This format minimizes the group-think process that can occur in focus groups.

- The focus group facilitator must anticipate that group-think will be a problem, and must have some strategies to address this problem. Putting everything out on the table right at the beginning of the focus group has been a helpful strategy. The facilitator lays the ground rules for the focus group in a positive way and tells the participants that they are going to elicit everyone's response. A second strategy is to use sub-groups within the focus group. Immediately after asking a question, put people in dyads to discuss the questions with one another. The dyads will later report back to the entire group.

II. Focus Groups—Evaluation or Intervention?

In addition to being an evaluation method, focus groups often border on intervention itself. During his presentation, Douglas Pratt mentioned that elements of parallel process were used when he conducted focus groups:

- Training focus group participants on parallel process is a possibility within the focus group method, but this is secondary to eliciting and recording participants' responses while maintaining neutrality. "Maybe I could have been explicit about my use of parallel process, but we didn't really feel like that was our primary job. The focus group attendees were able to see the report later, where we discussed the use of parallel process within the focus groups."
- The principles underlying the use of parallel process in focus groups is to be group-centered and strengths-based. We can choose to train in a very traditional way—information heavy, expert to student, pedagogy, and so on. We can also train using methods that are almost the same as those used in our practice. For example, supervisors, coaches, and mentors can consciously use parallel process to develop relationships with new workers in the way that we want workers to develop relationships with families. This can also extend to the way that administrators develop relationships with supervisors.

III. Role of the Facilitator:

- The facilitator maintaining a neutral position in the focus group is critical. When there is a strong dissenting voice, the facilitator should frame the comment by stating that he/she wants to hear from everyone and everyone's view is valid. When an issue arises during a focus group, the facilitator can bring the issue back to the group to gauge the other participants' reactions. Try to elicit a response from each focus group participant. This will help assess whether it is one outlying idea or if other participants share similar concerns. The facilitator must be cognizant that his/her role is to gather information and see the focus group evolve, not to react to comments or speculate.
- A participant stated that she preferred to facilitate focus groups with a partner. Partners should have a set of codes to let one another know when they are acting as a participant rather than a facilitator. The participant felt that in certain situations it was okay to share some knowledge with the group but that these moments needed to be clearly identified.

IV. Data Collection:

A participant raised a concern that when he examined the transcriptions of a focus group she recently facilitated, he was horrified to discover that he had not maintained a neutral tone throughout the group. This alarmed him because he thought he had been neutral while facilitating the group. Suggestions were made for data collection within the focus group method:

- Having transcribers, who are familiar with the content area, in the room when focus groups are being conducted can be helpful for recording information that the facilitator(s) missed.
- Another participant stated that she often videotapes focus groups. She has found that although people act a little bit robotic at first, as soon as the discussion begins to heat up in the room people forget that the camera is on.

V. Successful Focus Groups:

The group discussed various aspects of successful focus groups.

- The culture of the organization where the focus group is taking place has a large impact on its success. When the organizational culture promotes reflection upon practice, focus groups work very well. Otherwise, better information can be gathered from individual interviews.
- Giving each participant the notes from their focus group and contacting them directly allows the facilitator to gather more information. This additional contact can also strengthen the relationship between the facilitator and the focus group participants.
- A participant shared that people are generally excited to participate in focus groups. This setting gives individuals an opportunity to come together and talk about what is going on in their lives and their profession, share their concerns, and build camaraderie. This was viewed as a great benefit of focus groups; people have an opportunity to build a network and a sense of community, which is often lacking in their jobs.
- The Walk About Survey is a unique way to elicit responses from people who don't want to speak. Specific questions that you want to collect data on are written on chart paper throughout the room. Each individual walks around the room, post-its in hand, and responds to each question. When this process has been completed, the group comes together as a whole and discusses the responses elicited through the Walk About Survey. One symposium participant has used the Walk About Survey to conduct needs assessments. In addition, this method has been very helpful when mixed levels of representation from an organization are in a room. A full range or frequency of the group is garnered using this method. Finally, if evaluators use this method multiple times, trends can be identified.
- Another participant found that focus groups conducted in the early deliveries of a new program have been very useful in pin-pointing problem areas. Focus group findings often confirm the problem areas within a program.

	Supervisors' and Employees' Perceptions of Transfer of Learning in a Child Welfare Pre-Service Training Course

Elizabeth Lindsey, *M.S.W., Ph.D.*, and Basil Qaqish, *M.A.*

Abstract

A Transfer of Learning (TOL) program was developed to complement a Pre-Service Training program (PST) for new child welfare staff. To evaluate the impact of this TOL program, a cross-sectional survey of employees and supervisors was conducted, using a stratified random sample. The overall response rate was 81% (85% for employees and 75% for supervisors), and the survey items showed good reliability. This article presents results from a comparative analysis of data from employees and their supervisors. Both groups believed that TOL activities were relevant to employees' jobs and prepared new employees for their jobs. Employees were able to link classroom learning to their job duties and apply that knowledge and skill as they began work in their new positions. While there were a few differences in perceptions between supervisors and employees, overall, both groups agreed on the value of the TOL process. Recommendations for modification to the TOL component focus primarily on the amount of time the program takes and how to enhance supervisory support for employees with respect to TOL activities. Other child welfare training programs considering use of a structured transfer of learning process as a complement to classroom instruction may find it useful to take these results into consideration as well.

Introduction

In 1997, the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation requiring that all new child welfare staff attend a pre-service training course prior to having direct contact with clients. In 1998, the North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) Family

Support and Children's Services Section Staff Development Team began offering a mandatory training program, *Child Welfare in North Carolina*, also known as Pre-Service Training (PST). This article reports on results from the evaluation of a new component of PST, Transfer of Learning (TOL), implemented in fall 2002.

PST consists of a 72-hour, four-week training program that focuses on foundational knowledge required for child welfare practice in North Carolina. The first two weeks of training take place in the classroom; in the third week of training, participants return to their county DSS offices for on-the-job training experience; and for the fourth week they return to the classroom. In 1999–2000, focus groups were conducted with child welfare supervisors to assess their perceptions of PST. One of the major findings of that study was that supervisors desired a more structured approach to the third week's on-the-job training experience. As a result of this feedback, the Staff Development Team developed the TOL package, which includes activities for PST trainees during the third week of training as well as some activities that carry over into the last week of classroom training.

Implemented in the fall of 2002, the purpose of the TOL package was "to provide guidance to supervisors in orienting and training new child welfare workers" (NCDSS, 2002, p. 1). The manual is designed to be used by new employees to complete a number of activities directly related to PST classroom content. While the TOL process is largely self-directed, supervisors are encouraged to provide guidance to new employees and assign them experienced mentors to oversee their experience.

Although a majority of TOL activities are designed to be conducted during Weeks 3 and 4 of PST, two orientation activities involve: 1) a pre-training conference between supervisor and employee and 2) an employee review of computer-based training modules that are available on-line and provide an orientation to the North Carolina social service system. In general, TOL activities involve interviewing staff, shadowing experienced staff, accompanying staff to visits to other community agencies, working with actual case records, and reading and responding to case scenarios. Trainees bring their completed TOL packets with them to Week 4 of PST during which time they use some of the TOL material for in-class discussions and exercises. All participants must complete the TOL materials to fulfill the requirements of PST. At the conclusion of PST, trainees turn in their materials to

the trainers who assess their work and mail feedback to their supervisors within a month of the conclusion of PST.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the level of transfer of learning that takes place and to gather information on both employee and supervisor perceptions of the relevance and effectiveness of the TOL material. This information will be used to modify the TOL material to improve its usefulness to supervisors and training participants. A secondary purpose of the evaluation is to assess perceptions of PST training and learning, overall.

Methodology

The evaluation was conducted using a cross-sectional survey design. Data was collected from employees who had completed PST at least three months previously and their supervisors.

Instrumentation

Two surveys, one each for employees and their supervisors, were developed. Drafts were reviewed by the state's Training Evaluation Advisory Committee, responsible for overseeing the evaluation of the entire child welfare training system, TOL curriculum developers, and trainers who teach the PST curriculum and manage the TOL process.

The employee survey contained questions about the amount of time respondents spent working on the TOL activities, the relevance of the different activities, and their knowledge and level of preparedness to take on job tasks. Most survey items used a likert-scale-type measure (1 to 6 rankings), and a few were dichotomous "Yes/No" type questions. For the most part, the supervisor survey contained items that were similar to those in the employee survey, but from a supervisor's perspective.

The overall reliability of both instruments is acceptable. Reliability of likert-type items was .77 on the employee survey and .78 on the supervisor instrument. Reliability for dichotomous items was .62 on the employee survey and .69 on the supervisor instrument. Copies of both surveys are available upon request from the authors.

Sample Size and Data Collection

The surveys were sent to a stratified random sample of child welfare staff who took PST during July through October of 2003 and their supervisors. The sample was stratified to secure approximately equal numbers of participants from each of the four PST sessions that were held during this period. During this

four-month period, a total of 167 employees completed PST. Surveys were sent to a random sample of 76 employees and their supervisors three months after the end of each employee's training. A reminder letter was sent two weeks later. If there was still no response from the employee or the supervisor, a second and, eventually, a third survey were sent.

Rates of return were very good for a mail survey. Out of a total of 76 employee surveys, 65 were returned, yielding an 85% response rate. For supervisors, 58 usable surveys out of 76 were returned, for a supervisor response rate of 75%. The overall response rate, for both employees and supervisors combined, was 81%.

There were 51 matched pairs of employees and supervisors. Power analysis of the sample of 51 matched pairs showed good power (0.87), indicating a sufficient number of matched pairs to compare the two groups statistically.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Employee and supervisor data were analyzed separately, and there was a comparative analysis of matched pairs of supervisors and employees. This paper addresses only the comparative analysis. T-tests and McNemar's tests were used to compare employee and supervisor responses.

Results

Table 1 below reflects results of t-tests that compare employee and supervisor responses to items related to overall perceptions of PST and the TOL process. With respect to item 2, supervisors estimated that the amount of time required to complete the TOL process was almost twice that of what employees reported. Similarly, on item 4, there was a statistically significant difference in supervisors' and employees' estimates of the percentage of total time required to complete the TOL material that employees were able to do in the office during Week 3. A possible reason for the differences between employees and supervisors on items 2 and 4 may be the difficulty of questions that ask respondents to approximate time and percentages of time. However, the large differences in the means may also indicate a lack of understanding by supervisors about the amount of time TOL takes.

**Table 1: Pre-Service Training and the Transfer of Learning Process
(Employee items 2, 4, 5, 6 vs. Supervisor items 1, 2, 3, 4)**

Item *	Employee Mean	Supervisor Mean	Mean Difference (Emp - Sup)	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
2. Approximately how many hours did you spend working on the Pre-Service Training Transfer of Learning Package during weeks 3 and 4?	16.78	30.15	-13.37	-2.70	0.01**
4. Approximately what percent (%) of the hours in question #2 did you complete while you were at the office during week #3?	60.57	44.02	16.55	2.36	0.02**
5. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="None or almost none"; 6="All or almost all"), approximately how much knowledge have you been able to transfer from the Pre-Service Training curriculum to your current duties?	4.43	4.43	0.00	0.00	1.00
6. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Completely irrelevant"; 6="completely relevant"), how relevant was the transfer of learning process to your current duties?	4.33	4.59	-0.26	-1.33	0.19

* Item language is from the employee survey. Similar supervisor items were reworded. Item numbers above are also from the employee survey.

** Statistically significant, $p < .05$

Table 2 compares employees' and supervisors' responses to items about the relevance of each of the 10 TOL activities. The second column indicates the percentage and number of employees who completed that activity who rated the activity. For example, 29 employees indicated that they completed the "Roles and Functions in Child Welfare" TOL activity. Of those, 93% rated that activity as "most relevant." The same calculation is used in column 3, which reflects the percentages and numbers for supervisors. Column 4 shows the percent difference between columns 2 and 3. Because the data in Table 2 is dichotomous, we used a nonparametric test, McNemar's, to see if there were any significant differences between the two groups. As seen on Table 2, there are no statistically significant differences between employees' and supervisors' responses to any of the items.

Table 3 reflects employees' and supervisors' opinions about whether specific TOL activities should be required of all PST participants. McNemar's test was used for this analysis as well. There are only two activities for which there were significant differences between employees and supervisors. Comparing the significance values from Table 2 to their counterparts in Table 3, it seems apparent that employees agreed more closely with supervisors with regard to the *relevance* of the different activities than they did about whether the activity should be *required* or not. Even so, there is not really any apparent pattern of disagreement between the two groups, other than the two activities noted.

Table 4 shows that there were significant differences between employees and supervisors with regard to estimating the number of hours they met to develop TOL objectives (item 4). However, as described earlier, this type of question that asks people to estimate exact numbers often poses problems, and the validity of this item is questionable. Items 5 and 6 exhibited statistically significant differences in patterns of responses regarding employees' level of knowledge and preparation prior to PST, with supervisors rating their employees' knowledge of child welfare more highly than did the employees and employees rating their own level of preparation for the job more highly than did their supervisors.

**Table 2: Relevance of TOL Activities
(Employee items 8.1a-8.10a vs. Supervisor items 5.1a-5.10a)**

Item* If you completed [TOL Activity], is that activity MOST relevant to your current duties?	Employees % (N)**	Supervisors % (N)**	Difference (Emp - Sup)	McNemar Sig. (2-tailed)
Roles & Functions in Child Welfare	93% (29)	92 % (49)	1%	1
The Role of the Community in CPS	84% (32)	77 % (27)	7%	1
Laws, Rules, Policies, & Standards	98% (44)	96 % (56)	2%	1
Cultural Competence	86% (37)	77 % (31)	9%	0.45
Child Development	93% (44)	89 % (37)	4%	0.63
Assessing Child Sexual Abuse	90% (39)	92 % (39)	-2%	1
Social Work Interview	95% (42)	94 % (50)	1%	0.63
Functional Assessment	86% (35)	83 % (41)	3%	1
Investigative Process	95% (41)	96 % (50)	-1%	1
Ingredients of a Case Decision	98% (42)	91 % (47)	7%	1

* Item language is from the employee survey.

** N in columns 2 and 3 corresponds to the number of respondents who answered that question. For instance, for “Roles and Functions”, 93% of the 29 employees who answered that question said that that activity is “most relevant” to their job duties (0.93 x 29 = 27 respondents).

**Table 3: Should Specific TOL Activities Be Required?
(Employee item 8 vs. Supervisor item 5)**

Activity	Employees % (N)**	Supervisors% (N)**	Difference (Emp - Sup) %	McNemar Sig.(2-tailed)
Roles & Functions in Child Welfare	30% (50)	55% (51)	- 25 %	0.02*
The Role of the Community in CPS	11% (47)	14% (51)	- 3 %	1
Laws, Rules, Policies, & Standards	58% (50)	80% (51)	- 22 %	0.04*
Cultural Competence	17% (47)	16% (51)	1 %	1
Child Development	31% (49)	22% (51)	9 %	0.50
Assessing Child Sexual Abuse	29% (48)	20% (51)	9 %	0.54
Social Work Interview	32% (50)	43% (51)	- 11 %	0.24
Functional Assessment	17% (48)	22% (51)	- 5 %	0.79
Investigative Process	50% (48)	35% (51)	15 %	0.28
Ingredients of a Case Decision	52% (48)	41% (51)	11 %	0.30

* Statistically significant, $p < .05$

** N in columns 2 and 3 corresponds to the number of respondents who answered that question. For instance, for "Roles and Functions", 30% of the 50 employees who answered that question said that that activity should be required ($0.30 \times 50 = 15$ respondents).

**Table 4: Questions Pertaining To “Before Pre-Service Training”
(Employee items 1-6 vs. Supervisor items 1-4, 6, 7)**

Item *	Employee Mean	Supervisor Mean	Mean Difference	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
1. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Poor"; 6="Excellent"), rate the quality of preparation for training your supervisor gave you.	3.86	3.98	-0.12	-0.22	0.83
2. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Poor"; 6="Excellent"), rate your understanding of your new job duties.	4.29	4.51	-0.22	-0.86	0.39
3. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="None or almost none"; 6="Extensive"), how much information about TOL did your supervisor give you before you started Pre-Service Training?	3.32	2.88	0.56	1.45	0.15
4. The week before you started Pre-Service Training, approximately how many hours did you meet with your supervisor to develop TOL objectives?	1.86	4.78	-2.92	-2.83	0.01**
5. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your level of knowledge about child welfare in North Carolina before you started Pre-Service Training.	2.88	3.49	-0.61	-2.26	0.03**
6. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your level of preparation for your new job before you started Pre-Service Training.	3.10	0.69	2.41	9.22	0.00**

* tem language is from the employee survey.

** Statistically significant, $p < .05$

Table 5 compares items related to employee experiences during PST. There were no statistically significant differences in how employees and supervisors responded to these questions.

Table 6 compares employees' and supervisors' perceptions of the employees' experience and abilities after PST. There are no statistically significant differences between the two groups on any of these items. It is important to note that the two groups agreed that employees were moderately well prepared for the job and had a high level of knowledge one week post-PST.

Employees were asked if they were assigned an experienced employee as a mentor *before* starting PST. Supervisors were also asked if they assigned an experienced employee as a mentor for the new employee. Of the 51 employee responses, 31 (61%) said they were assigned a mentor. Of the 49 supervisor responses, 34 (69%) said that they assigned a mentor to the new employee. McNemar's test indicated there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups on this item.

Employees and supervisors were also asked about the assignment of an experienced employee as a mentor to the new employee *after* PST. Of the 51 employee responses, 30 (59%) said that they were assigned a mentor. Of the 48 responses by supervisors, 30 (63%) said that they assigned a mentor to the new employee. McNemar's test indicated no statistically significant difference between the two groups on this item.

**Table 5: Questions pertaining to “During Pre-Service Training”
(Employee items 8-10 vs. Supervisor items 8-10)**

Item*	Employee Mean	Supervisor Mean	Mean Difference	t	Sig (2-tailed)
8. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your ability to link content you learned in Pre-Service Training to your job tasks.	4.57	4.25	0.31	1.27	0.21
9. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Rarely"; 6="Daily), rate how often you were given an opportunity to apply information you learned in class.	4.59	4.08	0.51	1.78	0.08
10. While you attended Pre-service Training, approximately how many times did your supervisor talk to you about your progress?	3.87	5.14	-1.27	-1.8	0.08

* Item language is from the employee survey.

