

## STAR COMMITTEE MEETING

January 31, 2008

**Attendees:** Marcia Daniel, Diane Senn, Nelda Rains, Brent Villemarette, Lisa Welch, Karen Faulk, Lynn Farris, Shelly Johnson, Joy Thibodeaux, Valerie Harvey, Charlotte Frilot, Hannah Dunn, Gail Lewis, Kaaren Hebert

**Conducting:** Shewayn Watson and Bridget Clark

### **Review/Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as is.

**2007 Children's Bureau Conference (Charlotte and Brent):** Attended conference regarding the recruitment and retention of staff in Washington D.C. Eight five year studies completed. Handouts were provided regarding the information received from the studies. Recruitment and retention is a national problem. Turnover and retention is estimated nationally to be between 20%-40%. Training provided research on work load studies. These are designed to account for every minute of every day while someone is at work and accounted for all of the hours that are spent on a case. Computer program designed to weigh case vs. providing the number of cases assigned to staff. This creates the ability to provide scientific information to legislature. Some states have advertising time. Pride and public service, working for child welfare.

Joe Bruno looked at RMS data. Transportation was the second highest task spent on cases. Worker spends a lot of time transporting clients to court, appointments, etc.

Kris Sahonchik leads NRC. Interested in sending two researchers to us to discuss problem using TA days.

### **CQI/COA Information:**

Bridget: Looking at turnover data in CQI. By looking at the data differently in May of last year, able to show that this was a problem and people began to take notice that this is a problem. Need to utilize support of administration and skills of committee members. We are currently looking at training programs to see what's out there and see what's important. Need to coordinate work and not duplicate efforts.

Bridget: Handed out COA standards regarding recruitment of retention. Need to rate ourselves at some point and will assist in guiding us. Need to get with Marty and discuss components of trainings that this group feels are beneficial.

### **Training/Supervision**

Brent discussed items included in BadPack: Budget request for child welfare training academy. Working with universities to expand 710 training, looking at other academies that exist, building supervisory competency to support staff. Since we have problem with turnover and retention we have to address money piece but this will not resolve it. Supervisory support is very important. Trying to get more money for NRC and working

with Marcia Salis to train supervisors. Many supervisors have not been to training. Looking at certificate program for child welfare positions. IV-E dollars are maximized when we utilize universities for training.

Brent indicated there is an offer on the table from Kris Sahonchik to have someone come and do research and look at issue. This group is peer driven. Staff are the number one resource. Have to have good, qualified, trained staff.

Charlotte addressed a need to remain data driven.

Brent indicated Connie suggested that we have some sort of group with staff to discuss reasons why they leave or what would assist in making them stay.

Need to present a balanced view of what challenges and rewards are regarding positions.

Charlotte stated Michigan State has retention focused supervision. Need to focus on recruitment as well. A lot of focus on warm bodies, but need to get the right fit.

Brent suggested we have Marty come to next meeting to coordinate services. Would be valuable for her to here what this group believes are the issues. Brent indicated Marty working on academy and mentoring and training piece.

Gail Lewis discussed training that creates culture of critical thinking and problem solving.

Training now is way to short. It is worth it to not have caseload for new workers for three to six months?

**Workload/Caseload:**

Hannah: Need to make sure that we have enough staff to cover workload in order to not give case load to new workers. Need to look at how everything that we come up with affects the field. Need to communicate effectively at every level and ultimately look at how this affects the field. Communication needs to occur as to what's going on in each section in State office.

Joe Bruno looking at work flow issues. Believe that Marty and Joe need help in putting this together. Need to invite Joe to meeting and ask how we can help with what he is working on. A lot of information is coming from this group.

**Support/Guidance:**

Gail indicated the need to have constant message to the field that we are working on this issue and see that this is a problem. Discussed Brent sending message to the field that this issue is constantly being addressed.

Discussion: Staff will respond when they see an ongoing response to this issue. Not being said today and gone tomorrow. Staff need to have confidence that we hear them. Brent to bring up to Nanette possibly doing a newsletter to let staff know what we are doing. Shewayn suggested communications with staff that can be in the format of the current LIFTS newsletters.

Once we push out all of the new initiatives, need to support staff. Field is saying that it is too much. Need to be concerned about a mass exit of staff. Need to increase morale.

**Pay:**

Need to bring worker salaries in line with teachers and emergency responders. 5% Special entrance rate will help, then look at organizational culture and structure.

**Meeting with NRC/Updates:**

Bridget and Shewayn- contacted NRC via conference call. Marty Gibson was in attendance Freda Bernotavicz and Susan Kanak sent information that was dispersed to the group. Lynn, Lisa, Diane, Marcia- Information from NRC's. Packets provided. Brochure from Maine that they hand out to potential workers for recruiting workers.

Lisa- Brent provided a lot of information previously. Maine's focus is not different from discussions in this meeting and information provided through survey. They spent thousand's of dollars researching this and we have come up with the same conclusions in this meeting. Handout provided- Recruitment can't be alone. Have to bring in training and support, agency support, evaluations (exit questionnaires), yearly job satisfaction survey. On-going process, on-line resource center related to recruitment and retention. The training focused on the importance in support in supervision. Did this through pre-supervision preparation with training of Spec. 2 and 3, new supervision training within first two years of supervision, have a schedule of what training curriculum will look like, supervisor enhancement training, using data in supervision, managing in state government, administrative responsibilities in legal issues, leadership training, mentoring/coaching. Not different from what we have discussed except that they have researched, developed and implemented it. Realistic job previews- not investing a lot of money and time into someone who is not compatible with our agency. Screen people out as well as in.

