

SBC evaluation highlights survey of social work supervisors

This fact sheet highlights some of the findings from the survey of social work supervisors conducted by Partners for Our Children in collaboration with Children's Administration and Research and Data Analysis. The survey of supervisors is critical to assessing the degree to which implementing the Solution Based Casework practice model improves the outcomes of children and families served by CA. The findings below highlight supervisors' perceptions of

- Obstacles to helping families
- Workers' use of Solution-Based interviewing skills
- Workers' use of family development knowledge
- Workers' use of prevention knowledge
- Workers' inclusion of families in case planning
- The organizational climate in their office and
- Their job satisfaction

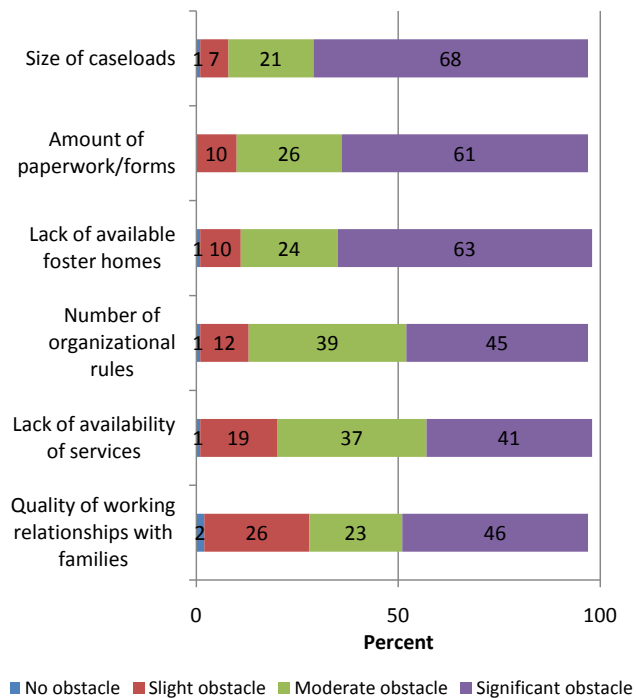
The full report is available on Partners for Our Children's Knowledge Center at www.partnersforourchildren.org. Please contact Sandra Lyons (sandra.lyons@partnersforourchildren.org) or Elizabeth Jones (ELIJ300@dshs.wa.gov) if you have questions about the survey findings or the evaluation.

About the survey. The purpose of the survey was to obtain baseline measures of supervisors' current approaches to casework practice, their perceptions of obstacles to helping families who receive services from CA, their job satisfaction, and their perceptions of working conditions. The survey also asked supervisors to assess the casework practices of a randomly-selected social worker they supervise. Statewide, between February and September, 2008, surveys were completed by 69 percent of supervisors, and 50 percent of the supervisors assessed the casework practices of one of their supervisees.

Partners for Our Children is committed to improving the lives of Washington state foster children through rigorous research, analysis and evidence-based innovation. The organization, founded in 2007, is a collaborative effort of the University of Washington School of Social Work, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and private funders.

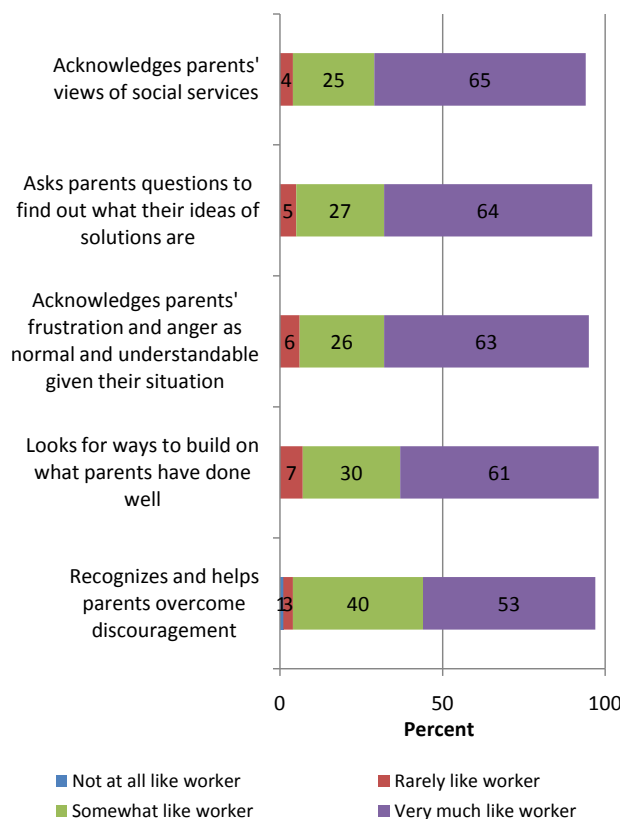
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Obstacles to helping families. Social work supervisors indicated that the most significant obstacles to helping families were: the size of caseloads, the amount of paperwork to be completed, the lack of available foster homes, the number of organizational rules, the lack of availability of services, and the quality of working relationships with families.



