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Child Welfare Training Assessment

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BACKGROUND: The project first began in 1992 as collaboration between the Cabinet and the Kent School's Rod Barber. The purpose of the assessment is to see if new workers are learning knowledge and skills in training and are then able apply this learning in the workplace. The Louisville Child Welfare Training Evaluation Model is used to examine the impact of worker, trainer, supervisor, co-worker and other workplace variables on worker's willingness and ability to enjoy training, learn during training, transfer that knowledge to the field and positively affect outcomes for children in the areas of safety, permanency and well-being. Tests were originally administered in the classroom and participants completed them during the training. Starting in 2004 tests were available online to be more convenient to trainees and offer more time in the classroom for training.

METHODOLOGY:

- Measure a series of variables that affect learning including conscientiousness, learning readiness, and emotional stability.
- Update and measure training content effectiveness via DACUMs, SOP Update Process, Studies of the P&P Practice Model and trainer effectiveness through ITIP Model of Lesson Planning, Third Party Reviews and feedback from Level I and II Evaluations
- Measure effects of training in terms of training utility and liking of training
- Measure effects of training on learning using pre-post tests to show the gain in learning
- Measure effects of training on transfer to the field
- Measure effects of training on child outcomes and organizational outcomes
- Aside from this ongoing evaluation of core training, we have conducted numerous studies through the years noted below.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Martin, Barbee, Antle & Sar (2002), Antle, Christensen, Barbee & Martin (in press) found that teams that adhere to the Solution Based Practice Protocols conduct superior casework in terms of engaging clients, working with collaterals, achieving case goals and keeping children in the least restrictive environments.
- Dever (2005) found that most trainers show proficiency or mastery in culture of training, planning and preparation of training and instructions for training.
- ECU finds that Level I satisfaction ratings across trainings range from 4.13 to 4.24 on a 5-point scale and have steadily improved over the past 3 years.
- (Barbee, et al, 2005) finds that Level II evaluations across 5 different trainings range from 57% to 66% in pre-test scores to 75% to 90% for post-test scores. All 5 areas show consistent significant effects of training on learning.

- Yankeelov, Barbee, Barber & Fox (2000) compared a training group with 8 straight weeks of classroom training (Training Only) vs. a training group with 8 weeks of classroom training interspersed with field practice (Intermittent). Learning from before to after training was greater in the Intermittent vs. the Training Only groups.
- Research by Yankeelov and Barbee (1996) examined the effects of training and predictor variables on training transfer and found that conscientious workers learned more in training and thus could transfer the knowledge to better assessments and case plans. Furthermore, supervisory support, co-worker support and low caseloads predicted training transfer as well.
- Our research has found that supervisory support predicts learning, training transfer, and worker retention (Antle, 2002, Barbee, Sullivan & Yankeelov, 2002, Yankeelov & Barbee, 1996)
- Barbee, et al (in press) has found that the FTS program increases new worker's ability to join with clients, interact positively with co-workers, adhere to policies and practice in a more culturally sensitive way. Furthermore, workers are more confident in their work, supervisors rate them better than workers coming out of regular training and FTSs are benefited by the extra help and teaching and coaching opportunities
- Fox, Burnham, Barbee, & Yankeelov, 2000, Fox, Miller, & Barbee (2003), Sullivan, Antle, Hall, & Barbee (2004) and Huebner (2003) found that the PCWP program enhances worker confidence, supervisor ratings of key behaviors, worker retention and child outcomes (see next 1 pager for more information).
- Antle (2002) and Barbee, Antle, & Martin (2003) found in the evaluation of the ASFA Supervisory Team Training that knowledge gain from pre to post training was significant, supervisors that learned more produced workers who engaged in superior casework in terms of assessment, case planning and child outcomes of safety and well-being.
- Antle & Barbee (1998) compared workers in a virtual office setting vs. a traditional workplace setting and found that conscientious workers performed better in the virtual office environment than in traditional settings.
- Sullivan, Yankeelov and Barbee (2003) found that supervisory support, career ladders, education, urbanicity of worksite, and worker personality all affected worker retention (See one pager to follow).

USEFULNESS TO CABINET:

- National studies conducted on training evaluation find that Kentucky has the most sophisticated training evaluation system in the country.
- The research findings from this project have been important in describing the workforce in the Cabinet.
- The predictors have helped to understand exactly what types of workers are needed in child welfare.
- The project has also been key in understanding if the training is applied and how valuable it was to each participant.
- This project continues to be an informative piece in understand the make-up of the Cabinet workforce.