

# Child Welfare Education and Research Programs



## 2015-2016 Annual Report

School of Social Work

---

University of Pittsburgh

**Child Welfare Education and Research Programs**  
**Annual Report**  
Of the  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates Program**  
**(CWEB)**  
And the  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership Program (CWEL)**

**July 1, 2015- June 30, 2016**

The Child Welfare Education and Research Programs are a collaborative effort of the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators.



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



Published by

**Child Welfare Education and Research Programs**  
**School of Social Work**  
**University of Pittsburgh**  
**2329 Cathedral of Learning**  
**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260**

<http://www.socialwork.pitt.edu/researchtraining/child-welfare-education-research-programs>

1-866-275-2935

December, 2016

## **Greetings**

### **From the Dean**

Leadership in public child welfare has been a hallmark of the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work for a century. Beginning as early as 1917, the School of Social Work has been at the forefront of specialized education and training devoted toward the development of the child welfare profession. Our continued efforts to strengthen the public child welfare workforce through professional social work education are highlighted in this Annual Report of the Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) and the Child Welfare Education for Leadership (CWEL) programs. This report describes the work of the fifteenth year of the CWEB program and the twenty-first year of the CWEL program. The ongoing commitment of the Department of Human Services and the University to vulnerable children, youth, families, and communities has enabled Pennsylvania to remain a national leader in child welfare education, training, organizational development, and practice improvement.

The School of Social Work remains committed to best practices in child welfare through education, training and research. As always, we thank the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators for their steadfast support in assuring that children, families, and communities receive the best services possible to promote safety, stability, lifelong connections, equal opportunity, and well-being. Our work together remains critical to preparing social work professionals to meet the challenges of an ever-changing economic, social and political landscape. I look forward to our continued partnership in public child welfare workforce development and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Larry E. Davis, Ph.D.  
Donald M. Henderson Professor  
Dean, School of Social Work

### **From the Principal Investigator**

We are proud of the achievements of the CWEB and CWEL programs and continue to be gratified by our contributions to the enrichment of the public child welfare system in Pennsylvania. The past year was marked by many changes in child welfare practice, most notably in the implementation of revisions to the Commonwealth's Child Protective Services Law and an increase in the public's recognition of our shared responsibility in keeping children safe from harm. A multitude of changes to the daily practice of child welfare professionals across Pennsylvania have resulted in expanded opportunities for collaboration, shared vision, leadership and organizational development. A competent, well-prepared workforce must meet this challenge.

At this time, one thousand and fifty-eight (1,058) CWEB students have entered into the county agency system and one thousand two hundred and eighty-three (1,283) students have graduated from the CWEL program. All have work commitments in county child welfare. During the current academic year, approximately 169 CWEB and CWEL participants are engaged in social work studies. We have established an educational ladder within the Pennsylvania child welfare system, have seen our graduates emerge as leaders and have witnessed their positive impact upon child welfare practice. We celebrate their accomplishments. We also extend sincere thanks to our partnering schools, county child welfare agencies, and the Office of Children, Youth and Families for their continued dedication to workforce development. Together, we continue to prepare and support exemplary child welfare professionals. .

Helen Cahalane, Ph.D., ACSW, LCSW  
Principal Investigator

## Table of Contents

<b>Greetings</b> .....	iii
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	iv
<b>List of Figures and Tables</b> .....	vi
<b>Mission and Goals</b> .....	1
<b>Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>Background</b> .....	3
<b>Program Descriptions</b> .....	6
<i>Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates Program</i> .....	6
<i>Child Welfare Education for Leadership Program</i> .....	7
<b>Racial Disproportionality in Child Welfare and CWEB/CWEL Enrollment</b> .....	9
<b>Administration</b> .....	10
<b>Academic Program Approval and Curriculum</b> .....	12
<b>Trauma-Informed Principled Leadership Series</b> .....	13
<b>Commitment and Recoupment of Funds</b> .....	14
<b>Deliverables</b> .....	17
<i>Campus Meetings</i> .....	22
<b>The Changing Landscape of Pennsylvania Public Child Welfare</b> .....	24
<b>Evaluation</b> .....	26
<i>Introduction</i> .....	26
<i>Current CWEB and CWEL Students</i> .....	28
<i>Survey procedures and methods</i> .....	28
<i>Description of the survey respondents</i> .....	29
<i>Is there a career pathway?</i> .....	30
<i>How do students perceive their program?</i> .....	33
<i>Focus group results</i> .....	39
<i>Recent CWEB and CWEL Graduates</i> .....	40
<i>Survey procedures and methods</i> .....	40
<i>Description of the survey respondents</i> .....	40
<i>How do recent graduates perceive their program?</i> .....	42
<i>Long-Term Graduates</i> .....	49

<i>Survey procedures and method</i> .....	49
<i>Description of survey respondents</i> .....	50
<i>What do the long-term CWEB and CWEL graduates say about the climate of child welfare agencies?</i> .....	52
<b><i>Schools and Agencies</i></b> .....	57
<i>How do Pennsylvania schools of Social Work view the CWEB and CWEL programs?</i> .....	57
<i>How do child welfare agency administrators view the CWEB and CWEL programs?</i> .....	59
<b><i>Core Competencies</i></b> .....	62
<b><i>Overall Summary</i></b> .....	68
<b>Discussion</b> .....	70
<b><i>CWEB</i></b> .....	70
<b><i>CWEL</i></b> .....	73
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	87
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	91

## Appendices

- [Appendix A: Table I-Participating School Programs](#)
- [Appendix B: CWEB and CWEL School Participation Map](#)
- [Appendix C: Table II-University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Courses, 2014-2015](#)
- [Appendix D: Table III-Undergraduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of Approved CWEB Schools, 2014-2015](#)
- [Appendix E: Table IV-Graduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of Approved CWEL Schools, 2014-2015](#)
- [Appendix F: CWEB County Participation Map](#)
- [Appendix G: CWEB Overview: 2001-2015](#)
- [Appendix H: CWEB Leadership Series](#)
- [Appendix I: CWEL Overview: 1995-2015](#)
- [Appendix J: CWEL Applicant Pool and Admissions: 1995-2015 Academic Years](#)
- [Appendix K: Program Evaluation Data Tables](#)
- [Appendix L: List of Supplemental CWEB and CWEL Materials Available On-line](#)
- [Appendix M: Child Welfare Research Sampler](#)
- [Appendix N: Child Welfare Education and Research Programs Faculty and Staff](#)

## List of Figures and Tables

### Figures:

<b>Figure 1. Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates Requirements</b> .....	6
<b>Figure 2. Admissions to CWEB by Gender</b> .....	7
<b>Figure 3. Child Welfare Education for Leadership Requirements</b> .....	8
<b>Figure 4. Admissions to CWEL by Status and Gender</b> .....	9
<b>Figure 5. Demographics of PA Child Population and CWEB/CWEL Participants</b> .....	10
<b>Figure 6. Career Pathway for CWEB and CWEL</b> .....	31
<b>Figure 7. Current Student Satisfaction with CWEB/CWEL Programs</b> .....	34
<b>Figure 8. Comparison of Student Satisfaction Ratings Over the Last Four Academic Years</b> .....	35
<b>Figure 9. Current Job Titles Among CWEB Graduates</b> .....	41
<b>Figure 10. Current Job Titles Among Recent CWEL Graduates</b> .....	43
<b>Figure 11. Recent Graduates' Perceptions: CWEB and CWEL</b> .....	44
<b>Figure 12. Current Job Titles: CWEL Long-Term Graduates</b> .....	52
<b>Figure 13. Highest mean values by program for school respondents</b> .....	58
<b>Figure 14. Highest mean values for agency satisfaction and impact of CWEB/CWEL programs</b> ....	60
<b>Figure 15. Retention Strategies Reported by Directors</b> .....	61
<b>Figure 16. Mean Ranks of Core Competencies</b> .....	68
<b>Figure 17. CWEB County Participation</b> .....	70
<b>Figure 18. CWEL Field Placement Types</b> .....	75
<b>Figure 19. CWEL County Leadership</b> .....	76
<b>Figure 20. Long-term Commitment of CWEL Graduates</b> .....	80

### Tables:

<b>Table 1. Student and Graduate Departures from Programs and Recoupment</b> .....	16
<b>Table 2. Campus Meetings with CWEB and CWEL Participants</b> .....	22
<b>Table 3. Return Rates by Survey Type</b> .....	27
<b>Table 4. Average Ratings of Organizational Climate Dimensions by CWEB and CWEL Long-Term (1+ years) Graduates</b> .....	53
<b>Table 5. Comparison of School Administrator's Ratings of the Importance of Core Competencies to Traditional Selection Criteria</b> .....	64
<b>Table 6. CWEB and CWEL Core Competency Ratings by Agency Administrators</b> .....	65
<b>Table 7. CWEB Supervisor/Mentor's Core Competency Ratings for CWEB Program Participants</b> .....	66

## Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates

And

## Child Welfare Education for Leadership

### **Mission and Goals**

#### Our Mission

The Child Welfare Education and Research continuum includes two degree education programs, Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) and Child Welfare Education for Leadership (CWEL). Administered by the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators, the mission of these programs is to strengthen child welfare services to Title IV-E eligible children and families in Pennsylvania by increasing the number of educated professionals and equipping them to deal with the increasingly complex demands of public child welfare practice.

#### Our Goals

- Addressing the vacancy and turnover rates among public child welfare employees and the recruitment and retention problems in Pennsylvania;
- Recruiting undergraduate students throughout the widely dispersed locations in order to prepare persons for public child welfare employment;
- Assisting in retention of public child welfare staff already serving Title IV-E eligible children and families by making graduate education with a focus on child welfare studies more readily available;
- Providing academic and curricular support for child welfare studies to university programs;
- Providing a career ladder within public child welfare and assisting in the long-term career development of child welfare professionals;
- Engaging in efforts to promote the development of skills in evidenced-based practice for child welfare professionals;
- Conducting research and evaluation focused on evidence-based child welfare practice and the impact of social work education
- Advocating for practice improvement within the child welfare system through education, ongoing training, transfer of learning, technical assistance, organizational development, and support provided by competent, committed, and confident child welfare professionals.

## **Introduction**

Recruitment and retention of public child welfare personnel has been recognized as a problem not only in Pennsylvania, but nationwide for more than two decades. National studies have concluded that “insufficient training” is one of the major factors contributing to the difficulties in retaining child welfare personnel. Research findings document that professional education is one of the factors that can reduce turnover, improve services, and reduce costs.

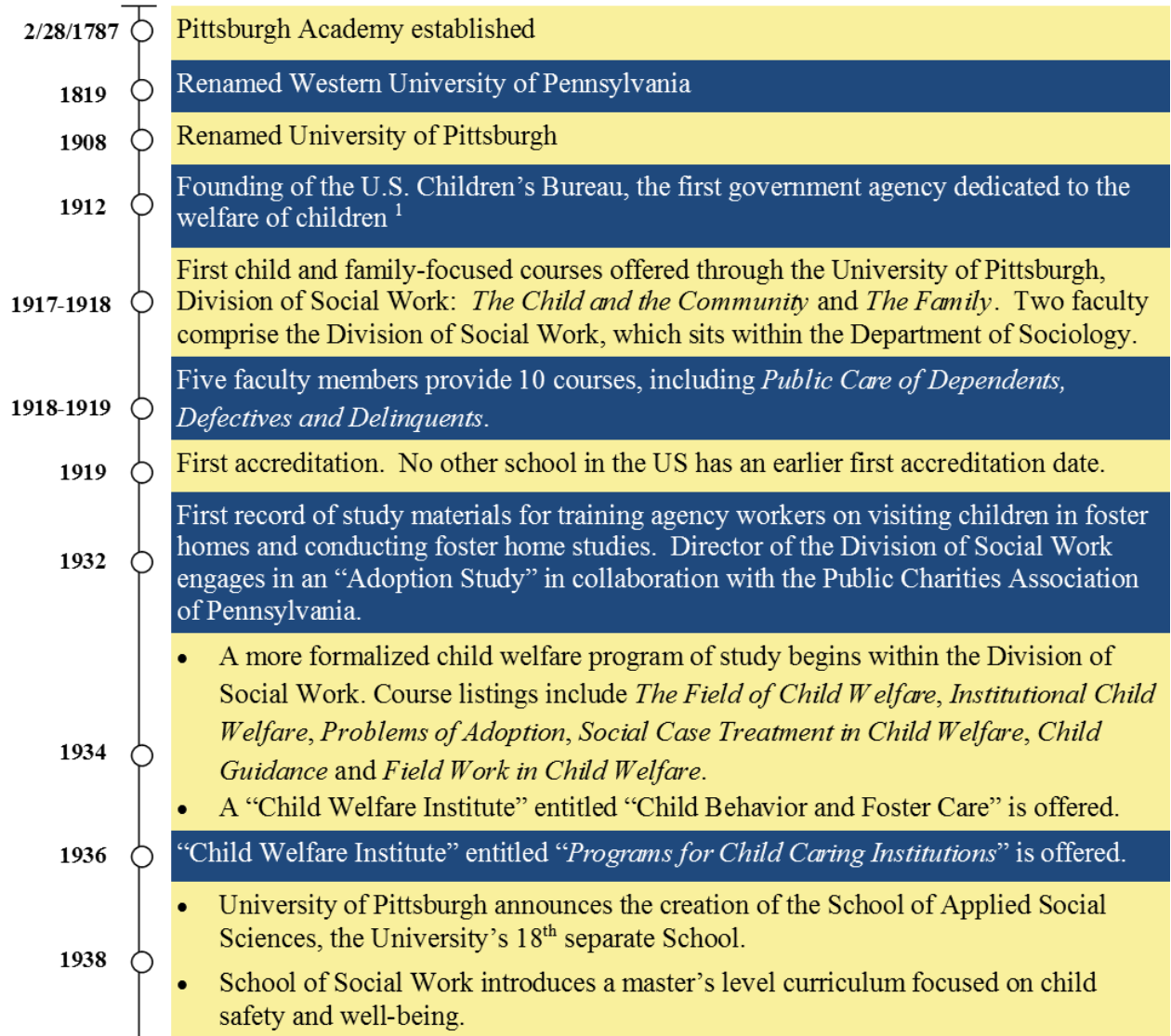
This report marks the completion of the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) full academic year of operation for the Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) program and twenty-first (21<sup>st</sup>) full academic year of operation for the Child Welfare Education for Leadership (CWEL) program in Pennsylvania. Both have become remarkably integrated into the fabric of public child welfare throughout the state, with 99% of counties in the Commonwealth participating in CWEB and CWEL. For the past 21 years, CWEL has been returning graduates to the roughly 4,200 caseworker, supervisor, manager, and administrator position in Pennsylvania’s county child welfare agencies, while CWEB has been preparing graduates to enter the child welfare field over the past 15 years. At the present time, over 20% of the state’s public child welfare positions are occupied by a CWEB graduates, a CWEL graduate, or a currently enrolled CWEL student. There are many other factors to be included when addressing morale, recruitment, and retention problems, but CWEB and CWEL continue to demonstrate their effectiveness in addressing the significant issue of preparatory and advanced education for the child welfare workforce.

The need for both the baccalaureate and graduate-level child welfare education programs is described and their basic designs are included in Pennsylvania’s federally approved Title IV-B plan. Federal financial participation is based upon federal Title IV-E regulations contained in 45 CFR, Ch. II, Part 235 and Ch. XIII, Parts 1355 and 1356.

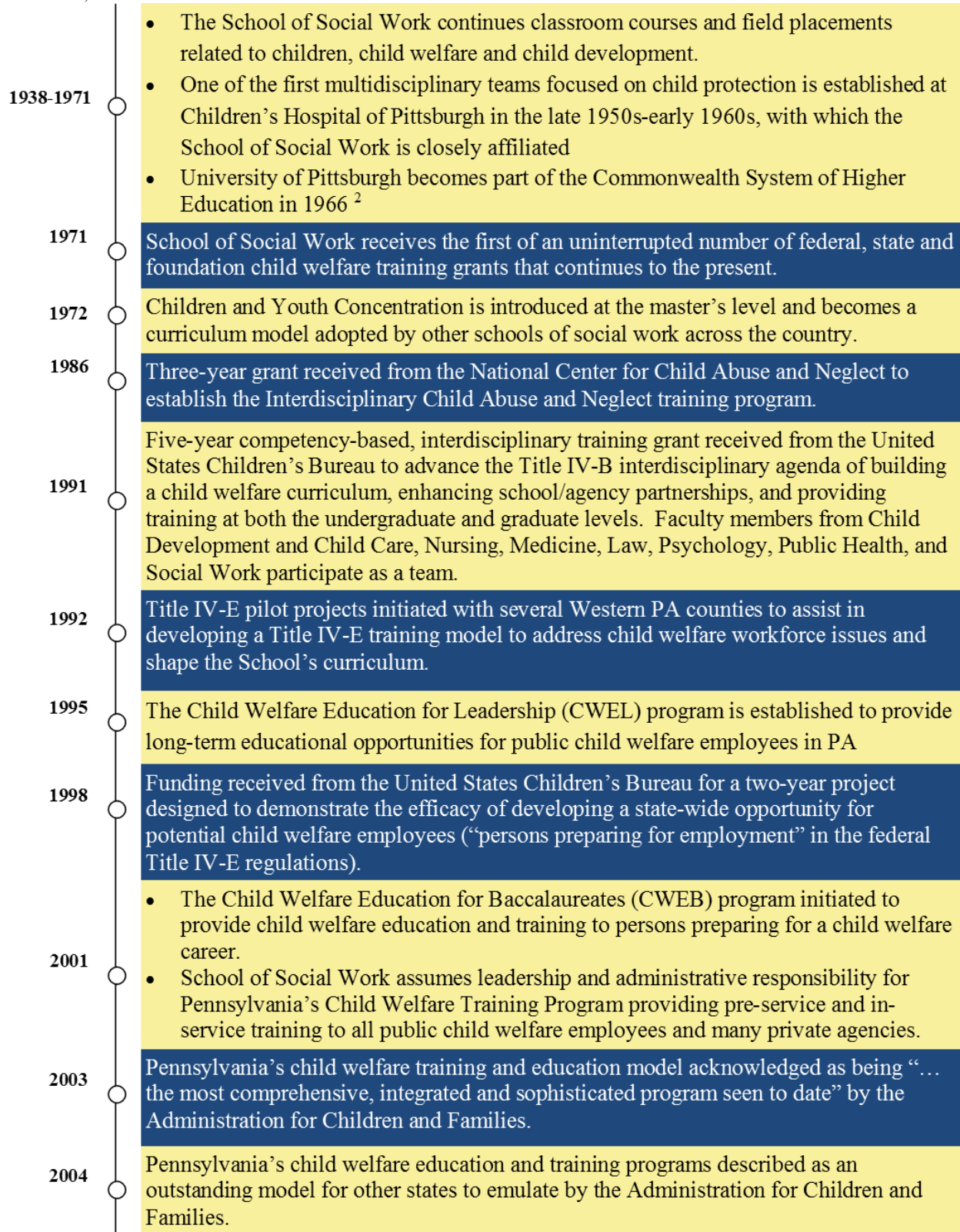


**Background**

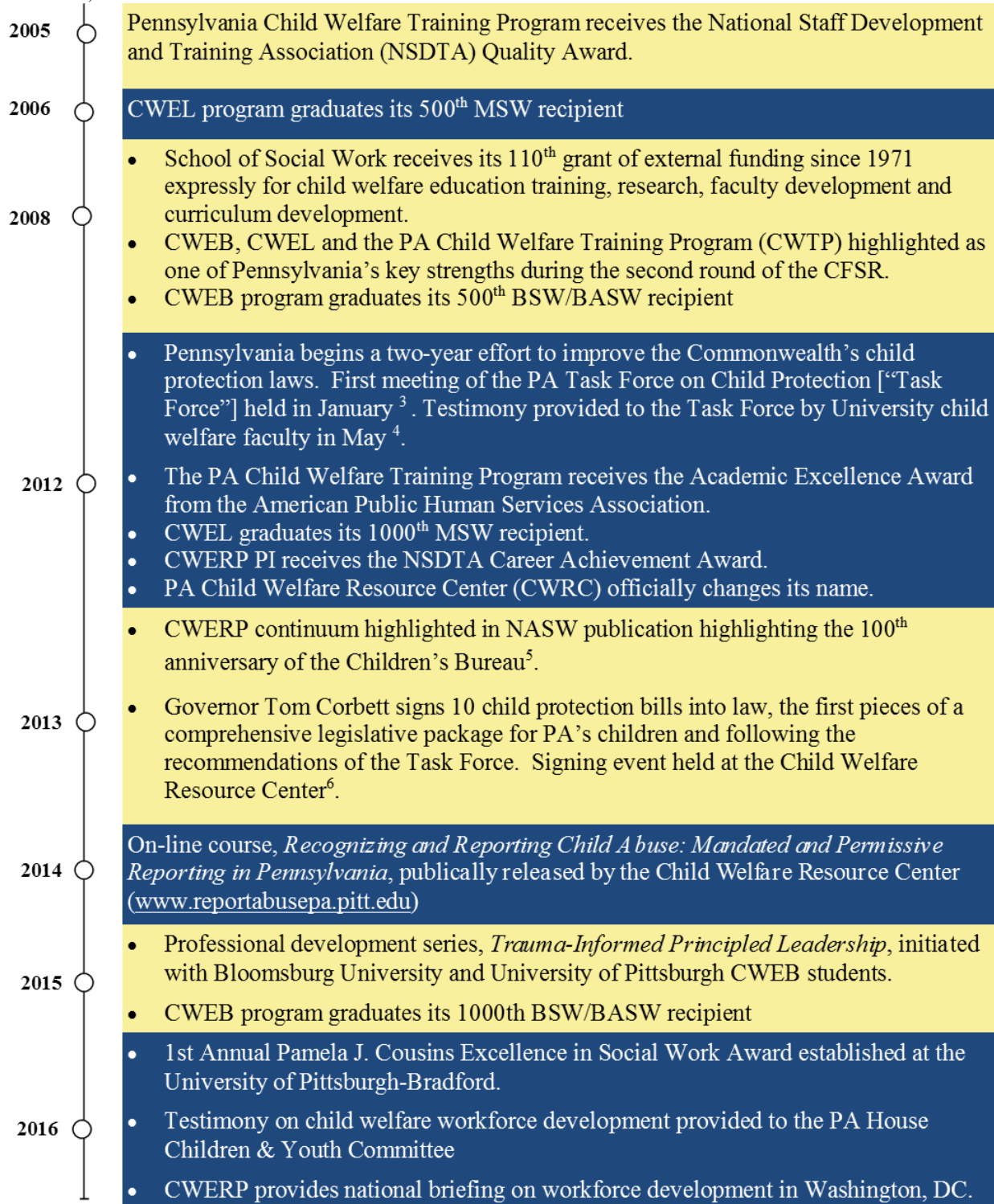
Child welfare has been a vital component for social work practice at the University of Pittsburgh since as early as 1917. The following timeline provides an historical overview of key events in the University’s legacy of child welfare education and training.



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Children’s Bureau, *The story of the Children’s Bureau* [https://cb100.acf.hhs.gov/sites/all/themes/danland/danblog/files/Story\\_of\\_CB.pdf](https://cb100.acf.hhs.gov/sites/all/themes/danland/danblog/files/Story_of_CB.pdf)



<sup>2</sup> 1966, Special Sess. No. 3, July 28, P.L. 87, § 2. 24 P.S. § 2510-202, PA ST 24 P.S. § 2510-202. Current through 2015 Regular Session Acts 1 to 70



<sup>3</sup>January 26, 2012

<sup>4</sup>May 31, 2012

<sup>5</sup>Zlotnik, J.L. (2013). University-agency partnerships to advance child welfare. In K. Briar-Lawson, M. McCarthy & N. Dickinson (Eds.), *The Children’s Bureau: Shaping a century of child welfare practices, programs and policies* (pp. 275-292). Washington, DC: NASW Press.

