

**Child Welfare Training: National Child Welfare Workforce Initiatives Child  
Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Grant (Priority Area II)  
HHS-2008-ACF-ACYF-CT-0047 – CFDA Number 93.648**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Louisiana State University School of Social Work (LSU), in partnership with the State of Louisiana Department of Social Services Office of Community Services, (DSS/OCS) and the Louisiana University Child Welfare Training Partnership established the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project (LCWCWP) (Priority Area II) with funding from the Children's Bureau. The purpose of this project is to improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and youth by building the capacity of Louisiana's child welfare professionals and by improving the systems in the State that recruit, train, supervise, manage, and retain them.

Louisiana is an extraordinary, diverse state with urban, rural and suburban environments and an estimated total population of 4,293,204 (US Census Bureau, 2007). Louisiana is comprised of 64 parishes (called counties in the rest of the U.S.), clustered into ten geographic regions – Orleans, Baton Rouge, Covington, Thibodaux, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Alexandria, Shreveport, Monroe, and Jefferson. In 2007, there were over 5,116 children and youth in foster care with 3,483 children and youth entered the Louisiana foster care system that same year. In this project, we focus on the Louisiana state child welfare system workforce, the personnel who are charged with meeting the needs of these children and youth.

The Louisiana Office of Community Services (OCS) currently employs 907 child welfare workers in levels 1-3. There are 213 child welfare supervisors in level 4. The average educational background for line staff is BA level staff; the average length of employment is 2.5 years. According to Louisiana OCS data, the agency is experiencing high turnover in its front line Child Welfare Workers. Turnover rates average 25% among the four primary child welfare specialist positions (Child Welfare Specialist Trainee, Child Welfare Specialists 1, 2, & 3). The current workforce is critically inexperienced. Over 26% of the workforce has less than one year of experience and 51.86% of Louisiana's workers have less than three years of experience. Louisiana's separation figures reveal further that 50% of employees who separated from the agency in the last fiscal year had less than two years of experience at the time they left the employment of OCS. Louisiana's caseload carrying workforce is so inexperienced that the State is forced to promote supervisors who barely meet the minimum qualification requirements. These inexperienced supervisors are having a difficult time providing the necessary support and guidance for the staff they supervise. OCS reports a 50% turnover in supervisors over the last 4 years. Although the caseload size is relatively manageable, the average number of cases assigned to each foster care case manager is 11.9 cases, the workload is high.

Among the critical challenges currently facing the agency as it struggles to manage the child welfare workforce issues are: high turnover, low entry level salaries, high incidence of retirement among seasoned child welfare staff, inexperienced supervisory staff, and an inability to attract qualified new staff with the basic skills sets necessary to be successful as protective and preventive service workers.

## **EVALUATION: YEAR ONE**

### ***Introduction:***

Year One evaluations have focused on the following areas:

- 1) Students entering the child welfare field in Schools of Social Work at all seven participating public Louisiana Universities,
- 2) The Development of the Louisiana Child Welfare Workforce Alliance,
- 3) Louisiana OCS Staff Development and Appreciation Activities,
- 4) Comprehensive Workforce Data (The Executive Summary and key findings are presented in this report. The entire report can be found at the LWCWP website.),
- 5) Collaborative work with national recipients of the Children's Bureau Workforce and Traineeship grants,
- 6) The Louisiana OCS Supervisory Projects and
- 7) The LCWCWP Website.

The following report details key evaluation efforts and the results of these studies and activities.

### **I. Louisiana Child Welfare Workforce Scholars, OCS IV-E Stipend Students and OCS Field Instructors**

***Program Description and Goals:*** The Louisiana Child Welfare Scholars program exists through a partnership between the Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS), Office of Community Services (OCS) and the seven public universities and colleges that serve Louisiana students. The program provides tuition reimbursement to promising bachelor's and master's level social work students who are committed to practicing social work in Louisiana in the field of child welfare. A special grant in the form of a cooperative agreement between LSU and the USHSS Children's Bureau provides funding for these stipends. The primary goal of the program is to prepare competent social workers in the areas of foster care and adoption for career positions with Louisiana's Office of Community Services. Students accepted into the Child Welfare Scholars program are placed in public or private child welfare agencies in Louisiana for their field practicum and have access to a variety of child welfare training opportunities and resources. The Scholars stipend program is available for both current and potential employees. Recruitment of potential employees and retention of current employees are central to the purpose of the program.

#### **Goals of the Child Welfare Scholars Program**

- To increase the number and professional child welfare skills of BSW/MSW level social workers among the existing OCS workforce.
- To recruit and retain highly trained, ethnically and racially diverse social work professionals with advanced degrees.

- To advance the knowledge, experience and professionalism of public child welfare social workers employed by OCS.
- To develop and administer an academic/practicum program, which is informed by current research on public child welfare and is evaluated to determine the value added by Scholars graduates to public child welfare practice.

***Stipend Student Evaluation: Perceptions, Motivation, Confidence***

Although plans were made to collect data across all of the Children’s Bureau funded projects, data collection was limited to what each site accomplished on its own in this first year. Our research team participated in all planning for subsequent years of data collection, but none have yet been collected and the collective research plan is still being developed. Therefore, we collected some baseline data on those students funded in Louisiana as stipend students. Some are Title-IV-E funded and some are funded as Child Welfare scholars, under this grant. In Louisiana, we have determined that interventions with and services for all these students will be identical, so that all stipend students benefit from the same trainings, orientations, curriculum development, and field supervision. In Year One, there were 13 Child Welfare Workforce Scholars enrolled across Louisiana’s participating universities. (See Chart 1.)

**Chart 1.**

2009-2010 LCWCWP Scholars by School, their Department of Social Services Office of Community Services supervisors and the parish where they are placed

School	Number of CW Scholars	OCS Office
Northwestern State University	4	Grant Parish OCS
		Shreveport Regional OCS Office
		Rapides Parish OCS
		Sabine Parish OCS
University of Louisiana at Monroe	2	Union Parish OCS
		Quachita Parish OCS
Southern University and A&M College	1	Point Coupee Parish OCS
Grambling State University	2	Shreveport Regional OCS Office
		Caddo Parish OCS
Southeastern Louisiana University	2	Livingston Parish OCS
		Livingston Parish OCS
Louisiana State University	2	Lafayette Regional OCS Office
		Lafayette Parish OCS Office

**Demographics.** A total of 49 incoming stipend students (both Title IV-E and the Child Welfare Scholars) completed the Child Welfare Work Survey Pre-test for fall 2009. Seven Louisiana schools were represented: Grambling State University, Louisiana State University, Northwestern State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, Southern University Baton Rouge, Southern University New Orleans (SUNO) and University of Louisiana at Monroe. There were 31 (63.3%) students pursuing a Bachelor's in Social Work and 17 (34.7%) pursuing a Master's in Social Work. (One student did not include demographic information.) The ages of participants ranged from 20 to 55 years, and the average age was 26.7 years.

**Methodology.** Students were given a survey with basic demographics included at one of two regional orientations in the fall, 2009, as they began their stipend year experience. (See Appendix A.) The first set of questions reflects students' thoughts about work in the area of child welfare. The second set of questions focused on what influenced them to choose child welfare as a career. The final set of questions centered on topical areas or job-related tasks, asking their level of confidence that they could currently accomplish these tasks/skills competently.

**Findings.** All questions asked them to compare Child Welfare with other fields of Social Work for this first survey. Perceptions of work in the Child Welfare area generate relatively strong feelings both on the positive and negative aspects of the work. One hundred percent of respondents at least slightly agree that child welfare work 'makes more of a difference in the world' as compared to other fields of social work. Students perceive that child welfare work is more rewarding with 87.7% (43) agreeing strongly or somewhat. Only 4% (2) slightly disagree that the work is less rewarding.

There are a number of reasons students choose to go into Child Welfare. Students agree (93.9%) that their own families are supportive of their decision to choose the field of child welfare in which to work. Once on the job, students anticipate a supportive work environment (95.9%) and believe the job offers opportunities for advancement (97.9%).

There are also aspects of the job which may be more demanding than other fields of Social Work and the stipend students seem to understand some of these "down" sides of the job. As positive as students are about their career selection, they indicate a level of concern and realism in their expectations. Almost 96% of respondents at least slightly agree that the job will be demanding, with 93.9% agreeing that the job will require irregular and extra hours. Over 75% (77.6%) agree that the job will be more frustrating than other social work career choices, although 40.8% who agree that it 'is frustrating' only slightly agree. Nearly 80% of respondents believe that child welfare work 'is more dangerous' than other job choices would be. A large majority (93.9%) of respondents believe that child welfare work 'is work you are likely to continue to think about after you go home at night.'

The second set of questions reveals to what extent certain factors have influenced a focus on child welfare as a career choice. All respondents at least slightly agree that the following factors are reasons for making a child welfare career choice:

'I want to work with families.'

'I am passionate about this field of social work.'

'I am interested in making decisions that make a real difference for the safety, permanency and well-being of children.'

‘I think Child Welfare work will provide many opportunities for me to keep learning.

Over 90% of respondents *at least* slightly agree that the following factors influenced their decision to pursue a career in Child Welfare:

‘I want to work with children.’ (97.9%)

‘I think the Child Welfare agency adequately supports its workers.’ (94.8%)

‘I am aware of a wide range of options for work in Child Welfare.’ (91.8%)

Almost 84% acknowledged that they at least slightly agree that personal experiences have drawn them into work in this field. Over 50% strongly agree that personal experience has drawn them into the Child Welfare field. Almost 80% at least slightly agree that someone (colleague, professional, teacher) presented a compelling argument for focusing on child welfare.

