Let’s Talk
Host - Debi Mathias
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www.buildinitiative.org
www.qrisnetwork.org
Measuring, Monitoring, and Improving the Quality of Work Life in Early Childhood Programs
Presenters

Paula Jorde Bloom  

Jill Bella
Poll

What is your role?

• I am a technical assistance specialist who provides support to center-based programs
• I am an assessor who measures different aspects of program quality
• I am a trainer who provides professional development for center directors
• I am a decision maker who determines the components of a quality improvement initiative
• I have been the director of an early care and education program
Questions

- Does your state implement training or technical assistance that addresses quality of work life issues in early care and education programs?

- Does your QRIS include assessments of organizational climate and/or the adult work environment?
Agenda

- Importance of Measuring Work Attitudes
- The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey (ECWES)
- Embedding the ECWES in Quality Improvement Initiatives
- Let’s Talk
43% felt their pay was adequate

2010 Workforce Survey

$N = 3,579$
2010 Workforce Survey

$N = 3,579$

- 43% felt their pay was adequate
- 40% anticipated a raise the next year
2010 Workforce Survey

\[ N = 3,579 \]

- 43% felt their pay was adequate
- 40% anticipated a raise the next year
- 44% felt opportunities to advance were limited
2010 Workforce Survey

* N = 3,579

- 43% felt their pay was adequate
- 40% anticipated a raise the next year
- 44% felt opportunities to advance were limited
- 54% felt they were given helpful feedback about their performance
Remembering John Goodlad
“By failing to meet the needs of adults who work in child care, we are threatening not only their well-being, but that of the children in their care.”
Two Perspectives

The individual
Two Perspectives

The individual

The organization
Field-Specific Measures

- The Early Childhood Job Satisfaction Survey (ECJSS)
- The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey (ECWES)
Defining Organizational Climate

The distinct and unique atmosphere that characterizes each work setting.
The Benefits of Assessment

- Identify organizational strengths
The Benefits of Assessment

- Identify organizational strengths
- Pinpoint areas of concern
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- Drive organizational change
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- Monitor the impact of intervention
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- Surface differences in perceptions
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- Empower staff to be active partners in CQI
The Benefits of Assessment

- Identify organizational strengths
- Pinpoint areas of concern
- Drive organizational change
- Monitor the impact of intervention
- Surface differences in perceptions
- Empower staff to be active partners in CQI
- Promote great transparency
Organizational Climate

- The distinct and unique atmosphere that characterizes a work setting
Organizational Climate

- The distinct and unique atmosphere that characterizes a work setting

- The collective perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and values of the individuals in a particular work setting
Organizational Climate

- The distinct and unique atmosphere that characterizes a work setting
- The collective perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and values of the individuals in a particular work setting
- A composite of the personalities that come together and the leadership that guides them
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collegiality</td>
<td>The extent to which staff are friendly, supportive, and trusting of one another. The peer cohesion and esprit de corps of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Growth</td>
<td>The degree of emphasis placed on staff’s professional growth. The availability of opportunities to increase professional competence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>The degree of facilitative leadership providing encouragement, support, and clear expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>The extent to which policies, procedures, and responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward System</td>
<td>The degree of fairness and equity in the distribution of pay, fringe benefits, and opportunities for advancement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>The degree of autonomy given to staff and the extent to which they are involved in making centerwide decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Consensus</td>
<td>The extent to which staff agree on the philosophy, goals, and educational objectives of the center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Orientation</td>
<td>The emphasis placed on organizational effectiveness and efficiency, including productive meetings, program outcomes, and accountability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Setting</td>
<td>The extent to which the spatial arrangement of the center helps or hinders staff in carrying out their responsibilities. The availability of supplies and materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovativeness</td>
<td>The extent to which the center adapts to change and encourages staff to find creative ways to solve problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Early Childhood Work Environment Survey

Dear Early Childhood Professional:

This survey is designed to find out how you and your colleagues feel about your early childhood center as a place to work. The questionnaire provides you with an opportunity to express your feelings and opinions concerning various center policies and practices. It includes questions about general work conditions, staff relations, supervisor support, pay and promotion opportunities, and the physical setting. The questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete. The success of this survey depends on your candid and honest responses. An individual’s responses to the survey will not be identified. Results will be reported as group averages that assure anonymity.

When you have completed the survey, put it in the attached plain envelope, seal it, and give it to your staff representative. This individual will then mail the sealed surveys to the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership for data analysis. In approximately six weeks your center will receive a center profile. The profile will report a summary of the group results along ten dimensions. From this profile, staff will be able to systematically determine group perceptions of program strengths as well as identify areas that may need improving.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. I hope you find this survey both interesting and useful.

Cordially,

Paula Jorde Bloom, Ph.D.
Chair

McCORMICK CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP | AT NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY
6200 Capitol Drive | Wheeling, IL 60090 | TEL-FAX 847.947.5059
Background Information

Gender:  □ Male  □ Female  Age: _______ Years

What is the highest educational level you have completed?

□ High School or GED equivalent
□ Some college
□ Associate’s Degree (AA)
□ Bachelor’s Degree (BA/BS)
□ Some graduate work
□ Master’s Degree (MA/MS)
□ Post Master’s work
□ Doctorate (Ed.D/Ph.D.)

How long have you worked in the field of early childhood?  _______ Years _______ Months

How long have you worked for your current employer?  _______ Years _______ Months

How long have you worked in your current position?  _______ Years _______ Months

Indicate the category that most nearly describes your present employment:

□ employed full-time (more than 35 hours per week)
□ employed part-time (10 to 34 hours per week)

How many months of the year do you work?

□ 11 or 12 months
□ 9 or 10 months
□ fewer than 9 months

Check the job title that most nearly describes your role in your organization. If you have a dual role, what position do you spend more time doing?