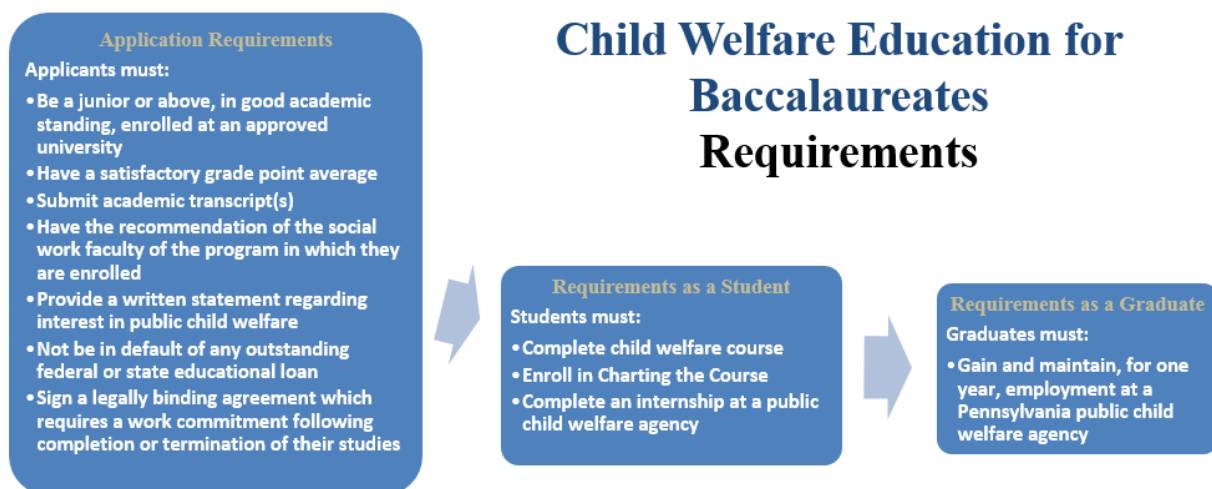
<sup>6</sup>December 18, 2013

## **Program Descriptions**

### ***Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates Program***

Designed to recruit and prepare students for a career in public child welfare, the Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) Program is offered to undergraduates at 14 schools throughout Pennsylvania. Undergraduate students who are official social work majors in any of the 14 approved schools are eligible to apply for the CWEB program. Figure 1 below illustrates the program requirements.

**Figure 1. Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates Requirements**

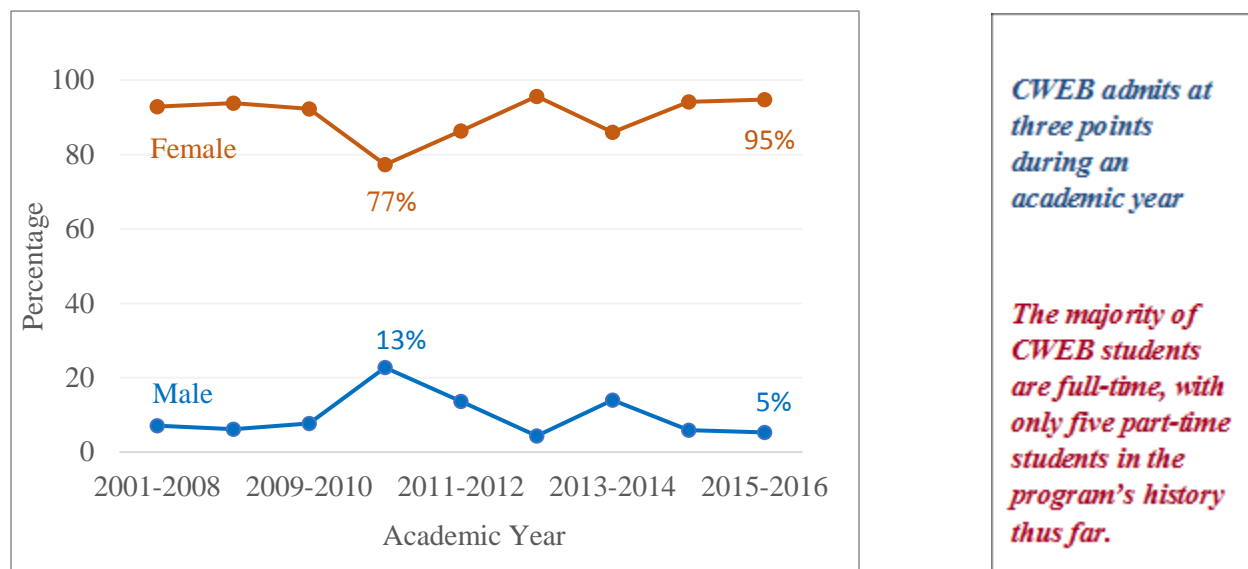


Qualified students can receive substantial financial support during their senior year in return for a commitment to work in one of Pennsylvania’s county public child welfare agencies following graduation. Students must satisfactorily complete child welfare course work and an internship at a public child welfare agency. During the course of the internship, most students are able to complete a portion of the competency-based training required for all public child welfare caseworkers. Upon graduation, students also receive assistance with their employment search.

Over 1,050 students have graduated from CWEB during the program’s first 15 years. CWEB graduates have completed internships and have completed internships and have been employed in 91% of Pennsylvania counties. Once in the field, they are able to draw on a solid

background of on the job experience, educational preparation, and skill-based training. County child welfare agencies benefit immensely from the program because it addresses a critical child workforce need by providing skilled, entry-level social workers who come to the field with a combination of academic knowledge and exposure to child welfare practice. Figure 2 below illustrates CWEB admissions by gender.

**Figure 2. Admissions to CWEB by Gender**



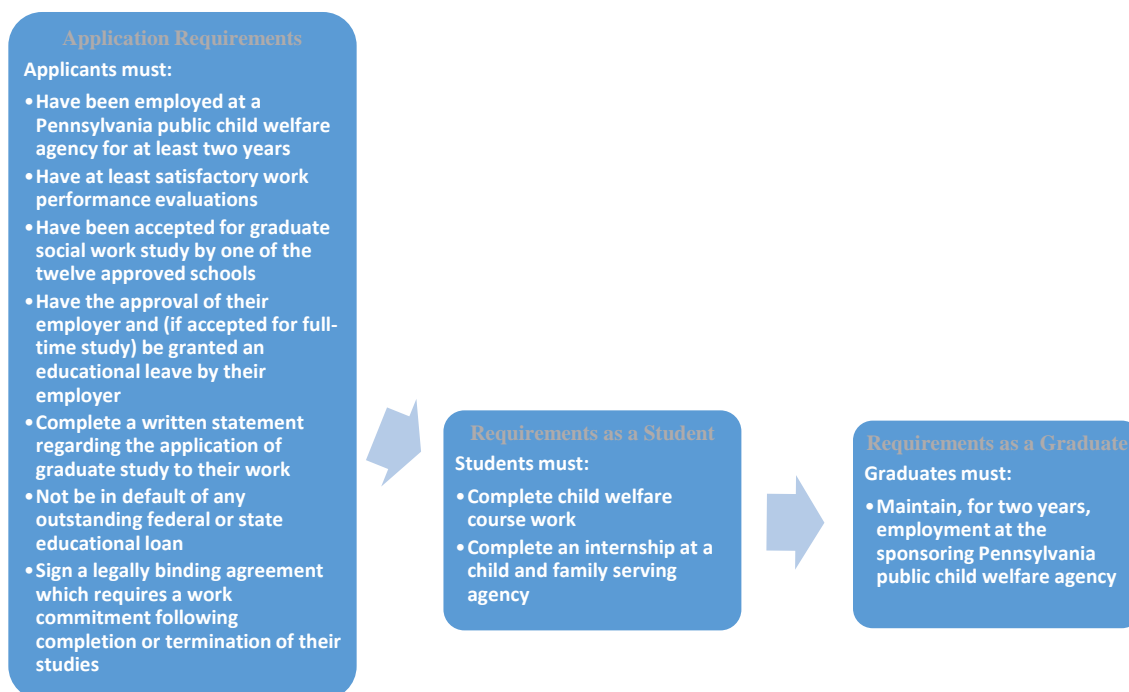
### ***Child Welfare Education for Leadership Program***

The Child Welfare Education for Leadership (CWEL) Program provides substantial financial support for graduate-level social work education for current employees of public child welfare agencies. Caseworkers, supervisors, managers or administrators of any Pennsylvania county children and youth agency are eligible to apply to participate in the CWEL program. See Figure 3 below for all program requirements. All persons enrolled meet these criteria as determined by their CWEL applications, resumes, personal statements, agency approvals, admission to one of the approved schools, and signed agreements.

CWEL has funded students from 64 counties and twelve Pennsylvania schools of social work on both a full and part-time basis. At the present time, 17% of the Pennsylvania child welfare

workforce consists of a CWEL graduate or a current CWEL student. Additionally, CWEL serves as an educational and career ladder for public child welfare employees. Overall, approximately

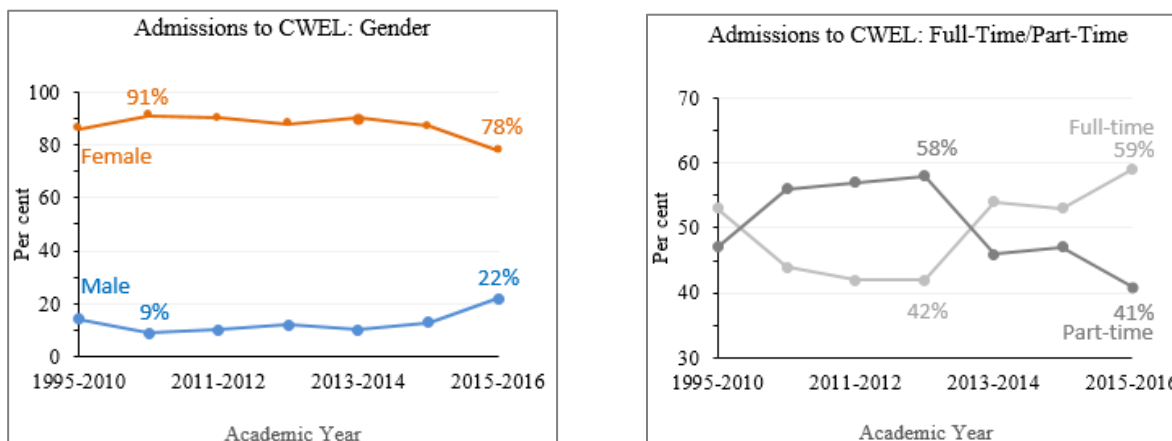
**Figure 3. Child Welfare Education for Leadership Requirements**



16% of CWEB graduates have entered the CWEL program thus far. CWEB alumni made up 19% of the active CWEL student enrollment during the 2015-2016 program year. Admission trends by enrollment status are shown in Figure 4.

CWEL reimburses salary and benefits for full-time CWEL students and covers tuition, fees, and other expenses for both full and part-time students in return for a commitment to the employing child welfare agency upon graduation. During the first 21 years of the program, 1,283 child welfare professionals have earned graduate social work degrees. These individuals occupy various positions, ranging from caseworker to administrator. The program has a remarkably successful record of retention, with annual retention rates averaging 92%.

**Figure 4. Admissions to CWEL by Status and Gender**



### **Racial Disproportionality in Child Welfare and CWEB/CWEL Enrollment**

It is well known that children of color are overrepresented in the United States child welfare system<sup>7</sup>. In 2013 for example, African American children made up approximately 14% of the U.S. child population but represented 24% of the foster care population<sup>8,9</sup>. Disproportionate representation is striking across all levels of child welfare service and is particularly evident in substitute care. Pennsylvania is the sixth most populated state in the country, with a total of 12.8 million people<sup>10</sup>. According to a recent report by Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, there were almost 23,000 Pennsylvania children living in foster care in 2015<sup>11</sup>. Approximately thirty-five percent of these children are Black or African American, yet African American children comprise just under 14% of the state’s child population<sup>9,11</sup>. Caucasian children make up almost 75% of the state’s child population and comprise approximately 41% of Pennsylvania’s foster care

<sup>7</sup>Wells, S.J. (2011). Disproportionality and disparity in child welfare: An overview of definitions and methods of measurement. In D.K. Green, K. Belanger, R.G. McRoy & L. Bullard (Eds.), *Challenging racial disproportionality in child welfare: Research, policy, and practice*. Washington, DC: CWLA Press.

<sup>8</sup> US Department of Health & Human Services (2015). *Foster care statistics*. (2014). Washington, DC: Children’s Bureau. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/foster>

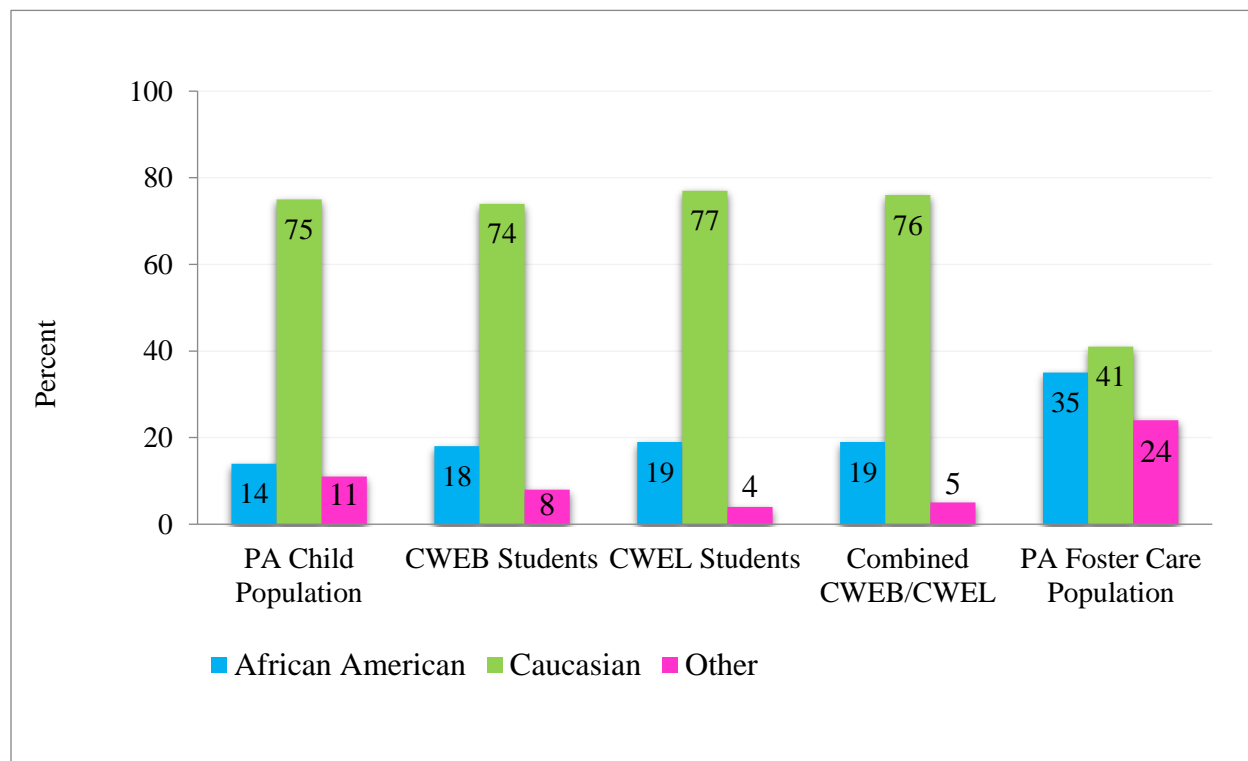
<sup>9</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation (n.d.), KIDS COUNT data center. Retrieved from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/4201-population--children-age-0-17-by-race-and-ethnicity#detailed/2/any/false/133,11/144,107,9,167,172,4,185,12/9030,9031>

<sup>10</sup> United States Census Bureau, Department of Commerce. (n.d.). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/42>

<sup>11</sup> Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children (2016). *State of Child Welfare 2016*. Harrisburg, PA: Porchlight Project: Retrieved from [http://www.papartnerships.org/reports/2016\\_socw/source\\_files/2016%20SOCW%20Source%20Notes.pdf](http://www.papartnerships.org/reports/2016_socw/source_files/2016%20SOCW%20Source%20Notes.pdf)

population<sup>9,11</sup>. While the causes and solutions for the disproportionate representation of children of color in the child welfare system are complex, we recognize that it is crucial for the workforce to be reflective of the populations served. Within the CWEB and CWEL programs combined, African Americans represent 19% of participants. Figure 5 below illustrates the demographic characteristics of the Pennsylvania child population and those of CWEB/CWEL participants.

**Figure 5. Demographics of PA Child Population and CWEB/CWEL Participants**



**Administration**

The CWEB and CWEL programs have been administered by the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh since their inception in 2001 and 1995, respectively. Part III-A of the Project Description and Implementation provides background information. In addition to providing undergraduate and graduate level social work degree programs on both a full-time and part-time basis, the School of Social Work provides academic and curriculum support for the other 13 undergraduate universities and 11 graduate schools eligible to participate in the CWEB and CWEL programs. The total number of participating school programs is 16, with 4 schools at the



undergraduate level only, 10 university programs enrolling both undergraduate and graduate students, and 2 programs at the graduate level only.

The CWEB and CWEL faculty conduct annual site visits with each university program, including branch campus locations, and maintain ongoing contact to discuss academic programs, issues, and progress. The legal agreement for each student contains a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) waiver which permits the sharing of academic information. The CWEB and CWEL faculty and staff have hundreds of contacts with faculty and students from the other fifteen schools throughout the year.

Fiscal administration includes reimbursement to county employers of full-time graduate students for salaries and benefits, reimbursement to students for books, payment of tuition and fees at all approved educational institutions and, where appropriate, travel expenditures and fellowship payments. These payments are advanced by the University as they become due. The University, in turn, invoices the Commonwealth and is reimbursed from a combination of state and federal funds.

A series of formal agreements provides the mechanism for the operation of the programs. These include the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Department of Human Services and the University of Pittsburgh; a series of agreements between the University and each of the other 15 approved institutions of higher education; and, agreements between CWEB students with the University or among CWEL students, their respective county employer and the University. These agreements provide for the students' enrollment arrangements, reimbursement for allowable expenses, and the required post-education work commitments. The CWEL employers' responsibility to maintain benefits and grant education leave to full-time students is specified in the agreement. Reimbursement to employers for CWEL student salaries and benefits is also included.

To accomplish all of these tasks, approximately nine full-time equivalent faculty and staff have been engaged. All program faculty teach regular credit courses, provide academic advising to students, and oversee internships. In addition, the CWEB and CWEL faculty are responsible for assisting in program evaluation. The faculty and staff listing is contained in [Appendix N](#).

### **Academic Program Approval and Curriculum**

All of the schools participating in the CWEB and CWEL programs are fully accredited by both the Middle States Association of College and Schools (MSACS) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The 16 approved schools and their accreditation dates are listed in [Appendix A](#), Table I. A graphic representation showing the location of the participating schools is included in [Appendix B](#).

All approved undergraduate schools are required to offer at least one child welfare course and internships in county child welfare agencies. Approved graduate programs are required to offer at least two graduate-level child welfare courses and child welfare internships. The continuing availability of these courses and internships is verified by the CWEB and CWEL Academic Coordinators who consult regularly with the approved schools regarding field assignments, specific courses, student registrations, and student progress.

The graduate level offerings of the University of Pittsburgh and their enrollments are listed in [Appendix C](#), Table II. The 2015-2016 course offerings of the 14 undergraduate schools participating in CWEB and the other 11 graduate school programs participating in CWEL and shown in [Appendix D](#), Table III (CWEB) and in [Appendix E](#), Table IV (CWEL). These course listings referenced above do not include internships, for which a minimum of 400 clock hours is required at the baccalaureate level and 900 at the masters level.

At the undergraduate level (CWEB) the range of field or internship hours is from 400 to 600 with a mean of 475. However, the CWEB students are encouraged to participate in the Pennsylvania State Civil Service County Social Casework Intern program in conjunction with their

school and the county agency in which they are completing their placements. This option requires 975 hours of internship. The advantage of this option for the student and agency is that upon completion of the official County Social Casework Intern program and graduation, the student is eligible to being work immediately in the agency, typically as a Caseworker II, without the requirement of a Civil Service examination. Of the 72 CWEB students who graduated during the 2015-2016 academic year, 52, or 72% exercised the State Civil Service Social Casework Intern option. CWEB county participation is included in [Appendix F](#).

At the graduate level, nearly all placements exceed the 900 hour minimum with the average being over 1,000 hours. At the University of Pittsburgh, there are 360 hours of internship for first year students, in addition to a 15-week field seminar. Second year students are required to complete 720 hours, resulting in a grand total of 1,080 internship hours. Comparable hours and field seminars are required at the other participating graduate school programs. CWEL county participation is included in [Appendix I](#).

### **Trauma-Informed Principled Leadership Series**

In recognition of the steep learning curve that undergraduate students encounter when entering public child welfare agencies, a special leadership development training was initiated during the 2014-2015 academic year. Initially piloted with CWEB students from Bloomsburg University and the University of Pittsburgh, this five-module series addresses the development of leadership skills associated with cultural competence, self-care and trauma-informed practice. Students receive training on five practices of exemplary leadership identified in the literature<sup>12</sup> and participate in monthly discussions focused on core leadership skills and service delivery in the child welfare system. Agency climate, differences in rural and urban settings, the impact of culture and race, and client empowerment are among the topics discussed. Students also explore the impact of trauma exposure in their practice and develop self-care plans to increase their resilience.

---

<sup>12</sup> Kouzes, J & Posner, B. (2012). *The leadership challenge: How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Participation in an experiential leadership exercise concludes the training. An overview of the series is included in [Appendix H](#).

### **Commitment and Recoupment of Funds**

All students enrolled in the CWEB and CWEL programs must repay the educational benefits they have received. This is accomplished in one of two ways. For CWEB graduates, the repayment by service is one calendar year of service for one academic year of support<sup>13</sup>. For CWEL graduates, the length of this service is an amount of time equal to the length of the educational leave for full-time CWEL students and equal to the proportion of the full-time length of the degree program they have completed as part-time students<sup>14</sup>. Students who received support for only a portion of their program have a pro rata work commitment proportional to the support they received. During the period of this report, 59 CWEL students completed their degree programs and were graduated. All graduates returned to their counties of origin following graduation.

The full amount of the cash paid to the student or on the student's behalf must be reimbursed whenever a CWEB or CWEL graduate fails to complete his or her commitment. This provision is contained in the agreement each student signs either with the University (as in the case of CWEB students) or with the University and county of origin (as in the case of CWEL students). During the 15<sup>th</sup> program year, seven CWEB students withdrew or were terminated from the program after receiving financial benefits, some after beginning their period of commitment payback. Our experience with the program over this fifteen year period has been that those who withdraw early discover that child welfare was not what they had anticipated and not what they want to pursue as a professional career. In general, baccalaureate-level students are just beginning their professional career path and it is not uncommon for undergraduates to underestimate the rigor and reality of child welfare work. We have learned that this important discovery is to be

---

<sup>13</sup> 45 CFR, Ch. II, §235.63 (b) (5)

<sup>14</sup> 45 CFR, Ch. II, §235.63 (b) (1)

anticipated in a certain number of instances among CWEB students and is best identified before great time, training, and costs have been expended. A graphic summary of the CWEB departures and their recoupment status appears on page 16.

In 21 years of program operation, it is notable that only 6% of the students admitted to the CWEL program have resigned or been terminated from the program. These departures are for various reasons, represent widely distributed counties, and include most schools. These situations, together with the actions being taken are summarized in Table 1. The employment (retention) of all students exiting the program will continue to be monitored as required in Section II, G, 13 of the Program Description and Implementation, and by PL 103-432 which was enacted by the United State Congress during the first CWEL program year and which applies to graduates funded after October 1, 1995.

Retention has two aspects in the CWEB and CWEL program. The first is the retention of currently enrolled students. Among both programs combined, the student loss rate is 5%. This is most reasonable considering the large number of academic, work, and personal factors that can affect the decision to withdraw from an academic program. The second aspect is the retention of graduates after they have completed their work commitment. Over the past 15 years of the CWEB program (through the summer of 2016), 988 CWEB students accepted employment after graduation. Within the CWEL program, only 15 individuals out of a total of 1,283 graduates have not completed their employment commitment after graduation.

**Table 1. Student and Graduate Departures from Programs and Recoupment**

School	# of Students			Reason for Departure		Recoupment Status	
	Total	CWEB	CWEL	Employment	Withdrew from School/Program	Collection Initiated	Obligation Satisfied
Bloomsburg University	9	9	0	5	4	5	4
Bryn Mawr College	4	0	4	0	4	1	3
California University	17	16	1	11	6	9	8
Edinboro University	14	13	1	7	7	7	7
Kutztown University	12	11	1	9	3	5	7
Lock Haven University	11	11	0	6	5	4	7
Mansfield University	12	12	0	11	1	6	6
Marywood University	20	0	20	3	17	6	14
Millersville University	4	3	1	1	3	3	1
University of Pennsylvania	6	0	6	0	6	3	3
University of Pittsburgh	25	7	18	9	16	9	16
Shippensburg University	11	10	1	7	4	4	7
Slippery Rock University	10	10	0	7	3	5	5
Temple University	30	13	17	12	18	11	19
West Chester University	5	5	0	5	0	2	3
Widener University	17	6	11	8	9	8	9
<b>TOTALS</b>	207	126	81	101	106	88	119

Among the CWEB graduates who have most recently satisfied their legal work commitment, 53% remain in the agencies. Overall, 62% have exceeded their commitment by over two years. Increased familiarity with the program, more focused selected criteria and stronger case management has contributed to improved outcomes. The number of CWEL graduates who have discontinued child welfare work for all reasons over the life of the program averages 8% per year. This figure includes death, retirement, total and permanent disability, transfer of spouse/partner employment out of state, and other routine changes of employment.

