Appendix B
Literature Review

The following organizational and practice supports have been identified from the literature and focus on those that impact supervisors. Specific examples of programs implemented and contact information are provided when possible. The following topic areas were included in the search:

Anticipating/addressing/managing change

- Within community
- Within agency
- Within unit

Facilitating communication and collaboration

- Supervisor-caseworker
- Agency-community (including public and media)
- Agency-foster parents
- Supervisor-agency administrators
- Agency-courts
- Supervisor-caseworker-Contractual service providers

Empowerment of supervisor/influencing agency

- Goals
- Policy
- Structure
- Processes
- Resources
- Short-and long-term planning

Recruiting, selecting, pre- and in-service training, and retaining child welfare staff/providing on-going professional development

- Caseworkers
- Supervisors

Enhancing/managing/evaluating caseworker performance

- Knowledge/Skill development and application
- Rewarding excellent performance
- Addressing performance difficulties

Preventing/addressing stress/secondary traumatic stress/burnout

- For caseworkers
- For supervisors

Enhancing job satisfaction/building and maintaining morale

- For caseworkers
- For supervisors

Anticipating/managing risk (safety)

- To clients
- To caseworkers
- To supervisors

Managing caseloads

- Supervisor unit size (number of supervisees)
- Caseworker caseload size
- Assigning and covering cases

Managing time and workflow

- Supervisor
- Caseworker

Using management information systems (MIS)

- In evaluating outcomes (permanency planning)
- In identifying resource needs
- In identifying training needs
- In identifying policy problems
- In managing caseloads

Organizational responsibilities to supervisor

- Clarity of job expectations and ongoing appraisal
- Training and professional development
- Career ladder and opportunities
- Supervision/consultation/mentoring
- Peer support
- Role in strengthening agency and its services
- Involvement in caseworker training
- Information and training re: policy and practice changes

Caseworker responsibilities to supervisor

- Timely information sharing
- Developing agenda for formal supervision
- Self-assessment re: training/stress/professional development

Ethics in supervision

- Boundary issues
- Confidentiality

Developing practice competence in caseworkers

Selecting model of supervision

Providing leadership within organization/community

Disproportionality

Roles and responsibilities of supervisors related to quality improvement

Identified supports are organized into the following sections: Training and Information Sharing, Administrative/Fiscal, Recruitment and Retention/Preventing Stress/Enhancing Morale, Facilitating Communication and Collaboration, Enhancing/Managing/ Evaluating Caseworker Performance, Anticipating and Managing Risk, Ethics in Supervision, Selecting Model of Supervision.

Training and Information Sharing

Link faculty from schools of social work with MSW-level supervisors (Strand & Badger, 2005)

- The Clinical Consultation for Child Welfare Supervisors program was designed to assist supervisors with their roles as educators, mentors, and coaches for casework staff, specifically in relation to case practice decisions.

Develop comprehensive mentoring programs for supervisors (Children's Rights & NCYL, 2007; NRCOI, 2007)

Build a local informal and/or formal network of supervisors (Blythe, et al., 1992; Landsman, 2007; NRCOI, 2007)

Provide supervisors opportunities to practice skills through "learning laboratory projects" and case study review (Robison, 2006)

- With a grant from the federal Children's Bureau, universities and child welfare agencies in four southern states (Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee) are conducting "learning laboratory" projects to improve supervision. Each project emphasizes on-the-job skill-building in addition to classroom training for supervisors. Arkansas is focusing on mentoring of supervisors by field educators. Classroom training for supervisors is followed by mentoring strategies that are especially useful for supervisors in small offices where daily, face-to-face support is not available. Support for supervisors in the field includes; direct mentoring every other week using structured on-the-job activities, on-line educational offerings, peer group sessions using video conferencing to practice applying theory to actual case/supervision situations.

  Contact: Debbie Schiell, Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, debbie.schiell@arkansas.gov, 501-682-1554

- After discovering that poor decision-making was partly to blame for several high-profile tragedies, Arizona's Child Protective Services reform initiative began working to improve practice throughout the child welfare system. Arizona State University conducted a needs assessment of supervisors. The study found that the agency's supervisors are highly committed individuals who value opportunities to learn from their peers above classroom training or instruction.

