EVALUATION OF THE TITLE IV-E/426 PROGRAM: A COMPARISON STUDY OF THE 2004 FEDERALLY-FUNDED SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR CHILD WELFARE WORKERS IN GEORGIA

by

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(Under the Direction of Kevin DeWeaver)

ABSTRACT

This research study was a formative program evaluation completed for the State of Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) to assess the Title IV-E program. Title IV-E funds are used to provide social work education to full-time and part-time bachelor's and master's degree students who are interested in public child welfare employment following graduation. Graduates of the program were asked to rate their own capabilities in completing thirty various tasks of child welfare work; they also completed scales on professional commitment, job satisfaction, job stress, and their intent to remain working for DFCS. Two comparison groups of new case managers hired during the same period also completed the measures: one group of new employees who had no social work education, and another group of new case managers who had social work degrees, but had not received Title IV-E funding. Additionally, supervisors of the study participants were asked to rate their workers' capabilities using the same measures. The results of the data analysis indicated that there were no statistically significant differences among groups of new workers. It was found that the Title IV-E graduates and the group of non-IV-E social workers rated themselves the same as their supervisors.

However, the group of non-social workers rated themselves significantly higher than their own supervisors did. This result led to the speculation that non-social workers are more likely to not know what they don't know about child welfare work. The measures of job stress, professional commitment, and intent to remain employed for DFCS did not show significant differences among groups. Job satisfaction did show significant difference among groups with the non-social workers indicating the greatest satisfaction and the non-IV-E social workers showing the least satisfaction.

INDEX WORDS: Child welfare, Title IV-E, Impact of education in child welfare, Retention of child welfare staff

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DEDICATION

This endeavor is dedicated to my loving husband, Patrick D. Murphy. I would also like to acknowledge the constant support and encouragement from my parents, John and Dorothy Ruthven, and my sons, Michael and Patrick Kroulik.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the social work profession has been the dominant force in the field of child welfare services (Lieberman, Hornby, & Russell, 1988). Educators in schools of social work have included academic coursework in child welfare in their programs for decades. Child welfare agencies have also been traditionally important field instruction settings for educating professional social workers (Dickinson & Perry, 2002).

The Social Security Act of 1935 provided the availability of federal support for educational leave for child welfare workers to earn a social work degree; this support was later strengthened in 1962 through Section 426 of Title IV-B and in 1980 through Title IV-E (Zlotnik, 2002). This seventy year federal commitment to social work education for child welfare work emphasizes the nationwide need for highly educated staff in child welfare agencies and supports social work education as the appropriate method of preparation for child welfare work (Smith, 2002). Partnerships between state child welfare agencies and universities have developed throughout the country using Section 426 and Title IV-E funds to enhance social work education curricula, provide stipends and other supports to students, and cover the costs of field supervisors and faculty field liaisons (Zlotnik, 2002). Although these programs have provided support for social work education for years, assessments of their benefits have only recently been initiated. Study of these programs is critical in determining the effectiveness of social work education in producing well-educated child welfare workers (Smith, 2002) and to assess the retention of these graduates in the public agencies across the country (Gansle & Ellett, 2002).

The general goal of this study was to evaluate the Title IV-E/426 (referred to as IV-E henceforth) programs in Georgia in their goal of producing well-prepared child welfare practitioners. This formative program evaluation provided the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) with information about the IV-E graduates compared to their other new employees in child welfare case management positions so that improvements could be made in the recruitment and selection of the program participants and the delivery of the program across the state. This study furnished DFCS and the participating universities with information regarding the perception of Title IV-E graduates and their supervisors about the graduates' educational preparation for child welfare work. Additionally, the study examined some of the possible differences between IV-E graduates and non-IV-E new case workers in the field of child welfare in the state of Georgia and added to the national knowledge base regarding Title IV-E graduates in the child welfare workforce.

Background of the Problem

The Social Security Act of 1935 created federally supported child welfare services and included provisions for higher education for individuals employed in child welfare (Gansle & Ellett, 2002). The U. S. Children's Bureau encouraged state governments to use this funding to provide educational leave for staff members to obtain a social work degree. In 1953, 53% of all child welfare workers had one or more years of graduate social work education (Coll, 1995). By the early 1960s, a workforce shortage of MSWs who were interested in working in child welfare was identified. The Social Security Act was amended in 1962, and the Title IV-B Section 426 program was created to provide field placements opportunities, traineeships, and stipends in over thirty states to encourage students to consider a career in child welfare services (Zlotnik, 2002). Continuing to recognize the need for social work education, the Social Security Amendments of

1967 included Section 707, which provided additional funding until 1974 for grants to colleges and universities to meet the costs of developing, expanding or improving both undergraduate and graduate social work education programs (Zlotnik, 2002).

In 1974, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act mandated that states develop child abuse and neglect reporting systems (Pecora, Whittaker, & Maluccio, 2000; Costin, Karger, & Stoesz, 1996). These systems triggered reports of child abuse and neglect to triple from 1976 to 1986, and then double during the period from 1986 to 1993 (Ellett & Leighninger, 2007). This inundation of new reports created overwhelming caseloads and resulted in serious caseworker shortages, because funding for child welfare agencies did not allow staff to be increased proportionally. High caseloads and inadequate resources led to an increase in caseworker turnover. Recruitment and retention of qualified child welfare workers became so problematic that most states reduced minimum educational requirements for new staff (Jones & Okamura, 2000). By the end of the 1970s, only 28% of all public agency staff had any social work education (Coll, 1995). In 1975, 12% of the states had an MSW requirement, but by 1986, no state retained this; in 1975, 16 % of the states did not require a college degree at all, but by 1986, 48% of the states did not require a degree of any kind (Russell & Hornby, 1987). This de-professionalization of child welfare work combined with low compensation and high caseloads with multiple-problem families decreased the appeal of a public child welfare career to social work graduates (Jones, 2002). Both BSWs and MSWs were also drawn from public social work employment to opportunities with private agencies, both non-profit and for-profit. Jones and Okamura referred to this as a widespread abandonment in the past two decades of child welfare by social work (2002). Social work licensure, which was spreading throughout states across the

country, also opened the possibility of private practice social work to licensed MSWs and contributed to this abandonment.

The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 exacerbated the situation, since it excluded any staffing or training provisions and cut existing social service training through Title XX (Allen & Knitzer, 1983). The 1980 act did provide the means to utilize Title IV-E funds for education; unfortunately, this was not publicized to state agencies or to social work education programs until 1990 (Zlotnik, 2000). However, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 did provide funding to support both graduate and undergraduate education in child welfare in schools of social work with the federal match for Title IV-B and Title IV-E being 75% to 25% non-federal dollars (Robin & Hollister, 2002). The Family Preservation and Support Services Provisions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 required states to provide a staff development and training plan (Zlotnik, 2002). Educational collaborations between university social work programs and state child welfare agencies developed to meet this mandate. These partnering efforts were further stimulated by the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), passed in 1997 (Zlotnik, 2002). This act intensified the need to provide quality services to families in shortened time frames (Smith, 2002); ASFA requirements promoted the idea that staff competencies and appropriately-sized caseloads are necessary for caseworkers to work *quicker and smarter* (Zlotnik, 2002). The number of partnerships among state child welfare agencies and universities grew; it is estimated that Title IV-E funds are currently being used to foster over forty of these collaborations (Zlotnik, 2002).

Most university and child welfare agency partnerships include financial assistance to students to complete a BSW or an MSW in an accredited social work program. This financial assistance may be in the form of stipends or tuition grants, as well as reimbursement for

education-related expenses such as textbooks and mileage to and from the classroom. Students may be selected from within the child welfare agency or from the social work student population. Typically at least one of each student's field placements must be completed within a child welfare organization. Most social work programs offer courses on topics related to child welfare services, and the student is usually required to complete several. As a payback for funding received, students must seek employment in a public child welfare agency upon graduation and remain employed for a predetermined length of time (Robin & Hollister, 2002). Graduates who fail to complete the 'payback' period are asked to repay the funding that they received. Title IV-E funds may also be used to strengthen child welfare curricula in schools of social work, cover the costs of field instructors and liaisons, provide funding for recruitment materials and activities, hire faculty, and provide for program evaluations. Agencies may choose to use the funding for replacement staff when employees are on educational leave, other leave costs, or for salaries for full-time students on educational leave (Zlotnik, 2002).

In many states agencies and universities work as a consortium, planning and implementing system improvements to ensure that recruitment activities occur, curriculum and educational issues are addressed, students obtain appropriate field placements, and graduates are offered employment opportunities. These partnerships increase the level of communication between public agencies and universities, contributing to improved coordination of both social work education and caseworker training. The intended outcomes of these educational programs funded through Title IV-E and IV-B (Section 426) include improved quality of public services to children and families and increased professional credibility of child welfare staff through the retention of a well-educated workforce (Robin & Hollister, 2002).

Georgia's Title IV-E Program

A university – agency partnership began in September, 2001 with an overall goal of developing a stable staff of qualified professional social workers who would ultimately improve the quality of child welfare services throughout the state of Georgia. Although several schools of social work had been offering the federal funding to educate students for child welfare services prior to the formation of the consortium, the collaboration offered each university the opportunity to benefit from the sharing of knowledge and experience across the state. Five universities and the Department of Family and Children Services have been participating in a child welfare consortium in Georgia since it began. The schools involved are the University of Georgia, Georgia State University, Savannah State University, Valdosta State University, and Albany State University; the primary consortium members from DFCS are staff members of the state office Education and Training Section. Clark Atlanta University, Thomas University, and Dalton State University have recently joined the collaboration and are using IV-E funds to support the education of students interested in pursuing a career in child welfare. Four of the universities offer both BSW and MSW funding opportunities, three other programs are limited to BSW programs, and the eighth university offers only an MSW program.

Child Welfare Challenge

Work in the field of child welfare is among the most demanding for those delivering human services. Families are typically involuntary clients and they have problems that impact the caseworker's ability to deliver effective services such as substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, poverty, and criminal activity. Some research has been completed that addressed the impact of social work education on child welfare duties. Olsen and Holmes (1982) studied the relationship between educational backgrounds of child welfare caseworkers and their ability

to deliver public social services to children and families. Their findings indicated that overall, social work educated staff, including both BSWs and MSWs, delivered the majority of services to families and children more efficiently than non-social work educated staff. This was corroborated by Booz-Allen, Inc. (1987), in their study of Maryland child welfare jobs in depth and found that the overall performance of MSWs was significantly higher than non-MSWs. They also indicated that "education, specifically holding an MSW, appeared to be the best predictor of overall performance" in social service work. In addition, supervisors rated MSWs highest in overall performance, and rated them as the best-prepared employees, requiring the least amount of supervision and training. Karger (1983) found in a study conducted in Michigan that education was the most predictive variable that an entry-level social service employee would have the requisite knowledge and skill to do the job; experience was found not to be a predictor of job performance. Burmham's (1997) research results indicated that most IV-E graduates believed that the skills acquired in their MSW program were effectively used in the child welfare agency for which they worked; two-thirds also felt they were able to change the agency in some ways, and all respondents reported personal changes, such as knowledge acquisition, ethics awareness, and improved coping skills.

Problem Statement, Study Purpose, and Study Objectives

It has been reported that the child welfare staff turnover rate in Georgia in 2000 was 44%, and as high as 100% in some counties (Saturday, 2004). A statewide study completed in Georgia examined factors contributing to retention and turnover in child welfare staff (Ellett, Ellett, & Rugutt, 2003). This research project was not specific to Title IV-E graduates, but focused instead on retention of the child welfare staff as a whole. However, the study found that less than 20% of child welfare staff in Georgia had social work degrees, and 10% had only a high school diplomas

or GED. It was also discovered that 36.3% of the child welfare staff intended to leave DFCS employment within five years with compensation and career concerns being the most important factors contributing to that decision.

With the demanding tasks that child welfare staff must accomplish daily, their feelings of being stressed and overwhelmed have been an ongoing problem for agencies. Large caseloads, diminishing resources, unclear practice and policy guidelines, controversial public images of child welfare agencies and workers, perceptions of child welfare practice as low status without career ladders, receiving low pay, lacking sufficient training opportunities and adequate supervision, excessive bureaucracy, and stressful work environments have led to problems attracting and retaining social workers (Jones & Okamura, 2000). Turnover has been a major problem for child welfare agencies and the replacement cost per worker, estimated to be between $15,000 and $17,000, has put a substantial strain on limited budgets (Daly, Dudley, Finnegan, & Christiansen, 2000). Turnover rates have varied from state to state, but, a study completed in Louisiana found that turnover rates during the first three years of employment were as high as 39% in some urban offices (Ellett & Ellett, 1996). There has been evidence that caseworkers with social work education remain employed in public child welfare positions longer. In their study, Russel and Hornby (1987) found a 15% turnover rate among child welfare staff in states with a social work degree requirement, while the turnover in states with no degree requirement was 23%. Also, Jones (2002) found that Title IV-E educated social workers in one Southern California public child welfare agency had longer periods of employment than non-IV-E educated employees.

The problem that this study addressed was Georgia's lack of well-prepared child welfare workers to staff DFCS offices across the state. The high turnover rates discussed previously

meant that the large number of new case managers had to be hired from a pool of potential employees widened to include people with educational backgrounds that were not necessarily related in any way to human services. This problem has been referred to as a crisis in child welfare (Briar-Lawson, Schmid, & Harris, 1997; Brown, Chavkin, & Peterson, 2002). The Title IV-E program was designed to increase the number of professional social workers working in the public child welfare system in Georgia and to prepare them well for the responsibilities of the job (Saturday, 2004). The effectiveness of the Title IV-E program in meeting these goals has been unknown. The purpose of this study was to provide information to DFCS and the universities about the Title IV-E program graduates' preparation for child welfare work. An additional purpose of the research was to begin to examine retention rates of the IV-E graduates compared to other newly hired child welfare staff.

Although federal funding has been used for social work education to prepare workers for employment in child welfare agencies for about seventy years, surprisingly few evaluations have been completed to determine the effectiveness of these programs (Hopkins, Mudrick, & Rudolph, 1999). Several researchers have indicated the need for evaluations of these programs. Robin and Hollister (2002) pointed out the scarcity of outcome studies given the significant number of federal dollars that have been put into child welfare workers' educational programs. Scannapieco, Boen, and Connell (2000) surveyed Title IV-E students and graduates in Texas, and administrators of the agencies where the workers completed field placements or where they were employed. Their goal in that study was noted to be the beginning of measurements of the impact of social work education on the field of child welfare; they also reminded researchers in other states that the federal government had become increasingly interested in outcomes. Ellett and Leighninger (2007) encouraged further evaluations of Title IV-E program effectiveness, and

indicated its necessity in convincing state and federal legislatures to mandate social work degrees for child welfare staff. Smith (2002) also indicated the need to better understand the impact of child welfare training partnerships, gauge their effectiveness, and understand how to maximize their effectiveness. Smith stressed the importance of evaluating educational partnerships, and pointed out the lack of descriptive data on social work students who have benefited from Title IV-E funding, as well as on the impact of students in child welfare agencies, including the average child welfare job tenure of the graduates (2002). Thus, the problem that this evaluation began to address was the paucity of knowledge about the level of the success of Georgia's efforts to improve the educational preparation of their child welfare workforce through the Title IV-E programs at numerous universities throughout the state.

One of this study's objectives was to provide Georgia DFCS with some understanding of their new child welfare workers, including descriptive information about this group, and the new workers' perceptions of their capabilities for child welfare work. Each new worker's supervisor also provided his/her opinions regarding the capabilities of their new worker. Another objective was to examine some of the differences among IV-E graduates, non-IV-E new employees who have social work education, and non-IV-E new employees without social work education. Comparisons among these groups were made regarding their perceptions of their capabilities, professional commitment for child welfare work, intent to remain with the agency, job stress, and job satisfaction. In addition, a comparison among the three groups was completed using each worker's supervisor's opinions of the workers' capabilities for child welfare work. Value may be gained from this study by providing the participating universities useful information related to the educational preparation that IV-E graduates received through their social work programs so that recruitment and selection of program participants could be improved along with

programmatic improvements within the various schools of social work. Additional value of this study was to add to the national knowledge base regarding Title IV-E graduates and programs.

Research Questions

As previously stated, the goal of the IV-E program is to professionally educate social workers for child welfare work in the state of Georgia. The primary research question addressed by this study was: were newly hired Title IV-E graduates better prepared to perform child welfare work than other new case managers? The process of answering this question included two sources of information---the worker's own perception of his/her capabilities and his/her supervisor's opinion of the worker's capabilities. The two sources of data were targeted at providing concurrent validity of the capabilities measure. Secondary research questions that were also addressed were: did IV-E graduates report a higher professional commitment than non-IV-E new workers; did IV-E graduates voice a greater intention to remain at DFCS than non-IV-E new workers; did IV-E graduates report less job stress than non-IV-E new workers; and, did IV-E graduates rate their job satisfaction higher than non- IV-E new workers?

One of the major intentions of the Title IV-E program was that the participants would choose a career in public child welfare, and increase the percentages of child welfare staff with social work education throughout the organization over time. Therefore, participants' professional commitment, intention to stay, level of job stress, and job satisfaction are key factors in meeting this program objective.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables used in this study were: the capability to perform the tasks of child welfare workers, professional commitment, intention to remain working for DFCS, job stress, and job satisfaction. All of these variables have been used in previous research related to

public child welfare work; discussion of these studies is presented in Chapter 2. Detailed information about the measures used for each of the five variables is provided in Chapter 3.

The concept of an individual being "well-prepared" for child welfare work has many facets and could be measured numerous ways. For this study, being "well-prepared" was defined as the perception of possessing the capability to complete the various tasks of child welfare work. This was measured in two ways: each individual's own perception of his/her capability and that individual's supervisor's perception of the worker's capability to perform the responsibilities of the job. The capabilities were thirty behaviorally-anchored tasks of the child welfare case manager's position. Participants were asked to identify how capable they believed that they, or their new workers, were to complete the specific task (see Appendix A). This measure originated with a group of Kentucky researchers (Fox, et al., 1997, 2000, 2003). The wordings of some items on the scale were altered to clarify the questions; this was done by a group of DFCS representatives and faculty members from three of Georgia's state universities. Other studies of child welfare workers have used the self-report method to measure beliefs about capabilities or self-efficacy in doing child welfare work (Lieberman, Hornby, & Russell, 1988; Jones & Okamura, 1998; Ellett, 2000, Jones & Okamura, 2000; Wehrmann, Shin, & Poertner, 2002; and Dickenson & Perry, 2002) and they provided support for using this variable. The same capabilities measure, in addition to the professional commitment and intent to remain measures, were also used in the previous study completed by DFCS (Saturday, 2004). These measures were utilized in the current study so that the results from participants in each year could be compared and combined.

In this study, Professional Commitment was defined as the strength of the participant's plan to continue working in the field of social work. This variable has been used by several

researchers (Scannapieco, Bolen, & Connell, 2000; Landsman, 2001), but the specific measure used in this study originated as a portion of the Human Caring Scale (Ellett & Ellett, 1996; Ellett, 2000). This again was a self-report and subject to the participant's subjective opinion the day on which he/she completed the survey. It has been found that the professional commitment of child welfare workers was the strongest predictor of the worker's intention to remain working in the field of child welfare (Ellett, Ellett, & Rugutt, 2003). This result of previous research emphasized the importance of including professional commitment as a dependent variable in the current study.

The variable of Intent to Remain was defined as a worker's plan to continue working in child welfare. This dependent variable has been used in other research (Ellett & Ellett, 1996; Ellett, 2000; Landsman, 2001, Dickenson & Perry, 2002) and was deemed to be an important factor given the past difficulties in worker retention in Georgia.

Job Satisfaction was chosen as another dependent variable due to the possible link to the workers' intent to remain and retention in public child welfare. This measure was defined as an individual's report of contentment with both specific aspects and an overall feeling about their jobs. This variable has also been used by other researchers in studying child welfare workers (Ellett & Ellett, 1996; Alperin, 1998; Okamura & Jones, 1998; Scannapieco, et al., 2000; Jones & Okamura, 2000; Dickenson & Perry, 2002).

The final dependent variable chosen for this study was Job Stress. This variable was defined as the experience of having certain feelings, such as nervousness or anger, when in specific job-related situations. The addition of this variable was based on the possibility that individuals who were better prepared for child welfare work might perceive the job to be less stressful than those who were not as well-prepared. A job stress variable has been used in several

previous research studies involving child welfare workers (Jones & Okamura, 2000; Landsman, 2001).

Data collected using self-reported perceptions, beliefs, and feelings may have been impacted by the participants' various experiences on the day the survey was completed (i.e., a 'good' day versus a 'bad' day at work). Although this issue was a concern, it is believed that all groups of participants had the same chance of completing the survey on a 'typical' day.

A review of the literature was completed in Chapter 2; it includes research pertaining to social work education and child welfare work, studies on Title IV-E programs in other states, and retention studies that examined child welfare staff. The program evaluation framework for this study is discussed in Chapter 3 along with the methods used in the study, including an explanation of the measures used, the research design, sample, and data analysis completed. The results of the research are identified in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the findings, along with the limitations of the study and recommendations for areas of future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In examining the factors that are significant to an exploration of Title IV-E programs, it appeared appropriate to review research on social work education related to child welfare, the university – public child welfare agency partnerships, retention studies on child welfare staff, and program evaluations that have been completed in other states with federal funding partnerships. Adult learning theory will also be briefly discussed as it pertains to child welfare education.

Social Work Education and Child Welfare

Although social work was historically the primary field associated with child welfare, changes in the field have led to a workforce that shifted from a majority of caseworkers with social work education to staff providing direct services and supervision who often possess no formal education related to human services. Over twenty years ago, Stein (1982) described these changes as a movement away from a clinical model to a legal model. He encouraged social work educators to examine the skills required of child welfare workers to work within the new model. Stein indicated the belief that the discrepancy between the educational preparation and what was demanded in public welfare agencies contributed to high staff turnover. He predicted that social work would lose the field of child welfare unless social work educators adjusted curriculum to the future needs of those in the public setting.

To assess the state of the field a few years later, Vinokur-Kaplan and Hartman (1986) examined national data from child welfare supervisors and workers to provide a profile of these

practitioners and their perspectives on their training needs. The authors found that supervisors (56%) were more likely to have earned a social work degree than workers (37%) were. However, both supervisors and workers reported the desire and need for further professional development due to the complexity of tasks faced every day by child welfare staff. Half of the workers serviced caseloads for which they provided services in a variety of areas of child welfare practice with children, adolescents, and families coming from a range of different cultural backgrounds with various special needs. Workers and supervisors indicated high stress, and both reported considerable gaps between how they spend their time and how they would prefer to spend their time. Workers gave preference to spending more time actually working with children and families, developing resources for clients, and improving their own professional skills. These researchers did not compare the social work-trained participants to the workers and supervisors without social work education.

An early research study examined the relationship between educational backgrounds of caseworkers and their ability to deliver child welfare services to children and families (Olsen & Holmes, 1982). This study was an analysis of the 1977 National Study of Social Services to Children and Their Families data set. Caseworkers were divided into five groups based on education: 1) BSWs, 2) those with all other bachelor's degrees, 3) workers with incomplete social work graduate education, 4) MSWs/DSWs, and 5) those with all other graduate degrees. The results showed that only one out of four families was assigned to a caseworker who had formal social work education. The rate at which a specific service was delivered within a three-month period after the service was identified as being needed if the case plan was tracked. Child welfare workers with varying levels of education differed in the rate with which they delivered eleven of the nineteen services recommended for their clients. In general, MSWs tended to be the

most successful in delivering adoption and group home services. Those with BSWs were more successful than any other group in obtaining day treatment, mental health care, employment, financial assistance, and court studies. Workers with any social work degree were the most successful in obtaining recommended educational services for the children assigned to them. Over 75% of the children assigned to BSWs or MSWs had a plan for regular contact with the person primarily responsible for their care once they returned home from placement compared to about 66% of the children assigned to non-social workers. Not all services were provided by social workers at a significantly higher rate. Non-social work graduates provided clients with homemaker services at a significantly higher rate than social workers. Transportation services were obtained most successfully by workers with degrees other than social work. The researchers concluded that BSWs were most successful in performing the 'social broker' role providing the most recommended supportive services. Substitute, or placement, services were most successfully provided by MSWs and this was significantly different than their provision of other services. The authors proposed that social workers with professional education tended to focus on the psychological aspects of the case situations more than the environmental.