Financial issues do not seem to be a reason to avoid Child Welfare work for the stipend students surveyed. Three-fourths (75.5%) of respondents at least slightly agree that they can make a good living with decent benefits. However, 61.2% disagree with the statement that the pay is reasonable for the demands of the job. These items indicate that while pay is not likely the motivating factor for selecting Child Welfare as a career, most respondents believe the pay and benefits to be sufficient. It is possible that pay and benefits don’t seem too important in the beginning but may result in early burnout or lack of commitment as time goes on.

One portion of the pre-survey for incoming CW students in the fall of 2009 reveals intrinsic motivators for these students that may indicate the reasons for selecting Child Welfare as a career choice. These intrinsic motivators may also indicate a student’s likelihood to remain in the field. There is very little variation in responses to these questions. Students entering the Child Welfare program are for the most part very positive in their expectations of their own work as well as their expectations of the actual work they will be doing. Ninety-eight percent of the students indicated they are ‘proud of my work’ and ‘feel a sense of personal accomplishment through my work.’ Over 90% (92%) are ‘confident in my ability to perform services in Child Welfare.’ Students agree at least somewhat that they will remain motivated and persistent in overcoming obstacles faced by families (98%) and persistent in spite of setbacks (94%). These responses indicate high levels of personal drive and motivation, but may also be reasons for burnout due to the high demands placed on Child Welfare workers both in sheer numbers of clients as well as emotional toll.

The desire to help others was by far the most common positive response for why they are motivated to do this work, with 100% indicating ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree.’ Relative to the desire to help others, 93.8% are ‘bothered that some clients don’t receive the services they deserve.’ Students are also willing to delay their own personal plans (85.7%) to help clients who need assistance. All respondents at least somewhat agree that ‘my work in child welfare will offer opportunities to make a difference.’

The third measure on the survey looked at the self-perceived level of confidence in work preparedness of incoming students, focusing on tasks which they will need to master in the stipend program. This was measured using a likert-type scale. ‘Some confidence’ is the most frequently occurring response to almost all of the survey questions measuring the level of confidence students have in the areas of readiness to

work in the field. Charts were prepared to show the areas the student rated themselves as feeling most confident and areas where they felt less confident. It should be noted, that this perception of ability is not equivalent to true ability. Areas of the highest level of confidence were: Adaptations to working with diverse families, application of critical thinking skills, understand Family Group Decision-making, making sound placement decisions and understanding the history of child welfare. (See Table 1: Responses Indicating Highest Levels of Confidence.) For the most part, very few respondents indicated lack of confidence to do the work of a child welfare worker. The items most often indicating at least some lack of confidence were: Writing court reports, testifying in court, assessing risk to children after an abuse allegation, supervision styles and engaging a parent who is suspected of child abuse. (See Table 2: Responses Indicating Lowest Levels of Confidence.) Areas of least confidence appear to be those dealing with in-court issues and supervision style. Both are areas where students are not likely to have had much or any experience.

**Table 1.**  
Responses Indicating Highest Levels of Confidence (n=49)

	Complete Confidence	A lot of Confidence	Some Confidence	Neutral	Some lack of Confidence	Very little Confidence	No Confidence
Can make adaptations to work with diverse cultural or ethnic backgrounds.	14%	45%	9%	8%	4%	--	--
Can apply Critical Thinking Skills in child welfare practice.	18%	29%	33%	12%	8%	--	--
Understand and can work with Family Group Decision-making.	27%	20%	33%	6%	12%	2%	--
Can make sound Placement Decisions or recommendations in child welfare cases.	14%	29%	31%	12%	12%	2%	--
Understand History of Child Welfare and can use it in your practice.	18%	18%	35%	14%	14%	--	--

Note: Rounded to nearest whole percent.

**Table 2.**  
Responses Indicating Lowest Levels of Confidence (n=49)

	No Confidence	Very little Confidence	Some lack of Confidence	Neutral	Some Confidence	A lot of Confidence	Complete Confidence
Can Write Court Reports for child welfare cases.	4%	12%	20%	18%	33%	10%	2%
Can Testify in court.	6%	6%	8%	22%	25%	12%	20%
Can Assess Risk to children of remaining in their homes after an abuse allegation.	4%	--	18%	12%	29%	22%	14%
Know different Supervision Styles and can use supervision to your benefit.	4%	4%	10%	27%	25%	20%	10%
Can successfully engage with a parent who is Suspected of Abusing their child.	--	2%	20%	6%	33%	22%	14%

Note: Rounded to nearest whole percent.

**Conclusions:**

Child Welfare stipend students appear to have strong motivation for their choice of a specialization. In addition, there are external supports for their choice that may help them continue in the work. There are some interesting possible differences between non-

CW students and CW students, yet some of these may be clarified to enhance recruitment into Child Welfare (knowledge of advancement opportunities and a supportive work environment). Nearly half of the non CW students actually indicated some interest in CW work, and nearly all indicated a desire to work with children and families.

### **Non-Child Welfare Students: Impressions of CW Work**

**Demographics.** All 33 students who completed this survey represent a single university of the seven that are participating in the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project. These students are not currently enrolled in the Child Welfare curriculum. The data was collected at a student orientation program for the school of social work and those who were taking child welfare classes or saw that as their focus of training were asked not to take the survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine the reasons that individuals might not choose to work in child welfare. Of the 33, 17 (51.5%) indicated they are not interested in a Child Welfare internship or in Child Welfare work. One of the students currently works in Child Welfare. Interestingly, this shows that almost half *might* be interested in future CW work if they are recruited and provided more information.

**Methodology.** The evaluation team created an instrument for express use with this population, based on materials commonly used in understanding attitudes about child welfare, motivation, and influences that may support or discourage a choice to work in the child welfare field. After pilot testing, a survey was distributed at a general orientation meeting for all SW students, asking only those who did not plan to do child welfare work to complete it. It was voluntary and not all students who were eligible completed the survey (as evidenced by the number who responded).

**Findings.** First, participating students completed the “Impressions of Child Welfare Work” Survey. (See Appendix B.) It should be noted that the answers were to be given in comparison to other social work responses, so that the responses are relative to other SW options. (See Table 3.) Responses are listed in order of the mean numbers of the responses. The response categories were divided into those that provide motivation for the work from outside reinforcers or variables and those that are internally motivating (emotionally, satisfying). The response set was as follows:

- Strongly Disagree = 1
- Somewhat Disagree = 2
- Slightly Disagree = 3
- Slightly Agree = 4
- Somewhat Agree = 5
- Strongly Agree = 6

**Table 3**

Question 1: **Compared to other social work specializations, I believe child welfare work:**

<b>Extrinsic Motivators</b>	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6
Requires irregular and extra hours	4.33	--	3.0%	24.2%	21.2%	39.4%	12.1%
Has opportunities for advancement	4.03	3.0%	9.1%	21.2%	24.2%	33.3%	9.1%
Pays less	4.00	--	9.1%	21.2%	42.4%	15.2%	12.1%
Provides a supportive work environment	3.97	3.0%	12.1%	15.2%	33.3%	27.3%	9.1%
Confers higher status	3.03	9.1%	9.1%	54.5%	24.2%	3.0%	--
<b>Intrinsic Motivators</b>							
Is very emotionally demanding	5.52	--	--	--	6.1%	36.4%	57.6%
Is work you are likely to...think about...at night	5.12	--	3.0%	--	24.2%	27.3%	45.5%
Is work my family would support me in doing	5.06	3.0%	3.0%	--	12.1%	42.4%	39.4%
Makes more of a difference in the world	4.88	--	--	6.1%	30.3%	33.3%	30.3%
Is frustrating	4.52	--	6.1%	15.2%	21.2%	36.4%	21.2%
More rewarding	4.36	6.1%	6.1%	15.2%	15.2%	33.3%	24.2%
Is more dangerous	3.76	6.1%	15.2%	27.3%	21.2%	9.1%	21.2%

Almost 70% of respondents believe that Child Welfare pays less than other social work specializations/jobs. Over 50% at least slightly disagree that Child Welfare work confers higher status on those who work in that field. About 75% of those who participated believe they will be required to work irregular and extra hours more often than in other social work jobs. About 70% agree that Child Welfare would provide a supportive work environment and provides opportunities for advancement.

Even among non-Child Welfare students, there is a perception that work in the field is rewarding (73%) and will make a difference in the world (93.9%). These students also expect family support (93.9%) should they opt to work in this field. On the more negative side, non-Child Welfare students believe that the work is ‘frustrating’ (79%) and a slim majority (51.5%) also believes it to be more dangerous than other social work jobs. Overwhelmingly (97%), these students believe that Child Welfare work ‘is work you are likely...to think about...at night’. This “taking the job home” was another negative aspect of the job perceived by the respondents.

**Table 4**

Q.2: To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision NOT to focus on child welfare as a career?