**Table 6: Questions Pertaining to “After Pre-Service Training”
(Employee items 14-18 vs. Supervisor items 13-16)**

Item *	Employee Mean	Supervisor Mean	Mean Difference	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
14. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Poor"; 6="Excellent"), rate the quality of your mentoring experience.	5.34	5.03	0.31	1.13	0.26
15. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your level of knowledge about providing child welfare services in North Carolina one week after you returned from Pre-Service Training.	4.39	4.16	0.23	1.01	0.32
16. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your level of preparation for your new job one week after you returned from Pre-Service Training.	4.24	4.16	0.08	0.33	0.74
17. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your current level of knowledge about providing child welfare services in North Carolina.	4.96	4.9	0.06	0.35	0.73
18. On a scale of 1 to 6 (1="Low"; 6="High"), rate your current level of preparation for your new job.	4.98	4.98	0.00	0.00	1

* Item language is from the employee survey.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate supervisors' and employees' perceptions of the Transfer of Learning (TOL) component of the child welfare Pre-Service Training (PST) program. A secondary goal was to assess respondents' perceptions of the extent to which PST, as a whole, prepared new employees for their positions. Interpretations of data included in this section are informed by feedback from the PST trainers and curriculum developers as well as Staff Development Team management and relevant scholarly literature.

Perceptions Regarding Transfer of Learning to the Job

Overall, both PST participants and their supervisors reported that PST and the TOL process prepared new employees for their jobs. Both groups agreed that employees were able to transfer a moderate amount of PST knowledge to their jobs, which compares favorably with data on transfer of knowledge from other human service training programs reported by Curry (2001). Supervisors and employees also agreed that employees were able to link PST content to their job tasks, which is another way of demonstrating that they are transferring knowledge from training to the work environment. Further evidence of transfer of learning are both groups' relatively high assessments of employees' knowledge and level of job preparation one week after PST.

Perceptions Regarding TOL Material

Relevance to job duties. Supervisors and employees alike assessed TOL positively. They believed that, overall, the TOL process was relevant to employees' duties and that all of the individual TOL activities were also relevant to employees' jobs. These findings are important because employee perception that training material is relevant is a predictor of the extent to which employees will be able to utilize learning on the job (Alliger et al., 1997; Curry, 2001).

Recommended requirements for TOL. Although employees and supervisors indicated all 10 TOL activities were relevant to employees' job duties, only 4 of the 10 TOL activities were recommended to be required for all participants. Discussion with PST trainers and curriculum developers suggested several possible reasons for this apparent inconsistency. First, several of the TOL activities are quite time-consuming and require that employees gain access to other staff. According to PST trainers, participants often find it extremely difficult to gain such access and may be

frustrated in their attempts to complete those activities. Therefore, they may be much less likely to believe these activities should be required. Furthermore, the fact that a majority of employees reported not having enough time to complete the TOL material at the office probably contributed to their reluctance to require all activities. Second, participants may prefer having some choice about what TOL activities they complete, rather than being required to do them all. PST trainers and managers report that employees and supervisors alike are focused on the aspects of training that they perceive to be relevant to the employee's specific job and, in general, do not value as highly activities that are not directly related to the job. Third, some new child welfare employees may believe they know some or most of the material that is covered in PST and the TOL package. Staff who have worked for the agency in other capacities or who have a social work degree may believe that they already know the material that is covered in a particular module and believe they should not be required to go back over material they already know.

Preparedness for training. While employees and supervisors believed that employees are generally well prepared for training, both groups agreed that supervisors do not always provide their employees with much information about the TOL process before training. Also, employees indicated they spent less than half the number of hours indicated by supervisors on discussion of TOL objectives with their supervisors, which may indicate a lack of understanding of the question or what TOL objectives are. Despite the possibility of measurement problems with this and other items that require estimates of time, this finding is somewhat disturbing since research indicates that preparation for training and later preparation for application of learning are factors that affect transfer of learning (Curry, 2001).

Required time commitment. There was a large and statistically significant difference of opinion between employees and supervisors regarding how much time the TOL activities actually take. Supervisors tended to believe that the activities took, on average, almost twice as much time as employees actually reported they spent doing the activities (30 hours vs. 17 hours, on average). Similarly, supervisors and employees did not agree on the percent of total TOL time employees completed at the office (60% vs. 44%). There was a high degree of variability among both employees and supervisors on both of these items, possibly

indicating a measurement problem with the item itself. However, it is possible that supervisors really do not know exactly what their employees are doing and how long it takes to complete the TOL package.

The issue of time is one that has been at the heart of PST since its inception. County administrators and supervisors want new employees trained as quickly as possible so they can assume caseloads. In the focus groups that were conducted to assess supervisors' perceptions of PST, the length of training time was a major issue (Lindsey, 2000). At the same time, supervisors also want workers to return from training fully prepared to assume a caseload. This inherent tension between the amount of time needed to adequately prepare a child welfare worker and the agency's need to have a person in the field doing the job is evident in this assessment of TOL as well.

Mentors and TOL. A majority of employee respondents to the survey were assigned a mentor prior to attending PST. The survey did not inquire about their experience with this mentor, so that data is not available. However, people who were assigned a mentor *after* PST rated their mentoring experience extremely highly. Both employees and supervisors also believed employees received a moderately high level of follow-up assistance from their supervisors during PST. This is extremely important as research has shown that employees' likelihood of transferring knowledge and skills to the job is affected by the degree of supervisor and organizational support they receive (Curry, 2001; Warr & Allan, 1999).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The TOL process was designed to provide new child welfare staff with a bridge between the classroom and the agency work environment. This evaluation shows that the process is, in general, being implemented as intended and is having positive results. Employees are able to link classroom learning to their job duties and apply that knowledge and skill as they begin work in their new positions. The high level of agreement between employees and supervisors regarding the relevance of the TOL activities and how employees perform on the job after training provides solid support for the TOL process and material.

However, these results also suggest several recommendations for modifications to the TOL component of PST. The material

should be reviewed with respect to the issue of time, with special attention given to the number and type of activities that are required of all participants, keeping in mind that the purpose of the PST and TOL is to provide training that is adequate for a new worker to begin the job. If that cannot be accomplished by reducing the amount of material or time involved for TOL, clearly the need to meet training objectives is paramount. The Staff Development Team should continue to educate PST participants and their supervisors about the amount of time employees actually need to complete the TOL material and emphasize with supervisors the importance of giving employees time at the office during Week 3 to complete TOL rather than having them begin work on caseloads or other duties.

It will also be important to continue to educate supervisors about the importance of being involved with and accessible to new employees as well as providing mentors for them, both before PST, during Week 3, and after PST. While respondents indicated a majority of employees were assigned mentors, a very large minority were not, and thus their ability to make most effective use of training and the TOL process was likely diminished.

A review of the TOL process and materials, with attention to issues raised by this study, will enhance the training system's ability to prepare North Carolina child welfare staff to begin their careers with a solid foundation of knowledge and skill they need to work effectively with families and children. In addition, child welfare training programs considering use of a structured transfer of learning process as a complement to classroom instruction may find it useful to take these results into considerations as they develop their own transfer of learning strategies.

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	Discussion

Thursday, May 27, 2004, 2:15-3:15 p.m.

Basil Qaqish, *M.A.*, Presenter

Jane Berdie, *M.S.W.*, Facilitator

Basil Qaqish's presentation on his work with Dr. Elizabeth Lindsey engendered a lively discussion of Transfer of Learning. The discussion began by inquiring about the differences in workers' and supervisors' perceptions of the Transfer of Learning and understanding the importance of these differences. The focus then changed to methodological matters, such as how the researchers managed to have such a high survey response rate, the differences between paper and electronic surveys, and what impacts response rates.

Topics of Discussion

I. Workers' and Supervisors' Perceptions of the Transfer of Learning (TOL):

- Employee and supervisor ratings of the TOL reflect very different perspectives. For example, supervisors thought that employees were spending about four times as much time than the employees thought they were. This raised the question of why the two perceptions were so different and what, if any, follow-up would be done in response to the great differences in perceptions.
- Differences in perspectives depend on supervisors' expectations of training and how much time workers *should* spend on TOL activities, which emerged in the Qaqish's focus groups with supervisors. There was a wide variation in how supervisors viewed the efficacy of training itself and even the efficacy of preparedness of workers. Supervisors usually just want someone to get to work right away. This may have, in part, influenced their perceptions.

- In response to participants' self-ratings being much higher than the supervisors' self-ratings, the researchers found that when supervisors were involved in planning the participant action plan, they seemed to actually pay more attention to what the worker was doing. When the worker rated himself or herself higher without the participant action plan, the supervisors may not have been "tuned in" to how workers were applying what they learned. Most likely, the true score is somewhere between the scores of the supervisors and the workers. When the supervisors participated in developing the action plans, all the supervisors rated the participants' application higher than the participants did themselves.
- The purpose of this study related to perceptions of what learning took place, or *what should have been learned* versus an objective review of *whether learning actually took place*. It's not an objective evaluation of whether workers learned a particular skill; it is about their perception of whether they learned it or if it's applicable to their work.
- The study is about perception, but the strength of the research focuses on perception coming from two sources—the workers and the supervisors. The focus of attention has to be on the difference in two perceptions, not the absolute value of what each perception is. The researchers looked at how the supervisors perceived the TOL differently than the employees. An old sociological idiom elucidates the point: when you have many subjective perceptions and they form a pattern, you can begin to comment on objective reality. One cannot look at individual perceptions per se unless there is a pattern of those perceptions and that's what the focus of attention needs to be.
- In another study in which supervisors and supervisees were surveyed about the supervisees' training, the same pattern of different perceptions emerged. Supervisors consistently thought that supervisees had learned less than the supervisees thought they had. It's not that the supervisors are right and the supervisees are wrong; there's no way of objectively saying how much the supervisees have learned. This observation raised the question of the meaning behind the differing perspectives.

- Qaqish responded that the results are good on their own merits in that they will be used to improve the training. The researchers collected constructive views on the various activities. One could conduct focus groups with the supervisors and with the supervisees to see what changes should be made to the training and develop recommendations based upon the findings. In fact, some of the qualitative questions on the survey attempted this. There's no right or wrong response; but there may be a better way of doing the same activity, which is the purpose of the survey.

II. Increasing Response Rates:

The response rates in this study were high, and the group wanted to know more about how to achieve this.

- Getting a high response rate may have to do with how you deal with people. Suggestions offered for how to increase response rates based on successful strategies applied in this study were as follows:
 1. The language one uses should be friendly.
 2. It is always helpful to have someone with a Ph.D. sign the letter attached to the survey to give more credibility to the study.
 3. A week after sending out the survey, send a postcard kindly stating that the participant received a survey, that it had not been returned, and that the participant is requested to fill it out and return it.
 4. Two or two and a half weeks later, if the survey is still not completed, send another with no additional note.
 5. If in another week you still don't get anything back, send an additional survey with a very friendly letter, stating that the recipient was chosen through randomization, and without the participant's information, the study will not be as valuable.

Through strategic persistence, Qaqish ended up with a high response rate. Eighty-five percent of the workers and 76% of the supervisors responded compared to the return rates for most studies, which are around 25% to 30%. Had the

response rates not been so high, it is always helpful to have participants' telephone numbers on-hand to follow-up by phone.

- High response rates may be determined not only by the process by which one sends out and follows up on surveys, but what one does from the very beginning, before evaluation of training begins. A great deal of time and energy meeting with various stakeholders to create buy-in to evaluation is essential. Even having supervisors participate in focus groups helps to give them a greater sense of ownership in evaluation.

III. Electronic Surveys:

The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of electronic survey methods.

Pros

- Having to mail out a paper survey and follow up with a sample of over 2,500, for instance, is a very laborious task.
- Los Angeles County has reported their employees are responding very well to their own electronic surveys.
- In his book, *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*, Don Dillman writes about using Internet surveys. According to Dillman, electronic surveys get better response rates.

Cons

- After getting high response rates using a mail survey it may be challenging to feel confident switching to electronic surveys.
- Electronic surveys may just be preferred due to the novelty of electronic communication and are unlikely to yield higher response rates. Otherwise, the reluctance or barriers to responding to surveys, electronic or paper, wouldn't appear to be different. If a participant doesn't feel like responding to a survey, it doesn't matter whether it arrives via e-mail or regular mail. Deleting an e-mail is as easy as throwing a piece of paper away. Theoretically, there doesn't seem to be a difference. The increased use of electronic surveys may be due to the excitement or satisfaction of using new technology and the perception that it is more efficient.

- Part of the California Workforce Survey is on-line and 3,000 of the responses were sent on-line through a web-based survey. The kinds of feedback received in e-mails from the workers were: “Wow, that’s a really cute survey” and “This is exciting.” The fact that some of the counties don’t allow Internet access to their workers served as a barrier. However, the response rate for electronic surveys was not found to be higher than the mailed surveys.
- It is important to be aware of how one uses electronic surveys. For example, asking participants to evaluate a training by returning to their offices following the session to do the evaluations on-line has yielded a terrible response rate. The advantage of using paper surveys is that one may administer it immediately following a training, while participants are still a captive audience.

Additional Comments on Using Electronic Surveys:

- It’s not necessarily that electronic surveys will maximize the response rate; there are several other technical issues that impact response rates. For example, there are a number of people currently doing research looking at this exact factor in controlled studies, such as what impacts on response rates do electronic forms have versus not.
- Some of the significant factors are technological, such as whether or not one has a relational database. The types of language that one uses, such as how much Java script there is, come into play technologically to impact response rates in some of the preliminary studies done by researchers in this field.
- Navigational issues are another factor that has emerged from this area of research. Especially for web-driven electronic instruments, the extent to which a participant knows how far along he or she is from one page to the next is a factor that’s showing consistently in some preliminary studies. In fact, researchers are presenting on this issue at the American Statistical Association (ASA) conference this year.

	Evaluating the Impact of Training on Staff Retention

Miriam J. Landsman, *Ph.D., M.S.W.*

Abstract

This article describes a federally funded child welfare training project that has a primary goal of improving recruitment and retention in public child welfare agencies. The initiative is a collaboration between the University of Iowa School of Social Work and the Iowa Department of Human Services.

The project emerged as a federal child welfare training priority from recent child welfare workforce studies that highlight the role of supervisors and managers in improving retention of public child welfare employees. The specific model for the Iowa training project was developed from the principal investigator's research on commitment in public child welfare. This research used structural equation modeling to estimate the relative effects of the following: workplace variables; job stressors; professional identification variables; and controls on public child welfare employees' job satisfaction, commitment, and intention to remain in the agency and in child welfare practice.

Eight months into a five-year grant, this article describes the empirical and conceptual basis for the model, tasks and issues that have emerged in early project implementation, and plans for the evaluation of process, short-term, and long-term outcomes.

Introduction

The challenges of recruiting and retaining qualified and committed employees in public child welfare agencies have long been acknowledged and debated (Alwon & Retitz, 2000; Child Welfare League of America, 2001; Gibelman & Schervish,

1996; Hopkins, Mudrick, & Rudolph, 1999; Kamerman & Kahn, 1989; Pecora et al., 2000; Russell, 1987). Trends toward the de-skilling of public social services, including child welfare, have continued even as the demands on public child welfare agencies—to serve high-need families, with limited agency resources, and to resolve permanency and safety for children more expeditiously than ever—have increased.

Research on public child welfare retention has shifted from a focus on correlates of job satisfaction or turnover (Fryer, Miyoshi, & Thomas, 1989; Harrison, 1995) to stress and burnout models (Drake & Yadama, 1996; Harrison, 1980; Um & Harrison, 1998) to examinations of the organizational contexts of child welfare practice (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998; Landsman, 2001; Vinokur-Kaplan, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1994). This growing body of research has illuminated some of the reasons for the challenges found by the child welfare workforce, as well as some of the potential solutions.

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

In response to this newer body of research, the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funded eight five-year projects around the country to develop collaborations with public child welfare agencies for effective models of training to improve recruitment and retention in public child welfare. The project outlined below represents one of the projects, a collaboration between the University of Iowa School of Social Work and the Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS).

Iowa's Workforce

While Iowa's turnover rate is not high (except in the larger urban centers) compared with other states, Iowa has recently endured a massive budget reduction by the state legislature. The budget reduction resulted in losses in training resources, elimination of regional offices, and a re-organization that reduced the number of administrative staff (including county directors) by 118 positions and left an additional 35 case management positions vacant. Thirty-four of the 99 county offices are now open less than full time, with additional coverage provided by contiguous county offices. After the reorganization was complete, IDHS retained approximately 700 direct service workers, 85 supervisors, and 15 administrative staff. These changes left staff responsible for increasingly large geographic areas and higher workloads. Supervisors and managers had fewer opportunities to interact among peers and with those under their supervision. According to the recent Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), workloads in Iowa's public child welfare agencies were three times the national average.

Beyond the impacts of the budget cuts, Iowa had no defined competencies for child welfare supervisors and had no training program for supervisors. Supervisors are almost completely drawn from among line staff who move into supervisory positions without any formal training relative to their new responsibilities. The federal grant provided an opportunity to develop such a training program and to work with IDHS at a time of great need.

Project Implementation

Assumptions about retention and training

Key assumptions about retention and training are relevant to this effort. First, it is assumed that retention of effective staff is desirable for any organization, including public child welfare agencies. The reasons are widely acknowledged: retention of effective staff keeps knowledge and experience at the agency; turnover is costly in terms of resources required to recruit and train new employees; and turnover creates burdens on remaining staff as well as gaps in coverage, which may have negative impacts on children and families. However, it is also assumed that not *all* staff retention is desirable. The agency would not retain staff who cease to be effective in their work, who may not be suited to public child welfare work, or who (despite training and counseling) do not

improve their skills. Ineffective staff place other burdens on the rest of the staff, their supervisor, the agency as a whole, and the agency's clientele. One must, therefore, regard retention as a goal with a qualifier.

Next, it is assumed that training is a valuable activity for enhancing skills and improving staff performance, and that training can address some of the factors contributing to staff retention, such as perceived support from the supervisor, the agency, and community. Training alone cannot address all of the factors contributing to staff retention, however, such as excessive caseloads and promotional opportunities within the agency. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that training can play a role in improving retention, but it may not be sufficient to improve retention if other systematic barriers are not addressed.

Empirical Research Base

The conceptual model for this training project is based on Landsman's (2001) research on commitment in public child welfare in another Midwestern state. Using a cross-sectional survey approach, this research used structural equation modeling to estimate a causal model of commitment and turnover intentions. It examined the relative effects of many different structural features of the workplace, job stressors, professional variables, and relevant control variables on employees' job satisfaction, commitment, and intentions to stay at the agency and continue in child welfare practice.

Findings indicated that in a multivariate causal model, a relatively small number of key variables affect job satisfaction and commitment. Specifically, commitment was enhanced by three factors: stronger perceived support from both the supervisor and the agency; opportunities for advancement within the agency; and a strong service orientation, (a belief in the value of child welfare work on the part of the worker). Conversely, commitment was reduced when workload was perceived as excessive and when the employee perceived negativity from the community toward the agency.

Many of the factors that have been suggested as contributing to commitment were not significant in this multivariate causal model. These variables included: job security, support from coworkers, autonomy, decision-making authority, perceived bureaucratization, emotional stress of the work, job safety, role conflict, role

ambiguity, salary, and perceived agency fairness in how employees are treated.

