

Staff Survey

Department of Health and Social Services
Office of Children's Services

2014

Office of Children’s Services Staff Survey

Section I. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a survey of the staff of the Office of Children’s Services that was conducted by the Evaluation Unit in 2014. Each employee of the Office of Children’s Services was included in the electronic distribution of the survey. The survey was sent to 486 OCS employees with 345 responses received for a response rate of 71%. Three follow-up contacts were sent to those employees who had not responded over the course of the survey period.

The survey sought information regarding the employee’s experiences in the agency. Both fixed response and open-ended narrative questions were used in the survey instrument. Respondents were able to skip questions they did not wish to answer. Therefore, the data for each question will not be equal to the total number of overall survey respondents. Percentages in each table may not total 100 percent due to rounding. Responses to narrative questions were summarized. The findings of the 2014 survey are as follows.

Descriptive Information

Tables 1-5 present information regarding the number of responses, job titles of the respondents, number of years worked at the agency and number of years in the current job position.

Table 1

Survey Responses by Year and Percent			
Year	Number of Surveys Sent	Number of Respondents	Percent of Responses
2014	486	345	71%

Table 2

Respondents by Job Title and Percent	
Job Title	Percent of Respondents
Administrative/Clerical Support Staff	15%
Children's Protective Services Specialist I, II, III	35%
Children's Protective Services Specialist IV	8%
Children's Protective Services Manager I, II	5%
Community Care Licensing Specialist I, II, III	7%
Eligibility Technician	3%
Independent Living Specialist	1%
Mental Health Clinician and Psychiatric Nurse	1%
ORCA Support Staff	1%
Social Service Associate	10%
Social Svs. Program Coordinator/Officer and Program Administrator	8%
Other	7%

N = 344

Table 3

Respondents by Region, Number, and Percent		
Regional Office	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Northern	53	15%
Southcentral	63	18%
Anchorage	103	30%
Western	26	8%
Southeast	44	13%
State Office	43	13%
Location not provided	13	3%

N=345

Table 4

Period of Time Respondents Employed at Office of Children's Services by Number and Percent		
Number of Years	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Less than a year	58	17%
1-2 years	56	16%
3-5 years	85	25%
6-10 years	79	23%
More than 10 years	63	18%

N = 341

Table 5

Respondents' Years in Current Position by Number and Percent		
Number of Years	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Less than a year	100	29%
1-2 years	78	23%
3-5 years	92	27%
6-10 years	53	15%
More than 10 years	20	6%

N = 343

Section II. State Office Communication With The Field

This area of the survey asked staff questions regarding communication throughout the state. Tables 6 through 14 present the questions and findings.

Table 6

The philosophy of the Office of Children's Services as reflected in the practice model is clearly described to staff.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	63	20%
Agree	203	63%
Undecided	36	11%
Disagree	18	6%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%

N = 322

Table 7

The state office provides leadership that reflects the practice model and supports its implementation.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	36	11%
Agree	167	52%
Undecided	72	23%
Disagree	34	11%
Strongly Disagree	10	3%

N = 319

Table 8

There are established methods of communication from state office through memorandums and meetings which keep me informed of the activities of the agency.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	39	12%
Agree	164	52%
Undecided	68	22%
Disagree	40	13%
Strongly Disagree	5	2%

N = 316

Table 9

There are regular opportunities for me to provide information and suggestions to state office management.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	25	8%
Agree	114	36%
Undecided	97	31%
Disagree	66	21%
Strongly Disagree	14	4%

N = 316

Table 10

The agency, through the efforts of the state office, effectively communicates its mission with the larger community.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	20	6%
Agree	146	47%
Undecided	80	26%
Disagree	52	17%
Strongly Disagree	13	4%

N = 311

Table 11

Leadership which establishes clear direction for the agency is provided through state office.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	25	8%
Agree	135	43%
Undecided	102	32%
Disagree	44	14%
Strongly Disagree	11	3%

N = 317

Table 12

I regularly receive copies of Quality Assurance Reports prepared by the State Office Quality Assurance Unit.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	34	11%
Agree	105	34%
Undecided	88	28%
Disagree	64	21%
Strongly Disagree	20	6%