<b>Influencing factors</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
I am more passionate about another field of social work.	4.15	9%	6%	24%	18%	6%	36%
The risk of burnout would concern me.	4.03	12%	12%	6%	24%	21%	24%
I believe I can make more money elsewhere.	3.94	6%	15%	18%	21%	18%	21%
I don't know much about options for work in child welfare.	3.58	15%	6%	18%	33%	21%	6%
I've heard horror stories.	3.50	12%	15%	18%	27%	12%	12%
The pay is too low for the demands of the job.	3.45	6%	21%	21%	33%	9%	9%
I don't think the child welfare agency adequately supports their workers.	3.03	18%	18%	27%	21%	9%	6%
I am concerned that I might make a life-and-death mistake.	2.91	33%	18%	12%	12%	9%	15%
I think work in child welfare would be too narrow and not offer enough variety.	2.88	15%	27%	33%	9%	9%	6%
No one has presented a compelling argument for focusing on child welfare.	2.30	49%	18%	12%	6%	6%	9%
I don't care to work with children.	1.91	58%	18%	15%	--	3%	6%
I don't care to work with families.	1.55	61%	24%	15%	--	--	--

Note: Rounded to nearest whole percent.

### **Conclusions:**

The reasons likely vary from person to person as to why he or she opts not to pursue a career in Child Welfare. First of all, the reasons these students did not select Child Welfare as a career is not because they do not want to work with children and families. Over 90% disagree that they 'don't care to work with children,' and 100% disagree that they 'don't care to work with families.' Responses to other questions lend credence to the variation in reasons for not selecting the Child Welfare field of work. Over 51% have heard horror stories about working in Child Welfare and almost 70% indicate they are concerned about the risk of burnout. Eighty percent of respondents disagree that 'no one has presented a compelling argument for focusing on Child

Welfare.’ In other words, they have been made aware of the need for Child Welfare workers. Over 60% indicated they are ‘more passionate about another field of Social Work’, and believe they will make more money elsewhere. Approximately 75% believe that the Child Welfare agency supports its workers and the Child Welfare agency supports its workers and the Child Welfare job would provide variety. Almost two thirds of respondents (63.6%) disagree with the statement, ‘I am concerned that I may make and life and death mistake’.

Based on the responses, it is difficult to give an absolute reason as to why students have not or do not select Child Welfare as a career. But the most glaring reason could be the level of perceived burn out at 70%. This perception along with perceived low pay and more passion for another field may be the combined reasons for selecting another career field.

***Comparison of Responses between Child-Welfare and Non-child Welfare Students:***

Of some interest is a comparison of the responses of the CW students with the non-CW students. While these are only preliminary data, and the samples are not necessarily equivalent, they raise some questions for further exploration. See Table 5 below for a comparison of means between the groups on survey items.

Response Set:

- Strongly Disagree = 1
- Somewhat Disagree = 2
- Slightly Disagree = 3
- Slightly Agree = 4
- Somewhat Agree = 5
- Strongly Agree = 6

**Table 5.**

Compared to other social work specializations, I believe child welfare work:

	Mean 1(-)	Mean 2 (=)	Net Difference
1. Pays less	4.06	4.00	.06
2. Is more rewarding	5.41	4.36	1.05
3. Is very emotionally demanding	5.35	5.52	-0.17
4. Makes more of a difference in the world	5.53	4.88	.65
5. Is frustrating	4.16	4.52	-0.36
6. Confers higher status	4.15	3.03	1.12
7. Requires irregular and extra hours	5.16	4.33	0.83
8. Is more dangerous	4.27	3.76	0.51
9. Provides a supportive work environment	5.08	3.97	1.11
10. Has opportunities for advancement	5.43	4.03	1.40
11. Is work you are likely to continue to think about after you go home at night	4.96	5.12	-0.16
12. Is work my family would support me in doing	5.39	5.06	0.33

Mean 1 = Mean response of entering Child Welfare students in the fall of 2009

Mean 2 = Mean response of entering non-Child Welfare students in the fall of 2009

From Table 5, interesting trends are apparent:

1. Incoming CW students believe that the CW field is more rewarding with a difference in the means of 1.05.
2. Incoming CW students are more likely to think that this career makes more of a difference in the world.
3. Non-CW students are somewhat more likely to think that CW is frustrating.
4. CW students are quite a bit more likely to think that a CW job confers a higher status.
5. CW students are more likely to believe that CW work requires irregular and extra hours.
6. CW students are more likely to think that CW work is more dangerous.
7. CW students are quite a bit more likely to think that CW work offers a supportive work environment.
8. CW students also find it much more likely that CW work offers opportunities for advancement.
9. CW students are more likely to indicate their family would be supportive of their decision to select CW as a career.

### **Intensive Supervision Study**

***Introduction.*** Standard practice in field liaison work requires faculty to have one site visit each semester to monitor field experiences and growth, meeting with field supervisors and students in placement. In addition, phone and email contact supplements faculty support for students in field, as well as for the field supervisors, who are essentially donating their time for the education of SSW students. Because of a change from last year (2007-2008) to this year (2008-2009) in our Title IV-E focus, faculty liaison work was intensified from one visit per semester to one per month, meaning overall students received three to four times the face to face contact with faculty in the field placement. In addition, the field supervisors built relationships with the faculty liaison and were also offered time alone to discuss their concerns, including their own stressors at work. Thus, with intensive supervision, ideally, both the supervisors and the students would feel more support and have more active interaction with faculty than with a once-semester visit.

***Methodology.*** Late spring of 2009, following a year of the new intensive supervision, a phone survey was conducted by the LSU School of Social Work with OCS Field Supervisors and LSU graduate students in the child welfare placements. The interviewer was someone with whom neither the students nor the field supervisors had any prior communication. Questions in the survey pertained to the attitudes of supervisors (see Appendix C) and students (see Appendix D) about the increased number of site visits by the university liaison. Five supervisors were contacted by phone. Four of the five responded to the survey. One of the five never responded after numerous attempts to contact by phone and email. Four students were contacted by phone and all four students responded to the survey questions. All phone interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes. Notes were taken by the interviewer during each conversation.

**Supervisor Responses.** The overall response to the intensive supervision was very positive. All of the responding supervisors were pleased with the relationship with the faculty liaison and appreciated her depth of knowledge of the OCS Department and her ability to assist with any problems that surfaced, even those unrelated to the student placements.

**Number of visits.** All of the supervisors appreciated the additional support they received from the liaison and the relationship that developed as opposed to a one-time meeting. The additional meetings also allowed for consistent and timely feedback between the classroom and practice. One of the supervisors felt there were too many visits by the liaison primarily because the student with whom she worked was very self-motivated. This particular supervisor had no issues or problems, but realized that if there had been a problem the additional visits would have been welcomed.

**Helpfulness of visits.** The supervisors indicated that the meetings were especially helpful because the liaison not only trained the students, but was able to give advice and support that assisted the supervisors with decision-making related to interns as well as to office matters. Few problems were mentioned with lack of time being the overarching cause of any problems. One supervisor felt that the additional meetings required too much time away from work. Another mentioned that scheduling a time for the meetings when all parties could attend was difficult. However, they were ultimately able to work around the scheduling issues. Three of the four responding supervisors believed that the intensive supervision should be continued.

**Supervisor Suggestions.** The supervisors made several suggestions for changing or improving the program.

**Number of visits.** Visit 1 establishes the internship (protocol, etc.). Visit 2 should be made in the second month of the internship. Follow up phone calls or visits should be made as events warrant in subsequent months. More phone or email communications could be helpful.

**Student schedules.** Allow the students to serve a block of time during the semester rather than two days per week. The current schedule causes students to miss opportunities and they are unable to see continuity in the office. (This is a field education issue, not about intensive supervision).

**Screening process.** Involve and assist supervisors in the student screening and selection process to discern the best fit qualities in students. Screen in a manner that would yield students/ OCS employees who will be most likely to stay in OCS after the completion of the mandatory service. Again, this feedback regards other university and OCS procedures and not really intensive supervision.

**Student Responses.** All four of the students reported very positive experiences in the intensive supervision program. The additional time spent with the faculty liaison allowed for more teaching time, more timely feedback and better communication between all parties.

**Number of visits.** The additional visits allowed for quick responses to problems or concerns that emerged. Concerns were addressed and remedies were suggested and put into place. One student mentioned that the increased visits meant additional travel time to and from the location of the meetings which in turn reduced the amount of time she had

for field opportunities. Scheduling was noted as a problem at one of the sites because “everyone is so busy,” it’s difficult to find a time when everyone is available.

**Helpfulness of visits.** The students were pleased with the constant and almost instantaneous feedback provided by the additional meetings, and most of them recalled a single meeting that was either a turning point in the internship or that provided an additional measure of needed support. One student was unsure initially of her placement but found the meetings to be reassuring and affirming even when being given suggestions for improvement. The student is much more confident in her ability to make an informed decision about future work plans. Another student discussed the lack of client contact at her placement with the liaison. The liaison helped the student speak with the supervisor and the student saw immediate changes and had a positive internship experience. The visits and meetings informed the supervisors of tasks and activities to which students needed to be exposed in order to have the most effective internship. “The visits kept us focused on what needed to be accomplished.” During the time of the interviews, hiring freezes and job losses were very much a concern for state employees and potential new hires. One student mentioned that ... “The open communication helped to keep us informed and reduced the anxiety about getting a job.”

**Student suggestions:**

**Visits.** Scheduling meetings every six weeks would be better.

**Meetings.** Allow other more direct supervisors to attend the meetings. The task supervisors were more involved with student’s work and would have been more aware of strengths and weaknesses for more informative input. (In year two of this program, we are in fact attempting to do this more.)