The research suggests that several training strategies may improve retention of line staff. These include training for supervisors that strengthens support, and improving supervisors' skills in identifying workers with a strong service orientation, and in nurturing that service orientation. Creating promotional opportunities and manageable workloads are less likely to be solved completely through a training program.

Conceptual Framework

Three illustrations depict the conceptual model for the training project. Figure 1, the *Basic Model*, postulates that supervisor training can have an impact on staff retention:

Figure 1. Basic Model: Supervisor training can have an impact on staff retention

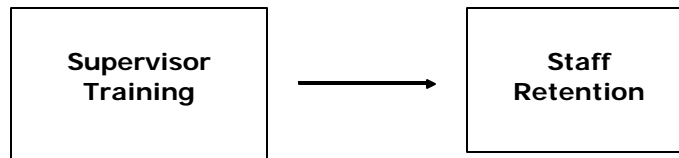


Figure 2, the *Conceptual Model*, describes the process by which the basic model unfolds. Providing training to supervisors helps to strengthen supervisors' skills, their sense of self-efficacy, and their perceived support. This, in turn, is hypothesized to improve workers' skills, sense of self-efficacy, and perceived support, which leads to enhanced commitment on the part of workers and a greater likelihood of retention.

Figure 2. Conceptual Model: How supervisor training affects staff retention

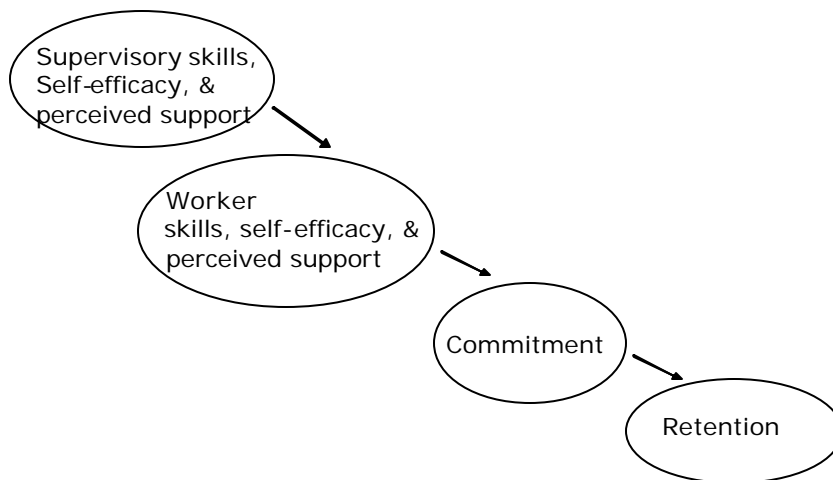
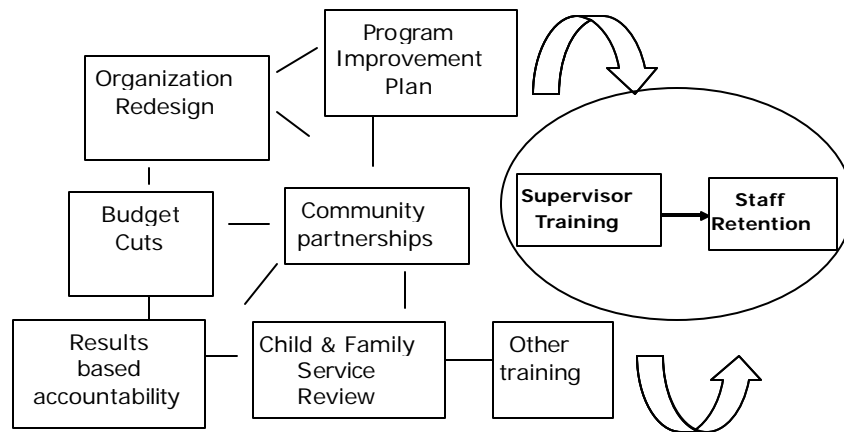


Figure 3, the *Ecological Model*, helps to contextualize the training initiative by placing it in a broader framework. While the focus of our initiative is on the encircled relationship between supervisor training and staff retention, the ecological model illustrates that much more is occurring in the larger organizational and community environment. Related factors and initiatives, such as budget cuts, the organization redesign mandated by the Iowa state legislature, the Program Improvement Plan that emerged from the federal CFSR, and other training activities that are ongoing at IDHS may have their own independent influences on training of supervisors and on staff retention.

Figure 3. Ecological Model: Training in a broader context



Tasks and Issues in Early Implementation

As we began implementation of this training project, we were keenly aware of the recent organizational restructuring and its impact on IDHS employees. We did not want to enter into the project as yet another initiative coming down on IDHS. Therefore, we felt it was important to build investment in the project from stakeholders at all levels.

This process began with developing a role for the existing IDHS training committee on the recruitment and retention project. The training committee serves as an advisory group to IDHS in all training activities. We asked this committee to also serve as the advisory group for the recruitment and retention project. The committee meets monthly, usually via teleconference calls, and the recruitment and retention project is on the monthly agenda to provide updates and advice on upcoming activities.

Also early on in the project, the principal investigator met with the key administrators overseeing field operations throughout the state to provide an overview of the new recruitment and retention project, to answer their questions, and to hear their concerns as we began implementation.

Next, we needed to connect with the supervisors around the state, those individuals who would be the primary recipients of training. Child welfare supervisors in IDHS tend to be highly experienced child welfare employees, many with long tenure in the department. Despite the fact that they have not received training specifically in supervision, many have extensive experience as supervisors. We felt it was very important to hear directly from them about their training needs.

We went about this task by conducting focus groups with supervisors in each of the eight service areas around the state. The groups ranged in size from 4 to 11 participants each, with a total of 67 supervisors participating in the groups. The key questions for the groups focused on: 1) what works well for supervisors currently?; 2) what are the challenges that supervisors face currently?; and 3) what specific areas would be useful for them in a supervisory training program?

Following completion of the focus groups, which were audio-taped and transcribed, we prepared a summary of key findings and disseminated this to all supervisors. We kept this summary limited to a little over two pages, in response to the supervisors' request for a summary that would be brief and highlight major points.

We then used the information from these focus groups as the basis for a draft of supervisor competencies. In creating this draft, we also referred to developmental work that IDHS had begun previously on supervisor competencies, which had been interrupted by the budget cuts. We also compared the competencies that emerged from the focus group data with those from existing curricula for child welfare supervisors available from other child welfare organizations. A working group of IDHS training staff reviewed and refined the draft set of competencies, which were then shared with the statewide training committee for further review and comment, and with the service area administrators who oversee field operations throughout the state.

The competencies are organized into five general areas, each of which contains a set of specific competencies. The general areas are: 1) understanding and supervising within the organization, which concerns the supervisor's role within the organization, communication at various levels, etc.; 2) managing work through people: the human resources role, which deals with a variety of personnel and performance related tasks; 3) social work supervisor as clinical supervisor, which focuses on the supervisor's important role in supporting and guiding effective practice; 4) supervisor's role in public and community relations, which addresses strategies for improving the agency's image in the community, handling stakeholder complaints, etc.; and 5) supervisor's role in addressing personal stress and safety issues, which relates to both supervisors and their staff.

The next step involves sharing the competencies with all supervisors and asking them to self-assess for each one on two dimensions. The first dimension is the degree of perceived need for skill development. The second is the perceived importance of each competency to their job. This approach was adapted from the MidSouth Training Academy at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock's Supervisor Individual Training Needs Assessment. The combination of perceived need and perceived importance produces a score for each competency. Our plan is to use this information to help prioritize areas of focus for training.

Evaluating Training To Improve Retention

The project evaluation plan includes attention to process and outcomes as well as both qualitative and quantitative modes of data collection and analysis. The process evaluation focuses on

implementation issues, while the outcome evaluation will examine both short-term and long-term changes that are anticipated as a result of the recruitment and retention project.

Key issues for the process evaluation concern the development of supervisor competencies, design of the training program around key competencies, and supervisor participation and engagement in the training program. We have evaluated the face and content validity of the supervisor competencies, first through reviews by various stakeholders (as described previously). We will conduct an empirical validity assessment through the self-assessment pre-test, which will provide data from each of the supervisors on the importance of each competency to their job. Another key process measure will be participation in the training program itself.

Our plans for the outcome evaluation will identify both short-term and long-term outcomes that we anticipate as a result of the project. Short-term outcomes include: 1) consumer satisfaction with the quality and usefulness of training; 2) improvement in competencies over time as measured through self-assessment; and 3) utilization of skills learned through the training program.

The first short-term outcome, consumer satisfaction, will be measured following completion of each training module using a survey research method. While consumer satisfaction is often criticized as an inadequate measure of training effectiveness, we contend that it is an important component (though not sufficient by itself) in an evaluation of training effectiveness.

The second short-term outcome, improvement in competencies over time, will be measured using the self-assessment of supervisor competencies at pretest and at posttest. The final short-term outcome, utilization of skills learned in training, will most likely be evaluated using a qualitative interview process. In addition to utilization of skills, we will be examining barriers to using the skills and techniques taught in the training.

Longer-term outcomes of interest to this project are those that refer to change in factors that are related to retention as well as actual employee retention. Specifically, we will be examining changes in perceptions of the workplace and subsequent changes in job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and intentions to stay or leave. These outcomes will be measured through an online employee survey administered this year and to be re-administered in the final year of the project.

We will also be gathering data on job changes within IDHS, including promotions and transfers within and across county offices. These data, as well as voluntary and involuntary turnover, will be collected from IDHS central office.

Next Steps and Challenges

At eight months into a five-year project, we feel that much has been accomplished in a short time; yet, much remains to be done. Prioritizing the key areas for our first round of training, and developing and field-testing the curriculum are our next tasks for the remainder of this first year.

The training program will be implemented during a period of continuing change in the service environment. IDHS will be implementing its plan for organizational redesign, including a practice model emphasizing the use of family team meetings statewide and a new initiative to reduce disproportionality among minority children and families in the child welfare system. The Program Improvement Plan that responds to the C FSR will be finalized and implemented. As the state of Iowa continues to struggle with budget deficits, financial constraints are expected to remain a factor in service provision.

A key challenge is maintaining a primary focus on our goal of improving recruitment and retention through training while remaining cognizant of and responsive to those ecological changes which have an impact on the training program and on retention. No training program is ever really immune from these external influences but the nature of our program requires a higher level of sensitivity in this area. As we learn more about the impact of training on staff retention over these next few years, we hope to provide the training symposium audience with the results of our efforts.

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	Discussion

Thursday, May 27, 2004, 3:30–4:30 p.m.
Miriam Landsman, *Ph.D.*, *M.S.W.*, Presenter
Sherrill Clark, *Ph.D.*, *LCSW*, Facilitator

Miriam Landsman's presentation on staff retention led to a discussion of the types of training areas that supervisors want or need and the different ways to train supervisors and their staff. Participants offered their experiences and perspectives on what types of training have been most helpful and effective and whether training can have a lasting impact on the agency and its organizational climate.

Topic of Discussion

I. Training Areas to Enhance Competency of Supervisors

The group discussed areas of focus for potential supervisor training.

- One problem for supervisors is that they are responsible for a much greater geographic coverage than they were prior to the budget cuts. They work out of multiple offices and don't have a lot of face-to-face contact with all of their staff. They asked for how to provide clinical supervision more efficiently; how to meet the needs of their workers in this new era of management when they are not present in many of the cases.
- One of the ways workers may experience increased perceived support is to provide supervisors with skills to better manage their time, given the constraints under which they work. This skill building may allow workers to feel that they have more access to their supervisor.
- Supervisors also grapple with managing challenging staff, those who are underperforming. Supervisors express having difficulty dealing with feelings of resentment or

dissatisfaction among workers who feel that there is someone in their unit who isn't doing his or her share and their supervisor spends all his or her time with that person. If we can teach better human resource management skills to supervisors, it will give them better strategies for managing those difficulties while helping the performing staff feel that they are getting the support they need.

- Regarding retention, agencies need to consider the impact of staff workload and promotional opportunities. Workload may be partly managed by teaching efficiency methods, but it cannot take care of the problems that emerge with heavy workloads. It is important to underline that training can change some things but it can't change everything.

II. The Impact of Different Types of Training Strategies:

- The presenter explained that the original plan for this Iowa study called for doing one wave of supervisor training, hooking supervisors up in a mentoring role with their trainers, then doing a second wave of training, where supervisors and their workers would be trained together. It may be that there is so much training the supervisors need that they are unable to follow this plan. It may be better to use more of the resources to do more of the supervisor training upfront. The impact of training workers and supervisors together appears unclear at this point.
- One participant offered her experience in conducting years of supervisor training. First, supervisors receive foundational training. Advanced training is then offered in particular topic areas throughout the year. Supervisors have the opportunity to participate in training continuously. "Supes Exchanges" were incorporated a couple of years ago. These morning meetings involve supervisors spending an hour or hour and a half on some topic area and then spending the rest of the time in small groups, strategizing about how to deal with that particular issue in their own work environment. The opportunity to do a little whining, receive some support, and do some brainstorming has been one of the more valuable pieces of supervisors' learning. Many may not necessarily consider this a part of training. However, providing supervisors with the opportunity to receive information on a topic area and then allowing them

to think about, discuss, and receive feedback on their own struggles has been incredibly helpful to them in their role as supervisors. Looking at how these exchanges play out with respect to retention would be important.

- Another participant offered a similar format for supervisory training that appeared to be effective. Supervisors come together at quarterly forums with their local managers and discuss, “Here’s what’s working; here’s where we still need your support; here’s the message we need you to get out agency-wide.” The forums give supervisors an opportunity to ask for things and also tell managers how things are going. Although it is difficult to arrange administratively, this model seems to have worked really well with staff.
- The University of Kentucky has a week-long program with their training academy where they begin by bringing their supervisors in for a day of training. They then have two or three days when they bring the supervisor and their whole unit in for training and a final one-day training with just the supervisors. The strategy is to have supervisors work on some of the things they learned on the first day with their staff as a hands-on training.

III. Supervisory Training and the Organizational Climate:

- In response to the question of whether supervisory training can, in turn, impact the organizational climate of an agency, there is a pervasive belief that supervisors really are the key to change within the organization. In fact, there is research that supports this assertion. It’s a big task to make a change in the organizational climate and organizational atmosphere of an agency. From an ecological perspective, it means changing many of the ways that people perceive themselves and the way they are treated, especially at a time when there are major organizational changes occurring.
- A participant offered his experience in attempting to change behavior in individuals. In so doing, he has learned that one-shot training proves to be ineffective. Even if you conduct the training over several months, if you leave the original group to train other supervisors, you’re not going to make an impact on the organizational culture.

IV. Barriers to Implementing Training:

- One must remain cognizant that agency staff with whom we work may not understand training as *strategic* as opposed to *technical*. Perhaps, this disconnect accounts for some of the barriers encountered when giving staff feedback or when trying to implement the training itself. People don't like change in general. Especially in turbulent times, they like it even less. Yet, there's something to be said for making the strategic purpose of training more explicit.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Evaluation Methodology for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program’s Caseworker and Supervisor/Manager Core Training Pilots</p>

Claudia K. Hoffman and Timothy McCarragher, *Ph.D., LISW*

Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the development, piloting, and evaluation of Ohio’s revised Core curricula for line workers and managers/supervisors. Evaluation data will be collected at multiple levels using multiple methods.

Introduction

The mission of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) is to promote the delivery of high quality, family-centered child welfare services to abused and neglected children and their families by assuring staff in the child welfare system are properly trained. State law mandates caseworkers, supervisors, and managers receive Core training within the first year of employment to increase the competence of Ohio’s child welfare staff. Core training is designed to provide essential foundation-level content and skill. The OCWTP delivers the mandated Core training for new caseworkers, supervisors, and managers in Ohio’s 88 county child welfare agencies.

The OCWTP is in the process of revising Caseworker and Supervisor/Manager Core training to:

1. Reflect national research and best practice standards;
2. Address current issues faced by Ohio’s caseworkers, supervisors, and managers;
3. Provide opportunities for caseworkers, supervisors, and managers to develop fundamental skills as quickly as possible;

4. Integrate pre-training readiness activities and post-training skill-development activities into Ohio's standardized Core curricula.

The OCWTP Steering Committee appointed four work teams to plan, develop, pilot, and evaluate the newly revised Core training: Assessment, Core Revision, Skill Building and Transfer, and Evaluation. The work teams, comprised of staff from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, the eight Ohio Regional Training Centers, county child welfare agencies, the Institute for Human Services, trainers, content experts, and evaluation consultants, developed extensive work plans to assure the coordination of activities. In addition, a Technology Work Team was formed to assist the OCWTP in the continuing use of technology in training and evaluation activities, and to develop a new learning management software system to support statewide training. The revised Core training will be piloted and evaluated from April 2004 through May 2005.

Goals for Evaluating the Revised Core Training Pilot

This evaluation project was designed to:

1. Collect data about the extent to which the revised Core training meets the current learning needs of Ohio's child welfare workforce;
2. Report evaluation findings to key stakeholders for additional revisions to Core curricula to enhance training outcomes;
3. Collect information about the pilot evaluation process to inform the development of a continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated system for the evaluation of OCWTP training activities.

The evaluation project will collect data to improve the quality and delivery of the revised Core training, as well as collect data to determine whether the revised Core training resulted in certain predetermined outcomes. For example, the evaluation might determine whether a skill taught in training is reflected in the follow-up learning lab simulation.

Objectives of the Evaluation

The methodological approach is designed to meet the needs of five key stakeholder groups: the Core Revision Work Team, the Skill Building and Transfer Work Team, the Evaluation Work Team, the OCWTP Steering Committee, and the Ohio Department

Job and Family Services. Evaluation Work Team members and consultants worked with stakeholder groups to establish a common understanding about the expected outcomes of evaluation activities, define those outcomes in measurable terms, and prioritize the questions with the highest systemic impact to be addressed first. These discussions resulted in the following evaluation objectives:

1. To determine, in selected competency areas, the extent to which caseworkers, supervisors, and managers participating in the pilot mastered Core competencies, and to what level of learning;
2. To determine trainees' opinions and perceptions about the revised Core content, organization, and training methods;
3. To determine trainers' opinions and perceptions about the revised Core content, organization, and training methods;
4. To determine trainees' and trainers' opinions about the pre-training readiness activities and post-training skill-development activities;
5. To collect data about the revised Core training directly related to Ohio's Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP);
6. To collect data about the pilot evaluation process and outcomes to help inform the development of the OCWTP comprehensive evaluation system.

