The workforce studies are the core of CalSWEC’s evaluation framework. Conducted every three years since 1992, they measure the population of child welfare staff in California by gathering administrative data from the local county child welfare agencies. The agencies also supply information about vacancies, needs for MSWs and bilingual workers and, this year, information about how the recession has affected hiring. The population data are then compared to data gathered from the individual workers themselves about their demographics, educational levels, desire for more education and training, and service assignments.

The first workforce study in 1992 provided a baseline measurement of the proportion of MSWs working as social workers in local child welfare agencies. At that time, counties estimated that 20.5% of their child welfare social workers had MSWs. In 1993, the CalSWEC Title IV-E Program graduated its first MSWs. As of spring 2012, 4634 MSW students have graduated from the program since 1993. In 2011 using two online surveys (the Agency Administrative Survey and the Individual Worker Survey), we estimated that the proportion of MSWs in the child welfare social work staff in 2011 was 40.5%.

This series of data briefs presents the results of the California Public Child Welfare Workforce Studies, organized by specific topics.

**The Population Data Brief** describes the population of child welfare staff, their demographics and educational levels, using two survey instruments, the Agency Administrative Data Survey and the Individual Worker Survey.

- In 2011 county child welfare agencies reported there are 7.2% fewer supervisors and 21.4% fewer case-carrying social workers in 2011, as compared to 2008 levels.
- 60% of the respondents to the survey report holding a master’s degree of some kind. Those holding MSWs in the public child welfare system constitute 40.6% of all respondents, a change from 1992 when the estimate was 20.5%.
- The CalSWEC Title IV-E program supplies the majority of MSWs (57.6% of 1230 MSWs responding) to the California public child welfare system. Many MSWs are supervisors, managers and administrators. Among newly hired public child welfare social workers (who have had their jobs for less than one year), 40.1% have participated in an MSW or BASW Title IV-E program.

These findings strengthen the case for continuing workforce development in public child welfare and advocacy for children in the child welfare system.

**The BASW Data Brief** describes those child welfare staff with BASWs in California. They are the smallest college-educated group among public child welfare social workers. The brief describes their regional distribution in the state, service assignments, desire for further education and training, and demographics such as years of experience and diversity.

- In 2011, 186 BASWs constitute 5.5% of the entire workforce sample. This is virtually unchanged from 2008 when BASWs made up 5.7% of the sample.
The BASW workers are in general a diverse group; 41% are White. The ethnicity proportions are statistically no different between non IV-E and IV-E BASW participants.

About 33% of the BASW respondents replied that they do speak another language on the job; most of those speak Spanish.

57% (106 of the 186) responding BASWs indicated they want to pursue an MSW with CalSWEC Title IV-E support.

BASWs play important roles in public child welfare services and are generally involved in all aspects of public child welfare service delivery.

The American Indian/Native American Data Brief describes results of the California Public Child Welfare Workforce Study from the responses of the American Indian/Native American child welfare staff, including their regional distribution in the state, their service assignments, desire for further education and training, and demographics, such as years of experience.

- American Indian/Native American child welfare workers constitute 2% of the child welfare social workers/supervisors in 28 of 58 counties in California.
- The majority who responded to the 2011 California Public Child Welfare Individual Worker Survey are case-carrying social workers.
- There is a high level of educational attainment among the American Indian workers who responded to this survey—63% have master’s degrees of some kind, slightly higher than the statewide average of 60%. There is interest in obtaining an MSW among the others.

Although the sample of American Indian public child welfare staff appears to be double that of the proportion of American Indian children in the system, children in care of the Tribes are not accounted for in these data and American Indian social workers who work in Tribal agencies are not accounted for in this workforce study.

The Turnover Data Brief describes external and internal turnover in the child welfare staff population from the Agency Administrative Survey and service assignment changes as described by the child welfare staff who responded to the Individual Worker Survey.

- An analysis of the 2011 California Public Child Welfare Workforce Study revealed that the external turnover rate statewide was 6.1% for 47 (of 58) counties reporting. Comparing 2004 and 2008, the external turnover rates for all social worker and supervisor positions are smaller in 2011.
- Internal turnover opportunities—lateral moves, promotions, and leaving child welfare but not the county agencies—are also discussed in this brief.
- Results indicate that about one quarter of the social work staff has experienced some change in their service assignment in 2010-2011. Much of it seems to be in response to department reorganization efforts to meet client need and in response to the economic recession.

Workers need additional training for their new positions and changed service assignments. Given this perspective, those concerned with turnover could examine internal turnover as well as external turnover.

The Training Data Brief describes professional child welfare staff’s access to and experience with on the job training.

- For 2412 professional child welfare staff respondents to the Individual Worker Survey, 99.8% self-report that they have received training for their jobs in fiscal year 2010-2011.
- Most have completed (73%) or are in the process of completing (4.8%) the Common Core Curricula for Child Welfare Workers.
- Among 358 respondents who have been at their current jobs for one year or less, 99.4% have received from 1 to 30 days of training last year.

The Effects of the Economic Recession on Child Welfare Services and Staff Data Brief describes contributions from 47 counties’ administration. Due to concern about the economy, 401
child welfare staff positions were not filled in 2010-2011. Additionally, twelve counties anticipated losing positions in 2011-2012. However 42 counties laid off 33 staff in 2010-2011. County respondents noted concern and stress in three main areas: on service delivery, on the community, and on staffing. The results are reported here by region of the state.