**Conclusions**

The increased number of visits was well-received and appreciated by all participants. Those that questioned the necessity of the number of visits realized that there were very few problems associated with the particular placement but understood that if circumstances had been different, the additional contact with the liaison may have been necessary. One of the supervisors summed up the experience this way, “I really liked it! ... I am invested in the internship. The dialog with her (the liaison) helped us to tease out what we can do to develop Child Welfare workers. The dialog is beneficial and the support comes regularly. That is very beneficial to the supervisors.”

**II. Louisiana Child Welfare Workforce Alliance: A Partnership between OCS and Louisiana Universities**

Louisiana DSS OCS leadership and its seven school of social work partners in the Louisiana University Child Welfare Training Partnership recognizes that to improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and youth in foster care, it must make a priority of building the capacity of Louisiana child welfare professionals and by improving the systems in the State that recruit, train, supervise, manage, and retain them. Challenges facing the State and the partnering schools of social work in the short and long term focus around retention, recruitment of a high quality and competent child welfare workforce and the corresponding challenges of creating a learning system which guarantees the transfer of institutional knowledge and learning in the state system dictates that we proactively address the comprehensive system of training that serves both staff and foster parents. The State and its University Partners have been working for two

years now in rethinking how they might jointly provide a competency based trainings system continuum that will support pre-employment education, on-going professional development, advanced learning opportunities and leadership training for child welfare staff, foster parents, and service providers. Although this effort began prior to the support of this Workforce Grant, the project has provided leadership, travel money, resources, and opportunities to promote this effort and move it forward more rapidly.

Both full-Alliance group meetings and subcommittees (Undergraduate curriculum development) have met regularly in this past year with excellent progress on goals. Key accomplishments include:

1. An undergraduate curriculum is being finalized to ground each program in core competencies required for successful work in Child Welfare. The grid created, combined with linking courses to competencies will assure each program AND field experiences address all training components required for new workers.
2. The core competencies grid is also being utilized in field supervision and when faculty visit the field. This reminds students, faculty, and field supervisors of any gaps in knowledge and keeps them focused on training goals.
3. The aim of the comprehensive core-competency based student preparation is, in part, to make students work-ready when they are eligible to be hired, replacing a long and somewhat ineffectual new worker training model, which has also delayed their ability to work right out of school.
4. The schools are working together to build a Child Welfare Certificate Program which will certify the specialized training of well-trained students in this topical area. One school has already had a Child Welfare Certificate Program approved departmentally at their university.
5. Through use of a listserv and blackboard internet capacity, as well as the website, partners have shared their syllabi, materials, and evaluation tools.
6. The Workforce project has been able to purchase books, DVDs and other supplies and materials to enhance the child welfare courses at each school.
7. The Workforce project has provided trainings for stipend students to augment their course material and instruction.

### **III. OCS Staff Development and Appreciation – Staff Retention Strategies**

Our inability to recruit and retain line casework staff is a complex issue with a number of contributing factors including supervisory support, training, competitive salaries, safety issues, and the overall demands of the job. It is essential that we maintain a qualified and competent workforce to provide the highest level of services to Louisiana's children, youth, and families. The cost of staff turnover is estimated at one-third of the employee's annual salary. The high turnover rate is an ever-increasing financial burden on DSS/OCS budgets. Reducing the child welfare staff turnover rate means reducing the cost of continually training and orienting new staff hires. The LCWCW Project is part of the State's larger efforts to improve outcomes for children and promoting sustainable systems change in the Louisiana child welfare system. Thus, the Staff Appreciation and Staff Development component of the project was developed in

order to build the capacity of and encourage Louisiana child welfare professionals and to improve the collaborative systems in the State that recruit, train, supervise, manage, and retain them.

**Methodology.** The Staff Appreciation/ Staff Development Days were held in seven parishes or regions across the state of Louisiana. These sites included: East Baton Rouge, Rapides, Vernon, Lake Charles, Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany. Day long activities were conducted at all seven sites. The Baton Rouge region held a Staff Appreciation Day with a motivational speaker, team building activities and recreation. All other sites had an appreciation component, but focused more on staff development and staff training. Dr. Gerald P. Mallon conducted the day long trainings at the six additional sites. Food and snacks were served at all sites. Evaluations were conducted at all sites and the results of the evaluations are presented in this report.

A total of 508 evaluations were completed and returned to the evaluator; however, the data is presented by region or parish rather than as a compilation of all the data in order to detect differences among offices/ staff for future trainings. The first three events held in East Baton Rouge, Rapides and Vernon Parishes were evaluated using a slightly different evaluation form than what was used in the subsequent four sites. (See Appendices E and F, respectively.) The initial evaluation form was created for the purpose of evaluating a staff appreciation day. (Note: The Vernon and Rapides Parish trainings were evaluated using the Staff Appreciation form although the events were Staff Development. The evaluators were not notified of the change in programming.) The later form, used in Lake Charles, Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany, focused on staff development/ training in order to reflect the programming change. A few additional modifications were made to the evaluation forms after the Lake Charles and Orleans trainings were held. The responses to several of the statements indicated a tendency to answer in the wrong direction (more negatively than would be indicated by the responses to other questions) or were more likely to be left blank, possibly due to poor wording. These questions were re-worded or eliminated.

**Demographics**

Across all the sites, those in attendance were primarily Field Staff (CWS Trainee, CWS1, CWS2, CWS3) and others in attendance ranged from CWS4 to Regional Managers. Non-CWS employees also attended including retired CWS workers and lawyers. (See Table 6.)

**Table 6. Demographics: OCS Job Categories of Attendees**

	<b>East Baton Rouge N=97</b>	<b>Vernon and Rapides N=62</b>	<b>Lake Charles N=63</b>	<b>Orleans N=84</b>	<b>Jefferson N=86</b>	<b>St. Tammany N=116</b>
<b>CWS Field Staff</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>CWS Administrator</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Not an OCS Employee</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Missing (no response to</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>

<b>question)</b>						
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Many of the attendees had significant experience with the agency. Vernon and Rapides Parish employees have the largest mean number of years of work at OCS with 16.04, remarkably more years than all other parishes or regions. This alone may be an indicator of workforce stability that needs further exploration by region. The median number of years in Vernon and Rapides Parishes indicates that half of those responding have been there longer than 17 years and half have been there less than 17 years. The most frequently occurring number of years reported by these two parishes is 19 years. Six people reported having been there for 19 years. Lake Charles, Jefferson, and East Baton Rouge Parish attendees represent the lowest number of mean years with a mean of 9.71-9.81 years. Jefferson Parish appears to have the most new staff as the mode is one year. More respondents in Jefferson Parish indicate they have been employed in the office for one year than any other year. (See Table 7.) All parish offices except Vernon and Rapides show a large number of fairly new staff, although there were also numbers of missing responses from some of these parishes.

**Table 7. Demographics: Length of time with agency**

	<b>East Baton Rouge N=97</b>	<b>Vernon and Rapides N=62</b>	<b>Lake Charles N=63</b>	<b>Orleans N=84</b>	<b>Jefferson N=86</b>	<b>St. Tammany N=116</b>
<b>Mean # of years</b>	<b>9.81</b>	<b>16.04</b>	<b>9.71</b>	<b>11.41</b>	<b>9.71</b>	<b>10.00</b>
<b>Median # of years</b>	<b>6.75</b>	<b>17.00</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>6.50</b>	<b>6.00</b>
<b>Mode</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>3.00</b>
<b>Missing (no response to question)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>

The attendees were predominantly female as would be expected. Fewer than 10% of those reporting gender were male at all but one site, Vernon and Rapides.

African-American/ Black (not Hispanic) represents the majority of those in overall attendance at the events, and were by far the majority in East Baton Rouge, Orleans and Jefferson Parishes. St. Tammany and Lake Charles had a majority of Caucasian/ White (not Hispanic) in attendance. Very few other races are represented in any of the OCS offices surveyed. (See Table 8.)

**Table 8. Demographics: Race**

	<b>East Baton Rouge N=97</b>	<b>Vernon and Rapides N=62</b>	<b>Lake Charles N=63</b>	<b>Orleans N=84</b>	<b>Jefferson N=86</b>	<b>St. Tammany N=116</b>
<b>African American/ Black (not Hispanic)</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Caucasian/ White (not Hispanic)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Missing</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>

**Findings**

Evaluations were conducted at all seven sites in order to assess the perceived effectiveness and usefulness of the activities, the presenter and the information presented. In all sites, the overwhelming response was extremely positive. Most participants were appreciative of the break from work, the meals and the time spent with co-workers. They were interested in and informed by the presentations.

As indicated previously, the evaluation form for East Baton Rouge, Vernon and Rapides differed from those used in later events. All aspects of the Appreciation Day activities were well received by attendees. Scores were compiled using a 5 point Likert-type scale, with 1 as strongly disagree and 5 as strongly agree. The low 3.09 mean response to ‘The Awards Ceremony inspired me to continue to work in my chosen field of Child Welfare’ on the part of Vernon and Rapides can be explained by the fact there was no Awards Ceremony as was held in East Baton Rouge. As mentioned earlier, the content of the day’s events in Vernon and Rapides was focused on development rather than appreciation. Table 10 represents the evaluation of the staff development workshops and indicates an overwhelming positive experience at the workshop. The lower means for the question ‘Information presented in the workshop was new to me’ indicates that a number of attendees disagreed that the information was new, as 1 = Strongly disagree and 2 = Somewhat disagree.