In 1987, Booz-Allen and Hamilton (1987) completed a study that included a comparison of social workers and non-social workers. The study was undertaken as a result of the difficulties that the state of Maryland had been having in recruiting social service workers. The purpose of their research was to review the positions at the state and local level and determine the qualifications needed to perform the social service jobs in a satisfactory manner as rated by their supervisors. Caseworkers and supervisors were surveyed and it was found that the overall performance of MSWs was significantly higher than non-MSWs, especially in the task areas of intake, case management, counseling, and therapy. When inexperienced workers with all the

possible educational preparations were assessed, supervisors judged only MSWs to be somewhat prepared to perform most of the usual social service tasks. These researchers concluded that "education, specifically holding an MSW, appeared to be the best predictor of overall performance in social service work". The authors also concluded that the University of Maryland MSW program provided all the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for graduates to be prepared for the state's social service positions.

Another study from the late 1980s corroborated the Booz-Allen and Hamilton study and was completed by Dhooper, Royse, and Wolfe (1990) in Kentucky; it addressed child welfare workers with social work degrees compared to those without social work education. This research utilized five data collection efforts, including the state agency's Departmental Quality Assurance Rating, State Merit Examination, Supervisor's Assessments, Social Work Values Test, and workers' self-ratings. The overall results clearly demonstrated that employees with social work education ranked higher than their colleagues who had no social work training. On all five of the measures, either BSWs or MSWs ranked highest compared to workers with non-social work bachelor's degree and workers with master's degrees in areas other than social work.

Researchers at the University of Southern Maine were also assessing educational backgrounds of child welfare workers in the late 1980s (Lieberman, Hornby, & Russell, 1988). The results of this national study of over 5,000 child welfare staff members showed that 15% of the participants held a BSW and 13% had an MSW or doctorate in social work. This was a 1% decrease in BSWs since 1978, but a 4% increase of MSWs in the child welfare workforce. In evaluating preparedness for child welfare work, overall, "MSWs reported being the best prepared and the most knowledgeable: in 21 out of the 32 areas" assessed (Lieberman, et al., 1988). Additionally, BSWs viewed themselves as better prepared for child welfare work than those with

bachelor's degrees in other fields in all areas except for two. This data led the researchers to state that it appeared that BSW graduates started child welfare work with greater resources than those without social work education. Those with social work education (MSW or BSW) consistently rated themselves higher in knowledge-based areas, while staff without social work degrees rated themselves higher in practice areas than in knowledge-based areas. The authors presented the possibility that individuals with advanced social work education may have believed that they were knowledgeable, however they may have been insecure in the actual application of the knowledge into practice. The results of this study also supported the findings of Booz-Allen & Hamilton (1987).

In assessing child welfare positions and the tasks that staff members complete in these positions, a system of differential use for BSW and MSW educated social workers was proposed by Rittner and Wodarski (1999). These authors believed that the generalist skills taught in BSW programs prepared graduates for work as crisis-line screeners, foster care case managers, protective services ongoing workers with low-to-moderate risk families and as recruiters, screeners, and trainers of foster and adoptive parents. The skills taught in MSW programs were determined to be necessary to conduct initial investigations, work with high-risk families, terminate parental rights, and place children with adoptive families. Furthermore, an MSW was seen as needed along with direct field experience with children at risk and their families to perform the job tasks of a supervisor, administrator, or program evaluator. The differences between the two levels of educational preparation focused on critical thinking, decision-making skills, and the advanced knowledge that an MSW has gained beyond the BSW preparation. These authors promoted the application of standards for minimal educational criteria for child

welfare positions based on the demands of the jobs and the knowledge and skills needed to execute effectively the responsibilities.

Child Welfare Competencies

In 1987, an invitational conference attended by twenty-five leaders from schools of social work, public child welfare agencies, and representatives of the social work profession reinforced the need for proper educational preparation for social service work (Lieberman & Hornby, 1987). The task of the attendees was to consider the plight of the child welfare field and to determine a plan of action that would result in a stronger commitment from the social work profession to public child welfare. The recommendations of the participants centered around four issues: professional leadership, agency working-environment, directions for professional social work education, and public relations.

A key recommendation in the area of professional leadership was that the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) should promote the establishment of minimum standards for child welfare practice. The suggestion was that the BSW be considered the entry-level educational standard and the MSW be the preferred degree for supervisory and intake positions. Another important recommendation was that NASW should work to bridge the gap between schools and agencies regarding the educational needs of child welfare practitioners. This set the foundation for the future collaborations that have developed across the country.

Recommendations regarding the agency work-environment included developing workload standards and performance criteria, and supporting professional development and training. In the area of social work education, recommendations centered on matching the knowledge and skills needed for child welfare work and the knowledge and skills taught in schools of social work. Developing a continuum of competencies for BSW and MSW degrees

that would encompass child welfare casework, supervision, and administration was suggested. Supporting continuing education and in-service training and enhancing the accessibility of degree programs to non-traditional, employed students were also significant recommendations upon which the IV-E partnerships would later be based. The conference also recommended that strategies be developed to improve the image of public child welfare to both social work professionals and the general public. The work of this conference set the stage for future collaborations between public agencies and schools of social work.

By the mid-1990s, the literature reflected the impact of the conference summarized by Lieberman and Hornby. Public child welfare agencies began to collaborate with universities within their state to attempt to address the shortage of child welfare workers. Efforts were focused on educating more child welfare staff as social workers and on providing better training to the workforce currently in the agencies. Scholars and agency administrators began to discuss the knowledge and skills needed to perform child welfare services effectively and the idea of defining these skills as ‘competencies’ was strengthened.

By forming collaborative child welfare educational programs, a wide gap was addressed between the demand for child welfare services and the availability of personnel with the appropriate competencies in many states. In Arizona, Risley-Curtiss, McMurtry, Loren, Gustavsson, Smith, and Faddis (1997) pointed out that more than 12 percent of their state’s child welfare workers lacked a college degree; of those who had college degrees, only 15 percent held an MSW and 9 percent a BSW. A collaborative effort was instituted between the state public child agency and the MSW program at Arizona State University to develop a child welfare specialization. Curriculum emphasized a practice model based on advanced crisis intervention and case management skills, an ecological approach to understanding family problems, and a

systems orientation. The goals were to move toward a competency-based curriculum and to provide electives that addressed specific problem areas affecting families in the child welfare system. The collaboration focused on recruiting students for the specialization, funding their education, and placing graduates within the agency. The authors reported that a pretest-posttest evaluation of students' self-ratings on forty-six identified competencies was completed with the students in the first year of the program (seven students completed the pretest, and five completed the posttest). Although the sample was very small, the results suggested that students perceived themselves as becoming more familiar with the competency areas as a result of the opportunity to practice them during their internship.

A partnership in Kentucky chose to develop a continuum of pre-service, in-service, and advanced leadership development opportunities for child welfare workers (Fox, Burnham & Miller, 1997). The collaboration among the state agency and universities began in the early 1980s. Its original focus was on in-service training for staff and foster/adoptive parents by university training and administrative personnel. By the mid-1990s, a joint agency-university Public Child Welfare Worker Certification Program was developed that integrated knowledge acquisition and skill development at the undergraduate social work level. This program provided a group of selected undergraduate social work students with a special tract of coursework and practicum experiences that should better prepare them for public child welfare work. University faculty had the primary responsibility for teaching the special courses that were designed jointly by all the participating schools of social work. These courses were taught to all program students at the same time at all universities via compressed-video and satellite technology. Students who have received funding were required to make a two-year commitment to the public agency following graduation.

This program supported the recruitment and retention of child welfare staff with the Department of Social Services offices across the state. Both the in-service training program and the BSW education program had curricula that were designed applying adult learning theory and based on competencies needed to complete child welfare jobs. The consortium of universities also prepared a plan for outcome measurement for the training and the educational programs. Evaluations were planned to be conducted at three levels: participant satisfaction, knowledge and assessment, and transfer of learning to the job. The assessment of the skill transfer to the job included feedback from supervisors, reaction questionnaires, and job performance studies of case assessments and plans. The authors did not report any results of the evaluation efforts in this publication.

In considering competency-based education for child welfare workers, a testing program was developed by one group in Virginia (Biggerstaff, Wood, & Fountain, 1998). Child welfare workers were tested for their 'readiness to practice', which was defined as the extent to which the worker was prepared to manage the situations that arose in practice. The scale included both situation-type questions to assess knowledge, and background questions, such as personal characteristics, experience, education, and training. Three separate fifty-item multiple-choice tests were developed to evaluate knowledge of the various types of child welfare reports (intake and investigation, child sexual abuse, and sexual abuse investigations). Although the authors reported the process of the test development, content validity, item writing, test administration, and standard setting; no application of the testing program was discussed.

Bernotavicz (1994) discussed Maine's approach to identifying child welfare competencies that included knowledge of the individual as forming the basis for continued learning and growth. Competencies had been previously understood through a task analysis that

led to a grouping of the knowledge and skills needed to perform job tasks. Bernaotavicz suggested that an analysis of effective job performance be expanded to include personal characteristics such as attitudes, values, traits, and motives. She also pointed out that job performance occurs in a specific work environment, with policies, procedures and practices that impact the worker's ability to perform tasks. The state of Maine developed a 25-day competency-based pre-service training program to address this broad definition of job preparation. This program was designed based on an analysis of qualities possessed by a group of caseworkers that had been nominated as outstanding by their peers and supervisors. The result yielded a competency model containing five categories: work management skills, conceptual skills, interpersonal skills, self-management skills, and technical knowledge. Since the goal of competency-based training is that students not only have knowledge, but that they can do tasks with the knowledge that they have gained in the classroom, the program developers turned to adult learning theory for guidance. Behaviorally-based learning objectives and assessments of knowledge were designed to encourage learners to think, judge, decide, discover, interact, and create. Participants, trainers, and supervisors developed protocols for competency assessment for use before, during, and after training. The training curriculum also emphasized to participants that their own self-awareness is critical and that learning would be an on-going process.

Adult Learning Theory

Teaching students how they need to behave and how they must make decisions during future employment are challenging goals when consideration is made that child welfare workers deal exclusively with unique individuals, families, and situations in continuously changing environments.

The educational techniques that aid students in learning the necessary competencies for child welfare work fit perfectly within the recommendations of adult learning theory as developed by Malcolm Knowles (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998). Although this formative program evaluation was atheoretical rather than theory-based, the IV-E educational program that was developed to prepare child welfare workers is supported by Knowles' theory.

According to Knowles, adult learners need to understand why they should learn specific material to trigger their internal motivation. Additionally, adult learning theory has the basic assumption that adults are motivated intrinsically to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy. The adult student's orientation to learning is life-centered and experience is the major source of learning. Given those ideas, students who have experience in child welfare and students planning to work in child welfare would better understand their need to learn material that could increase their knowledge and enhance their skills.

Knowles also identified that most adults have been found to have an internally-based need to be self-directed. Since individual differences increase with age, adult students must have opportunities to customize their learning experience to meet those individual needs. In courses that are not specifically related to child welfare, students need the freedom to tailor their focus on assignments toward their child welfare interest; this opportunity is often found in BSW and MSW curricula and it fosters the students' needs to be self-directing. In classrooms filled with students with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, discussions offer rich learning experiences based on actual situations.

Social work students are able to discover for themselves the gaps between what they know from the classroom and what they need to know in practice through their child welfare field placement. The required practica in all social work programs fit well into adult learning

theory as students are learning concepts in the classroom that they can easily use in practice with actual clients with the close supervision of a MSW. This transfer of learning from books to practice was noted to be a critical factor in educating students in the skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary for child welfare work.

The development of lists of specific competencies needed by child welfare workers occurred in a number of states across the country by educators and child welfare staff and administrators. The obvious goal was to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions necessary to not only complete the job, but to do it most effectively. After these competencies were descriptively ascertained, educators examined their curricula to determine if the competencies were actually being taught to social work students. Since university professors develop course outlines for the areas of knowledge to be covered in every course, that portion of the competencies was the easiest group to identify in social work programs; skills, abilities, and attitudes needed to practice child welfare work were more difficult to distinguish (Fox, Burnham, & Miller, 1997). One way by which educators attempt this in social work programs is to utilize common practice situations and allow students to role-play their actions and decision-making process. Another method is to discuss practice situations that students confront in their field placements and process ‘what to do’ with a group of students in the field seminars and supervision.

Adult learning theory has been integrated into the child welfare education in social work programs and child welfare training efforts by various partnerships, especially focusing on learning transferred into practice. For Pennsylvania, state administrators formulated an integrated system of education and training for child practitioners designed to promote best practices in child welfare (Breitenstein, Rycus, Sites, & Kelley, 1997). This training and education system

resulted from collaboration among state and county governments and two universities. The two major components of the plan are a competency-based in-service training and certification program and an education for leadership program. The development of the two programs was coordinated so that they complemented each other and avoided duplication of effort.

The training system that was instituted included explicit values-based practice and clearly identified standards of practice to promote achievement of the organization's mission. Strategies were also set into place that promoted the transfer of learning to ensure that newly acquired knowledge and skills would be used and further developed in the workplace. A school of social work within one of the universities managed the training program, which was developed to include nine topic areas in 120 hours of classroom education. Evaluation of the program was also determined to be part of the plan; however, the authors did not report the results of this.

The second major component of the education and training plan focused on formal educational preparation for child welfare staff. The linkage of the public agencies to the other university formed this program and utilized Title IV-E funding. The university developed curricula that incorporated the same child welfare competencies that were being used in the in-service training program. Evaluation results included the finding that there were dramatic, statistically significant increases in the competencies of all the MSW graduates. Students completing the program received favorable reviews from their agencies as a result of their newly acquired knowledge and skills. Since the program was limited to workers who could commute to the single university, the program was eventually expanded to include five additional universities with graduate social work education programs. The program was also changed from offering child welfare employees the opportunity to return to school full-time to the availability of part-time graduate education with the agencies developing flexible work schedules or educational

leave policies. The most distinguishing feature of Pennsylvania's approach to solving the child welfare crisis is the integration of university education and agency in-service training.

An evaluation of the transfer of learning to practice in a child welfare training curriculum was completed in Illinois (Wehrmann, Shin, & Poertner, 2002). These researchers pointed out that most evaluations of child welfare training count the number of participants and the dollars spent or focus on the participants' opinions of the training and methods used. This study used a longitudinal design that asked participants to assess their knowledge acquisition and use of skills at the end of training and again six months later. The assessment of the training transfer to practice was the change in the participants' views of what they had learned and used since the training occurred. The results showed that peer support and the opportunity to perform new learning skills after completion of training were associated with greater learning and application of new skills. These important factors in explaining learning transfer included supervisors providing workers with tasks that allowed the use of new skills and the time to practice and implement new skills. Elements of peer support included the opportunity to talk with colleagues about the training and their support in attempting to use new skills.

Another study that addressed adult learning in child welfare training was conducted in Wisconsin (Rose, 1999). The Title IV-E grant funding was used to provide full-time graduate social work education to several cohorts of students committed to child welfare work. Unfortunately, this program was started only two weeks prior to the first semester of classes, so there was an accelerated pace of recruitment, selection and admissions that gave students little choice over schedules and minimal control in their preparation for graduate school. Consequently, this group of students reported difficulties in making the transition from worker to student.

The second cohort was held to the same admission deadlines as non-IV-E students. This gave them greater lead-time to exercise more control in making the changes necessary to become a student. Educators involved in teaching these students found them to be more active and less resistant to learning in their classes. During the first year of the program, the child welfare students were segregated into classes separate from the rest of the MSW student body. In response to complaints from the IV-E learners, the students were mixed with the other students in the classes that were not specific child welfare courses during the following years. These classes were then augmented with a weeklong series of workshops with child welfare problem-focused content for the Title IV-E students. The format of some courses was also enhanced by increasing the amount of experiential techniques requiring students to break into smaller work groups that chose a more specific application of the course material. Students with work experience were also asked to bring in case material for discussion rather than relying on the instructor to offer practice examples.

Following the first several years of the program, graduates were interviewed to obtain their viewpoints on the educational experience. Participants reported that they applied for the program because they wanted to enhance their professional performance and increase opportunities for advancement. The financial support was cited as a major strength of the program, along with the strong academic and personal support of the faculty and staff. Students were also pleased with the mix of veteran caseworkers and inexperienced students. They identified weaknesses of the program as being repetition of material in foundation courses and in field placements, and the lack of a broader range of electives. Graduates expressed opinions that they felt more confident and competent in working with clients, identifying both a new attitude and new skills that they had acquired. Graduates verified several of the adult education concepts

as they articulated the desire to be more self-directed in their studies and to work in seminar discussion groups. They also voiced a strong orientation toward problem solving and using class material to improve their performance in the field. The author concluded with recommendations to social work educators that included individualized learning assessments so that material could be geared to the students' specific needs, and that more experiential material, such as role plays and case presentations, is used in the classroom (Rose, 1999).

While field placements in both BSW and MSW programs are important elements, the experiential learning process seems particularly crucial when preparing social workers for public child welfare work. The mandatory child welfare practicum provides the student with increased understanding of the field and begins to prepare them for future employment. A researcher studied student satisfaction with their child welfare placements in seven Florida social work programs (Alperin, 1998). Students at six BSW programs and four MSW programs were included in the survey, totaling 206 participants. Results of the combined percentages of students' ratings as 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' showed that 82% were satisfied with the learning experience, 81% were satisfied with the overall field work experience, 80% were satisfied with their field instructors, 75% were satisfied with the field work program, and 72% were satisfied with the child welfare agency.

The data analysis indicated that when demographic variables were considered, only ethnicity showed a significant relationship with satisfaction. Caucasian students reported greater satisfaction than students who identified themselves with another ethnic group did. Students who had enrolled in a course with child welfare content after starting their field placement reported more satisfaction with their agency than students who had not enrolled in such a class. Also, students who had not received funding for their education were more satisfied with their agency

when compared to students who had received funding. Two field placement elements were found to have a significant positive correlation to all aspects of student satisfaction: having had an individual interview with an agency staff member prior to the practicum, and being in a placement that was the student's first choice. None of the agency characteristics showed a significant relationship to any of the student satisfaction items. Students who had scheduled weekly supervision and the ability to seek supervision between scheduled meetings indicated greater satisfaction with their field instructors. Two factors were significantly related to overall field learning: students who were assigned only one field instructor and students who were assigned to only one program area were less satisfied with their learning experience. This suggested the important role that diverse and relevant learning opportunities played in a student's satisfaction with a child welfare field placement.

University – Public Child Welfare Agency Partnerships

Since some states have had public agency and university partnerships for ten to fifteen years, descriptions and evaluations of these programs are beginning to appear in the literature. Overall, results are encouraging, but not always dramatic, nor always consistent among studies.

In 1990, Kravitz (1991) visited fourteen states and two Canadian provinces to review the state of social work education and public child welfare in an attempt to better understand what issues were involved in the child welfare crisis. He found that many universities voiced a renewed commitment to public child welfare, although most schools only had one course devoted to child welfare content and indicated difficulty finding faculty members with public child welfare experience. State agencies also reported an eagerness for the universities' involvement with their training efforts.

Briar-Lawson, Schmid, and Harris (1997) explained university and public child welfare agency partnerships, defining them as mutual investments in the pursuit of a shared vision and a desired result. Both organizations have the common interest of a vision to build a better child welfare system with the best-prepared workers possible. Professional education for public child welfare staff can help to protect the integrity of the system. Most states have some form of partnership among universities and the public child welfare agency. The variations of programs included social work education at the bachelors or masters degree level, staff support, training centers for employed public welfare staff, faculty and child welfare staff exchanges, field placement education units, training for foster parents and/or other service providers, training in independent living skills for foster children, and evaluation of the training units and impact of social work education on systems and clients.

The state of Nevada formed a comprehensive alliance in 1987 between the university system and the public child welfare agencies (Reilly & Peterson, 1997). This partnership involved four primary areas including in-service training, professional education and teaching, research and evaluation, and community service. The universities assisted the agencies' staff in delivering a core competency-based training program that is mandatory for all child welfare workers to attend. In addition, a new foster parent training program has been developed through the agency - university collaboration. The universities also made a commitment to recruit faculty members with a practice background in public child welfare and a series of workshops and seminars were created by these academics. These faculty members have served as consultants and facilitators to state and county management and supervisory personnel within the public agencies.

The Nevada program includes the commitment of funding for any and all agency staff who returned to school to earn a MSW. As a result of this endeavor, the authors reported an increase in staff that possessed a social work degree from 20% to 68% by 1997. The collaboration has yielded many opportunities for university researchers to conduct studies in the agencies along with the child welfare personnel. Topics of the research efforts include the effectiveness of family preservation services, multicultural competence of child welfare, mental health, early childhood development and juvenile parole workers, and program evaluations of the numerous state grants. The partnership has provided many opportunities for community service for both agency staff and university faculty members. Representatives from each side of the collaboration have served on various university committees and community child welfare committees. The authors concluded by focusing on future challenges to the child welfare system in Nevada, including an extensive reorganization scheduled for July of 1997, which involved a shift from a programmatic organizational structure to a regional structure.

Staff Retention in Child Welfare

Throughout the country, staff turnover in public agencies is one of the major factors in the child welfare crisis. Training and education cannot benefit a system if staff members leave shortly after time and money were invested in their preparation for the job. Most public state agencies have begun to examine their retention rates and the factors that affect those rates. Some states have also initiated studies of retention rates of the staff members who received educational benefits through the Title IV-E funding.

For example, a statewide study of all professional staff in the Louisiana public child welfare system was completed in 1996 (Ellett & Ellett). The findings showed that employee morale was less than 64% of the maximum possible score and low scores were produced for

attitudes toward promotional opportunities and incentives, administrative procedures, policies, and support, and the quality of the relationships with external agencies and groups. In rating job satisfaction, the employees surveyed summed 58.14% of the maximum possible score and identified the dimensions of paperwork (38.2%) and organizational support (47.9%) being rated as the lowest. Staff gave the highest rating to their relationships with coworkers (74.6%) and with their immediate supervisors (74.5%); salary/benefits received a rating of 51% of the maximum possible score.

In distinguishing the employees 'at risk' to leave the agency's employment, it was found that four variables could correctly predict leaving the agency. These factors were the employees' perception of promotional opportunities and incentives, personal energy and persistence in overcoming job barriers (self-efficacy motivation), evaluations of personal and job competence and efficiency, and personal responsiveness to the needs of clients. The researchers examined the risk of leaving the agency among staff members who had been employed three years or less. This analysis showed that the only differentiation between those with personal intent to leave and those who planned to stay at the agency, were the four factors comprising the human caring instrument (moral/ethical consciousness, responsivity, receptivity, and professional commitment).

The qualitative portion of the study was summarized as representing two professional views found in all levels of the staff. These were that the difficult client population and unpredictable work environment contributed to the employees' feelings of futility and stress. The researchers summarized their results by indicating that retention is dependent upon the level of caring—*those who care…stay* (Ellett & Ellett, 1996).

Commitment and caring in public child welfare were also studied through a survey completed by the child welfare staff within the Missouri Department of Social Services (Landsman, 2001). The purpose of this research was to examine the factors that contributed to job satisfaction of this population, and to evaluate commitment to the organization and to the field of practice. The variables of interest were: organizational commitment, intention to stay in the organization, occupational commitment, intention to stay in the occupation, and job satisfaction, which is considered to be a precursor to the other variables. Job stress was also included, with role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload, community stress, and job hazards as dimensions of that variable. The study found that job satisfaction, commitment, and intent to stay in the organization, and commitment and intent to stay in child welfare practice are each a distinct construct. Job satisfaction was found to be positively related to the intent to stay in the organization and the intent to stay in the field of child welfare.

Support from the immediate supervisor and opportunities for advancement were the two variables that had substantial effects on job satisfaction. The degree of perceived agency support had a rather strong direct effect on organizational commitment, but no meaningful effect on job satisfaction. The results showed that a higher perceived workload had a significant negative relationship to job satisfaction and to the intent to stay in the field of child welfare, but a significant positive relationship with organizational commitment. Community stress had a sizable direct negative impact on organizational commitment, but little effect on job satisfaction. The researcher concluded that the strength of orientation to service appeared to have been the single most important factor in explaining job satisfaction and commitment among public child welfare staff.

The career paths of four cohorts of Title IV-E funded MSW graduates in Minnesota were studied by two researchers (Robin & Hollister, 2002). Of the 73 graduates, 97% became employed in child welfare following graduation, with 66% in a public agency, 18% in a private child welfare agency, 11% in public schools, and 3% in tribal social services. At the time of the survey, which was four to seven years after graduation, 93% of the graduates continued to be employed in either public or private child welfare settings (including schools) after completing their employment obligation. Of the 48 graduates who had become employed in public child welfare following their education, 38 were still employed there at the time of the survey. Approximately 38% of the respondents to a follow-up survey had taken promotions since the time of their initial employment. The authors concluded that taxpayers were receiving good value for the federal dollars spent toward Title IV-E social work education with this group of students.

