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## QIC-WD Site Intervention Selection – Fall 2018

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## QIC-WD Site Intervention Selection – Fall 2018 (Blog Post)

Posted on October 18, 2018

The eight QIC-WD sites have worked with the QIC-WD to determine which intervention to implement and evaluate to strengthen their child welfare workforce. These decisions came after a thorough needs assessment through which human resources (HR) data was examined to uncover the root causes of child welfare caseworker turnover. The sites recognize that turnover is not caused by a single issue, so they had to consider which aspect of turnover they could address in partnership with the QIC-WD. The QIC-WD team simultaneously examined available interventions, study designs, and the needs of the broader child welfare field to help each site select an intervention. The following list highlights issues that contribute to caseworker turnover that will be addressed by QIC-WD sites:

### *Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians: New Employee Onboarding Process*



Onboarding is the process of helping new hires adjust to social and performance aspects of their new jobs quickly and smoothly. Research has shown that more formal and structured onboarding programs are more effective in helping newcomers adjust to their job. Studies have also connected strong onboarding processes with better organizational outcomes such as performance, job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, intent to remain, and turnover ([Bauer et al., 2007](#)). The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' root cause analysis identified the onboarding process as an opportunity to strengthen their workforce. The onboarding program will help provide a solid framework for new employees coming into the job with the ultimate goal of improving worker retention.

### *Louisiana: Job Redesign*



Job redesign is a multi-step process that includes (1) conducting a thorough job analysis to identify the tasks that make up the job, (2) assessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed to perform job tasks, (3) examining reconfiguration options while considering the anticipated costs, benefits, and implications of the redesign, (4) implementing the redesign, and (5) evaluating target outcomes before and after the redesign. Research shows that job characteristics (such

as the amount of autonomy one has in the job, the variety of tasks and skills needed to perform the job, and the amount of social support within the role) are linked to various

organizational outcomes including turnover intentions. In Louisiana, the root cause analysis revealed that turnover is driven by workload and too few people to do the job.

### *Milwaukee County: Organizational Culture & Climate*



Research shows that organizational culture and climate are linked to the quality and outcomes of children’s services (Glisson & Hemmelgran, 1998; Martin et al., 1998; [Glisson & James, 2002](#); Hemmelgarn et al., 2006). The QIC-WD measured organizational culture and climate in all eight sites

using the [Organizational Social Context](#) (or OSC) assessment because it is a reliable and valid predictor of staff job satisfaction, commitment and turnover, quality of care, and client functioning and well-being. It has also been nationally normed with child welfare agencies. In Milwaukee County, the assessment revealed an opportunity and openness to improve the agency’s culture and climate.

### *Nebraska: Addressing Secondary Traumatic Stress*



Preventing or reducing the symptoms of secondary traumatic stress (STS) is a major concern within the field of child welfare. Through the exploration process the Nebraska team determined that the agency could help workers better manage the trauma events and STS that is part of their job. Nebraska selected an intervention to build resiliency and the coping skills of caseworkers and supervisors and offer debriefing sessions following a traumatic event, such as a child death. Other jurisdictions across the

country are working to address STS among child welfare workers, however, there is a lack of rigorous evaluation connecting STS to turnover.

### *Ohio: Supportive Coaching and Addressing Secondary Traumatic Stress*



Research shows that perceived supervisor support and attachment is associated with job satisfaction and retention (Jacquet et al., 2008; Yankeelov et al., 2009). Although many supervision theories exist, very few studies have examined the impact of supervision interventions on turnover in child welfare. Across multiple counties in Ohio a multi-level system approach will address STS and provide additional supervisor guidance and support.

- Frontline workers will participate in an intervention to address STS;
- Supervisors will learn a coaching model and how to support workers' ability to manage STS; they will also participate in peer group for supervisors to gain coping skills, get social support with peers, know what staff learn;
- Managers will receive supervision instruction in order to support the supervisors; and
- Directors will be informed and receive information on implementation science and their role in aligning implementation drivers to support the intervention.

### *Oklahoma: Competency-Based Employee Selection Process*



Competencies are the knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles successfully. The process for developing a competency-based selection process involves conducting a job analysis to identify the competencies required for minimal and optimal performance. Oklahoma does not currently have a standardized selection process and the root cause analysis highlighted the need to better understand the qualities and characteristics needed to perform the job well.

### *Virginia: Mobile Technology*



Child welfare workers spend up to 50% of their day gathering and processing data ([GAO, 2003](#)). Child welfare administrators across the country recognize that leveraging mobile technology can boost the efficiency and productivity of case workers. The use of transcription services, tablets, smart phones, and other mobile computing devices in the field can also help social workers capture the most up-to-date information possible. Prior to being selected as a QIC-WD site, Virginia identified a need for its workers to complete timely casework in order to better support its families and workers. A mobile technology intervention which includes transcription services in the field is expected to give staff the flexibility to complete administrative tasks in various locations, which should result in timely, accurate case documentation, lower worker stress, retention of staff, and increased safety and permanency outcomes for children.

## *Washington: Telework*



Research indicates that the benefits of telework include improvements in job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Washington selected a telework intervention because the needs assessment process found that staff members desire a flexible schedule and greater technological options to get their work done. Many agencies are implementing telework strategies to increase employee morale and ease the burden of the job, yet these strategies are untested in child welfare.

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