NATIONAL Child Welfare
WORKFORCE
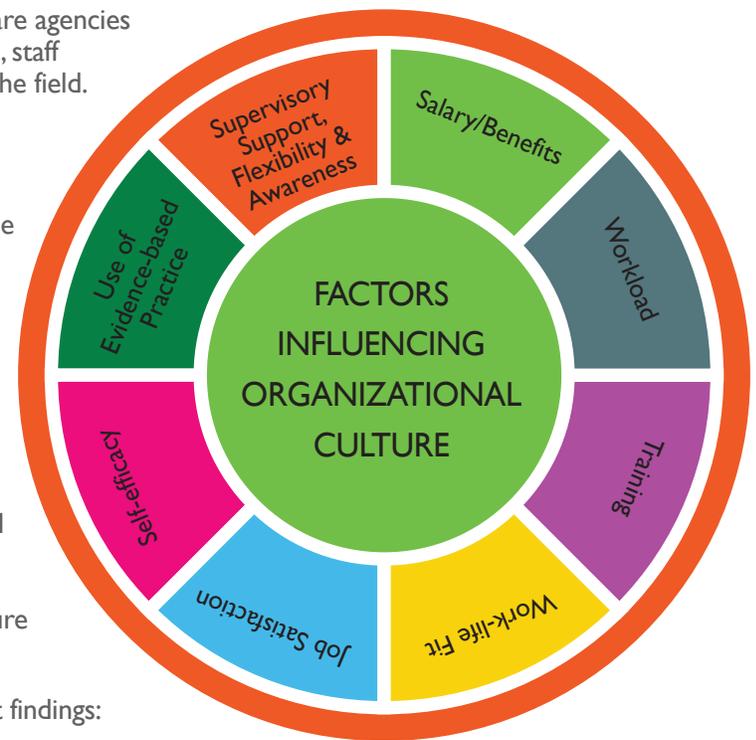**I**NSTITUTE

Learning, Leading, Changing

Organizational Culture & Retention

Collins-Camargo, C. (2010). A study of the relationships among effective supervision, organizational culture promoting evidence-based practice, and worker self-sufficiency in public child welfare. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 4*(1), 1-24.

Agbenyiga, D. L. (2009). Child welfare employee recruitment and retention: An organizational culture perspective. *Child Welfare, 88*(6), 85-108.

WHAT ARE THESE RESOURCES?

These two research studies address the impact of individual, supervisory, and organizational factors on organizational culture and caseworker retention.

WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL FINDINGS?

- High staff turnover rates in child welfare agencies negatively impact children and families, staff morale, and the public perception of the field.

- A positive organizational culture - the attitudes, behaviors, and values of an organization - can not only create a supportive work environment, increase productivity, improve self-efficacy, but also decrease staff turnover. The elements of constructive organizational culture include humanistic-encouraging, affiliative, achievement, and self-actualizing cultural norms.

- Organizational culture is not uniform, and the factors influencing organizational culture differ in urban, rural, and suburban agencies. The figure at right provides an overview of some of the factors influencing organizational culture and turnover.

Factors Influencing Organizational Culture: Supervisory Support, Flexibility & Awareness; Salary/Benefits; Workload; Training; Work-life Fit; Job Satisfaction; Self-efficacy; Use of Evidence-based Practice.

These studies offer a number of important findings:

- Supervisors influence the social, cognitive, and behavioral competencies of caseworkers, and effective supervision promotes caseworkers' positive view of organizational culture and higher levels of self-efficacy.

- Effective supervision is linked to an organizational culture that promotes evidence-based practice.

- An organizational culture that promotes evidence-based practice improves retention.

- Organizations that encourage humanistic and self-actualizing cultural norms are associated with improved employee recruitment and retention, including higher levels of work-life fit and job satisfaction.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR WORK?

Agencies should strive to (1) improve professional development training and expand the use of evidence-based practices; and (2) Increase supervisory support, awareness, and flexibility. Help supervisors create and nurture a constructive organizational culture that promotes evidence-based practices, through the use of worker- and unit-level data to assess practice effectiveness, and promoting an outcome-focused and data-driven approach for staff including directed goal setting, progress monitoring and feedback, and opportunities for collaborative learning and self-efficacy.