- With these preferences in mind, the agency and university are developing quarterly group sessions for all supervisors and assistant program managers, which will be part of ongoing, required supervisor training. Supervisors bring cases to staff and practice their decision-making skills, and the assistant program managers provide information on new agency

policies and practices. Supervisors pass on the skills they learn to case managers, integrating better decision-making throughout the agency. Contact: Holli Sanger, Training Supervisor for Child Protective Services Arizona Department of Economic Security hsanger@azdes.gov

Offer targeted general, ongoing training for supervisors (Faller, 2003; NRCOI, 2007; Robison, 2006)

- Faller, et al. describes a needs assessment conducted with approximately 250 public child welfare staff on the topic of training for child welfare supervisors. The following seven sessions were designed based on the findings:
- Supervising - The Front End
- Training/Coaching/Teaching/Educating/Mentoring: The Learning Connection
- Supportive Communication: Three Major Conversations
- Working with Workers (and others) With Strong Opinions: Managing Difficult People
- Decision Making/Problem Solving
- Supervising - The Back End including Monitoring, Reviewing, and Performance Architecture
- Management of Self

Develop a training curriculum for mid-level managers (Preston, 2004, p.93)

- "Providing a second level of management training to supervisors promoted into middle management affords states the opportunity to address the training gaps identified [i.e., leadership, strategic skills and competencies]"

Train supervisors in policy and practice changes before they are made and provide tools for supervisors to promote these changes with their workers (NRCOI, 2007)

Involve supervisors in training workers (NRCOI, 2007)

Ensure extra staffing to allow for training attendance (Blase & Fixsen, 2004)

Ensure that supervisors create and implement a training and/or development plan with each caseworker (CO DHS, 1994)

Administrative/Fiscal Supports

Create a managerial level dedicated solely to providing supervision to field supervisors (Children's Rights & NCYL, 2007)

Require and provide funding for supervisors to obtain advanced social work degrees (Children's Rights & NCYL, 2007)

Encourage responsive/flexible relationships with referral or other organizations including:

- Joint training sessions (Blythe, et al., 1992)
- Common screening and referral forms (Blythe, et al., 1992)

Develop an articulated practice model to ensure that all staff members understand the agency's philosophy on working with children and families (Bordeaux, 2008)

Ensure manageable staff/supervisor ratios allowing time to work one-on-one with staff (Jacquet et al., 2007; Robison, 2006)

"Facilitative administration at the program or regulatory level actively looks for ways to decrease barriers to implementation and improve supports that are needed for effective intervention… Some examples of administrative issues are extra staffing needed so that other staff can participate in training, funding mechanisms that support the new way of doing business, organizational supports necessary to accomplish the change, and technical assistance and management information systems that take into account the new procdures and the needs of staff and management for timely information." (Blase & Fixsen, 2004. p 4)

Build MIS systems that improve policy and practice, take into account new procedures, and allow for efficient entry and useful reports (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2001; Blase & Fixsen, 2004; Lyons, et al, 2002; NRCOI, 2007)

- Self-evaluation in Family to Family entailed three types of effort: first, to build databases that tracked children through their experiences in out-of-home care by drawing on data already being collected in routine program operations; second, to compile information about children in out-of-home care from a variety of agencies that serve families and children (mental health, special education, juvenile justice, etc.); and third, to build "self-evaluation teams" that would pull together information on an ongoing basis, and more importantly, use it to improve child welfare policy and practice. Contact John Mattingly of the Annie E. Casey Foundation for further information. The following persons also can answer questions about self-evaluation: Lynn Usher, School of Social Work, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 919.962.6496, Fax: 919.962.1486; or Stan Schneider, Metis Associates, Inc., New York, New York, 212.425.8833, Fax: 212.480.2176. (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2001)
- Provide tools to help supervisors talk with workers about agency goals and current performance [i.e., data reports and clinically focused case review processes] (NRCOI, 2007)

Support system-level problem solving to reduce funding and regulatory barriers (licensing, funding, reporting) that hinder or present implementation of "what works" (Blase & Fixsen, 2004)

Anticipate/address/manage change (O'Connor, 1997)

- Requires "systemic thinking" that views each part of the child welfare system in relation to the entire picture. Repeated crises in the system are not departmental breakdowns but signals, symptoms of something wrong at a systemic level. When a crisis occurs, attention goes to the breaking point, but treating the symptom alone will not suffice. Managers must build understanding at every level of how each part fits the whole system, and they must spread the "work of worry" about the whole system across every managerial level. For further information, contact Mal O'Connor at the Center for Applied Research, 617-576-1166.