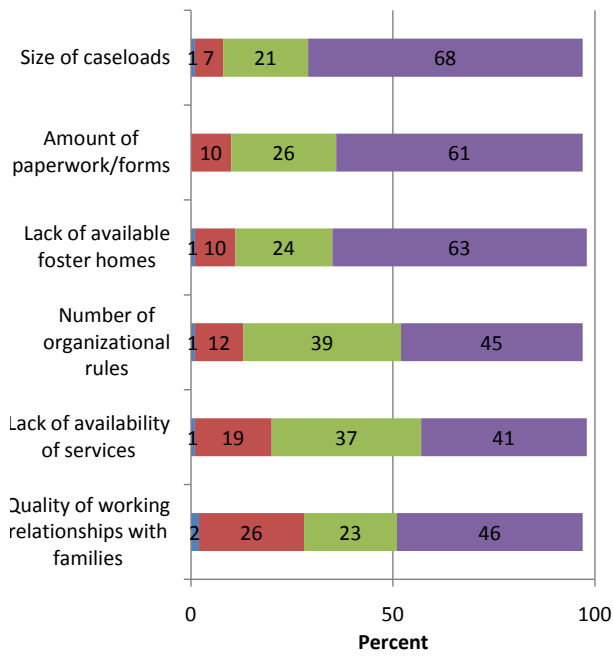
Note. Percentages may not add to 100 due to missing data.

Supervisors' assessment of workers' Solution-Based interviewing skills. Over half of the supervisors reported that it was very much like the worker they assessed to: acknowledge parents' views of social services; ask parents questions to find out what their ideas of solutions are; acknowledge parents' frustration and anger as normal and understandable given their situation; look for ways to build on what parents have done well; and recognize and help parents overcome discouragement.



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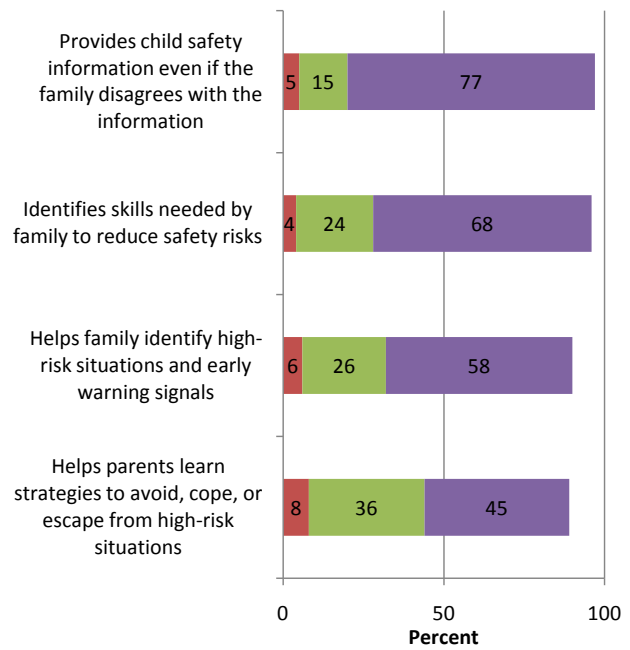
Supervisors' assessment of workers' use of family development knowledge in their practice. About half of the supervisors indicated that it was very much like the worker they assessed to help families recognize behaviors that undermine their ability to accomplish everyday tasks, and to identify everyday family management tasks that challenge the family or create risk. Nearly half said that it was very much like assessed workers to focus on helping families successfully manage everyday tasks. Almost one-quarter of supervisors reported that it was very much like, and one-third said it was somewhat like, assessed workers to place parents' behavior in the context of the family's stage of development.



■ No obstacle ■ Slight obstacle ■ Moderate obstacle ■ Significant obstacle

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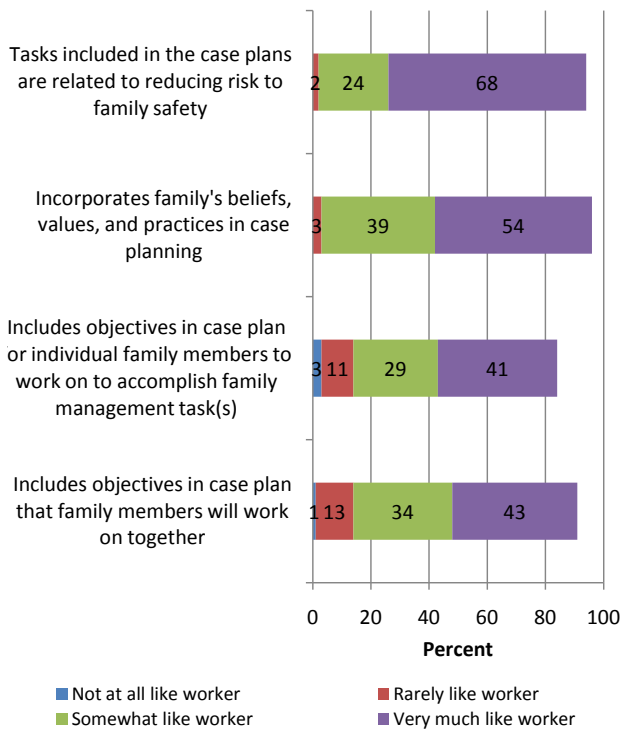
Supervisors' assessment of workers' use of prevention knowledge in their practice. Over two-thirds of the supervisors reported that it was very much like the workers they assessed to provide child safety information even if the family disagrees with the information, and to identify skills needed by the family to reduce safety risks. Fifty-eight percent of the supervisors indicated that it was very much like assessed workers to help families identify high-risk situations and early warning signals. Forty-five percent said it was very much like, and 36 percent said it was somewhat like assessed workers to help parents learn strategies to avoid, cope, or escape from high-risk situations.



