

**Staff Turnover and Retention (STAR) Workgroup  
December 5, 2007**

Introductions

Attendees: Shelly Johnson, Marcia Daniel, Diane Senn, Karen Faulk, Kaaren Hebert, Nelda Rains, Gail Lewis, Lisa Welch, Hannah Dunn, Melissa Maiello

Conducting: Shewayn Watson, Bridget Clark

Review/approval of minutes:

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as is.

Review of surveys completed by supervisors (received 16 responses). Survey responses compiled and provided to the group. Supervisors felt that supervisory training, leadership training and managing tasks were the top three things that have prepared them for their duties as a supervisor. Mandatory CPTP, communications/interpersonal skills, HR training and how to train a new worker were also included. Supervisors felt that upper management support, retention of staff and time were top things they need to be a more effective supervisor. Supervisors feel that the most pertinent training for staff should occur at introductory training, mentoring/shadowing/coaching, one-on-one supervision, on the job and through co-workers. Supervisors believe that maintaining caseload standards, retaining staff, and effective performance, evaluation and corrective action skills are the top three ways that the agency can best support them to be a more effective supervisor. This is followed with on the job training, assessment, time management, critical thinking and case planning skills, selective hiring practices and ongoing supervisory training. Supervisors state that general computer usage (ACCESS, TIPS, MS Word, Groupwise), general paperwork and supervisory conferences with staff take up the highest percentage of their time. This is followed by staffings, case disruptions/case emergencies, researching policy/forms, case assignments, training, and supervisory conferences with the DM.

Ongoing theme: Looking for on the job type training and a mentoring/shadowing piece while on the job.

As per Kaaren Hebert's request, include Marty Gibson in information regarding these training programs as she is looking at training programs in other states at this time.

Also, Connie Wagner coordinate with the STAR group in order to not duplicate efforts regarding training on staff turnover and retention.

Conference call tomorrow (12/6/07) with the NRC on organizational improvement. Requesting that they provide input on other states curriculum on supervisory training and model approaches to mentoring/coaching.

NRC: Three categories included in their research.

**Administrative:** How to get staff involved in outcomes? Provide tools to help supervisors talk with workers about agency goals and current performance.

- 1) Using data reports to staff cases
- 2) Clinically focused case review process

**Educational:** Help staff learn what they need to know by being involved in worker training and development, and coaching staff on practice issues.

- 1) Clear job expectations and related evaluation procedures and training.
- 2) Training

Should involve supervisors in training workers.

**Discussion:** Workers wondering what it is that they are supposed to be doing. When looking at training, need to remember where we were and look at what we need to fix now. People need to know what their expectations are and need to know their duties. Get the feeling that supervisors are unclear about their responsibilities (in court). Everything has changed since Hurricanes. Changes and additions of responsibility and duties since storms. Supervisors assumed new responsibilities as well as old responsibilities. How do we get supervisors prepared for changes and additions? Confusion about what the job job for workers. Would help for supervisors to spend less time doing paperwork and more one-on-one time with a worker discussing their duties, not just a specific case. Also, district managers discussing supervisory role with supervisors.

**Supportive:** Create a climate where staff needs are addressed and caseworkers support one another in a team.

- 1) support from their own supervisors
- 2) advice and assistance from outside consultants or mentors
- 3) opportunities to meet with other supervisors.

With all of the responsibilities on a daily basis, guidance is missing.

Issues that increase staff turnover is confusion of duties and the feeling that one has no control over their job. (Karen Faulk)

Job descriptions and duties would be a good place to start. Although, supervisor can be very specific in PPR or staffings as to what a workers role is. SF 3's completed every three years. Every employee should have a copy and every supervisor should have a copy of their worker's SF 3.