N = 311

Table 13

When changes are made in response to the findings of Quality Assurance activities, the changes are clearly communicated to staff members.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	12	4%
Agree	92	29%
Undecided	110	35%
Disagree	57	18%
Strongly Disagree	11	3%
N/A	33	10%

N = 315

Table 14

I find the information in the Frontline Newsletter helpful.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	40	13%
Agree	186	58%
Undecided	72	23%
Disagree	16	5%
Strongly Disagree	5	2%

N = 319

Respondent Comments: Respondents were asked to share suggestions for articles and topics they would like to see in the Frontline Newsletter. Responses are summarized as follows.

Respondents described wanting to see testimonial stories from current and retired staff members and from resource parents regarding their experience with the agency and accomplishments. There were comments regarding getting the perspective of long term workers and tips on how to reach longevity.

Staff members were interested in articles about strengthening and supporting the agency's connections to the community such as ways to improve the agency's relationship with the tribes and resource families. This included information regarding how the agency increases awareness in the community.

Several members were interested in having articles regarding new child protection studies and research on the topic of child maltreatment in the newsletter. It was felt it would be helpful to provide answers to frequently asked questions and information regarding legal and legislative changes that impact child protection.

There was a strong interest in having articles regarding the agency's current focus to include progress towards the Child and Family Services Plan (five year plan), administrative changes, and the challenges the agency is facing. Several respondents were interested in having current data available such as number of children in custody, number of reunification cases, and number of cases closed.

There was also interest in features regarding maintaining children's important connections to their family, culture, and support systems while they are in out of home care.

Staff would like the topic of staff retention discussed in the Frontline. Comments included managing turnover, retention efforts, and the allocation of PCNs per region. Some staff are interested in information regarding the agency's recruitment efforts for new staff and resource families.

Information regarding the complaint process for staff and dealing with discrimination in the workforce was suggested.

Several comments were made to include training opportunities in the Frontline. Some training topics suggested were FASD training and assessing placements.

Section III. Regional Office Communication With The Field

This section explored ways that respondents perceive their regional office is able to convey important issues. The responses are presented in tables 15 through 22.

Table 15

My regional office provides information that clearly describes the way practice should be carried out.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	34	11%
Agree	133	43%
Undecided	54	17%
Disagree	39	13%
Strongly Disagree	13	4%
N/A	37	12%

N = 310

Table 16

Regional offices provide leadership that reflects the practice model and supports its implementation.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	34	11%
Agree	120	39%
Undecided	68	22%
Disagree	39	13%
Strongly Disagree	14	5%
N/A	32	10%

N = 307

Table 17

There are established methods of communication from my regional office through memorandums and meetings which keep me informed of the activities of OCS.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	31	10%
Agree	151	49%
Undecided	46	15%
Disagree	33	11%
Strongly Disagree	11	4%
N/A	34	11%

N = 306

Table 18

There are regular opportunities for me to provide information and suggestions to regional management.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	33	11%
Agree	105	34%
Undecided	58	19%
Disagree	53	17%
Strongly Disagree	21	7%
N/A	37	12%

N = 307

Table 19

Leadership which establishes clear direction for the agency is provided through my regional office.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	30	10%
Agree	120	39%
Undecided	62	20%
Disagree	41	13%
Strongly Disagree	14	5%
N/A	37	12%

N = 304

Table 20

Based upon my experience working with community agencies, I believe the Office of Children's Services has strong working relationships with communities.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	23	7%
Agree	133	43%
Undecided	77	25%
Disagree	38	12%
Strongly Disagree	13	4%
N/A	25	8%

N = 309

Table 21

The role and purpose of foster home licensing in child protective services are made clear to staff members.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	24	8%
Agree	145	47%
Undecided	41	13%
Disagree	55	18%
Strongly Disagree	16	5%
N/A	28	9%

N = 309

Table 22

The emergency licensing packet is available in my office and I understand how to use it.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	53	17%
Agree	123	40%
Undecided	39	13%
Disagree	26	8%
Strongly Disagree	9	3%
N/A	60	19%

N = 310

Section IV. Staff Training And Development

This section sought information regarding respondents' experiences with training available to staff as well as other efforts to develop work skills. The findings are presented in tables 23 through 37.