Despite the loss of some staff, both the CWEB and CWEL programs have a strong record of retention. Nevertheless, there are real reasons behind each of the post-commitment departures. We describe these in our previous annual reports, and have presented them to the state-wide Recruitment and Retention Committee, at meetings of the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators Association, at national professional meetings, and include additional information later in this report. Fortunately, most of the root causes of turnover can actually be remedied, though some are more difficult to address than others. We are committed to working with county agencies to focus on organizational-level solutions that can assist in workforce development, worker retention, and the enhanced capacity of child welfare systems.

### **Deliverables**

Extensive efforts to inform all interested parties about the CWEB and CWEL programs are ongoing. The entry of 1058 CWEB students into the agency system and the return of 1,283 CWEL graduates to a total of 66 counties have been very helpful in continuing to make the value of the programs visible. Current and former students are a valuable source of recruitment, as are county agency directors and school faculty members. The volume of inquiries and applications, and involvement of nearly all the counties in the state of Pennsylvania, suggest that information about the program is reaching those eligible to participate as students or employers. Continued efforts are required, however, to assure the opportunity for child welfare-focused education is widely

known across Pennsylvania counties and across school programs. A long-established toll-free line is available to facilitate inquiries and calls for assistance [1 (866) ASK-CWEL/1 (866) 275-2935].

Web-based information regarding both programs is routinely updated and publically available on the School of Social Work website, and both programs can also be accessed through the Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC) website. The CWEB and CWEL webpages include a Student Handbook for each program as well as “Frequently Asked Questions” to clarify program information and address common concerns. An informational video regarding the CWEB program that features faculty members and program participants was distributed to each participating school and is posted on the CWEB webpage.

The CWEB/CWEL program continuum also has a Facebook page. This accessibility is helpful to both prospective and current students, and illustrates the personal connection both programs develop with participants. Program information is also readily available to county agencies and schools through electronic and personal communication. Other forms of communication, such as the use of blast texting, are used to transmit program information.

The following efforts and products were delivered by the University during 2015-2016 in accordance with the approved Project Description and Implementation plan:

- Previous annual reports were posted on the CWERP website and are available to all county administrators, DHS officials, CWEB and CWEL academic partners and other interested state and federal officials.
- CWEB and CWEL program and application materials were posted on the CWERP website for all counties, participating schools and interested parties.
- Dr. Bradley-King made numerous presentations regarding the CWEB program at participating undergraduate social work programs throughout Pennsylvania.
- Dr. Bradley-King received two awards during this academic year, *2015 Dedicated and Deserving Social Work Award* from *Social Work Today*, and *2015 Inaugural University*



*Honors College Faculty Fellow.* The receipt of these awards showcases Dr. Bradley-King's commitment and dedication to the field of social work and educating future social workers.

- Dr. Cahalane began serving as a committee member for the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts Caseworker Recruitment and Retention Committee. Dr. Cahalane brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this vital committee to ensure the Commonwealth attracts and maintains the most qualified workers to child welfare positions.
- Dr. Perry was invited to participate in a panel presentation at the Children's Bureau 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Child Welfare Demonstration Projects Meeting in Washington, DC. The presentation was titled *Assessing fidelity of family engagement in Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Demonstration Project.*
- Rachel Winters, Senior Evaluation Coordinator, presented on the topic, *An invisible struggle: The presence of intergenerational trauma in child welfare*, at the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Pennsylvania Infant Mental Health Conference hosted by Pennsylvania's Association for Infant Mental Health.
- Dr. Cahalane continued to serve as the Co-Chair of the Child Welfare Track of the Council on Social Work Education.
- Dr. Winter presented two workshops at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference for Promoting Healthy Attachments in Steubenville, Ohio. These workshops were titled *Self-Care for workers and caregivers* and *The intersection of traumatic stress and substance abuse.*
- Dr. Bradley-King continued her appointment as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair on the Family Services of Western Pennsylvania Board of Trustees and began an appointment on the Board of Trustees for The Early Learning Institute.

- Dr. Rauktis conducted a symposium entitled “*When you first get there, you wear red*”: *Youth perceptions of point and level systems in group home care* at the Society for Social Work Research.
- Dr. Winter presented a workshop at the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Child Maltreatment hosted by Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. The workshop was titled *Biofeedback and meditation tools for self-care*.
- Dr. Perry was invited to present at the pre-conference for the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium (NHSTES) in Berkley, California. The presentation was titled *Assessing organizational culture in Pennsylvania’s child welfare agencies*.
- Dr. Cahalane, along with Dr. Cindy Parry, also presented at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual NHSTES. Their presentation, *Evaluating organizational change in a complex agency environment*, highlighted Pennsylvania’s organizational effectiveness work delivered through the CWRC.
- Dr. Cahalane along with Tasha Hannah, a CWEL graduate and Philadelphia Department of Human Services Intake Supervisor, testified before the Pennsylvania House Children and Youth Committee on the topic *Child Welfare Professional Education and Training*. These testimonies provided crucial information to Pennsylvania’s state government on the importance of a well-educated child welfare workforce.
- Dr. Cahalane, Rachel Winters, and Wendy Unger from Pennsylvania’s Child Welfare Resource Center, presented *Innovative pathways to sustained change: Organizational effectiveness work in child welfare* at the 2016 National Association of Social Workers National Conference in Washington, DC.
- Dr. Cahalane was invited to testify at a national congressional briefing, *Let’s Improve Child Welfare Outcomes: The Workforce Matters* sponsored by the Child Welfare League of America and the National Association of Social Workers in collaboration with the Senate

Foster Youth Caucus and the Congressional Social Work Caucus in Washington, DC. Dr. Cahalane's testimony brought the issue of a well-educated child welfare workforce to a national platform and highlighted Pennsylvania's child welfare education and training continuum as a model.

- On June 3, 2016, Dr. Cahalane presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual *Pamela J. Cousins Excellence in Social Work Award* at the University of Pittsburgh-Bradford (UP-B) campus. The award was established in honor of Pam's lifelong commitment to public child welfare. Pam was the director of Elk County Children and Youth Services and a proud graduate of the UP-B MSW program and the CWEL program. She also served as a faculty instructor of child welfare practice.
- The child welfare faculty and staff have also contributed to numerous scholarly publications thereby spreading their wealth of knowledge to a broader audience.
- Program evaluation instruments were distributed to all participating counties, schools, current students, and a sample of graduates from both CWEB and CWEL as part of the annual program evaluation, the results of which are described later in this report.
- Faculty visits were held with participating school programs beginning in the fall of 2015 and continuing through the spring of 2016. These visits are summarized in Table 2 below and included meetings with prospective students, current students, academic faculty, and academic program administrators. Focus groups regarding professional development for public child welfare workers were held with the CWEB and CWEL students, the details of which are described in the Evaluation section of this report.
- In addition to the specific activities noted above, hundreds of telephone and e-mail inquiries were handled from potential students, agency administrators, county commissioners, other states, and other colleges and universities.

***Campus Meetings***

There was excellent attendance and participation of the CWEB and CWEL constituencies at all of the campus sites. Students discussed and asked questions related to many aspects of child welfare education and practice as well as specific issues related to the CWEB and CWEL programs. Wide ranging discussions of policy issues, academic concerns, administrative procedures, and other matters were frank, constructive and overwhelmingly positive. Students spoke openly about the opportunities and the challenges encountered by the PA child welfare workforce throughout the past program year. The dates of the campus meetings held during the 2015-2016 Academic Year are displayed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Campus Meetings with CWEB and CWEL Participants**

<b>School Program</b>	<b>Date of Visit</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>
California University of Pennsylvania	11/24/15	CWEB
Edinboro University	9/17/15	CWEB
Lock Haven University	9/22/15	CWEB
Mansfield University	9/22/15	CWEB
University of Pittsburgh-Oakland	8/27/15	CWEB
Shippensburg University	9/23/15	CWEB
	4/18/16	CWEB & CWEL
Slippery Rock University	9/17/15	CWEB
Bloomsburg University	10/9/15	CWEB
Bryn Mawr College	10/6/15	CWEL
Kutztown University	10/5/15	CWEB & CWEL
Marywood University-Lehigh Campus	10/5/15	CWEL
Marywood University- Scranton Campus	10/9/15	CWEB & CWEL
Temple University- Main Campus	10/6/15	CWEB & CWEL
University of Pennsylvania	10/8/15	CWEL
West Chester University	10/7/15	CWEB & CWEL
Widener University	10/7/15	CWEB & CWEL
University of Pittsburgh-Bradford	12/11/15	CWEL
	6/3/16	
Millersville University	4/19/16	CWEB & CWEL
Temple University- Harrisburg Campus	4/18/16	CWEL

Throughout the years of program operation, consistent themes have emerged during the focus groups that have been observed across student cohorts as well as across schools, counties, and regions. Undergraduates discuss their beginning exposure to child welfare by sharing

experiences of their county agency field practica. As a whole, the undergraduates speak about their agency work with enthusiasm and readily share experiences working with children, families, and the court system. Current CWEB students share their experiences with prospective CWEB students and also benefit from mixed group discussions that include both CWEB and CWEL participants. In relaying their experiences to other students, the CWERP team has an opportunity to see student transfer of learning first hand.

Overall, participants in the focus groups were appreciative of the opportunity to participate in the CWEB and CWEL programs. They spoke about the support they have received from their professors, the superior quality of their field placements, and how the educational programs were teaching them how to become effective social workers. One participant noted “The curriculum has been life changing.” Another theme that emerged from the group discussions was the importance of treating people with dignity and respect by looking at their cases holistically and not only by the incidents that brought them into the child welfare system. In fact, participants discussed having a mission to speak for the individuals they are working with, to challenge the concept of resistance to service, and investigate the limitations of the child welfare system and how the child welfare system may perpetuate oppression in certain populations. This zeal for child welfare work was reflected in the participant’s referring to themselves as “servant leaders” and proclaiming the need to “do better for my people.”

The CWEB participants were excited by the experiences they were having in their field placements at the child welfare agencies. They discussed the diverse opportunities they were given by caseworkers involving them in every aspect of a case and witnessing the more complex nature of some child welfare situations. CWEB participants noted that they are treated like co-workers, including being part of the “office talk.” One CWEB participant commented that the child welfare agency treats them as a member of the team and “not just as the folks from the school down the street.” It is this wealth of experience and inclusion that allows the CWEB students to feel better prepared for a career as a child welfare caseworker.

CWEL participants commented on how their counties were moving toward being more family centered and more inclusive of father involvement in child welfare cases. As expected, CWEL participants also spoke about issues regarding work overload and agencies being understaffed, which contributes to low morale within the county agencies. Some CWEL participants commented on recent agency strikes and how they impacted the workforce climate, describing it almost as PTSD symptoms and noting their lack of a voice in whether they should strike. However, the students emphasized that their training as social workers helped them to navigate the complexities of the strike. In congruence with the program evaluation findings, a few CWEL participants discussed the rising costs of textbooks and their desire for the book stipend to be re-examined. Overall, CWEL participants were enjoying their coursework and were utilizing this educational opportunity to delve deeper into unfamiliar topics that relate directly to their work in the child welfare agency.

### **The Changing Landscape of Pennsylvania Public Child Welfare**

Last year, we noted the major shift in Pennsylvania’s child welfare system operations as a result of the public exposure and subsequent legal proceedings emanating from a decades-long child abuse travesty. The impact of this high-profile series of cases has been of such significance that we repeat the background and context here. Following a three-year investigation of sexual abuse allegations against a prominent collegiate sports coach and the response of the institution where he had been employed<sup>15</sup>, the Pennsylvania General Assembly established the Task Force on Child Protection to conduct a comprehensive review of the laws and procedures relating to the reporting of child abuse and the protection of children. Although originating from tragic circumstances, the high profile cases of child abuse increased public awareness of child maltreatment and prompted a re-examination of the Commonwealth’s laws designed to safeguard children. Beginning in January of 2012, the Task Force conducted 17 public hearings and working

---

<sup>15</sup> Freeh, Sporkin & Sullivan, LLP (July 12, 2012). “*Report of the Special Investigative Counsel Regarding the Actions of the Pennsylvania State University Related to the Child Sexual Abuse Committed by Gerald A. Sandusky*”.

sessions throughout the state. More than 60 individuals provided written testimony. After extensive review and deliberation, a number of policy and statutory recommendations were made. The Task Force's final report was released in November of 2012<sup>16</sup>.

In response, Pennsylvania passed 23 pieces of legislation over the course of one year to assure children greater protection and to restore public confidence in the state's ability to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. Amendments were made to the Crimes Code, the Domestic Relations Code, and the Judicial Code. Major changes to the Child Protective Services Law included broadening the definition of abuse, who is considered a perpetrator, failure to act and who is a legally mandated reporter. Education for mandated and permissive reporters of abuse became required for licensed professionals and readily available to both professionals and the general public. A number of statutory changes related to definitions, timeframes and procedures impacted the practices and daily routines of child welfare professionals.

As public recognition continued to grow, referrals of suspected abuse and neglect increased as much as 200% in many jurisdictions. While many counties have made attempts to increase the size of the child welfare workforce, most are not able to keep pace with the increasing demand. The resulting increase in work demands, new requirements and multiple changes within a short period of time continued to add to the stress of an already taxed child welfare system. At the same time, new opportunities to employ more efficient and effective modes of practice, including the use of more sophisticated data systems and evidence-based interventions, are available. All of these factors continue to influence exponential changes in the landscape of Pennsylvania public child welfare throughout the last several years.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Child Protection in Pennsylvania: Proposed Recommendations, Report of the Task Force on Child Protection.*  
Full report and Executive Summary available at  
[http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us/publications.cfm?JSPU\\_PUBLN\\_ID=285](http://jsg.legis.state.pa.us/publications.cfm?JSPU_PUBLN_ID=285).

## **Evaluation**

### ***Introduction***

The CWEB and CWEL programs have several critical stakeholder groups: schools participating in the educational programs, current students and those who have recently graduated, and the county agencies that employ them or provide field placements. Because these are such important constituents they are surveyed annually; their responses provide valuable information about the usefulness and quality of the curriculum and field, as well as what areas offer opportunities for improvement. These constituents also share their perspectives about the value that CWEB and CWEL students bring to their schools and child welfare organizations. In addition, we ask those who have graduated and been working for at least a year about the organizational culture of their work environment. This information helps us to better understand what aspects of climate are associated with positive outcomes, such as commitment to the field, job satisfaction, and personal achievement. All of this information is shared with CWEB and CWEL stakeholders including agency administrators, school faculty, and CWERP faculty and staff to inform and help improve the quality of services, curriculum, and working environment.

What follows are the findings from the 2015-2016 evaluation. The first two sections summarize the results from current students and recent graduates of the CWEB and CWEL programs. The third section summarizes what long-term program graduates say about the climate of the child welfare agencies in which they work. The fourth section highlights the findings from the faculty of the schools and agency administrators who have employees currently participating in or who have graduated from the CWEB or CWEL programs. The final section reviews the presence of core competencies among CWEB and CWEL program participants.

All of these surveys are web-enabled. Throughout the year, emails, letters, and instructions are sent to current students, recent graduates, long-term graduates, and CWEB/CWEL schools and counties with information on how to access their surveys located on a secure server. A standard



follow-up protocol is in place to obtain a minimum 50% response rate for each group of respondents. Response rates are reported below.

**Table 3. Return Rates by Survey Type**

<b>Respondent Group</b>	<b>Response Rate (%)</b>
County	76%
Current Students	85% CWEB 94% CWEL
Recent Graduates	79% CWEB 81% CWEL
Long Term Graduates	48%
CWEB/CWEL Schools	94%

During this 2015-2016 evaluation cycle, we continued using questions about core competencies that research has demonstrated as important for the child welfare workforce<sup>17</sup>. These questions were included in the current student, recent graduate, and long-term graduate surveys for completion by those who supervise or mentor CWEB students. We asked respondents to rate the degree to which the competencies are exhibited by CWEB students whom they supervise or mentor in their agencies.

A new prospective survey protocol was initiated this year to follow CWEB program participants from the time they are admitted into the program through one year of full-time child welfare work. These surveys contain self-report versions of the core competencies which align with the core competency questions asked of schools, agencies, and those that supervise or mentor CWEB students. At the time of this writing the number of completed surveys is small, but some mention of preliminary results will be discussed in a larger context with results from the other surveys presented.

---

<sup>17</sup> The R&R Project (2009). *Resources for selecting qualified applicants for child welfare work*. Chapel Hill, NC; Jordan Institute for Families at UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

### ***Current CWEB and CWEL Students***

#### *Survey procedures and methods*

An email with a link to the web-based survey was sent to all CWEB and CWEL students currently enrolled in the program. Students were sent notices in January 2016 and were given until March 2016 to complete the survey. One hundred and thirty-two students responded to the survey, resulting in a return rate of 85% for CWEB and 94% for CWEL students. The survey asked the students to rate their experiences with (1) the CWERP program and processes (e.g., website, communication, student contract, faculty and staff helpfulness); (2) their relationship with the faculty and the university that they attend, and the quality of the courses they take; (3) the agency/field interface; and (4) their beliefs about the value of their education to child welfare practice, and their commitment to the field. The statements are positively worded and the rating scale is from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher ratings suggesting a greater degree of satisfaction.

Most of the questions were common to both programs, such as “*I received good supervision in my field placement or internship placement.*” Some items were unique to the program and to the student’s status. For example, CWEB students were asked if their field site agency was familiar with the requirements of the CWEB program. The full-time CWEL students were asked about their return to the agency in the summer and the part-time students were asked questions about their ease of arranging time for field and classes. Part-time CWEL students were also asked to rate the CWEB students they supervise or mentor (if applicable) on a series of core competencies. The results of these items can be found in the Core Competency section below. If students were currently in their field placement, they were asked about the focus of their responsibilities and their agency type.

Finally, because we are interested in the career paths of professional child welfare caseworkers, the current CWEL students were asked if they had been a CWEB student, and if they

were still in the agency in which they had completed their CWEB work commitment. Three open-ended questions were included about the positive aspects of the program, which areas could be improved, and what qualities prospective CWEB/CWEL students should have in order to be successful in the program. A final question asked if the students have received any awards or recognitions for their academic or field work during this survey period.

*Description of the survey respondents*

Forty of the completed 132 surveys were from CWEB students. The majority of the CWEB respondents were full-time (82%). Of the CWEB respondents, 92% were female; 57% were white, 27% were African-American, 3% were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 3% were Asian, and 8% were multiracial. Ninety-two of the completed surveys were from CWEL students. Of the CWEL respondents, 44% were part-time students and 56% were full-time. CWEL respondents were also primarily female (83%) and white (67%). Over a quarter were African-American (28%) with smaller percentages reporting as multiracial (3%). A small number of CWEL students (4%) reported to be of Hispanic ethnicity.

All CWEB respondents were completing their field placement in a public agency, primarily engaged in direct practice with abused and neglected children (82%). Smaller percentages reported that they were working with abusive parents (3%), alcohol or substance abusers (3%), homeless families (3%), people in poverty (2%), or other (7%). All of the CWEB students were attending classes at the main campuses of their universities.

The majority of CWEL students (87%) were currently in a field placement, and of this group, 54% were completing their field placement within their county agency. Similar to their undergraduate counterparts, most CWEL students responded that their field placement was in a public agency (72%) working in direct service (84%) positions. The primary client population was abused and neglected children and their families (46%). The next prominent client population was “other” (19%), followed by youth transitioning out of child welfare (6%), alcohol or substance abusers (5%), and juvenile offenders (5%). Approximately 30% of the CWEL respondents were

associated with a branch campus of their university, with most attending a satellite program of either Marywood University or Temple University. Smaller numbers attended branch campuses of Widener University and California University of Pennsylvania.

*Is there a career pathway?*

We seek to determine the extent to which a professional education and career pathway is in place for the child welfare workforce, and how recruitment at the undergraduate level can help to foster a long-term public child welfare career. As in past years, the current CWEL students are asked if they participated in the CWEB program. The education and career pathway for the child welfare professional is shown in Figure 6.

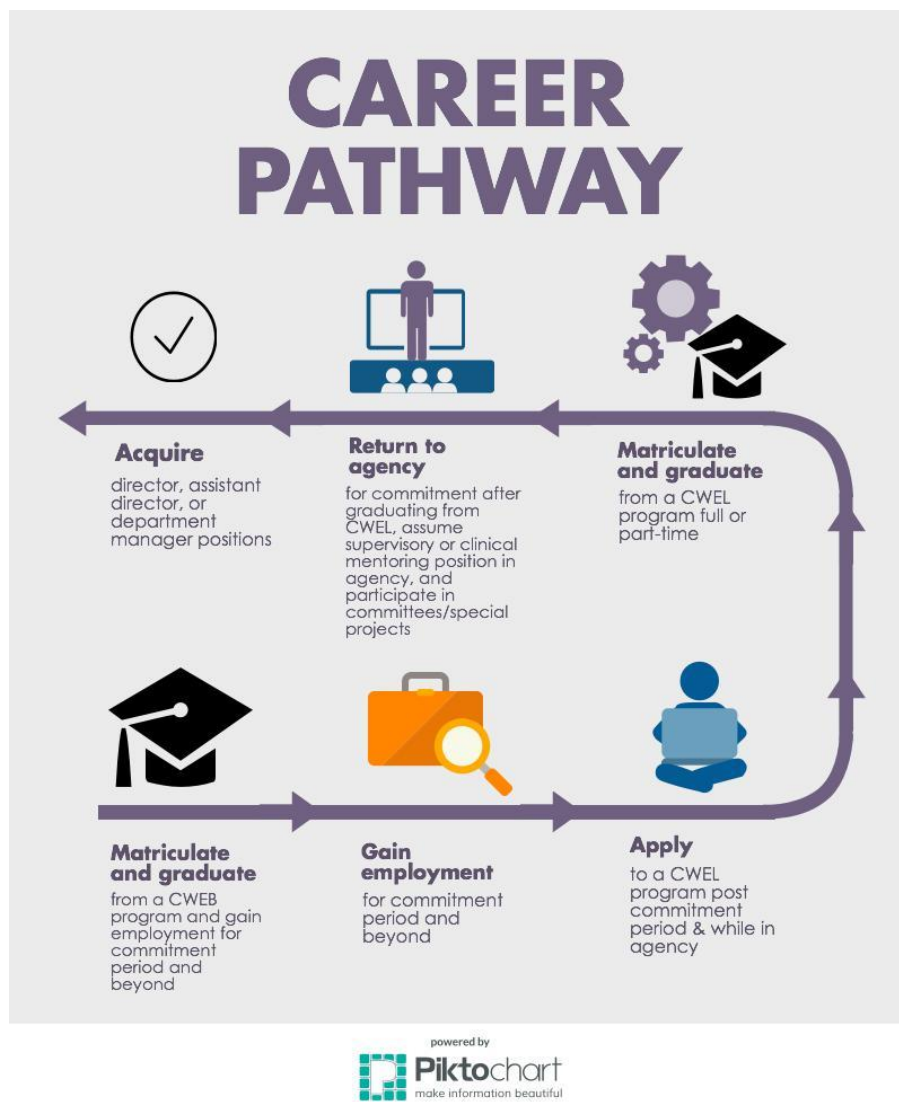
The value that students find in the CWEB and CWEL programs is illustrated in the following sample of open-ended survey responses.

*“I absolutely love many things about the CWEB program. In my time interning here this year, I feel extremely confident that I could go to any county agency once I graduate and be prepared. Although this job is a process, and requires experience and trial and error, I will be prepared. The best part of the program, is going out with all sorts of caseworkers to learn and observe their ‘style’ which is very helpful when developing your own”*

*“I have learned so much more in the MSW program than I ever could have imagined and I am excited to get back into the child welfare field to be able to put what I have learned into practice... I also love that it connects us to other child welfare professionals within our county and across the state!”*

*“I believe that is necessary for child welfare workers to have a better understanding of the issues that face many of our clients. I believe that the CWEL program provides this opportunity. Also, the program emphasizes self-care and I feel that this is necessary to help social workers remain both mentally and physically healthy to better serve our clients.”*

**Figure 6. Career Pathway for CWEB and CWEL**



Sixteen (18%) of the current CWEL respondents said that they received their degrees through the CWEB program. The majority of these CWEL students (81%) remain at the agency in which they completed their post-CWEB work commitment. We have observed this CWEB to CWEL progression pattern for the last several years and it suggests that the first few steps are in place, and that the career pathway supports agency retention. Moreover, agency directors have told us in prior evaluations how much their organizations benefit when these well-trained and seasoned caseworkers remain in their agencies as they continue their education. However, it is

important to stress that the agency and worker must carefully consider whether the worker should enroll in the CWEL program. It is not suitable for everyone. For example, one respondent wrote: *“We promote the CWEL program, but with caution, as every person interested is not necessarily a good candidate.”* Another respondent said, *“Employees know that if they want to do CWEL it is {meant} for their own professional growth and not for promotion or reassignment (even though promotion happened in the past due to restructuring).”* Therefore, before continuing on the pathway, both the student and the agency should carefully consider whether further commitment to the agency is in both parties’ best interests.