Empower supervisor to influence agency (Cearley, 2004; Children's Rights & NCYL, 2007; Dawson, 1998; NRCOI, 2007; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006)

- "Supervisors' empowering behaviors toward workers significantly affect workers' sense of empowerment – this author suggests an intervention in the form of training in child welfare agencies." (Cearly, 2004, p. 325)

- "Facilitate the robust involvement of supervisors in the reform efforts through their inclusion in task forces and focus groups and the development of supervisor-directed reform plans at the local level" (Children's Rights & NCYL, 2007, p.13)
- Autonomy in carrying out job responsibilities (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006)

Ensure clarity of job expectations (Allnoch, 1998; NRCOI, 2007; Sundet & Kelly, 2007)

Work toward managing caseloads (Juby & Scannapieco, 2007; Weaver, et al, 2007)

- Supervisor support positively impacted worker ability and was positively associated with availability of resources, indicating supportive supervisors may provide more direction toward available resources. (Juby & Scannapieco, 2007)
- Easing new workers into a full caseload more likely to retain workers.(Weaver, et al, 2007)

Use consultants to address specific needs (Blythe, et al., 1992)

Provide adequate vacation/respite for supervisors (Blythe, et al., 1992)

Recruitment and Retention/Preventing Stress/Enhancing Morale

Engage supervisors in preventing turnover through regional goals and corrective action plans (Robison, 2006)

- In Delaware, supervisors have been key to reducing turnover by half. The child welfare division's goal is to continue reducing turnover until it is below ten percent throughout the state. The individual performance plan of each regional administrator and assistant regional administrator (the staff who supervise supervisors) sets the expectation that frontline staff turnover will not exceed ten percent, though each region has its own goals based on past performance. If unit turnover tops this target, a corrective action plan is developed for supervisors, and they receive specialized training. The agency uses routine exit interviews and informal "stay" interviews with workers to evaluate supervisors' effectiveness. Findings indicate that high worker turnover rates are more likely to stem from the personality of supervisors than their practice skills. Contact: Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, 302-633-2601

Use supervisors as mentors (Robison, 2006)

- The Delaware Department of Services to Children, Youth and Families has implemented a range of workforce initiatives that are credited with reducing staff turnover from 40 to 20 percent in a two-year period. Among these initiatives is a focus on mentoring and coaching. The agency defined mentoring and established written standards and competencies. Supervisors select experienced line staff, usually family crisis therapists, to complete special training and serve as mentors. These mentors then coach new staff who have completed core training. Mentors receive no extra payment or caseload reduction, but report great satisfaction from working with other staff.
- The department also found that supervisors overseeing more than one new worker at a time were not able to provide the support that new staff needed. "Coaching units" were established regionally to ensure that new workers received the training they needed and to prevent supervisors from being spread too thinly. Now, all new staff in these regions are assigned to coaching units, in which supervisors work very closely with them to ensure that they are prepared for their permanent assignments later. Workers report that they feel better

prepared to move into permanent positions as a result. Contact: Marcia Roe, Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, Marcia.Roe@state.de.us, 302-633-2706

Support supervisors in addressing staff recruitment and retention through methods including targeted training and other methods described below (Children's Bureau, 2007)

- Putting the Pieces Together, Supervisor Core Curriculum. Effective supervision spans three main areas (Administrative, Educational, and Supportive Supervision). Each unit emphasizes self-reflection and application to the unique circumstances of each supervisor. All modules are competency-based, highly interactive and accommodate a variety of learning styles to maximize the learning experience. Supervisor Core Curriculum, Putting the Pieces Together: http://tatis.muskie.usm.maine.edu/pubs/pubdetailWtemp.asp?PUB_ID=B060065
  For more information, please contact: Charmaine Brittain, MSW, Ph.D. Charmaine.Brittain@du.edu, (303) 871-6336