Generally, the evaluation project will gather a large amount of previously unknown data with which to build general ideas and theories

Revised Core Trainings

The eight revised Caseworker Core and five revised Supervisor/Manager Core trainings to be piloted and evaluated are:

Revised Caseworker Core

- Module I: Family-Centered Approach to Child Protection
- Module II: Engaging Families in Child Protective Services
- Module III: Legal Issues in Child Protective Services
- Module IV: Assessment in Family-Centered Child Protective Services
- Module V: Investigative Processes in Family-Centered Child Protective Services
- Module VI: Case Planning and Casework Process in Family-Centered Child Protective Services

Module VII: The Effects of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development

Module VIII: Attachment, Separation, and Placement

Caseworkers are taught the family-centered approach to engaging families in investigations, case planning, placing children, and working towards reunification. Beginning-level skill development in case planning, interviewing, and preparing children for placement occurs during Core training. As part of the revision of Caseworker Core, several of the current Core workshops were shortened in length to reduce trainee fatigue, and to increase the opportunity for skill-development activities between workshops.

Revised Supervisor/Manager Core

Module I: Leadership in the Child Welfare System

Module II: Leadership in Organizational Development

Module III: Leading Individuals in a Learning Organization

Module IV: Leadership with Groups

Module V: Casework Supervision

The revised Supervisor/Manager Core series is designed to prepare supervisors and managers to be leaders in their own work units, in the child welfare agency, and in the larger community family-serving system. Modules I through IV are applicable to both line supervisors and middle managers in a child welfare agency, regardless of the functions of the units they supervise. Module V is designed specifically for supervisors and managers of child welfare casework units.

OCWTP Products and Resources

The evaluation methodology for the revised Core pilot refers to several OCWTP products and resources:

1. *OCWTP Revised Core Competencies*

The term “Core” is used by the OCWTP to represent knowledge and skills fundamental and essential to all members of a targeted work group to perform their jobs. The Universe of Competencies for both Caseworker and Supervisor/Manager Core has been revised to ensure that all OCWTP competencies are current, relevant, and reflect best practice in child welfare.

2. *OCWTP Pre-training Readiness Activities*

Pre-training readiness activities are completed by caseworkers and supervisors/managers prior to attending classroom training. The purpose of pre-training readiness

activities varies with each Core training. Pre-training readiness activities may be required to:

- a. Increase caseworker or supervisor/manager awareness of a problem or issue;
- b. Provide foundation knowledge to be further developed in the classroom training;
- c. Prompt a caseworker or supervisor/manager to identify a real case study for use in a classroom training application exercise.

3. *OCWTP Skill-Development Activities*

Skill-development activities are post-training interventions designed to help caseworkers and supervisors/managers apply and master prioritized skills. Skill-development activities may include:

- a. Self-directed learning activities;
- b. Shadowing an experienced worker demonstrating the needed skill(s);
- c. Learning labs providing application practice;
- d. On-the-job interventions, such as on-site coaching or mentoring.

4. *OCWTP Training Partnership Plans*

An OCWTP Training Partnership Plan outlines the steps a county child welfare agency will take, in partnership with its Regional Training Center and the OCWTP, to ensure skill-development and transfer-of-learning opportunities for staff. A Training Partnership Plan is designed to accelerate learning and the mastery and application of new skills.

Pre-training Readiness and Skill Development Activities

During the pilot process, several of the revised Core modules include a mandatory pre-training readiness assignment and/or a mandatory post-training skill development activity. Tables 1 and 2 identify the Core pre-training readiness and/or post-training skill-development activities to be evaluated.

Table 1. Pre-training Readiness and Skill-Development Activities for Caseworker Core

Revised Caseworker Core			
Module	Pre-training Readiness Activity	Days of Classroom Training	Post-training Skill Development Activity
I Family Centered Approach to Child Protection	Yes - Reading assignment	2 Days	Yes – Apply training content to an agency case & review with supervisor
II Engaging Families in Child Protective Services	No	1 Day	Yes – ½ day learning lab on engagement skills
III Legal Issues in Child Protective Services	Yes – Reading assignment and prepare questions	2 Days	No
IV Assessment in Family-Centered Child Protective Services	No	2 Days	Yes – One day learning lab on assessment skills
V Investigative Processes in Family-Centered Child Protective Services	No	1 Day	Yes – One day learning lab on interviewing skills
VI Case Planning and Casework Process in Family-Centered Child Protective Services	Yes - TBD	3 Days	No

VII The Effects of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development	Yes - TBD	3 Days	No
VIII Attachment, Separation, and Placement	No	3 Days	No

Table 2. Pre-training Readiness and Skill-Development Activities for Supervisor/Manager Core

Revised Supervisor/Manager Core			
Module	Pre-training Readiness Activity	Days of Classroom Training	Post-training Skill Development Activity
I Leadership in the Child Welfare System	Yes – Reading assignment	2 Days	Yes – Identify transformational & transactional approaches to leadership; track using strength-based questions with staff
II Leadership in Organizational Development	Yes – Conduct an organizational assessment of their agency	3 Days	No
III Leading Individuals in a Learning Organization	Yes – Identify strengths and barriers to staff performance	2 Days	No
IV Leadership with Groups	No	3 Days	Yes - TBD
V Casework Supervision	Yes – TBD	2 Days	Yes – TBD

Caseworkers and supervisors/managers will receive pre-training readiness assignments at least 10 days prior to attending the Core classroom training. The skill development activities will be held approximately two weeks after the classroom training.

Evaluation Research Design

The research design addresses the questions of how the research will be structured, who will participate in the research, and when and where the research will be implemented.

Revised Core workshop evaluation data will be collected from three sources:

1. Caseworkers and supervisors/managers participating in the revised Core pilot;
2. Revised Core trainers;
3. Revised Core training observers.

Evaluation data will be collected regarding the effectiveness of the revised Core content, organization, and training methods. These categories represent the primary components of all OCWTP in-service training curricula and will help to identify further revisions needed to the revised Core.

Identifying Pilot Participants

Regional Training Center staff contacted county child welfare agency executive directors or agency supervisors to discuss the revised Core project and to recruit participants for the pilot. This proactive outreach by RTC staff was important for two reasons. First, it was critical that as many newly hired, or newly appointed agency staff as possible participate in the pilot program. Second, county agency executive directors had to agree to the following requirements for caseworkers or supervisors/managers to participate in the revised Core pilot:

1. Support the trainees and their supervisors throughout the pilot process;
2. Allow reasonable accommodations for trainees to participate in pre-training readiness activities, classroom training, and post-training skill-development activities;
3. Complete the OCWTP Training Partnership Plan that outlines these responsibilities, and how the agency and Regional Training Center will work together.

Data Collection from Participants

The longitudinal nature of this evaluation will link all data collected from the training participants into one data set. Trainees

will be assigned personal identification numbers at the beginning of the first module, which will link their demographic information, pre- and post-test scores for the workshops, and their scores on the skill-development activities. Although the sample size of this pilot evaluation is small, the longitudinal nature of the evaluation process will strengthen the findings.

Demographic Data

Prior to beginning the first module, demographic data about the participants (e.g., age, race, education, and work history) will be collected using a paper survey. While most quantitative data from the trainees will be collected using the Classroom Performance System, this system significantly reduces the measurement level of the demographic data (e.g., only being able to indicate a range for years of work experience in child welfare, rather than an actual number of years.) This information will be linked through an ID number to other data collected in the evaluation.

Pre- and Post-tests

Trainees for the eight Caseworker Core modules and five Supervisor/Manager Core modules will be given a pre-test at the beginning of each workshop and a post-test at the completion of each workshop. The tests will be administered using the Classroom Performance System (CPS) used by the OCWTP. CPS is a wireless response system that allows every participant to respond instantly to questions. The pre- and post-tests will consist of 10 to 15 questions to measure knowledge acquisition and knowledge comprehension. Because of the complexity and expense of developing a valid and reliable revolving test bank of questions, the same questions will be utilized for both the pre- and post-test.

All questions will be developed in careful consultation with the Core Revision and Skill Building and Transfer Work Teams. Evaluation Work Team members and consultants with extensive experience in training child welfare staff will meet with the revised Core curricula developers to identify appropriate content for the questions. In order to establish face validity of the questions for the pre- and post-tests, the questions will be reviewed by the curriculum developers, work team members, and other experts in the field prior to including them in the pilot evaluation.

Focus Groups

At the conclusion of each classroom training, the trainees will participate in a brief focus group session, to explore their opinions and perceptions of the workshop and the pre-training readiness

activity, if one is assigned. In order to efficiently collect information from all trainees, the focus group questions will be asked using CPS, with the trainees responding to the questions using their keypads. If a clear consensus emerges from the group's responses, the facilitator will move on to the next question. If there are varied opinions and perceptions, the facilitator will elicit additional qualitative comments from the trainees. Because the trainees will use the CPS for their initial responses, these responses can be linked to their pre- and post-test scores, again strengthening the chain of evidence. To help assure the trainees are comfortable expressing their opinions, trainers will not attend the focus group sessions.

Skill-Development Activities

In addition to classroom training, skill-development activities will be developed for several Core workshops. In order to appropriately measure the level of learning of the trainees, specific evaluation strategies will be designed for each skill-development activity. Because the skill-development activities include a more "hands-on" approach to learning, a standard pre- and post-test utilizing quantitative questions would be inappropriate, and an inaccurate measurement of skill development or demonstration. Therefore, other evaluation methodologies, such as observation and content analysis, will be utilized.

For example, at the beginning of a skill-development activity that focuses on engaging families in case planning, a case study would be presented to the trainees, asking them to identify specific strategies they would utilize in order to engage the family. At the conclusion of the skill-development activity, the trainees would be presented with the same case study, along with their previous responses, and asked to identify any changes they would make to their previous responses. A standardized instrument to quantitatively score their responses will be developed.

This approach will accomplish two objectives. First, it will provide a clear pre- and post-test score of skill development or demonstration. Second, it will serve as a means of practicing the skills covered in the skill-development session, allowing the trainees to recognize their own skill development. The pre- and post-test scores will be recorded using the unique CPS ID numbers of trainees, which will be linked to the pre- and post-test scores of the workshops, as well as trainees' responses during the focus group sessions.

Identifying Pilot Trainers

The Core Revision Work Team considered several factors when choosing trainers for the revised Core pilot. For both Caseworker and Supervisor/Manager Core, OCWTP master trainers were selected. Master trainers have trained for the OCWTP for a considerable period of time, have consistently scored high levels of satisfaction on the standardized OCWTP evaluation form, and often have mentored other trainers. In addition, for the revised Supervisor/Manager Core, trainers were selected who have demonstrated the ability to train all current Supervisor/Manager Core modules, and who have broad in-depth knowledge of current management theories and practice. Supervisor/Manager Module V—Casework Supervision will be trained by an OCWTP master trainer with direct experience supervising child welfare caseworkers or managing line supervisors.

Pilot trainers will be involved in the development of the revised Core curricula, affording them the opportunity to become familiar with trainer background resource materials, and to discuss content and training methods during the curriculum development process.

Data Collection from Trainers

Evaluation data will be collected from trainers after each revised Core workshop and skill-development session. Upon completion of the training workshop and skill-development session, a trainer will be given a questionnaire with open-ended questions to collect their opinions and perceptions on content, organization, and training methods. Trainers will receive both a hard copy and an electronic version of the questionnaire, which they will complete and return to the Institute for Human Services (IHS). Then the trainer will participate in a follow-up phone interview to clarify or expand upon their questionnaire responses.

Data Collection from Workshop Observers

Either a revised Core curriculum developer, or a Core Revision Work Team member, will observe each revised Core training. A structured approach will be taken for workshop observation, by utilizing a detailed data collection guide specific to each Core workshop, and by instructing observers on observation methods. The data collection guide contains a set of questions about the revised Core curriculum content, training methods, and organization. It resembles a survey instrument, with space for recording purposes.

Observers will be told how to record what they know happened and what they think happened during the workshops, and will be instructed to look for specific actions and behaviors of the trainers. The observers will not participate in the training workshop.

Data Analysis

All pre- and post-test and focus group information will be collected utilizing CPS. The CPS data files will be emailed to Dr. McCarragher for conversion into a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for data analysis and to report findings. The demographic information, and the data generated from the skill-development activities, will also be forwarded to Dr. McCarragher.

Because of the longitudinal nature of the data collection process, the primary method of analysis will be a series of paired sample t-tests, and analysis of variance (ANOVA). This will provide a comparison between pre- and post-tests. Pearson's product moment correlations will compare the post-test scores to the scores on the skill-development activities. The demographic information will be analyzed with measures of central tendency, including mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation.

Qualitative data from the focus groups, trainer questionnaires/interviews, and workshop observations will be reviewed by a team of IHS staff, research/evaluation consultants, and the OCWTP Evaluation Work Team to identify themes and summarize conclusions. In order to ensure a uniform process of thematic review of the qualitative data, the focus group facilitators, workshop observers, and Dr. McCarragher will meet to summarize the information after the pilot workshops have been completed for each Core module.

The qualitative data will be examined using a thematic analysis, looking for emerging patterns and trends in trainees', trainers', and observers' responses. Triangulation will be established by comparing the trainer, trainee, and observer qualitative data to the quantitative data generated from the pre- and post-tests and skill-development activities.

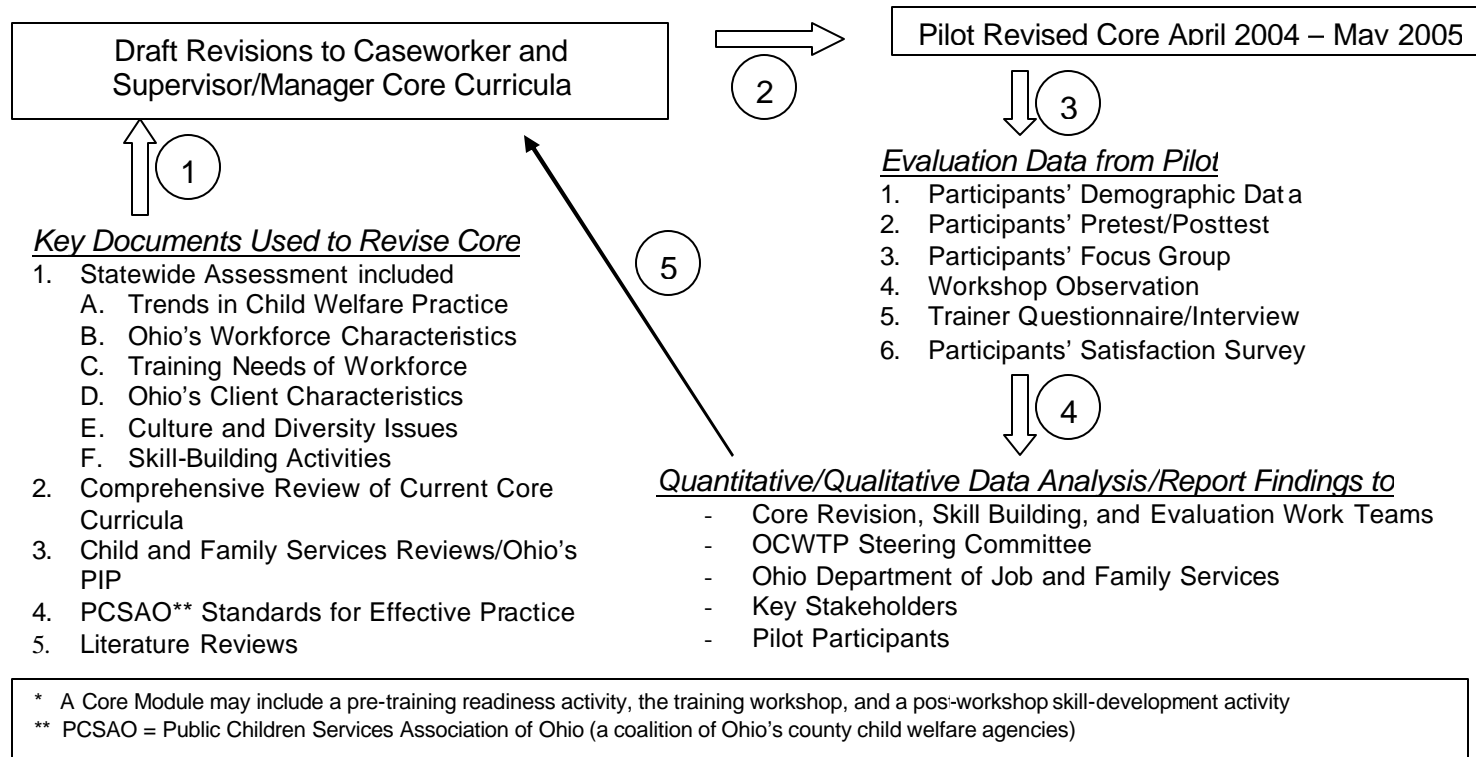
Reporting the Data

Because the revised Core training pilot will extend over 13 months, the Evaluation Work Team will report findings to the Core Revision and Skill Building and Transfer Work Teams after each workshop. In addition, a series of quarterly reports summarizing

the evaluation findings will be developed and disseminated to the OCWTP Steering Committee and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, beginning June 2004.

The following diagram summarizes the process described in this paper.

**The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program
Revised Caseworker and Supervisor/Manager Core Modules* Pilot
Evaluation Activities**



	Discussion

Friday, May 28, 2004, 9:15–10:45 a.m.

Claudia K. Hoffman and Timothy McCarragher, *Ph.D., LISW*,

Presenters

Michael Nunno, *D.S.W.*, Facilitator

Claudia K. Hoffman and Timothy McCarragher presented on the evaluation process of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program's revised caseworker and supervisor/manager core trainings.

Discussion regarding the details of their training and evaluation processes revealed innovative strategies to incorporate evaluation into the participants' learning, and new methods of data observation, collection, and analysis. Implications for including stakeholders in the process and what they wanted to learn from the data were also discussed.

Topic of Discussion

I. Post-Training Skills Assessment:

There was great interest in learning about the process of the post-training skills assessment and how the role play of case scenarios occurred and how it was evaluated.

- Two issues in setting up this skills assessment need to be addressed. First, one or two trained observers must be present at each training, and this has staffing implications. Second, activities must be structured for the other participants while a dyad is being observed.
- One way to address what participants may do while the dyad is observed is to have the other participants present observe the dyad and complete feedback forms. These forms wouldn't necessarily go into the scoring of the evaluation but would get turned in to the person who is practicing. Giving and receiving additional feedback on the role play enhances the learning of each participant.

- In Ohio, the trainees are divided into groups, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Both groups cover the same content.
- The trainees are then grouped into dyads in the post-training role play so that they experience both the role of the worker and that of the family member. The classes aren't large and there are a couple of trained observers.