Part-time study while working full-time is challenging under the best of circumstances, and the terrain of public child welfare is punctuated by crisis, unpredictability, and the need for rapid response. In addition, many CWEL students have families and other personal responsibilities that compete for their attention. With over half of CWEL students attending school part-time, students and the agency should have a candid discussion concerning workload and expectations while the employee is participating in the CWEL program. An example of this type of communication is illustrated by this CWEL student’s comment, *“I think it should be made clear that if a person has an evening class during the work week it should still be considered one of his/her school days just because the time is needed during the day to prepare for the class.”* In addition, many of the part-time CWEL students are working full-time as well as being scheduled for on-call duties during class time. Additional discussions may need to take place with the schools providing the CWEL program so that there is an understanding of the time requirements for part-time CWEL students. This concept is exemplified by this comment from a CWEL student, *“I would like if the schools would take into account full time employees and the hours in which you need to complete internship hours. Managing working full time and class and a 300 hour internship is very challenging. Every night I am not in class I am working late to meet my job requirements and my weekends are all internship. I wish the schools would have more understanding to the busy schedules of their students.”*

*How do students perceive their program?*

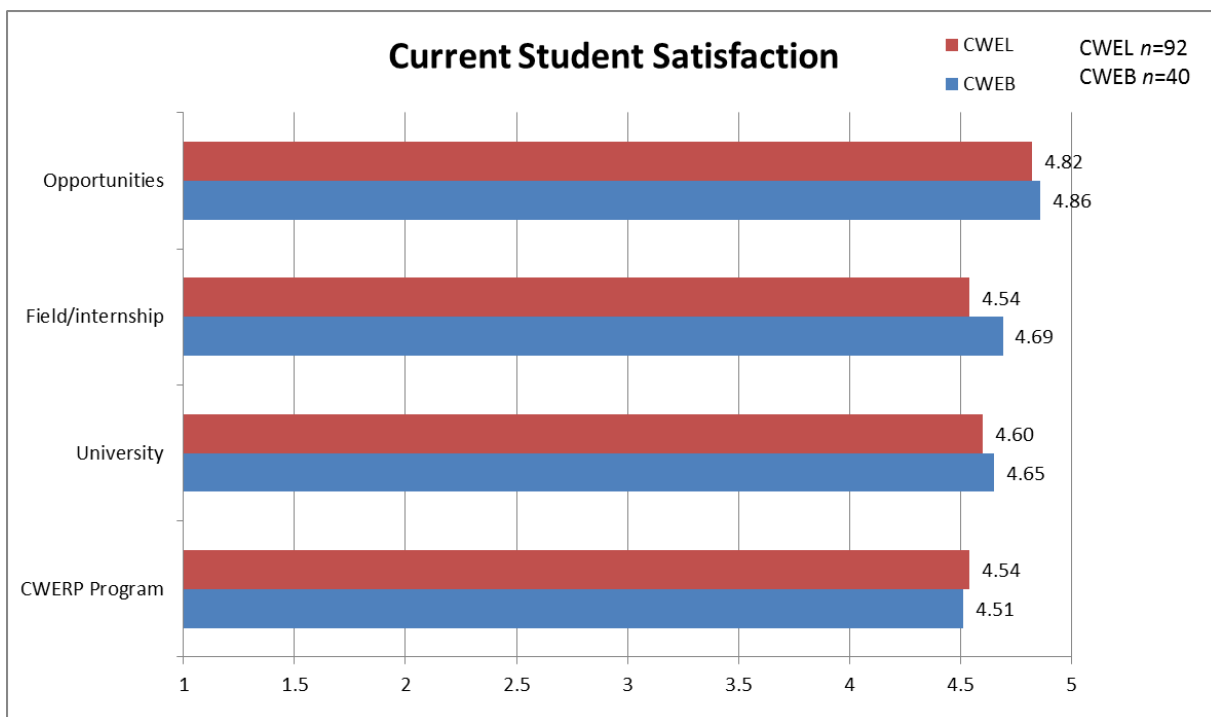
When asked about the important aspects of their CWEB or CWEL program, the students responded:

*“Excellent entry-program into the world of Children, Youth and Families. Perfect way for students to be educated for a year, then complete a salaried year with vast knowledge/practice.”*

*“CWEL supports employees of the statewide county child welfare agencies to gain valuable skills and knowledge needed to effectively work with vulnerable children and their families. I would not have pursued this degree had CWEL or a similar program been unavailable. I recommend the program to my coworkers and encourage people I know to pursue a social work undergrad degree so that they can also gain from CWEB and CWEL.”*

CWEB and CWEL students highly value their professional education. Using a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 having the lowest value and 10 the most value, respondents were asked, “What is the value of the CWEB or CWEL program to the public child welfare system?” The average score for the CWEB students was 9.11 ( $SD=1.00$ ) and the average score for the CWEL students was 9.39 ( $SD=1.18$ ). Responses to this question, as well as each survey item (rated on a 1-5 scale) can be found in Table 1, [Appendix K](#). This table displays the responses of the CWEB students, as well as both the full-time and part-time CWEL students. All three subgroups report being quite satisfied with the processes, the degree program, and the interface with the agencies; they also feel that their participation in the professional degree programs has helped them professionally and personally. Students were asked to rate the items on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Their aggregate responses are graphically displayed in Figure 7 below.

**Figure 7. Current Student Satisfaction with CWEB/CWEL Programs**

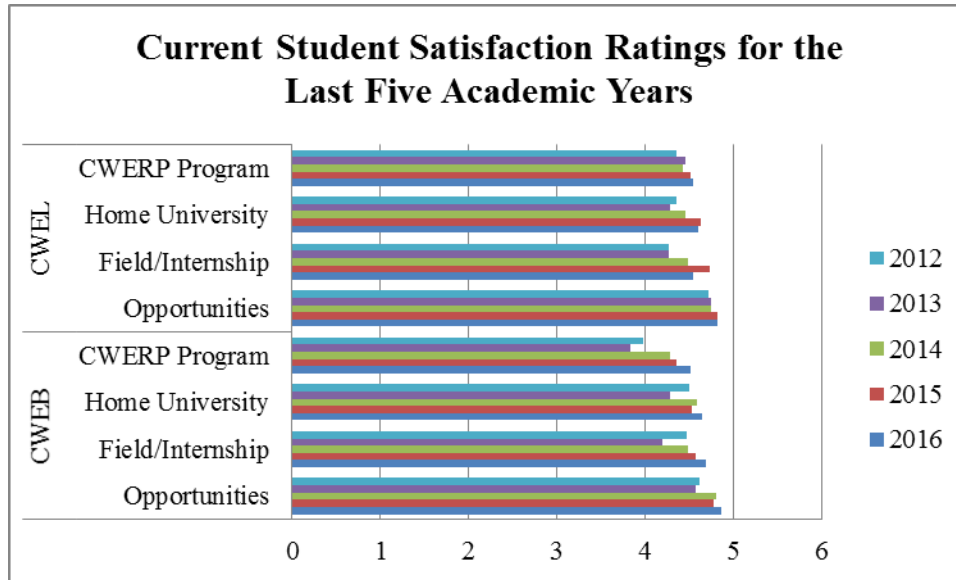


When comparing current students' satisfaction ratings across the past four academic years, a striking pattern emerges. Each year the students' satisfaction ratings increase, if only incrementally, from previous years. However, this academic year while the CWEB students' satisfaction ratings continued this trend, the CWEL students' ratings for some of the scales either stayed the same or changed in the opposite direction. CWEL students' satisfaction ratings for Field/Internship and Home University decreased from last year and the Opportunities scale stayed the same. Reviewing the CWEL students' responses on how to improve the program, it appears that there are concerns with the availability and selection of courses within their home universities and they feel that they should have more flexibility in where they can complete their internships. More clarification to the CWEL students regarding the internship requirements may improve this issue, however the frequency/timing of electives is more challenging to address, especially since close to half of the CWEL students are part-time. To address the elective issue, a few CWEL students recommended an expanded menu of CWEL-approved elective courses, or receiving preferential status when registering for classes to ensure that classes would be available and meet



CWEL requirements while offering novel topics of study. Figure 8 demonstrates the increases in satisfaction ratings.

**Figure 8. Comparison of Student Satisfaction Ratings Over the Last Four Academic Years**



T-tests were conducted to determine if there were significant differences in the means between this year's CWEB and CWEL students and also between full and part-time CWEL students. A negative t-value indicates that the mean for the CWEB students was lower than the mean for the CWEL students. The p-value indicates statistical significance, with anything less than .05 considered statistically significant. In this academic year, there were three areas that differed significantly between the CWEB and CWEL students, and one that was approaching significance. However, unlike previous years, the means for the CWEL students are lower on these items. CWEL students were less likely to feel that they would be able to use what they have learned in their programs within their home child welfare agencies ( $t=1.80, p=.08$ ), they were less likely to understand their contracts ( $t=2.34, p<.05$ ), they felt less supported in arranging their field placements ( $t=2.48, p<.05$ ), and they were less likely to feel that their field placement was a valuable learning experience ( $t=2.09, p<.05$ ). The standard deviations for these items among the CWEL respondents were close to or over 1 indicating a large amount of variability in the individual

student's responses. These findings are not surprising given the CWEL students' responses to the open-ended portions of the survey. Findings must also be placed in the context of an increasingly stressed child welfare landscape in Pennsylvania. Based on their comments, CWEL students are struggling with completing their field hours with full-time work, school, and family responsibilities. The CWEL students also commented on their desire to complete their field assignments outside their child welfare agencies to get a different experience working with vulnerable children and families. Confusion regarding the contracts has been mentioned in previous years, but this is the first year this item was statistically significant.

T-tests comparing full-time and part-time CWEL students also revealed some statistically significant differences and some items approaching significance. Similar to the 2013/2014 academic year, part-time CWEL students were less likely to feel that their academic advisors were familiar with the CWEL program ( $t=1.93, p=.06$ ). Consistent for the past three academic years, full-time CWEL students were less likely to feel they were receiving good supervision in their field placements ( $t=-2.51, p<.05$ ). New this year, full-time CWEL students were less likely to find the

## PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE:

Every March the nation celebrates social workers. During this time, the CWERP program highlights the achievements of our CWEB and CWEL students and graduates on the program's Facebook page. These posts reflect the great work our CWEB and CWEL students/graduates are doing in the field.

*A CWEL student at Temple University and an employee at Philadelphia DHS, along with his field supervisor created a new protocol so that youth leaving foster care can obtain vital documents (e.g., birth certificates, social security cards) that are needed for youth to obtain housing, employment, or other services. These documents are necessary for youth to move towards independent living. This CWEL student, along with other CWEB and CWEL students and graduates, is impacting the lives of Pennsylvania's youth by seeing a need, and proposing a mechanism to address that need.*

*A Marywood CWEL student and employee at Lehigh County Children and Youth Services, worked with a team of individuals to help an 18 year old youth achieve adoption. She said "I was excited that this youth could find his forever family and that I could work with such a great team of individuals. This team and most importantly, the youth's desire to be adopted, was key in finding and finalizing his adoption." The hard work of this student and our CWEB and CWEL graduates and students will impact the number of children able to reach permanency!*

website easy to use  $t=-1.79$ ,  $p=.08$ ). However, each of these items have standard deviations approaching or above 1, indicating a wide variety of responses from individual CWEL student respondents.

The CWEB students' levels of satisfaction with the process of arranging their field increased slightly this year. However the part-time and full-time CWEL students' satisfaction ratings fell this year with the full-time CWEL satisfaction ratings trending toward the lower ratings from the 2011-2012, 2010-2011, and 2009-2010 academic years. There were no significant differences in this item between the CWEB and CWEL students or between the full-time and part-time CWEL students. Again, the experiences seemed to vary among students as suggested by the standard deviations. With the ratings for arranging field placements for the CWEB students continuing to rise, it may suggest that county administrators are seeing the benefits of accepting CWEB interns into their agencies. In fact, one agency administrator commented: "*Our recruitment efforts toward CWEB internships and for [CWEB] graduates [to enter] casework positions have yielded quality and informed workers for our agency.*" However, the satisfaction levels of full-time CWEL students in arranging field placements dipped to a mean of 3.98.

A review of the qualitative data suggests that full-time CWEL students would like more flexibility in the types of agencies that are accepted for field placements and would like the field placement to be outside their agency of employment. It is highly likely that limitations on outside field placements may be a result of agency workforce shortages. A related issue raised by one full-time CWEL student was support in obtaining a field placement within their child welfare agency. As in prior years, the part-time CWEL students report that they are not easily able to arrange time away from work to complete their field placement requirements ( $M=4.38$ ,  $SD=1.13$ ). This challenge is exemplified by this comment: "*Some counties do not accommodate field, which has to be done in 4 hour blocks and hours are interrupted, when they are already difficult to maintain.*"

The qualitative information provided by the students through the survey provides us with useful information about the agency, school, and CWERP factors that assist students in their pursuit of a BSW or a MSW. The CWEB students' qualitative responses continued to focus on the importance of their field placements. This trend has been observed in the past few academic years, which is a departure from prior years where CWEB students predominately talked about the financial support as the main positive attribute of the program. Last year, the CWEB students talked about fostering a love for child welfare work, educating the child welfare workforce to increase caseworker retention, and their field experiences preparing them for a job in the child welfare field. The responses this year expand those concepts; they discussed taking full advantage of the internship experience to gain a better understanding of child welfare casework, creating their own casework style by observing other caseworkers within their agency, and how completing the 975 hours of internship gives CWEB students confidence to enter the child welfare workforce upon graduation.

The majority of the CWEL students considered the financial support the most important aspect of the program. However, CWEL students also valued the opportunity to gain insight into the struggles facing families involved in the child welfare system and how relevant the coursework is to those issues. As one CWEL student wrote: *"The courses directly apply to many of the things you'll encounter while working in the field. I also think it's beneficial to participate in field work while taking classes because it allows you to actively apply what you learn from class."* Another CWEL student said: *"The program has helped me to understand the population that I work with in a more understanding way of why they have the problems they have and that everything is not just black and white."*

Opportunity, experience, support, and knowledge were themes noted among the open-ended responses from CWEB and CWEL students. CWEB students felt greatly supported by the program and their field supervisors, some saying that supportive supervision is a key to their success in their field placements. One CWEB student reported that the positive aspects of the

program include: *“Experience working with a myriad of social and individual problems such as poverty, substance abuse, mental health, truancy, child abuse and neglect, etc. Quality supervision is crucial to the success of the internship. The supportive environment, Pitt and agency staff offer support when needed.”* In addition to a passion for child welfare and a desire to change the field for the better, CWEL students spoke about how the coursework, exposure to differing ideas, and field experience broadened their exposure to different aspects of social work and made them eager to use these skills in their case work practice. Exemplifying these views, one CWEL student said *“[I am] gaining additional knowledge about my job and the clients I work with. [I am] ... able to broaden my critical thinking skills and interactions with my clients. [I am] broadening my understanding and education in regards to social work and how it relates to my employment. [The] interactions with teachers and other students [allow me] to understand different ideas and perspectives.”*

#### *Focus group results*

During the annual school visits in October 2015 and April 2016, CWERP faculty had the opportunity to speak with both CWEB and CWEL program participants. A list of possible focus group questions were prepared beforehand by the evaluation team based on information gleaned from the program evaluation surveys. This past academic year, the theme of the focus group questions dealt with how to prepare for a career as a child welfare caseworker. The most common theme on how to prepare and maintain a career in child welfare was self-care. Participants spoke of setting up boundaries, learning how to say ‘no’, debriefing cases, learning to prioritize, and taking a break at work. Students at every site visited discussed the importance of self-care. Another theme that was emerged was learning. Participants in the focus groups talked about child welfare being experiential learning and the importance of knowing your role and function, familiarizing yourself with policies and procedures, and how to effectively engage families, along with shadowing opportunities. One participant noted “you can’t know what you don’t know.” In addition, participants recommended completing the full 975 hours of field

practicum for CWEB students. Two additional themes revolved around building relationships with supervisors and co-workers and advocating not only for themselves but for the families on their caseloads as well.

When asked what would have been helpful at the beginning of their careers, focus group participants discussed the need to be flexible in their thinking, their desire for clear and concise directions, and being aware that you don't have to know everything as a new caseworker. Students were also asked what would help them to move forward in their child welfare careers. As expected, some recurring issues were mentioned, such as higher pay, more opportunity for advancement, and the agency valuing the MSW degree, particularly in financial terms. Another challenge that emerged was the some of the difficulties inherent in working in rural settings and a need for more mobile technology in these rural areas. More positive responses were also noted such as being an advocate and being able to help people, along with good supervision.

### ***Recent CWEB and CWEL Graduates***

#### *Survey procedures and methods*

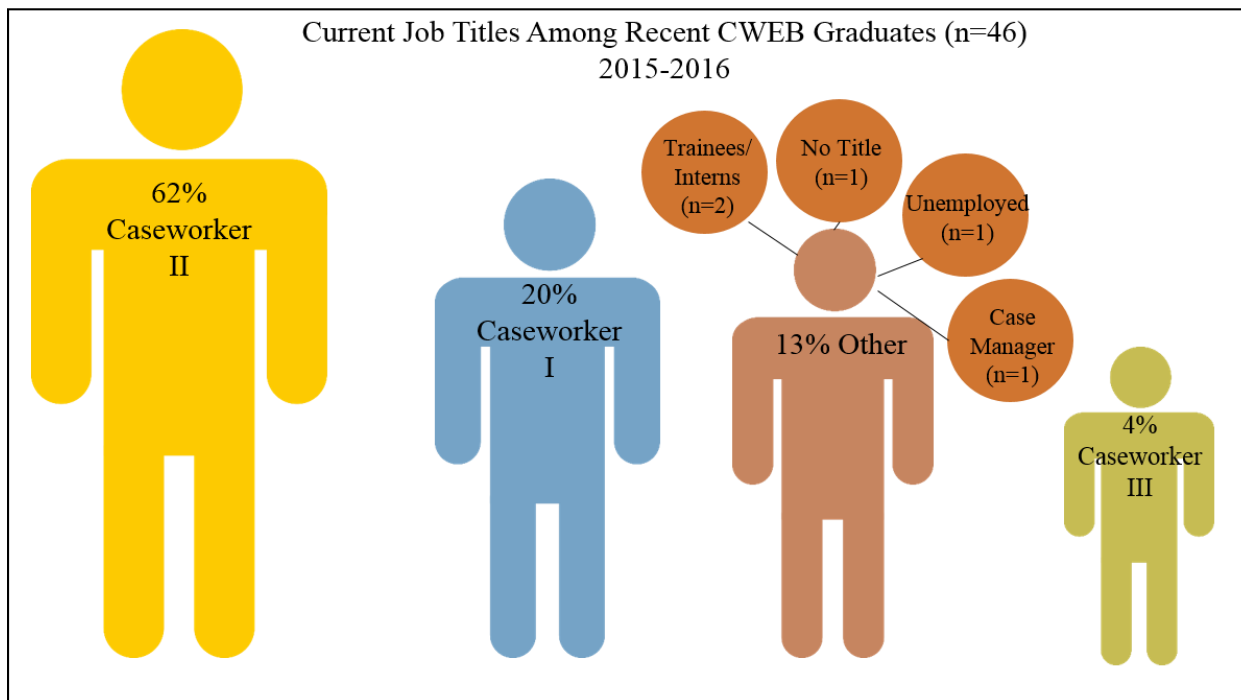
An email with a link to the survey was sent to graduating cohorts of CWEB and CWEL students in winter 2015 and the spring and summer of 2016 (total n=130). The return rate for the CWEB graduates was 79% and 81% for the CWEL graduates. The total number of usable surveys was 93. Nineteen respondents graduated in winter 2015, 64 in spring 2016, and 10 in summer 2016. Fifty percent (n=46) were CWEB graduates and 51% (n=47) were CWEL graduates. Additionally, 24% (n=11) of the CWEL graduates identified themselves as former graduates of the CWEB program, and, of those, 67% (n=8) were still working at their CWEB commitment agency at the time of graduation from the CWEL program.

#### *Description of the survey respondents*

The majority of the CWEB respondents were white (74%) and female (98%). Figure 9 below showcases the CWEB graduates' job titles. Unlike previous years, CWEB graduates' work was evenly split between units responsible for intake (45%) and ongoing (45%). Smaller

percentages were working in substitute care (7%) or other direct service (2%). Last year CWEB graduates worked primarily in intake whereas in previous years, they worked mostly in ongoing units. The change in the distribution of CWEB graduates working in intake versus ongoing this year might be attributed to county child welfare agencies becoming more accustomed to the updated child protective services laws such that they may not have as great a need for seasoned workers at the intake level. However, it appears that the CWEB graduates' skills have been recognized as an asset at the intake level since a significant portion of this cohort is working within county intake units.

**Figure 9. Current Job Titles Among CWEB Graduates**



CWEB respondents reported managing an average caseload of 6 families or 10 children, showing a slight increase from last year. There was a large standard deviation suggesting wide variation regarding the number of families and children on their caseloads. In looking at the data a third of the respondents (33%) reported no children or families on their caseloads. When these cases were removed from the dataset, the average number of families jumped to 8 while the

average number of children increased to 15. These numbers more accurately reflect the case sizes of previous years among CWEB graduates.

CWEL respondents were also primarily white (77%) and female (84%). Figure 10 below depicts the job titles of Recent CWEL Graduates. The majority of CWEL respondents were working in ongoing (30%). The remainder were working in intake (20%) or in substitute care (15%). The CWEL graduates were working with larger caseloads than the CWEB graduates, reporting an average of 11 families and 22 children under their responsibility, which shows a slight decrease from last year. Similar to previous years, there was a significant difference between CWEB and CWEL graduates regarding the number of children on their caseloads. However, similar to CWEB graduates, the standard deviations are large suggesting a wide variation in the amount of cases CWEL graduates manage. The decrease in case size for both CWEB and CWEL graduates despite the changes in CPSL may indicate improvements in screening intake calls and diverting less serious cases to other service providers.