- Supervisory Support: To enhance supervisory skills at all levels, the Standards for Supervision and the Supervisory Competency Model was revised to reflect current practice; the concept and content outline for a Supervisory Academy was developed for all supervisors and a certificate program was designed for experienced supervisors. A syllabus was also developed for a three credit MSW course on Creating a High Performance Workforce in Child Welfare, offered in 2005 and 2006.
  For more information please contact: Freda Bernotavicz, Child Welfare Training Institute, Muskie School of Public Service, Fredab@usm.maine.edu, (207) 626-5241

- In Connecticut, managers were more satisfied than either supervisors or social workers. Of the three job categories, supervisors were the least satisfied, and the most dissatisfied with their own supervision. Supervisory support has included the development of an agency-wide supervisory training plan, the identification of competencies for supervisors and the development of a behavioral interview protocol for hiring new supervisors. Dr. Virginia Strand: PI   Children FIRST, Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service

- A Supervisor's Guide to Recruitment, Selection and Retention: A 4-day curriculum to enhance the ability of supervisors and managers to recruit, select and retain qualified child welfare workers. Nancy S. Dickinson, MSSW, PhD, Jordan Institute for Families, ndickins@email.unc.edu, (919) 962-6407

- Supervisory Skills: Retaining Child Welfare Workers: Public child welfare supervisors often receive training in agency policy, but not in skills to use in supervising staff. Our research to date, and that from other studies, indicates that the competence of supervisors plays a major role in worker turnover and retention. We have developed a curriculum that draws upon the human services management literature and our past experience training child welfare supervisors. Recruitment & Retention of Child Welfare Professionals Program, http://www.ssw.umich.edu/public/currentProjects/rrcwp/, (734) 998-9700

- Supervisory Needs and Interests Survey. Based on a sample of over 150 supervisors and middle managers, training needs and areas of competency were identified to inform future training and mentoring activities. Final report is pending. Curriculum Development: A supervisory training curriculum was developed with a focus on retention issues. The six interactive workbooks are:
  A. The Role of Leaders in Retention
  B. Practice of Retention-focused Supervision

<ol type="C" start="3">
Working with Differences
Communication Skills
The First Six Months
Recruiting and Selecting Staff

Gary Anderson, MSU School of Social Work, <u>gary.anderson@ssc.msu.edu</u> , 517-355-7515

Train supervisors to improve their supportive skills to enhance worker retention (Jacquet, et al., 2007)

"When supervisors provide support, help, and a positive environment, workers' commitment is strengthened and they remain with child welfare regardless of the size of their caseload.(p.30-31)"

Acknowledge that the agency has an "influential and multidimensional role in the retention of child welfare staff" (Ellett, et al, 2007; Rycraft, 1994)

- Agency has control over mission, goodness of fit, supervision and investment – all key elements in caseworker retention. (Rycraft, 1994)

Use peer-group supervision - it demonstrates a commitment by agency leadership to provide ongoing training and personal growth for caseworkers and a desire to prevent burnout among them (Marks, J.L. & Hixon, D.F., 1986).

Prevent burnout. Tips for supervisors to prevent staff burnout and compassion fatigue:

- Implement crisis debriefings after a traumatic event has taken place to provide support and validation.

- Offer ongoing or further support and validation to casework staff when a traumatic event occurs.

- Institute a trauma support group.

- Initiate supportive activities on the unit level. For example, a practice could be started of coworkers helping with paperwork or assisting with home visits during particularly traumatic periods. Supervisors can establish flexible work schedules, including "mental health days" or days spent in the office not making home visits.

- Provide a religious or spiritual consultant to offer solace and counseling when children or fellow staff members die.

- Deliver training to create self-awareness regarding stress and how to manage it, how to understand the effects of trauma, and how to develop coping skills that enable staff to better manage trauma (Salus M, 2004).

Improve retention. Maine's "Reengineering Study" revealed a number of recommendations to improve retention (Bernotavicz, 1997):

- Conduct a pilot program to reduce time spent by caseworkers on service negotiation and payment.