Table 23

I receive feedback from my supervisor regarding my performance that is useful in making changes in my work.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	91	30%
Agree	140	46%
Undecided	37	12%
Disagree	29	10%
Strongly Disagree	8	3%

N = 305

Table 24

My supervisor is available and responsive to questions I have regarding my work.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	139	46%
Agree	114	37%
Undecided	23	8%
Disagree	22	7%
Strongly Disagree	7	2%

N = 305

Table 25

The agency provides adequate support to enable me to respond to secondary trauma in my work.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	28	9%
Agree	114	39%
Undecided	81	27%
Disagree	49	17%
Strongly Disagree	24	8%

N = 296

Respondent Comments: Staff were asked to discuss the kinds of tools, resources and strategies for responding to secondary trauma and stress they would like to see available and that they would access. Responses are summarized as follows.

A number of respondents requested that the agency develop a protocol at each work site to support employees who have experienced secondary trauma relating to client deaths, threats made to employees, and workload stressors. Respondents suggested that the system consist of debriefing with an onsite clinician or Chaplain. The need to include rural

sites was stressed. Additional examples of onsite support consisted of opportunities to participate in yoga, massage, workout facilities, and prayer circles.

Education and training for supervisors and workers regarding managing secondary trauma was suggested. Comments suggest that the trainings consist of handouts, workbooks, coaching, online education, and tips on healthy practices.

Several respondents suggested an increase of benefits for employees to address secondary trauma and increase self-care. Benefits recommended by respondents included gym memberships, insurance coverage for acupuncture and message therapy, educational stipends, provision of sabbaticals, and an increase of paid breaks throughout the workday.

Support and flexibility regarding the work schedule was suggested by respondents. It was recommended that part time positions be made available, provision of additional staffing to support workers taking leave, and offering a flexible work schedule to state office employees. Increasing the number of supportive staff employed such as office assistant positions and SSA positions was suggested by several respondents.

Respondents noted that a reduction in workload would help reduce stress and secondary trauma. Several comments recommended capping caseloads to make the workload manageable.

Comments were made regarding increasing the recognition for achievements to include positive feedback by management and supervisors. Encouragement during supervision for self-care practices and increased supervision was also suggested. Strategic planning meetings were suggested to address secondary trauma and address obstacles for accessing support and self-care practices.

Increasing worker safety through an alert system for staff members was suggested.

Table 26

I have received sufficient information/training on how to document my case work in ORCA.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	40	13%
Agree	143	48%
Undecided	28	9%
Disagree	26	9%
Strongly Disagree	6	2%
N/A	58	19%

N = 301

Table 27

I found the staff development plan helpful to my learning about the agency.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	15	5%
Agree	83	28%
Undecided	81	27%
Disagree	25	8%
Strongly Disagree	9	3%
Did not receive a copy of the plan	82	28%

N = 295

Table 28

I believe my orientation to the agency was adequate to get me started.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	24	8%
Agree	137	46%
Undecided	62	21%
Disagree	51	17%
Strongly Disagree	21	7%

N = 295

Table 29

The cross cultural training I have received has helped me work with different populations the agency serves.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	26	9%
Agree	122	41%
Undecided	69	23%
Disagree	32	11%
Strongly Disagree	9	3%
I have not received cross cultural training.	41	14%

N = 299

Respondent Comments: Respondents were asked to indicate other information they believed would be helpful regarding cross cultural training. Responses are summarized as follows.

Several respondents discussed the diverse population that the agency serves in Alaska and suggestions were made to include these various cultures in training. Respondents are interested in education regarding the different cultures that are found by region in Alaska.

Respondents stated interest in continuing to access the cross cultural trainings available to the agency. Staff suggested that these trainings be made available to staff that are not considered line workers such as office assistant positions. Respondents recommended that cross cultural training be available as on the job training, through coaching methods, mentoring, and shadowing.

Respondents suggested utilizing outside resources for trainings such as experts in cross cultural studies, academic professionals, and community partners.