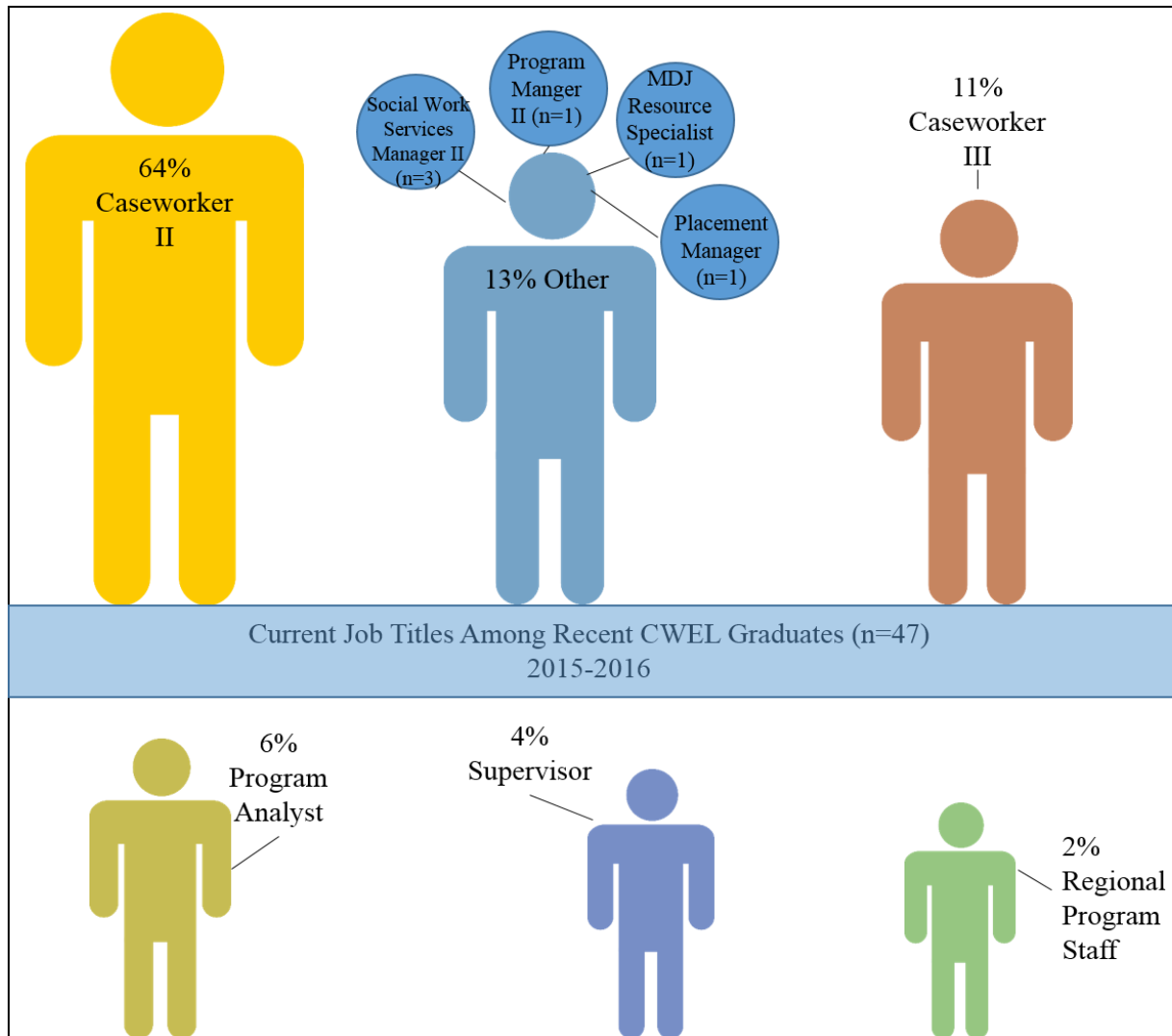
#### *How do recent graduates perceive their program?*

The survey includes questions about preparation, perceived skill levels, opportunities to advance within their agencies, and their commitment to their agency and the field of child welfare. The statements are positively worded and the rating scale is from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) with higher scores indicating a greater degree of agreement. The mean responses to each of the questions by CWEB and CWEL groups can be found in Table 2 in [Appendix K](#). Few statistically significant differences were observed between the CWEB and CWEL students on these items. When compared to CWEB graduates, CWEL recent graduates perceived their skills to be better than non-CWEB/CWEL caseworkers ( $t=-.567, p=.04$ ) and reported that their long term plan is to work with children and families ( $t=-2.53, p=.01$ ). CWEL graduates tended to be more likely to consider leaving child welfare ( $t=-2.22, p=.03$ ). A review of the open ended comments of CWEL graduates regarding the issue of retention suggests that respondents contribute their thoughts of leaving the agency to the inability to use the skills they learned in the



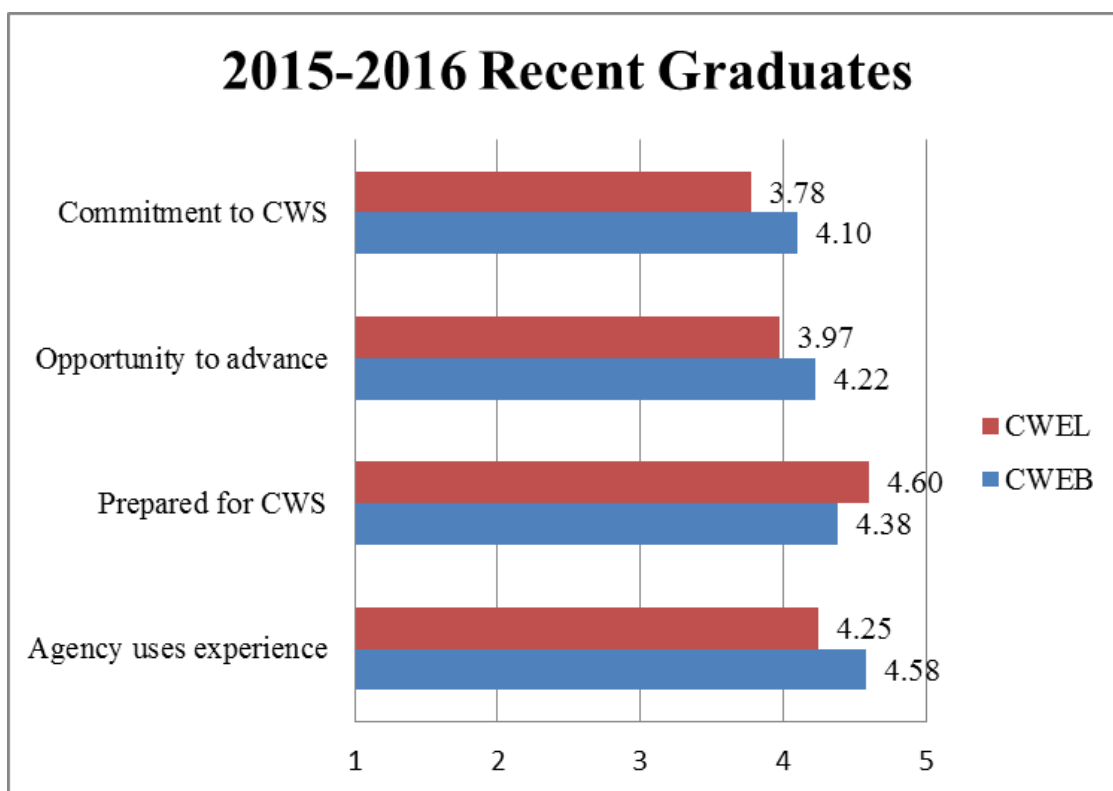
master's program, low salary, poor opportunities for advancement, lack of support from administration, and few opportunities to provide input on new laws and policy changes.

**Figure 10. Current Job Titles Among Recent CWEL Graduates**



A factor analysis (Principal Component Analysis) conducted previously indicated that there are four subscales captured by these items. These include: (1) agency utilization of the student’s education; (2) educational preparation of CWEB and CWEL programs; (3) career advancement; and (4) commitment to child welfare. Alpha coefficients for these subscales ranged from .74 to .90 for this sample. Average subscale ratings for recent CWEB and CWEL graduates can be seen in Figure 11.

**Figure 11. Recent Graduates' Perceptions: CWEB and CWEL**



CWEL graduates are lower than CWEB graduates on three of the four subscales, but are still trending to the positive side of the scale. The two most striking differences between CWEB and CWEL graduates are on the “agency uses experience” and “commitment to child welfare subscales”. Combined with results from the T-test discussed above and the reviews of the open ended comments, more attention should be focused at the agency level to improve the career outlook for CWEL graduates and therefore improve retention. This discussion should occur early

in the process, ideally when the worker is applying to CWEL. Prospectively thinking about how to utilize new knowledge and skills may begin to widen thinking beyond “promotion”. While some agencies may not have the capability to promote CWEL graduates to supervisory positions, selecting CWEL graduates to serve on committees or oversee special projects will enable the CWEL graduates to use the skills they obtained in their MSW programs, thus giving them a greater sense of influence, satisfaction and pride in their work. In addition, providing CWEL graduates an opportunity to have input into how new state mandates will be implemented in the agencies, will not only give the administration valuable information on how changes in protocol affect front-line staff, but will provide the CWEL graduates a sense of empowerment and recognition that their opinion is valued and they have a voice in the agency culture.

Graduates of both CWEB and CWEL feel that their respective programs have prepared them for working in the child welfare system. Ratings were slightly lower for CWEB graduates than for CWEL graduates on this subscale, but this is understandable and appropriate given the developmental stage of most CWEB graduates and that CWEL graduates have previous experience working in the field of child welfare. Recent CWEB graduates were more optimistic about their opportunities to advance in the field than CWEL graduates, and were more committed to the child welfare system. Ratings on the “prepared for child welfare subscale” were significantly higher for CWEL graduates.

Recent graduates were asked a number of open-ended questions. Question content included positive aspects of the CWEB/CWEL programs, things they would change about the programs, how the CWEB/CWEL program contributed to their professional development, and recommendations that they would give prospective CWEB/CWEL students. Responses to these open-ended questions are summarized below.

Please describe the aspects of the CWEB or the CWEL program that are particularly positive.

*CWEB gave me many opportunities to seek advice from other students going through the same experiences as myself. The program and its professors gave all of us the most amazing support and information. Without CWEB, I do not believe I would be as prepared for this field. The 975 hour internship allowed me to observe and learn not only the job itself, but the environment of the agency. When I see the new workers being trained, I do not believe that would have been enough for me to be comfortable taking this position. I believe the relationships I gained doing the CWEB program were some of the strongest, and most supportive that I have ever experienced. Without the bond of experiencing the child welfare realm together through CWEB, I do not believe I would be where I am today.*

*It gave me the opportunity to improve my skills in order to better serve my clients. I would not have had the time or the financial resources to take these classes without the CWEL program. I learned so much about myself, about my clients, and how our interactions are so much more connected than I would have ever imagined. I also learned the importance of self-care.*

Graduates truly valued their experiences in field placements and felt that those experiences, coupled with the education they received both in and out of the classroom,

## PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE II:

*It is hard to find the perfect balance between school, work, internship, and home life. A CWEB May graduate from California University of Pennsylvania, faced these challenges head on. In the Fall semester, she worked part-time, completed 32 hours a week at her internship site, and was on the dean's list with a full credit schedule at school. She said "It was a lot of work, but hard work pays off!" This graduate exemplifies the tenacity and perseverance of our CWEB and CWEL students and graduates not only in their education, but in the field as well.*

*A CWEL graduate from Bryn Mawr University and an employee at Philadelphia DHS saw a need to reach older youth who are transitioning into adulthood. After discussions with her field supervisor, a comprehensive quality assessment of current services, and through research of other programs, processes, and forms, she created the Youth Development Plan. The Youth Development Plan contains 10 domains that were identified as needs in the life of an emerging adult. Her work demonstrates the critical thinking skills and dedication of our CWEB and CWEL students and graduates.*

helped them to enhance their social work skills. CWEL graduates, in particular, felt that their education helped to expand their understanding of the challenges faced by families involved in the child welfare systems and provided them with skills to effectively address those challenges, whereas CWEB graduates felt that the breadth of experiences during their field placements truly prepared them for employment as a child welfare caseworker. Both CWEB and CWEL graduates were grateful for the support they received during their respective programs from the universities they attended, their child welfare agencies, and the faculty and staff at the University of Pittsburgh. Similar to previous years, the financial advantages to these programs were also seen as a great benefit.

As in previous years when asked about areas of possible improvement, CWEB graduates reported that they would like more communication between their home universities, the CWEB program staff, and the counties. CWEB students also desire more one-on-one communication with program administrators to check in and offer support and mentorship. Similar to previous years, CWEL graduates wanted more freedom to take courses outside of the child welfare curriculum, such as mental health courses and those focused on grief and loss. CWEL graduates also mentioned that it was difficult to manage a full-time job, classwork, and part-time internship. They recommended that the number of internship hours be reduced or that previous years of employment in the child welfare workforce should be considered when determining the required field hours. Respondents were asked specifically about what courses they felt would be helpful to them, that were not offered or available. Frequent responses to this question included classes specific to grief and loss, trauma, and drug and alcohol.

What aspects of the field or internship placement contributed the most to your professional development as a child welfare professional?

*I believe that the workers in my agency really impacted the kind of worker I am today. While doing my internship, I was able to shadow many different caseworkers. By doing this, I was able to take the good parts, and get rid of the parts that I did not see fit, and along with my personal attributes, I was able build myself into the caseworker I am today.*

*The supervision and administration also were amazing to work with and guided me. (CWEB graduate)*

*I enjoyed both my internships. My internship in placement allowed me to connect with others at the Agency whose function was a bit of a mystery before. I found a division in my Agency that actually does true social work and comes up with creative ways to help the clients we serve. My first internship as a domestic violence intern allowed me to share my knowledge and experience in domestic violence with my co-workers and help them add to their toolbox in order to better serve families suffering with domestic violence. Both internships were very rewarding. (CWEL graduate)*

*I got an opportunity to participate in the Philadelphia Children's Alliance which allowed me to see how forensic interviewing of sexually abused children are handled. The relationships that I developed with my field instructor and the other social workers at my field placement was a great learning experience. I got a chance to meet and talk to families in the Philadelphia community and I learned how different the lifestyles of the Philadelphia community varied. I felt like I did not know my community that I have lived in for so long, but being in the program changed all that for me and now I have a broader knowledge of the amount of people and the kind of life that they have to live in Philadelphia. (CWEB graduate)*

*I interned through my agency and I was able to interact with people I normally do not. It was helpful to be able to learn about my co-workers as well as learn the daily duties and how their works impacts the agency. It helped me become more empathetic to the various departments of the agency. (CWEL graduate)*

Many recent CWEB graduates felt that the hands-on experience they gained via home visits and one-on-one client interactions gave them a good perspective on every facet of child welfare work. They also enjoyed attending trainings, meetings, and going into the community to different agencies, offices, and schools. CWEL recent graduates felt that their internships allowed them to work in collaboration with their agencies and other community providers, as well as enabled them to expand their professional networks, gain knowledge of other roles that coordinate with child welfare services, and adapt in order to better deal with the dynamics of the profession and the people served by the child welfare system. Consequently, CWEL graduates were exposed to different practice areas within their agencies, which they felt was beneficial.

**What advice would you give a CWEL or CWEB student who is beginning their program?**

*I would tell the CWEB student to take advantage of every opportunity while doing his/her field placement internship. I would also like to tell the student to take advantage of the resources (i.e. professors, other CWEB students, past CWEB students). Having those other*

*CWEB students really helped soften the hard experiences and normalized my feelings and reactions. Finally, I would tell the student to not give up on the child welfare realm; it is hard, emotional, and very crazy at times, but helping just one family is the most rewarding feeling. (CWEB Graduate)*

*Use the CWEB program to absorb as much information and knowledge as possible. Have a self-care routine in place before you start- revisit it and make changes if needed. Utilize other students in the CWEB program and share your experiences. Know that it will take a long time to understand the system and don't get frustrated with yourself if things seem to be moving slowly or are confusing. Utilize groups or other caseworkers to help make decisions- you don't have to do everything on your own. Reach out to others if you need help with work or help to emotionally handle everything. (CWEB Graduate)*

*I would advise them to take advantage of all that the program has to offer. I would especially ask them to keep an open mind about the many variations of social work and how the role of environment plays of children's lives. (CWEL Graduate)*

*There are always opportunities to continue to learn something new throughout life; take these experiences and put them to good use. Don't act as if you already know everything, because you don't. There's always people to help and they all deserve to be helped in a way that fits them individually; nothing is cookie cutter. (CWEL Graduate)*

Both CWEB and CWEL graduates emphasized the importance of communicating with faculty at their universities, supervisors, and the CWEB/CWEL faculty and staff at the University of Pittsburgh to truly advocate for themselves. Graduates also encouraged those new in the program to have an open mind – about child welfare, about their classes and field placements, and to take advantage every opportunity presented to them. CWEB graduates discussed the need for persistence to get questions answered, get necessary information, and to also make the most out of the field experience by checking in with caseworkers within the agency to shadow different aspects of child welfare casework. Finally, graduates wrote messages of encouragement and told others to stick with the program, persevere, and not give up.

### ***Long-Term Graduates***

#### ***Survey procedures and method***

Research shows that organizational culture and climate are significant factors in explaining an employee's intention to stay in or leave a workplace<sup>18,19</sup>. Graduates of the CWEB and CWEL

---

<sup>18</sup> Shim, M. (2010). Factors influencing child welfare employee's turnover: Focusing on organizational culture and climate. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(6), 847-856.

<sup>19</sup> Cahalane, H., & Sites, E. (2008). The climate of child welfare employee retention. *Child Welfare, 87*(1), 91-114.

programs are a fitting group of individuals to use as a barometer for assessing the climate of child welfare agencies across Pennsylvania. The Organizational Culture Survey<sup>20</sup> was sent to 119 individuals who graduated from the CWEB program during the period of 7/1/14 to 6/30/15 or the CWEL program between 12/1/14 and 8/31/15 regardless of their employment status in a public child welfare agency. Fifty-eight surveys were returned for a response rate of 48%. A total of 10 responses were removed from the data set due to having less than 50% of survey items completed, resulting in a total of 48 valid surveys. The Organizational Culture Survey includes 31 items that measure 6 dimensions of an organization's culture: teamwork, morale, information flow, employee involvement, supervision, and meetings. The respondents were asked to rate their work climate on these items on a scale from 1 (To a Very Little Extent) to 5 (To a Very Great Extent). The characteristics of the respondents by CWEB and CWEL status are detailed in the next section, followed by an overview of the graduates' ratings of their organizational culture and climate.

#### *Description of survey respondents*

Fourteen (25%) respondents were graduates of the CWEB program. Their average age was 24; the majority of respondents were White (88%) with smaller percentages of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (12%). Most of the respondents were female (90%). The majority (60%) of CWEB long-term graduates who responded are still working in their commitment agency. On average, CWEB graduates had been working in their agency for a little less than one and a third years ( $M=1.29$ ,  $SD=0.57$ ). There was an even split between those working in urban areas (43%) and those in rural areas (43%); the remainder were working in suburban (14%) areas. Respondents were located throughout Pennsylvania: 14% were in the Central region, 14% in the Northeastern region, 57% in the Southeastern region, and 15% in the Western region.

In terms of their current positions, almost all (70%) CWEB graduates were currently employed at a county children, youth, and family agency. CWEB graduates all reported working

---

<sup>20</sup> Glassern, S.R., Zamanou, S., & Hacker, K. (1987). Measuring and interpreting organizational climate. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 1(2), 173-198.

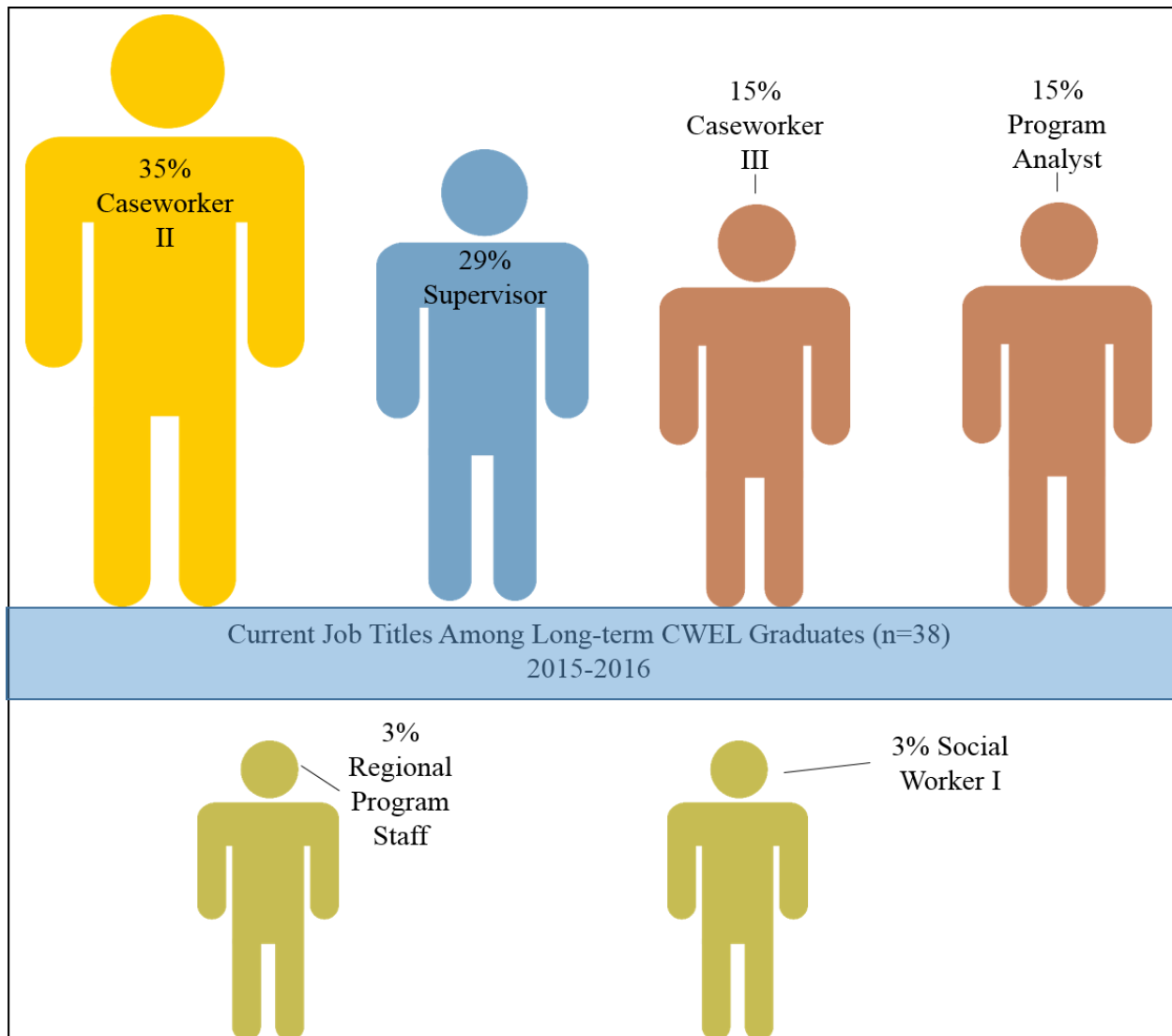


in direct services (e.g., intake, ongoing, substitute care). These work assignments also suggest that agencies are able to incorporate CWEB graduates into a variety of positions serving children and families. The majority of CWEB long-term graduates (70%) are in Caseworker II positions.

The majority of respondents were CWEL graduates (43 or 69%). Consequently, they were a slightly older group, with an average age of 38. They were predominately female (88%); the majority (81%) were White and 19% were African-American. CWEL long-term graduates are experienced workers, with slightly more than half having eight or more years of service in child welfare ( $M=9.27$  years,  $SD=4.73$ ). The majority of CWEL graduates worked in suburban areas (52%), followed by urban areas (30%), and the remainder working in rural areas (18%). Similar to the CWEB long-term graduates, most CWEL long-term graduates were located in the Southeast region (33%), followed closely by the Central region (27%), and Western regions (21%) with the remaining in the Northeast region (19%).

Almost all CWEL graduates who responded to the survey still worked at a CYF agency (95%), and the majority (88%) were involved in direct services (with the remaining 12% serving in administrative roles). Relative to promotion, more than a third of respondents (35%) reported being promoted since they received their MSW degree. Figure 13 illustrates the current positions of the CWEL graduates.

**Figure 12. Current Job Titles: CWEL Long-Term Graduates**



*What do the long-term CWEB and CWEL graduates say about the climate of child welfare agencies?*

Table 4 shows the average ratings on key organizational climate items by type of graduate (as well as for the total sample). The scale ranges from one to five, with higher ratings indicating more positive work environments.

**Table 4. Average Ratings of Organizational Climate Dimensions by CWEB and CWEL Long-Term (1+ years) Graduates**

Quality	CWEB (n=10)	CWEL (n=38)	Total (n=48)
Teamwork	3.64	3.16	3.26
Morale	3.08	2.92	2.96
Information Flow	3.13	3.20	3.18
Employee Involvement	3.20	3.11	3.13
Supervision	3.50	3.46	3.47
Meetings	3.10	3.11	3.11
Overall Climate	3.29	3.23	3.24

Both CWEB and CWEL graduates were predominately neutral about their work climate, with CWEB graduates feeling slightly more positive than CWEL graduates. Comparing these results to those of the 2014-2015 academic year, this year’s CWEB graduates had lower scores on every domain except for employee involvement, although none of these differences were statistically significant. These changes should be viewed with caution since there were only 10 usable CWEB surveys for this academic year, half the number which responded to last year’s survey. However, if this downward trend continues, efforts should be made to engage the CWEB graduates in a meaningful way to prevent burnout and potential departure from the child welfare workforce. When conducting this comparison with CWEL graduates, every domain score was higher this academic year. This year’s CWEL graduates responses to information flow were significantly higher ( $t=-2.14, p<.05$ ); in addition, the morale ( $t=1.82, p=.073$ ) and employee involvement ( $t=-1.87, p=.066$ ) scores were approaching significance. Perhaps the positive increases in domain scores for this year’s CWEL graduates can be attributed to mechanisms county agencies are using to try to retain child welfare workers. The CWEL graduates in this year’s cohort feel more involved in their agencies, are getting more from meetings, and perceive a more team-based environment. Although still low, the staff morale domain also increased for this cohort suggesting that CWEL graduates are feeling slightly better about their positions within the agency.

Focusing solely on this academic year, the most positive climate scores were related to supervision, for both CWEL graduates ( $M=3.46$ ), and CWEB graduates ( $M=3.50$ ). These scores indicate both CWEB and CWEL graduates value their supervision. The lowest ratings for CWEB ( $M=3.08$ ) and CWEL ( $M=2.92$ ) were related to staff morale. This may indicate that both CWEB and CWEL graduates do not feel appreciated or valued for the work they do with the families on their caseloads.

Organizational climate ratings were compared according to respondents' tenure in public child welfare (five or fewer years or more than five years). Although the ratings were neutral for both groups, respondents who worked in child welfare for more than five years rated every domain (teamwork, morale, information flow, employee involvement, supervision, and meetings) as lower than those who have been working in child welfare for less than five years. However, none of these differences were statistically significant. When compared to last academic year, a downward trend was seen in the domain scores for respondents employed in child welfare for less than five years. Since this cohort is comprised mostly of CWEL graduates, this finding is not surprising and should be interpreted as the findings above regarding the increase in CWEL graduates' ratings from last academic year. Likewise, the domain scores for this year's cohort were higher than last

### PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE III:

*CWEB and CWEL students and graduates have the opportunity to impact not only the children and families on their caseloads, but also the agencies they work in and the way policies and practices are implemented.*

*A Marywood student who graduated from CWEB in 2011 and CWEL in 2014 helped to create and coordinate a supervisor workgroup in her agency in Lackawanna County. In this work group, supervisors are able to process their experiences in the agency and conceptualize ideas to suggest to administration to improve agency practices. This workgroup enables the supervisors and line caseworkers in the agency to have a voice in the way the agency handles the children and families in Lackawanna County. Through their education and field experiences, our CWEB and CWEL students and graduates model strengths-based casework practice not only to those they supervise or mentor, but to their peers in the field as well.*

year, with information flow ( $t=-2.17, p<.05$ ) being statistically significant and employee involvement ( $t=-1.79, p=.063$ ) approaching significance. It can be assumed that this cohort is comprised mostly of CWEL graduates, which is why the means follow a similar upward pattern when comparing last year's results.