- Reduce the time spent by caseworkers on locating placements for children in DHS care and custody. Assign responsibility to a Central Office staff member to oversee the exploration of innovative ways to increase the number of foster homes including improved marketing materials and to develop more efficient databases to locate placements.

- Place ASPIRE (TANF welfare to work) participants in offices to provide backup administrative support.
- Re-engineer the Payments Process;
- Eliminate regional review of transportation bills;
- Place MSW students in offices to provide program support;
- Train Mental Health providers to work effectively with Child Welfare system;
- Provide administrative support for authorization and payments.
- Help supervisors support new caseworkers through the two-three year transition period.
- Provide a supportive climate for debriefing traumatic situations
- Provide recognition and rewards for longevity.
- Disseminate information on options for unpaid educational leave.
- Support the use of flexible work schedules.
- Continue gathering data on retention through exit interviews of caseworkers.
- Authorize non-emergency overtime pay.
- Conduct a salary/benefits survey of child welfare caseworkers in public and private agencies.
- Develop a plan that will allow caseworkers to take educational leave to complete MSW degrees and ensure that their work is covered in their absence.
- Strengthen the role of the supervisor.
- Provide opportunities for caseworker sabbaticals for independent study after two years on the job.
- Provide workshops to help caseworkers bridge the two-three year transition period.
- Incorporate findings from retention literature into training for supervisors.

Use training programs to prevent supervisor burnout in child welfare agencies. Training must focus on (1) how to recognize symptoms of stress, (2) how to develop effective coping mechanisms for managing stress, (3) how to identify work stresses in the agency and in the profession of social work, (4) how to develop political acumen and skill, (5) how to communicate with and better relate to colleagues so that strong peer support may be developed, and (6) how to improve supervisory skills and techniques (Zischka, 1981).

Expect supervisors to establish a positive work climate. Specific expectations include:
- Acknowledge effective performance, caseworker efforts, client progress, accomplishment, and individual contributions.
- Treat staff with importance, dignity, and respect.
- Create/model high standards of practice.
- Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff.
- Support staff in taking care of themselves physically and emotionally.
- Treat staff as professionals.
- Support a climate of trust and openness.

- Encourage staff to express their feelings and concerns about individual clients as well as the agency and help them to resolve these feelings.

- Create a sense of safety and stability to support risk-taking.

- Create an environment in which cultural differences are appreciated.

- Refer staff to outside assistance (e.g., employee assistance program), when appropriate.

- Use mistakes as an opportunity to teach and learn.

- Developing/supporting a teamwork approach;

- Facilitating successful resolution of conflict within and outside the agency (CO DHS, 1994).

Help workers "to become masters of their immediate environment" in the workplace and "to feel that their work and they themselves are important -the twin ingredients of self esteem". Workers need to feel valued and needed and not manipulated or used. This is central to the quality of service delivered by clients. Example of "worker of the week" where worker is nominated by supervisor (Hughes, et al, 1991, p.6.5-6.6).

"To help identify, recognize, and prevent burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and secondary traumatic stress,…organizations must acknowledge the emotional aspect the work can take on supervisors." The following strategies are offered:

- Develop pre-screening tools to assess suitability to child welfare and supervision

- Regular use of Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) that meet with staff on a regular basis (team meetings, retreat days)

- Provision of regular and frequent supervision to front-line supervisors

- Develop peer supervision within agency

- Create job rotation to facilitate moving from high-stress situations (ex. intake to foster care after two years)

- Regular professional development on the concepts of burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and secondary traumatic stress.

- Implementation of a Peer Support Program to promote a caring community where all provide support in times of stress (Dill, 2007)

    "Focus on getting and hanging on to the right people in the first place—those who are productively neurotic, those who are self-motivated and self-disciplined, those who wake up every day, compulsively driven to do the best they can because it is simply part of their DNA - instead of using incentives to "motivate" otherwise unmotivated or undisciplined people.

    In the social sectors, when big incentives are simply not possible, this becomes even more important. Lack of resources is no excuse for lack of rigor—it makes selectivity all the more vital." (Collins, 2005, p.1).

