

Site Profile

DIVISION OF MILWAUKEE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES Intervention: Improving Organizational Culture and Climate



QIC-WD Overview

The Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development (QIC-WD) is dedicated to understanding how to improve child welfare workforce outcomes. The QIC-WD partnered with eight child welfare agencies to evaluate evidence-informed workforce interventions and how they are related to outcomes for children.

Site Overview

The Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) includes approximately 185 State employees, responsible for the delivery of child protective services and ongoing case management services through contract agencies in Milwaukee County. The goal of the QIC-WD project is to implement and test an organizational culture and climate intervention called ARC which stands for Availability, Responsiveness, & Continuity.

Workforce Challenge

The QIC-WD completed a comprehensive needs assessment process, which included a review of administrative data; organizational culture and climate surveys completed by workers, focus groups of supervisors and workers; and a root cause analysis involving agency workers, supervisors and leadership. Fused together, the root cause of high turnover was an organizational culture and climate that showed signs of resistance to change, low engagement, rigidity, and low job satisfaction.



Theory of Change

By involving the DMCPS workforce in agency decision making, creating a less hierarchal organizational culture, and improving communication between leadership and staff, the agency's organizational culture and climate will significantly improve. In turn, staff are expected to have increased levels of commitment, job satisfaction, and engagement with families while the agency experiences less turnover.



Intervention

Availability, Responsiveness, and Continuity (ARC) is a proven organizational change process that:

- introduces core principles to guide service improvement efforts;
- embeds research-based organizational components that support service improvement; and
- fosters attitudes and mindsets necessary for ongoing service improvement.

Evaluation and Expected Results

The QIC-WD is dedicated to generating new knowledge about effective strategies to improve child welfare workforce outcomes. This will be accomplished through a site-specific evaluation and a cross-site evaluation. Through this site's evaluation, we will better understand whether ARC leads to a number of outcomes, including but not limited to:

- increased levels of organizational commitment, intent to stay, and job satisfaction;
- increased teamwork behaviors and collaborative decision-making behaviors on agency practices and policies;
- improved communication patterns for policy decisions and interpersonal interactions;
- improved indicators of organizational culture and climate;
- decreases in functional and dysfunctional staff turnover; and
- improvements in child safety, permanency and well-being.

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