Long-term graduates were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback in an open-ended comment box. Their responses mirrored those of the current students and recent graduates. A CWEB graduate mentioned that successfully completing the CWEB program and the 975 internship hours did not enable the graduate to move up within the agency. This graduate felt better prepared for the profession than other new hires but was treated the same way as other entering the field without this extensive educational and field experience. CWEL long-term graduates felt that their new skill sets were not being fully utilized within their agencies and felt that there was limited availability for promotion or career growth. CWEL long-term graduates discussed the financial difficulties in participating in the CWEL program since they could not earn overtime pay, which they had depended on as part of their income. Despite these challenges, long-term graduates from both programs praised the education they received.

*CWEB program was a good way to get experience in an agency/field which contributes to people's lives in more than one way. (CWEB Long-term Graduate)*

*I appreciated having the program and I feel it helped me in my career and education. (CWEB Long-term Graduate)*

*Who knows where I would have ended up if it weren't for CWEB? Financially they were both fabulous programs. I couldn't have afforded my Master's Degree without CWEL. Getting my Master's was an incredibly positive experience, probably just as valuable as actually possessing the degree. (CWEL Long-term Graduate)*

*CWEL is an excellent program that allowed me to continue my education in Child Welfare. I have been promoted to a Program Analyst and I am currently on the Supervisor's list. I actively encourage my colleagues to apply to the CWEL program. (CWEL Long-term Graduate)*

In summary, CWEB and CWEL graduates work primarily in direct services in a variety of communities throughout the state of Pennsylvania. They report relatively high levels of

satisfaction with the supervision they receive. Although CWEB graduates rated all aspects of work climate slightly more negatively than CWEL graduates, in general, ratings of work climate were neutral for all long-term graduates. Graduates of both programs were least satisfied with staff morale. These findings are not surprising given the inordinate amount of stress on the Pennsylvania child welfare workforce.

Retaining experienced child welfare caseworkers is extremely important given the increasing levels of complexity presented by the families involved in the child welfare system. While the positive opinions of the longer tenured workers and CWEL graduates increased during this academic year, ratings have declined among newer workers and CWEB long-term graduates. This finding is concerning since the CWEB long-term graduates are the future for the field of child welfare work. This is especially true given the findings of the CWEB follow-up study showing that at 90 days post hire, CWEB graduates are starting to show signs of being overworked as evidenced by a small dip in how they rate themselves on core competency items. Even more concerning is the lack of self-care plans CWEB graduates endorse shortly after hire. A CWEL long-term graduate said *“Self-care is another thing that is not a priority at our agency. As a CWEL student, self-care was stressed in every class. I am the self-appointed self-care advocate in our department and try to add something educational to each department meeting, even if it is just a handout on dealing with stress.”* Without solid self-care plans and support for those plans from supervisors, CWEB and CWEL long-term graduates may experience compassion fatigue that can contribute to an exit from the child welfare field. Agencies should make self-care a priority and check in with employees on their self-care plans and how the plans are working for each individual. This will not only aid in employee retention by reducing burnout, but it will model a caring relationship that can transfer to families and children.

***Schools and Agencies***

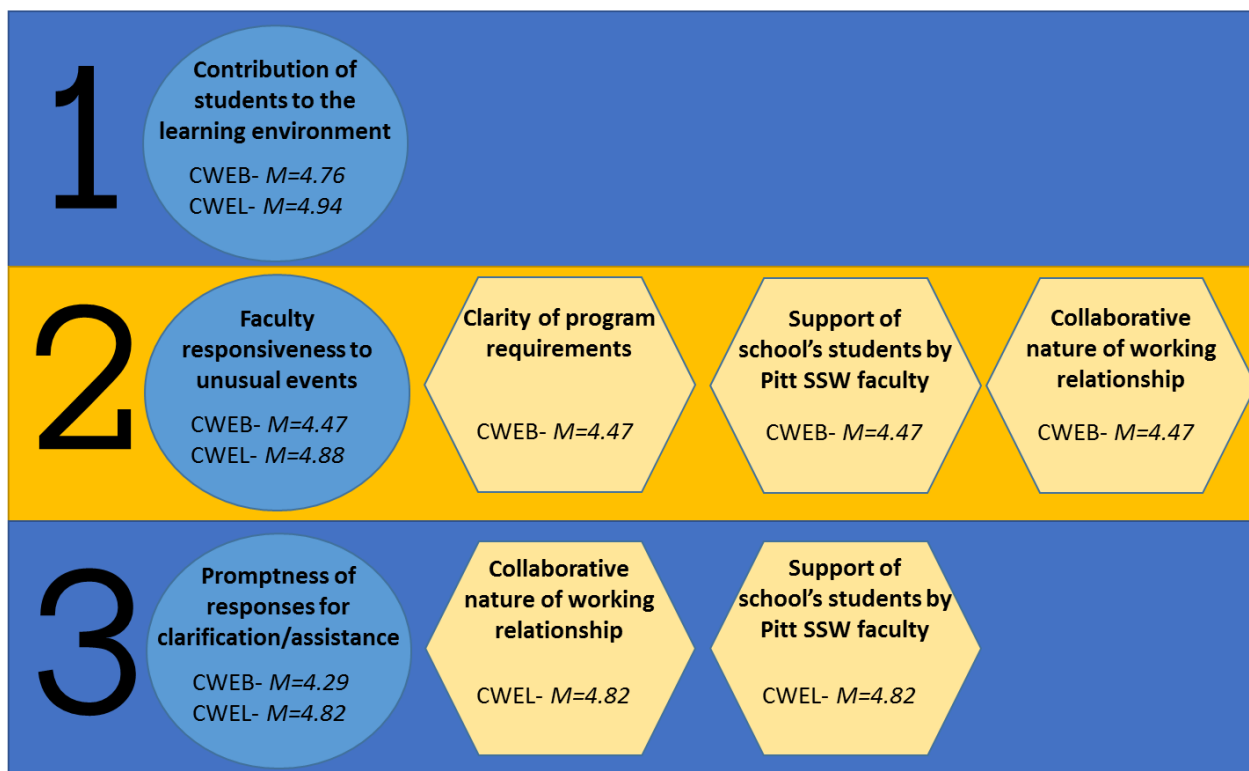
*How do Pennsylvania schools of Social Work view the CWEB and CWEL programs?*

Selected individuals at participating schools of Social Work were asked to complete an annual survey regarding their involvement in the CWEB and CWEL programs. Responses were obtained from 94% of the schools, with a 75% response rate from individuals (surveys were sent to multiple respondents at each school). Of the 33 respondents, 41% reported that their university participates only in the CWEB program or only the CWEL program and 17% reported involvement with both programs.

The first part of the survey focused on questions rating the quality of the CWEB and CWEL programs, which respondents answered through 6 quantitative and 3 qualitative questions. Quantitative questions were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Very Good). Items included collaboration between schools and staff, faculty support of students, and student's contributions to the school's learning environment. Qualitative questions asked respondents to describe student caliber, positive elements of the CWEB/CWEL programs, and problems or suggestions for program improvement. In the second part of the survey, respondents were asked to rate how important a mixture of core competencies and traditional criteria were in order to select CWEB students. Results of these items can be found in the Core Competency section below.

Responses indicate that school administrators continue to be satisfied with the quality of the CWEB and CWEL programs; both programs scored well with the average hovering around 4.3 or above on each of the items. Rankings for the top three highest rated items can be seen in the figure below.

**Figure 13. Highest mean values by program for school respondents**



These high ratings were matched by faculty's praise for the students and programs, describing students as, "...high achievers, super motivated to do well, and committed to social justice" (CWEB) and "...experienced, committed practitioners who add a great deal to the classroom" (CWEL). Of the CWEB program, one faculty member reported, "Students that enter CWEB have the opportunity to have additional educational preparation in working with children and families. They become well acquainted with child welfare issues through taking the child welfare course. The ability to engage in experiencing child welfare with mentors is extremely important in helping the student realize the commitment to this field of practice...." Another respondent described the CWEL program as "having experienced CWEL students in class that contribute to clinical courses is invaluable. They are able to round out the curriculum content and provide practice examples from their work."



A review of the open-ended comments revealed that partnering schools of social work perceive CWEB and CWEL students to have superb academic capabilities and that they show a commitment to working with children and families. Specifically, respondents described their CWEB students as hardworking and motivated. Respondents described CWEL students as committed social workers, full of life, with rich hands-on experiences. CWEB respondents endorsed positive program benefits, including the opportunity for hands-on learning and promotion of child welfare as a viable career path for undergraduates. CWEL respondents cited the extensive practice experience CWEL students bring into the classrooms.

*How do child welfare agency administrators view the CWEB and CWEL programs?*

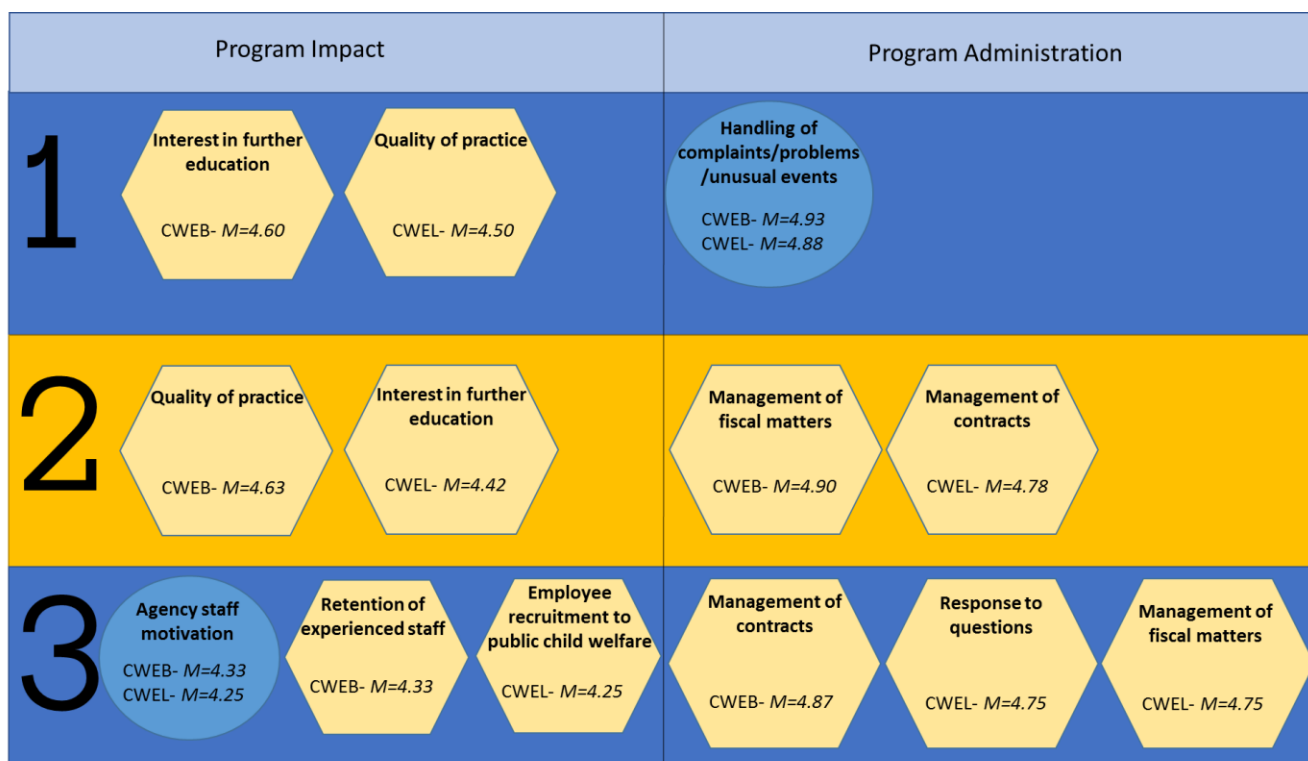
Agency directors were asked to answer questions regarding the administration of the CWEB and CWEL programs and the impact and value of these programs on their agencies; they also rated the quality of CWEB and CWEL graduates' skills and work characteristics. Additionally, they were asked to describe the strategies they have created to utilize CWEB and CWEL graduates' abilities and knowledge, as well as strategies they have devised to increase caseworker retention. Finally, agency directors were asked to rate CWEB and CWEL graduates on a series of core competencies. The results from these items are discussed in the Core Competency section below. Out of agencies with graduates and/or current students, 71% of individuals responded, accounting for 76% of participating agencies. In some cases, surveys were sent to multiple individuals in each agency, such as the county administrator and the person within the agency who is most knowledgeable about the CWEB and CWEL programs.

Respondents rated their satisfaction with the CWEB and CWEL programs and students on 22 items using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Very Good). Items were grouped into two sections: 1) the impact the CWEB/CWEL program has had on the agency and 2) the administration of the CWEB/CWEL program. In the first section, respondents rated items dealing with employee recruitment, retention, and quality of staff. The second section included items

referring to fiscal management and communication from the University of Pittsburgh regarding the program.

Directors consistently rated their satisfaction with the CWEB and CWEL programs and the impact of the programs on the organization culture (e.g., recruitment, retention, staff motivation, quality of practice, and interest in higher education) between the values of “Good” and “Very Good.” A depiction of the highest mean values for these two areas can be seen in the figure below.

**Figure 14. Highest mean values for agency satisfaction and impact of CWEB/CWEL programs**

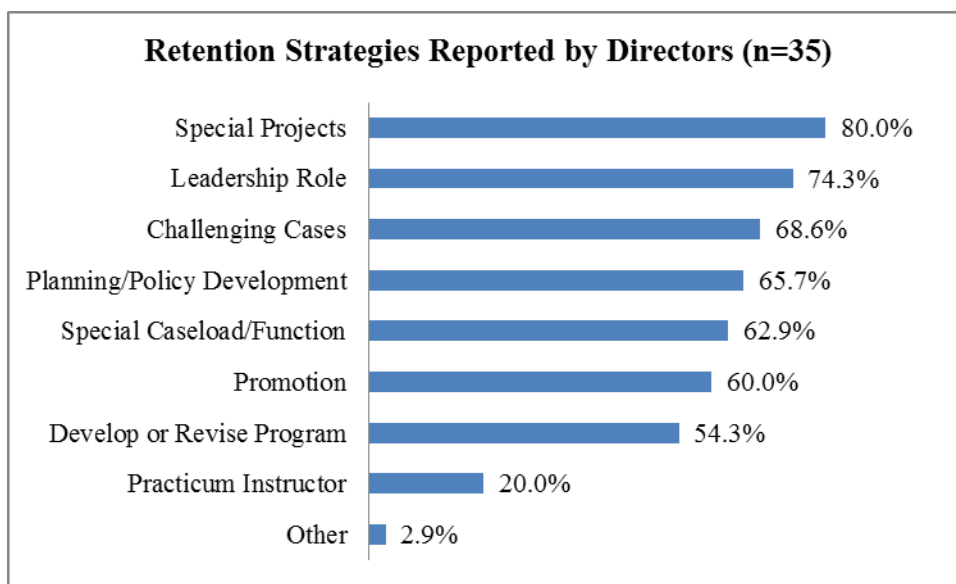


Generally, the means for the satisfaction and administration scales were higher than the ratings last year. The higher means for the items in these scales mirror the administrators’ responses regarding the value of the CWEB and CWEL programs ( $M=4.90$ ;  $M=4.75$ ). This suggests that agency administrators truly appreciate the opportunity the CWEB and CWEL

programs provide for their agencies by enabling them to have a skilled and highly trained workforce.

As in previous years, agency directors responded to questions asking them to describe how they have created or adapted programs and assignments that utilize the skills of recent graduates. The most commonly reported strategies were assigning graduates to special projects (80%), assigning to leadership roles (74%), and allocating more challenging cases (69%). These responses correlate with the open-ended comments that indicate that CWEB and CWEL graduates have more responsibility in their roles within the agency. Figure 14 below shows the results of these specialized tasks. Retention of skilled child welfare workers remains a concern with agency directors, especially when opportunities for advancement or promotion may not be available. In addition, job classification categories, local politics, and collective bargaining agreements all play a part in not only the advancement of skilled workers, but also the ability of the workers to utilize their skills in new arenas. One director voiced this concern by saying *“We have found that only when a CWEL or CWEB graduate is in a non-union position, can our agency get creative with allowing the graduate ‘work outside the box’.”*

**Figure 15. Retention Strategies Reported by Directors**



Another director spoke about the lack of recognition that is common within the child welfare system. *“I think it would go a long way if we (social workers in child welfare) were recognized and appreciated for what a tough job working in child welfare is. Police, doctors, lawyers, teachers all have a long history of being honored and revered by the community for how hard their jobs are...Child Welfare in PA (CPSL only dating back to 75) is still a young profession and even our counter- parts don't grasp the magnitude of the difficult decisions we make on a daily basis. If there were more respect and appreciation for the work I think that we would draw more people to the work and retain them.”* Until more supervisory and upper management positions begin to be granted to CWEB and CWEL graduates, agencies have to think of innovative techniques to keep the workforce engaged and provide them ways to utilize their new skillsets to truly promote retention.

Agency directors have used the CWEB and CWEL graduates in a variety of situations, from supervising interns to educating the community on the importance of reporting child abuse and neglect. CWEB and CWEL graduates participate in continuous quality improvement teams within agencies and research new assessments and evidence based practices that can help an agency navigate the unique issues of the child welfare population. This specialized group of caseworkers are also assigned cases with more complicated issues, such as incarceration, mental health issues, interpersonal violence, drug addiction, and truancy. In addition, CWEB and CWEL graduates were selected to participate in workgroups focusing on recruitment and retention of not only resource families for youth, but also on recruitment and retention of qualified child welfare caseworkers.

### ***Core Competencies***

This year, agency and school administrators, as well as supervisors/mentors of CWEB students, were asked to rate CWEB program participants on 10 core competencies that the research literature suggests are important for a successful career in child welfare. These competencies are:

(1) interpersonal skills; (2) adaptability; (3) communication skills; (4) observation skills; (5) planning and organizing work; (6) analytic thinking; (7) motivation; (8) self-awareness/confidence; (9) sense of mission, and (10) teamwork. All correlate with the prescribed core competencies for selecting qualified applicants for child welfare work<sup>21</sup>.

CWEB mentors/supervisors were identified from the pool of current part-time CWEL students and from recent and long-term CWEB and CWEL graduates who responded to a question asking if they supervise/mentor CWEB students in their agencies. The 10 items were rated using a 5-point scale. The anchors for the Likert scale differed based on respondent type. School administrators were asked to rate the importance of the core competencies in selecting candidates to participate in the CWEB program; the items were rated from 1 (Not at All Important) to 5 (Extremely Important). Agency administrators and CWEB supervisors/mentors were asked to rate the competencies of CWEB students/graduates with whom they worked (as a group); the items were rated from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Superior).

In addition to the core competencies, school administrators were also asked to rate (using the same scale) the importance of 6 more traditional criteria when selecting CWEB students – student's GPA, writing ability, faculty recommendation, financial need, engagement in extracurricular activities, and interest in working with children and families. Agency administrators and mentors/supervisors of CWEB students were asked to rate the CWEB graduates/students in their agency on the aforementioned core competencies. For these items, every respondent was prompted to rate interpersonal relations, communication skills, and self-awareness/confidence. To reduce respondent burden, 2 of the 7 remaining core competencies (adaptability; observation skills; planning and organizing work; analytic thinking; motivation; sense of mission; teamwork) were randomly selected for each participant.

---

<sup>21</sup> The R&R Project (2009). *Resources for selecting qualified applications for child welfare work*. Chapel Hill, NC; Jordan Institute for Families at UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

Responses from the survey additions indicate that school administrators value the core competencies for selecting child welfare workers, but place equal value on some of the traditional markers of qualification. Table 5 illustrates these findings.

The most highly rated item of the 10 core competencies was “*interpersonal relations*” ( $M=4.65$ ), and the lowest rated item was “*teamwork*” ( $M=3.80$ ). Of the traditionally valued items, the most highly rated item was “*student has an interest in working with children and families*” ( $M=4.65$ ). The lowest rated items, “*student’s financial need*” ( $M=3.00$ ) and “*student’s engagement in extracurricular activities*” ( $M=2.82$ ), had significantly lower scores than any of the items included in the cores competencies. Predictably, “*student GPA*,” “*student’s writing ability*,” and “*faculty recommendation of student to the program*” all received ratings above “very important” ( $M=4.06$ ,  $M=4.00$ ,  $M=4.18$ ).

**Table 5. Comparison of School Administrator's Ratings of the Importance of Core Competencies to Traditional Selection Criteria**

Core Competency	Mean	Traditional Indicators	Mean
Motivation (n=5)	4.40	Interest in Working with Children and Families (n=17)	4.65
Interpersonal Relations (n=17)	4.65	Faculty Recommendation (n=17)	4.18
Adaptability (n=5)	4.00	GPA (n=17)	4.06
Analytic Thinking (n=4)	4.25	Writing Ability (n=17)	4.00
Awareness/Confidence (n=17)	4.41	Engagement in Extracurricular Activities (n=17)	2.82
Communication Skills (n=17)	4.29	Financial Need (n=17)	3.00
Sense of Mission (n=5)	4.40		
Observation Skills (n=5)	4.40		
Planning and Organizing Work (n=4)	4.25		
Teamwork (n=5)	3.80		

Similar to the school respondents, agency administrators were asked to rate CWEB and CWEL graduates on the core competencies. Ratings for both CWEB and CWEL graduates hovered around the “Good” to “Very Good” range. See Table 6 below for the ratings for all 10 competencies. Respondents rate the CWEB graduates highest in “*sense of mission*” ( $M=4.50$ ), and lowest in “*observation skills*” and “*self-awareness/confidence*” ( $M=3.71$ ). Respondents also

rated CWEL graduates high in “*sense of mission*” ( $M=4.50$ ), “*motivation*” ( $M=4.40$ ), and “*observation skills*” ( $M=4.33$ ), and lowest on “*planning/organizing work*” ( $M=3.63$ ). Developmental differences and depth of exposure to the child welfare field likely explain these differences among CWEB and CWEL participants.

Because agency administrators may be far removed from the frontline CWEB caseworkers, the core competency questions were added to the current student, recent, and long-term graduate surveys last year. Similar to the agency administrators, CWEB supervisor/mentors’ ratings of CWEB participants in their agency were in the “Good” to “Very Good” range.

**Table 6. CWEB and CWEL Core Competency Ratings by Agency Administrators**

Core Competency	Mean	
	CWEB	CWEL
Interpersonal Relations	4.00 (n=21)	3.96 (n=26)
Adaptability	3.80 (n=5)	4.00 (n=9)
Communication Skills	4.10 (n=21)	4.04 (n=27)
Observation Skills	3.71 (n=7)	4.13 (n=8)
Planning and Organizing Work	3.83 (n=6)	3.63 (n=8)
Analytic Thinking	3.86 (n=7)	4.00 (n=7)
Motivation	4.00 (n=7)	3.89 (n=9)
Self-Awareness/Confidence	3.71 (n=21)	4.11 (n=27)
Sense of Mission	4.50 (n=4)	4.33 (n=6)
Teamwork	4.33 (n=6)	4.00 (n=7)

Table 7 below contains the mean ratings on all 10 core competencies. CWEB students/graduates were rated highest on “*motivation*” ( $M=4.00$ ) and “*sense of mission*” ( $M=4.00$ ) domains, but appeared to need some improvement in “*adaptability*” ( $M=3.29$ ) and “*observation skills*” ( $M=3.38$ ).

A series of statistical analyses was conducted to determine if there were differences in three main areas of inquiry: 1) did agency respondents rate CWEB and CWEL graduates differently on the 10 core competencies; 2) were there differences between the core competencies that school respondents looked for in CWEB applicants and the core competencies the agency respondents saw in CWEB recent graduates; and 3) were there differences in the ratings of core competencies

in CWEB participants when comparing school administrators, agency administrators, and CWEB supervisors/mentors? Independent T-tests were conducted to answer the first two research questions. The third research question was addressed by using a Kruskal-Wallis Test to determine statistically significant differences between two or more groups on a series of variables rated on a Likert scale.