Facilitating Communication and Collaboration

Supervisor-caseworker

Ensure supervisors understand their role and responsibilities relating to communicating with workers. Standards for Supervision in Child Welfare (CO DHS, 1994) defines specific expectations of supervisors related to communication and collaboration with caseworkers:

- Foster ownership of agency vision, mission goals, values, policies and procedures
- Assure cohesion and high performance of the work unit
- Encourage maximum performance of individual staff (see also enhancing, managing, evaluating caseworker performance)
- Facilitate open communication between staff and upper management to achieve agency and unit goals
- Provide/assure orientation to new staff
- Provide case supervision and consultation
- Develop self-awareness of one's own attitudes, needs and behavior and its effect on the supervisor-worker relationship

Train supervisors on how to provide effective feedback. Nine criteria are essential for effective feedback: descriptive, non-evaluative, refer to behavior the worker can change, specific rather than general, constructive rather than destructive, include positive points as well as negative, honest, explain how behavior affects you/others in the organization; negative feedback should be sandwiched with positive feedback (Hughes, et al, 1991).

Agency-Community (including public and media)

Ensure supervisors understand their role and responsibilities relating to fostering collaborative relationships within the agency and with community agencies. Strategies include:

- Participate in the development of a system for communication across units and agencies;
- Provide staff with feedback regarding the messages they are communicating about the unit and the agency;
- Assure consistent visibility of unit/agency in community;
- Educate the community and other units in agency regarding unit goals, objectives and parameters;
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with the community;
- Help staff to understand roles and parameters of other units within the agency and community agencies;
- Model cultural responsiveness in collaborative relationships (CO DHS, 1994).

Involve supervisors in outreach that targets specific audiences through mainstream and community-based media. This outreach can support recruitment, expand funding, and provide access to elected officials, even as it familiarizes local reporters with agency operations - invaluable when and if a crisis occurs and the agency is suddenly in the media spotlight (Omang, J., Bonk, K., 1999).

Ensure that supervisors understand their role in developing good relationships between the agency, the public, and the media.

- While the major responsibility for this rests with the agency's administration, it also may be part of the responsibility of supervisors to inform the public and the media about the complex issues of child abuse and neglect. CPS agencies have a responsibility to inform the public about the causes of child maltreatment, what constitutes a reportable incident, and how the agency is organized to serve children and families. One of the most fundamental reasons that agencies do not speak with the media about specific child abuse incidents is confidentiality concerns. One recommendation for dealing with this issue is to avoid the specifics of the case and to speak in general terms about the agency's response in a given scenario (Salus, M.K., 2004, p. 26, 27).

Value the importance of community values/community context in a cross cultural setting:

- Focus on positive aspects of supervision applicable to child welfare agencies in the context of acknowledgement of, and sensitivity to, the values, situations, and circumstances of Native American clients and practitioners (Hughes, et al, 1991).

- Supervision in a reservation community setting requires that the supervisor maintain an awareness of the 1) community values, 2) community political structure and 3) informal political structure which is linked to the family systems in a community. Supervisors have to maintain an awareness of these factors from two perspectives which are: their own role in the scheme of things and the relationship of these factors to those they supervise. Another factor that influences the relationship of supervisors and their supervisees is the operation of the dual perspective in family practice. Dual perspective: functioning within the norms and rules of the dominating culture while maintaining one's own norms and rules (Hughes, et al, 1991).

- The cultural values which have the greatest influence in the daily work place are 1) concept of time, 2) team or group consensus rather than individuation, 3) cooperation rather than competition, 4) listening and observing rather than verbalizing and reacting, 5) interdependent rather than independent action. To be an effective practitioner, family practice worker cannot base the clients' treatment goals on his/her personal values. (Hughes, et al, 1991).

Supervisor-Agency Administrators

Provide supervisors with the tools to create an atmosphere where workers are treated with respect and their dignity as individuals are valued. Without this atmosphere, it is unlikely that the best interest of clients will be served (Hughes, et al, 1991).

Enhancing/Managing/Evaluating Caseworker Performance

Provide supervisors with the skills needed to encourage maximum performance of individual staff. Supervisors are expected to:

- Evaluate and monitor the quality, quantity, and timeliness of staff performance.

- Provide frequent, timely, and specific positive feedback and constructive criticism to keep workers apprised of performance.

- Be available to staff for consultation as needed.

- Provide a written performance plan and evaluation of staff a minimum of once per year.