**Table 9. Appreciation Day Activities Evaluation**

	<b>East Baton Rouge N=97</b>	<b>Vernon and Rapides N=62</b>
<b>The morning activities were welcoming.</b>	<b>4.51</b>	<b>4.50</b>
<b>I was inspired and motivated by the Guest Speaker.</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>4.63</b>
<b>I enjoyed the meals and snacks.</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>4.59</b>
<b>Free times (a.m. and p.m.) were fun and refreshing.</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>4.14</b>
<b>The Awards Ceremony inspired me to continue to work in my chosen field of Child Welfare.</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>3.09</b>
<b>The overall Appreciation Day was a good experience.</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>4.29</b>
<b>The setting and facilities were comfortable.</b>	<b>4.70</b>	<b>4.17</b>

**Table 10. Workshop Evaluation**

	<b>Lake Charles N=63</b>	<b>Orleans N=84</b>	<b>Jefferson N=86</b>	<b>St. Tammany N=116</b>
<b>Information presented in the workshop was new to me.</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.74</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>3.65</b>
<b>The workshop was presented in a professional/ non-threatening manner.</b>	<b>4.98</b>	<b>4.96</b>	<b>4.97</b>	<b>4.79</b>
<b>The presenter was knowledgeable of the material.</b>	<b>4.94</b>	<b>4.98</b>	<b>4.98</b>	<b>4.84</b>
<b>The presentation methods were appropriate and informative.</b>	<b>4.83</b>	<b>4.87</b>	<b>4.91</b>	<b>4.65</b>
<b>As a result of the workshop, I feel more prepared to work effectively with my clients</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>4.74</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>4.31</b>
<b>The morning activities were welcoming.</b>	<b>4.74</b>	<b>4.81</b>	<b>4.90</b>	<b>4.50</b>
<b>I enjoyed the meals and snacks.</b>	<b>4.66</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>4.88</b>	<b>4.47</b>
<b>The setting and facilities were comfortable.</b>	<b>4.56</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>4.19</b>
<b>Overall, the day's activities were worthwhile.</b>	<b>4.65</b>	<b>4.93</b>	<b>4.95</b>	<b>4.53</b>

The most important aspect of the Staff Development/Staff Appreciation events was to improve morale and increase the level of job satisfaction so that Child Welfare workers will be more likely to stay in their place of employment. More job satisfaction leads to consistency in employment and better service for clients, the ultimate goal for the agency. East Baton Rouge Region workers spent the day in Staff Appreciation that involved a motivational speaker, fun, games, free time and food and responded to the ‘how do you feel?’ question with more positive responses (See Table 11.) than did those participants in the other sites who participated in days devoted to Staff Development/ Training. The mean responses for Baton Rouge attendees is higher in the areas of: ‘Happier,’ ‘More appreciated,’ ‘Energized,’ ‘Less likely to be worried about neglected work,’ ‘Rested,’ ‘Glad for a break,’ and ‘Appreciation to the agency.’ This may indicate that a day of fun and laughter may, at least for a day, provide some respite for OCS workers. All other sites ranked ‘Gained new insights’ higher than East Baton Rouge. This result is likely because the days spent in the other regions were spent in development and training rather than appreciation; therefore, participants were more likely to gain knowledge that could be applied to their work. However, as Table 4 indicates, the mean scores for each site were very similar regarding ‘Long-term Job Experience’ whether individuals participated in Staff Appreciation or Staff Development. Orleans Parish mean scores were consistently the most positive of all sites on every ‘long-term job experience’ question.

**Table 11. As a result of participating in today’s Staff Appreciation Day, how do you feel?**

	East Baton Rouge N=97	Vernon and Rapides N=62	Lake Charles N=63	Orleans N=84	Jefferson N=86	St. Tammany N=116
<b>Happier.</b>	4.35	4.02	3.70	4.06	4.07	3.96
<b>More appreciated.</b>	4.32	3.76	3.74	4.11	3.84	3.74
<b>Energized.</b>	4.24	3.78	3.50	3.91	3.87	3.71
<b>Worried about neglected work.</b>	2.66	3.07	3.52	2.73	2.90	3.13
<b>Same as before.</b>	2.80	2.95	2.70	2.62	2.35	2.94
<b>Inspired.</b>	3.99	4.04	4.16	4.06	4.07	3.98
<b>Today was a waste of time.</b>	1.84	1.50	1.66	1.34	1.33	1.94
<b>Rested.</b>	3.95	3.14	3.11	3.55	2.94	3.37
<b>Not enough, but a start.</b>	3.36	3.11	3.52	3.26	2.92	3.16
<b>Glad for a break from work.</b>	4.56	3.82	3.93	4.14	3.49	3.96
<b>Gained new insights.</b>	4.03	4.47	4.31	4.72	4.59	4.24

<b>Appreciative to agency.</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>4.00</b>
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**Table 12. Effects of Staff Development/Appreciation Day on Expectations for Long-term Job Experience**

	<b>East Baton Rouge N=97</b>	<b>Vernon and Rapides N=62</b>	<b>Lake Charles N=63</b>	<b>Orleans N=84</b>	<b>Jefferson N=86</b>	<b>St. Tammany N=116</b>
<b>No effect. *</b>	<b>2.68</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>2.38</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>2.95</b>
<b>If continued, it will help.</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>4.60</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>4.05</b>
<b>Will build a sense of team.</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>3.98</b>
<b>Decrease burnout.</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.68</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>3.63</b>
<b>Improve service to clients.</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.12</b>
<b>Increase worker satisfaction.</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>3.83</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>3.86</b>
<b>Increase likelihood to stay at job.</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>3.80</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>3.73</b>

\*Note: The question that asked whether there would be ‘no effect’ from having participated in the Staff Development event is scored such that the lower the mean the more positive the response because “strongly disagree” equals ‘1’.

### **Conclusions:**

The purpose of the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project is to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and youth by building the capacity of Louisiana’s child welfare professionals and by improving the systems in the State that recruit, train, supervise, manage and retain the Child Welfare workforce. The staff appreciation/ staff development activities are planned to assist workers in areas where they might be experiencing difficulties or may lack knowledge about a particular area or population with whom they might be working. The workshops also allow OCS employees to come together and share experiences with other professionals for feedback and motivation. Based on the responses given on the evaluations, the workshops were extremely successful on the level of educating participants as well as providing an opportunity to be with other OCS workers and to have a day away from the stressful and often less than rewarding job of being a child welfare worker. Based on these findings, future Staff Development Days might include more team building activities similar to those held in the East Baton Rouge Staff Appreciation Day, a shorter, but meaningful awards ceremony that acknowledge workers

for their devotion and commitment to doing good work. Further, selecting training topics based on perceived worker needs may help them gain information where they feel they have gaps in their knowledge and prior training.

#### **IV. Comprehensive Workforce Data** (Note: This report is available in its entirety at the LCWCWP website – LCWCWP.org)

With groundwork set by OCS staff member Marty Gibson, MSW, LCSW-BACS Director of the Division of Workforce Development & Clinical Services a comprehensive plan was discussed to examine the OCS training system in order to determine whether it meets the needs of the agency, staff, and those they serve. The focus of the assessment was to obtain the perspectives of frontline child welfare workers, supervisors and state office personnel on how they could perform their job more effectively. Once the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project (LCWCWP) was funded, the staff of this federally funded program assisted in coordinating all aspects of the assessment process.

The approach to defining the training system and collecting quantitative and qualitative data was planned in a workgroup coordinated by OCS and LCWCWP and facilitated by Susan Kanak and Linda Kean from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement. Representatives from multiple programs and positions within OCS, community stakeholders, and LCWCWP staff were members of the workgroup. The result of the two day workgroup produced an assessment tool, core critical questions for the focus groups, and a basic format for the focus groups, customized for Louisiana.

Focus groups for both front line workers and supervisors/managers were conducted in every OCS Region facilitated by an OCS consultant and observed by LCWCWP staff. Additional focus groups were held after the regional groups were conducted which included OCS Training Staff, a sample of State Office Section Administrators, and a sample of State Office Program Managers. A total of 197 employees participated in the assessment.

**Methodology:** Two 2.5 hour focus groups which included approximately 8-10 frontline child welfare specialists (workers) and 8-10 supervisors were conducted in each region/district in Louisiana. The week of February 2-6, 2009 focus groups were conducted in Monroe, Shreveport, Alexandria, Lake Charles, and Lafayette. The week of March 2-6, 2009 the remaining worker/supervisor focus groups were conducted in Jefferson, Orleans, Covington, Thibodaux, and Baton Rouge. On March 30, 2009 an OCS training department focus group was conducted and on May 22, 2009 a state office staff focus group (program specialists and section administrators) was conducted. The contracted focus group facilitator and one LCWCWP staff member participated in each focus group. The agenda of the focus groups was consistent across the focus groups with welcome/introductions, review of purpose and ground rules, definition of “training system”, review and completion of the Training System Assessment Tool, group discussion to include pre-defined questions, and closing remarks. During the group discussion, participants were provided with time to openly discuss anything they wished regarding the training system and were requested to answer a set of pre-defined questions that were taken from the Training System Assessment Tool. The pre-defined questions

are listed below with two (2) questions from the Frontline Child Welfare Specialist section and two (2) questions from the Supervisor section.

**Key Findings:** Key findings from this process are summarized within three categories, *new worker training (NWT)*, *professional development*, and *general training system*.

***New Worker Training (NWT) –***

- NWT is too short, too overwhelming, lacking specialization/integration to employment programs, and lacking realistic scenarios for application purposes.