□ assistant teacher, aide, or apprentice
□ teacher
□ lead teacher
□ assistant director
□ director
□ component coordinator (education, family support, health/nutrition)
□ support staff (secretary, cook)
Work Attitudes

Check all that describe how you feel about your organization:

☐ I intend to work here at least two more years
☐ I often think of quitting
☐ I'm just putting in time
☐ I take pride in my center
☐ I put a lot of extra effort into my work
☐ I feel very committed to this center
☐ I don't care what happens to this place after I leave
☐ It would be difficult for me to find another job as good as this one
☐ It's hard to feel committed to this place
☐ I sometimes feel trapped in this place

If you could design the ideal job, how close would your present position resemble this ideal position with respect to the following? (check 1–5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>relationship with your co-workers</th>
<th>not like my ideal at all</th>
<th>somewhat like my ideal</th>
<th>is my ideal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>opportunities to learn and grow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship with your supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clarity in roles and responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fairness of pay and promotion opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision-making structure of the center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreement among staff on program goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>task orientation, program efficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment, materials, and the physical setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>innovativeness and creative problem solving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different people want and expect different things from their work. Check the 3 aspects of your work that are most important to you:

☐ collegiality, co-worker relations
☐ opportunities for professional growth
☐ support and feedback from supervisor
☐ clarity in policies and procedures
☐ fairness in pay, benefits, and promotions
☐ involvement in decision making
☐ consensus on program goals and objectives
☐ accomplishing work in an efficient manner
☐ physical setting, sufficient materials
☐ innovativeness and creative expression
Please answer the questions in this section with respect to the overall conditions in your center as they are *most of the time*:

Check *all* that describe the staff relations in your center most of the time:

- [ ] cooperative and friendly
- [ ] competitive
- [ ] people are reluctant to express their feelings
- [ ] teachers are very helpful to new staff
- [ ] good team spirit
- [ ] staff are generally frank and candid
- [ ] morale is low
- [ ] people socialize outside of work
- [ ] people feel isolated
- [ ] people complain a lot
Check all that describe how decisions are made at your center most of the time:

- people are encouraged to be self-sufficient in making decisions
- the director likes to make most of the decisions
- people don’t feel free to express their opinions
- everyone provides input on the content of staff meetings
- conformity is the name of the game here
- there are scheduled staff meetings at least twice a month
- people provide input but decisions have already been made
- teachers make decisions about things that directly affect them
- teachers are seldom asked their opinion on issues
- the director values everyone’s input for major decisions
Work Environment Profile

**PART A: STAFF'S RATING OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE (N = 25)**

The chart represents the average score for each dimension for subjects included in the sample. The height of the bars represents the score for each dimension based on responses of 1,000 subjects in 100 centers. The vertical line for each dimension represents the range of scores for subjects in this sample.

**PART C: OVERALL COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION (N = 13)**

The bar graph illustrates the overall commitment level of 13 subjects to the organization.

**PART E: RANKING OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (N = 14)**

The table lists the ranking of educational goals and objectives with a number of people who rated them as important.

**PART F: TEACHERS' DECISION-MAKING INFLUENCE (N = 15)**

The bar chart shows the level of influence teachers have in decision-making processes.
WORK ENVIRONMENT PROFILE

Name: ANYWHERE CHILD CARE

Date: January 1, 2010

Total administrative, teaching, and support staff: 15

Number of staff completing survey: 15

Employment pattern of respondents:

- 8 employed full-time (35 hours per week or more)
- 7 employed part-time (10-34 hours per week)
- 0 data not provided by respondent

PART A. STAFF’S RATINGS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE [N = 15]

The X represents the average score for this dimension for subjects included in this sample.

The O represents the norm for this dimension based on responses of 3,980 workers in 363 centers.

The vertical line for each dimension represents the range of scores for subjects in this sample.

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6200 Capitol Drive | Wheeling, IL 60090 | TEL: 847.347.3055 | McCormickCenter.nlu.edu
PART B. STAFF’S RATINGS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH DIMENSION (N = 15)

Number of employees who indicated each dimension as being one of three most important to them:

- 3 Colleagueship, co-worker relations
- 10 Opportunities for professional growth
- 4 Support and feedback from supervisor
- 3 Clarity in policies and procedures
- 5 Equitable pay, benefits, and promotions
- 5 Involvement in decision making
- 2 Consensus on program goals, objectives
- 2 Accomplishing work in efficient manner
- 9 Physical setting, sufficient materials
- 2 Innovativeness and creative expression

PART C. OVERALL COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION (N = 15)

![Bar chart showing commitment levels](chart)

PART D. HOW THE CURRENT WORK ENVIRONMENT RESEMBLES THE IDEAL (N = 14)

![Line chart showing resemblance levels](chart)
PART E. RANKING OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (N = 14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To help children develop...</th>
<th>Number of people who ranked item as:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>most important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language and problem-solving skills</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong friendships, skills in sharing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concepts needed for reading and math</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independence in caring for themselves</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical skill and coordination</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive self-concepts and self-esteem</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART F. TEACHERS' DECISION-MAKING INFLUENCE (N = 15)

![Bar chart showing perceived and desired decision-making influence across different activities.]
A Comparison of Administrator and Teacher Perceptions of Organizational Climate
Embedding the ECWES in Quality Improvement Initiatives

- Honoring different perceptions
- Giving voice to the workforce
- Reinforcing norms of continuous quality improvement
The “Full Body Scan”

Measuring concrete practices and perceptions

CLASS

ECWES

PAS

SACERS

FCCERS-R

ECERS-3

ITERS-R
How the ECWES is used in quality enhancement projects

- Texas
- Illinois
- Minnesota
Let’s Talk
Early Childhood Work Environment Survey

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