Some staff reported receiving cross cultural training prior to their employment with the agency. Others report that they have gained experience and understanding through working with clients and working with the Alaska Native tribes. Continued encouragement to include ICWA representatives in the case activities was also mentioned.

Respondents were interested in cross cultural training and how it relates to the ORCA system, policy and procedures, legal statutes, services availability, and community partners.

Table 30

I understand and firmly support the agency's goal to reduce disproportionality.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	99	33%
Agree	139	47%
Undecided	40	13%
Disagree	16	5%
Strongly Disagree	3	1%

N = 297

Respondent Comments: Respondents were asked to discuss suggestions to reduce disproportionality. Responses are summarized as follows.

Increased communication and work with tribal groups and community agencies to support families was cited. Some comments indicated that a newsletter or other means of communication about the efforts being made in this area would help raise awareness. Several respondents indicated that more support with education, services, and community involvement is needed to address disproportionality. Respondents indicated that a “team approach” is needed.

Comments were received which expressed the need for clarity on the concerns for disproportionality. A need for identification of strategies to address the issue was noted. Comments were made on the need for communicating the agency’s focus on this topic as well as updates on efforts being made across the state to support the agency’s efforts.

Several respondents expressed concern for the challenges to reduce disproportionality in rural Alaska where there are limited services and support to ensure child safety in the home. Some comments were received citing the need to support ICWA initiatives at the agency including hiring strategies, a position created exclusively to recruit Alaska Native resource homes, and using public service announcements to engage communities in the discussion.

Table 31

Retaining experienced staff is important to the agency. Please check all the areas which reflect reasons you have continued to choose to work at OCS.		
Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
I enjoy the challenges of working to ensure the well-being of children	200	58%
The job duties match my training and background	146	42%
I enjoy working with other state agencies or community agencies	118	34%
I enjoy the positive working relationship with my supervisor	158	46%
I believe in the Practice Model of the agency	137	40%
The pay and benefits are commensurate with the work	118	34%
My job duties are challenging and allow me to use my skills, talents, and problem solving abilities	215	62%
I receive support and guidance from my supervisor	154	45%
I have decided to pursue a professional career in child welfare	87	25%
I value the security and benefits of working for the state	212	61%
I enjoy the professional atmosphere of the agency	72	21%
My co-workers contribute to and make my job satisfying	173	50%
I value the opportunity for an alternate work week	61	18%

N = 345

Respondent Comments: Workers were provided an area to describe other factors that caused them to stay with the agency. Their responses are summarized as follows.

Workers cited the importance of the work they do with families. They described the value of children and families and the opportunities to make a difference. Working in the community to develop positive relationships was cited as important. Workers also commented on the challenges and of the job and level of professionalism among peers.

The Practice Model was cited as a reason that workers remain with the agency. Several comments were received indicating support for the mission and vision of the agency and the strong efforts to keep children safe.

Many respondents spoke about their strong relationships with supervisors. The importance of an experienced supervisor when a caseworker is newly employed was emphasized. Many spoke of the support they gain from their co-workers as a factor in remaining at the agency.

The opportunity to have flexibility in their work schedule was cited by many respondents as one of the reasons which contributed to their decision to stay with the agency. The availability of the alternate work week was cited by some respondents as a way to support their schedules. There was also mention of the ability to promote and change jobs within the agency.

There were comments reflecting workers commitments to their community. Several respondents indicated that their position allowed them to remain in their home communities and maintain strong connections to their culture, service providers, and families.

Several respondents cited the pay and benefits as an encouragement to stay with the agency. The opportunity for medical coverage was noted as well as the retirement plan. In addition, the proximity of the workplace to their homes was cited.

Table 32

There are many reasons that staff choose to change jobs. Please check the three main areas that you believe would help us retain staff.		
Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
A better work environment (i.e. office space, furniture, supplies)	68	20%
Greater autonomy in work decisions	28	8%
Increased pay and benefits	151	44%
Increased clerical support	96	28%
Increased recognition for work accomplishments	105	30%
Alternate staff to cover vacant caseloads	109	32%
Overall reduction in workloads	208	60%
Improved relationships with stakeholders, such as Tribal Staff or GAL's	42	12%
Improved quality of supervision	82	24%
Increased case (SSA) support	116	34%
Increased opportunities to influence agency policy and procedures	52	15%
Increased opportunities to attend trainings	78	23%
Opportunities for the alternate work week	71	21%

N = 345

Respondent Comments: Workers were provided an area to provide suggestions for attracting and retaining a strong workforce. Their responses are summarized as follows.

