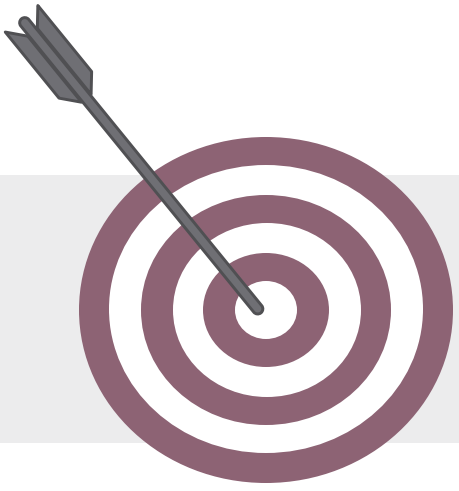


Employee Intent to Stay: Ideas on Retention from the Front Line

Cam Hughes, PhD

Dina McManus, LCSW-R

Learning Objectives



Participants will:



Understand the relational and financial impacts of staff turnover in residential care



Explore the causes of turnover and explanations for intent to stay for staff at a residential treatment center



Examine responses from staff who have stayed for 5 years or more at LaSalle School



Compare and discuss policies that work within their organization

About Us



Why we're presenting and what we have tried?

- Staff ACEs study
- This work is hard, why do we do it?
- Feed the Staff so they don't eat the children
- Self-Care Committee
- Community building events
- Recognition
- Aligning with mission
- What gets in the way?
 - Multiple hats
 - Expectations of oversight agencies
 - Crisis response
 - Impact of COVID

Why Care about Retention?

- Retention issues are a problem for most low-pay/high burnout jobs¹
- Turnover leads to loss of trained employees and disruption to clients and families
 - Significant financial impact
 - Loss of relationships might
 - Re-traumatize/Trigger clients
 - Interrupt progress
- Research has identified many ways to increase retention, including:
 - Improving organizational climate and culture
 - Professional development and training opportunities

Prior Research

Intent to Stay

- Much of the research on retention focuses on intent to leave
- Reasons for staying are often different from reasons for leaving
 - More information on why people stay can help agencies develop supports
- One study indicates that intent to stay is a strong predictor of retention, but job satisfaction and burnout were not²
- Intent to stay is associated with number of years on the job, self-efficacy, professional development, social emotional peer support, supervisory support, and organizational support
- Intent to stay is NOT ASSOCIATED with organizational innovation

Social Emotional Peer Support

- Talking about problems and experiences
 - Some of the content isn't appropriate in all groups
- Peer mentoring can be beneficial
- Venting and debriefing can be a go-to form of attempted self-care, but it isn't always beneficial
 - Research has found that it can be linked to increased burnout⁴

Supervisory Support

Important aspects of supervisory support include:

- Providing assistance with processing events
- Constructive criticism

Note: Giving workers influence over their supervisory experience can empower workers and increase intent to stay³

Organizational Support

- Organizational culture and climate is identified as a key influence on retention⁵
- Professional Development and training opportunities are beneficial but also can make staff more marketable to other jobs⁶

Our Study

Sample & Data Collection

- HR identified all staff who had been employed for 5+ years at LaSalle School (78 total)
- In person open ended interviews conducted by research and HR staff (21 total)
- All departments represented

What is satisfying about the work?



What makes the work harder?

Within our agency

- Not being on the same page
- Lack of follow-through
- Lack of support for students
- Extra expectations from administration
- Instability/Turnover
- Lack of cooperation
- Lack of accountability for staff
- Lack of consequences for students
- Mental health of students
- Not feeling involved
- Staff not staying in their lane

Outside our agency

- Oversight systems
- Lack of support from external bodies
- “Useless” hoops to jump through
- Expectations that do not match reality of the work
- Conflicting goals

What makes you want to stay?



What would make you want to quit?