- Take appropriate positive or corrective personnel actions.

- Document worker performance related to program compliance
- Identify workers' strengths and help them develop those strengths (CO DHS, 1994)

Ensure that supervisors are aware that positive feedback and recognition must be provided to caseworkers.

- Positive feedback reinforces those specific aspects of performance that the supervisor wants a caseworker to continue doing, whereas recognition is a general appraisal of someone's efforts or accomplishments (Salus, p. 51-52).

Provide supervisors with a process for analyzing performance problems and coaching for improved work performance.

- An effective supervisor must be able to describe what the employee is doing that creates problems, express why a particular behavior is problematic for the supervisor or the organization, specify what he/she wants to the employee to do differently, and outline consequences for succeeding or failing to change behaviors (Hughes, et al, 1991; Salus, 2004).

Anticipating and Managing Risk

Caseworkers

Common strategies employed by States emphasizing caseworker safety include:

- Mandatory safety training for all casework staff;
- Use of communication technology (e.g., cell phones or pagers)
- Protocol and written agreements for involving law enforcement;
- Counseling and support for caseworkers who have been injured or threatened (and, as appropriate, for the families of those caseworkers) (Salus, 2004).

Share proven tips for supervisors to maintain caseworker safety (Salus, 2004):

- Ensure that caseworkers obtain the latest case information and familiarize themselves with the area they will be visiting before making home visits.
- Make sure that staff members provide an up-to-date schedule of their visits.
- Remind caseworkers to observe everyone in and around the home visit area and watch for signs that indicate the potential for personal violence.
- Assist caseworkers in reviewing what is known about the client before making contact.
- Encourage caseworkers to follow their instincts. If they feel unsafe on a visit, they should take whatever action is needed to ensure their protection.
- Remind caseworkers to learn the layout of families' homes, the immediate surroundings, and typical activities that occur there to provide a baseline from which to judge potential danger.
- Reinforce that caseworkers should avoid dangerous or unfamiliar neighborhoods at night without law enforcement protection, if possible, or at least taking another coworker along.
- Prompt caseworkers to be sensitive to the timing of their visits. For example, early morning is usually the best time to go to drug-ridden areas.
- Remind caseworkers to use the safest route to and from a family's home.

- Ensure that caseworkers maintain their or the agency's car in good working order and keep it filled with gas.
- Demonstrate how to decline tactfully offers of food or refreshments.
- Instruct caseworkers on how to maintain their personal safety during home visits. For example, they should ask who is at home and if they have any problems with the caseworker's presence.
- Teach caseworkers to respond effectively to client anger and hostility.

Ethics in Supervision

Provide training to normalize sexual feelings in supervisory relationships and increase supervisors' awareness and understanding of these feelings.

- Includes discussion of socialization (impact of gender, sex role), use of power, social and cultural context (Koenig, T.L. & Spano, R.N, 2003).

Selecting Model of Supervision

Develop a coherent model of supervision, impart it to staff and rigorously evaluate its impact.

- Current theory and research on practice do not provide firm conclusions favoring one particular form of intervention over another (Sunde, P. et al, 2003).

Managing Change

Develop a comprehensive approach to implementing change:

- Develop and articulate a vision
- Plan and provide resources
- Invest in training and development
- Assess or monitor progress
- Provide continuous assistance
- Create a context conducive to change (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1994).

Provide manager authority to exercise influence on project requiring change; even backing them up with a letter assigning them as leader of the project when necessary (Remoussenard, 2007).

Assign projects requiring significant change to a supervisor with the skills to do so - someone who can keep workers motivated and focused and overcome resistance (Remoussenard, 2007).

Thank supervisors and workers involved for their efforts and accomplishments in implementing a change (Maurer, 2007).

Disproportionality

Assume that bias exists and implement certain actions for anti-racist to create effective checks and balances that don't just function as a rubber stamp by:

- Hiring diverse staff

- Training all staff to be alert to bias

- Requiring objective measures of family capacity (such as consistent use of risk and reunification assessments)

- Strengthening the voice of a variety of representatives from communities of color

- Providing supervisory oversight with training

- Alerting educated judicial oversight

- Using alternate decision-making processes (such as family group conferencing)

- Employing placement resources (such as kinship care or culturally-based programs) that honor cultural ways of caring

- Tracking services offered to kin, parents and families by race (King County Coalition on Racial Disproportionality, 2004).
    For more information or a copy of the report, please contact Catalyst for Kids at 206-695-3238 or marikoo@chs-wa.org.