Comments were received from workers indicating their concerns for the size of case loads and the complexity of the duties required. The amount of paperwork and documentation required of workers is viewed as a barrier to recruiting and retaining staff.

Workers provided comments citing the importance of support for newly hired workers. Some workers provided comments about salary and benefits. Workers would like to see their salary and benefits aligned with the job duties they perform.

Several staff offered suggestions for making the alternate work week available to all staff even in rural field offices as a way to retain workers. Being able to have flexibility in one's schedule was noted as a way to retain seasoned workers at the agency. Some staff commented that they would like to see a flexible schedule and cited that a flexible work schedule would allow them to balance work with their personal life. There was also concern expressed that the change in retirement benefits has had a negative impact on the ability to retain staff.

Staff commented that there are field offices where more workers are needed at the line level to complete all the necessary job duties. Staff comments in this area noted that more staff is needed in particular on a clerical level, SSA level, and worker level.

The importance of having training available for staff both initially and on an ongoing basis was stressed. The use of regular, small group customized training was suggested.

There was encouragement that the division stay current in its use of technology to support workers in carrying out their jobs. The use of tablets in the field and the use of voice to text programs was seen as a helpful process for the challenge of completing case documentation.

Table 33

Please check the areas in which you would like to receive further training.		
Area	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Substance Abuse: alcoholism, heroin, methamphetamines	84	24%
Clinical Issues	46	13%
Trauma Impact On Children	84	24%
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	65	19%
DSM V	57	17%
Case Plan Development	48	14%
In Home Case Management	45	13%
Suicide	42	12%
Child Attachment	65	19%
In Home Safety Planning	55	16%
Forensic Interviewing	52	15%
Adoption	36	10%
Working With Teenagers	44	13%
APPLA	20	6%
Initial Assessment	35	10%
Definitions of Abuse and Neglect	33	10%
Substantiations	65	19%
Training On The Practice Model	42	12%
Termination Of Parental Rights	31	9%
Court Procedures	68	20%
Providing Testimony	72	21%
Secondary Trauma	69	20%
Worker Safety	46	13%
Supervisory Management Skills	62	18%
Time Management	57	17%
Clerical	15	4%
ORCA	57	17%
Excel	64	19%
Access	18	5%
Specific Training For Social Service Associates	27	8%
Specific Training For Clerical Staff	28	8%

N = 345

Respondents Comments: Respondents were provided an opportunity to list other areas in which they would like training. The summary of their suggestions is as follows.

1. Cultural and ICWA related topics
2. Issues pertaining to substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, addiction disorders, and medication
3. ORCA – All aspects from functions and accessibility to documentation within the program
4. Techniques for interviewing children and parents including motivational interviewing
5. Legal training to include report writing, court practices, and testimony
6. Issues of child development
7. Research, statistics, and data analysis
8. Job and client related training offered both through the Child Welfare Academy and job duty specific trainings for protective services specialists, social services associates, office assistants, licensing, eligibility technicians, supervisors, managers, and administrators

Table 34

Have you attended SKILS in the last year?		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Yes	55	18%
No	246	82%

N = 301

Table 35

Attendance at SKILS helped me understand my role as a child protective services worker.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	13	24%
Agree	22	41%
Undecided	9	17%
Disagree	7	13%
Strongly Disagree	3	6%

N = 54

Table 36

Attendance at SKILS prepared me to work with families within OCS.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	8	15%
Agree	17	31%
Undecided	11	20%
Disagree	14	26%
Strongly Disagree	4	7%

N = 54

Table 37

Completing SKILS has made me confident that I am working according to the Practice Model.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	8	15%
Agree	17	32%
Undecided	15	28%
Disagree	9	17%
Strongly Disagree	4	8%

N = 53

Section V. Resources

This area of the survey asked staff members to respond to questions regarding support for program and case activities. Tables 29 through 36 present the findings.