■ Not at all like worker ■ Somewhat like worker ■ Rarely like worker ■ Very much like worker

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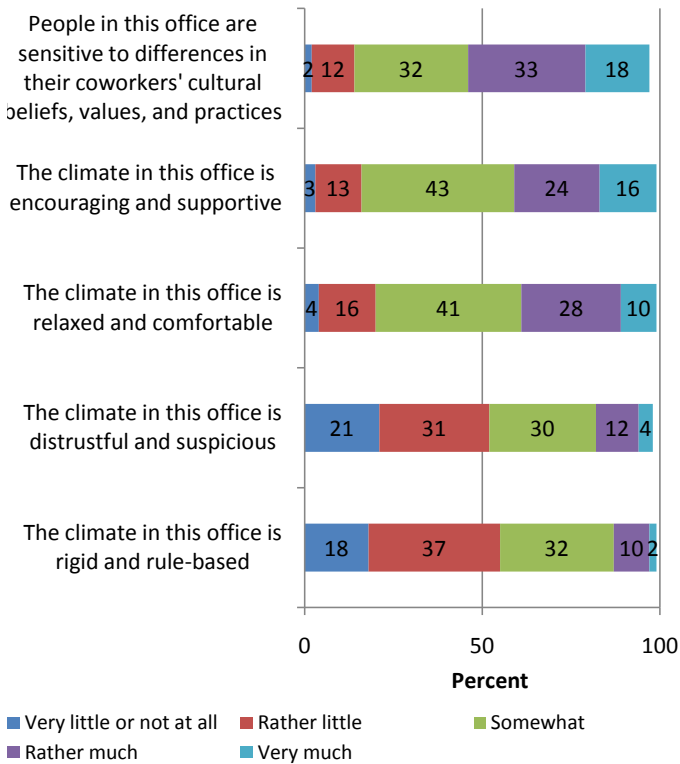
Supervisors' assessment of workers' inclusion of families in case planning. Sixty-eight percent of supervisors reported that it was very much like the workers they assessed to include in the case plans tasks related to reducing risk to family safety. Over half of the supervisors indicated that it was very much like the workers to incorporate families' beliefs, values, and practices in case planning. About 40 percent of the supervisors said that it was very much like the workers to include objectives in the case plan for individual family members to work on to accomplish family management tasks, and to include objectives that family members would work on together.



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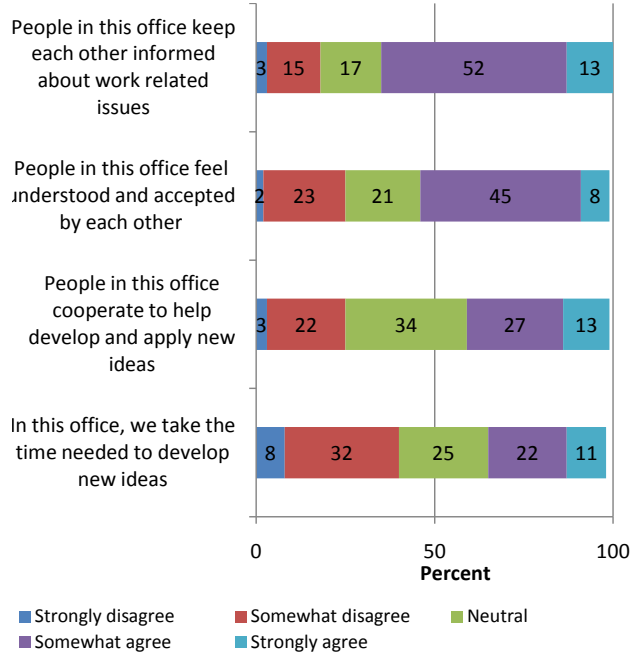
Organizational Climate and Supervisors' Job Satisfaction

Social climate. As shown in the chart below, a majority of supervisors held a positive view of the social climate in their office.



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Team climate. A majority of supervisors agreed that people in their office kept each other informed and felt understood and accepted by each other. However, smaller percentages of supervisors agreed that people in their office took the time needed or cooperated to help develop and apply new ideas.



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Job satisfaction. Thirty-six percent of supervisors strongly agreed with the statement, "All in all, I am satisfied with my job", 41 percent somewhat agreed, 13 percent were neutral, and 10 percent disagreed.