**Table 7. CWEB Supervisor/Mentor's Core Competency Ratings for CWEB Program Participants**

Core Competency	Mean
	CWEB
Interpersonal Relations	3.71 (n=28)
Adaptability	3.29 (n=7)
Communication Skills	3.64 (n=28)
Observation Skills	3.38 (n=8)
Planning and Organizing Work	3.86 (n=7)
Analytic Thinking	3.55 (n=11)
Motivation	4.00 (n=7)
Self-Awareness/Confidence	3.50 (n=28)
Sense of Mission	4.00 (n=8)

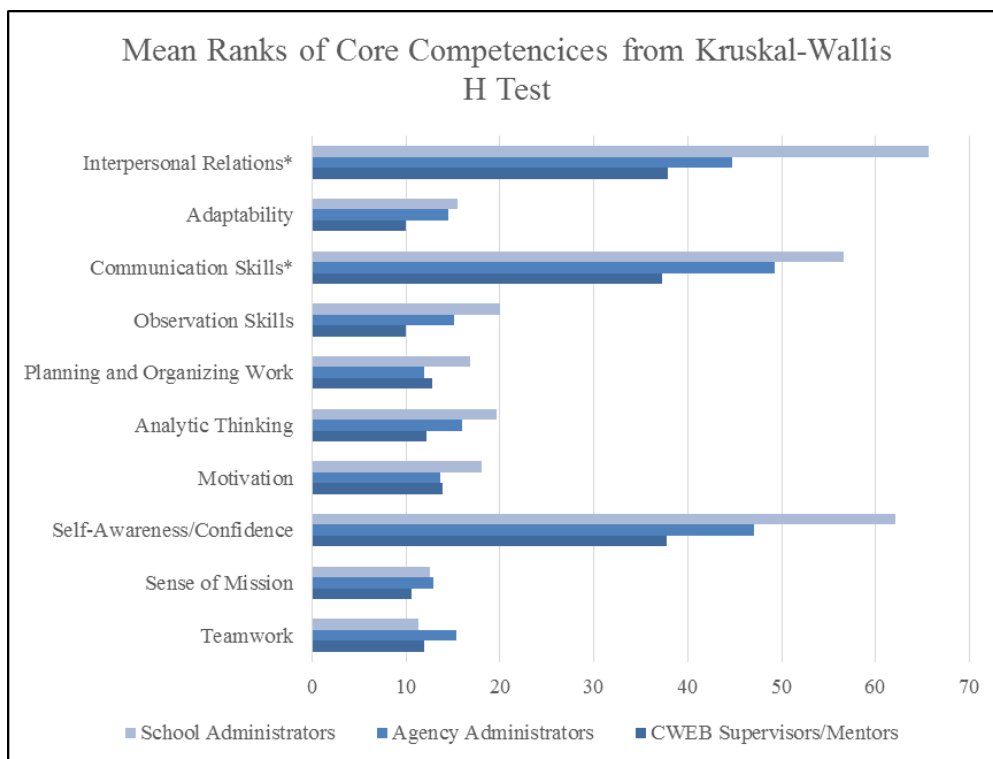
Looking at the first research question regarding the core competencies, there were no significant differences in the agency administrators' perceptions of the presence of core competencies in CWEB and CWEL graduates. Several significant results were seen when comparing the school respondents' ratings of the core competencies when considering CWEB applicants and the competencies that agency respondents felt that CWEB graduates possessed. School respondents rated "*interpersonal relations*" ( $t=-3.19, p<.01$ ), "*observation skills*" ( $t=-2.28, p<.05$ ), and "*self-awareness/confidence*" ( $t=-3.64, p<.01$ ) significantly higher than agency administrators. The only difference in the findings from the analyses conducted last year, is that "*observation skills*" instead of "*communication skills*" was statistically significant. Interestingly, there was movement in the ratings of the core competencies for both agency directors and school administrators since last year. Agency administrators rated 6 core competencies more positively than last year (interpersonal relations; adaptability; communication skills; analytic thinking; sense of mission; teamwork) whereas school administrators rated 5 competencies higher (interpersonal



relations; self-awareness/confidence; observation skills; analytic thinking; motivation) and 5 competencies lower (adaptability; communication skills; sense of mission; planning and organizing work; teamwork). In addition to a possible disconnect between schools and agencies in the definitions of these competencies, perhaps CWEB students are displaying these qualities in a classroom setting, but find it more challenging to engage in these behaviors while in the child welfare workforce. This may highlight a transfer of learning challenge for CWEB participants. Because of these differences, it is important to look at those who have direct contact with CWEB program participants in the county agencies.

In the Kruskal-Wallis H test, mean ranks are used to determine if there are any differences between the groups (e.g., school administrators; agency administrators; CWEB supervisors/mentors). These ranks can be used to determine the effect of the role of the respondent to the CWEB student on the ratings of the core competencies. It is important to note that this statistical test will not determine where the differences between the groups lie, just that a statistically significant difference was observed. The Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there were statistically significant differences between school administrators, agency administrators, and CWEB supervisors/mentors on two of the core competencies, “*interpersonal relations*” and “*communication skills*.” Respondents differed in their ratings of “*interpersonal relations*,”  $X^2 (2) = 13.555, p = .001$  with mean rank ratings of 37.93 for CWEB supervisors/mentors, 44.68 for agency administrators, and 65.65 for school administrators. With regard to “*communication skills*,” respondents’ ratings differed significantly as well,  $X^2 (2) = 7.362, p = .025$ , with mean rankings of 37.27 for CWEB supervisors/mentors, 49.28 for agency administrators, and 56.59 for school administrators. The full results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test can be seen in the figure below.

**Figure 16. Mean Ranks of Core Competencies.**



These results suggest that people within the child welfare agency are viewing CWEB program participants differently on “*interpersonal relations*,” a characteristic which encompasses respect and tolerance for people, relating well to others, and empathy. These skills may not be quantifiable until a student works directly with the child welfare population. Interestingly, the CWEB supervisors/mentors rated “*observation skills*” and “*analytical thinking*” lower than the other two respondent groups signifying that their interactions with CWEB program participants might be a better gauge of the presence of these competencies within their agencies. Again, transfer of learning activities may need to be strengthened.

***Overall Summary***

The stakeholders of the Title IV-E education programs continue to praise the CWEB and CWEL programs and students and acknowledge the value of these programs to the Commonwealth. CWEB and CWEL provide Pennsylvania’s county child welfare agencies a way to ensure a well-educated workforce and provide an opportunity to infuse core social work

values into casework practice. CWEB and CWEL program participants are extremely grateful for the opportunity to participate in these beneficial educational opportunities and see the programs as a way to promote change in child welfare and provide strengths-based solutions to youth and families.

CWEB and CWEL students continue to thrive both academically and in their agencies. Well over a third of CWEB and CWEL current students, recent graduates, and long-term graduates have received an award or recognition in the past year. Over 60% of these program participants were on the dean's list, graduated with honors, or became a member of a national honor society. In fact, all of the Spring CWEB graduates from the University of Pittsburgh graduated either cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude. Over one-third (39%) were recognized for accomplishments in their county agencies by receiving praise from supervisors, administrators, families on their caseloads, receiving "employee of the month" awards, promotions, or creating new initiatives within their agencies. A few program participants received special awards such as the Phi Alpha Student Leadership Award, Outstanding Senior Research Award, and Dawn Hicks Award. CWEB and CWEL program participants continue to prove their commitment to social work and child welfare.

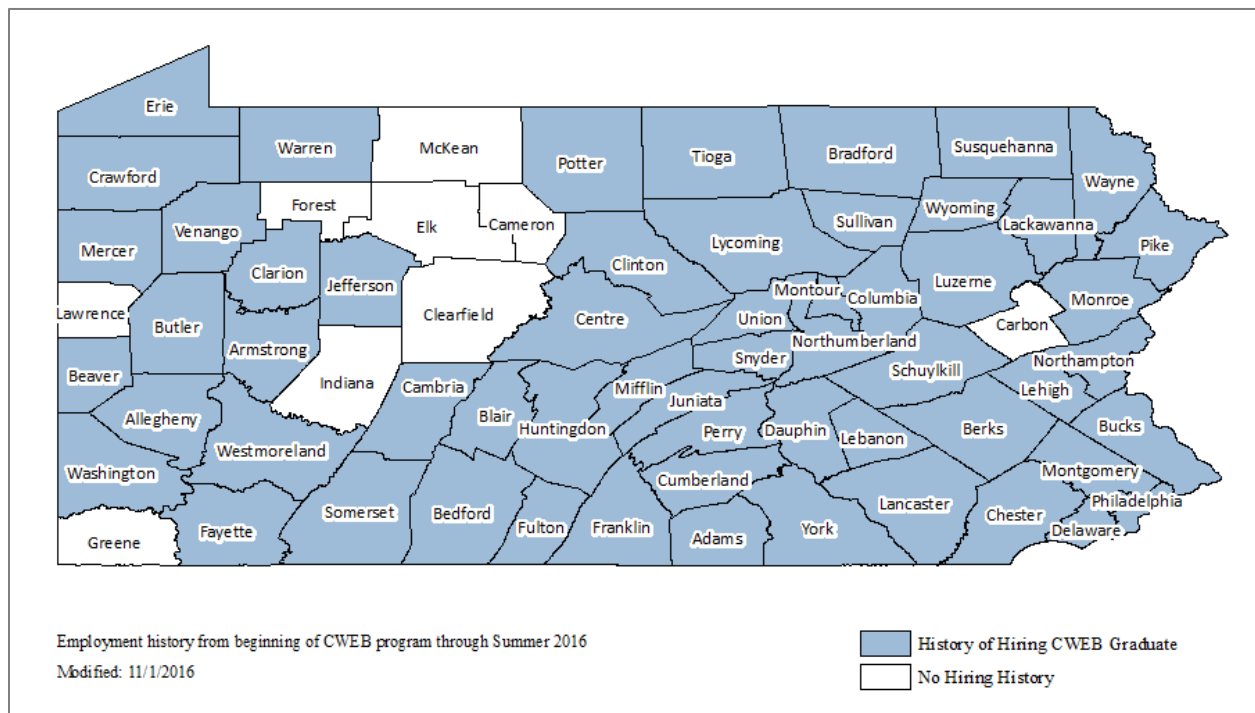
By providing this set of skilled workers with the means to enhance their work with families, strengthen their agencies, giving them a voice in policy implementation, and supporting their self-care, county child welfare agencies will be guaranteed a strong and vibrant workforce that will use their passion to help the children and families in the Commonwealth.

**Discussion**

***CWEB***

After fifteen years of operation, the CWEB program has made remarkable gains. Fourteen universities, 58 counties, and 1058 graduates have made major investments in its operational success. Strong collaboration has enabled the program to prepare individuals for work in public child welfare and county agencies report actively recruiting CWEB graduates.

**Figure 17. CWEB County Participation**



As shown in Figure 17, CWEB graduates have entered the child welfare workforce in 87% of the counties in Pennsylvania. This is evidence of the strong impact that our undergraduate education program continues to have on child welfare services across the state. The evaluations over the past 15-year period continue to be helpful in suggesting program improvements, as we continually analyze our lessons learned from administering the program. We have refined our admission criteria and instituted a more intensive case management process to ensure successful outcomes. The case management component, introduced in the 2009-2010

academic year has resulted in the increased enrollment of CWEB students in the state-mandated competency and skills-building training, Charting the Course (CTC). CWEB students are assigned to a Regional Training Specialist at the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center who assists them with enrollment in CTC and the initiation of their certification training record.

Variation in the civil service status among counties has presented a challenge for students as there is not presently an interface between these two merit employment systems. We work closely with students to complete the civil service process so that they have employment options in both civil service and non-civil service counties throughout the state. Barriers to the timeliness of hiring CWEB graduates have been successfully resolved for the most part, and are always subject to economic and political change at the local and state level. Close follow-up by the CWEB Academic Coordinator and the CWEB/CWEL Agency Coordinator has resulted in the majority of graduates securing county agency employment within 60 days of graduation. State budgetary issues have required an extension beyond 60 days for securing county agency employment in some instances. Even with this challenge, most recent CWEB graduates are gainfully employed.

We continue to make concerted efforts to connect graduates with agencies and provide technical support for resume development and interviewing skills. Students may pursue employment in any county in the state, and many are able to remain in the county where they completed their internship. However, there are some students who are reluctant to relocate and who live in areas where there are no immediate openings. When students fail to follow through on their contractual obligation, the CWERP program initiates a targeted collection procedure that can include obtaining a court judgment against the student. This is rarely necessary as nearly all students honor their obligations, and agencies are anxious to hire CWEB graduates due to their education and county experience.

As has been discussed previously, a career in public child welfare is not for everyone. The process of student discovery is a normal, healthy course of action which results in decisions that

benefit both students and counties. The CWEB program facilitates that process by counseling with the students and graduates and then providing a professional, business-like collection system for reimbursement when necessary. Repayment can be discontinued for those who are initially in default, but become employed in public child welfare.

Suggestions for CWEB program improvement and our action plan are summarized below. Some suggestions are new, while others are ongoing or have been addressed.

<b>CWEB: Suggested Program Improvement</b>	<b>Action Plan/Progress</b>
Improve successful outcomes for students by refining admission criteria and participant selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student transcripts and a personal statement regarding the desire to pursue public child welfare added to the application packet</li> <li>• Competency-based rating instrument used to assess CWEB applications</li> </ul>
Further guidance to university faculty on the details of civil service requirements and other technical aspects related to county internship and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted discussions occur during school visits and informational meetings</li> <li>• “Frequently Asked Questions” fact sheet posted on CWERP website</li> <li>• Diagram of civil service/non-civil service internship path included in student manual</li> <li>• CWEB presence at annual PA Undergraduate Social Work (PAUSWE) meeting</li> </ul>
Increase participation in Civil Service Social Work Internship program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing outreach to schools and students regarding the benefit of completing 975 hours of internship (e.g., civil service standing, exemption from SCSC exam, ability to complete CTC as part of internship, greater marketability for hiring)</li> <li>• County agency support for extended internship by CWEB students</li> </ul>
Increase successful program completion among “at risk” students (e.g., academic challenges, those experiencing unanticipated life events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing outreach and case management to students by CWEB faculty and staff</li> <li>• Regular collaboration with school faculty</li> </ul>

<p>Enhance student and school awareness of the difference between civil service and non-civil service counties and how this can impact county hiring practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion with students and schools</li> <li>• Most recent information regarding county civil service status posted on CWEB website and in CWEB student handbook</li> <li>• CWEB students completing internships within non-civil service counties also to register as a county casework intern so they are eligible for jobs in civil service counties</li> </ul>
<p>Increase county participation in the CWEB program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing consultation with counties</li> <li>• Ongoing school-county-program collaboration in the field practicum process</li> <li>• Presentations at PCYA &amp; CCAP meetings</li> </ul>
<p>Improve CWEB student enrollment in mandated child welfare skill and competency based training, <i>Charting the Course Toward Permanency in Pennsylvania (CTC)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case management system initiated to pair Regional Training Specialists from the PA Child Welfare Resource Center with each CWEB student</li> <li>• Enrollment in CTC during the CWEB students' senior year and initiation of training record to document completion of modules in effect</li> </ul>
<p>Improve leadership and professional development skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enroll student pilot groups at two locations in leadership and self-care training</li> </ul>
<p>Improve successful job placement following graduation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing assistance by CWERP faculty in identifying county casework vacancies, facilitating referrals for interviews, and counseling graduates regarding employment</li> <li>• Ongoing collaboration with SCSC</li> <li>• Collaboration with non-SCSC counties</li> </ul>
<p>Improve dissemination of child welfare career development opportunity through CWEB and CWEL to prospective and current participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CWEB informational video developed, CWEL video planned</li> <li>• Dissemination of realistic job preview video</li> </ul>

**CWEL**

After 21 years of operation, the CWEL program has continued to reach additional students and counties while maintaining its commitment to close, collaborative working relationships with the Department of Human Services, students, county agencies, and schools of social work in Pennsylvania. The number and diversity of counties has increased over time, enrollment continues

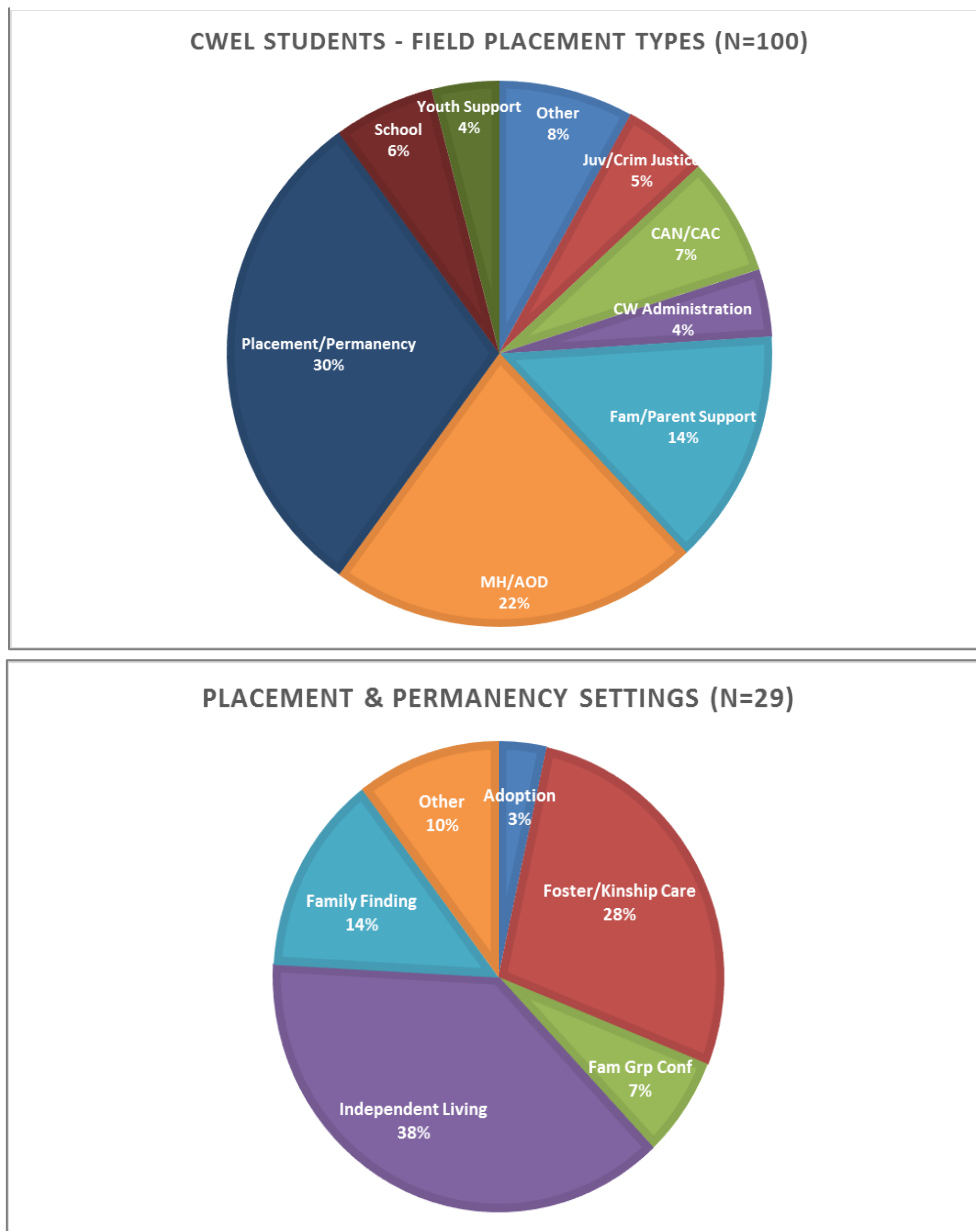
to meet projected goals, and the number of applications typically matches the number of budgeted student openings. The program is acknowledged as providing students with a valuable educational experience, which they regard as useful in their child welfare practice, and as a major asset to public child welfare in Pennsylvania. Feedback indicates that the program is well-administered and user friendly. It is credited as having a long-term impact on public child welfare practice and as a positive element in the continuing challenge of worker retention.

CWEL students contribute to human service programs in both the public and private sector during the course of their graduate studies through active engagement in field work in a variety of community-based agency settings. In turn, county agencies benefit from the expanded knowledge that CWEL students bring to the county. Figure 18 below illustrates the breadth of programs that benefit from the skill and expertise of our child welfare students.

By completing a field experience at an agency in the private sector or within another publically-funded program, students gain valuable information regarding systems, policies, service mandates, and intervention strategies. In turn, students transmit their experience and knowledge of child welfare policies and procedures to provider agencies that may have limited understanding of child welfare services. Students are encouraged to go outside their comfort zone to gain experience with a new service modality or intervention or a new client population or service setting about which they may have limited knowledge. All of this learning and collaboration occurs as our students share their expertise and enrich their skills through internships with public and private provider agencies. Students then bring new knowledge and skills back to their child welfare agencies and are well prepared to contribute to practice initiatives such as teaming and conferencing, connection to evidence-based treatments, and the use of enhanced assessments.



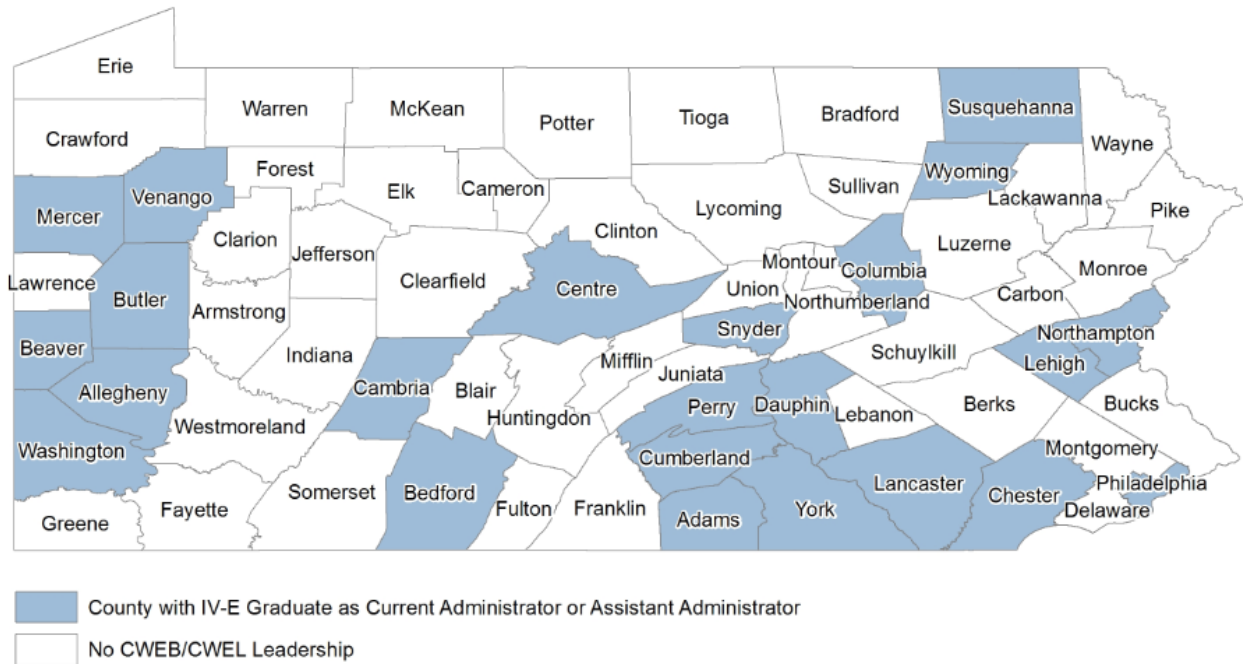
**Figure 18. CWEL Field Placement Types**



A main goal of the CWEL program is the development of leadership within child welfare. We follow the career path of our participants, and currently our CWEL graduates make up 34% (23/67) of county agency management/administration in Pennsylvania. In addition, a number of CWEL graduates and current CWEL students hold supervisory positions or roles that involve mentorship, quality assurance, and new practice initiatives, such as teaming and conferencing. Of note, a CWEB graduate also occupies a county leadership position. We applaud the promotion of

our graduates into these key leadership roles and the new vision and energy that they bring to public child welfare. Figure 19 illustrates this impact and includes leaders among both the CWEB and the CWEL programs. Efforts continue to be directed toward gathering comprehensive data on leadership activities among our graduates.

**Figure 19. CWEB/CWEL County Leadership**



Narrative responses gathered during the program evaluation contain a number of suggestions. These responses are obtained through open-ended comments on the evaluation instruments and then verified through key informant focus group sessions. Some suggestions are impractical or impossible to implement. Others are based upon misinformation. Most of the suggestions gleaned from the evaluation of both programs over the years, however, point to important questions and ongoing themes that bear thoughtful review. Several of these will be highlighted because they come from multiple sources, were reported in so many different ways, or have become persistent themes. All of the partners ought to be thinking about strategies to address them over subsequent review periods.