Provide training for supervisors and direct service workers on what the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) was designed to do and how to implement it. The general lack of knowledge about MEPA and confusion over its guidelines suggests that there may be a gap between policy and practice when it comes to understanding, interpreting and implementing MEPA (Chibnall, et al, 2003).

Recognize the importance of a strong agency infrastructure (experienced workers, proper supervision and oversight, strong peer relationships, and manageable caseloads) in reducing disproportionality by allowing supervisors and workers alike to do their jobs more effectively. If supervisors are able to supervise properly, then workers will be able to do their jobs more effectively, leading to better outcomes for children and families, including fewer children coming into the system in the first place (Chibnall, et al, 2003).

- Communicate the rationale behind administrative decisions. Supervisors find it difficult to see the big picture if they lack important information regarding changes in practice or policy (Chibnall, et al, 2003).

Roles and Responsibilities of Supervisors Related to Quality Improvement

Actively promote continuous quality improvement (CQI) through organizational culture:

- Supervisors, managers, administrators, and other agency leaders are champions of continuous quality improvement work, as reflected by their decision-making and communications with staff.

- Clear communication and regular feedback occurs between agency leaders, managers, supervisors, staff, children, youth, families and stakeholders.

Empower supervisors and staff to advocate for, test, and implement changes in policy, practices, programs, and/or training, based on priorities of strengths and best practices.

Train, prepare, and support staff on how continuous quality improvement should be the way the agency does its work. The support must be consistent and come from all levels of the agency, including supervisors, managers, and leaders (Casey Family Programs, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, 2005).

For more information, contact Peter Watson, Director of the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, at pwatson@usm.maine.edu or (207)228-8330.

Use structured methods of clinical casework supervision in child protection to positively impact satisfaction with supervision, organizational culture, preventable worker turnover, worker practice in assessment and intervention, and client outcomes. Agency administrators, supervisors, and workers alike have expressed a desire for quality supervision and techniques focused on the educational and supportive roles of supervision. The SR QIC Supervision Learning Laboratory Projects were implemented in:

- Arkansas Mentoring Family Service Worker Supervisors: focused on the mentoring of supervisors by field educators, and had four primary components: 1) classroom training on a model of clinical casework supervision; 2) mentoring by field educators every other week, utilizing a structured process; 3) On-line auto-tutorials on theory and research in the field; 4) Peer group supervision in which information from on-line offerings is applied case/supervision situations. Contact: Debbie Shiell, Division of Children and Family Services, 501-682-1554

- Mississippi Child Protective Service Casework Supervision Project: involved three major components in which the intervention group will participate: 1) assessment of supervisor competencies through cultural consensus analysis and development of supervisor-driven learning; 2) small group learning on a clinical casework supervision model; 3) establishment of a peer support system to promote transfer of learning and peer problem-solving. Contact: Kim Shackelford, University of Mississippi, 662-915-1563

- Missouri Role Demonstration Model in Child Protective Service Supervision: involved the training and provision of consultation on-site with supervisors to implement a four stage role demonstration model: worker observation of the supervisor providing clinical services; cooperative provision of clinical services; observed provision of clinical services by the supervisee; and independent provision of services by the supervisee with clinical feedback from the supervisor via case discussion and group consultation. Contact: Paul Sundet, University of Missouri, 573-882-0915

- Tennessee: Child Protective Services Supervisors Development Project: focused on two primary components: 1) classroom training focused on clinical decision-making; 2) a mentoring system to provide learning reinforcement in the field; 3) Use of auto-tutorials to make practice information readily accessible in the field. Contact: Jenny Jones, Virginia Commonwealth University, jljones2@vcu.edu .

   For more information about the SR QIC, contact: Crystal Collins-Camargo, MSW PhD, Training Resource Center, University of Kentucky College of Social Work , 859-257-5476 or Crystal.Collins-Camargo@uky.edu

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