The American Public Human Services Association completed a report on turnover following a survey of child welfare workers across the country (Cyphers, 2001). Although the median vacancy rates were between five and seven percent for child welfare workers and supervisors on the ‘snapshot’ date of September 1, 2000, annual turnover rates were quite high for most staff. Children’s Protective Services (CPS) workers in public agencies had a turnover rate of 22%; all other direct service workers had a rate of 18%; and, supervisors showed a more stable turnover rate of 6%. The study examined the reasons staff gave for leaving the agencies, defining ‘preventable turnovers’ as staff that left an agency for reasons other than retirement, death, marriage/parenting, returning to school, or a geographical move. The survey results showed that the median percentage of ‘preventable turnovers’ out of all turnovers was 67% for CPS workers and 50% for supervisors and other direct service workers. In seven of the sixteen

states responding to the survey, more than 78% of the CPS turnover was defined as 'preventable'. Turnover issues were identified as demanding workloads, high caseloads, workers feeling undervalued, low salaries, problems with supervisors, insufficient resources for families and children, and too little time available to spend interacting with clients. The impact of vacancies on child welfare agencies is compounded by frequently required pre-service training and phased-in caseload policies. Most states have implemented various strategies to attempt to decrease preventable turnover, but their reported effectiveness has generally been moderate. Many ideas about initiatives to be undertaken by public agencies and their partners have been proposed by the states, including increased salaries, staff training, reduced caseloads and workloads, service delivery and management improvements, and changes to the job conditions, such as flex time and mentoring.

Discussions of turnover and retention frequently include the concept of 'burnout' or a high level of job stress that leads to emotional exhaustion and an eventual reduction of job dedication that is likely to trigger an employment change. Crolley-Simic and Ellett (2003) completed a literature review with recommendations for public agencies. Their work addressed the important gaps in the research on burnout as a viable construct as well as implications for the preparation of competent child welfare staff. The results of their review showed a lack of conceptual and operational definitions of burnout in past studies. The authors concluded that the research on burnout has thus far not advanced the understanding of the child welfare crisis. They recommended that future studies be focused on factors that contribute to turnover in child welfare and, more importantly, the factors that facilitate retention.

In surveys conducted with child welfare staff in two states, Ellett (2000) studied some of the factors highlighted in these previous articles that correlated with employee retention. This

researcher found that the intention to remain employed in a public child welfare agency was largely explained by the worker's positive perceptions of administrative support and self-efficacy beliefs about completing work tasks. Human caring, self-efficacy beliefs and a professional organizational culture were positively correlated ($p<.001$) with the intent to remain at the agency.

In an earlier study on this issue, Briar (1987) discussed the role of universities in assisting public agencies with the challenges of staff retention. He indicated that the high rate of turnover was significantly lower among social workers with professional training. Furthermore, he identified several obstacles to recruiting BSWs and MSWs for the field of child welfare. One obstacle was actually getting social work graduates hired. In most states, there has been no advantage to having a social work education in state civil service systems, and priority was given to people who had been working in the system and who had seniority. Another obstacle identified focused on difficult working conditions, which included excessive caseloads, lack of support staff, lack of professional supervision, and excessive paperwork. Since professional skills are not always recognized or utilized when social workers are hired, dissatisfaction often occurs. A further obstacle to BSW and MSW recruitment was the lack of salary scales adequate to support social work educated practitioners without requiring them to become administrators. Briar encouraged schools of social work to offer specialization courses that address children's and families needs, and to offer public agencies consultation to improve services to troubled families. In his opinion, universities can also provide professional education opportunities for existing agency staff and public agency field placements for interested social work students.

In a thorough review of the social work literature, Ellett and Leighninger (2005) examined the de-professionalization of child welfare staff. These authors pointed out that, during the last twenty to twenty-five years, minimum educational requirements were reduced or

eliminated for child welfare work throughout the country. The problem of staff turnover contributed to de-professionalization and has been particularly significant among relatively new employees. High turnover rates caused state agencies to hire applicants without social work education because the number of vacancies far exceeded the number of candidates with social work degrees. For staff that had the intention to continue working for a public child welfare agency, the hierarchical nature of the organization left little room at the top for advancement. Social workers who find fulfillment in working directly with clients have found there is no opportunity to move up a career ladder if they wanted to continue to have direct client work. Lack of adequate professional preparation, coupled with increased job demands, may have been the impetus for high turnover rates. These authors concluded that social work education had a vital role in staff preparation for the complexities of child welfare work and for employment in a bureaucratic organization. Collaborative partnerships between public agencies and universities were promoted and schools of social work were encouraged to offer specialization training in child welfare within their curricula.

The United States General Accounting Office (GAO, 2003) completed a report to congressional requesters that addressed these problems of recruitment and retention in child welfare agencies across the country. This study was based on the belief that a stable and highly skilled child welfare workforce was crucial in effectively providing services that met federal goals for child protection. Focus groups were conducted in four states and the caseworkers interviewed reported that high caseloads, administrative burdens, a lack of supervisory support, and insufficient time for training were issues that impacted both their ability to work effectively and their decision to leave the child welfare profession. High turnover rates and staffing shortages left remaining staff with insufficient time to develop the relationships with children

and their families that would enable them to make necessary decisions to ensure safe and stable permanent placements. Large caseloads and worker turnover delayed the timeliness of investigations and reduce the frequency of worker visits with families.

Caseworkers reported that their desire to continue in child welfare was influenced by high-quality supervision and adequate on-the-job training; however, these factors were often lacking. The GAO report included an examination of Child and Family Services Reviews completed in twenty-seven states. Workforce deficiencies—high caseloads, training deficiencies, and staffing shortages—affected the attainment of at least one assessment measure in all states reviewed. In Georgia, workforce deficiencies impacted the attainment of fourteen of the assessment measures. Examples of these measures included 'caseworkers investigate reports of child maltreatment in accordance with state policy', 'caseworkers maintain stability of foster care placement', and 'caseworkers assess and address the needs of child, parents, and foster parents adequately'. The report also found that more than forty state agencies have formed child welfare training partnerships with schools of social work, and that the limited research on these partnerships has shown that they improved staff retention and have also improved worker competence and skill levels.

Dickinson and Perry (2002) examined the retention of 368 social work graduates who received assistance during their education through Title IV-E funding beyond their 'payback' period in California. The results showed that 78% of the graduates were still employed in public child welfare when surveyed, three to six months following the completion of their payback period. Some of these participants did indicate their intent to leave the public agency, and this number combined with those who had already left totaled 39.1%. Thus, over 60% of the Title IV-E recipients planned to remain in public child welfare work. The researchers compared these

two groups and found that those who left or planned to leave had an annual salary that was $2,778 less than that of those who planned to stay. Those who planned to stay carried an average caseload that was significantly higher than the other group. The group that intended to remain at the public agency also reported significantly more support from co-workers and supervisors, but no differences were observed between groups when support from friends and family members was considered. Job satisfaction and feelings of self-efficacy were also found to be significantly higher in the group of workers who intended to continue to work in the child welfare field. In responding to the survey, the workers who had left or intended to leave indicated their reasons for doing so. The four most important reasons included feeling 'burned out' or over-stressed; dissatisfaction with the current work environment; changes in career goals, and the availability of other jobs.

A study was completed to assess retention rates specifically with Title IV-E graduates in California public child welfare agencies (Jones, 2002). The author identified three major issues in the recruitment and retention of child welfare staff. Public agencies competed with non-profit and for-profit agencies that frequently offer better compensation packages to professional social workers. The replacement cost per worker, which the author estimated to be between $15,000 and $17,000, put a substantial strain on an agency's budget. The high turnover rates represented a loss of human capital and a replacement of experienced staff with inexperienced people. The sample in the study included all new hires to the Children's Services Bureau between June 1994 and August 1996; thirty-nine workers in the sample were IV-E educated and two hundred and twenty-seven were not. Of this sample, 77% had a master's degree and 48% had an MSW; some of these MSWs were not in the IV-E program. As of December 30, 1999, 39.1% of the workers from the sample had left the agency. Of the IV-E trained workers, 30% had left the agency. The

mean length of employment for the sample was 1118.92 days and 12995.56 days for the IV-E graduates. Those new workers with a bachelor's degree or less education had an average length of stay of 1029.5 days. The author concluded that the Title IV-E workers were more likely to have remained employed at the agency for a longer period of time than non-IV-E workers.

Another study was completed to evaluate the retention of Title IV-E recipients, both BSW and MSW, in public child welfare in the state of Kansas after declassification of staff and privatization of the agency (Lewandowski, 1998). Declassification, which occurred in 1994, did not provide roles for social workers with advanced education and skills to practice in child welfare services in the state in their revised job descriptions. This reduced promotional opportunities for these social workers. In 1996, all child welfare staff positions were filled by employees of private contractors to provide services except for the positions of Children's Protective Services (CPS) investigators. The IV-E Traineeship Program began in 1990 and was discontinued in 1996. Of the 191 IV-E graduates who received funding, 95% accepted social work positions in public child welfare. Of these, 67% were still employed by the agency two years later. Agency administrators reported their perception that BSWs were better suited to work in child welfare as they believed that MSWs had little opportunity to practice clinical skills and would eventually become dissatisfied in child welfare positions.

In this study, there was no significant difference between the BSW and MSW graduates in successfully completing their employment obligation. However, the retention rate was significantly higher among BSWs than MSWs when comparing those who stayed following the 'payback' period. Of the BSWs, 43.1% continued their employment with the state agency compared to only 26% of the MSWs. Of the graduates who had been state employees prior to their social work education, 89% fulfilled their employment obligation; only 70% of the

graduates who had not worked for the state agency prior to their social work training completed the employment obligation. At the two-year follow-up point, about 50% of the prior agency employees continued to work for the state, while only 20% of the graduates who became new employees after graduation actually continued their employment in child welfare. Graduates who were not considering a long-term career in child welfare indicated that they might change their consideration if privatization was reversed, if there were improved administrative support of employees, increased financial compensation, increased opportunities for advancement, flex time to focus on client needs rather than agency needs, a more clinical focus adopted, and the adoption of an increased client-centered approach. Thus, privatization may have been one of the reasons that some social workers chose to leave the agency rather than consider a long-term career in child welfare. The researchers concluded that there is a role for a long-term education program in their state to meet the need for child welfare social workers.

The largest retention and turnover study of child welfare staff in the United States was completed in Georgia and this research examined personal and organizational factors that contributed to Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) employee retention (Ellett, Ellett, & Rugutt, 2003). This agency reported their statewide staff turnover rate in 2000 was 44% in Georgia and as high as 100% in some counties. This situation created a loss of continuity and quality of services to children and families and weakened the professional organization and morale by overburdening the remaining staff. The data analysis showed that the most important predictor of an employee's intent to remain in child welfare was the professional commitment factor as measured by the human caring scale. In a regression analysis, the five variables that accounted for 54% of the variation among employees' intentions to remain were professional commitment, lack of job stress, job satisfaction, professional support, and external relations.

Elements of job satisfaction that were important were salary, caseload size, benefits, and promotional opportunities. Staff members who had social work degrees were found to have higher intent to remain employed in child welfare than those staff members without social work education. Other results that were important included staff reports of excessive paperwork that consumed 50 to 75% of their work time, the lack of professional mentoring and support, perceptions of staff being devalued by the organization and the general public, and 80% of the caseloads exceeding CWLA standards. Of the 1423 employees who responded to the survey, 36.3% reported the intent to leave the agency within five years.

Retention studies overall appear to support the belief that properly educated social workers will remain in child welfare positions longer than non-social workers. This, in turn, supports the idea that federal funding is well spent on proving professional education for those who plan to make a career of child welfare services.

Title IV-E Evaluation Studies

A review of the literature on assessing the current state of this evaluation research on federally funded child welfare educational partnerships was completed (Smith, 2002). The author found a lack of descriptive data on social work students who have benefited from the funding program and on the impact of students in child welfare agencies, including the retention of these graduates in child welfare settings. The author promoted the concept that universities should strive to demonstrate the value of the funding spent on social work education. Her recommendations included evaluations with well-targeted questions regarding retention and performance of students, research designs that are experimental or quasi-experimental, strong and innovative research methods, and theory-driven studies.

One early study of IV-E graduates described a partnership program in New York that provided undergraduate social work education to child welfare staff (Phillips, 1995). Tuition, books, and fees were paid by the grant and the employees became full-time students, and continued to receive their full salary from the public agency. Twenty-four of the twenty-five workers who were selected to participate in the program earned a BSW within three years. The graduates reported some difficulties with adjustment to the role of student and the absence of their co-worker support systems. They acknowledged difficulties in adjusting to the inability of 'leaving work behind' and the impact this had on their personal lives. The program did arrange advisement groups for these students that meet regularly throughout their school years to provide a new peer support system. This aided the students in their adjustment and encouraged them to develop a new self-confidence about their abilities. Overall, the students reported satisfaction with the program, despite the high personal costs.

Another evaluation was completed of all students who had participated in MSW education funded by Title IV-E in upstate New York (Hopkins, Mudrick, & Rudolph, 1999). These students had been employed at least five years by the public child welfare agency prior to their matriculation. A qualitative focus group approach was used in this exploratory study with separate groups of students and their supervisors. The semi-structured interviews focused on personal behavioral change and on agency structural change as a result of the educational partnership. Although the focus groups were conducted separately for the students and their supervisors, the changes and issues identified were quite similar. The personal behavioral changes that were described most frequently were increased confidence, greater sensitivity to clients, enhanced skills, sense of empowerment, and an understanding of the larger context of child welfare practice and agencies.

Workers discussed the increased confidence regarding developing a professional identity. They expressed a greater assurance in the decisions that they were making and in their assessments of client needs and strengths. Students reported an increased sensitivity to clients, specifically through an improved awareness of their own values and through an enriched understanding of diversity. Students also found that their greater understanding of psychopathology contributed to a decrease in the anger and frustration that they felt toward some of their clients. Students and supervisors concurred with reports that the MSW program increased skill levels of the workers, despite the fact that these were experienced and skilled workers before their graduate education.

The findings regarding agency change were less prominent; both students and supervisors indicated that much less structural change than personal change occurred as a consequence of the agency and university partnership. There were minor changes that were noted such as, increased consultation between agency supervisors or administrators and the workers who were attending the program, students were asked to conduct in-service training sessions, and the participants found themselves being given greater responsibilities and autonomy in the manner in which they performed their job. The students also reported that there was not always a good fit between the practice methods they were learning in school and the routine practices within the child welfare agency.

Supervisors also indicated the difficulty in allowing newly educated workers the freedom to try alternative methods of service delivery. The focus group participants provided input to the universities to ensure that classroom education was pertinent to practice in the field. The overall results of this study showed that the MSW educational experience produced noticeable changes

in the enrolled workers, specifically in increased knowledge and improved skills, greater confidence, and development of a professional identity.

A program evaluation of a Texas university and child welfare public agency partnership was conducted by Brown, Chavkin, and Peterson (2002). This study reported the process and outcome of 149 students who were educated in a BSW program prior to child welfare employment who received federal funding to complete their degrees. Students consistently reported that they benefited from the financial support provided by the program. Students also believed that there was a reduction of stress during the school year since they were less anxious about entering the job market upon graduation. The public agency reported that student interns completed a significant amount of work that benefited the agency and agency clients. For example, program interns organized a Parents Anonymous Program in one community, developed an evaluation instrument for worker-facilitated parent support groups, and translated official agency correspondence into Spanish. More than 79% of the students were hired upon graduation; 8% had their work obligation deferred until completion of graduate school; 2% paid back the stipend; and 10% were not hired. More than half of those hired continued their employment beyond the one-year commitment. The authors also reported on a pilot study of the performance evaluations completed by supervisors, comparing Title IV-E trained staff to caseworkers without social work education. Their initial results indicated that overall differences in the ratings did not vary a great deal by education. The researchers planned to conduct a more in-depth study to gain additional information in this area.

Another study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the Title IV-E educational program in preparing child welfare practitioners in California (Jones & Okamura, 2000). Three sources of data were used: self-administered questionnaires, follow-up telephone interviews, and

reviews of personnel records. All caseworkers hired between June 1994 and June 1997 were surveyed. Thirty-nine workers in the group of participants were IV-E educated and two hundred twenty-seven non-IV-E educated caseworkers served as the comparison group. All new workers completed a self-administered child welfare knowledge test prior to their initial in-service 'new worker' training. The telephone interview consisted of administration of a job satisfaction scale and a job stress scale, which were designed specifically to measure stress in child welfare jobs. Of the participants, 100% of the IV-E graduates had a MSW compared to 26.9% of the non-IV-E workers; 52.4% of the non-IV-E workers had master's degrees, which included MSWs and degrees in primarily human-service related fields. Non-IV-E workers did have significantly more practice experience than did the IV-E program graduates.

The results of the knowledge test showed that the IV-E graduates had significantly higher scores and they expressed more confidence in their ability to perform basic child welfare tasks than did the non-IV-E workers. The researchers expected that the IV-E education would lead workers to experience greater satisfaction with their jobs and to find the work less stressful than non-IV-E workers. The results indicated that the IV-E workers were more satisfied with their salary and the amount of responsibility they had on the job than were the non-IV-E workers. However, the IV-E workers rated their stress level exactly the same as that of the non-IV-E workers. Of the study participants, 89.5% of the Title IV-E workers were still employed on July 30, 1997 compared to 74.6% of the non-IV-E MSWs and 76.8% of the non-MSW master's degree holders. In fact, IV-E status was the only variable that predicted length of employment at the agency. The researchers concluded with the recommendation that universities should realize that educating workers is only half the job. The second half of the task should be to work with

the agency administrators to help them develop working conditions that are conducive to workers being retained in the agency.

In Louisiana, a study was completed on the implementation of the Title IV-E child welfare training program for students who were not employed in child welfare (Gansle & Ellett, 2002). The partnership among the Louisiana Department of Social Services, Office of Community Service (OCS) and seven state universities produced 169 social work graduates between 1993 and the summer of 2000. Of these, seventy-two graduated from MSW programs and ninety-seven from BSW programs. A child welfare knowledge test was given to participants prior to beginning the last year of their academic program and again just prior to their graduation, forming a pretest - posttest research design. A comparison group of non-Title IV-E students, both BSW and MSW, were also given the child welfare knowledge test at the same points in their education.

The results showed that students' scores were significantly different between the pretests and posttests. However, Title IV-E students did no better or worse than the non-Title IV-E students and the two groups did not change differently over time. Although IV-E students did score higher than non-IV-E students with each testing, these were only approaching significance. The researchers suggested that having a larger N may have changed the results of the data analysis. In the BSW groups, students' scores were significantly higher on the post-test, IV-E students did better than the non-IV-E students, and the IV-E students' scores changed more than the non-IV-E students' scores. Following graduation, 83% of the MSW participants became employed at OCS. Of the BSW participants, 33% also began working for OCS; this percentage was low because prior to September of 1996, BSW graduates did not qualify for the entry-level positions according to the Civil Service requirements. Of the graduates who did become

employed with OCS, 55% of the MSW graduates and 84% of the BSW graduates were still employed by March 1, 2000. The authors concluded that social work students are receiving some benefit in child welfare knowledge and skills through the instruction they received in the universities.

An assessment of practice knowledge and skills of Title IV-E child welfare workers was conducted in Texas (Scannapieco, Bolen & Connell, 2000). The IV-E participants responded to a survey regarding their graduate social work education as it related to their work in public child welfare. The agency's supervisors and administrators were also surveyed regarding their perceptions of the differences between the MSW graduates and other staff members who had bachelor's degrees in a variety of fields, including social work. The results indicated that overall, the MSW graduates believed that their social work education had a positive impact on their professional abilities.

Specific areas that showed the greatest impact of the educational experience were a better understanding of social work values, ethics, and child welfare dynamics, better assessment skills, critical thinking, and a better ability to use various interventions with clients. The areas of least impact were the relationship with the agency and the other professionals, job satisfaction, and commitment to the public agency. The supervisors and administrators reported only a slight impact of the Title IV-E program on the agency overall. This group of supervisors scored MSWs as having had a much greater commitment to the public agency than other workers had. This was the area of least agreement between the participants' reports and the supervisors/administrators' reports. The administrators agreed with the program participants that the area of greatest impact was the employees' relationships to the social work profession. The researchers concluded that those individuals with the most education in recognizing the proper application of a social work

model believed that MSWs were better able to apply the model than workers with alternative educational backgrounds.

A specific evaluation was completed of a one-year Title IV-E educational opportunity in Ohio where a university was partnered with a public child welfare agency (Vonk & Newsome, 2003). This program offered funding to second-year MSW students attending school full-time. Four courses related to child welfare were required and a field placement within the public child welfare agency was mandatory. Teaching efforts focused on the core competencies for child welfare practice as defined by the Comprehensive Competency-based In-service Training (CCBIT), distributed by the Child Welfare League of America. The core curriculum covered areas such as legal aspects of child protection, family-centered services, case planning and casework, and the effects of abuse and neglect on child development. The study involved a pretest-posttest comparison group of fourteen Title IV-E students and fourteen non-Title IV-E students from the same university; there was also a one-year follow-up. The knowledge acquisition test was developed by Rycus and Hughes (1998), the team that had originally developed the competency-based training program. Participant attitudes and beliefs about child welfare practice were also assessed.

The results of the pretest-posttest comparison showed an increase in child welfare knowledge for both groups. The child welfare group improved from scoring 66% to 75% correct items on the 81-item test. The non-child welfare group improved from 62% to 68% on the same test. Despite the greater increase in the scores of the child welfare trained group, independent t-tests showed no statistical significance from pretest to posttest for either group. Additionally, when controlling for the pretest, the one-way ANOVA uncovered no statistically significant difference between the two groups on posttest. However, there was a statistically significant

difference between the two groups of students concerning their attitudes toward the field of child welfare practice. Of the fourteen Title IV-E students, all indicated they planned to seek employment in the child welfare field at graduation, even though they were under no obligation to do so. At the one-year follow-up, eleven of the fourteen IV-E graduates were contacted; it was found that nine of the eleven were employed in child welfare. Another follow-up contact was completed a year later and twelve of the fourteen were still employed in child welfare. The program graduates also reported positive outcomes to questions concerning trainee satisfaction and trainee perception of the relevance of the training they had received. Due to the low number of participants in this study, the findings can be viewed as implications of the authors' conclusions.

The California State Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) was formed in 1989 as a result of the critical shortage of MSW personnel in the public child welfare agency. This organization became the partnership between the state's graduate schools of social work and the state's child welfare county directors. Each year, twenty full-time students entered the Title IV-E program; additionally, a group of Department of Social Services (DSS) employees received funding to attend the MSW program part-time. Okamura and Jones (1998) completed an evaluation of the first program graduates who became new agency employees to assess their basic child welfare knowledge, job satisfaction, and retention rates. A set of competencies was developed and included six major sections: ethnic sensitive practice, core child welfare skills, social work skills and methods, human development and behavior, workplace management, and child welfare management.

The study assessed thirty-nine program graduates and 145 other new caseworkers that were hired by the agency during the same period. Beginning in the summer of 1994, all new

hires completed a self-administered questionnaire prior to the start of agency in-service training. This included a child welfare knowledge test, a job satisfaction scale, and a rating of competence scale designed to measure a worker's confidence to begin practice. Of the entire sample, 77% had a master's degree; 44% of the sample had an MSW. The results showed that prior to initial training, the Title IV-E program participants scored significantly higher on the test of child welfare knowledge and expressed significantly more confidence in their ability to perform basic child welfare tasks than did the non-IV-E workers. However, the IV-E workers did not score significantly higher than the non-IV-E workers did on the job satisfaction scale. The IV-E workers reported higher satisfaction with their salary and the amount of responsibility given to them. They were less satisfied with their co-workers and the respect given them by other community professionals than the other workers were. Additionally, the IV-E participants found making home visits in high crime areas to be less stressful than the non-IV-E workers did, but they were slightly more stressed by court appearances than the non-IV-E workers were. The researchers also found that 24% of the sample left the agency during the period of observation. The IV-E workers remained employed at DSS for an average of 637 days, compared to a mean of 495 days for non-IV-E MSW workers and workers with master's degrees other than an MSW. The authors concluded that the Title IV-E educated workers were more likely to have longer periods of employment at DSS than other new child welfare workers.