Need to tap into what we are doing and what we are doing well. Need to look at what best practices are. Ex. Foster care workers have meetings and new workers assisted in ways to save time and assisted other workers with new computer technology, etc. Need to

utilize the tools that we have which will assist in getting back to one- on- one time with staff. Need to use our own resources to develop skills. Ex. Sara Alford returning to Alexandria region to assist workers. Other regions believe that this is a great idea and would welcome an opportunity like this. However, need to be able to measure this aspect and see if it works before deciding to replicate this in other regions.

Group feels that this could be a part of our role. What it would look like to have this in each region. Kaaren will look at funding and what is in place to measure the outcome of this project.

Need consistency with supervisors. Everyone needs to be doing the same thing. Creates lots of confusion when workers receive different information. If not statewide, at least within each parish office or within regions. Need to create an environment of teamwork within offices. Workers need to know that each program fits with the other program and that each program impacts another. Need to promote decisions based on best practices.

**Mentoring/training:** Kaaren will check on funds. Dialog with NRC tomorrow and explore some other training models they might have.

Training Models in other states: California, Utah and Maine:

Our training program has a lot of components. Not missing much of what training should have, however delivered in a much shorter amount of time vs. other states.

Utah/Maine: Continuous plan on progression of how worker learns components of job. Maine has a mentoring piece/job shadowing. Receive follow up on how you did in training and a plan for supervisor to continue to work with worker on areas needing improvement. Utah has a mentor assigned to new worker.

Need training for mentors. Experience doesn't necessarily mean that you can train someone new.

Supervisors need an understanding of what knowledge worker has. Need a formal process to help the worker progress.

Need to have a checklist of what worker should cover and also mentor should have checklist in order to show supervisor what should be worked on with worker.

Maine's example: Learned scenario in classroom and then scenario set up the next week to model what learned in classroom training.

What do supervisors feel that are areas that are lacking in regards to training new workers? Correlation between policy and implementation, finding the time to see what is new in policy, court testimony. A lot of people in Jefferson are leaving because of court problems.

Do you feel that staffings are occurring timely? Informally staffing cases all the time, however no formal documentation in the record. Began developing staffing forms during all staffings.

Need training to help supervisors to become supervisors. CPTP helped, but takes a long time to decide the need to go to this.

Need to decide whether we are talking about training supervisors, workers, or both. Group feels that supervisors should be trained first. Initial and ongoing training for supervisors.

Need to decide what makes a good supervisor and why employees are attached to certain supervisors.

Training supervisors: Supervisory training & training workers (operational components of training), Public relations with stakeholders (media, court, etc).

What would training supervisors to train workers look like?

What? Train the trainers, structured staffings, mentoring/educator/administrator (roles of supervisors), certifications/certificate programs (different program areas), disciplining for effective performance, evaluation/documentation

Who: Trained individuals (Marcia Salus curriculum), trained Specialist III's for leadership positions

When: Upon becoming a supervisor, ongoing for current supervisors

Where: Within each region (i.e. mentors, train the trainers)

How: Supervisor curriculum, computer training, supervisory handbook/orientation for supervisors

Coaching project: coaching supervisors to be good supervisors. The mentoring piece is for workers.

Poll people in regions to see low or no cost ways to show supervisors that we value what they do and the role and function that they have in this agency.

**Discussion:** Overall, show respect for wisdom and actions on a daily basis rather than in a ceremony. Ex. Very seldom hear that "that was a good job".

See if regions can come up with creative ways to reward workers/supervisors.

Dianne Senn to discuss reward and recognition possibilities with LSSSA.

Annual supervisory meeting, annual district supervisor's meeting, regional newsletters, pay it forward campaign?

Next steps: Contact with Marcia Salus, Freida Bernotavicz and Susan Kanak (NRC). Bring feedback to forum or see if they are available for next meeting, think about how we can reinforce tools that are already in place. Discuss staffing and how to create a focus on staffing.

Kaaren to find out about funding for coaching/mentoring program (i.e. Sara Alford in Alexandria) and will contact Marcia Salus, Diane to poll LSSSA regarding rewards and recognitions, find out about evaluation of mentoring/coaching program from NRC's.

Next meeting: January 31, 2008 from 9-12