Table 38

In general, ORCA is a useful tool to manage case information.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	52	18%
Agree	173	59%
Undecided	40	14%
Disagree	24	8%
Strongly Disagree	4	1%

N = 293

Table 39

When needed, support is available to me in a timely manner to assist with ORCA questions and issues.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	132	45%
Agree	138	47%
Undecided	19	7%
Disagree	4	.75%
Strongly Disagree	1	.25%

N = 294

Table 40

There is timely IT response to my needs when I have questions regarding the operation of my computer or I need direct assistance.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	71	24%
Agree	137	46%
Undecided	47	16%
Disagree	32	11%
Strongly Disagree	10	3%

N = 297

Table 41

The policy and procedures manual and other written directions that guide my job are clear and helpful.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	25	9%
Agree	158	54%
Undecided	60	21%
Disagree	35	12%
Strongly Disagree	12	4%

N = 290

Table 42

There are opportunities for me to make suggestions for changes and upgrades to the policy and procedure manual and they are considered.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	19	7%
Agree	85	29%
Undecided	106	37%
Disagree	60	21%
Strongly Disagree	19	7%

N = 289

Table 43

When policy and procedures are developed, they are disseminated throughout the agency in a timely manner.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	33	11%
Agree	156	53%
Undecided	77	26%
Disagree	20	7%
Strongly Disagree	7	2%

N = 293

Table 44

I receive necessary office supplies to carry out my job duties as needed.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	62	21%
Agree	153	51%
Undecided	31	10%
Disagree	41	14%
Strongly Disagree	12	4%

N = 299

Table 45

My office/cubicle/work area is adequately furnished.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	71	24%
Agree	173	58%
Undecided	22	7%
Disagree	24	8%
Strongly Disagree	9	3%

N = 299

Table 46

I believe I have had an adequate opportunity to give suggestions regarding providing for safety in the Office and Field.		
Level of Agreement	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Agree	32	11%
Agree	138	48%
Undecided	78	27%
Disagree	29	10%
Strongly Disagree	12	4%

N = 289

Section VI. Final Comments

In concluding the survey, a final area was provided for staff members to give comments they felt were important and helpful to the agency. The comments were far ranging and covered aspects of service organization and delivery at OCS. The following narrative provides a summary.

There were comments commending management and leadership for supporting staff and making efforts to improve the agency. There were some recommendations for improvement such as increasing supervision and clarifying roles/standards for all employee positions. Some employees would like to utilize supervision to address secondary trauma.

Many respondents would like to see an increase in staff positions to include office assistant positions, social services assistant positions, and Protective Services Specialists positions. The allocation of PCNs to rural offices was commented on and suggested that offices that require more travel receive sufficient staff to accommodate for travel time. Others were concerned with

the increase of rate of reports screened in without an increase of positions to manage the workload. A suggestion was received for further recruitment efforts for resource families able to take children with exceptional needs as a way to provide quality care and increased availability of placements for staff.

Many concerns regarding worker safety were received. Recommendations to improve safety for workers include increasing office security, technology to allow for communication in rural communities, and additional resources for staff to conduct investigations in pairs. Staff in rural communities are concerned about the delay in receiving phones and tablets to address their safety.

There were various comments and ideas to improve retention, to include an increase in salary, opportunities for promotion, increase training opportunities, and allow those who are furthering their education the option of part time positions. Other recommendations for improving the workplace include investing in comfortable furniture and reducing the noise around work stations.

Some staff are interested in receiving information on the agency's progress regarding the Child and Family Services Plan (five year plan) and progress with current agency challenges. There is also a desire for consistency across regions through an increase of communication between offices.

There were concerns expressed for agency documents and forms being out of date and difficult for clients to understand. Documents of concern included the case plan and licensing forms.

There were comments that it would be good to see a written plan for responding to the staff survey.

Appreciation to the Staff

The time that staff members took to express their thoughts and suggestions is deeply appreciated by the Office of Children's Services. The findings and comments of the survey serve to inform the Continuous Quality Improvement Process. The information will be used by management in efforts to enhance the work environment and to enable the delivery of quality services to families.