The state of Kentucky has used Title IV-E monies to fund BSW education at seven universities throughout the state (Fox, Burnham, Barbee, & Yankeelov, 2000). These universities collaborated with agency trainers to use a competency-based training to prepare students for entry into children's protective services at an advanced practice level through two child welfare courses and an intensive practicum. One unique feature of Kentucky's program is that the

specialized courses used a common syllabus, texts and tests, and the delivery of the courses has been simultaneous through the use of interactive television. All funded students also complete the agency core competency child protective services training during their last semester. This consistency in training has led the Cabinet for Families and Children to report that program graduates are prepared for the rigors of a caseload from the first day of employment.

An evaluation was completed of the pilot program, which included twenty-seven program graduates from May of 1998 through May of 1999. All students became employed following graduation at the Cabinet and were still employed in March of 2000 at the time of the program evaluation. The new graduates were compared to twenty-five other new hires trained during the same period on a test of knowledge and skills necessary for the job. The results showed that the Title IV-E graduates scored significantly higher than other new employees from pretest to posttest in the core competency in-service training. The program graduates moved from a mean of 48.6 on the pretest to an average of 52.6 on the posttest; the non-IV-E new hires scored a mean of 42.8 on the pretest and ended at 48.5 on the posttest. The study participants also completed a self-rating of their abilities related to behaviors that had been determined as essential in child welfare practice. In addition, the workers' supervisors completed the same scale, rating the participants who were their supervisees. The IV-E graduates rated themselves above the mean on all indicators, as did their supervisors.

The researchers also obtained qualitative data from the program participants and supervisors that indicated unanimous support for continuing the program and recommendations to require the program for all future protective services workers. The overall outcome of the evaluation of this pilot program was that the partnership between the universities and the state

agency was considered to be successful, and it was clear that the supervisors involved viewed the Title IV-E participants to be far advanced over the other new caseworkers.

The researchers in Kentucky continued their efforts to examine the effectiveness of the Title IV-E training funds (Fox, Miller, & Barbee, 2003). After several years of assessing the impact of the IV-E program, the researchers found that the educational strategy that had been formed to improve worker training had also impacted employee recruitment and retention. Follow-up interviews with the program graduates confirmed that they believed that the education had prepared them very well for their work. Several IV-E graduates indicated that if they had not clearly understood the demands of the child welfare position while in the program, they would have sought another job by the end of their probationary period. The researchers stated that many new workers quit the job within the first several months of employment, rather than succumbing to 'burn-out' after years of a stressful job. The program graduates consistently reported that they were prepared to face the challenges of front-line child welfare work. The authors believe that the three key principles for improvement of a child welfare agency are: creating a culture that values the employee; creating a learning organization based upon mission, vision and outcomes; and implementing true learning transfer and reinforcement. Kentucky's child welfare training program expanded to include nine universities and ten students per university enrolled in the program by September of 2000. The implementation of the pre-employment educational program has been a major step in improving recruitment and in retaining qualified staff (Fox, Miller, & Barbee, 2003).

The Department of Family and Children's Services' Assessment and Performance Unit completed a study on the impact of the IV-E Educational Grant Program in 2004 (Saturday, 2004). This involved new hires into caseworker positions between May 1, 2003 and August 18,

2003 and their supervisors. New workers participating in the study were asked to rate themselves in terms of their capabilities on thirty child welfare tasks. They were also asked questions to determine their attitude about child welfare and their intent to stay at DFCS as an employee. Supervisors of the new workers were also asked to rate the new workers' on the same capabilities. This study found that IV-E new hires generally rated themselves lower on the capabilities than the other new hires did. The researchers completing the study suggested that this was due to the fact that the IV-E graduates were more aware of what they still didn't know. This study found no trend to the workers' self-rating compared to the supervisors' ratings. However, it was identified that supervisors of IV-E new hires consistently rated them higher than the supervisors of the non-IV-E new hires rated their new workers. Also, supervisors of the IV-E graduates rated them as having a better attitude towards social work than the supervisors of the non-IV-E new employees rated their workers' attitudes. The graduates of the IV-E programs overwhelmingly agreed that the DFCS field placement was an invaluable experience that was an advantageous preparation for child welfare work. Both IV-E graduates and their supervisors supported the continuation of the program and reported believing that the agency benefited from professionalizing the workforce and attracting and retaining qualified employees.

Summary

The literature review indicates significant factors that have led to the current study. Child welfare work has been explained to be a difficult career choice because caseworkers often must work with involuntary, multi-problem clients in unique situations without simple solutions and frequently inadequate resources. Social work education has been identified as the best preparation for child welfare work; research indicates that child welfare staff members who have social work education perform better in many areas of the job. Federal funding for social work

education as a preparation for child welfare work has been available since 1935, most recently through Title IV-E and Section 426 of Title IV-B. Across the country, child welfare agency administrators and university Schools of Social Work have been forming partnerships to utilize this funding to improve efforts in preparing students for child welfare work. In an attempt to narrow the gap between what social work students learn in the classrooms and what child welfare workers need to perform the job, specific competencies have been identified that are necessary tools for effective child welfare casework and supervision. These include particular areas of knowledge, distinct skills in working with clients, specific abilities in meeting the demands of the job, and worker attitudes that promote effective casework.

The literature has also highlighted the link between the partnership programs and social work education to adult learning theory. Collaborations across the country have worked to identify ways to facilitate a transfer of learning from the classroom into the fieldwork of child welfare. Through adaptation of child welfare courses and the rich learning experience of a child welfare practicum, some of the universities participating in IV-E education have integrated the specific competencies needed for child welfare work into their curricula.

Among major problems identified for public child welfare agencies are high turnover rates among staff members; reported rates range from 18% nationally to 100% in some specific counties studied. Research on this topic has indicated that child welfare staff often reported low morale and feel undervalued, were burdened with high caseloads with overwhelming demands, lacked professional preparation, had few opportunities for promotion, received low compensation and incentives, had poor supervision, lacked support from administration, lacked needed resources for clients, and were saddled with excessive amounts of paperwork that led to inadequate time to spend with clients. It was implied that these issues have led to high turnover

of workers. However, some studies found higher retention rates and rates of staff 'intention to remain in public child welfare' with staff members who have a social work degree (Briar, 1987; Ellett, et.al, 2003), and other studies have reported higher retention rates for graduates of social work programs who received the Title IV-E funding (Lewandowski, 1998; Okamura & Jones, 1998; Jones & Okamura, 2000; Brown, et. al, 2002; Dickinson & Perry 2002; Jones, 2002; Robin & Hollister, 2002).

Evaluations of IV-E programs frequently examined the graduates' intention to remain working in public child welfare. Factors such as higher scores on human caring scales, higher rating of job satisfaction, a positive perception of administrative support, high self-efficacy related to completing required tasks of child welfare work, greater professional commitment, lower ratings of job stress, having strong professional support, score higher on knowledge exams, and having more external relationships usually are positively correlated with the intent to remain working in public child welfare. Job satisfaction was positively correlated with components like greater support from one's supervisor, more opportunities for advancement, lower perceived workload, stronger orientation to service, and a higher rating of commitment to child welfare (Landsman, 2001; Dickenson & Perry, 2002; Ellett, et.al, 2003). Another study found that IV-E graduates and other new workers rated job stress to be essentially the same (Jones & Okamura, 2000).

Research on Title IV-E programs in states other than Georgia have indicated that program graduates report higher confidence levels in completing the tasks necessary for the work, enhanced skills, greater sensitivity to clients, heightened sense of empowerment, improved understanding of child welfare and better attitude toward the field, and better understanding of clients due to their greater knowledge of psychopathology (Hopkins, et. al, 1999; Jones &

Okamura, 2000; Scannapieco et. al, 2000; Fox, et. al, 2003). Title IV-E graduates usually report that they were better prepared to do child welfare work and report improved skill levels even when they were experienced child welfare workers prior to program participation. Some studies show IV-E workers scoring higher on child welfare knowledge tests (Okamura & Jones, 1998; Fox, et. al, 2000; Jones & Okamura, 2000), while other studies did not indicate that there was a statistically significant difference on knowledge tests between IV-E graduates and other new workers (Gansle & Ellett, 2002; Vonk & Newsome, 2003).

In addition, one pilot study that examined job performance evaluations did not find a statistically significant difference between IV-E graduates and other new workers (Brown, et. al, 2002). However, other research indicated that IV-E graduates reported greater satisfaction with their job responsibilities, levels of autonomy, and salary, perhaps due to their greater contact with the public agencies during their field placements (Okaumura & Jones, 1998; Hopkins, et. al, 1999; Jones & Okamura, 2000). Although some studies showed IV-E graduates pleased with the professional identity they acquired through their social work education, another study indicated that IV-E graduates were less satisfied with the amount of respect they garnered from the community than were the non-IV-E workers (Okamura & Jones, 1998). In general, IV-E graduates did report having a better understanding of child welfare dynamics, social work values, and ethics (Hopkins, et. al, 1999; Scannapieco, et. al, 2000). They also indicated a belief that they possessed improved assessment and intervention skills, and possessed an increased ability to engage in critical thinking (Hopkins, et. al, 1999; Scannapieco, et. al, 2000).

The review of the pertinent literature led to the development of this research effort. The lack of well-prepared child welfare workers in Georgia was a significant problem given that less than 20% of child welfare staff members had social work degrees and the turnover rate averaged

44% across the state in one of the years prior to the study (Ellett, et al., 2003). Much of the literature indicated probable factors in the high turnover of child welfare workers, such as difficult, multi-problem client situations, high caseloads, and a lack of promotional opportunities. Dependent variables were chosen based on previous studies and the hypothesized links of these variables to the high turnover rate.

The purpose of this research was to provide information about Georgia's newly hired workers' preparations for child welfare work, including IV-E graduates, non-IV-E social workers, and non-social workers. This study does not answer all questions about the Title IV-E program. Rather, it identifies possible program improvements and provides a worthy beginning for understanding the value of the program for non-DFCS employees.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to provide DFCS with information about the Title IV-E graduates and other new workers regarding their preparation for child welfare work and their retention with DFCS. The conceptual framework of this research was based on the hypothesis that a better prepared worker would feel more confident in his/her abilities to do the job, feel greater commitment to the work, experience more satisfaction with the job, less stress from the work, and, thus, be more inclined to continue working in the job.

The conceptual definitions of the dependent variables support this hypothesis. Capabilities indicate the strength of the self-confidence of the individual that he/she possesses the ability and knowledge to perform child welfare tasks. Intent to remain signifies the strength of belief held by the individual that he/she will continue employment with DFCS. Professional commitment denotes the level of internal conviction that the individual will continue to practice in the field of social work. Job stress deals with the amount of perceived, self-induced internal tension felt during work. Job satisfaction identifies the level of internal comfort with the job responsibilities in which the person was currently engaged.

This program evaluation was an exploratory and descriptive work based on the survey method of research using primarily quantitative inquiries. The research design of this study was a posttest only comparison group design where the IV-E educational program was the independent variable or the program activity. The research study methods were approved by the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects prior to any data collection.

New DFCS caseworkers, including IV-E graduates, were asked to complete self-perception measures of their capabilities and attitudes regarding child welfare work, professional commitment, job stress, job satisfaction, and intent to stay employed at DFCS. All IV-E graduates, both BSWs and MSWs, were considered to be the experimental group. New employees who did not participate in the Title IV-E program but did have social work education served as one comparison group. Although these non-IV-E social workers had similar educational experiences, they did not have the benefits of several child welfare courses, at least one DFCS field placement, and the IV-E orientation and conferences. Other non-IV-E new employees with no social work education provided the second comparison group. To increase the construct validity, each new worker's supervisor was asked to complete an assessment of their worker's capabilities and attitude, and the mean of the total of the supervisors' ratings was compared to the corresponding group's mean total of the workers' ratings. Additionally, comparisons were done among the supervisors' ratings of the three different groups of caseworkers. Title IV-E graduates and their supervisors were also asked open-ended questions specifically about the IV-E program to provide information about their perceptions of the IV-E program.

Sample

The study sample included all DFCS employees in Georgia hired between May 1, 2004 and August 31, 2004 into caseworker positions and their supervisors. Newly hired workers who had previously been employed at DFCS were eliminated as well as new employees hired into positions other than various levels of child welfare caseworkers. A non-probability purposive sampling was used. The entire sample of workers fitting the study criteria was offered the on-line survey to complete. Supervisors were emailed the survey only after their participating worker

had completed his/her survey which signified consent for participation and agreement to allow his/her supervisor to be contacted to participate; this process was required by the University of Georgia's Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects. Those workers and supervisors who chose to complete the survey constitute the sample; thus, the sampling design was purposive by virtue of self-selection. Surveys were coded to permit matching between worker and his/her own supervisor for comparison. Survey results remained anonymous to DFCS since the researcher was the only individual to have access to a list with the matched names/email addresses and survey codes.

Participation in evaluations of the IV-E program was a condition of each recipient's contract, which was signed upon the student's acceptance of the IV-E funding. However, no method of enforcing that agreement was utilized to guarantee the participation of the IV-E graduates. Other new DFCS workers and supervisors made no such agreement and received no incentive to respond to the survey. Since their numbers greatly exceed those of the IV-E participants, a sufficient number of them chose to voluntarily complete the survey to further the research objectives. Survey completion was relatively easy, done via the Internet, and completed during the participant's workday in about 10 to 20 minutes. Directors of each county DFCS office received advance notice of the study and were asked to encourage staff members to participate if they received a survey. Participants who failed to complete the survey received several reminder emails that reminded them and contained the link for the on-line survey.

Quantitative Measures

Four different surveys were used: one for non-IV-E new workers (both social workers and non-social workers), another for IV-E graduates, another for supervisors of non-IV-E new workers (both social workers and non-social workers), and another for IV-E graduates'

supervisors. The four surveys were designed to ask the same questions regarding capabilities, but were worded to be read either from the worker's self-assessment viewpoint, or the supervisor's perspective of how capable he/she saw the specific worker. The two workers' surveys and the two supervisors' surveys were the same, but additional questions were asked of the IV-E graduates and their supervisors. These were open-ended questions addressing the participation in the IV-E program. All supervisors were asked to identify their worker's strengths and weaknesses also utilizing open-ended questions.

The initial section of all surveys requested demographic information from the participants. This information included gender, ethnicity, age range, and educational background, in addition to their current DFCS position title and area of work (children's protective services investigations or ongoing services, or foster care). This information was compared to assess for differences among the groups of workers and supervisors.

Capabilities Scale

The first section of the survey was the capabilities measure, which was developed with permission from the self-assessment and supervisor's assessment tools created by the Title IV-E evaluation team in Kentucky (Fox, S. R., Burnham, D., Barbee, A. P., & Yankeelov, P. A., 2000; Fox, S. R., Burnham, D., & Miller, V. P., 1997; and Fox, S. R., Miller, V. P., & Barbee, A. P., 2003). From their new worker and IV-E graduate questionnaires, twenty-three of the thirty items were used verbatim or with very slight wording changes on the capabilities portion of the survey. Examples of these capabilities were "Building positive working relationships with families of ethnic groups different from one's own" and "Writing a case plan with family participation that addresses the family's strengths and needs". Several of the Kentucky questions were split into two or three questions to promote specificity and clarity. Two questions were added; one asked

the worker to rate themselves on: “Maintaining professional behavior during contact with families, other professionals, and community agencies”, and the other a rating on: “Identifying indicators of abnormal child development”. A five-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 = little capability to 5 = exceptional capability with a range of 30 to 150. Since the supervisors’ questionnaires asked for a rating of the worker on the same items as the workers’ self-assessment, these changes were the same for the supervisors’ survey. The Kentucky group found a test-retest reliability of .89 for their twenty-five item worker’s self-assessment measure, and a .95 for the test-retest reliability of the supervisor’s opinion questionnaire. This measure had acceptable content validity due to the two panels of expert consultants who wrote and reviewed the specific items from different states. In Kentucky, faculty representatives from nine universities with social work programs met with members of the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children to create and review the survey items. All items were based on behavioral anchors related to specific tasks of child welfare workers. The research efforts reported by the Kentucky group did not identify any validity statistics. However, the State of Georgia DFCS staff identified this particular tool as the measure to be utilized in this evaluation of their program. Five university faculty members from several different Georgia universities joined with DFCS Education and Training staff to review the scale and altered it to clarify several items. To increase measurement reliability, two methods of data collection were used: the workers’ self-perception of their capabilities and each worker’s supervisor’s opinion of the worker’s capabilities and attitudes.

Professional Commitment Measure

The second area in the worker’s questionnaire addressed the worker’s professional commitment toward child welfare work from the Human Caring Inventory (Ellett, et al., 2003)

and his/her intention to remain working for DFCS. This was a six-item scale and the responses used a Likert scale rating ranging from 1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 4 = 'Strongly Agree' with a range of 6 to 24. Sample statements from the measure are "I would continue to work in the field of social work even if I did not need the money" and "If I could do it all over again, I would choose a profession other than social work". This measure showed content validity as all statements specifically asked the participant if he/she would remain committed to the field of social work i spite of difficult circumstances. The questions that measure 'professional commitment' and the items that measure 'intent to remain' were also used in the 2003 retention study (Ellett, et al., 2003) completed in Georgia and a recent dissertation study (Ellis, 2005). Reliability for this measure was found to be .84 (Ellett, et al., 2003) and .83 (Ellis, 2005). Test-retest reliability yielded a stability coefficient of .91 (n = 29) (Ellis, 2005).

Intent to Remain Measure

The Intent to Remain scale originated in a study completed in Louisiana (Ellett & Ellett, 1996) with child welfare staff and was also used in a dissertation research study as the dependent variable (Ellett, 2000). This was also a six-item scale and responses were on a Likert scale rating ranging from 1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 4 = 'Strongly Agree'. Statements such as, "I intend to remain employed in child welfare as my long-term professional career" and "The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare" were used in this measure. An expert panel examined this measure for face and content validity. Results using the 'intention to remain' subscale were analyzed for reliability and the results showed alpha coefficients of .86 (Ellett, 2000), .83 (Ellett, et al., 2003), and .90 (Ellis, 2005). Test-retest reliability yielded a stability coefficient of .91 (n = 29) (Ellis, 2005). The bivariate correlation for the 'Intent to Remain' and 'Professional Commitment' measures was .63 (Ellis,

2005). Professional commitment was the most important variable that differentiated high and low intention to remain in the organization (Ellett, et al., 2003). Since one of the major outcomes of the Title IV-E program is to keep well-educated social workers as long-term employees in public child welfare, these two variables, professional commitment and intent to remain, appear important.

Job Stress Measure

Job stress and job satisfaction have been identified as major factors in the literature addressing child welfare work and retention of social workers in the field (Ellett & Ellett, 1996; Alperin, 1998; Okamura & Jones, 1998; Scannapieco, et al., 2000; Jones & Okamura, 2000; Landsman, 2001; Dickenson & Perry, 2002). The six-item Job Stress scale asked 'how often' the worker had felt specific feelings of stress related to the job. Examples of these questions included "In the last three months, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?" and "In the last three months, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly at work?" Responses ranged on a Likert scale from 1 = 'Never' to 5 = 'Almost Always' with a range of 6 to 30. The measure for job stress was originally from Cohen, Kessler, & Gorden (1997) and was used in the Kentucky IV-E research (Fox, S. L., et al., 1997, 2000, 2003). Those studies identified alpha reliability of .90 for their study using the Cohen Stress Questionnaire (Cohen, et al., 1997). Fox and his group of researchers also found that job stress was negatively correlated with job preparedness ($r = -.57$, $p < .01$) and job satisfaction ($r = -.55$, $p < .01$). These correlations demonstrated the criterion-related validity of the stress measure.

Job Satisfaction Measure

As in the Kentucky research (Fox, S. L., et al., 1997, 2000, 2003) and the Georgia retention study (Ellett, et al., 2003), the measure for job satisfaction was an eight-item rating scale that addressed various aspects of the job, such as “Salary/Benefits” and “Organizational Support”, and an overall job satisfaction rating. This also utilized a Likert scale for the responses spanning from 1 = ‘Very Dissatisfied’ to 4 = ‘Very Satisfied’ with a range of 8 to 32. Content validity of this measure was assumed since the questions directly asked the participant to rate “how satisfied” he/she is with specific aspects of their jobs. It did not appear to be all-inclusive however. The Kentucky researchers found that job satisfaction showed significant positive correlations with the ‘intent to remain’ ($r = .56$, $p < .05$), ‘job preparedness’ ($r = .48$, $p < .05$), and the indication from IV-E graduates and supervisors that the IV-E program should continue ($r = .46$, $p < .05$). The Georgia retention study (Ellett, et al., 2003) also found job satisfaction linked to intent to remain ($r = .43$, $p < .001$).

Worker’s Attitude Measure

In the current study, supervisors were asked to rate their participating worker’s ‘attitude toward social work’ as a single item. A Likert scale of responses was provided with 1 = ‘Substandard’, 3 = ‘Average’, and 5 = ‘Superior’.

Qualitative Measures

All supervisors were asked two open-ended questions, specifically to identify what their participating worker’s strengths and weaknesses were. The Zoomerang system allowed a written text response of substantial length (3,500 characters) so that supervisors were free to provide considerable information about their opinion of the worker.

Qualitative Information Related to the IV-E Program

The final section of the surveys given only to IV-E graduates and their supervisors includes quantitative and qualitative information regarding the IV-E program and the preparation it provided for child welfare work. Open-ended questions asked participants to indicate what specific knowledge and skills were gained in the IV-E program that helped in their DFCS job. Participants were also asked to identify any improvements in the program that could be suggested, as well as a recommendation to continue or discontinue the program.

Data Collection Procedures

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected between early May, 2005 and mid-June, 2005 through an internet-based system called Zoomerang (www.zoomerang.com). This system sent the four different surveys to the email addresses of all appropriate participants. All new case managers were sent a survey that included all five scales; however, the surveys sent to the IV-E graduates had additional questions, both quantitative and qualitative, regarding the child welfare education program. All supervisors were sent a survey with the capabilities scale and a question regarding the new employees' attitude; but, supervisors of Title IV-E graduates also had several quantitative and qualitative questions about the child welfare education program. An informational heading was provided on-line at the beginning of the surveys to introduce the purpose of the research, and to explain that participation was voluntary. It explained that the survey responses were confidential to the researcher, but anonymous to all DFCS staff; all results were reported to the agency in aggregate. Participants were also advised that the survey had to be completed in one sitting, although answers could be changed at any point during the one sitting. When participants were finished answering the survey, they were advised that they could choose not to have their answers recorded by not clicking on 'submit'. Survey completion was easy

('point and click'), accomplished via the Internet, and during the work day rather than on the employees' own time. Directors of each county DFCS office received an advance notice of the study and were asked to encourage their staff members to respond if they received a survey email. Those who did not complete the survey were sent multiple reminder emails through the Zoomerang system.

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative Data

Statistical analyses for all quantitative data were completed utilizing SPSS 14 and primarily consisted of a series of one-way ANOVAs. The strength of association for each of these analyses was computed using *eta*. Cohen's (1988) interpretation of this value was used with about .1 signifying a weak association, approximately .25 indicating a moderate association, and about .37 equaling a strong association. When only two groups were compared, t-tests were used and a Pearson's correlation coefficient (effect-size *r*) was calculated. Again, Cohen's (1988) guides were utilized with an *r* of about .1 indicating a weak association, an effect-size *r* of about .3 representing a moderate association, and an effect-size *r* of .5 indicating a strong association.

Initially, an analysis of variance was completed on the demographic variables of gender, age, ethnicity, and level of education for the three groups of new workers, i.e. IV-E graduates, non-IV-E social workers, and non-social workers, to assess for any statistically significant differences among the three groups. Gender, age, and ethnicity were not expected to show significant differences. However, it was anticipated that the group of IV-E graduates may have a statistically significantly higher level of education since it was suspected that the group of IV-E graduates would include a higher percentage of individuals with master's degrees.

An examination of the capabilities scores was completed among the three groups of new case managers to assess for differences. An average score for each worker's self-ratings of their own capabilities was determined; then, the mean for each group of workers' capabilities scores was computed and compared to the three groups of workers. The same process was completed with the three groups of supervisors and a one-way ANOVA was computed to determine if differences were found. Each group of workers' average capabilities scores was also compared to their supervisors using t-tests; this was completed for both the IV-E graduates and their supervisors and the two groups of non-IV-E new hires and their supervisors. Each item on the capability portion of the survey was compared using ANOVA among the IV-E graduates and the two groups of non-IV-E new hires to assess for differences, as was the supervisors' ratings of IV-E versus the two groups of non-IV-E participants.