***Suggestions:***

- Expand NWT for a longer duration, perhaps over a year.
- Integrate job shadowing/mentoring including purposeful observations linked to training modules for skill integration.
- Provide supervisors with the information presented in NWT and plan for how they could facilitate continuity of training in the field.

***Professional Development:***

- Trainings related to supervision, leadership/management development, sensitivity (especially in terms of state administration and field office personnel engagement), and general professional growth were highly requested across groups.

***Suggestions:***

- Increase trainings in specialization areas such as domestic violence, substance abuse, poverty, cultural responsiveness, engaging the legal and court systems, disabilities, and identification of community resources.
- Provide equal opportunities and equitable access to trainings across all levels, programs, and regions of the agency.
- Offer workers case coverage while they attend trainings.

***General Training System*** – Participants across all levels of the OCS system provided feedback on the on-going training system as a whole that tended to cluster around four areas: *methods, tools, communication, and philosophy/practice*:

***Suggestions for Methods:***

- Increase hands-on experiences, mentoring, job shadowing, and year round training.
- Provide all OCS staff with equal access to all trainings, including external conferences and ethics training regardless of credentials.
- Offer supervisors training on new initiatives first, after a true pilot run has been completed and all “kinks” are resolved before rolling out to front-line workers.
- Make trainings for newly promoted supervisors available at the time of promotion.
- Offer systematic planning of training to provide increased skill development and leadership development within OCS workforce.

***Suggestions for Tools:-***

- Supply all materials and equipment related to new forms in the trainings. Every effort should be made to ensure the tools are in their final state before mandating

- their implementation in the field. If a tool is computer-based, then the training MUST use a computer to do the actual training.
- Consider need, input (from internal and external stakeholders), relevance, impact to workload, and utility into the decision making process before changing or adding a form/initiative.
  - Include direct level staff and other relevant parties are part of the decision making process for adopting new tools/methods of practice.

***Suggestions for Communication:***

- Increase the clarity, consistency and tenor of communication across all levels of the agency. (There is a perceived communication gap and disconnect between state office and the field)
- Increase efforts to treat all staff with respect, acknowledge the positive work completed by staff, increase attention to the reality of the traumatic toll inherent to the field of child welfare on staff. Specific recommendations from front line workers and supervisors included requests for positive emails, increased public relations identifying the value of child welfare workers in the community, increased accuracy in personnel evaluations, and proactive supports to staff during times of trauma/disasters.
- Increase communication with external partners.

***Suggestions for Philosophy/practice:***

- Reduce compliance focus at state level and increase efforts to provide quality care and services to children and families.
- Give workers effective tools to help meet all state/federal regulations while providing quality services to clients/supervisees.
- Hire/train clerical staff for routine, non-clinical paperwork, which is overwhelming.
- Provide dedicated, reduced caseload staff for supervision/mentoring support.

**Summary and Recommendations for Next Steps**

Overall, feedback from the workers, supervisors and state level personnel emphasized similar areas in need of attention. Although the participants varied in years of experience with DSS, program of employment, and position level, their responses were more similar than different. Their most urgent requests from the training system and the agency as a whole were to show more respect for all agency staff, develop more consistency across all programs and regions, prioritize skill development and critical thinking throughout the life of a case and the career of a worker, enhance the connection between state office and the field, demonstrate more of a commitment to a child welfare/social work focus rather than a case work/paperwork focus, provide clinical supervision, provide hands-on training through job shadowing and/or mentoring, and finally to reduce the rate at which changes are made to the training system.

***Immediate recommendations: (0-6 months)***

1. Provide more access to Marsha Salus' supervision, coaching, mentoring and training

2. Hire/Stipend retired supervisors to provide hands-on coaching, training/mentoring for newly promoted supervisors
3. Encourage state office staff to visit regional offices to provide direct communication regarding the agency's commitment to child welfare focus, policy/program updates
4. At all levels within the agency, all staff in management positions should provide some form of praise/acknowledgment to their workers through email, voicemail or hand written notes.

***Short term recommendations: (6 months-2 years)***

1. Develop a web-based training systems platform similar to what the State of Idaho has launched, linking universities and OCS as training partners. (Although Kentucky has been utilized, that training system is a very well developed and mature model which Louisiana should aspire to emulate, but, at this point in time, the model posited by Idaho is a much more practical system to emulate.) This system should develop core child welfare training modules for all OCS staff and electives for specializations. The entire curriculum, with weekly updates should be based on-line with specifically developed on-line tools for workers and supervisors to access via the website. For example a sample court report and an outline identifying the essential elements of a comprehensive court report could be posted there. Workers who were trained in court engagement strategies could, after the training, refer to these on-line samples as they are putting their reports together for court. There is a great need to customize existing child welfare curriculum in other states for use in the Louisiana OCS system.
2. The State needs to invest financial resources to hire Don Schmidt as a consultant for two or three days, to assist them in evaluating and maximizing their Title IV-E draw down of funds for training, as well as assisting universities in examining how they may claim their IV-E match to maximize the draw down capacity.
3. Restructure the role of clerical staff to include assisting with paperwork (opening cases, completing FAST forms, requesting birth certificates, etc...)
4. Develop leadership training (perhaps a leadership academy) for skilled/motivated workers and supervisors in a structured meaningful way with equal access and opportunities for all staff around the state
5. Reduce the caseload of senior skilled/motivated workers to allow them to provide mentoring to younger staff
6. Train supervisors on new pilot projects/forms well before workers are trained so they can offer support to the newly trained worker
7. Provide more communication/training to partners/stakeholders on the mission/vision of OCS, resources that are available, and limitations of agency involvement
8. Completely redesign the New Worker Orientation (NWO):
  - a. Provide a more systematic/organized training with modules focusing on specific content areas
  - b. Expand NWO to a period of up to a year
  - c. Include basic components of child/adolescent development and how it is impacted by agency involvement

- d. Encourage critical thinking skills and an underlying philosophy of family centered practice allied with the OCS Practice Model
- e. Focus less on forms and more on safety and family engagement
- f. Provide enhanced court training (several modules of training, which is primarily based on a social worker's role in understanding and negotiating the legal and court systems, with some legal staff collaboration in the training, NOT a training dominated by legal personnel telling social workers what they are doing wrong) including mock trials, how to prepare written reports, the nature of the court/DSS relationship, the nature of cross examination
- g. Include job shadowing/mentoring with seasoned workers
- h. Provide supervisors with an overview of material to be covered and their role in the transfer of knowledge
- i. Provide supervisors with feedback on their workers' performance in NWO
- j. Develop specialized training modules by program area in consultation with key program staff and regional offices
- k. Improve access to NWO training by offering modules across all regions of the state
- l. When training on forms is necessary, create more interactive training on forms (that are fully functional) using computers when forms are computerized

***Long term recommendations: (2-5 years)***

- 1. Provide joint training with agency staff, universities and partners/stakeholders
- 2. Develop leadership academy for senior workers/supervisors online

Expand the use of technology in the web-based training system platform to include training via webinars, webcasts, teleconferences, and podcasts.

**V. Workforce Grantee Colleagues**

Our research team (Dr. Carol Plummer and Vickie Tiller) participated fully and frequently with the evaluators from the other national Workforce projects. In addition, Dr. Plummer served on a subcommittee on evaluation of traineeships. Through primarily phone and email meetings, as well as work sharing draft documents on our work at individual sites. Conference calls occurred on March 17, March 31, April 2, April 21, April 29, May 14, August 6, Sept. 24, Nov. 5. In addition, site evaluators participated in multi-day meetings and trainings in Washington DC related to the project in February and in June. Although these meetings are preparatory and build relationships rather than measuring outcomes, significant progress was made on deciding how to coordinate the cross-site evaluation, instruments to use, the preference for a web-based student survey, and procedures for IRB approval. Data collection is being planned for spring so that it can incorporate the best-planned approaches and cooperation.

**VI. Louisiana OCS Supervisory Projects**

Child Welfare experts and researchers (Cyphers, 2002; Scannapieco & Connell-Carrick, 2007) agree that the key to the competent provision of child welfare services is the level of expertise and skill of the first supervisor. This is especially important when

the first line workers lack professional training or even when professionally trained, lack the experience specific to child welfare practice. Investment in the development of supervisory resources is one of the best investments for workforce development. Research suggests that strong supervisory support is a major contributing factor in our ability to retain child welfare caseworkers on the job. With the financial assistance of the NRCFCPPP, using Katrina funds, the State has engaged a nationally recognized consultant, Marsha Salus to assist the state with supervisory curriculum development, coaching and mentoring in the Regions for supervisor level staff. This work began in year one, and will be phased into all regions over the course of years 2-4 of the grant in consultation with OCS.

In addition to our long standing supervisory, coaching, and mentoring initiative with Marsha Salus, who has been training our supervisors across the state and has initiated an intensive coaching and mentoring component of her technical assistance, OCS collaborated with Dr. Gerald P. Mallon, DSW of the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project (LCWCWP) at LSU to institute a series of monthly child welfare supervisory teleconferences. The teleconferences offer a broad overview in supervision and allow all 200 supervisors statewide to participate in an innovative learning environment centered on best practices and clinical case consultation in child welfare supervision. This is part of a multifaceted approach by the agency to enhance and develop learning opportunities for supervisors centered on state of the art child welfare supervision principles and practices. The evaluation of the effectiveness of this component will be part of the goal of evaluations in subsequent years.