II. Assessing the Training and the Curriculum:

- One advantage of using Classroom Performance System (CPS) for the focus groups is being able to identify a clear consensus. For example, the first module had too much information to cover and CPS revealed there was a clear consensus among all of the focus group participants that there was way too much information provided. So, if everyone responds that they strongly agree that it was too much information, you can move on to another question.
- Another piece of the evaluation involved having people who participated in the curriculum development sit in the back of the room and conduct observation during training, to ensure that everything was covered. There was a very detailed checklist that was four or five pages long and the observers would check off items that were missed.
- The observers also watched the reaction of the participants to see if there was something that was obviously not clear or if it was obvious that there was an exercise that had gone on for way too long. There was a big discussion about this initially whether that would make the participants feel uncomfortable. However, after a few minutes, participants appeared to forget that they were there.
- The trainer questionnaire for the trainer who presented the curriculum asked a series of questions on how the training could be improved. The person who developed the curriculum met with the research team to determine what could have been done better, what was clearly missing, what needed to be revised. A report was generated from the meeting's feedback.

III. Specific Techniques for Skills Evaluation:

The group discussed various aspects of implementing skills-based evaluation, which was reviewed in more detail.

- In order to avoid making the pre-test and post-test so invasive that they took up more time than the actual training, the evaluators incorporated evaluation into skills training.
- The purpose of the post-training is both to give participants a chance to practice what was covered in the module, as there is no time for them to practice what they are learning during the training, and to continue to evaluate what they learned.
- For the engagement process in the post-training evaluation, a video is shown of a social worker trying to engage a family. It is clear in the video that there are specific problems that need to be identified and addressed. After the participants view the video, they receive a series of open-ended questions based on what they observed in the video, such as: “What were the strengths of the family?”; “What do you think are issues?”; “What would you want to address?”
- After the open-ended questions are covered, the trainees have the three-hour training. At the conclusion of the training, they are given a post-test, which involves giving them back the original sheet of paper that they initially completed and being told, “Here is how you responded initially to the questions about the video; how would you respond now?” The series of responses back and forth allows the post-test to be incorporated into part of the learning experience. Again, those responses are linked with each participant’s CPS pad.
- Answers to the open-ended questions are then evaluated. The evaluator developed ten items that she would expect trainees to identify as to the social worker’s strengths, weaknesses, and other issues that should be addressed.. Trainees’ responses are then scored in terms of how many of those items participants’ identified in their initial assessment compared to their final assessment.
- An advantage of using CPS is that it allows you to link participants to their demographic information, their pre-test

and post-test scores, their focus group scores, and their pre- and post-test scores on the role play observation.

- Another advantage of using CPS is that it allows you to download the participant responses into an Excel spreadsheet that you can then cut and paste from into SPSS, making transmitting data exceptionally easy.

IV. Planning and Implementation of the Evaluation:

The group posed various questions about the planning process for the evaluation.

- A question was posed regarding the inclusion of county managers prior to the training evaluation or after the pilot testing in order to examine whether responses fit with county practice.
- The researchers did include county staff throughout the entire process by meeting with the executive directors of all the counties in the state describe the initial findings and explain the process.
- Sometimes the inclusion of stakeholders, without clear explanation of the process from the start, can create high expectations of the data. The executive directors were very interested in getting their workers' post-test scores. The researchers had to explain in detail the type of aggregate data they were collecting, that this was a pilot study, and that people volunteer to participate and that there are no consequences for their outcomes. This was a difficult sell. The executive directors were much more interested in individual data than they were in the aggregate data.

V. Resources for Skills Evaluation:

- A video about interviewing and engagement, entitled "The Forrester Family Video" and used in one of the early caseworker modules, was a joint project of Ohio and Oklahoma. It is available on the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program's Web site. The video used in the post-workshop came from Florida.

	Measuring Organizational Culture: A Field Biology of Training Evaluation

Robert Highsmith *Ph.D.*, and Henry Ilian, *D.S.W.*

Abstract

This paper reports preliminary findings from a large-scale evaluation of common core training provided to supervisors in the New York City child welfare system. It focuses on the impact, prior to training, of 12 aspects of the organizational culture on productivity and morale. In a 360-degree evaluation, participating supervisors, their caseworkers, and their own supervisors rated the participants' units highest in "setting high performance standards for work unit staff" and lowest in ensuring that "work unit staff feel that they are positively valued and their contributions are appropriately evaluated and rewarded." Moreover, increases in participants' ratings on "setting high performance standards..." were associated with the largest statistically significant increases in supervisors' ratings of productivity and morale. A smaller, but statistically significant, increase in supervisors' ratings of productivity and morale resulted from increases in ratings of "feelings that the authority system competently responds to the organization's needs." In carrying out the evaluation, the organizational environment—organizational culture and structure—exerted a major impact in reshaping the evaluation design.

Introduction

This paper examines the intersection of training evaluation and organizational culture from two vantage points: the impact of organizational culture on productivity and morale; and the role of

organizational culture, and, by extension, structure in conducting the evaluation. To encompass the two vantage points, we have adopted the metaphor of field biology, by which we mean both all the activities necessary in order to measure training effectiveness and the actual measurement of training effectiveness. This is analogous to the activities of biologists who, in order to collect their data, are constrained to take into account the realities presented by the habitats of the objects of their research. In order to attach identifying tags, take blood and fecal samples, measure wingspread or attach radio collars, it may be necessary to scale cliffs, chase mother eagles from their nests, or anesthetize polar bears. We have not had to do anything quite as dramatic, but it has been as necessary for us to incorporate the constraints and the opportunities presented by an organizational environment that is as real in its effects on the types of data that can be collected and on the investigator's success in collecting the data as is the natural environment within which field biologists work.

The study of organizational culture particularly lends itself to a description of the interaction between the culture and attempts to measure it, and it is in this spirit that we report both the way in which the process was shaped by the organizational culture and some early results of an evaluation of a large-scale training endeavor. As such, it presents pre-training data on the effects of two sets of characteristics that are part of an organization's culture: on culture and on productivity.

The distinction between measures of the culture and activities necessary to measure it is especially relevant in reporting on research conducted within a large organization, where the shaping effects of the organizational structure and culture can have a profound impact on the way the research is carried out. This is akin to Kaplan's (1963) distinction between what he calls logic-in-use, the actual process of investigation, including missteps and serendipitous discoveries, and reconstructed logic, the way in which the description of the process is made to fit the formal conventions of scientific reporting. He argues that the former is as important in the growth of knowledge as the latter.

Method

The SupCore Evaluation Project has been described more fully elsewhere (Ilian, 2004). The description here concentrates on the components of the project necessary to understand the pre-training measures, which require active involvement of the participants. The project seeks to evaluate the common core training provided to all child protective, foster care and preventive services supervisors in the New York City child welfare system—approximately 1,600 in all. This number includes those employed by the city’s child welfare agency, the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS), as well as by the private agencies with which it contracts for foster care, adoption and preventive services. The supervisors each have between three to six caseworkers reporting to them.

Sample

Respondents were recruited from among those who attended orientation sessions held one week prior to the start of each Supervisory Core (SupCore) training class. Generally, between four to eight supervisors volunteered from each class of approximately 20 to 35. Additionally, following a 360-degree format (Nowak, 1993; Halverson, Tonidandel, Barlow, & Dipboye, 2002), the participants enlisted their own supervisors and caseworkers to complete a parallel set of measures on the same items as they themselves completed. The preliminary data presented here represent 54 participants, recruited to date, of the projected 75 who will constitute the convenience sample at the center of the investigation. Additionally, data are included from 157 caseworkers supervised by the 54 participants and from 23 of the participants’ supervisors.

Demographics

The caseworkers had relatively few years in child welfare (median = 4-5 years) compared with the participants and their supervisors (median = 10+ years). Not surprisingly, the workers also tended to be less well educated (the majority with bachelor’s degrees) than the participants and their supervisors (the majority with MSWs). Most of the respondents were female (participants, 72%; caseworkers, 75%; supervisors, 69%). The largest plurality of participants (49%), their supervisors (68%) and workers (54%) had African, Caribbean-American or African-American ancestry; 13% of the participants and 9% of their supervisors were Latino/Hispanic, as were 20% of the

workers; 26% of the participants were white, as were 14% of the supervisors and 9.3% of the workers. The median of participants' supervisory experience (4-6 years) was less than that of their supervisors (10+ years), unsurprisingly (*see Figure 1 below*).

Figure 1. Demographics by Type of Respondent

Number of Respondents	N=54	N=23	N=157
	Participants	Supervisors	Workers
Percent female	72.2	69.3	74.5
Ethnic affiliation			
White, not Hispanic or Latino	26.4	13.6	9.3
Hispanic or Latino	13.2	9.1	19.9
African-American	22.6	54.5	33.1
African	9.4	9.1	7.9
Caribbean (West Indian)	17.0	4.5	12.6
Asian American	1.9	9.1	1.3
Years of experience in child welfare			
Less than 6 months			3.9
6 months to 1 year			5.8
1-3 years	7.4		39.6
4-5 years	9.3		22.7
6-10 years	22.2	9.1	14.3
10 years or more	61.1	90.9	13.6
Years of supervisory experience			
No experience	7.4		
Less than 1 year	11.1		
1-3 years	27.8	9.1	
4-6 years	27.8	13.6	
7-9 years	11.1	13.6	
10 years or more	14.8	63.6	
Highest degree			
Bachelors	33.3	9.1	70.8
MSW	37.0	68.2	11.7
Masters Degree in other field	24.1	18.2	13.0
Post Masters	5.6	4.5	1.3

Procedure

Prior to the start of the training, all trainees are given a pre-test. For participants in the evaluation, pre-test scores (and later on post-test scores) constitute one component of the evaluation data. Additionally, participants are asked to mail us, prior to the training, two completed survey questionnaires (*described below*), one asking for a self-assessment of supervisory abilities and the other for ratings on a set of attributes of the work climate in their units. They are also asked to have their own supervisors and caseworkers mail us parallel questionnaires, in which these individuals rate the participants' supervisory abilities and attributes of the work climate in their units. Along with the pre- and post-training measures, participants and their supervisors and caseworkers complete the same measures at three-month intervals during the 12 months following the training.

Instruments

The supervisory abilities questionnaire listed 20 abilities targeted by the SupCore curriculum. These included: coaching workers to evaluate a family's readiness for change; assessing workers' cultural competence; listening to the words and feelings of others and verifying what a sender is communicating; and conveying respect for, acceptance of, and interest in another by observing, listening, and responding. The 20 abilities on this questionnaire appear in *Appendix 1*.

The second questionnaire, on work unit climate, asked for a rating on 14 attributes of the units led by the participants. Among these were expectations of high performance standards, clarity with respect to goals, expectations, responsibilities, and "mission," and the belief that "the authority system is competent in responding to...needs for growth and survival." The complete questionnaire, on which the following empirical results are based, appears in *Appendix 1*.

Questions, Struggles and/or Resolutions

The elaborate study design presented two major challenges in carrying out the evaluation: recruiting participants and retaining their participation. In our efforts to meet these challenges, we were obliged to take into account elements of the organization—structure and culture—that tended to work both for and against our ability to conduct the evaluation. A structural element in our favor, which made the evaluation possible to begin with, was that it was sponsored by the lead agency (ACS). Additionally, in our favor was the fact that the agency,

and particularly its training academy, was actively interested in the results of the evaluation. A cultural element in our favor was our initial familiarity with the agency and its culture, which came from the evaluators being based within ACS. Because we were inside the system and were familiar with its terminology and structure, our ability to demonstrate this familiarity lent credibility to our requests for assistance from potential participants and from others whose help we needed. In addition, we had personal relationships with many of the key actors. For example, when trainers enthusiastically supported our requests for volunteers, it was primarily because they knew us. When this happened, and it did not happen every time, we got more volunteers than when we were merely introduced to a group. Moreover, our familiarity with the organizational structure suggested both likely avenues for recruiting participants and for sustaining commitment to the study over its duration. An additional cultural element was the interest of at least some supervisors in the success of the evaluation in contributing to the shared mission of the participating agencies.

There were also structural and cultural elements that worked against the evaluation. For example, we had initially contemplated a much larger sample (all of the members of 225 units) than the 75 we ultimately settled on. The complexities in the agency's efforts to schedule its own supervisors, plus those from the contracting agencies, for such a massive training endeavor, however, made it impossible to identify and approach potential study participants in a way that would have yielded the desired number.

Cultural elements that worked against the evaluation included the fact that in the day-to-day supervision of child welfare workers, everyone is always extremely busy, so there is little time for anything that is not related to the task at hand. Moreover, the culture of the agency emphasizes tasks that are directly related to a particular case. This issue is both structural and cultural, and it is a reflection of the distinction within organizational theory between line and staff functions outlined in 1939 by Mooney and Reiley (Denhardt, 1995, 309), work on cases being a line function and evaluation a staff function. Consequently there is little support, either cultural or structural, for activities that deviate from this norm. For the people whose help we

needed to make the evaluation possible, the evaluation is not and cannot be a priority.

Finally, the cultural elements of cynicism and pride had an impact on the evaluation. While the agency culture involves some cynicism toward training and toward the possibility of meaningful change, this cynicism is counterbalanced by a sense of pride. Many of the supervisors believe in the importance of the work that they do and believe that the child welfare system is changing to better meet the needs of the system's clients (Protecting the children of New York, 1996).

Efforts to Overcome Obstacles

Our primary challenge in conducting the evaluation was to recruit participants. Our methodology for doing so evolved over approximately six months until we were satisfied that we had arrived at a means of enlisting the participation of all of those who potentially could or would participate, bearing in mind that not all supervisors supervise units, and a small number had plans to leave their jobs during the period of the study.

To recruit participants, we settled on an appeal by means of a PowerPoint presentation delivered at the half-day orientation session prior to the training, supplemented by an additional (abbreviated) presentation on the first day of training. We learned early that the success of our appeal depended on the trainers' ability to generate enthusiasm for the training from a class where many members had been assigned to come with no prior information and often on short notice. Once we learned this, the result was considerable good will that was transferable to us when it was time for our presentation. We learned to ask for active support from trainers, and once they had established their own credibility, they lent us credibility as well. Although we had initially counted on recruiting six to eight volunteers from each class, our early efforts usually yielded no more than four, and often fewer. Later on, however, as both the orientation and our presentation improved, we were able to recruit eight to ten from each class.

The second challenge was retaining the participation of those who had volunteered. Between March 1993 and April 1994, we recruited 90 supervisors. Of these, however, only 54 (60%) returned pre-training materials, and only 29 (32%) returned post-training materials. Trial and error played a larger role in addressing this problem than it played in recruitment. We first attempted to telephone those who had not

returned materials, but this proved to be extremely time consuming, especially since we frequently did not have current telephone numbers or otherwise had difficulty in reaching people. Also once people were contacted and had promised to return the materials, they did not always do so.

We contemplated a lottery, offering a prize worth several hundred dollars; those who returned post-training materials would be eligible. However, New York City conflict-of-interest rules precluded this option. We settled on small gifts to those who returned materials to build good will and show our appreciation. As of this writing, we have done this for several months, but it is difficult to assess how successful it has been. In a further attempt to increase the response rate, we assigned a member of the evaluation team to make personal contact with each volunteer and to follow that person through the study. Thus far, it is also too soon to assess the success of this effort. After the evaluation had been in progress for nearly one year we assessed our response rate and realized how seriously we were falling short. After consideration of efforts already tried and those we could try to increase returns, we chose to redefine the sample so that only those who actually returned the questionnaires would be counted as participants. This meant that it would be necessary to continue recruiting and extend the time for the study until we had accumulated the full sample of post-training materials, both for the end of training and for the four successive periods over the ensuing year.

Preliminary Results

Despite the challenges posed by elements of the organizational structure and culture, we have collected valuable data on the effect of organizational culture on organizational outcomes. The following section summarizes these preliminary findings. Mean ratings of work unit climate attributes were ranked from highest to lowest for participants, their supervisors and their workers (see Figure 2 below). All three groups gave the highest average ratings to the same attribute (i.e., “setting high performance standards for work unit staff”). All three groups also gave the lowest average ratings to a single attribute (i.e., “work unit staff feel that they are positively valued and their contributions

are appropriately evaluated and rewarded”). With occasional exceptions, the three groups ranked the remaining ten work unit climate attributes similarly.

Figure 2. Mean Ratings of Work Culture Attributes by Type of Respondent

Number of Respondents	N=54	N=23	N=157
Work Culture Attributes	Participants	Supervisors	Workers
Excellence: High performance standards are expected from work unit staff.	4.32	4.26	4.20
Clarity: Goals, expectations, responsibilities and "mission" are clearly communicated to work unit staff.	4.17	4.17	3.99
Collaboration: Performance is facilitated by cooperation, teamwork, and synergy among work unit staff.	4.15	3.96	3.82
Accountability: Work unit staff feel they are responsible and accountable for their performance.	4.09	4.09	4.19
Warmth: Sensitivity, support and empathy are demonstrated toward the needs of work unit staff.	4.06	3.91	3.68
Openness: Work unit staff feel free to express thoughts and opinions without fear of reprisal or intimidation.	3.92	3.87	3.72
Commitment: Work unit staff voluntarily expend energy to achieve organizational goals and objectives.	3.91	4.00	3.97
Autonomy: Work unit staff feel a sense of freedom in achieving goals ... which they design and implement.	3.66	3.83	3.83
Stability: Work unit staff feel a sense of safeness, security and permanence to their work environment.	3.58	3.52	3.38
Leadership: Work unit staff feel the authority system is competent in responding to...needs for growth and survival.	3.57	3.64	3.62
Adaptability: Work unit staff feel there is flexibility, innovativeness and openness to change.	3.53	3.48	3.63
Recognition: Work unit staff feel they are positively valued & their contributions are appropriately evaluated & rewarded.	3.36	3.35	3.38
Average	3.86	3.84	3.78

An initial exploration was conducted of the contributions to productivity and morale of ratings of work unit climate attributes provided by participants, their workers and their supervisors, using ordinary least squares regression (*see Figure 3 below*). Over repeated experiments involving various combinations of work unit attributes and demographic variables, one-unit increases in participants' ratings on "setting high performance standards for work unit staff" were consistently associated with the largest statistically significant improvements in participants' ratings of productivity (.382) and morale (.462) in the unit. A somewhat

Figure 3. Contributions of Attributes of Work Culture to Overall Climate

Number of Respondents	N=54	N=23	N=157
	Participants	Supervisors	Workers
Dep. 1: Overall climate contributes to high staff productivity.			
Excellence: High performance standards are expected from unit staff.	0.382		
Leadership: Unit staff feel the authority system is competent in responding to...needs for growth and survival.	0.310		0.376
Recognition: Unit staff feel they are positively valued & their contributions are appropriately evaluated & rewarded.		0.373	
Collaboration: Performance is facilitated by cooperation, teamwork, synergy among unit staff.		0.209	
 Dep. 2: Overall climate contributes to high staff morale.			
Excellence: High performance standards are expected from unit staff.	0.462		

Leadership: Unit staff feel the authority system is competent in responding to...needs for growth and survival.	0.248	0.477
Recognition: Unit staff feel they are positively valued & their contributions are appropriately evaluated & rewarded.		0.548
Collaboration: Performance is facilitated by cooperation, teamwork, synergy among unit staff.		0.291

smaller but statistically significant increase in participants' ratings of productivity (.310) and morale (.248) consistently resulted from unit increases in their ratings of "feelings that the authority system competently responds to the organization's needs." Positive feelings by workers toward authorities also led to larger increases in workers' ratings of productivity (.376) and morale (.477)

Ratings by participants' supervisors of productivity and morale in work units resulted from attributes of the work unit culture that differ from those influencing participants and workers. Each one-unit increase in supervisors' ratings of how well "members of work units felt that they are positively valued and their contributions are appropriately evaluated and rewarded" led to the largest, statistically significant increases in supervisors' ratings of productivity (.373) and morale (.548). A somewhat smaller but statistically significant increase in ratings of productivity (.209) and morale (.291) was associated with unit increases in supervisors' ratings of the "unit's success in facilitating members' performance through cooperation, teamwork and synergy."