Professional commitment was compared between IV-E graduates and the two groups of non-IV-E workers using an analysis of variance of the mean of the total responses for each group. The mean totals of the responses to these items were compared among the groups of workers using an ANOVA to assess for significant differences. Job stress was also compared using an analysis of variance to determine if differences were found among the three groups of workers on the mean of the scores for the total scale. Finally, job satisfaction was measured using the mean of the total response for each worker on an eight-item scale. Mean scores for each group of workers were compared among groups using an ANOVA.

All supervisors were asked to evaluate their new worker's attitude toward social work on a Likert scale with 1 = substandard to 5 = superior. Analysis of variance was completed to determine if there were significant differences among the supervisors' ratings of IV-E graduates' capabilities and the two groups of non-IV-E workers' capabilities. Correlation analyses were also

completed involving the various dependent variables in this study, that is, perception of capability, professional commitment, intent to remain, job stress, and job satisfaction for the study sample as a whole. This was done to ascertain significant relationships between any pairs of these variables.

Qualitative Data

The qualitative sections of this study included several areas. Supervisors of all three groups of workers were asked to identify their observations of their worker's strengths and weaknesses. Analyses of these measures involved the manifest content and responses were split into categories for coding purposes. Included were personal characteristics, attitudes and beliefs, work ethics and habits, organizational skills, and education-related factors such as knowledge and skills. Comparisons among the three groups of supervisors were done to identify any differences in patterns of responses. Supervisors of the IV-E graduates were the only supervisors asked questions about the IV-E program, such as whether or not they would recommend it, whether they would recommend that other supervisors hire IV-E graduates, and what could be done in the program to improve the preparation of graduates for child welfare work. Thus, no comparison of results could be done among groups of supervisors on these items.

Title IV-E graduates were asked six open-ended questions regarding their opinions of the knowledge and skills they believed they gained with the IV-E education and how they believed the program could be improved. No questions about the IV-E program were asked of the non-IV-E social workers or non-social workers.

The content of the item regarding program improvements was categorized into areas such as program administration, educational curricula, and selection of students. This was completed for supervisors' responses as well as IV-E graduates' responses. A comparison of the

supervisors' perspectives with the graduates' perspective was done to identify similarities and differences. Since the qualitative information from the IV-E graduates could be linked to the particular university program that the worker attended, a summary of the qualitative results was provided to each school about their own program.

The IV-E graduates were asked two questions with Likert scale responses: "How likely are you to recommend participation in the IV-E Child Welfare Grant Program to others" (rated from 1 = *Unlikely* to 3 = *Very Likely*) and "Overall, how well do you think the IV-E Child Welfare Grant Program prepared you for your job with the Division of Family and Children Services" (rated from 1 = *Did not prepare me at all* to 3 = *Highly prepared me*). The qualitative information regarding their opinions on these questions was solicited through open-ended questions that asked the participants to explain their answers to these questions.

Additional Data Analysis

The quantitative results of this study were compared to those of the 2003 study completed by DFCS Education and Training Section staff to assess for significant differences. To do this, data collected in the previous study were reviewed and new employees were split into two groups based upon whether they indicated that they had a social work degree or not. This allowed a comparison of three groups of 2004 participating workers with the 2003 participating workers. Results of the current study in the capabilities, attitudes, professional commitment, and intent to remain sections were also combined with the 2003 results since the items addressing these factors were identical in both surveys. This permitted additional analysis with larger samples in each group. Combining the two data sets provided the beginning of a longitudinal study of the IV-E graduates that can be continued through future years if the agency desires to do

so. The increased number of participants also improved the statistical power and the combined results produced more meaningful outcomes.

Summary

The primary research question addressed by this study was: were newly hired Title IV-E graduates better prepared to perform child welfare work than other new case managers? The capabilities scale was designed to assess the beliefs of these child welfare workers regarding their own capabilities to perform specific tasks involved in their job duties. Comparisons of this variable among the IV-E graduates, non-IV-E social workers, and non-social workers were intended to ascertain whether Title IV-E program graduates' beliefs that their capabilities to perform the tasks of child welfare work were significantly different than the view of non-IV-E new workers concerning their own capabilities. This measure was believed to be an indication of the new workers' preparation for child welfare work.

Supervisors of the new employees who participated in this study were also asked to rate their new workers' capabilities in performing the same child welfare tasks. The comparison of the capabilities' ratings among the supervisors of the three different groups of workers was determined to be a critical element in the evaluation of the workers' preparation for child welfare work.

An additional purpose of the research was to examine retention rates of the IV-E graduates compared to other newly hired child welfare staff. This was done by identifying all the child welfare workers hired between May 2004 and August 2004, both those who were IV-E graduates and those who did not receive IV-E education. The new workers who were no longer employed at DFCS were identified in May 2005 by the Human Resources department at the Department of Human Services; all remaining workers were included in the survey process.

Secondary research questions addressed other factors that might have contributed to the retention of child welfare workers. These factors included professional commitment, the intention to remain at DFCS, job stress, and job satisfaction. Self-report of beliefs and feelings were the basis of each of the measures for each factor and comparisons among the groups were completed as the method of determining differences.

The results of the study are outlined in Chapter 4 and the discussion of these results is presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter details the outcomes of the analyses of the data collected in this study. The survey return rates are initially identified. Then, brief comparisons of the major demographic information are reported to determine if there were significant differences among the three groups of new workers. Five scales were used to measure the dependent variables and the mean scores on these scales were compared among and between groups of workers and supervisors. The means of three scales (capabilities, professional commitment, and intent to remain) for the three groups of workers are compared to the results of the study completed by DFCS the 2003 new workers as participants. Additionally, the outcomes of the current study and the previous DFCS study were combined and these mean scores for the scales were compared to determine if increased sample sizes changed the results of the comparisons. Results of the quantitative analyses are explained and tables are included when results showed statistically significant differences. Results from the qualitative questions asked of all supervisors were compared for differences between groups of new workers. The results of the open-ended questions asked of IV-E graduates and their supervisors were also compared and discussed.

The data analysis attempted to answer the research questions and yielded information that could provide guidance for Title IV-E program improvements. The results indicated how capable new workers believed they were in completing the necessary tasks of child welfare work. In addition, these new workers' supervisors identified how capable they believed their workers were to perform the same tasks. Workers responded to other questions that addressed their

professional commitment, intention to remain employed at DFCS, job satisfaction, and job stress. The implications of the results of the data analyses are discussed in Chapter 5.

Quantitative

Survey Return Rate

There were 284 DFCS new employees hired into case management positions identified in all counties of Georgia between May 1, 2004 and August 31, 2004. Of these, twenty-one did not meet the criteria for the study as they had been hired as temporary employees, had previously worked for DFCS, or were actually hired into positions other than child welfare case management. Of the 263 remaining, twenty-two were Title IV-E graduates and the remaining two-hundred-forty-one were non-IV-E new employees. Some in both groups had left DFCS employment by the time the survey was initiated: five of the twenty-two IV-E graduates (22.7%) had resigned, and seventy-nine of the non-IV-E new hires (32.8%) were no longer employees. This resulted in retention rates of 77.3% for IV-E graduates and 67.2% for the non-IV-E new employees. Surveys were emailed via the Zoomerang website (www.zoomerang.com) to all available new case managers numerous times throughout the data collection period. Supervisors were emailed a survey regarding their participating worker only after the worker had completed his/her survey, which indicated his/her permission to have the supervisor provide input.

Of the Title IV-E graduates, 17 (100%) completed the survey; sixteen of the seventeen supervisors (94.1%) also participated. Ninety-nine of the one hundred and sixty-two non-IV-E new workers (61.1%) and sixty-four of the supervisors (64.6%) participated. The non-IV-E workers and their supervisors could not be separated into groups of non-IV-E social workers and non-social workers as this information was identified by the respondents in the demographic section of the survey. Survey return rates are found in Table 1.

In addition to the IV-E graduates and their supervisors, new non-IV-E case managers and their supervisors were separated into two groups of workers and their supervisors based upon whether the new worker had a BSW and/or a MSW. This allowed comparison among the three groups of workers and three groups of supervisors, and also permitted an analysis of all social workers compared to all non-social workers to assess for differences in mean scores on the five dependent variables. There were 17 Title IV-E graduates, 34 non-IV-E social workers, and 65 new workers who had no social work education included in the current study. Participating supervisors included 16 supervisors of IV-E graduates, 17 supervisors of non-IV-E social workers, and 47 supervisors of non-social workers. Data from the 2003 study were combined with that of the current study. However, the 2003 supervisors surveyed were not asked to indicate whether their workers had social work degrees. Thus, the 2003 supervisors of new non-IV-E workers could not be divided into two groups. There were a total of 33 IV-E graduates, 55 non-IV-E social workers, and 94 non-social workers in the combined 2003 and 2004 groups of workers. Thirty-one supervisors of IV-E graduates and 109 supervisors of non-IV-E graduates participated in the combined samples of 2003 and 2004 respondents. The total participants in each of the comparison groups for this study are found in Table 2.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The demographic information requested from the new workers included gender, age range, ethnicity, and highest level of education. These demographic variables were compared among the three groups of workers using Chi-square to determine if there were statistically significant differences in frequencies observed among groups that might have impacted the results of the study.

A chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing the variable of gender among the three groups of workers. Since only the non-social workers' group had any males participating, a statistically significant difference was found (chi square (2) = 6.74, $p < .034$). There was not a statistically significant difference found among groups in ethnicity when a chi-square test of independence was calculated. A chi-square test was also calculated comparing the variable of age among the three groups of workers. A statistically significant difference was identified (chi square (12) = 21.78, $p < .040$). Non-IV-E social workers had the highest mean age range and IV-E graduates had the lowest. As expected, a statistically significant difference was found among groups in education level when a chi-square was computed (chi square (2) = 7.04, $p < .03$). Title IV-E graduates had a statistically significantly higher level of education with 35.3% having a master's degree, although all participating workers had at least a bachelor's degree. Table 3 shows the descriptive frequencies of the demographic variables and the results of the chi-square analyses.

The 2004 groups of new case managers were compared to the 2003 groups of new case managers using chi-square tests on the same demographic variables. There were no statistically significant differences on the four variables between the 2004 IV-E graduates and the 2003 IV-E graduates when chi-square tests of independence were calculated. The only statistically significant difference the four variables used was between the 2004 non-IV-E social workers and the 2003 non-IV-E social workers was on the gender item since all the 2004 graduates were female (chi-square (1) = 5.14, $p < .02$). There were no statistically significant differences found when a chi-square test was computed with non-social workers hired in 2004 and those hired in 2003 in the demographic variables.

The three groups of workers from this study were combined with the participating workers in the 2003 study to form larger groups of IV-E graduates, non-IV-E social workers, and non-social workers. No statistically significant differences were found when chi-square tests were computed on gender and ethnicity. However, there was a statistically significant difference found in age range (chi square (12) = 23.19, $p < .026$) with the non-IV-E social workers being the oldest group and the IV-E workers being the youngest. As anticipated, there was a statistically significant difference in educational level among the three groups (chi square (2) = 19.4, $p < .000$) as the IV-E graduates were more likely (48.5%) to have a master's degree than the non-social workers (11.7%). Table 4 shows the frequencies of the responses on age range and education level and the results of the Chi-Square test when the 2004 data was combined with the 2003 data.

Mean Scores of Capabilities Ratings

The capabilities self-report scores involved a mean total of thirty specific action-oriented items; workers were asked to identify how capable they believed they were to complete the action on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 = *Exceptionally Capable* to 1 = *Not Capable*. A one-way ANOVA was completed with the three groups of 2004 respondents and it was found that there was no statistically significant difference among the groups of workers on the mean total of the capabilities items. Title IV-E graduates reported an average capabilities score of 3.7, non-IV-E social workers averaged 3.79, and non-social workers had a mean rating of 3.73 ($F = .188$, $p = .829$).

A t-test was also completed to assess the differences between the all 2004 social workers (both IV-E and non-IV-E) compared to the non-social workers on the self-reported capabilities scale. The results showed no statistically significant difference between mean total scores for the

capabilities scale. The group of all social workers reported an average self-rating of 3.76 and the non-social workers showed a mean self-rating of 3.73 (t = .266, p = .79).

The capabilities' self-ratings of each group of the 2004 workers were also compared to their supervisors' ratings using t-tests. There was no statistically significant difference between the IV-E graduates' mean capabilities self-ratings and their supervisors' ratings (t = .842, p = .406). There was also no statistically significant difference between the non-IV-E social workers self-ratings and their supervisors' ratings (t = 1.87, p = .07). The difference between the non-social workers' self-ratings of their capabilities and their supervisors' ratings of their capabilities was statistically significant (t = 3.58, p = .001). The strength of this association was computed using Pearson's product-moment correlation and found to be moderate (*r* = .32) (Cohen, 1988). Table 5 shows that as a group these non-social workers rated themselves higher (mean = 3.73) than did their supervisors (mean = 3.34). This result would appear to indicate that the IV-E graduates have a view of their capabilities more consistent with their supervisors than do non-IV-E new employees

An ANOVA was computed among the three groups of 2004 new case managers' supervisors' total ratings of their worker's capabilities; there were no differences found among the supervisors' mean ratings (F = 1.04, p = .36). A t-test was also completed comparing the supervisors' ratings of the non-social workers (mean = 3.23) to the group of social workers (mean = 3.52), both IV-E graduates and non-IV-E graduates. There was no statistical difference between these groups (t = 1.32, p = .19).

The three groups of 2004 new workers were compared to the three groups of 2003 new workers on their capabilities self-ratings using t-tests. There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups of IV-E graduates (t = .631, p = .53) or the two groups of

non-IV-E social workers (t = -.447, p = .66). However, the 2004 non-social workers rated themselves higher than the 2003 non-social workers; this difference was statistically significant (t = 1.95, p = .05). The strength of this association was computed to be between weak and moderate (*r* = .20) (Cohen, 1988). Table 6 shows the results of this examination.

The 2003 and 2004 new case managers were also combined and the three groups were compared using an ANOVA. There was no statistical difference found among the three groups in the mean of their capabilities self-ratings (F = 1.475, p = .232).

No statistically significant difference was identified between all social workers (2003 and 2004 IV-E graduates and non-IV-E social workers combined) and all non-social workers (2003 and 2004 combined) when compared using a t-test (t = 1.06, p = .29).

When the combined groups of new workers' (2003 and 2004) self-ratings were compared to their supervisors' capabilities ratings, no statistical differences were found between the IV-E graduates and their supervisors (t = .456, p = .65). However, statistically significant differences were shown between the non-IV-E new case managers (t = 4.55, p = .000) and the non-IV-E supervisors' ratings. The strength of this association was moderate (*r* = .28) (Cohen, 1988). This two-year combined result would seem to support the results that the IV-E graduates have a view of their capabilities more consistent with their supervisors than do non-IV-E new employees. Table 7 shows the results of these analyses of the new workers and their supervisors on the capabilities scale separated into IV-E and non-IV-E groups.

Individual Capabilities Items

Since the 2003 evaluation of the Title IV-E program examined the capabilities items individually, a brief review of the comparable assessment was done with the 2004 participants

and is included in this study. Tests for statistical differences were not completed if there were no statistically significant differences among or between groups on the scale mean scores.

Although there were no statistical differences between the three groups, Table 8 shows the descriptive results of mean self-report scores and standard deviations for each of the survey items on the capabilities measure for each of the three groups of new workers. All three groups rated item #32, “Maintaining professional behavior during contact with families, other professionals, and community agencies” as highest while IV-E graduates scored lowest on item #26, “Understanding and interpreting the language comprising legal documents”, non-IV-E social workers scored item #44, “Understanding and interpreting the laws framing child welfare practice” lowest, and non-social workers rated item #50 “Effectively testifying in court” lowest.

Average self-report scores and standard deviations for each of the survey items on the capabilities measure are also reported for the sample when the participants are divided into the group with social work education and those without social work education. These descriptive results are found in Table 9. Again, both groups rated item #32 “Maintaining professional behavior during contact with families, other professionals, and community agencies” highest. The group of social workers indicated that they believed they were least capable on item #26 “Understanding and interpreting the language comprising legal documents”, while the non-social workers believed they were least capable on item #50 “Effectively testifying in court”.

Since there was a statistically significant difference on the mean capabilities scores for the non-social workers who were hired in 2004 and those who were hired in 2003 ($t = 1.95$, $p = .05$), Table 10 shows means, standard deviations, and independent samples t-tests that were completed for each capability item. Six items were found to be statistically significantly different between the two groups with the 2004 non-social workers always rating themselves higher than

their 2003 counterparts. These items were: #26 “Understanding and interpreting the language comprising legal documents” ($t = 2.22$, $p = .03$); #28 “Using permanency planning philosophy” ($t = 2.25$, $p = .03$); #29 “Remaining safe in the office and in the field” ($t = 2.77$, $p = .01$); #46 “Preparing cases for court”($t = 3.61$, $p = .00$); #49 “Understanding and interpreting the laws framing child welfare practice” ($t = 3.67$, $p = .00$); and #51 “Appropriately terminating casework with families and closing cases” ($t = 4.02$, $p = .00$).

The 2004 data was combined with the 2003 data to form the three groups of new workers, increasing the N in each of the groups. A comparison of the three new workers’ groups was completed using ANOVA and no significant difference was found on the mean scores on the capabilities scale among groups ($F = 1.48$, $p = .23$). Table 11 indicates the descriptive statistics of the mean scores and standard deviations of each capability item for the three groups of new case managers when the groups from 2003 and 2004 were combined. Item #32, “Maintaining professional behavior during contact with families, other professionals, and community agencies”, was rated highest by all three groups. While the two groups of social workers scored lowest on item #26, “Understanding and interpreting the language comprising legal documents”, non-social workers scored lowest on item #50, “Effectively testifying in court”; these results were consistent with the results of the 2004 data analysis.

The combined 2004 and 2003 data were also examined by splitting the participants into the two groups of all social workers versus all non-social workers. Although no statistically significant difference was identified between these two groups when using a t-test ($t = 1.06$, $p = .29$), the mean scores and standard deviations are shown in Table 12 for each of the capabilities items.

As stated earlier, there were no statistical differences found between the 2004 IV-E workers' or the non-IV-E social workers' self-ratings on the capabilities scale and their supervisors' ratings. However, there were statistically significant differences shown between non-social workers' self-ratings of capabilities and their supervisors' ratings. Mean item scores, standard deviations and the results of t-test comparisons of each item on the capabilities scale between the non-social workers and their supervisors are shown on Table 13. On twenty-three of the items there were statistical differences, and there were no items in which the supervisor rated the workers higher than the workers themselves did.

Since there was a statistically significant difference between the combined 2004 and 2003 participating non-IV-E workers and their supervisors on the capabilities scale, t-tests were computed on the mean scores for each group on each item. The results of this are indicated in Table 14 along with mean ratings and standard deviations. Twenty-five of the thirty items showed a statistically significant difference between the non-IV-E workers' self-ratings and the supervisors' ratings. The only items that were not statistically significant were "Understanding and interpreting the language comprising legal documents", "Using permanency planning philosophy", "Remaining safe in the office and in the field", "Preparing cases for court", and "Effectively testifying in court". All other items were statistically significantly different with $p < .01$ and most strengths of association close to the moderate range.

Professional Commitment

An ANOVA was completed comparing the three groups of 2004 worker participants on the mean scores of the six-item professional commitment scale. There was not a statistically significant difference among groups ($F = 1.91$, $p = .154$). The internal consistency reliability for this scale for this sample was .83.

A t-test was completed between social workers (both IV-E and non-IV-E) and non-social workers on the professional scale. This also did not show a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($F = 1.55$, $p = .123$).

T-tests were used to complete comparisons between the three groups of workers hired in 2004 and the three groups of workers hired in 2003. There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups of IV-E graduates ($t = .09$, $p = .93$) or the two groups of non-social workers on the professional commitment scale ($t = -.05$, $p = .96$). However, a statistically significant difference was found on the mean for the professional commitment scale between the 2004 non-IV-E social workers and the 2003 non-IV-E social workers ($t = -2.17$, $p = .035$). This indicated that the 2003 group rated their professional commitment to be higher than the 2004 participants in this category. Table 15 shows the results of the t-tests computed comparing the three groups of new workers hired in 2004 to those hired in 2003.

Since the comparison of the non-IV-E social workers from the 2003 study and those from the current study showed a statistically significant difference, t-tests were computed on the individual items. On the individual items, three items were rated significantly higher by the 2003 non-IV-E social workers. These were “Most days I do not look forward to going to work” (reverse-coded) ($t = -2.52$, $p = .02$); “If I could do it all over again, I would choose a profession other than social work” (reverse-coded) ($t = -2.19$, $p = .03$); and “I find little enthusiasm for working as a social worker” (reverse-coded) ($t = -2.01$, $p = .05$). Table 16 shows the results of this comparison.

When the participants of the two studies were combined, a statistically significant difference was found on the overall mean of the professional commitment scale ($F = 4.36$, $p = .01$) using an ANOVA with the IV-E graduates indicating the highest commitment and the non-

social workers showing the least commitment. The strength of association of this relationship was found to be moderate (*eta* = .22). Table 17 shows the results of this comparison.

When the data were examined by a comparison of individual items, four of these showed statistically significant differences. Title IV-E graduates indicated higher ratings on the following items: "I would continue to work in the field of social work even if I did not need the money" (F = 8.42, p = .00); "If I could do it all over again, I would choose a profession other than social work" (reverse-coded, so social workers rated higher that they would not choose a profession other than social work) (F = 5.82, p = .00); "I find little enthusiasm for working as a social worker" (reverse-coded, so social workers indicated higher ratings for finding much enthusiasm for working as a social worker) (F = 5.61, p = .00); and "I cannot imagine enjoying any profession as much as social work" (F = 6.13, p = .00). Table 18 indicates the results of this analysis.

The responses of both studies were also combined to examine for statistically significant differences between social workers and non-social workers on the professional commitment scale. A t-test showed that social workers indicated a statistically significantly higher overall professional commitment score than non-social workers (t = 2.92, p = .00). The individual items in which the social workers scores higher were: "I would continue to work in the field of social work even if I did not need the money" (t = 4.08, p = .00); "If I could do it all over again, I would choose a profession other than social work" (reverse-coded, so social workers indicated higher scores saying that they would not choose a profession other than social work) (t = 2.93, p = .00); "I find little enthusiasm for working as a social worker" (reverse-coded, so social workers found more enthusiasm for working as a social worker) (t = 3.28, p = .00); and "I cannot imagine

enjoying any profession as much as social work" (t = 3.50, p = .00). Table 19 shows the means, standard deviations, and the results of the t-tests between the two groups.

Intent to Remain

The examination of the mean scores for the scale measuring the participants' intention to remain employed at DFCS showed no statistically significant difference among the three groups of the 2004 case managers when calculated using an ANOVA (F = 1.77, p = .18). Additionally, no statistically significant differences were identified when the 2004 data was combined with the 2003 results on this scale (F = .28, p = .75). The internal consistency reliability of this measure for this sample was .85 for the Intent to Remain scale (IRE).

A comparison was also computed comparing each group of 2004 workers with the corresponding group of 2003 workers using t-tests to examine the means of the intent to remain scale. No statistically significant differences were identified between the two groups of IV-E graduates (t = -.64, p = .52) or the two groups of non-social workers (t = -.18, p = .86). However, a statistically significant difference was found between the 2004 non-IV-E social workers and the 2003 non-IV-E social workers on the overall scores for the scale (t = -2.17, p = .01) indicating that the 2003 social workers had a stronger intention to remain employed at DFCS.

Further analysis was completed with the two groups of non-IV-E social workers examining the differences between individual items on the intent to remain measure. The specific items that were significantly different between these two groups were "I am actively seeking other employment outside the field of child welfare" (reverse-coded) (t = -2.46, p = .01), and "I frequently think about quitting my job" (reverse-coded) (t = -2.46, p = .02) and both showed the 2003 non-IV-E social workers to have greater intention to remain with the agency. Table 20 shows the results of the mean scores and item scores on the intent to remain measure.

A comparison was also computed to determine if differences in Intent to Remain scores were found when participants were separated into groups of social workers and non-social workers. The results of t-tests computed comparing the 2004 social workers and non-social workers showed no statistically significant differences between these groups ($t = -1.64$, $p = .11$). The combined groups of 2004 and 2003 social workers compared to both groups of non-social workers also showed no statistical difference between groups ($t = -.57$, $p = .57$).