**The following teleconferences have been held:**

**09/08/09** - Introduction to the OCS Supervisors Teleconference Series & Child Welfare Supervision - Gary Mallon, DSW

**10/13/09** – Overview of the Louisiana supervisors training, the coaching and mentoring project, the clinical training and consultation project and managing the millennial generation; Guest: Marsha Salus – “Strengthening Child Welfare Supervision as a Key Practice Change Strategy” – helps leaders and supervisors understand supervisors’ critical roles as change agents and develop plans to implement these roles.

**11/25/09** – “Child Welfare Supervision – Another Perspective,” “Strengthening Child Welfare Supervision: A Participatory Design Process” (PowerPoint) – Steven Preister, Associate Director of the NRC for Organizational Improvement

**12/09/09**- Models of Supervision – Crystal Collins Camargo, University of Kentucky

Regional Administrators have been directed to appoint a regional lead for the conference call series. In addition, the regional lead is expected to encourage and facilitate participation by all supervisors in the region as well as to coordinate the case presentations as indicated above. All supervisors are expected to participate in the conference calls. Regional Management is also encouraged to participate. These conference calls will provide OCS staff with the most relevant and sound approaches to

child welfare supervision while recognizing the critical role that OCS staff plays as change agents. An evaluation component of this intervention will assist OCS in evaluating its effectiveness and will be undertaken beginning in the next year.

**VII. LCWCWP Website:** The primary vehicle for dissemination of information for the LCWCW Project is the LCWCWP website ([www.lcwcwp.org](http://www.lcwcwp.org)), which was functional during this first year of the grant award. There were over 1700 visitors to the website. Visitors to the website will be able to access information about the following activities of the LCWCW Project and administrators:

**Louisiana Stakeholders** – a listing of all project stakeholders

**Louisiana Partners** – a listing with contact information for the Louisiana Office of Community Services (OCS), participating BSW Programs and participating MSW Programs

**Louisiana Child Welfare Scholars** – includes Goals, Program Eligibility and a contact name for more information

**Workforce Grantee Colleagues** – Contact information for the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute and other participating Centers and Universities

**OCS Staff Development and Staff Appreciation** – includes the power point presentation conducted by Dr. Gerald P. Mallon, entitled: “Appropriate Utilization of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement – APPLA as a Permanency Goal for Youth” and “Unpacking the “NO!” of Permanency for Youth.”

**Supervisory Project: Teleconferences** – Power Point Presentations are available for teleconferences already conducted. The schedule for future teleconferences is provided for planning purposes.

**Core Projects Year Two** – provides an overview of anticipated activities for 2010

**Louisiana Child Welfare Workforce Alliance** – a partnership between OCS and Louisiana Universities – The activities of the Alliance are listed and available for viewing. Additionally, the proposed BSW Competencies Matrix is available.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Themes for 2008-2009: Our focus this year was on preparing the programs and evaluation components that we will refine and improve for use in subsequent years. Already, we were able to collect important baseline data for child welfare students, non-CW students, supervisors, and faculty field supervision. We determined from this some clear needs, suggestions for program changes, and myths that will need to be addressed as we use this formative evaluation. Primary highlights for each area are provided below:

1. The student stipend program already has recruited students with strong motivation to be in CW and realistic expectations of the challenges. They recognize the risk of “taking work home” and some degree of danger. They report confidence in many arenas (which may represent undue overconfidence), but also need most help in court-related work, risk assessments, and use of supervision. They have high expectations of receiving support at OCS and opportunities for advancement, something that will be important to assess after they are employees and see if that is their

experience. The survey of non-CW majors also shows opportunities that may be used to guide and broaden our recruitment. Most do show some interest that may need to be nurtured, and especially agree they have no aversion to working with children or families. Additionally, the intensive field supervision conducted by university faculty appears to have value to both supervisors and students, particularly when problems emerge.

2. The Alliance collaborations have grown in the past year and this group, supported by the Workforce grant, has made great strides in developing new and improved curricula, updating syllabi, and utilizing new books and DVDs to enhance skills acquisition in students. In the next year, the work done on developing undergraduate standards will be expanded to the graduate programs. Further, work will begin on developing Child Welfare Certificate Programs for students with specialized training. Ongoing documentation of this process, as well as evaluation of outcomes and deliverables will be part of the 2009-2010 evaluation.

3. Staff Development and Appreciation efforts will continue and will be evaluated as approaches to retention are altered and improved based on feedback from employees. Input from this year's evaluations will assist in planning additional events and development needs. Further, we will be involved in tracking retention throughout the years of the grant to determine the effectiveness of retention efforts.

4. Comprehensive workforce data, collected this year from the focus groups, will drive plans for additional unmet needs and problems that may need to be addressed. Key problems identified, which can be monitored over the next few years, include special needs of new workers, specialized professional training (and cross-training with community partners), building leadership and supervisory skills, increased input and involvement of direct level staff in decisions, clear and timely communication, and fostering a respectful professional environment in the parish offices. The major focus of next year's work is threefold: 1. to help develop a web based training platform for the state, 2. to re-organize new worker orientation, and 3. to begin to work on a training model to enable child welfare workers to more actively engage the legal and judicial system.

5. Work with the Workforce Grantee Colleagues will become much more involved as we begin tracking demographics, training, experiences of traineeship students and develop a web-based survey that will be done prior to student training, after their training, and periodically in the first years of their employment. Further, the cross site evaluation will include interviews with other key partners in change efforts.

6. The supervisory training and mentoring program, which is relatively new, will be a focus of work next year in evaluating perceptions about its usefulness to employees. Additional efforts will be undertaken to build supervisor skills as well as to nurture leadership skills in the workforce, and to build capacity within the state in our university partners - all of which will be examined in next year's evaluation report. This is the fourth priority area for year two of the grant.

7. The website is expected to be used increasingly as its existence and resources become better known. Further, next year a survey monkey evaluation of its usefulness will be part of our evaluation.

Respectfully submitted:

Carol Plummer, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, LCWCW Project Evaluator  
Vicky Tiller, Research Associate  
LSU School of Social Work

APPENDIX A: CHILD WELFARE WORK SURVEY PRE-TEST  
**CHILD WELFARE WORK SURVEY PRE-TEST**

Thank you for your willingness to share some of your thoughts about work in Child Welfare. Please answer the following questions by circling one number based on the following Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree 1	Somewhat Disagree 2	Slightly Disagree 3	Slightly Agree 4	Somewhat Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6
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Compared to other social work specializations, I believe child welfare work:

1. Pays less	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Is more rewarding	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Is very emotionally demanding	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Makes more of a difference in the world	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Is frustrating	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Confers higher status	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Requires irregular and extra hours	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Is more dangerous	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Provides a supportive work environment	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Has opportunities for advancement	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Is work you are likely to continue to think about after you go home at night	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Is work my family would support me in doing	1	2	3	4	5	6

(Please continue to page 2.)

Please answer the following questions by circling one number, based on the following Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

There can be multiple reasons for making a career choice. To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to focus on child welfare as a career? Respond using the above Likert scale based on what is true for **you**.

1. I've heard positive stories about the work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I want to work with children.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I want to work with families.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. The pay is reasonable for the demands of the job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I am passionate about this field of social work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Someone presented a compelling argument for focusing on child welfare.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I am aware of a wide range of options for work in child welfare.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I believe I can make a good living with decent benefits.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I am interested in making decisions that make a real difference for the safety, permanency and well-being of children.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I think the child welfare agency adequately supports its workers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I think child welfare work will provide many opportunities for me to keep learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I have personal experiences that have drawn me to work in this field.	1	2	3	4	5	6

**The following survey asks some questions about what you know, think, or believe TODAY about your current readiness, knowledge, and motivation regarding work in the Child Welfare area. You are NOT expected to know all the answers nor will you be rated or graded for your responses. In fact, they will be available only to the research team for purposes of understanding overall gains we monitor in the PROGRAM, not in any individual. We ask you to answer to the best of your ability now and feel free to answer honestly without worrying.**

**Using a Scale with 7 as entirely confident and 1 as having absolutely no confidence, please rate your confidence today in these areas:**

- 1. That you can apply critical thinking skills within the context of child welfare practice.**
- 2. That you understand the values inherent in child welfare.**
- 3. That you can apply strategies of advocacy to advance social and economic justice.**
- 4. That you understand the history of child welfare and can use it in your practice.**
- 5. That you can write court reports for child welfare cases.**
- 6. That you can testify in court.**
- 7. That you understand and can work with Family Group Decision-making.**
- 8. That you can assess the risk to children of remaining in their home after an abuse allegation.**
- 9. That you can make sound placement decisions or recommendations in child welfare cases.**
- 10. That you can make adaptations to work with families in child welfare from diverse cultural or ethnic backgrounds.**
- 11. That you know different supervision styles and can use supervision to your benefit.**
- 12. That you can successfully engage with a parent who is suspected of abusing their child.**
- 13. That you can analyze, formulate, and influence social policy in child welfare.**

**The following questions should be answered using a scale from 1 to 7 regarding to what extent you agree with the statement. With 1 being totally disagree and 7 being complete and absolute agreement.**

1. I feel I'm working hard but rarely see results.
2. I remain motivated and persist in helping children and families overcome obstacles.
3. I rebound and persist after setbacks in efforts to accomplish goals.
4. I am proud of my work.
5. I am confident in my ability to perform services in Child Welfare.
6. I feel a sense of personal accomplishment through my work.
7. I chose this profession because I want to help others.
8. I would delay personal plans in order to help a client who needs assistance.

9. It bothers me that some clients don't receive the services they deserve.
10. I believe my work in child welfare will offer opportunities to make a difference.