Diane- Univ. of Colorado- Started with recruitment, selected workers that they thought would be successful. Everyone is having the same problem and looking at it from the same approach: Supervisor training/mentoring. A lot of it based on communication- letting workers know what is expected on the job through videos, role-playing. Training and retention is what we have discussed- cell phones, little perks to help workers feel valued and connected. Have discussed issues within supervisory group. They would like more representation from front line supervisors and workers.

Marcia- Univ. of Michigan- University system linked through the school of social work through the family assessment clinic. They have ten people devoted to project of recruitment and retention for child welfare dept. Again, identified same issues that we

have identified. They do survey with employees, baseline when hired, then again every six months for 18 months, they do a newsletter updating them on recruitment and retention efforts. Requested their research data. They identified a lot of the training that we feel are important. Identified supervisory skills that were important, not just mentoring aspect. Have DVD including day in the life of child welfare worker.

Joy: Something needs to be ready for about April to keep the momentum going. This group has identified four areas. Requested report on this information. Need a report of what has been discovered and give it to management. Wants to know what goals, mission and function of group are. Four issues that need to solve. Working one issue at a time is going to take too long. Sees the goal of this group as identifying issues and having general ideas of what will help. Then give to people that are experts in this area to implement solutions. Follow up with issues. Believe training is useful but not sure training supervisors is going to help. Believe that several things need to be occurring at once. Break into sub-committees. Need timelines. Determine short term and long term goals. Give Marketa reports on what has been done and suggestions for broad things that need to take place. In management meeting, will discuss what we have reported on and then bring information from management meeting back to the group. Needs to have more direct contact as to what group wants done first and keep in contact with experts that are going to be implementing solutions. Need to meet more often. Need to find people with management expertise vs. social worker expertise and things will flow better.

Kaaren- Marcia Salis beginning training again. Mentoring/coaching coming out of this. Looking at starting coaching project (supervisory coaching) again with about 20 supervisors. Requesting a mixture in years of experience, not just brand new supervisors. Question of targeting supervisors who are losing workers. Needs to be focused on where the need is. Will be rolling out in February with supervisory training for Lafayette, Lake Charles, and Alexandria. Three groups scheduled over the next year. Won't be able to train everyone. Question as to looking at another contract with coaching/mentoring. Looking at retirees to be trained by Marcia to be coaches. Budget freeze may impact this due to being unable to offer restrictive appointment. The plan was to start coaching shortly after supervisory training. Possibly look internally to serve as coaches. With training may be able to coach one or two people. Marcia's training calls for monthly training and discussion, monthly meeting with person coaching, phone calls in the interim. Problem with internal coaching is question of coaching within region or outside of region, but this presents the problem of travel cost outside of region, and line of authority within region. Not of lot of money in the budget to contract with people.

Bridget- need to look at retention at this point, then look at recruitment.

#### **Development of sub-committee's**

Shewayn: Discussed dividing into sub-groups to address issue identified. Bridget developed chart based on the four root causes identified.

### **TRAINING SUB-COMMITTEE:**

*On the job training and classroom for both supervisors and workers.*

**Joe and Sam (Co-Leaders), Melissa, Marty**  
**Suggestion to add Marty to Committee.**

### **SUPPORT/GUIDANCE SUB-COMMITTEE**

*Supporting and guiding staff through mentoring and coaching and effective communication.*

**Lynn and Marcia (Co-Leaders), Charlotte, Lisa, Kaaren H. Suggestion to add Nannette to committee**

Discuss issues regarding internal coach within regions. Possibly supervisor within a region that is really good, how do you select: application process, designate someone, certain criteria, performance evaluations. Will appear that this person is better than someone else who is not selected.

Has been any follow up to Marcia Salis' training to determine if it is effective?

### **WORKLOAD/CASELOAD SUB-COMMITTEE**

*Weigh case loads, reduce caseloads, time-study, timeline for assignment cases after completion of training, increase staff and efficient resources (e.g. laptops/speakrite etc)*

**Hannah and Diane (Co-Leaders), Nelda, Gail, Karen F.**  
**Suggestion to add Joe Bruno to committee**

### **PAY/RECRUITMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

Shelly and Bridget (Co-Leaders)

*Sub-committee Tasks:*

- Identify most critical pieces that the workers believe should be focused on. Which can be considered short term and long term goals that would make the biggest difference to the workers.
- Co-Leaders should contact suggested members and others felt to be beneficial to group
- Set up sub-groups and meetings by week of February 15, 2008
- Bridget will provide update to management team on February 18, 2008.
- Prioritize efforts that we think should happen first and make the most impact on the issues trying to address. Indicate short term and long term components. Bridget will present plan and previous work completed at next management team meeting in February management meeting.
- Look at COA standards within groups
- Present recommendations to Bridget and Shewayn by March 5, 2008.