Job Stress

No statistically significant difference was found among the three groups of 2004 new workers on the job stress scale using a one-way ANOVA ($F = .63$,$p = .53$). The internal consistency reliability of the Job Stress measure for this sample was .88.

There were also no significant differences on the Job Stress scale between participating 2004 new social workers and new non-social workers using a t-test ($t = .93$, $p = .36$). A comparison between the 2004 study participants and the 2003 respondents could not be completed as the job stress scale was not a part of the 2003 study.

Job Satisfaction

A statistically significant difference was found on the total Job Satisfaction scale score among the three groups of 2004 new case managers when an ANOVA was completed ($F = 4.78$, $p = .01$). Non-social workers indicated the highest level of satisfaction with the job ($M = 2.48$) and non-IV-E social workers rated themselves as least satisfied with their jobs ($M = 2.20$). The internal consistency reliability of this instrument for this sample was .75.

The individual items on the Job Satisfaction scale were also examined and “Adequacy of resources for clients” was rated statistically significantly different among the three groups ($F = 4.77$, $p = .01$) with the non-social workers being most satisfied with this area and the IV-E

graduates being the least satisfied with this. Also, a statistically significant difference was found for “Promotional/career advancement opportunities” ($F = 3.04$, $p = .05$) with non-social workers being most satisfied and IV-E graduates being least satisfied. One other item approached statistical significance: “Overall job satisfaction” ($F = 2.94$, $p = .057$) with non-social workers being most satisfied and non-IV-E social workers being least satisfied. Table 21 shows the results of the mean comparisons of the scale total means and Table 22 displays the results of the comparisons of each item of the scale.

When this scale was examined based on social work education, non-social workers rated their job satisfaction statistically significantly higher ($t = -3.00$, $p = .00$) when compared to social workers (IV-E and non-IV-E) in the 2004 study. Table 23 displays the results of this analysis.

On the individual items of this scale, non-social workers were statistically significantly more satisfied with “Organizational support” ($t = -2.08$, $p = .04$), “Adequacy of resources for clients” ($t = -3.01$, $p = .00$), “Paperwork” ($t = -1.97$, $p = .05$), “Promotional/career advancement opportunities” ($t = -1.95$, $p = .05$), and “Overall job satisfaction” ($t = -2.42$, $p = .02$) with non-social workers being more satisfied with each of these areas. Table 24 shows the results of the comparison of the individual items of the job satisfaction measure.

Job satisfaction could not be compared between the 2004 and 2003 study participants as this scale was not included in the 2003 evaluation.

Internal Reliability of Scales

The internal consistency reliability of each of the scales used in this study was assessed for homogeneity using coefficient alpha (Rubin & Babbie, 1997). The results of these analyses were noted in the text and are found for all scales in Table 25.

Correlation of Scales

The mean scores of all five scales for all respondents were correlated and the results are found in Table 26. These correlations show the strong relationships between the various scales. High capability ratings were strongly correlated to greater professional commitment and higher intention to remain working for DFCS. Additionally, high capability ratings were negatively correlated with stress ratings. Professional commitment was strongly positively correlated with intention to remain, job satisfaction, and capabilities, and negatively correlated with job stress. Intention to remain working for DFCS was positively correlated with job satisfaction, professional commitment, and capabilities, and negatively correlated to job stress. The job stress scale was negatively correlated with ratings of capabilities, professional commitment, intention to remain employed at DFCS, and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was positively correlated to professional commitment and intention to remain, and negatively correlated with job stress.

Supervisor's Ratings

Each worker's supervisor was asked to rate his/her participating worker's capability on the same thirty items that the worker rated himself/herself using the same Likert scale. Supervisors were separated into three groups: those who supervised IV-E graduates (M = 3.59), those who supervised non-IV-E social workers (M = 3.45), and those who supervised non-social workers (M = 3.23). No statistically significant difference was found among the supervisors ratings of their workers on the mean total capability score ($F = 1.04$, $p = .36$).

A comparison of all 2004 supervisors' ratings of worker participants who had social work education to supervisors' ratings of those who did not was also computed. There was no statistically significant difference in total capabilities ratings by the supervisors of social workers (M = 3.52) as compared to supervisors of non-social workers (M = 3.32) ($t = 1.32$, $p = .19$).

The 2003 study did not separate the non-IV-E supervisors into those who supervised case managers with social work education and those without it. Therefore, the total group of supervisors could not be divided into the three groups as done with the 2004 data. Instead, a t-test was calculated comparing the mean of the total capabilities ratings by all IV-E supervisors (M = 3.58) and all other supervisors (M = 3.34) when the combined supervisors' ratings for 2004 and 2003 were examined. There was no statistical difference (t = 1.79, p = .076) between the mean of the total capabilities scores of the IV-E supervisors and all other supervisors.

All supervisors were asked to rate their worker's attitude toward social work using a five-point Likert scale with 1 = *Substandard* and 5 = *Superior*. Statistically significant differences were found among the three groups of supervisors of 2004 new employees (F = 5.24, p = .007) with IV-E graduates having the highest rated attitude (M = 3.65) and the non-social workers having the lowest rated attitude (M = .29). This analysis is found in Table 27.

A t-test was also computed to assess for differences between supervisors' ratings of all 2004 new social workers and all non-social workers. A statistically significant difference was found on attitude toward social work (t = 2.59, p = .011) between the social workers (M = 3.52) and the non-social workers (M = 3.32). Table 28 indicates the mean findings of this analysis.

Since the 2003 evaluation did not request information from supervisors that distinguished who supervised non-IV-E/426 social workers and who supervised non-social workers. Therefore, a comparison could not be done among the supervisors who direct the three different groups of workers. Instead, a t-test was completed between the supervisors of the IV-E/426 workers (M = 4.03) and supervisors of non-IV-E workers (M = 3.63). A statistically significant difference in attitude was found between these two groups of supervisors' ratings (t = 2.95, p = .004). Table 29 displays the means, standard deviations, and results of the t-test.

IV-E Ratings

The IV-E workers and supervisors were asked two quantitative questions specifically addressing the IV-E program. Graduates of the program were asked "How likely are you to recommend participation in the IV-E Child Welfare grant program to others*?"* with 1 = *Unlikely*, 2 = *Likely*, and 3 = *Very likely*. There were no statistical differences between the 2004 IV-E graduates (M = 2.18) and the 2003 IV-E graduates (M = 2.44) (t = 1.10, p = .28). The mean rating for the combined 2003 and 2004 graduates was 2.30 on the 3-point scale. Graduates were also asked "Overall, how well do you think the IV-E child welfare grant program prepared you for your job with DFCS?" Graduates responded on a four-point Likert scale with 1 = *Not at all prepared* to 4 = *Highly prepared*. There was no statistically significant difference between the ratings of the 2004 graduates (M =2.65) and the 2003 graduates (2.88) (t = .75, p = .46). The mean rating for the combined 2003 and 2004 graduates was 2.76, which indicated that graduates felt between *Somewhat prepared* and *Adequately prepared* for their jobs by the IV-E program. Table 30 shows the mean ratings for the IV-E graduates for each group of IV-E graduates and their combined ratings.

Supervisors of IV-E/426 graduates were asked "Do you recommend that the IV-E/426 program continue?" with a three-point Likert scale using 1 = *Do not recommend* and 3 = *Highly recommend*. There was no statistically significant difference between the 2003 and 2004 supervisors in their responses to this question (t = .86, p = .40). The mean score of the combined groups of supervisors was 2.39 on the 3-point scale; no supervisor indicated that he/she would not recommend the program. These participants were also asked "Would you recommend that supervisors hire graduates of the IV-E/426 program?" using the same three-point Likert scale. There was a statistically significant difference between the two groups of supervisors (t = 2.09, p

= .046) with the 2003 supervisors' mean rating being 2.53 and the 2004 supervisors' mean rating being 2.19 as displayed in Table 31. The combined rating for both groups resulted in a mean of 2.35 with no supervisor indicating that he/she would not recommend hiring graduates of the IV-E program.

Qualitative

Supervisors' Responses

All supervisors were asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their participating workers in open-ended questions. These responses were split among the three groups: those of supervisors of IV-E graduates, supervisors of non-IV-E social workers, and supervisors of non-social workers. The comments from each group were further segmented into remarks that pertained to knowledge, skills, attitudes, or personal characteristics. In the section involving the worker's strengths, all groups of supervisors indicated similar comments in the areas of attitudes and personal characteristics. Remarks that were included in the category of "attitudes" were responses such as 'team player', 'eager to learn', 'open to supervision'. Comments that were counted as "personal characteristics" were qualities such as 'dependable', 'conscientious', 'confident'. There did not appear to be significant differences among the types of qualities that were identified in these two areas by supervisors of the three different groups.

The area of "skills" included responses such as 'excellent documentation', 'meets deadlines', and 'able to build rapport with families quickly'. Several respondents in all groups of supervisors voiced comments regarding their workers having good organizational skills, good documentation skills, good communication skills, and being able to establish rapport well with children and families. Several supervisors of non-social workers indicated that their workers exhibited good skills in being assertive and confrontational with clients while none of the

supervisors of social workers, either IV-E or non-IV-E noted this as a strength of their participating worker.

Supervisors noted “knowledge” issues that involved comments such as ‘culturally sensitive and aware’, ‘understands the dynamics of domestic violence’, and ‘understands family systems theory’. However, almost all comments related to knowledge came from supervisors of workers who had a social work degree themselves, both those with IV-E education and those without it. The few remarks noted by the supervisors of the non-social workers that addressed areas of knowledge specifically indicated the relationship of that knowledge to some previous experience. Examples of this are: “has knowledge base of court system as she worked as a paralegal previously” and “this worker comes from a long history working with mental health; she can quickly identify areas of concern with children and families”. The majority of comments that were made by supervisors of social workers, both IV-E and non-IV-E graduates, addressed areas of knowledge and skills, while the majority of comments made by supervisors of non-social workers were related to attitudes and personal characteristics.

Some of the weaknesses of the workers in all three groups noted by their supervisors to include inexperience, lack of assertiveness and difficulty in confrontational interactions, lack of confidence and needing frequent supervision, poor time management and organizational skills, and becoming overwhelmed and stressed by the job. Lack of knowledge of policy and forms was also an area mentioned by supervisors of all three groups of workers, which might be expected with relatively new workers regardless of their educational backgrounds. In addition to these generalized comments about worker weaknesses, the only other negative issue noted by one supervisor of a IV-E graduate noted was that the worker needed more knowledge about the domestic violence and substance abuse problems that impact so many of the agency’s clients.

Issues identified only by the supervisors of the non-social workers included a lack of professional boundaries, a lack of knowledge about child development and child interviewing, and abrasiveness with clients.

Supervisors of IV-E graduates were also asked open-ended questions about whether they would recommend the program and recommend hiring program graduates. Comments were very positive from supervisors stating that they would recommend the program as it produced more "well-rounded and knowledgeable workers than those without social work degrees." Many of the supervisors indicated that the financial benefits provided the educational opportunity to many students who would not otherwise be able to pursue the education. Many supervisors also noted the importance of the field placement in DFCS as it provided an invaluable introduction to the agency and job demands. One supervisor commented that the IV-E program is best for workers who have had experience in the field in addition to the education as young, inexperienced workers are easily overwhelmed with the realities of the job. Another supervisor noted that the IV-E program offers students the opportunity to determine if child welfare is what they actually want to do; this supervisor stressed the importance of workers having passion for the work to become an asset to DFCS.

In responding to whether they would hire IV-E graduates, supervisors generally indicated that they would hire program graduates since they were better prepared for the job. However, several supervisors stated that they would not want to be forced to hire all program graduates; they were reluctant to give up a choice in hiring new workers. One supervisor encouraged careful selection of students for the program to increase the likelihood that the worker will want to work for DFCS beyond the 'payback' period.

When asked how the IV-E program could be improved, supervisors provided several suggestions. Some reiterated the importance of a DFCS field placement and stated that their program graduate had not been placed at DFCS during his/her education. Another supervisor noted that schools of social work need to be supportive of the work of DFCS; he/she stated that students reported negative comments about DFCS by university instructors. Several supervisors stated that students need a more realistic understanding of the field and the agency's typical clientele. One supervisor suggested that the internship responsibilities be as close as possible to a normal caseload so that the student will clearly understand what having a caseload would entail.

The last open-ended question that supervisors were given asked if they had identified any deficits in knowledge, skills, or disposition of their participating worker. Only two supervisors indicated any deficits in their worker's preparation. One supervisor stated that the worker needed an understanding of the multi-layered and multi-generational problems of the families served by DFCS. The other supervisor stated "mainly overall work experience and knowledge of issues facing our population". Additionally, this supervisor indicated that organizational skills and professional dress had been issues with his/her IV-E graduate.

IV-E Graduates' Responses

Program graduates were asked six open-ended questions. The first addressed the knowledge that the worker gained from the program. Graduates indicated that coursework gave them valuable information about abuse and neglect, cultural diversity, methods in conducting investigations and working with families, and assessment skills. Others noted that the field placement in DFCS provided an understanding of how the agency works, how each section works together and was good preparation for casework positions. Some graduates were less specific and stated that the program had given them a "good education" and a "good job". A few

graduates noted some personal growth with their education, such as learning not to take the job personally, not to judge others by their own standards or beliefs, and that every family cannot be saved.

When asked to identify specific skills that they acquired in the program, graduates listed skills such as ‘building rapport with families’, doing ‘good documentation’, ‘knowing different resources and community organizations’, ‘interviewing skills’, ‘tips on how to manage a caseload’, ‘tips about how to provide clients with effective services”, and ‘assessment skills’. Some graduates also reiterated responses similar to those regarding the knowledge they gained. These included information about abuse and neglect, cultural competency, child development, and family dynamics.

Another question asked if the student’s experience in the program impacted their professional dispositions. Most graduates indicated that the program had changed their disposition in some way. Examples of specific areas of impact noted are: ‘the ability to work with diverse families’, ‘understanding that people with different life experiences than my own are not wrong’, and ‘understanding that preserving the family is the goal so that I keep an open-mind when working with abuse/neglect victims.’ Others noted that the program increased their commitment to work with families and their respect for clients. Some additional comments were that the graduate learned how the NASW Code of Ethics affected them and the families with whom they work, and another graduate was helped to understand that families who receive positive support will send out positive accomplishments.

The next question asked if the graduate could recommend that the program adds any learning activities. Responses included information on child development stages, more practice in interviewing, information on domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse, and cultural

diversity were additional suggestions. Some other ideas were to have someone from DFCS share what the agency was all about, and some preparation on how to work with the non-professional people working in the field, including supervisors and managers.

Graduates were also asked if they would recommend that the IV-E program continue. ***All respondents*** indicated they would recommend that the program be continued. Graduates indicated that they appreciated the opportunities for the education and the automatic job placement. Several also mentioned that they are gaining valuable experience by working for DFCS. The benefit of the grant program attracting students to the field of child welfare was noted by several other graduates.

Finally, graduates were asked to identify any ways the IV-E program could be improved. One graduate stated that there should be more rigorous interviewing criteria at the time the grant is awarded as students can be unaware of how stressful child welfare can be. Others indicated that the program should be better organized and that the policies should not be changed each year. Several other graduates commented that work obligations should be enforced. An honest depiction of how professionals will be treated in a hierarchical setting with no respect for their education was suggested by several other workers. It was also recommended that the IV-E program allow DFCS field placements and that everyone in the IV-E program get the opportunity to meet and interact at least twice each year. These last two suggestions are currently part of the IV-E program through all the Georgia universities utilizing the funding.

Summary

This study used the sample of all new child welfare workers hired in Georgia during a four-month time period in 2004. Since the survey was sent to new workers almost a year after many of them were hired, a retention rate could be determined for the first eight to twelve

months of employment. It was found that 77.3% of the IV-E graduates were still working for DFCS at the time of the survey and 67.2% of the non-IV-E new workers continued as employees of DFCS.

The results of the data analyses indicated that there were no statistical differences among the three groups of new workers on their self-ratings of their capabilities of completing the tasks required of child welfare workers. This was also the result when the study participants were grouped into social workers and non-social workers and when the 2004 results were combined with the 2003 results. There were no statistically significant differences between the 2004 results and the 2003 results on the capabilities measure when IV-E graduates and non-IV-E social workers were compared; however, the 2004 non-social workers rated themselves statistically higher than the 2003 non-social workers.

When comparing the new workers' self-ratings to their supervisors' ratings there were no statistical differences found between the IV-E graduates and their supervisors or the non-IV-E social workers and their supervisors. However, there were statistically significant differences between the non-social workers' ratings of their own capabilities and their supervisors' ratings of their capabilities with the workers rating themselves higher than their supervisors.

The comparisons among and between the groups of 2004 new workers on the mean scores on the Professional Commitment and the Intent to Remain scales yielded no statistical differences. When the three groups of 2004 workers were compared to their counterpart 2003 groups, the 2003 non-IV-E social workers scored statistically higher on both the professional commitment and the intent to remain measures. When the 2004 data was combined with the 2003 results, the total group of IV-E graduates scored significantly highest among the three groups of workers on professional commitment.

Job stress appeared to be a factor that was perceived somewhat the same by all groups of participants as there were no statistically significant differences on this variable among or between any of the groups of new workers examined.

Of the three groups of 2004 new workers, non-social workers rated their job satisfaction significantly highest. Additionally, when the 2004 survey participants were grouped by social work education, the non-social workers scored statistically higher on this variable.

One of the most important findings of this study was the correlation analysis completed between the five dependent variables used in the survey. The only variables that did not show a statistically significant relationship were the capabilities scores and the job stress scores. All other dependent variables showed strong correlations.

Supervisors of new the new workers hired in 2004 reported that IV-E graduates showed the best attitude toward social work while non-IV-E social workers were rated the lowest on attitude. Qualitative questions asked of the IV-E graduates and their supervisors about the IV-E program showed overwhelming support for the IV-E program from both groups. All participants reported that they believed that the program should be continued and that they would recommend it to others.

Chapter 5 will discuss the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the limitations of the study, the implications for the IV-E program in Georgia, and recommendations for future studies on the Title IV-E program in Georgia.

Table 1

Survey Return Rates of New Case Managers with Different Educational Preparation Hired in 2004

Survey Group	Surveyed	Responded	Percentage
Title IV-E Graduates	17	17	100%
Title IV-E Graduates' Supervisors	17	16	94.1%
Non-IV-E New Workers	162	99	61.1%
Non-IV-E New Workers' Supervisors	99	64	64.6%
	295	196	66.4%

Table 2

Total Number of Study Participants in Each Comparison Group

Group	Participants
2004 IV-E Graduates	17
2004 Non-IV-E New Case Managers with a BSW or MSW	34
2004 Non-IV-E New Case Managers without a social work degree	65
2004 Supervisors of IV-E Graduates	16
2004 Supervisors of Non-IV-E New Case Managers with a BSW or MSW	17
2004 Supervisors of Non-IV-E New Case Managers without a social work degree	47
2003 and 2004 IV-E Graduates	33
2003 and 2004 New Case Managers with a BSW or MSW	55
2003 and 2004 New Case Managers without a BSW or MSW	94
2003 and 2004 Supervisors of IV-E Graduates	31
2003 and 2004 Supervisors of Non-IV-E New Case Managers	109

Table 3

Comparison of Study Participants' Demographic Variables for 2004 New Case Managers Using Chi-square

	IV-E Graduate	Non-IV-E Social Worker	Non-Social Worker	Chi Square	Signif.
Gender					
Male			8 (12.3%)		
Female	17 (100%)	34 (100%)	57 (87.7%)		
				6.74	.03*
Ethnicity					
Native American			1 (1.5%)		
Caucasian	10 (58.8%)	12 (35.3%)	37 (56.9%)		
African American	7 (41.2%)	21 (61.8%)	26 (40%)		
Multi-racial			1 (1.5%)		
Other		1 (2.9%)			
				8.678	.37
Age					
20 – 25	12 (70.6%)	10 (29.4%)	20 (30.8%)		
26 – 30	2 (11.8%)	8 (23.5%)	19 (29.2%)		
31 – 35	2 (11.8%)	6 (17.6%)	15 (23%)		
36 – 40		3 (8.8%)	4 (6.2%)		
41 – 45	1 (5.9%)	2 (5.9%)	3 (4.6%)		
46 – 50		1 (2.9%)	4 (6.2%)		

	IV-E Graduate	Non-IV-E Social Worker	Non-Social Worker	Chi Square	Signif.
51 – 55		4 (11.8%)			
				21.78	.04*
Educational Level					
Bachelor's Degree	11 (64.7%)	25 (73.5%)	58 (89.2%)		
Master's Degree	6 (35.3%)	9 (26.5%)	7 (10.8%)		
				7.04	.03*

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 4

Comparison of Age Range and Education Level for the Combined 2004 and 2003 New Case Managers using Chi-square

	IV-E Graduate n = 33	Non- IV-E Social Worker n = 55	Non-Social Worker n = 94	Pearson Chi-Square	Significance
Age					
20 – 25	19 (57.6%)	17 (30.9%)	29 (30.9%)		
26 – 30	6 (18.2%)	15 (27.3%)	24 (25.5%)		
31 – 35	4 (12.1%)	10 (18.2%)	18 (19.1%)		
36 – 40	3 (9%)	4 (7.3%)	12 (12.8%)		
41 – 45	1 (3%)	3 (5.5%)	5 (5.3%)		
46 – 50		1 (1.8%)	6 (6.4%)		
51 -55		5 (9%)			
				23.19	.03*
Education					
Bachelor’s Degree	17 (51.5%)	40 (72.7%)	83 (88.3%)		
Master’s Degree	16 (48.5%)	15 (27.3%)	11 (11.7%)		
				19.4	.00*

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 5

Comparison of Mean Total Scores on the Capabilities Scale between Case Managers' Self-ratings and their Supervisors' Ratings using t-tests

	n	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
IV-E Graduates	17	3.70	.512			
IV-E Graduates' Supervisors	16	3.56	.498			
				.842	.41	
Non-IV-E Social Workers	33	3.79	.543			
Non-IV-E Social Workers' Supervisors	16	3.45	.684			
				1.87	.07	
Non-Social Workers	64	3.73	.491			
Non-Social Workers' Supervisors	45	3.35	.641			
				3.58	.00*	.32

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 6

Comparison of Mean Scores on the Capabilities Scale for the 2004 and 2003 Three Groups of New Workers Using t-tests

	n	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
2004 IV-E Graduates	17	3.70	.512			
2003 IV-E Graduates	16	3.57	.678	.631	.53	
2004 Non-IV-E Social Workers	33	3.79	.543			
2003 Non-IV-E Social Workers	19	3.86	.553	-.447	.66	
2004 Non-Social Workers	64	3.73	.491			
2003 Non-Social Workers	29	3.48	.740	1.953	.05*	.20

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 7

Comparison of Mean Total Scores on the Capabilities Scale between All Non-IV-E New Case Managers' Self-ratings and their Supervisors' Ratings using t-tests

	n	M	SD	t	p	Effect-size *r*
IV-E Graduates	33	3.64	.592			
IV-E Graduates' Supervisors	30	3.58	.491			
				.456	.65	
Non-IV-E New Workers	145	3.71	.575			
Non-IV-E New Workers' Supervisors	103	3.35	.668			
				4.55	.00*	.28

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 8

Summary of Item Means and Standard Deviations for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for All Three Groups of New Workers Hired in 2004

	IV-E Graduates n = 17		Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 34		Non-Social Workers n = 65	
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
23	4.06	.83	3.91	.90	4.22	.65
24	4.24	.66	4.42	.61	4.05	.84
25	3.71	.59	4.06	.75	3.83	.63
26	3.00	.79	3.36	.96	3.35	.82
27	4.18	.53	4.24	.70	4.03	.73
28	3.56	.81	3.84	.81	3.65	.80
29	3.82	.81	3.85	.96	3.91	.86
30	3.92	.76	3.83	.70	3.57	.90
31	3.73	.65	3.47	.61	3.51	.88
32	4.35	.61	4.44	.61	4.49	.59
33	4.12	.70	4.06	.79	4.09	.70
34	3.88	.99	3.60	.87	3.74	1.08
35	3.59	.71	3.76	.66	3.70	.75
36	3.76	.75	3.91	.73	3.84	.72