Discussion

The average responses of participants, their supervisors, and workers on attributes of their work units reported in Figure 2 surprised us. While anecdotal evidence led us to expect that child welfare practitioners would feel under recognized for their work, literature on supervision and management (Bunker & Wijnberg, 1985; Neugeborn, 1985, p. 30; Palthe & Kossek, 2003; Patterson Warr & West, 2004) points to differential skills and perceptions at differing organizational levels. Therefore, we did not expect participants, workers, and supervisors all to give the lowest ratings to "staff's feelings that they are

positively valued and their contributions are appropriately evaluated and rewarded.” Nor, based on anecdotal evidence, did we expect that all three groups would give the highest average ratings to “staff feelings that high performance standards are expected.” Overall it is apparent that all three groups feel that their units set high standards, communicate expectations clearly, monitor accountability, and facilitate cooperation. It is equally apparent that all three groups perceive that staffs of units feel they are undervalued, have little flexibility, possess little safety when they innovate, and experience minimal feelings of freedom in doing the work.

The regression results (*Figure 3*) support, deepen understanding of, and increase confidence in, insights suggested by some of the averages (*Figure 2*). Participants attribute the largest increases in productivity and morale to “expectations of high performance standards for work unit staff,” supporting the high average ratings achieved by that attribute. Deeper insight into the low average ratings given by all groups to “feelings by members of the work unit staff that they are positively valued” is provided by the contrary discovery that participants’ supervisors rate this as the greatest contributor to productivity and morale. Work unit staff are not highly valued, according to supervisors, even though doing so would substantially improve productivity and morale. “Facilitation of cooperation, teamwork and synergy among work unit staff,” which achieved high average ratings for all groups, yielded the smallest impact on ratings of productivity and morale of the attributes achieving significance, and only for participants’ supervisors. Although “staff feels that the authority system is competent in responding to the organization’s need” was awarded relatively low average ratings by all groups, participants and their workers judged it to be a significant influence on productivity and morale in the unit. Though these results appear to be interesting, they are, of course, only suggestive of the direction the investigation may take in the more refined analysis of the data currently under way.

Conclusion

Rather than being incidental to research or evaluation efforts conducted within an organization, or no more than a series of impediments to be overcome, the organizational environment, comprised of organizational

culture and structure, is fundamental to the success of these efforts. Even when investigators believe that they have, or have been given control over the conditions necessary for data collection, surprises, often large ones, can await. The application of an a priori research design intended for circumstances where the investigators have full control of the data-collection environment, to a situation where control is tenuous, frustrate the intent of the design and the need for valid and reliable data. Nevertheless, the adaptations dictated by the organizational environment can result in a research design that evolves during the process of data collection, rather than following a fixed and predetermined path. We believe that our experience shows that an emerging design can result in data that produce interesting and, ideally, usable results.

Although the empirical results are preliminary and only suggestive at this time, they hint at possible insights that may be useful directly for improving perceptions of productivity and morale in work units and indirectly for delivering services to clients. Increasing participants' perceptions of the levels of productivity and morale of their units may require them to expect high performance standards from their units and help their staffs to experience the authority system within which they work as competent; enhancing workers' productivity and morale may require that they also experience the authority system as competent. Increasing supervisors' perceptions of enhanced productivity and morale in a unit may require that workers in the units perceive they are valued and rewarded and their performance is facilitated through cooperation, teamwork and synergy.

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Appendix 1

ACS Supervisory Skills and Abilities Questionnaire

Welcome to our study! This survey tells us whether Supervisory Core training is successful in helping supervisors learn the skills and attitudes taught in the program. We are asking for your opinion on how skilled the SupCore Participant (if you are the SupCore Participant, then answer these questions about yourself) is with respect to the skills and abilities taught in the program. Your opinions will be kept confidential so that no one will ever know how you responded. Each question has a 1 to 10 scale with 1 meaning NOT AT ALL and 10 meaning EXTREMELY. Please answer each question by typing your answer in the brackets following the phrase "Please enter your response here ([]). Think through your answers one at a time and do not respond with extreme answers to every question. To begin, double click on this email and then click reply. Fill in your answers then send it back to Dr. David Menefee at dm430@columbia.edu. If you have any questions about how to complete the email questionnaire call me at (212) 854-5463. Thanks!

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[E-Mail Subject Heading = Email Subject]
[Instrument = [NEW SURVEY]]
[Project = ACS Supervisor Skills]
[Access = A.073BEA55-FEF7-4FFE-A930139AE11050E9]

ACS Supervisory Skills and Abilities Questionnaire

Supervisory Skills:

[Q1] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in coaching workers to evaluate and influence a family's readiness for change?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q2] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in assessing and improving the cultural competence of workers.

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q3] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in evaluating the appropriateness of workers' safety assessments and determinations?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q4] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in modeling the worker-client relationship, using effective questioning techniques and reflections during supervisory conferences?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q5] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in assessing the relationship between behavior and primary needs, underlying conditions and contributing factors?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q6] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in monitoring success in the stages of the professional helping relationship with workers and areas needing strengthening?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q7] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in providing feedback regarding workers' ability to convey the core helping conditions with families?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q8] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in demonstrating effective feedback regarding strengths-based practice?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q9] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in coaching workers to develop effective problem statements, outcomes, and activities?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q10] How skilled is the SupCore Participant in promoting attachment in casework practice to strengthen parent-child relationships and preserve families?

Not At All Skilled 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Skilled

Please enter your response here [[]]

Supervisory Abilities:

[Q11] Empathy: the ability of the SupCore Participant to tune into another person's feelings and develop a sense of what a situation means and feels like for that person.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q12] Genuineness: the ability of the SupCore Participant to be real, truthful, honest, and sincere.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q13] Respectful: the ability of the SupCore Participant to value another person because he or she is a human being.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q14] Reflections: the ability of the SupCore Participant to listen to the words and feelings of others, observe nonverbal cues, and verify what the sender is communicating.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q15] Attending: the ability of the SupCore Participant to convey respect for, acceptance of, and interest in a person by observing, listening, and responding to the person.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q16] Questions: the ability of the SupCore Participant to use questions to discover the capability, behavior, beliefs, feelings, needs, self-concept, and values of others.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q17] Concreteness: the ability of the SupCore Participant to respond appropriately when information is omitted, distorted, or when conclusions are unsupported.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q18] Summarization: the SupCore Participant's ability to check understanding; clarify; show contradictions; make transitions, structure interviews; and focus discussion.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q19] Joining: the SupCore Participant's ability to establish rapport and bond with another person by consciously communicating a similarity between them.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q20] Nonverbal Communication: the SupCore Participant's ability to respond effectively to non-verbal communication that attend their professional helping relationships.

Not At All Able 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely Able

Please enter your response here [[]]

Respondent Characteristics

The following questions are necessary for the researchers to keep track of who is responding so that they can match them to their respective units and supervisors. Without this information the survey will be of little use in helping to improve the SupCore training program. The information that you provide here will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you.

[Q21] What is the name of the organization in which you work?

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q22] What is the name of the unit in which you work?

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q23] Which of the following best describes your current working relationship with the supervisor for whom you are providing feedback on this survey?

- (1) I am a non-supervisory employee in this unit.
- (2) I am the SupCore Participant on this unit
- (3) The SupCore Participant on this unit reports directly to me.

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q24] For how long have you known this supervisor in the working relationship you currently have with him or her?

- (1) Less than 6 months
- (2) 6 months to 1 year
- (3) 1 to 3 years
- (4) 4 to 5 years
- (5) 6 to 10 years
- (6) Over 10 years

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q25] What is your gender?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q26] What is your ethnic affiliation?

- (1) White, not Hispanic or Latino
- (2) Hispanic or Latino
- (3) African-American
- (4) African
- (5) Caribbean (West Indian)
- (6) Asian
- (7) Asian-American
- (8) Two or more races
- (9) Other

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q27] How many years of experience do you have in child welfare?

- (1) Less than 6 months
- (2) 6 months to 1 year
- (3) 1 to 3 years
- (4) 4 to 5 years
- (5) 6 to 10 years

(6) Over 10 years

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q28] How many years of supervisory experience have you had?

- (1) No Experience
- (2) Less than 1 year
- (3) 1 to 3 years
- (4) 4 to 6 years
- (5) 7 to 9 years
- (6) 10 years or more

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q29] What is your highest degree?

- (1) Bachelors
- (2) MSW
- (3) Masters Degree in Other Field
- (4) Post Masters
- (5) Other

Please enter your response here [[]]

[Q30] What are the first five numbers in your Social Security number? (For tracking purposes only)

Please enter your response here [[]]

This is the end of the questionnaire! Thank you very much for participating in our study of the Supervisory Core training program at ACS. Please attach the survey file to an email and send it to dmenefee@sergconsulting.com. If you have any questions about how to send the survey via email, please call David Menefee at (212) 854-5463. Thank you!

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[E-Mail Subject Heading = SURVEY AA22421636.A22421636]
[Instrument = ACS Culture Inventory]
[Project = ACS Culture Inventory]
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Appendix 2

ACS Culture Inventory

Welcome to our study! The James Satterwhite Academy Department of Evaluation and Assessment would like to evaluate supervisory core training's influence on the climate in your work unit. We are asking you to give us your honest opinion on the climate in your work unit. All of your answers will be kept completely confidential so that no one will ever be able to tell how you answered. Please respond to each question by selecting the answer that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement as a description of the way things ARE NOW in your unit. Answer by typing the answer number at the end of the "Please enter your response here >>" below each question. When you have finished, please send your questionnaire back to Dr. David Menefee at dm430@columbia.edu. Thank you very much for your help!

Work Unit Climate Questions

[Q1] Clarity: Goals, expectations, responsibilities and "mission" are clearly communicated to work unit staff.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q2] Warmth: Sensitivity, support and empathy are demonstrated toward the needs of work unit staff.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q3] Commitment: Work unit staff voluntarily expend energy to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q4] Collaboration: Performance is facilitated by cooperation, teamwork, and synergy among work unit staff.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q5] Openness: Work unit staff feel free to express thoughts and opinions without fear of reprisal or intimidation.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q6] Autonomy: Work unit staff feel a sense of freedom in achieving goals according to strategies and approaches which they design and implement.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

A Field Biology of Training Evaluation

Please enter your response here >>

[Q7] Recognition: Work unit staff feel that they are positively valued and that their contributions are appropriately evaluated and rewarded.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q8] Excellence: High performance standards are expected from work unit staff.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q9] Accountability: Work unit staff feel they are responsible and accountable for their performance.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q10] Adaptability: Work unit staff feel there is flexibility, innovativeness and openness to change.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q11] Stability: Work unit staff feel a sense of safeness, security and permanence to their work environment.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q12] Leadership: Work unit staff feel that the authority system is competent in responding to the organization's needs for growth and survival.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

Overall Work Unit Climate

The next two questions ask about the overall climate in your work unit. Climate is the quality of daily interaction among the workers in the work unit. Please answer each question by filling in the appropriate circle.

[Q13] Overall, the climate within my work unit contributes to high staff productivity.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

[Q14] Overall, the climate within my work unit contributes to high staff morale.

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Strongly Disagree

Please enter your response here >>

Respondent Characteristics

The following questions are necessary for the researchers to keep track of who is responding to the questions on this survey so that they can match them to their respective units and supervisors. Without this information the survey will be of little use in helping to improve the SupCore training program.

Remember that all information you provide on this form will be strictly confidential. Thank you.

[Q15] What is the name of the organization in which you work?

Please enter your response here >>

[Q16] What is the name of the work unit in which you work?

Please enter your response here >>

[Q17] Which of the following best describes your current working relationship with the supervisor for whom you are providing feedback on this survey?

- (1) I am a non-supervisory employee in this unit.
- (2) I am the supervisor of this unit
- (3) The supervisor of this unit reports directly to me.
- (4) I am a peer of the supervisor of this unit.
- (5) Other

Please enter your response here >>

[Q18] What are the first five numbers in your Social Security number? (For tracking purposes only)

Please enter your response here >>

This is the end of the Work Unit Climate Questionnaire. Thank you very much for your participation and for your contribution to helping improve the James Satterwhite Supervisory Core training program. If you have any questions about this questionnaire please contact Robert Highsmith (646) 935-1484 in the ACS James Satterwhite Academy's Department of Evaluation and Assessment. Please give your completed questionnaire to the session monitor. Thanks again!

	Discussion

Friday, May 28, 2004, 10:00–10:45 a.m.

Robert Highsmith, *Ph.D.*, and Henry Ilian, *D.S.W.*, Presenters

Michael Nunno, *D.S.W.*, Facilitator

The following is a discussion that ensued following Robert Highsmith and Henry Ilian's presentation on the impact of training on organizational culture. Drs. Ilian and Highsmith presented baseline data at the symposium and documented what they may expect to happen based on the purpose of the study and the research design. Many of the obstacles encountered in the initial phases of research were presented and feedback was requested on improving their process or looking at new outcome areas.

Topics of Discussion

I. What Impacts Response Rates:

The group discussed the problems of getting an inadequate response rate.

- Involving supervisors and stakeholders in the research process from the beginning may help. The fact that they weren't involved until after implementation may account, in part, for the lower response rate.
- Urban response rates are consistently lower than rural response rates. This study was conducted in an entirely urban area, which may also account, in part, to the lower response rate.
- Discussion arose over the repeated testing involved in the study and whether the research design itself may contribute to the lower response rate. Participants may not want to take the same test four or five times and may therefore drop out of the study.

II. Research Design:

Several aspects of the research design and sampling strategy were discussed.

- The fact that it is a longitudinal study with the intention of discerning the half-life of knowledge imparted in the training means that the researchers need to test at the end of 3, 6, 9, and 12 months. However, administering multiple tests without an item bank of different questions may confound the results.
- The test provided is a statewide, normed, and standardized test with great credibility. The researchers' concern is not that participants will remember the items at each testing interval, but that they will take it seriously enough at each iteration to reflect a good reading on what they know.
- A desire to examine and understand the skills and abilities of participants and how those may change over time warranted multiple testing intervals. They wanted to see if there was a point when the training "came together" and was integrated
- There does seem to be a measure of the culture's effect on the training in the post-training results. This would address the question: "If skills don't improve, why didn't they improve?" Either the training was ineffective, which is possible, or the effect of the training is being eroded. The findings will allow the researchers to surmise that the organizational culture is playing a role, particularly if the scores are higher immediately following post-training, then fall off after the 3-, 6-, 9-, and 12-month intervals.
- The stakeholder group wanted a better understanding of the impact of training on practice. There are many ways to do that, with limitations to each. The study was an attempt to find out the extent of the training's impact, whether it ends with the training or goes beyond, and if so, does it bear on practice.
- The fact that all the participants are volunteers and that convenience sampling was employed constrain the generalizability of the study. The sample turned out to be much smaller than was anticipated from the outset. Pre-testing did not occur at the same time for all participants.

III. Recommendations for Future Directions in Research:

The group made the following recommendations for future directions of the study:

- Examine the interactive correlations between the questions and conduct a factor analysis.
- If the findings at each interval of testing reveal that scores are falling off, consider asking participants open-ended questions, or holding a focus group that asks what impeded participants from using their knowledge and skills in the workplace. See if patterns emerge suggesting something related to the cultural factors.

	Wrap-up

Friday, May 28, 2004, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Jane Berdie, *M.S.W.*, Barrett Johnson, *M.S.W., LCSW*, & Leslie Zeitler, *M.S.W., LCSW*, Facilitators

Each year a wrap-up discussion helps to identify the strengths of the symposium, as well as areas that need improvement. Topics for next year are also identified to assist in planning.

Topics of Discussion

I. What Worked:

Participants were invited to discuss positive aspects of the symposium.

- Participants appreciated the open dialogue within the group. Both the struggles and successes associated with conducting training evaluations were candidly discussed by the presenters and the symposium attendees.
- Participants agreed that hearing about other people's projects provided them with resources for issues that they are facing.
- The progress of the human services training evaluation field is evident when reflecting upon the content covered in this year's symposium. Discussions focused much more on TOL and skills evaluation. We, as a field, have moved passed satisfaction surveys and knowledge testing to some extent. This speaks to the original purpose of this symposium and its ongoing utility.
- The organized discussion time following the presentations was highly valued by many of the participants.

II. Suggestions for Next Year:

- Although participants enjoyed the project briefings, they felt the discussion time following the presentations was driven by questions and answers rather than a true

discussion. In the past, panels have lent themselves to discussions around broader evaluation issues occurred.

- It was suggested that an interactive exercise occur on the first evening rather than a keynote speaker. The exercise would elicit participants' questions and concerns that would drive the discussions for the next day and a half.
- Important but off-topic points that arise should be held in a "parking lot" that is revisited before the symposium's end.
- A participant requested that a forum of experts in different areas be made available to symposium participants. This would enable individuals with specific questions to have their questions answered.
- Participants wanted a more in-depth description of the current projects that attendees are working on.
- This was the first year a resource room was available at the symposium. The CalSWEC staff will facilitate the process of further developing the resource room for next year's symposium.

III. Attendance:

- A trainer, who was new to the symposium this year, suggested that more trainers attend the symposium. This would strengthen the relationship between the trainers and evaluators and also enable trainers to further understand the process and value of evaluation. Increasing the trainer's knowledge would stimulate trainers to incorporate evaluation throughout their trainings.

IV. Possible Topics or Themes

Possible topics or themes for next year's symposium were discussed including:

- Skills evaluation.
- Pre- and post-evaluation or retrospective evaluation as a methodology.
- Evaluating training related to Family Team Meetings or Family Group Decision Making, particularly for caseworkers that are being put in those positions.
- Bringing the consumer or client's voice into the research process.
- Indicators across states in terms of training evaluation; outcome measure across states.

