

Winter 2018

**From the Desk of Susan Atwell, Unit Manager
Office of Children and Family Services**



Hello Everyone, I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season!

We are still in the midst of the accreditation process with Healthy Families America.

Central Administration had its peer visit in November of 2017. The peers noted that in Healthy Families New York, “the vast majority of Multi-Site Best Practice Standards are being adhered to with fidelity.” They also commented that our “three branches of Central Administration function in a beautifully seamless way” and that “it is clear from our conversations with programs that they feel Central Administration truly cares about them, the families they serve, and quality home visitor services.”

That said, we do have some items needing follow up. We are preparing a panel response to come into adherence on eight of the Central

Administration Best Practice Standards. We must meet at least two of these standards to become accredited. Next, HFA will visit 11 of our programs between February and April.

Here at OCFS, we are very proud of the work that Central Administration and all of the programs have done so far to get to this place in the accreditation process. Once the selected programs have gone through the process, we will look forward to celebrating our renewed HFA Multi-Site accreditation. ~SUE



OCFS Leadership Team at the 2017 HFNY Training Institute



The Healthy Families Training Institute, sponsored by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, was held September 18-20th at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany, NY. This was a great opportunity for every staff person involved with Healthy Families New York to gather together for learning, networking and for some fun, too! An exciting agenda was brought together, including keynote speakers Dr. Gloria Wilder and Dr. Kenneth Barish, as well as magic and motivation from James Snack at The HUMOR Project, Inc. Workshop topics were varied and included sessions on breastfeeding, child development, wellness and self-care, working with fathers, and much more. World Cafes were also facilitated for each role within HFNY. We all left energized, committed, and even better equipped to keep serving the families of New York. Photos and more information are inside this issue of the Link. Enjoy!

HEALTHY FAMILIES NEW YORK

the Link

Healthy Families New York Training Institute 2017

There were 425 program staff statewide that attended the 2017 HFNY Training Institute. Feedback was very positive and it was a wonderful time to connect with old friends and make some new ones.



Networking



Program Baskets



Sharing



AWARDS

The Joy Griffith Award- Carol Peeling (Broome)
 Ann Pitkin Award- Sofia Nivar (South Bronx)
 John Heck Award- John Heck (CHSR)
 Innovation Award -Allegany Cattaraugus Team
 Mentoring Award-Roxanne Monroe (Brookdale)
 HFNY Spirit Award-Holly Kipp (Clinton)



World Cafes



Workshops



Research Corner: Education and Job Climate Key to Home Visitor Retention

Margaret Gullick, Senior Research Scientist and Eunju Lee, Assistant Professor
School of Social Welfare, University at Albany and CHSR HFNY Research & Evaluation Team

Staff retention is a key component in maintaining a strong, high performing home visiting program. But what characterizes a home visitor who is likely to stay, and what makes a worksite one at which a home visitor wants to remain? To address these questions, we examined whether each of the respondents from the 2014 HFNY Family Support Worker (FSW) survey was still employed at their program three years later, and determined which demographic and organizational characteristics had the greatest impact on retention.

Out of 213 FSWs, 127 (60%) had been retained three years later. The attrition rate is similar to that of comparable fields, such as child welfare workers. Age, education, and program proximity each impacted retention. Younger FSWs with a bachelor's degree (or more) were more likely to move on than those with a high-school diploma or associate's degree. Factors such as gender, race, and outside paid employment were not related to retention.

Several organizational factors affected staff retention. Work climate, organizational commitment, reflective supervision, job satisfaction, and feelings of mastery are positive factors for retention while burnout is a negative factor. These factors are interrelated, and improvements in one aspect of work experience may also support other components. As such, building a positive agency climate may decrease burnout.

The opportunity for growth and advancement was found to be a key factor for retaining staff. FSWs who were promoted to supervisor in the three-year period showed remarkable retention: none of those promoted had moved on. While home visitors cannot be promoted if they have already left, those who were promoted were highly likely to stay in their positions.

Recruiting and hiring good home visitors who will stay at a program is difficult work, and each case must be considered individually: not every college-educated worker left the position, and not all staff reporting positive work climates stayed. But the overall patterns seen may help inform programs' decisions regarding how long potential hires are likely to stay, and what can be done to improve the work experience at each site.

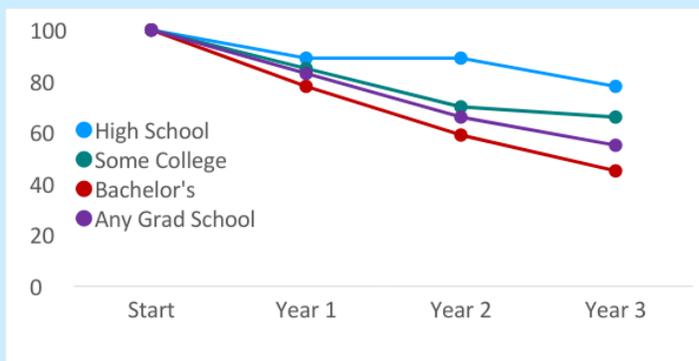


Figure: Impact of Staff Education on Retention

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WARM WELCOME



Safiya Iklas-OCFS

Hello everyone! I'm excited to join the Healthy Families team. My experience with child welfare includes working as a foster care/ preventive caseworker, at the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment, and most recently as a program contract manager for the Trust Fund and Public Private Partnership programs. I'm so grateful to continue my work in strength-based prevention. I have only been at HFNY for a short time, but I am already so impressed by the wealth of knowledge, ingenuity and passion within the staff at our programs. I'm originally from Queens NY, but I have made a home in Albany County for the past 16 years. I am also the proud (and tired) mother of three teenagers. I'm looking forward to continuing to learn and grow!

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