Lack of Work/Life
Balance

Safety Concerns

Less
Collaboration
Between
Departments

Not Feeling
Appreciated

Issues/Concerns
Not Being
Addressed

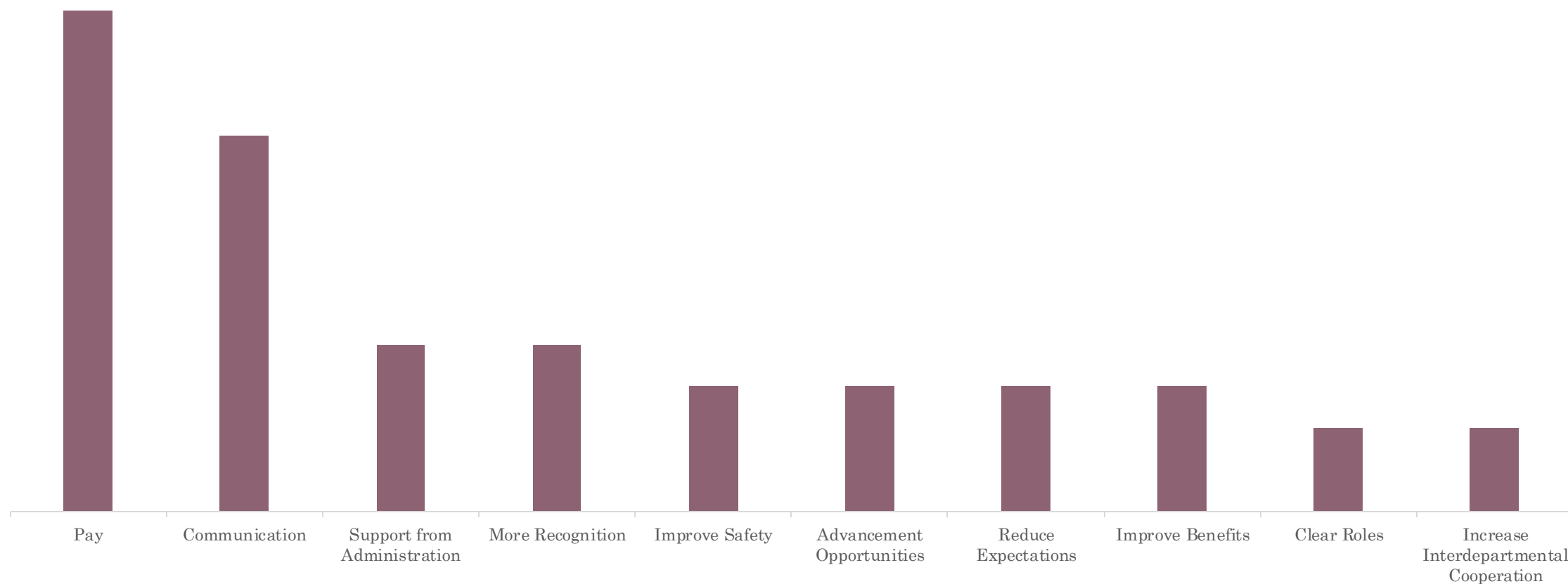
Better Paying
Job/Better
Retirement

Perceived Lack of
Job Security

No Opportunities
for Advancement



What would motivate people to stay?



WHY DO PEOPLE LEAVE?



Opportunities as a
result of changing
employers



Perceived lack of
support, respect or
recognition



Concerns about
safety



Burnout due to
overwhelming
expectations

WHAT CAN IMPROVE RETENTION?



Relationships are key both with youth and with other staff



Seeing impact helps increase intention to stay



Pay is not the only thing that impacts intent to stay



Supervisors can play a key role in inviting staff to the culture and to participate in opportunities

References

1. DePanfilis, D., & Zlotnik, J. L. (2008). Retention of front-line staff in child welfare: A systematic review of research. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 30(9), 995-1008., Lizano, E. L., & Barak, M. M. (2015). Job burnout and affective wellbeing: A longitudinal study of burnout and job satisfaction among public child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 55, 18-28., Rao Hermon, S., Biehl, M., & Chahla, R. (2018). Views on workplace culture and climate: Through the lens of retention and Title IV-E participation. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 12(3), 380-397.
2. de Guzman, A., Carver-Roberts, T., Leake, R., & Rienks, S. (2020). Retention of child welfare workers: Staying strategies and supports. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 14(1), 60-79.
3. Griffiths, A., Royse, D., Culver, K., Piescher, K., & Zhang, Y. (2017). Who stays, who goes, who knows? A state-wide survey of child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 77, 110-117., Howard, A. R. H., Parris, S., Hall, J. S., Call, C. D., Razuri, E. B., Purvis, K. B., & Cross, D. R. (2015). An examination of the relationships between professional quality of life, adverse childhood experiences, resilience, and work environment in a sample of human service providers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 57, 141-148., Rao Hermon, S., Biehl, M., & Chahla, R. (2018). Views on workplace culture and climate: Through the lens of retention and Title IV-E participation. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 12(3), 380-397.
4. He, A. S., Phillips, J. D., Lizano, E. L., Rienks, S., & Leake, R. (2018). Examining internal and external job resources in child welfare: Protecting against caseworker burnout. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 81, 48-59.
5. Boyas, J. F., Wind, L. H., & Ruiz, E. (2013). Organizational tenure among child welfare workers, burnout, stress, and intent to leave: Does employment-based social capital make a difference?. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(10), 1657-1669. He, A. S., Phillips, J. D., Lizano, E. L., Rienks, S., & Leake, R. (2018). Examining internal and external job resources in child welfare: Protecting against caseworker burnout. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 81, 48-59.
6. Fernandes, G. M. (2016). Organizational climate and child welfare workers' degree of intent to leave the job: Evidence from New York. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 60, 80-87. Griffiths, A., Royse, D., Culver, K., Piescher, K., & Zhang, Y. (2017). Who stays, who goes, who knows? A state-wide survey of child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 77, 110-117.,