- The use of statistics and data analysis for the various types of evaluations.
- High-stakes evaluation and testing from two perspectives: (1) personnel implications for testing, (2) strategic thinking about higher levels of evaluation in relation to high-stakes skills.
- Performance Based Contracting and the implications for training evaluators.
- Thoughtfully infusing fairness and equity issues into evaluations in terms of evaluating specific trainings on culture and cultural awareness.
- Computerized data management systems that different states are using and the value of those systems. The fiscal implications associated with such systems. What is the value of using these tools for practice?
- Collecting data from an outcomes perspective rather than a process perspective. How are people informing line staff and supervisors about the need for outcomes data and how do we evaluate how this message was received?
- Evidence-based practice and the implications for evaluators.
- Linking training evaluations with practice outcomes.

	Program

Seventh Annual
National Human Services
Training Evaluation Symposium
2004

Wednesday, May 26

5:00–6:00 p.m.
Reception

6:00–7:00 p.m.
Dinner

7:00–7:15 p.m.
Convene, Welcome, & Introductions
Barrett Johnson, Regional Training Academy
Coordinator
CalSWEC, University of California, Berkeley

7:15–8:30 p.m.
**Keynote Address: Training as an Avenue to Support
Practice Improvement**
Wayne Stevenson, Deputy Secretary
Office of Children, Youth & Families
Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

<i>For additional reference materials, please visit our adjacent “Resource Room”</i>

Thursday, May 27

8:00–9:15 a.m.

Registration

8:30–9:15 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

9:15–9:30 a.m.

Introduction to the Symposium

- Barrett Johnson, Regional Training Academy
Coordinator
 - Leslie W. Zeitler, Training and Evaluation Specialist
CalSWEC, University of California, Berkeley
-

9:30–10:30 a.m.

Theme: National Frameworks

Title: Planning the National Evaluation of Child Welfare
Training

Presenter:

Mary Elizabeth Collins, M.S.W., Ph.D.
Boston University School of Social Work

Facilitator:

Robin Leake, Ph.D.
American Humane

10:30–10:45 a.m.—Break

Thursday (*cont'd*)

10:45–11:45 a.m.

Theme: National Frameworks

Title: North American Certification Project

Presenters:

- Dale Curry, Ph.D., LSW
Kent State University School of Family and Consumer Studies
- David Thomas, M.S.
Texas Center for Adolescent Rehabilitation and Education, Inc.

Facilitator:

Michelle I. Graef, Ph.D.
*University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Center on Children, Families and the Law*

11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m.—Lunch

1:00–2:00 p.m.

Theme: Transfer of Learning

Title: Focus Group Efficacy Evaluating Performance Sustainability after Advanced Training

Presenter:

E. Douglas Pratt, D.S.W., LCSW
Policy–Practice Resources, Inc.

Facilitator:

Robin Leake, Ph.D.
American Humane

2:00–2:15 p.m.—Break

Thursday (cont'd)

2:15–3:15 p.m.

Theme: Transfer of Learning

Title: Evaluation of North Carolina's Pre-Service Training Transfer of Learning Component

Presenter:

Basil Qaqish, M.A.

University of North Carolina–Greensboro Department of Social Work

Facilitator:

Jane Berdie, M.S.W.

Jane Berdie & Associates

3:15–3:30 p.m.—Break

3:30–4:30 p.m.

Theme: Staff Retention

Title: Evaluating the Impact of Training on Staff Retention

Presenter:

Miriam Landsman, Ph.D., M.S.W.

University of Iowa School of Social Work

Facilitator:

Sherrill Clark, Ph.D., LCSW

CalSWEC, University of California, Berkeley

4:30–5:00 p.m.

Logistics for evening and morning

Leslie W. Zeitler, Training and Evaluation Specialist

CalSWEC, University of California, Berkeley

5:00 p.m.—Break for the evening

Friday, May 28

8:30–9:10 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

9:10–9:15 a.m.

Opening remarks

Barrett Johnson, Regional Training Academy
Coordinator
CalSWEC, University of California, Berkeley

9:15–10:45 a.m.

Theme: Organizational Culture

Title: The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program

Presenters:

- Kyle Hoffman
Institute for Human Services
- Tim McCarragher, Ph.D., LISW
University of Akron School of Social Work
- Brian Wear, M.S.H.C.S.
East Central Ohio Regional Training Center

Title: Measuring Organizational Culture: A Field Biology of Training Evaluation

Presenters:

- Robert Highsmith, Ph.D.
- Henry Ilian, D.S.W.
Administration for Children's Services
James Satterwhite Academy for Child Welfare Training

Facilitator:

Michael Nunno, D.S.W.
Cornell University Family Life Development Center

Friday (cont'd)

10:45–11:00 a.m.—Break

11:00 a.m.–12:00 noon

Wrap-Up, Strategize for 2004 & Closing Remarks

- Jane Berdie, M.S.W.
Jane Berdie & Associates
- Barrett Johnson, Regional Training Academy
Coordinator
- Leslie W. Zeitler, Training and Evaluation Specialist
CalSWEC, University of California, Berkeley

12:00 noon–

Lunch & Beyond

Acknowledgements

CalSWEC extends its gratitude to the Steering Committee of the 7th Annual National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium who made this event possible:

Anita Barbee	Barrett Johnson
Jane Berdie	Robin Leake
Dale Curry	Chris Mathias
David Foster	Cindy Parry
Michelle I. Graef	E. Douglas Pratt
Henry Ilian	Leslie W. Zeitler
Phyllis Jeroslow	

The *California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC)* is a partnership between the state's schools of social work, public human service agencies, and other related professional organizations that facilitate the integration of education and practice to assure effective, culturally competent service delivery and leadership to the people of California. CalSWEC is the nation's largest coalition of social work educators and practitioners.

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	Directory of Presenters and Participants

<p>Gary Adair Staff Development Program Manager Santa Cruz County Human Resources Agency P.O. Box 1320 Santa Cruz, CA 95061 831-454-4890 Fax: 831-454-4692 hra037@hra.co.santa- cruz.ca.us</p>	<p>Gary Adair oversees Social, Employment and Eligibility Services and is responsible for all staff training programs, including transfer of learning and evaluating outcomes. He is currently working on leadership development programs involving coaching and mentoring for all supervisors and the Human Resources Agency.</p>
<p>Fasih Ahmed, Ph.D. Professor of Sociology North Carolina A & T State University 6108 Gold Dust Trail Greensboro, NC 27455 336-334-7894 Fax: 336-334-7197 ahmedf@ncat.edu</p>	<p>Fasih Ahmed teaches program evaluation, population studies, research methods, and statistics. He collaborates with Dr. Elizabeth Lindsey on the North Carolina Child Welfare Training Evaluation Project of the State of North Carolina, Division of Social Services and the University of North Carolina, Greensboro.</p>
<p>Jane Berdie, M.S.W. Consultant 435 South Gaylord St. Denver, CO 80209 303-733-9532 Fax: 303-733-9532 jberdie@msn.com</p>	<p>Child welfare consultant Jane Berdie currently provides strategic planning and technical assistance to the CalSWEC Statewide Training Evaluation Project/Macro Evaluation Team, as well as several training evaluation projects for Pennsylvania's child welfare</p>

Presenters and Participants

	core training and for independent living training in Colorado and North Carolina involving embedded evaluation of knowledge and/or skills.
Alan Bookhagen E-Learning Consultant Training Management Systems 185 Parkside Ave. Buffalo, NY 14214 716-836-5220 abookhagen@hotmail.com	
Susan Brooks, M.S.W. Program Director Northern California Training Academy UC Davis Extension 1632 Da Vinci Ct. Davis, CA 95616-4860 530-757-8643 Fax: 530-754-5104 sbrooks@unexmail.ucdavis.edu	Susan Brooks has nearly 20 years of experience in social services, with expertise in substance abuse, collaboration, team-building, and supervision.
Soledad Caldera-Gammage, M.S.W. Curriculum & Evaluation Specialist Central California Child Welfare Training Academy 112 Ron Ct. Vallejo, CA 94591 559-278-8065 (Fresno Office) Fax: 707-647-1655 scaldera@csufresno.edu	Soledad Caldera-Gammage is also a trainer for the Specialized Foster Parent Training program at CSU, Fresno. She coordinates the evaluation of the Central Academy's mentoring program for newly hired social workers.

<p>Sherrill J. Clark, Ph.D., ACSW, LCSW Research Specialist California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley Marchant Bldg., Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608 510-642-4480 Fax: 510-642-8573 sjclark@berkeley.edu</p>	<p>Sherrill Clark has been responsible for implementing a California-wide competency-based curriculum to prepare MSWs for work in public child welfare. Her research interests include child welfare and health policy, and social work education, especially the continuum of education and practice, how learning in the classroom is transferred to and from the field, and the relationship between education and outcomes for children and families. Dr. Clark is a U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Bureau of Health Professions Primary Care Policy Fellow and a former member of the California Department of Social Services' statewide Child Welfare Stakeholders' Group.</p>
<p>Mary Elizabeth Collins, M.S.W., Ph.D. Associate Professor School of Social Work Boston University 264 Bay State Rd. Boston, MA 02215 617-353-4612 Fax: 617-353-5612 mcollins@bu.edu</p>	<p>Mary Elizabeth Collins is director of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Sociology and Social Work. Currently, she is principal investigator for the National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training Grants funded by the Children's Bureau. She is also principal investigator for the training project Professional Education for Current Public Child Welfare Agency Staff. Her previous projects focused on developing training for</p>

Presenters and Participants

	<p>public child welfare workers helping youth transition out of care and several program evaluations in the areas of welfare reform, housing, and youth services.</p>
<p>Dale Curry, Ph.D., LSW Assistant Professor School of Family & Consumer Studies Kent State University Nixson Hall P O Box 5190 Kent, OH 44242-0001 330-672-2998 Fax: 330-672-2194 dcurry@kent.edu</p>	<p>Dale Curry coordinates evaluation for a trainer development certificate program in collaboration with the Northeast Ohio Regional Training Center. He was the principal investigator for two statewide training evaluation projects in Ohio and served as the consultant to American Humane on its comprehensive evaluation of the Pennsylvania Competency-Based Child Welfare Training and Certification Program. He is currently exploring factors affecting transfer of learning for CWS staff and its relationship to staff retention. He chairs the NSDTA Evaluation Committee and co-chairs the Assessment Committee of the North American Certification Project for child and youth care workers.</p>
<p>Angel Dawson Research Coordinator Northwest Institute for Children and Families School of Social Work University of Washington</p>	<p>Angel Dawson currently works on evaluation projects with the Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program (CWTAP), Family Group Conferencing (“Connected and</p>

<p>4101 15th Ave., NE Box 354900 Seattle, WA 98105-6299 206-543-8445 Fax: 206-685-1330 angel3@u.washington.edu</p>	<p>Cared For”), and academy training.</p>
<p>Mary De Souza Program Manager Northern California Training Academy UC Davis Extension 1632 Da Vinci Ct. Davis, CA 95616 530-757-8643 Fax: 530-754-5104 mdesouza@unexmail.ucdavis.edu</p>	
<p>Midge Delavan, Ph.D. Training Coordinator Utah Division of Child and Family Services 120 North 200 West, #225 Salt Lake City, UT 84103 801-538-4404 Fax: 801-538-3993 mdelavan@utah.gov</p>	<p>Midge Delavan is an instructional psychologist. The Training Team at Utah’s Division of Child and Family Services is planning an evaluation system that includes mentoring as an evaluation medium.</p>
<p>Nancy S. Dickinson, Ph.D., MSSW Director Jordan Institute for Families University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill School of Social Work 301 Pittsboro St., CB #3550 Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3550 919-962-6407</p>	<p>Nancy S. Dickinson is a clinical professor and executive director of the Jordan Institute for Families, which focuses on strengthening families through research, educational and technical assistance projects. Dr. Dickinson is currently principal investigator and director of a five-year</p>

Presenters and Participants

<p>Fax: 919-843-9827 ndickins@email.unc.edu</p>	<p>Children’s Bureau-funded project, “Child Welfare Staff Recruitment and Retention: An Evidence-Based Training Model,” in which a resources and curriculum model will be developed and delivered to supervisors, managers, and directors in 17 North Carolina counties. A rigorous experimental evaluation will compare outcomes within each of the trained counties before and after training and with outcomes in 17 other counties.</p>
<p>Bill Donnelly, M.P.A., LCSW Director Inter-University Consortium Center for Child & Family Policy 3250 Public Policy Bldg Box 951656 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1656 310-825-2811 Fax: 310-206-2716 donnelly@spsr.ucla.edu</p>	
<p>Mark Ezell, Ph.D. Associate Professor School of Social Welfare University of Kansas Twente Hall 1545 Lilac Lane Lawrence, KS 66044-3184 785-864-2267 Fax: 785-864-5277 marke@ku.edu</p>	<p>Mark Ezell designs evaluation instruments for the various types of training implemented by his state child welfare agency.</p>

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<p>David Foster, LCSW Director Central California Child Welfare Training Academy CSU, Fresno 5310 N. Campus Dr., M/S PHS102 Fresno, CA 93740-8019 559-278-2258 Fax: 559-278-7229 david_j_foster@csufresno.edu</p>	<p>David Foster has 17 years of experience in public child welfare as a social worker, supervisor, and manager. He served as Title IV-E coordinator for the CSU, Fresno Social Work Program from 1993–1998 and was the founding member of the California Regional Training Academy Development and Implementation Project. He has been academy director since 1998.</p>
<p>Elizabeth Gilman, M.A., J.D. Elizabeth Gilman Curriculum Specialist California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) University of California, Berkeley School of Social Welfare Marchant Bldg, Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608 510-642-9273 Fax: 510-642-8573 egilman@berkeley.edu</p>	
<p>Shaaron Gilson, M.S.W., LCSW Title IV-E Project Coordinator School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley 120 Haviland Hall #7400 Berkeley, CA 94720-7400 510-642-2424</p>	<p>Shaaron Gilson has served as the Title IV-E project coordinator for the UC, Berkeley School of Social Welfare for ten years. Her prior experience includes a career in public and private agencies in mental health and child welfare services as well as academic</p>

Presenters and Participants

<p>Fax: 510-643-6126 shaaron@berkeley.edu</p>	<p>appointments. Her most recent evaluation projects include the ongoing assessment of the Title IV-E training curriculum.</p>
<p>Michelle I. Graef, Ph.D. Research Assistant Professor Center on Children, Families & the Law University of Nebraska—Lincoln 121 South 13th St., Suite 302 Lincoln, NE 68588-0227 402-472-3741 Fax: 402-472-8412 mgraef1@unl.edu</p>	<p>Michelle I. Graef is an industrial/organizational psychologist. Under a contract with the Nebraska Health and Human Services System, she and her team develop and validate assessments for use in the selection of Child Protective Services workers and in the evaluation of staff competencies during their training and probationary periods. Her current work also includes the design and evaluation of supervisory training, consultation with human services agencies on staff recruitment and retention issues, and a study of CPS case decision-making.</p>
<p>Michael Gray Division Chief Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services 4024 N. Durfee Ave. El Monte, CA 91723 626-258-2061 Fax: 626- 582-7068 graymi@dcpf.co.la.ca.us</p>	

<p>Bart Grossman, Ph.D. Adjunct Professor School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley 120 Haviland Hall Berkeley, CA 94720-7400 510-642-0722 Fax: 510-643-6126 bg47@socrates.berkeley.edu</p>	<p>Bart Grossman is the founding director of CalSWEC. He currently is adjunct professor and director of field education at the UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare. He provides consultation to Rutgers University regarding training and evaluation of New Jersey DYFS staff. He also provides extensive consultations regarding the use of Title IV-E funds for child welfare training and field education.</p>
<p>Norma Harris, Ph.D. Director Social Research Institute College of Social Work University of Utah 395 S. 1500 E Rm. 111 Salt Lake City, UT 84112 801-581-3822 Fax: 801-585-6865 nharris@socwk.utah.edu</p>	<p>Norma Harris has extensive experience in the evaluation of child welfare programs. She is currently the principal investigator for the Title IV-E grant with the Division of Child and Family Services. This grant includes a research/evaluation component.</p>
<p>Robert Highsmith, Ph.D. Director of Assessment & Evaluation James Satterwhite Academy for Child Welfare Training ACS Children's Center 492 First Ave., 5th Floor New York, NY 10016 646-935-1484 Fax: 646-935-1583 robert.highsmith@dfa.state.ny. us</p>	

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<p>Claudia K. Hoffman Training Coordinator Institute for Human Services 1706 E. Broad St. Columbus, OH 43203-2039 614-251-6000 Fax: 614-251-6005 khoffman@ihs-trainet.com</p>	<p>As a training coordinator with the Institute for Human Services, Claudia K. Hoffman chairs the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) Evaluation Work Team. OCWTP Evaluation Work Team members include: county child welfare staff, Regional Training Center coordinators, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services staff, and research consultants. The work team is in the third year of a four-year effort to develop a comprehensive system to evaluate knowledge acquisition, knowledge comprehension, skill demonstration, and skill transfer that occur as a result of OCWTP Training.</p>
<p>Teresa Hubley, Ph.D., M.P.A. Research Associate II: Evaluation Services Institute for Public Sector Innovation Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service University of Southern Maine 295 Water St. Augusta, ME 04333 207-626-5292 Fax: 207-626-5210 Teresa.A.Hubley@maine.gov</p>	<p>Teresa Hubley has several years of experience in evaluation and public health. She has conducted a workflow study of a child protective intake unit and is newly hired in the Evaluation Services Unit to work on child welfare projects. She has a doctorate in cultural anthropology, specializing in medical anthropology, and an M.P.A. focusing on health policy, both from Syracuse University.</p>

<p>Henry Ilian, D.S.W. Training Evaluator James Satterwhite Academy for Child Welfare Training ACS Children's Center 492 First Ave., 5th Floor New York, NY 10016 646-935-1410 Fax: 646-935-1604 henry.ilian@dfa.state.ny.us</p>	<p>Henry Ilian has been involved since 1987 in evaluation and testing at the James Satterwhite Academy for Child Welfare Training. He is currently developing competency-based measures to accompany the New York City adaptation of the New York State Common Core training system for child welfare workers. He also teaches research at the Columbia University School of Social Work.</p>
<p>Mindy Ing, M.S. Training Evaluator Child Welfare Partnership Portland State University 520 SW Harrison St., #440 Portland, OR 97201 503-725-8006 Fax: 503-725-8030 ingm@pdx.edu</p>	<p>Mindy Ing manages two child welfare staff training evaluations. The first project concerns evaluations of core training sessions for new and ongoing workers. The second provides evaluation of the development and delivery of a training curriculum to rural child welfare workers and their community partners in Oregon and Alaska.</p>
<p>Susan E. Jacquet, Ph.D. Research Specialist California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley Marchant Bldg., Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608 510-643-9846</p>	<p>Susan E. Jacquet works with Dr. Sherrill Clark on CalSWEC's research component, including ongoing surveys of California's MSW students and CalSWEC Title IV-E MSW graduates who have completed payback work in child welfare, as well as the development of new research initiatives on outcomes for</p>