Item	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
37	4.29	.47	3.91	.79	4.03	.64
38	3.69	.70	3.94	.70	3.81	.69
39	3.59	.87	3.48	.67	3.58	.83
40	3.47	.87	3.64	.86	3.67	.71
41	3.75	.58	3.84	.69	3.64	.75
42	3.69	.87	3.84	.85	3.66	.82
43	3.75	.77	4.06	.76	3.75	.67
44	3.29	.99	3.88	.79	3.57	.80
45	3.40	.84	3.33	.78	3.30	.91
46	3.47	1.01	3.67	.96	3.63	.87
47	4.15	.55	3.74	1.06	3.80	.78
48	3.18	.88	3.75	.76	3.60	.77
49	3.24	.83	3.29	1.06	3.34	.85
50	3.41	.94	3.53	1.11	3.25	.95
51	4.00	1.00	3.81	.74	3.78	.72
52	3.85	.80	3.41	1.12	3.36	.85

Table 9

Summary of Item Means and Standard Deviations for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for All Social Workers and All Non-Social Workers Hired in 2004

	All Social Workers n = 51		Non-Social Workers n = 65	
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD
23	3.96	.87	4.22	.65
24	4.36	.63	4.05	.84
25	3.94	.71	3.83	.63
26	3.24	.92	3.35	.82
27	4.22	.64	4.03	.73
28	3.75	.81	3.65	.80
29	3.84	.90	3.91	.86
30	3.86	.71	3.57	.90
31	3.57	.63	3.51	.88
32	4.41	.61	4.49	.59
33	4.08	.75	4.09	.70
34	3.67	.89	3.74	1.08
35	3.70	.68	3.70	.75
36	3.86	.74	3.84	.72

Item	M	SD	M	SD
37	4.04	.72	4.03	.64
38	3.86	.71	3.81	.69
39	3.52	.74	3.58	.83
40	3.58	.86	3.67	.71
41	3.81	.65	3.64	.75
42	3.79	.85	3.66	.82
43	3.96	.77	3.75	.67
44	3.67	.90	3.57	.80
45	3.35	.79	3.30	.91
46	3.60	.97	3.63	.87
47	3.88	.94	3.80	.78
48	3.55	.84	3.60	.77
49	3.27	.98	3.34	.85
50	3.49	1.04	3.25	.95
51	3.88	.83	3.78	.72
52	3.55	1.04	3.36	.85

Table 10

Summary of Item Means and t-test Results for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for 2004 Non-Social Workers and 2003 Non-Social Workers

Item	2004 Non-Social Workers n = 51		2003 Non-Social Workers n = 65				effect-size
Number	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	*r*
23	4.22	.65	3.97	.78	1.62	.11	
24	4.05	.84	4.21	.68	-.91	.37	
25	3.83	.63	3.66	.77	1.14	.26	
26	3.35	.82	2.93	.92	2.22	.03*	.23
27	4.03	.73	4.03	.87	-.02	.99	
28	3.65	.80	3.17	1.09	2.25	.03*	.24
29	3.91	.86	3.34	1.01	2.77	.01*	.29
30	3.57	.90	3.45	.96	.47	.64	
31	3.51	.88	3.20	1.11	1.18	.24	
32	4.49	.59	4.28	.70	1.55	.13	
33	4.09	.70	4.21	.62	.76	.45	
34	3.74	1.08	3.47	1.12	.85	.40	
35	3.70	.75	3.79	.86	-.51	.61	
36	3.84	.72	3.69	.85	.91	.37	
37	4.03	.64	3.97	.94	.39	.70	

							effect-size
Item	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	*r*
38	3.81	.69	3.55	.95	1.50	.14	
39	3.58	.83	3.24	.83	1.86	.07	
40	3.67	.71	3.43	1.10	1.26	.21	
41	3.64	.75	3.55	.83	.50	.62	
42	3.66	.82	3.72	1.16	-.32	.75	
43	3.75	.67	3.55	1.12	1.03	.30	
44	3.57	.80	3.28	1.03	1.50	.14	
45	3.30	.91	2.87	.97	1.77	.08	
46	3.63	.87	2.86	1.11	3.61	.00*	.36
47	3.80	.78	3.50	1.10	1.38	.17	
48	3.60	.77	3.59	.95	.09	.93	
49	3.34	.85	2.59	1.05	3.67	.00*	.37
50	3.25	.95	2.86	1.11	1.74	.09	
51	3.78	.72	2.89	.93	4.02	.00*	.47
52	3.36	.85	3.05	1.05	1.34	.22	

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 11

Summary of Item Means for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for the Combined 2003 and 2004 Three Groups of New Workers

Item Number	IV-E Graduates n = 33		Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 55		Non-Social Workers n = 94	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
23	4.15	.71	4.00	.87	4.14	.70
24	4.22	.66	4.42	.66	4.10	.79
25	3.76	.83	4.04	.73	3.77	.68
26	2.88	.96	3.31	.95	3.22	.87
27	4.13	.66	4.28	.71	4.03	.77
28	3.57	.82	3.72	.88	3.51	.91
29	3.67	.99	3.82	.94	3.73	.94
30	3.73	1.00	3.80	.69	3.53	.92
31	3.27	1.03	3.48	.67	3.41	.97
32	4.36	.65	4.47	.60	4.43	.63
33	4.12	.78	4.17	.82	4.13	.68
34	3.53	1.07	3.69	.86	3.65	1.09
35	3.50	.80	3.87	.68	3.73	.78
36	3.81	.82	3.88	.74	3.80	.76

Item	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
37	4.25	.62	4.04	.77	4.01	.74
38	3.63	.83	4.00	.67	3.73	.78
39	3.50	.88	3.54	.67	3.48	.84
40	3.45	.97	3.70	.82	3.60	.85
41	3.68	.75	3.88	.65	3.61	.77
42	3.53	.92	3.83	.83	3.68	.93
43	3.81	.83	4.04	.76	3.68	.84
44	3.33	.99	3.85	.79	3.48	.88
45	3.10	1.04	3.38	.76	3.14	.95
46	3.22	1.16	3.52	.96	3.40	1.01
47	3.89	1.01	3.76	.99	3.72	.88
48	3.18	.81	3.75	.76	3.60	.83
49	3.21	.86	3.33	1.07	3.11	.98
50	3.06	1.11	3.41	1.08	3.13	1.01
51	3.94	.98	3.78	.76	3.52	.89
52	3.81	.88	3.40	1.03	3.26	.92

Table 12

Summary of Item Means for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for All Social Workers and All Non-Social Workers Hired in both 2003 and 2004

	All Social Workers		Non-Social Workers	
Item	n = 88		n = 94	
Number	M	SD	M	SD
23	4.06	.81	4.14	.70
24	4.34	.66	4.10	.79
25	3.93	.77	3.77	.68
26	3.15	.97	3.22	.87
27	4.22	.69	4.03	.77
28	3.66	.86	3.51	.91
29	3.76	.96	3.73	.94
30	3.77	.82	3.53	.92
31	3.40	.83	3.41	.97
32	4.43	.62	4.13	.68
33	4.15	.80	.09	.70
34	3.64	.93	3.65	1.09
35	3.73	.75	3.73	.78
36	3.86	.77	3.80	.76
37	4.11	.72	4.01	.74

Item	M	SD	M	SD
38	3.86	.75	3.73	.78
39	3.52	.75	3.48	.84
40	3.60	.88	3.60	.85
41	3.80	.69	3.61	.77
42	3.72	.87	3.68	.93
43	3.95	.79	3.68	.84
44	3.65	.90	3.48	.88
45	3.29	.87	3.14	.95
46	3.40	1.04	3.40	1.01
47	3.81	1.00	3.72	.88
48	3.53	.82	3.60	.83
49	3.28	.99	3.11	.98
50	3.27	1.10	3.13	1.01
51	3.84	.85	3.52	.89
52	3.56	.99	3.26	.92

Table 13

Summary of Item Means and t-test Results for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for 2004 Non-Social Workers and their Supervisors

Item Number	Non-social Workers n = 65 M	SD	Non-social workers' Supervisors n = 47 M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
23	4.22	.65	3.70	.72	3.94	.000*	.354
24	4.05	.84	3.62	.75	2.73	.007*	.261
25	3.83	.63	3.49	.73	2.59	.011*	.242
26	3.35	.82	3.16	.77	1.28	.203	
27	4.03	.73	3.67	.67	2.64	.010*	.249
28	3.65	.80	3.40	.94	1.42	.159	
29	3.91	.86	3.75	.78	.97	.333	
30	3.57	.90	3.16	.92	1.95	.055	
31	3.51	.88	2.96	.84	2.49	.016*	.305
32	4.49	.59	3.76	.74	5.79	.000*	.479
33	4.09	.70	3.64	.74	3.21	.002*	.298
34	3.74	1.08	3.00	1.10	2.59	.012*	.321
35	3.70	.75	3.33	.71	2.60	.011*	.246
36	3.84	.72	3.31	.70	3.85	.000*	.350

Item	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	Effect-size *r*
37	4.03	.64	3.55	.63	3.90	.000*	.354
38	3.81	.69	3.39	.69	3.16	.002*	.291
39	3.58	.83	3.11	.91	2.83	.006*	.261
40	3.67	.71	3.18	.79	3.36	.001*	.310
41	3.64	.75	3.36	.76	1.86	.066	
42	3.66	.82	3.18	.81	2.96	.004*	.282
43	3.75	.67	3.20	.79	3.81	.000*	.351
44	3.57	.80	3.09	.80	3.06	.003*	.287
45	3.30	.91	2.73	.78	2.62	.011*	.319
46	3.63	.87	3.31	.85	1.93	.056	
47	3.80	.78	3.34	.73	2.99	.004*	.291
48	3.60	.77	3.20	.81	2.61	.010*	.245
49	3.34	.85	2.84	.94	3.00	.003*	.269
50	3.25	.95	3.07	.87	1.00	.320	
51	3.78	.72	3.36	.93	2.63	.010*	.245
52	3.36	.85	2.84	.99	2.62	.010*	.271

* Significant at the .05 level

Table 14

Summary of Item Means and t-test Results for Each Item of the Capabilities Measure for 2004 and 2003 Non-IV-E New Workers and their Supervisors

	All Non-IV-E New Workers n = 145		All Non-IV-E New Workers' Supervisors n = 103				
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
23	4.09	.76	3.81	.74	2.95	.00*	.18
24	4.21	.76	3.69	.80	5.29	.00*	.32
25	3.87	.70	3.49	.83	3.99	.00*	.24
26	3.26	.90	3.15	.89	.92	.36	
27	4.12	.76	3.70	.71	4.44	.00*	.28
28	3.59	.90	3.36	.88	1.87	.62	
29	3.77	.94	3.78	.74	-.163	.87	
30	3.63	.84	3.19	.93	3.26	.00*	.24
31	3.43	.87	2.97	.82	3.32	.00*	.26
32	4.44	.62	3.82	.76	7.21	.00*	.41
33	4.14	.73	3.75	.75	4.12	.00*	.26
34	3.67	1.00	3.20	1.09	2.74	.01*	.22
35	3.78	.75	3.50	.81	2.79	.01*	.18
36	3.83	.75	3.38	.81	4.46	.00*	.28
37	4.02	.75	3.58	.77	4.61	.00*	.28

Item	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
38	3.83	.75	3.40	.76	4.39	.00*	.27
39	3.50	.78	3.21	.94	2.69	.01*	.17
40	3.63	.84	3.22	.82	3.90	.00*	.24
41	3.71	.74	3.33	.80	3.81	.00*	.24
42	3.73	.90	3.34	.84	3.50	.00*	.22
43	3.81	.82	3.36	.84	4.20	.00*	.26
44	3.61	.87	3.08	.91	4.69	.00*	.29
45	3.24	.88	2.76	1.03	3.12	.00*	.24
46	3.44	.99	3.31	.98	1.02	.31	
47	3.73	.92	3.41	.86	2.63	.01*	.18
48	3.66	.80	3.36	.91	2.74	.01*	.17
49	3.19	1.02	2.83	1.03	2.77	.01*	.17
50	3.23	1.04	3.15	1.02	.61	.55	
51	3.61	.85	3.19	.94	3.62	.00*	.23
52	3.39	.99	3.03	.97	2.34	.00*	.18

* Significant at the .05 level

Table 15

Mean Scores on the Professional Commitment Scale for New Workers Hired in 2004 and New Workers Hired in 2003 Using t-tests

	n	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
2004 IV-E Graduates	17	3.16	.611			
2003 IV-E Graduates	16	3.14	.564	.09	.93	
2004 Non-IV-E Social Workers	34	2.97	.569			
2003 Non-IV-E Social Workers	21	3.30	.525	-2.17	.035*	.29
2004 Non-Social Workers	65	2.87	.529			
2003 Non-Social Workers	29	2.88	.603	-.05	.96	

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 16

Comparison of Individual Items on the Professional Commitment Scale for the 2004 Non-IV-E Social Workers and the 2003 Non-IV-E Social Workers Using t-tests

	2004 Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 34		2003 Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 21				
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
53	3.21	.73	3.30	.80	-.44	.66	
56	3.18	.72	3.20	.70	-.12	.91	
59	2.44	.99	3.10	.83	-2.52	.02*	.34
61	3.00	.85	3.52	.87	-2.19	.03*	.29
62	3.29	.72	3.67	.58	-2.01	.05*	.28
64	2.74	.93	3.05	1.02	-1.16	.25	

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 17

Mean Total Scores on the Professional Commitment Scale for New Workers Hired in 2004 Combined with New Workers Hired in 2003 Using ANOVA

	n	M	SD	F	p	*eta*
IV-E Graduates	33	3.16	.579			
Non-IV-E Social Workers	55	3.10	.571			
Non-Social Workers	94	2.88	.550			
				4.36	.01*	.22

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 18

Mean Scores of Individual Items on the Professional Commitment Scale for New Workers Hired in 2004 Combined with New Workers Hired in 2003 using ANOVA

	IV-E Graduates n = 33		Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 55		Non-Social Workers n = 94				
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F	p	*eta*
53	3.18	.81	3.24	.75	3.17	.72	.15	.86	
56	3.27	.80	3.19	.70	2.76	.79	8.42	.00*	.25
59	2.76	.71	2.69	.98	2.81	.77	.34	.72	
61	3.48	.62	3.20	.89	2.98	.70	5.82	.00*	.20
62	3.33	.65	3.44	.69	3.07	.66	5.61	.00*	.21
64	2.91	.89	2.85	.97	2.43	.76	6.13	.00*	.28

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 19

Mean Total Scores and Item Means for the Professional Commitment Scale for All Social Workers and All Non-Social Workers Hired in both 2003 and 2004 using t-tests

Total and Item Number	All Social Workers n = 88 M	SD	Non-Social Workers n = 94 M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
Total Scale:	3.12	.57	2.88	.55		.00*	.21
Individual Items:							
53	3.22	.77	3.17	.72		.68	
56	3.22	.74	2.76	.79		.00*	.29
59	2.72	.88	2.81	.77		.46	
61	3.31	.81	2.98	.70		.00*	.21
62	3.40	.67	3.07	.66		.00*	.24
64	2.87	.94	2.43	.76		.00*	.25

* Significant at the .01 level

Table 20

Comparison of Mean Total Scores and Individual Item Scores on the Intent to Remain Measure for 2004 and 2003 Non-IV-E Social Workers Using t-tests

	2004 Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 34		2003 Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 21				
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
Total Scale	2.41	.67	2.88	.57	-2.76	.01*	.21
54	2.47	.93	2.71	.78	-1.00	.32	
55	2.12	.91	2.52	.68	-1.76	.09	
57	2.26	1.02	2.71	.90	-1.65	.10	
58	2.36	.90	2.76	.62	-1.78	.08	
60	2.68	.91	3.38	.80	-2.91	.01*	.38
63	2.53	.99	3.19	.93	-2.46	.02*	.33

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 21

Analysis of Variance of Mean Total Scores on the Job Satisfaction Scale for New Workers Hired in 2004

	n	M	SD	F	p	*eta*
IV-E Graduates	17	2.30	.59			
Non-IV-E Social Workers	34	2.20	.45			
Non-Social Workers	65	2.48	.39			
				4.78	.01*	.28

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 22

Analysis of Variance of Individual Items on the Job Satisfaction Scale for the Three Groups of New Workers Hired in 2004

	IV-E Social Workers n = 17		Non-IV-E Social Workers n = 34		Non-Social Workers n = 65				
Item Number	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F	p	eta
71	2.29	.99	1.79	.73	2.06	.79	2.42	.09	
72	1.76	.66	1.72	.58	1.98	.72	1.94	.15	
73	2.41	.94	2.21	.98	2.60	.72	2.5	.09	
74	2.56	.89	2.38	.92	2.62	.63	1.05	.35	
75	2.65	.70	2.41	.70	2.69	.53	2.42	.09	
76	2.12	.70	2.44	.82	2.60	.68	3.04	.05*	.24
77	2.06	.75	2.21	.78	2.55	.64	4.77	.01*	.29
78	2.47	.87	2.41	.70	2.72	.55	2.94	.057	

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 23

Comparison of Mean Scores on the Job Satisfaction Scale for All New Social Workers and New Non-Social Workers Hired in 2004 Using a t-test

	n	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
Social Workers	51	2.23	.494			
Non-Social Workers	65	2.48	.386	-3.00	.00*	.27

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 24

Comparison of Individual Items on the Job Satisfaction Scale for 2004 Social Workers and Non-Social Workers Using t-tests

Item Number	2004 Social Workers n = 51 M	SD	2004 Non-Social Workers n = 65 M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
71	1.96	.85	2.06	.79	-.66	.51	
72	1.73	.60	1.98	.72	-1.97	.05*	.19
73	2.27	.96	2.60	.72	-2.08	.04*	.19
74	2.44	.91	2.62	.63	-1.22	.22	
75	2.49	.70	2.69	.53	-1.77	.08	
76	2.33	.79	2.60	.68	-1.95	.05*	.18
77	2.16	.77	2.55	.64	-3.01	.00*	.27
78	2.43	.76	2.72	.55	-2.42	.02*	.21

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 25

Internal Consistency Reliability Assessment using Coefficient Alpha for Each Measure Used for the Total Sample of Respondents

Measure	# Items on Scale	Alpha	n
Capabilities Scale	30	.96	196
Professional Commitment Scale	6	.82	116
Intent to Remain Scale	6	.84	116
Job Stress Scale	6	.88	116
Job Satisfaction Scale	8	.75	116

Table 26

Correlation between Scales

	Capabilities	Professional Commitment	Intent to Remain	Job Stress	Job Satisfaction
Capabilities	1.000				
n = 178					
Professional	.355**	1.000			
Commitment	p < .000				
n = 178					
Intent to Remain	.309**	.742**	1.000		
n = 178	p < .000	p < .000			
Job Stress	-.281*	-.405**	-.474**	1.000	
n = 114	p < .002	p < .000	p < .000		
Job Satisfaction	.120	.278*	.431**	-.458**	1.000
n = 114	p < .202	p < .003	p < .000	p < .000	

*Significant at the .005 level

**Significant at the .001 level

Table 27

Comparison of Mean Scores on the Attitude Rating for 2004 New Workers' Supervisors' Ratings Using ANOVA

	n	M	SD	F	p	*eta*
IV-E Graduates' Supervisors	16	4.06	.77			
Non-IV-E Social Workers' Supervisors	17	3.65	.70			
Non-Social Workers' Supervisors	45	3.47	.55			
				5.24	.007*	.35

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 28

Comparison of Mean Scores on the Attitude Rating for 2004 Social Workers' and Non-Social Workers' Supervisors' Ratings Using a t-test

	n	M	SD	t	p	Effect-size *r*
Supervisors of						
Social Workers	32	3.85	.76			
Supervisors of						
Non-Social Workers	45	3.47	.55	2.59	.011*	.42

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 29

Comparison of Mean Scores on the Attitude Rating by the Combined Groups of 2004 and 2003 IV-E Graduates' Supervisors' Ratings and the Combined Groups of 2004 and 2003 Non-IV-E New Workers' Supervisors' Ratings Using a t-test

	n	M	SD	t	p	effect-size *r*
Supervisors of IV-E Graduates	31	4.03	.80			
Supervisors of non-IV-E New Workers	107	3.63	.64			
				2.95	.004*	.27

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 30

Mean Ratings by IV-E Graduates on Quantitative Questions Regarding the IV-E Program for 2004 and 2003 Separately and Combined

	2004 IV-E Graduates n = 17		2003 IV-E Graduates n = 16		Combined 2004 and 2003 IV-E Graduates n = 33	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
How likely are you to recommend participation in the IV-E child Welfare grant program to others?	2.18	.64	2.44	.73	2.30	.68
Overall, how well do you think the IV-E child welfare grant program prepared you for you job with DFCS?	2.65	.86	2.88	.89	2.76	.87

Table 31

Comparison of 2004 and 2003 IV-E Graduates' Supervisors Ratings on Quantitative Questions Regarding the IV-E Program

	2004 IV-E Graduates' Supervisors n = 16		2003 IV-E Graduates' Supervisors n = 15			
	M	SD	M	SD	t	p
Do you recommend that the IV-E program continue?	2.31	.48	2.47	.52	.86	.40
Would you recommend that supervisors hire graduates of the IV-E program?	2.19	.40	2.53	.52	2.09	.046*

*Significant at the .05 level

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this formative evaluation of the Title IV-E program in Georgia was to provide information to DFCS and the universities about the program graduates' preparation for child welfare work and to examine differences between these new workers and other new workers hired by the state to do child welfare work. Additionally, retention rates of the IV-E graduates were compared to other newly hired child welfare staff. Surveys were sent to all new DFCS workers hired during a four-month period in 2004. These surveys included self-report measures for capability to complete specific child welfare responsibilities, professional commitment, intention to remain working at DFCS, job satisfaction, and job stress. These workers' supervisors were also surveyed and the same measure of capabilities was used. Title IV-E program graduates and their supervisors were also asked several quantitative and open-ended questions about the IV-E program. Chapter 5 discusses the results of the data analyses that were completed, the limitations of the study, and the implication for the program and future research.

Major Findings

This study replicated the DFCS 2003 evaluation of the Title IV-E/426 program graduates, but also took the evaluation further in the examination of the program. This evaluation added several new measures and included a more comprehensive data analyses.

As in the 2003 study, no statistical differences were found among groups on the mean scores of the capabilities scale in the current study. Speculating about why there were no

statistically significant differences among groups in the mean scores of this scale, the researcher who completed the 2003 study suggested that *the reason for this is that the more you know, the more you know you don't know* (Saturday, J., 2004). Better understanding of the complexities of the human mind, child development, and family dynamics may foster the awareness that each child welfare client's situation is unique and cannot be treated in a routine way. This may have led social workers to the realization that one can never know all the answers when dealing with ever-changing, unique individuals. Thus, workers with that level of understanding may rate their capabilities lower than others. Certainly the results of the comparison between each group of workers and their supervisors supported the idea that social workers, especially IV-E trained graduates, had a better understanding of their own capabilities than did the non-social workers. There was no difference in the mean capabilities scores of IV-E graduates and their supervisors, while the non-social workers believed they were much more capable than their own supervisors believed they were. Another factor may be linked to one of the goals of social work education: to teach students critical thinking skills, not only to assess clients and systems, but to evaluate continually one's own interactions, interventions, and practice. Perhaps the results of this study reflected the success of the schools of social work in instilling the capacity for critical thinking into their graduates. Some new employees in the group of non-IV-E social workers and the group on non-social workers had rated themselves a perfect "5.00" in terms of their own capabilities, while the highest mean score for the capabilities scale for IV-E graduates was 4.73.

Another issue that may have been a determining factor was that 2004 new hires completed the surveys approximately one year after they were hired. After a year of working as a case manager, one would expect all new hires to have been somewhat comfortable with their abilities to handle various aspects of the job. Therefore, some of the lack of significant

differences may have been due to the fact that all new hires had experienced considerable learning during their first year of employment. Also, case managers who believed that they were not capable of performing the tasks related to the job may have left the agency as eighty-four people hired during the target time period had left the agency by the time the study was conducted. The final consideration of the results of the capabilities scale was that a self-rating scale may not have been the best indication of an individual's actual job performance. It was possible that even if a worker was confident about his/her own capabilities, he/she may not be capable of actually performing the delineated job tasks and skills.

On the professional commitment scale there were no statistically significant differences among the three groups of new workers or when the participants were separated into the group of social workers compared to non-social workers. It seemed surprising that social workers would not indicate greater professional commitment than those without social work education. One possible explanation for this may have been the organizational turmoil that was occurring during 2004 with a new DFCS director who made numerous abrupt changes to policies and procedures. These changes impacted the required duties of front-line workers and some social workers reported anecdotally that some of these changes were contradictory to the social work values and ethics that they were taught in school. The 2004 social workers' lower scores on the job satisfaction scale may also have reflected this and may have impacted their feelings of professional commitment.