APPENDIX B: IMPRESSIONS OF CHILD WELFARE WORK SURVEY

IMPRESSIONS OF CHILD WELFARE WORK

Thank you for your willingness to share some of your thoughts about work in Child Welfare. Please answer the following questions by circling one number, based on the following Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

Compared to other social work specializations, I believe child welfare work:

<b>1. Pays less</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Is more rewarding</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Is very emotionally demanding</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Makes more of a difference in the world</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Is frustrating</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Confers higher status</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. Requires irregular and extra hours</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>8. Is more dangerous</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>9. Provides a supportive work environment</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10. Has opportunities for advancement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>11. Is work you are likely to continue to think about after you go home at night</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>12. Is work my family would support me in doing</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

Strongly Disagree 1      Somewhat Disagree 2      Slightly Disagree 3      Slightly Agree 4      Somewhat Agree 5      Strongly Agree 6

There can be multiple reasons for making a career choice. To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision NOT to focus on child welfare as a career? Respond using the above Likert scale based on what is true for **you**.

<b>1. I've heard horror stories.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>2. I don't care to work with children.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>3. I don't care to work with families.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>4. The pay is too low for the demands of the job.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>5. I am more passionate about another field of social work.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>6. No one has presented a compelling argument for focusing on child welfare.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>7. I don't know much about options for work in child welfare.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>8. I believe I can make more money elsewhere.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>9. I am concerned that I might make a life-and-death mistake.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>10. I don't think the child welfare agency adequately supports their workers.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>11. I think work in child welfare would be too narrow and not offer enough variety.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>12. The risk of burnout would concern me.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6

## APPENDIX C: FIELD SUPERVISOR SURVEY QUESTIONS

### Field Supervisor Survey Questions:

This semester, the LSU Faculty Liaison has increased the number of contacts with Field Supervisors from one contact per semester to one contact per month (approximately 4 contacts in the semester.) Your thoughts about this increased contact are important as we design future field experiences for our students.

1. How was the increased number of contacts by the faculty liaison different for you?
2. What did you find useful or helpful about more visits?
3. What did you find problematic or unhelpful about more visits?
4. Can you tell of a time when you found the visit to be especially helpful?
5. How do you think the increased visits were beneficial for the student?
6. Do you think that the increased number of visits is a project that should be continued?
7. Do you think the frequency of visits was too often, not enough, or about right?
8. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

## APPENDIX D: STUDENT (FIELD PLACEMENT) SURVEY QUESTIONS

### Student (Field Placement) Survey Questions:

This year you had more frequent visits from your faculty liaison at your field placement. Your thoughts about this increased contact are important as we design future field experiences for other students.

1. How was that different for you?
2. What did you find useful or helpful about more visits?
3. What did you find problematic or unhelpful about more visits?
4. Can you tell of a time you found the visit to be especially helpful?
5. How do you think the visit was beneficial for your supervisor?
6. Do you think this is a project that should continue?
7. Do you think the frequency of visits was too often, not often enough, or about right?

APPENDIX E: OCS STAFF APPRECIATION DAY EVALUATION  
**OCS STAFF APPRECIATION DAY  
 EVALUATION FORM**

**Thank you for participating in today’s activities. This event was sponsored by the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project at Louisiana State University. Please take a moment to complete the evaluation form in order to help us show our appreciation in ways that are helpful and meaningful to you!**

Please answer the following questions by circling one number based on the following Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree 1	Somewhat Disagree 2	Uncertain 3	Somewhat Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
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**1. As a result of participating in today’s OCS Staff Appreciation Day, how do you feel?**

Happier	1	2	3	4	5
More Appreciated	1	2	3	4	5
Energized	1	2	3	4	5
Worried about neglected work	1	2	3	4	5
Same as before	1	2	3	4	5
Inspired	1	2	3	4	5
Today was a waste of time	1	2	3	4	5
Rested	1	2	3	4	5
Not enough, but a start	1	2	3	4	5
Glad for a break from work	1	2	3	4	5
Gained new insights	1	2	3	4	5
Appreciative to agency	1	2	3	4	5

**2. Appreciation Day Activities Evaluation**

The morning activities were welcoming.	1	2	3	4	5
I was inspired and motivated by the Guest Speaker.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoyed the meals and snacks.	1	2	3	4	5
Free times (a.m. and p.m.) were fun and refreshing.	1	2	3	4	5
The Awards Ceremony inspired me to continue to work in my chosen field of Child Welfare.	1	2	3	4	5
The overall Appreciation Day was a good experience.	1	2	3	4	5
The setting and facilities were comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5

**EVALUATION CONTINUES ON BACK!**

Strongly Disagree 1	Somewhat Disagree 2	Uncertain 3	Somewhat Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
---------------------------	---------------------------	----------------	------------------------	------------------------

**3. What do you think will be the effect of Staff Appreciation efforts (like today) on your long term job experience?**

No effect	1	2	3	4	5
If continued, it will help	1	2	3	4	5
Will build a sense of "team"	1	2	3	4	5
Decrease burnout	1	2	3	4	5
Improve service to clients	1	2	3	4	5
Increase worker satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
Increase likelihood to stay at job	1	2	3	4	5
Cynical that changes are superficial	1	2	3	4	5

**Additional Comments or Suggestions for Appreciation Day Activities:**

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**Please answer the following questions to help us know what groups are represented at the OCS Staff Appreciation Day today:**

**1. OCS Job Category (Please mark only your current position.)**

- Field Staff(CWS Trainee, CWS 1, CWS 2, CWS 3)
- CWS 4
- CWS 5-B
- CWS 5-A
- CWS Assistants or Assistant Trainees
- Administrator (CWS 6, CWS 8)
- Administrative Coordinator 2, 3 or 4 or Administrative Assistant
- Administrative Program Manager or Supervisor
- Social Services Analyst 2

**2. Length of Time with Agency \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Gender:  Female  Male**

**4. Race/Ethnicity**

- African American/Black (not Hispanic)
- Asian American
- Caucasian/White (not Latino (a)/Hispanic)
- Latino (a)/Chicano (a)/Hispanic
- Native American/American Indian (specify Tribal affiliations \_\_\_\_\_)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX F: STAFF DEVELOPMENT/STAFF APPRECIATION EVALUATION  
ALEXANDRIA OCS STAFF APPRECIATION DAY  
EVALUATION FORM

**Thank you for participating in today’s activities. This event was sponsored by the Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project at Louisiana State University. Please take a moment to complete the evaluation form in order to help us show our appreciation in ways that are helpful and meaningful to you!**

Please answer the following questions by circling one number based on the following Likert scale.

Strongly Disagree 1	Somewhat Disagree 2	Uncertain 3	Somewhat Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
---------------------------	---------------------------	----------------	------------------------	------------------------

**1. As a result of participating in today’s OCS Staff Appreciation Day, how do you feel?**

Happier	1	2	3	4	5
More Appreciated	1	2	3	4	5
Energized	1	2	3	4	5
Worried about neglected work	1	2	3	4	5
Same as before	1	2	3	4	5
Inspired	1	2	3	4	5
Today was a waste of time	1	2	3	4	5
Rested	1	2	3	4	5
Not enough, but a start	1	2	3	4	5
Glad for a break from work	1	2	3	4	5
Gained new insights	1	2	3	4	5
Appreciative to agency	1	2	3	4	5

**2. Appreciation Day Activities Evaluation**

The morning activities were welcoming.	1	2	3	4	5
I was inspired and motivated by the Guest Speaker.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoyed the meals and snacks.	1	2	3	4	5
Free times (a.m. and p.m.) were fun and refreshing.	1	2	3	4	5
The Awards Ceremony inspired me to continue to work in my chosen field of Child Welfare.	1	2	3	4	5
The overall Appreciation Day was a good experience.	1	2	3	4	5
The setting and facilities were comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5

**EVALUATION CONTINUES ON BACK!  
PLEASE TURN PAGE!**

Strongly Disagree 1      Somewhat Disagree 2      Uncertain 3      Somewhat Agree 4      Strongly Agree 5

**3. What do you think will be the effect of Staff Appreciation efforts (like today) on your long term job experience?**

No effect	1	2	3	4	5
If continued, it will help	1	2	3	4	5
Will build a sense of "team"	1	2	3	4	5
Decrease burnout	1	2	3	4	5
Improve service to clients	1	2	3	4	5
Increase worker satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
Increase likelihood to stay at job	1	2	3	4	5
Cynical that changes are superficial	1	2	3	4	5

**Additional Comments or Suggestions for Appreciation Day Activities:**

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**Please answer the following questions to help us know what groups are represented at the OCS Staff Appreciation Day today:**

**1. OCS Job Category (Please mark only your current position.)**

- Field Staff(CWS Trainee, CWS 1, CWS 2, CWS 3)
- CWS 4
- CWS 5-B
- CWS 5-A
- CWS Assistants or Assistant Trainees
- Administrator (CWS 6, CWS 8)
- Administrative Coordinator 2, 3 or 4 or Administrative Assistant
- Administrative Program Manager or Supervisor
- Social Services Analyst 2

**2. Length of Time with Agency \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Gender:  Female  Male**

**4. Race/Ethnicity**

- African American/Black (not Hispanic)
- Asian American
- Caucasian/White (not Latino(a)/Hispanic)
- Latino(a)/Chicano(a)/Hispanic
- Native American/American Indian (specify Tribal affiliations \_\_\_\_\_)
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_