Presenters and Participants

<p>Fax: 510-642-8573 sjacquet@uclink.berkeley.edu</p>	<p>child welfare and the efficacy of the IV-E program. She is responsible for coordinating CalSWEC's funded research process from RFP through review of proposals.</p>
<p>Phyllis Jeroslow, M.F.A., M.F.T. Training & Curriculum Specialist California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley Marchant Bldg., Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608 510-643-5440 Fax: 510-642-8573 pjero@berkeley.edu</p>	<p>Phyllis Jeroslow assists in the development and dissemination of statewide standards and curriculum for core and ongoing child welfare training. She previously served as a child welfare worker and supervisor in San Francisco County's Department of Human Services and spearheaded the department's family conferencing program and its implementation of team decision-making.</p>
<p>Barrett Johnson, M.S.W., LCSW Regional Training Academy Coordinator California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley Marchant Bldg., Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608</p>	<p>Barrett Johnson oversees CalSWEC's coordination of statewide training efforts, including development and implementation of a common core curriculum, and strategic planning for a statewide training evaluation system. He is currently involved in planning the training efforts for California's Outcomes and Accountability System. He has</p>

<p>510-643-5484 Fax: 510-642-8573 barrettj@berkeley.edu</p>	<p>worked for many years with urban children and families, with an emphasis on intervention in cases of child sexual abuse.</p>
<p>Brenda Kester, Ph.D. President Evoke Communications 5949 E. University Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46219 317-356-3596 Evoke@sbcglobal.net</p>	<p>Brenda Kester provides training services for the Indiana Child Welfare Training Program, including curricula development, coaching and mentoring trainers, producing marketing materials, and developing an infrastructure for program evaluation. The program provides training for 92 counties and approximately 1,000 child welfare case managers, supervisors, or directors. She most recently developed competencies, performance criteria, and an evaluation process for training delivery.</p>
<p>Michel Lahti Research Faculty, Director Evaluation Services Institute for Public Sector Innovation Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service University of Southern Maine 295 Water St. Augusta, ME 04310 207-626-5274 Fax: 207-626-5210 Michel.Lahti@maine.gov</p>	<p>Michel Lahti currently works on the following evaluation projects: Evaluation of Family Team Meeting process-foster care/permanency; Evaluation of Post-Adoption Services; and Social-Indicators-Performance Measurements. His teaching interests include research design and performance measurement.</p>

Presenters and Participants

<p>Troy Lakey Distance Delivery Training Specialist Child Welfare Partnership Portland State University 520 SW Harrison #440 Portland, OR 97201 503-399-2579 Fax: 503-725-8030 tlakey@chemeketa.edu</p>	<p>Troy Lakey is involved in developing ways to extend training methods to reach workers around Oregon. These distance delivery projects require online evaluations of both the content and the mode of delivery. He will soon begin work on a rural training grant partnering Oregon with Alaska requiring distance delivery of training and evaluation.</p>
<p>Miriam J. Landsman, Ph.D., M.S.W. Assistant Professor of Social Work and Executive Director National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice University of Iowa 351 North Hall Iowa City, IA 52242 319-335-1257 Fax: 319-335-1711 miriam-landsman@uiowa.edu</p>	<p>Miriam J. Landsman is currently principal investigator for a federal child welfare training grant to improve recruitment and retention in public child welfare. She has published on factors contributing to commitment in public child welfare, as well as differences in the work environments of urban and rural child welfare organizations.</p>
<p>Robin Leake, Ph.D. Manager of Training & Program Evaluation American Humane 63 Inverness Drive East Englewood, CO 80112 303-925-9486 Fax: 303-858-0871 robin@americanhumane.org</p>	<p>Robin Leake is currently directing a comprehensive five-year follow-up evaluation of Pennsylvania's competency-based training program and is the project field coordinator/evaluator for the Rocky Mountain Quality Improvement Center, a federal research grant project to test innovative practice models for serving families struggling with</p>

	<p>substance abuse and child maltreatment. Dr. Leake is an evaluator for the Western Regional Recruitment and Retention Project, a federal grant project awarded to the Institute for Families at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work and American Humane that is designed to develop, implement, and evaluate effective and comprehensive training models for recruiting and retaining a competent work force in public child welfare agencies in the Rocky Mountain Region.</p>
<p>Ken Levin, M.S.W., M.P.A. Senior Social Services Supervisor Training and Career Development Orange County 1928 S. Grand Ave., Bldg., A30 Santa Ana, CA 92705 714-435-7370 Fax: 714-435-7410 Ken.Levin@ssa.ocgov.com</p>	<p>Ken Levin trains trainers for Children and Family Services.</p>
<p>Pamela Marques, Ph.D., LCSW Associate Professor Masters of Social Work Program CSU, Stanislaus 801 W. Monte Vista Ave.</p>	<p>Pamela Marques is currently involved in two evaluation projects. The first involves a process evaluation of redesigning a parenting curriculum and providing training to practitioners</p>

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<p>Modesto, CA 95382 209-667-3321 Fax: 209-667-3869 pmarques@csustan.edu</p>	<p>involved in family reunification services. The second involves a two-day training for supervisors in how to use the supervisor-supervisee relationship to develop multicultural competence.</p>
<p>Chris Mathias, M.S.W Director California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley Marchant Bldg., Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608 510-642-7490 Fax: 510-642-8573 cmathias@uclink.berkeley.edu</p>	<p>Chris Mathias joined CalSWEC in March 2000 as head of the Regional Training Academy Coordination Project. As director, she leads the development and evaluation of the Title IV-E Stipend Program for Public Child Welfare and the Regional Training Academy Coordination Project. She heads a consortium that includes 17 universities, the County Welfare Directors Association, the Mental Health Directors Association, the four Regional Training Academies, the Inter-University Consortium in Los Angeles, and the California Department of Social Services. For 14 years prior to joining CalSWEC, Ms. Mathias worked primarily in the private non-profit sector with children in out-of-home care. During that period, she developed curriculum, training, and quality assurance methods for practice for direct care workers, clinicians, and administrators.</p>

<p>Timothy McCarragher, Ph.D., LISW Assistant Professor Consultant, The Institute for Human Services University of Akron School of Social Work Akron, OH 44325-8001 330-972-5976 Fax: 330-972-5739 mccarra@uakron.edu</p>	<p>Timothy McCarragher teaches graduate-level research courses. For the past three years, he has collaborated with the Institute for Human Services, and the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) Evaluation Work Team. Team members include: county child welfare staff, Regional Training Center Coordinators, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services staff, and research consultants. The team is in the third year of a four-year effort to develop a comprehensive system to evaluate knowledge acquisition and comprehension, and skill demonstration and transfer resulting from training.</p>
<p>Richard J. McCowan, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus Director of Research and Evaluation Center for Development of Human Services SUC at Buffalo 1695 Elmwood Ave. Buffalo, NY 14207-2407 716-796-2049 Fax: 716-796-2149 dickm@bsc-cdhs.org</p>	<p>Richard J. McCowan is responsible for assessing training outcomes for more than 60,000 trainees throughout New York State. His unit has developed ACES (Automated Course Evaluation System), which produces tests and automatically generates reports from scanned or electronically-entered data. ACES, which is integrated into the state registration system, includes Internet programming to automate the collection of statewide needs assessments and training.</p>

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<p>Latifu Munirah, M.S.W., LISW Trainer & Curriculum Specialist Public Child Welfare Training Academy 6505 Alvarado Rd., #107 San Diego, CA 92120 619-594-3913 Fax: 619-594-1118 lmunirah@projects.sdsu.edu</p>	<p>Much of Latifu Munirah's career has focused the areas of family violence and child abuse. Her professional background includes work as a therapist, teacher, supervisor, administrator, consultant, and trainer in varied settings in the U.S. and abroad, including as a Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica, West Indies.</p>
<p>Michael Nunno, D.S.W. Senior Extension Associate Family Life Development Center Cornell University MVR Hall Ithaca, NY 14853-4401 607-254-5127 Fax: 607-255-4837 man2@cornell.edu</p>	<p>Michael Nunno is the principal investigator of Cornell University's Residential Child Care Project and is responsible for the evaluation of its training and technical assistance programs. The project trains residential child care workers in non-confrontational limit setting strategies to reduce the levels of aggression and critical incidents in residential child care, juvenile correction, mental health, and mental retardation facilities, as well as training in institutional abuse prevention, investigation, and remediation. These training and technical assistance programs for governmental and non-governmental facilities are conducted throughout North America, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Bermuda, and Australia.</p>

<p>Robin Perry, Ph.D. Associate Director Institute for Health & Human Services Research School of Social Work Florida State University 2035 E. Dirac Dr., Suite 236 HMB Tallahassee, FL 32306-2810 850-645-5769 Fax: 850-644-8331 reperry@garnet.acns.fsu.edu</p>	<p>Robin Perry is the principal investigator for Florida State University's Title IV-E Stipend Program and associated evaluation efforts. A former CalSWEC research associate, he has published on training and training evaluation topics. His recent research within the child welfare field in Florida has focused upon the following areas: the examination of the influence of educational background upon CPI and CPS workers' job performance; the development of a task-analysis tool/model for child protective service workers; a cost analysis of integrating select information technology into child protection investigations ; and, the development of a statistical/actuarial model for the equitable distribution of child welfare service money.</p>
<p>E. Douglas Pratt, D.S.W., LCSW President Policy-Practice Resources Inc. 3786 Evans Rd. Atlanta, GA 30340 770-723-9105 Fax: 770-723-9105 ppr-edp@juno.com</p>	<p>E. Douglas Pratt has specialized in staff development and outcome evaluation since 1990. Prior to that, he was a child sexual abuse trainer for the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. He co-designed the MAPP curricula (GPS- and CSA-MAPP) used by 20 states, Israel, the Netherlands, and MAPP trainers. Dr. Pratt has served as a consultant to the</p>

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	<p>Alabama reform since 1991 (<i>Making Child Welfare Work</i>, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, 1998), where he helped design the Alabama Certification Training and formative evaluation process. He has conducted statewide evaluations of training and practice development for numerous states and training academies. He is currently helping the Community Partnerships for Protecting Children to use the Quality Service Review and the Family Team Meeting Process, where he is refining the use of focus groups as one method of formative evaluation.</p>
<p>Jennifer Propp, M.S.W. Project Manager University of Kansas School of Social Welfare 1545 Lilac Lane Lawrence, KS 66044 816-361-3582 Fax: 816-361-3582 propp@ku.edu</p>	<p>Jennifer Propp is working on her doctoral dissertation related to youth transitioning from foster care. She serves as a project manager for training and evaluation of Title IV-E programs for the School of Social Welfare.</p>
<p>Basil Qaqish, M.A. Research Scientist Department of Social Work University North Carolina— Greensboro 451 Graham Bldg. Box 26170</p>	<p>Basil Qaqish is working on the Transfer of Learning Survey in North Carolina and assessment instrument development in North Carolina for social work training for the following core topics: (1) effects of separation,</p>

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<p>Greensboro, NC 27402 336-315-7044 Fax: 336-334-5210 bfqaqish@uncg.edu</p>	<p>loss and attachment, (2) medical aspects of child abuse, (3) child development in families at risk, and (4) legal aspects of child welfare in North Carolina.</p>
<p>Maryanne Rehberg Assistant Director Bay Area Academy 133 Hammond Ave. Santa Cruz, CA 95062 831-426-4970 Fax: 831-426-4970 rehbergm@pacbell.net</p>	
<p>Martha Roditti, Ph.D., M.S.W. Curriculum/ Evaluation Specialist Bay Area Academy 2201 Broadway, Suite 100 Oakland, CA 94612 415-613-2674 Fax: 510-663-5532 mroditti@sfsu.edu</p>	<p>Martha Roditti has completed several submissions for articles on the topic Child Caregiving Networks and Child Neglect. Formerly the director of the Bay Area Academy, she is currently its curriculum and evaluation specialist and teaches child welfare at San Francisco State University.</p>
<p>Greg Rose, M.S.W. Resources Development & Training Support Bureau California Department of Social Services 744 P St., MS 11-86 Sacramento, CA 95814 916-651-6160 Fax: 916-651-6325 greg.rose@dss.ca.gov</p>	<p>Greg Rose is bureau chief of the Resources Development and Training Support Bureau at the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). He also represents CDSS as the co-chair of California's Statewide Training and Education Committee. Prior to entering state service, he worked in policy development, research</p>

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	and direct practice with people living HIV/AIDS, gang-involved youth, and pregnant and parenting young women.
Marcia Sanderson, LCSW Director Protective Services Training Institute School of Social Work University of Texas at Austin 1 University Station D3500 Austin, TX 78712-0358 512-471-0521 Fax: 512-232-9585 MSanderson@mail.utexas.edu	Marcia Sanderson has been the director of the Protective Services Training Institute (PSTI) since 1993. From 1999 to 2002, she also was the director of the Child Welfare Education Project, a Title IV-E stipend program at the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work. In 2002 she became full-time PSTI director and relocated to the University of Texas at Austin. While at the University of Houston, she taught grant writing in the social work master's program and program evaluation as part of a continuing education workshop on Program Planning and Proposal Writing.
Melanie Silveria Evaluation Coordinator Northern California Training Academy UC Davis Extension 1632 Da Vinci Ct. Davis, CA 95616-4860 530-757-8643 Fax: 530-754-5104 msilveria@unexmail.ucdavis.edu	

<p>Norma Smith-Sessions, LMSW Training/Development Director The Center for Child & Family Studies University of South Caroline College of Social Work 226 Bull St., Benson Bldg. Columbia, SC 29208 803-777-0647 Fax: 803-777-9409 norma.sessions@sc.edu</p>	<p>Norma Smith-Sessions directs projects to develop and provide advanced training for adult services workers in the South Carolina Department of Social Services. She is currently involved in implementing the center's new Training Quality Collaboration, of which a major component is formative, process, and summative evaluation.</p>
<p>Wayne T. Stevenson, M.S.W. Deputy Secretary for Children, Youth & Families Department of Public Welfare P.O. Box 2675 Rm. 131 Health & Weflare Bldg. Harrisburg, PA 17105 717-787-4756 Fax: 717-787-0414 wstevenson@state.pa.us</p>	<p>Wayne T. Stevenson directs Pennsylvania's efforts to protect children and support families through child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention service delivery systems. Children, Youth & Families ensures a continuum of care for delinquent and dependent children that supports their rights, safety and well being and realizes improved results for children and families through outcomes-based planning and research-based strategies. Mr. Stevenson provides leadership at both the state and national levels in the areas of competency-based training, permanency planning, public/private partnerships, and cross-systems collaboration. He oversees the licensure of public and private residential facilities serving dependent and delinquent children and youth;</p>

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	<p>the licensure and registration of child care facilities; and 13 state residential facilities for juvenile offenders.</p>
<p>Becky L. Thomas Senior Training Officer Cuyahoga County Dept. of Children & Family Services 1321 Apache Pass Streetsboro, OH 44241 216-881-5316 Fax: 330-626-9286 bthomas@www.cuyahoga.oh.us</p>	<p>Becky L. Thomas serves on the Evaluation Work Team for the Institute for Human Services (IHS) that runs the state of Ohio's training program for the child welfare systems. The team is beginning to focus on the higher AHA Evaluation Levels of knowledge acquisition, knowledge comprehension, skill demonstration, and skill transfer.</p>
<p>David C. Thomas, M.A. Executive Director Texas Center for Adolescent Rehabilitation & Education, Inc. 6500 Mapleridge Houston, TX 77081 832-200-6154 Fax: 713-664-9217 DThomas@TCare.org</p>	<p>David C. Thomas is the administrator of a nonprofit organization in Houston that operates one of the state's largest residential treatment programs. As president of the Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, a national organization of child and youth care practitioners, he coordinates the North American Certification Project, which establishes a system for the assessment and certification of individual practitioners across the country. Mr. Thomas is completing his dissertation in the Ed.D. program at Nova Southeastern University.</p>

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<p>Shradha Tibrewal, Ph.D. Assistant Professor Master of Social Work Program CSU, Stanislaus 801 W. Monte Vista Ave. Turlock ,CA 95382 209-667-3951 Fax: 209-667-3869 stibrewal@csustan.edu</p>	<p>Shradha Tibrewal teaches social work research methods, data analysis, social work practice, and social welfare policy, both at the foundation and advanced levels. Her most recent projects include a participatory action research project to develop and implement an evaluation of Family Group Decision Making, a preliminary exploration of the foster youth emancipation experience, and an assessment of empathy as a practice skill in social work education.</p>
<p>Indra M. Trujillo, M.S.W. Training Manager Northwest Institute for Children and Families 4433 Brygger Drive W. Seattle, WA 98199 206-696-3823 Fax: 347-823-7677 indra@u.washington.edu</p>	<p>Indra M. Trujillo supervises the delivery of basic and advanced training to child welfare staff, supervisors and managers, and coordinates the evaluation efforts for the services delivered.</p>
<p>Charlene Urwin, Ph.D., LCSW Curriculum Director & Site Manager Protective Services Training Institute University of Texas at Austin</p>	<p>Charlene Urwin has directed training needs assessments and competency projects in child and adult protection and recently completed a performance dimension approach in Child Care</p>

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<p>School of Social Work 1 University Station D3500 Austin, TX 78712 512-471-0560 512-232-9585 curwin@mail.utexas.edu</p>	<p>Licensing. She has extensive experience in teaching and directing social work education programs.</p>
<p>Brian K. Wear, MSHCS Training Director ECORTC/Ohio Child Welfare Training Center 274 Highland Ave., Suite. 100 Cambridge, OH 43725 740-432-2355 Fax: 740-439-2683 wearb01@odjfs.state.oh.us</p>	<p>Brian K. Wear has over 11 years of social service experience and currently serves on the Evaluation Workgroup for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Center to develop a comprehensive evaluation program.</p>
<p>David Wegenast, D.S.W. Professor Buffalo State College 185 Parkside Ave. Buffalo, NY 14214 716-836-5220 wegenadp@buffalostate.edu</p>	<p>David Wegenast is the past president of the National Staff Development and Training Association. He developed the New York State Child Welfare Training System (1970–2000). His current research interests and activities include the use of audience response polling systems in human services training and evaluation.</p>
<p>Leslie W. Zeitler, M.S.W, LCSW Training & Evaluation Specialist California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) School of Social Welfare University of California, Berkeley</p>	<p>Leslie W. Zeitler coordinates and implements CalSWEC's statewide training and evaluation efforts, and provides technical assistance to the California Regional Training Academies and the state's 58 counties. Prior to joining CalSWEC, Ms. Zeitler</p>

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<p>Marchant Bldg, Suite 420 6701 San Pablo Ave. Oakland, CA 94608 510-643-6400 Fax: 510-642-8573 lzeitler@berkeley.edu</p>	<p>provided direct social work services for six years to low-income children and families through the San Francisco-based Legal Services for Children. A graduate of the Coro Fellowship Program in Public Affairs, she teaches family assessment and risk management skills to Head Start direct services staff its annual conferences.</p>
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