Although there were no statistically significant differences found among the three groups of new workers hired during 2004 or between groups when these same participants were divided into the group of all social workers compared to all non-social workers, statistically significant differences were found when the 2003 and 2004 participants were combined. In a comparison of

all IV-E graduates, all non-IV-E social workers, and all non-social workers statistically significant differences were found with IV-E graduates having the highest scores and the non-social workers showing the lowest levels of professional commitment.

The intent to remain scale did not show a significant difference among the groups of workers. One goal of the IV-E program was that social workers who have the opportunity to work at DFCS will eventually have a career within the agency. Some of the IV-E/426 graduates' comments in the qualitative section of the survey appeared be important when considering the graduates' job satisfaction and intent to remain scale scores. Although the IV-E/426 graduates did not rate their intention to remain employed at DFCS significantly higher than the workers in the other groups, their retention rate from their start date to the time of the study was about 10% higher than the non-IV-E/426 new case managers. It may have been that IV-E graduates did not feel adequately compensated for their social work education, which was targeted toward child welfare practice. These graduates reported few promotional opportunities within DFCS even with their specialized education; indication of this was noted in the results on the job satisfaction scale. Frustration may have been experienced by IV-E graduates due to working in an environment where social work knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values were not always rewarded.

Job stress was not rated significantly different among the three groups of workers in this study. It was hypothesized that a better prepared worker may have perceived case management responsibilities as less stressful. This idea was not supported by the results of this study as the stress of the case management jobs was reported to be essentially the same across all three groups of new workers. Again, this may have been the result of the DFCS director changing

policy so that all reports of child abuse and neglect had field investigations completed resulting in higher caseload and increased bureaucratic demands.

The Job Satisfaction scale did show a significant difference among groups with the non-social workers having been the most satisfied overall and the non-IV-E social workers indicated being the least satisfied overall. Title IV-E graduates were the least satisfied in the specific area of promotional/career advancement opportunities and non-social workers were the most satisfied. A statistically significant difference was also found in overall job satisfaction between the participants when they were separated into two groups: those with social work education and those without it. The group of social workers (IV-E and non-IV-E) was also significantly less satisfied in the specific areas of paperwork, organizational support, promotional/career advancement opportunities, and adequacy of resources for clients. It could be assumed that most of the new non-social workers had selected their college major area of study with the intention of doing something other than a case management position with DFCS. It may have been that they were unable to secure employment in their chosen field and were quite grateful for the opportunity to have a job in another profession, which might account for their greater satisfaction. People who chose to enter a school of social work may be somewhat idealistic about what they will be able to do in helping people once they are working in child welfare. The reality of work in the field with many limitations on what can be done to change other people or their situations may have impacted these social workers' satisfaction. In essence, social workers may have had higher expectations of their ability to be change agents than other new case managers. This concept was reflected in the result that showed that there was a statistically significant difference among the groups of workers in their satisfaction with the adequacy of resources for

clients. Non-social workers indicated the highest satisfaction with this and IV-E graduates, and social workers in general, showed the lowest satisfaction.

The relationships among the five scales used in this study were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. It is important to note that these measures did show considerable relationships between each other. Statistically significant differences were found between each pair of these variables except the capabilities scale and the job satisfaction scale. The largest strength of correlation was between the professional commitment scale and the intent to remain scale. All other correlations were moderate in strength. These results indicate that the variables of professional commitment, intent to remain, job stress, and job satisfaction have relationships with each other and with the capabilities measure.

Supervisors were asked to rate their participating worker's attitude toward social work. There was a significant difference found among the supervisors' ratings of the three groups of workers with the IV-E/426 graduates rating the highest and non-social workers the lowest. Additionally, when the 2004 new workers were separated into the group of all social workers compared to the group of all non-social workers, there was a statistically significant difference found with supervisors indicating that social workers had a better attitude than non-social workers. When the 2004 participants were combined with the 2003 participants, attitude ratings for all IV-E graduates showed a statistically significantly higher rating than all non-IV-E new workers. Thus, the IV-E graduates were rated to have the best attitudes toward social work in all the comparisons completed in this study. Despite the fact that program graduates indicated less satisfaction with their jobs, these workers did not seem to extend it to their feelings about their chosen profession as perceived by their supervisors.

All supervisors were asked to identify strengths and weaknesses of their participating workers. Many comments were very similar in all groups, particularly when addressing qualities that were personal characteristics or attitudes. Examples of these are: ‘cares about clients’, ‘learns quickly’, ‘dedicated’, ‘team player’, ‘independent’, and ‘conscientious’. Supervisors of social workers did make more comments about their workers’ skills and knowledge than supervisors of non-social workers; over 60% of the comments from supervisors of social workers were related to these areas as opposed to only 27% of the comments from the supervisors of non-social workers. In assessing weaknesses, supervisors of non-social workers indicated problem areas related to knowledge or skills in almost 70% of their comments, while supervisors of social workers mentioned skills and knowledge-related issues as problem areas in less than 22% of their comments. Similar weaknesses were noted in all three groups of supervisors’ comments. These included ‘lack of experience’, ‘lack of knowledge about policy’, ‘poor organizational skills’, ‘poor time management skills’, ‘needs too much supervision’, and ‘needs to become more confident’. Several comments were made about non-social workers being aggressive and confrontational; one was noted to be abrasive. None of the comments about either group of social workers identified these issues. In fact, supervisors of social workers were more likely to indicate that their worker was not sufficiently assertive and handled confrontations with difficulty. This may be related to the idea that social workers may have viewed their role as a helper, while non-social workers may have seen themselves as an investigator/enforcer.

Both IV-E graduates and their supervisors indicated that they would recommend the child welfare grant program to others. No participant gave a negative comment about the program, although one supervisor recommended that the IV-E participants have some social work experience prior to their selection for the program. Another supervisor stated that the educational

curriculum should be improved to include job specific education and development of the skills needed to do case management. Almost all supervisors noted that they would recommend that program graduates be hired, but several commented that they would not want to give up their ability to select their employees by stating that they would not want to be required to hire IV-E graduates over other applicants. One supervisor indicated experience with IV-E interns whom he/she would not want to hire. Child welfare agencies actually are given an opportunity to make a more informed hiring decision with IV-E program graduates who have had a DFCS internship than with other applicants.

Supervisors and IV-E graduates were also asked to identify any recommended program improvements and to note any learning deficits that they found with program graduates. One supervisor suggested that the consortium should continue to work together to develop courses that share objectives with DFCS training, which has been done. Another comment was that professors in schools of social work should be supportive of the work of DFCS (some students reported hearing negative comments about DFCS by classroom instructors). Several supervisors indicated that coursework and field placements should be as realistic as possible. Others commented that students need to be better prepared to work with clients who struggle with issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, or sexual abuse. Since these IV-E students graduated, universities have included these topics in child welfare courses. One supervisor said that students need to be prepared to deal with resistant clients who have multiple layers of problems based on multiple generations of family problems. Several stated that graduates are not always prepared for the real world of DFCS work. It could not be identified by the responses if this was related to the age of the new worker or not. It should be noted that some of the IV-E graduates in this study did not have a DFCS field placement during their education.

Most of the comments by the IV-E graduates were positive about the program. In addition to areas of knowledge and skills that they attributed to their education, they reported areas of personal growth, such as developing the ability to work with diverse families, learning to keep an open mind when working with abuse/neglect victims, increasing their commitment to work with families, and increasing their respect for clients. Additional learning activities that were recommended included more information on child development, domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse, and cultural diversity. All graduates recommended that the program be continued to attract social workers to child welfare practice. In identifying ways to improve the program, graduates mentioned more rigorous selection to choose social workers capable of handling the stress of child welfare, improved consistency and organization in the program, and enforced work obligations (payback period of employment).

Limitations of the Study

The most important limitation of this study is the unknown validity of the Capabilities scale. This was based on an established scale used in other studies and it appeared to have face validity between the measurement items and the participants' beliefs about their own capability to perform specific tasks. However, it may not be an accurate assumption that the new workers were completely comfortable in responding honestly on an e-mailed survey when it is common knowledge that e-mails can be tracked easily. It should be recognized that the DFCS State Director at the time of the data collection was previously employed by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and there were anecdotal reports of a 'culture of fear' within the organization. The data collection did show some possible participant anxiety about confidentiality as many who responded did not identify the unique code number that they were instructed to include on the survey. It also cannot be determined if there were any differences between the new workers who

participated in the survey and those who failed to respond. Even if the survey results accurately reflected new workers' self-perceptions about their capabilities, their beliefs may not be related to their actual capabilities to perform tasks. Furthermore, there is no evidence that being "exceptionally capable" in performing these typical child welfare worker's tasks causes the outcomes of the clients with whom they are working to be any different than workers who are less capable in executing the same tasks.

Validity was also a questionable factor when reviewing the studies that had been previously completed using some of the same measures, especially the capabilities scale. Validity was not reported for the capabilities scale when it was used by the Kentucky group of researchers with their sample.

The sample in this study was a purposive sample of new child welfare workers in a statewide public agency. While there were respondents in the sampling frame from rural areas, small, medium, and large cities, and a very large metropolitan area, the sample size of the IV-E graduates was relatively small (17) and most respondents were working in the more populated counties. This small sample size and uneven distribution of types of county offices decreases the generalizability of the results to other populations of child welfare workers. The size of each worker's caseload was not measured and that could have been a factor impacting how capable workers believed they were in terms of meeting the responsibilities of the job, their job stress level, their job satisfaction level, their intent to remain in the job, and their professional commitment.

Another limitation of this study was that the data collection was not started until approximately a year after the new workers were hired. This meant that some learning through on-the-job experience had occurred by all new worker participants; this could have impacted the

various groups of workers differently (possibly greater learning for those who had no social work education). Newly hired workers who left the agency within the first year also were not included in the study as they were no longer available via identifiable e-mail addresses. It is unknown why people left so quickly or what may have been different about their responses to these same measures.

The final limitation of this research was that the test/retest reliability property of this sampling frame was not measured since this study was not repeated with same participants.

Study Results Related to Previous Research

The primary measure used in this program evaluation was based on the capabilities scale that was developed in Kentucky by Fox and his research group (Fox, et al. 2000 and Fox, et al., 2003). In reviewing the reported results of these research efforts, several questions have arisen. Although it was reported that the IV-E graduates studied scored significantly higher than other new employees, no results of t-test comparisons were identified. Results were provided of pre-posttest scores of self-ratings of the graduates' competence in various child welfare worker tasks, and significant differences were found on these self-ratings before and after the training for each group. There were also significant differences found before and after training on self-ratings for a group on non-IV-E new employees. It appears that Kentucky's training programs were effective in increasing the self-ratings for both groups; however, a test of significance between groups was not included in the findings. The research reports also indicated that supervisors rated the IV-E graduates *above the mean* on all indicators; additionally, all IV-E graduates rated themselves *above the mean* on all behaviors. Unfortunately, the study report did not explain to which mean they are referring and whether or not this was statistically significantly higher than the comparison group of new workers. A comparison group of supervisors was not included in

the Kentucky studies and the means of the supervisors' ratings of the IV-E graduates were not compared to the self-ratings of the graduates. The studies did continue to report that supervisors perceived the IV-E graduates *as far advanced over other new employees*, but explained that this conclusion was drawn primarily from the qualitative data collected in focus groups of the supervisors of IV-E graduates only. This current study appeared to have less encouraging results than the Kentucky research findings. However, when further analyzed, the Kentucky research may not have been as significant as previously believed.

The current DFCS study found other evidence on workers' self-ratings of their knowledge and capabilities of child welfare work to have been contradictory to results identified in several important studies from the late 1980s. Both Booz-Allen (1987) and Lieberman, et al. (1988) found that those with social work education consistently rated themselves higher in knowledge-based areas, while staff without social work degrees rated themselves higher in practice areas than in knowledge-based areas. It may be that a knowledge-based measure would yield results consistent with these studies in Georgia rather than a practice-based self-rating of perceived capabilities, although Gansle and Ellett (2002) and Vonk, et al. (2003) did not find statistically significant differences between the IV-E graduates and other new child welfare workers when scored on knowledge measures.

The study completed by Dhooper, et al. (1990) used five sources of data including worker's self-ratings and supervisors' ratings. These researchers also analyzed the state agency's Departmental Quality Assurance Rating, State Merit Examination, and Social Work Values Test. Their findings indicated that IV-E graduates scored statistically significantly higher than non-IV-E new employees on all measures. Unlike the current study, Dhooper and his group found IV-E workers' self-ratings of their abilities and IV-E workers' supervisors' assessment of the workers'

abilities to be statistically higher than the non-IV-E new workers. Dhooper collected his data using different measures. Perhaps, the results of Dhooper's study may offer ideas for additional data sources for collection in future program evaluations of the IV-E graduates in Georgia.

This DFCS study showed that IV-E graduates had higher retention rates during the first year of their employment; this result was also identified in other studies involving the IV-E program graduates (Lewandowski, 1998; Okamura & Jones, 1998, Jones & Okamura, 2000; Brown, et al., 2002; Dickenson & Perry, 2002; Jones, 2002; and Robin & Hollister, 2002). This current study found results consistent with Jones & Okamura (2000) in comparing job stress between IV-E graduates and non-IV-E new workers. Both studies showed no statistically significant difference between these two groups of new child welfare workers in their perception of their job stress. In contrast, the current study's results were contradictory to other studies by researchers in other states (Okamura & Jones, 1998; Hopkins, et al., 1999; and Jones & Okamura, 2000) in examining another variable. These other researchers found that IV-E graduates rated their job satisfaction statistically significantly higher than non-IV-E new workers; the current study showed the opposite result.

The correlation results of the mean scores of the various scales used in the current study were consistent with the findings of several other studies. Both Landsman (2001) and Ellett (2000) found positive correlation between the variables of job satisfaction, intent to remain employed in child welfare, and professional commitment. While the current study did find statistically significant correlation between these variables, no evaluation of whether the scores on these measures were related to new workers actually staying in the child welfare field, specifically with DFCS, or leaving could be completed. However, 77.3% of IV-E graduates

compared to 67.2% of non-IV-E new employees remained employed one year at the time of data collection.

Major Conclusions

After approximately one year of employment, the mean capabilities self-ratings of all groups of new workers were not statistically significantly different. However, only the group of non-social workers rated their capabilities statistically significantly higher than their supervisors did. This result appears to support the idea that non-social workers may not realize how much they do not know about child welfare work. Both groups of social workers, IV-E and non-IV-E, showed self-ratings that were not statistically significantly different from their supervisors' ratings.

Additionally, another result that would lend support to that belief is that non-social workers hired in 2004 rated their capabilities statistically significantly higher than non-social workers hired in 2003. Shortly after the 2004 new workers were hired, all DFCS training was suspended for new workers. Thus, the 2004 new case managers, who received no new worker training, believed that their capabilities to do the job were better than the new case managers who were hired in 2003 and who had received the DFCS new worker training. This result also supported the idea that new workers without social work education and child welfare training would not comprehend the amount of knowledge and skills that they didn't have to successfully fulfill the duties of a child welfare case manager.

Although adult education theory initially appeared to be useful in understanding why social work education would be good preparation for child welfare work, the results of this study would not support future research on this topic based on this theory. Social work education is consistent with adult education theory as practical experience and actual work-related situations

are woven into the curriculum through the use of teaching techniques such as role plays and discussion groups. Field placements in social work settings provide the hands-on circumstances that adult learners find useful. However, the results of this study did not show that graduates of social work programs had higher self-ratings of their own capabilities to do child welfare work. This study did seem to indicate that non-social workers did not recognize the gap between their knowledge and skills and the knowledge and skills required to do child welfare work well. These workers viewed themselves as possessing higher capabilities than did their supervisors despite the absence of the benefits of social work education.

Job satisfaction was a variable that showed statistically significant differences among the three groups of workers with the non-social workers being the most satisfied group. Yet, the new workers' supervisors rated the IV-E graduates as having a statistically significantly better attitude toward social work than the other groups of new workers. This could indicate that while IV-E graduates have a good attitude toward the profession, they are not satisfied with the realities of the limitations of child welfare case managers, or perhaps, the agency. Inexperienced social workers can be idealistic about the work that they plan to do; their expectations of what they believe they can accomplish as professionals may be far higher than non-social workers. Unmet expectations may lead new social workers to feel less satisfied with their jobs. Since IV-E graduates indicated significantly greater dissatisfaction with the adequacy of resources for clients, this may show some of their frustration with the limitations of the agency's availability of services to meet clients' needs. Title IV-E graduates also showed statistically greater dissatisfaction with promotion and career advancement opportunities. Feedback in the qualitative data confirmed that IV-E graduates believed that they were working in an agency where their social work knowledge, skills, abilities, and values were not considered for promotion and career

advancement. Non-social workers who took jobs not in the field in which they received their education may be merely satisfied that they are employed and may not have had lofty expectations of the services they would provide to people or anticipation of promotions and career advancement. It should be noted that there is not a cause – effect relationship between job dissatisfaction and turnover rates.

Perhaps the most useful results of this study may come from the qualitative data collected. While all groups of supervisors commented on workers' strengths and weaknesses in the areas of attitude and personal characteristics, noticeably more comments regarding skills and knowledge were made about new workers with social work education, especially the workers with IV-E preparation. These results suggested that the expectation that social workers would be better prepared for completing the tasks required of child welfare workers appeared accurate. Several specific areas of knowledge that a number of supervisors identified as strengths of those with social work education were an understanding of family systems, domestic violence, substance abuse, and child development. One supervisor felt that his/her worker's weakness was in this area; he/she indicated the expectation that a social work graduate would have knowledge in these topics. Although the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires coursework on family systems, the other areas mentioned are typically offered in elective coursework. Since students cannot always include electives related to these topics in their programs of study, alternative methods of offering instruction on problem areas frequently encountered by DFCS clients may be in order. Many of the IV-E graduates noted that they believed their education could have been strengthen by learning more about cultural diversity, domestic violence, child development, and substance abuse. Semi-annual conferences are held for IV-E students, and this may be a convenient vehicle for delivering this type of curricula.

Both IV-E graduates and their supervisors stressed the importance of a DFCS field placement in their comments about the IV-E program. There were still a few graduates who had not done one and they reported this as a disadvantage. Since all universities in Georgia are now requiring that IV-E students do their practicum in DFCS, this is a problem that should already be remedied. A number of the graduates who did complete a DFCS practicum noted that they would have liked a more realistic exposure to the realities of case management. These graduates indicated that their field experience did not give them adequate preparation for actual day-to-day responsibilities of child welfare work. Several supervisors also discussed their expectation that a DFCS practicum would have been better preparation for IV-E graduates. Thus, it would appear that not all DFCS placements offered the same experience. Some graduates also commented that they felt unprepared for the stress of a full caseload and they believed that they needed some education on how to cope with the overwhelming stress of child welfare work. A number of other IV-E graduates noted that they needed better preparation to cope with working in an environment where their education was not valued by some supervisors and administrators. It would appear that the most important concerns of the IV-E case managers were dealing with the stress of the job and coping with feelings of being undervalued.

Recommendations

The Educational Consortium may want to consider completing the next replication of this study at a time closer to the new workers' start date with the agency to continue this longitudinal study. Greater differences among IV-E graduates, other social workers, and non-social workers may be identified before months of on-the-job training has occurred. Other methods of measuring practice knowledge and skill may also be considered, including some client outcome measures.

To date, no study of the DFCS employees who have returned to school for their social work degree while continuing to work at DFCS has been undertaken in Georgia. In addition, graduates who have taken jobs at DFCS other than that of child welfare case managers have not been assessed. The impact of the IV-E program should be evaluated examining the experiences of these graduates as well.

Careful selection of grant recipients is critical to success of the program and retention of the graduates. Only students interested in careers in child welfare should be selected for the funding opportunity. All students selected should meet the criteria for state employment prior to being selected for the program. At least one field placement in Child Protective Services, Foster Care, or Adoptions in DFCS should be mandatory for all grant recipients. This placement should include the opportunity to experience as many tasks and responsibilities as would be required for employment. Field instructors should be given direction concerning the learning opportunities that their student will need. University faculty liaisons also need to provide this direction with new field instructors. Placements should have an emphasis on exposure to clients and practice guided by social work principles and DFCS policy. Also, the required 'payback' period of employment needs to be enforced; graduates who do not fulfill their obligations need to repay all grant monies.

Expanded use of the IV-E conferences that are held twice during each school year should be considered. Mandatory attendance should be enforced so that all students can benefit from the learning opportunities offered. Another suggestion should be to utilize a full two-day program that would include a focus on a different area of client-related issues, such as domestic violence, substance abuse, sexual abuse, or child development for approximately half of the conference period. Experts in these areas could be brought in to provide information focused on

understanding the issues and realistic interventions for use with DFCS clientele. Other topics that could be addressed during the conferences would include organizational skills, documentation skills, stress management, and making the most of supervision.

The final recommendation is focused on the IV-E graduates' issues around their dissatisfactions with the job. A career ladder needs to be in place for social workers so that they have advancement opportunities within the agency and are adequately compensated for their advanced skills and knowledge. Also, some way to show respect for social work education should be considered; these employees desire respect for their knowledge and effort and it seems likely that they will go elsewhere if they don't find it within DFCS.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Capabilities Scale

Each item is rated:

1 = Little capability 2 = Some capability 3 = Adequate capability

4 = High capability 5 = Exceptional capability 6 = Not Applicable

Items:

23. Working with supervisors
24. Establishing rapport with families
25. Identifying indicators and understanding the dynamics of neglect
26. Understanding and interpreting the language comprising legal documents (e.g.: court petitions, orders, etc.)
27. Building positive working relationships with families
28. Using permanency planning philosophy
29. Remaining safe in the office and in the field
30. Asking appropriate questions during an intake
31. Applying appropriate criteria for accepting CPS referrals
32. Maintaining professional behavior during contact with families, other professionals, and community agencies
33. Building positive working relationships with families of ethnic groups different from one's own
34. Completing investigations within appropriate time frames
35. Identifying indicators of normal child development
36. Recognizing and addressing problematic parenting patterns with families

37. Building positive working relationships with community agencies
38. Identifying indicators and understanding the dynamics of physical abuse
39. Working with resistant families
40. Identifying indicators and understanding the dynamics of emotional abuse
41. Assessing risk and safety and making appropriate case decisions
42. Identifying indicators and understanding the dynamics of domestic violence
43. Recognizing the effects of domestic violence on children in the home
44. Identifying indicators and understanding the dynamics of child sexual abuse
45. Selecting appropriate strategies to use when investigating child sexual abuse cases
46. Preparing cases for court
47. Writing a case plan with family participation that addresses the family's strengths and needs
48. Identifying indicators of abnormal child development
49. Understanding and interpreting the laws framing child welfare practice
50. Effectively testifying in court
51. Appropriately terminating casework with families and closing cases
52. Writing a comprehensive case assessment based on principles of family centered practice

APPENDIX B

Professional Commitment Scale

Each item is rated:

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree

3 = Agree 4 = Strongly Agree

Items:

53. I genuinely enjoy my profession.

56. I would continue to work in the field of social work even if I did not need the money.

59. Most days I do not look forward to going to work.

61. If I could do it all over again, I would choose a profession other than social work.

62. I find little enthusiasm for working as a social worker.

64. I cannot imagine enjoying any profession as much as social work.

APPENDIX C

Intent to Remain Scale

Each item is rated:

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree

3 = Agree 4 = Strongly Agree

Items:

54. I intend to remain in child welfare as my long term professional career.

55. I will remain in child welfare even though I might be offered a position outside of child welfare with a higher salary.

57. I would leave child welfare work tomorrow if I was offered a job for the same salary but with less stress.

58. The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare.

60. I am actively seeking other employment outside the field of child welfare.

63. I frequently think about quitting my job.

APPENDIX D

Job Stress Scale

Each item is rated:

1 = Never 2 = Almost never 3 = Sometimes

4 = Fairly often 5 = Very often

In the last three months, how often have you:

Items:

65. In the last three months, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly at work?
66. In the last three months, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?
67. In the last three months, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?
68. In the last three months, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside your control?
69. In the last three months, how often have you found yourself thinking of things that you had to accomplish?
70. In the last three months, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

APPENDIX E

Job Satisfaction Scale

Each item is rated:

1 = Very dissatisfied 2 = Dissatisfied

3 = Satisfied 4 = Very satisfied

How satisfied are you with:

Items:

71. Salary/benefits
72. Paperwork
73. Organizational support
74. Structure and quality of communications in the organizations
75. Organizational/administrative policies
76. Promotional/career advancement opportunities
77. Adequacy of resources for clients
78. Overall job satisfaction