One prominent and persistent theme concerns the climate, salaries, job classifications, assignments, and opportunities for career development which graduates of the CWEL program encounter upon their return to the county agencies. The following key points have been repeated by multiple respondents and noted consistently in our annual program evaluations:

- difficulty in negotiating assignments that capitalize on the returning worker's new skills, knowledge, and advanced training;
- lack of differentiation in job classifications among workers with and without graduates degrees;
- lack on salary incentives in most counties;
- hostile, skeptical, and jealous reception workers sometimes face upon return to their agency after graduation;
- scarcity of opportunities for promotion in many counties;
- lack of opportunities for leadership and/or a voice in decision making;
- the sense that advanced educational achievement is not matched with respect and growth opportunities.

In some counties, returning graduates have been embraced and invited to participate in creative and challenging assignments that are advantageous to both the worker and the agency. Participation in Quality Services Reviews (QSRs), membership in committees associated with Pennsylvania's CPSL Implementation, membership in specific workgroups (i.e., Pennsylvania's implementation of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, Safety Assessment and Management, Diversity Taskforce, CAST curriculum, TA Collaborative, CWIS) and involvement in practice initiatives such as the early developmental screening of young children, family teaming and conferencing (e.g., Family Group Conferencing, Family Teaming, Family Group Decision Making), Family Finding, and enhancing the use of mobile technology in the field are a few of the projects that benefit from the expertise of CWEL graduates. CWEL graduates are invited to become mentors and supervisors of CWEB students in their agencies;

many assume prominent roles in leading youth and family engagement practices and are active in continuous quality improvements initiatives within their counties. Of the current trainers and consultants of the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, 25% are CWEL graduates. Many graduates are members of statewide committees and workgroups. Other have involved themselves in the education of future child welfare professionals by becoming adjunct instructors at schools of social work.

The contrast in the moods of those graduates who have enrichment opportunities and those who do not is stark. One group of graduates speaks of long-term commitment to public child welfare and the other group is beginning to think of other ways they can serve children at risk and their families where the opportunities are better fitted to their skills. Graduates do not speak of renegeing on their commitments; when they do contemplate other options such as moving to employment with private providers or other human service entities after completion of their commitments, they do so with sadness for the most part. The CWEL faculty views the comments of graduates about agency climate as representative of the key deciding element in child welfare employee retention. Our research, and that of others, strongly supports this finding. Counties and agencies that ignore these concerns should not be surprised by the loss of valuable staff. While there is extensive research evidence of the importance of non-salary factors in retention (see [Appendix M](#)), the results of this and previous surveys affirm that salary remains a very important issue in Pennsylvania. Along with supportive agency working conditions, adequate compensation is critical to the stability of our child welfare workforce.

Well-educated and skilled professionals who serve children at risk and their families will benefit public child welfare wherever they practice and will return the investment made on their training by the taxpayers many times over. But a major opportunity will be lost if agencies do not take full advantage of the skills, optimism, and enthusiasm of the returning workers. Retention has always been one of the goals of federal funding for child welfare training and is central to the mission of the CWEB and CWEL programs. It is well known from research conducted over a

decade ago that workers who are skilled in the services they are asked to provide and who receive strong agency support have higher retention rates<sup>22</sup>. All indications suggest that CWEB and CWEL students have received excellent training and education. It remains for the partners in this enterprise to be creative, innovative, and energetic in following through with organizational change after the graduates return. The 12 or so months CWEB students and the 20 or so months full-time CWEL students spend in educational preparation is very modest when compared to the many years their potential child welfare careers will span following graduation.

CWEL has a remarkable record of retention. Of the 1283 graduates who have completed the program, only 15 have failed to complete their work commitment. Another 657 have resigned after completing their commitments for all reasons. Again, these reasons include not only voluntary departures from child welfare employment, but also retirement, death, permanent disability, relocation of a spouse, and a variety of other unique circumstances. This represents an overall loss rate of only 8.2% a year for the life of the program. Figure 20 below illustrates retention among our graduates at one, five, and ten-year intervals post-commitment. The average commitment period is approximately 1 ½ years. This commitment calculation includes individuals who were awarded advanced standing in their academic program by virtue of having a BASW degree, those who completed a full, two-year academic program, and those who obtain CWEL funding for only a portion of their academic studies. Figure 19 shows that of those whose commitment ended over 10 years ago, almost 40% remain in their agencies nearly 12 years after graduation (1 ½ years average commitment plus 10 years post-commitment). This does not include those who continued in the child welfare field in other agency settings.

---

<sup>22</sup> Jones, L.P. & Okamura, A. (2000). Reprofessionalizing child welfare services: An evaluation of a Title IV-E training program. *Research on Social Work Practice, 10*(2),607-621.

**Figure 20. Long-term Commitment of CWEL Graduates**



The research literature on long-term retention of workers with no legal work commitment clearly shows the importance of agency climate, quality of supervision, intrinsic worker fulfillment, and job satisfaction from appropriate assignments, and personnel policies along with salaries as some of the keys to long-term retention<sup>23</sup>. Unfortunately, there is little that CWEB or CWEL alone can do about any of these important factors. It is critical for the Department, the University, county agencies, and PCYA to work together in implementing strategies to address organizational and workforce issues. Organizational effectiveness interventions provide a structure for defining, assessing, planning, implementing, and monitoring workforce development strategies<sup>24</sup>. While implementation at both the state and county levels is highly political and often difficult, we believe that our longitudinal research on the retention of CWEL students and our expertise in organizational effectiveness can inform this important work. The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) has provided leadership in capacity building among middle managers and supervisors, in particular, as part of an overall change strategy for the child welfare workforce (see <http://www.ncwwi.org>).

The subject of the advantages and disadvantages of full and part-time study continues to surface among the CWEL students. We have made the following points in pervious annual reports

<sup>23</sup> Glisson, C. and Hemmelgarn, A. (1998). The effects of organizational climate and interorganizational coordination on the quality and outcomes of children’s service systems. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 22(5),401-421.

<sup>24</sup> Basso, P., Cahalane, H., Rubin, J., & Kelley, K.J. (2013). Organizational effectiveness strategies for child welfare. In H. Cahalane (Ed.), *Contemporary Issues in Child Welfare Practice* (pp. 257-288). New York: Springer.

and repeat them here. There is no doubt that full-time versus part-time enrollment is one of the areas in which county differences occur, but there is also no doubt from student evaluations and the many years of collective experience the schools have had, that the educational experiences of full-time students are clearly superior. Full-time students have many more opportunities to interact with their academic advisors and other faculty outside of class, more time to network with other students, more time available for academic research, more choice of elective courses, more time to write papers and prepare other assignments, and more options for completing their internships. They can do this with less commuting, less stress from two major work-related responsibilities, less conflict between work schedules (e.g., court appearances) and class schedules, and less time away from their family responsibilities.

The tuition for full-time completion of a degree is also less than for part-time study. Full-time students require only half as much time or less to complete the program. This means a quicker return to full productivity in the agency. Part-time students often take as long as four years to complete, and there is a higher rate of academic disruption (and sometimes program discontinuation) among part-time students compared to full-time students. Three to four years is an extraordinary amount of time for students to be balancing the demands of child welfare work, academic studies, and the other responsibilities in their lives. Our experience over the past 21 years has shown that part-time students are at a higher risk for program discontinuation compared to full-time students.

The agencies' primary concern with full-time study for CWEL students most frequently is whether or not the agency can fill the position while the student is away for full-time study. The counties that have hired replacements have experienced no major difficulties and have been able to do so without any financial cost because of the reimbursement they receive for the salary and benefits of the trainee in school. Schools and students almost unanimously favor the full-time model. Of the withdrawals from the program prior to graduation, seventy-eight percent (78%) were part-time students. Our discussions with these students confirm that the challenges inherent

with part-time study, such as stress and scheduling, were the determining factors. These are serious, costly, and unnecessary losses. Even the most conscientious caseworker and diligent student can manage only a finite number of competing demands for time, attention, and action before something gives way. For most every child welfare professional, the sacrifices most often made are those that are personal, such as advanced education, self-care activities, and other forms of fulfillment.

Another county agency concern with full-time study is the belief that part-time students are likely to have higher retention rates after graduation. There is absolutely no evidence for this contention. By far the greatest number of complaints and the most impassioned concerns from part-time students are that they are not permitted to engage in full-time study. These students are angry, bitter, under pressure from their families, sleepless at night because of their worries over the children in their caseloads, and some express a determination to resign as soon as their commitments are completed. We have witnessed this during the history of the CWEL program and know from our collaborative work with other IV-E programs across the country that high levels of stress among part-time students is a universal phenomenon. We believe that only authorizing part-time study is a shortsighted and counter-productive agency policy.

Part-time study while working full-time is difficult under the even most ideal circumstances. The competing responsibilities of work, home, and school are encountered by all part-time, working students. This reality is compounded for child welfare students by the demands of the job (i.e., court dates, unanticipated emergencies, staff shortages). During the past several years these stressors have continued to be amplified by the national budget crisis. Additionally, the major changes in Pennsylvania's CPSL laws coupled with the implementation of a statewide child welfare information system, and, for some counties, participation in the state's Child Welfare Demonstration Project, overloaded the capacity of the child welfare system.



As a primarily rural state, Pennsylvania has many counties with a low population density. The size of the county agency workforce ranges from 700 to four. Clearly, in smaller counties a reduction of even one individual in full-time study represents a huge loss for the workforce. Full-time study may not be feasible. For part-time enrollment to be viable and more satisfying for participants, both counties and schools need to be flexible with scheduling and provide enhanced supports to assist employees/students in the balancing of multiple responsibilities. This is a necessary workforce investment.

Moreover, administratively, only full-time students may be used by the University in generating the substantial matching funds it contributes to balance the project's budget. The CWEL program began as a largely full-time program. In the 2015-2016 academic year, 41% of the newly admitted students were part-time. This serves to potentially reduce the total number of students who can participate, reduces the federal contribution to the program, and increases the state matching funds required.

Another concern with which all four partners must constantly struggle is differences in policies or requirements. County personnel policies differ in ways such that CWEB and CWEL students in the same classroom with their respective program classmates may be subject to contrasting requirements. Curricular requirements or academic calendars among the schools may differ enough that students from the same county (but not attending the same school) also have contrasting requirements.

The CWEB and CWEL faculty are keenly aware of these differences and seek to assist the other partners in being aware of alternative approaches that might be helpful. But in the final analysis, uniformity is not the goal. These are not seen as fairness issues. As long as the Title IV-E regulations are being followed, the effort has been to allow for local conditions and needs to guide local decision-making. This is true for county agencies and among schools of social work. Workers in some counties are employed under union conditions. Others are not. Small counties

face somewhat different personnel issues than larger ones. Child welfare salaries vary across the state. Counties operate under a range of governance structures (commissioners, mayors, and county executives) that exert a strong influence on policies and procedures for the human services workforce.

College or university calendars may control social work department or school schedules. The number of child welfare students in a given school has an effect on the number of child welfare courses that can be offered. Some schools or departments of social work operate under strict operational policies that are controlled by a centralized university administration that determines which courses can be offered, in what format, and how often they can be placed on the academic calendar. Consequently, students and others who observe some differences are quite correct and refer to a diversity that is neither possible nor desirable to control centrally. It is always the goal of the CWEB and CWEL programs to provide:

1. Easy access to the programs for trainees, counties, and schools;
2. Equitable distribution of resources that assures as many schools and counties have the opportunity to participate as possible;
3. Streamlined administrative procedures and timely reimbursements;
4. Strict observation of Title IV-E regulations;
5. Full disclosure of all aspects of the program's operation among the partners and to the public;
6. As little interference as possible with selection of trainees and implementation models by counties and with schools in their selection and admissions processes;
7. Recognitions of the achievements and contributions of our students;
8. Recommendations for workforce improvement.

Suggestions for quality improvement and our action plan for the CWEL program are summarized on the following pages.

<b>CWEL: Suggested Program Improvement</b>	<b>Action Plan/Progress</b>
Alteration in commitment time for part-time students (suggested by participants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part-time student commitment period is already pro-rated in order to avoid a longer commitment time. Commitment time begins upon graduation. (Because this question is raised periodically, we note it here.)</li> </ul>
Expansion of commitment time for all participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is precluded by federal Title IV-E regulations [45 CFR, Ch. II § 235.63 (b) (1)]</li> </ul>
Increase support to part-time students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County agencies are encouraged to provide flexible scheduling, modified work assignments, and opportunities for field work outside the agency</li> <li>When difficulties arise with a particular student, the county is actively engaged in problem solving and solution-building</li> <li>Enforcement of part-time academic load</li> </ul>
Continued focus upon agency working environment and opportunities for graduates to use their expanded skills and abilities within the agency and at the state level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted intervention with agency supervisors and administrators</li> <li>Ongoing feedback to administrators</li> <li>Ongoing CWERP faculty participation in state and national recruitment, retention, and workforce development</li> <li>CWEL graduate involvement in ongoing organizational effectiveness/CQI processes within counties</li> <li>Inclusion of CWEL graduates in state-wide practice and policy initiatives (i.e., CPSL Amendments, Safety Assessment and Management, Quality Service Reviews, PA Child Welfare Practice Model, organizational effectiveness work, curriculum development and quality assurance committees, developmental screening of young children, IV-E waiver demonstration activities)</li> </ul>
Supervision and mentorship of CWEB program participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CWEL graduates are encouraged to provide supervision and mentoring to CWEB students/graduates at their county agency</li> <li>County agency directors are encouraged to utilize CWEL graduates as field instructors, task supervisors, and mentors to CWEBs</li> </ul>

<p>Permission for students to major in administration or macro practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in a current administrative or managerial position are permitted to pursue an administrative or macro track. Those in direct service positions must focus on direct practice. This policy is in keeping with federal expectation that trainees are being prepared for best practice in that aspect of IV-E services to which they are assigned by the agency</li> <li>• Students may take administration courses as electives; those approved for macro study are encourage to take practice courses</li> </ul>
<p>Increase in full-time student enrollment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counties are encouraged to permit full-time enrollment and hire replacement staff using the reimbursement received for the salary and benefits of the school trainee</li> </ul>
<p>Inclusion of advanced level child welfare coursework in school curricula, particularly in evidence-informed and evidenced-based practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing curricular consultation to schools</li> <li>• Provision of technical assistance</li> <li>• Offering of courses targeted toward effective family engagement and teaming practices, motivational interviewing skills, and enhanced assessment</li> <li>• Inclusion of trauma-informed care principles in child welfare curricula</li> <li>• Continued refinement of child welfare curricula</li> </ul>
<p>Enhance involvement of graduates in state-level policy and practice initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts will continue to be directed toward linking graduates to statewide practice improvement initiatives</li> <li>• PA’s CWDP, legislative and practice changes to CPSL, implementation of Sex Trafficking &amp; prudent parenting legislation, and planning for the upcoming CFSR Round 3 provide significant opportunities for graduates to become involved in high-level activities impacting the child welfare system</li> <li>• Increase and sustain efforts to better integrate the CWEL and CWRC programs</li> </ul>
<p>Increase salary of child welfare workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to advocate at the county, state, and federal level that salaries must be adequate to compensate for the demands and responsibility of public child welfare jobs</li> </ul>

**Recommendations**

We are committed to continuous quality improvement and understand that no successful program is static. Areas for future consideration for both programs are summarized below.

<b>CWEB/CWEL: Recommendation</b>	<b>Background Information and Rationale</b>
Maintain CWEB enrollment number at approximately 85-90	This target appears sufficient at this time. In the event that recruitment efforts increase child welfare interest, demand may surpass capacity.
Maintain CWEL enrollment at approximately 175. Increase minimum agency employment time to two years.	This enrollment target is sufficient at this time. Partnering schools value our child welfare students. On-line course work has offered students more flexible learning forums. Evaluation data has shown that increased tenure at admission is related to retention among graduates of CWEL.
Consideration of CWEL participation by Department employees, i.e., DHS Regional Office employees, Child Line employees, perhaps others	OCYF approval granted in 2008. The opportunity for state employees allows additional trainees to benefit from CWEL. This, in turn, benefits our children, families, and communities.
Increase depth of undergraduate child welfare curriculum among schools through the development of a certificate in Child Advocacy Studies in collaboration with the National Child Protection Training Center.	Undergraduates currently complete one child welfare course and a public child welfare internship. The second of three courses in Child Advocacy Studies have been developed in an on-line, hybrid format. Providing these courses across schools will strengthen the child welfare course options for students and also has the benefit of providing an elective option for students outside of social work who receive little, if any, content on child abuse/neglect.

<p>Consideration of an additional component to the CWEL program in order to recruit new employees for the counties. These persons would never have worked in a county CYS before, but would be trained and would have the same length of work commitment as that currently required of CWEL students.</p>	<p>The provision in the federal Title IV-E regulations which permits the training of persons “preparing for [public child welfare] employment”<sup>25</sup> provides this opportunity. A principal advantage is cost savings; the cost to the Department would be the non-federal match. The potential impact on the CWEB program must be carefully considered, however. It is possible that increasing the number of masters-prepared individuals might significantly limit the opportunity for bachelor-level graduates to obtain county employment.</p>
<p>It is recommended that consideration be given to including the fourteen (14) private, accredited undergraduate social work programs in the CWEB consortium.</p>	<p>Many of the schools presently participating in CWEB have small enrollments. If all of the fourteen additional schools chose to participate, met the requirements, and were approved, the potential would be to approximately double enrollment.</p> <p>Although the need among counties for new bachelor-level social work graduates is high, two budgetary challenges complicate what may appear as a relatively simple solution. Many counties have had to freeze vacant positions secondary to state budget issues. Secondly, the cost of expanding the program to additional schools would be borne largely by the Department as the University has little with which to match federal funds in the CWEB program. The two largest line items in the CWEB budget are tuition and fellowship payments, neither of which is subject to indirect costs. Program expansion is an opportunity that does warrant continued discussion and is a question repeatedly asked by non-participating schools.</p>

---

<sup>25</sup> 45 CFR, Ch. II §235.63 (a).

<p>Inclusion of additional graduate degree programs in Pennsylvania as they become accredited.</p>	<p>Increasing the number of schools has allowed for greater student access, reduction in student commuting time, and a reduction in program costs. Several graduate programs have been approved for the CWEL program since its inception, including the University of Pittsburgh’s Bradford campus (2002), Kutztown University (2007), and the joint Millersville-Shippensburg program (2010).</p> <p>Many schools have branch campuses, and an increasing number of these campuses have become options for CWEL students. Access to approved child welfare courses and academic oversight is available at these branch campuses.</p>
<p>Participation by CWEB/CWEL graduates in the implementation of practice changes as a result of major revisions to PA’s child abuse laws.</p>	<p>CWEB and CWEL students remain in an excellent position to support and assume leadership in the judicial and practice changes resulting from amendments to PA’s Child Protective Services Law.</p>
<p>Development of CWEB/CWEL Advisory Network to provide input on emerging program issues.</p>	<p>CWEB/CWEL school partners endorsed the development of an advisory network among school faculty, program graduates, county administrators, and CWERP faculty to provide guidance for the programs. Several faculty have joined the Training Steering Committee of the PA Child Welfare Resource Center.</p>
<p>Incorporation of trauma-informed supervision at the county level.</p>	<p>Current students and graduates speak poignantly about needing supervisory and peer support to manage work-related stress, and of the impact of secondary trauma upon their ability to remain in the field of child welfare. We believe it is critical to address this issue. Revisions to the Supervisor Training Series developed by CWRC have placed increased emphasis on this particular workforce need.</p>

<p>Consideration of a doctoral-level child welfare education option.</p>	<p>This recommendation can provide an additional evaluation arm for the Department and further our mission of establishing evidence-based child welfare practice across the state. CWERP is in an excellent position to facilitate doctoral education. A reasonable objective over time might be one (1) doctoral student in each of the five (5) schools with a doctoral program. Work commitment issues require detailed discussion among all parties.</p>
<p>Transition support and ongoing connection among CWEB and CWEL graduates.</p>	<p>All graduates benefit from ongoing connection and support, and coaching is particularly important for CWEB graduates who are new to public child welfare. Additionally, portfolio and resume development is essential. Transition back to the county agency is a distinct issue among CWEL graduates, and is most problematic for those who have been full-time students. Increased attention has been paid to preparing these students for their return to the agency. Greater network support and participation in transition groups for returning students are helpful strategies. All graduates are encouraged to join special workforce or task groups through the PA Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC). Practice Improvement Specialists from CWRC are assigned to counties throughout the state and actively engage with CWEB/CWEL graduates to provide support and enlist them in practice initiatives. Graduates are able to share their expertise on a statewide level by becoming trainers for CWRC.</p>



<p>Reimbursement to counties for 100% of the salaries of full-time students and for fringe benefits at the same level that the Department currently reimburses counties.</p>	<p>When the CWEL program was initiated, it was decided to reimburse counties for only 95% of full-time students' salaries. It was hypothesized that counties would pass the 5% reduction along to students and this amount in aggregate would be used as part of the non-federal matching funds required under IV-E regulations. However, this approach was quickly abandoned. First, it became evident that federal authorities would classify contributions as "private funds" which are prohibited except under very obtuse rules this approach could not meet. Secondly, a number of counties continued to pay the workers their full salaries even though the counties were reimbursed as only the 95% level. Adding to this is the burden of the very low salaries that so many CWEL students earn. Those students with families find the 5% salary reduction very difficult to endure.</p>
--	---

**Conclusions**

The faculty and staff of the CWEB and CWEL programs sincerely believe the Department and the counties can rightfully be proud of the continued achievements of our child welfare education programs. Pennsylvania is a leader in workforce development and is fortunate to have an integrated education, training, and practice improvement continuum of programs dedicated to the child welfare system. While we are gratified to be part of this remarkable venture and partnership, we sincerely acknowledge that the contributions of many others are what guide, shape, and sustain these highly acclaimed programs.

The county children and youth service administrators have been unfailingly responsive as individuals, and through their organization, the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators. The Department of Human Services has continued to strongly endorse the CWEB and CWEL programs. We especially thank Ted Dallas, Secretary of the Department of Human Services, and Cathy Utz, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Children, Youth, and Families, for their strong support and partnership. We also thank our OCYF Program Monitor, Desiree Weisser, for her

thoughtful oversight and steadfast support of our work. We also thank Lorrie Deck and Cindi Horshaw of the OCYF Bureau of Policy, Programs and Operations.

Our academic partners have made major contributions to the success of our programs and that of our students. Admissions, registrations, invoices, graduations, academic schedules, course listings, internships, and dozens of other details must be coordinated and carefully attended. The State System of Higher Education has enabled the ten state universities with accredited undergraduate social work programs to become members of the consortium. The United States Children's Bureau, and especially its Region III office in Philadelphia, has continued its strong support, not least of which is extensive funding of both the CWEB and CWEL programs.

We are proud that the CWEB and CWEL education programs have been recognized as key strengths in Pennsylvania during both rounds of the federal Child and Family Services Review. We anticipate no less in Round 3 of the CFSR. Our graduates have assumed leadership roles in practice initiatives throughout the state and actively contribute to shaping the future of child welfare services on the local, state, and national level. Graduates are providing direct service, serving as managers and supervisors, mentoring junior colleagues, contributing to training curricula, conducting quality improvement initiatives, participating in child fatality/near fatality reviews, and working as child welfare trainers and/or consultants. We are proud that an increasing number of our child welfare graduates have assumed teaching roles in Schools of Social Work throughout the state of Pennsylvania, many as adjunct professors, others as part-time clinical faculty, and some as Directors of Social Work programs.

Finally, no amount of contracts, agreements, budgets, reports, curricula, faculty or any other of the myriad of academic and administrative components of this project could produce a successful outcome without exceptional students. The vast majority of the CWEB and CWEL students selected to participate in these programs have been exceptional achievers academically, as well as leaders among their peers. They have distinguished themselves through their dedication

to working with society's most vulnerable children and families, and in circumstances that involve daily exposure to upsetting situations and overwhelming crises. As always, we salute them with sincere admiration. The students' investments, risks, energy, vision, and contributions to the child welfare system are more responsible than anything else for the continued success of the CWEB and CWEL programs in the final analysis.



## Appendices

- A. [Table I: Participating School Programs](#)
- B. [CWEB and CWEL School Participation Map](#)
- C. [Table II: University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Courses, 2014-2015](#)
- D. [Table III: Undergraduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of Approved CWEB Schools, 2014-2015](#)
- E. [Table IV: Graduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of Approved CWEL Schools, 2014-2015](#)
- F. [CWEB County Participation Map](#)
- G. [CWEB Overview: 2001-2015](#)
- H. [CWEB Leadership Series](#)
- I. [CWEL Overview: 1995-2015](#)
- J. [CWEL Applicant Pool and Admissions: 1995-2015 Academic Years](#)
- K. [Program Evaluation Data Tables](#)
- L. [List of Supplemental CWEB and CWEL Materials Available On-Line](#)
- M. [Child Welfare Research Sampler](#)
- N. [Child Welfare Education and Research Programs Faculty and Staff](#)



# Appendix A

Table I Participating School Programs

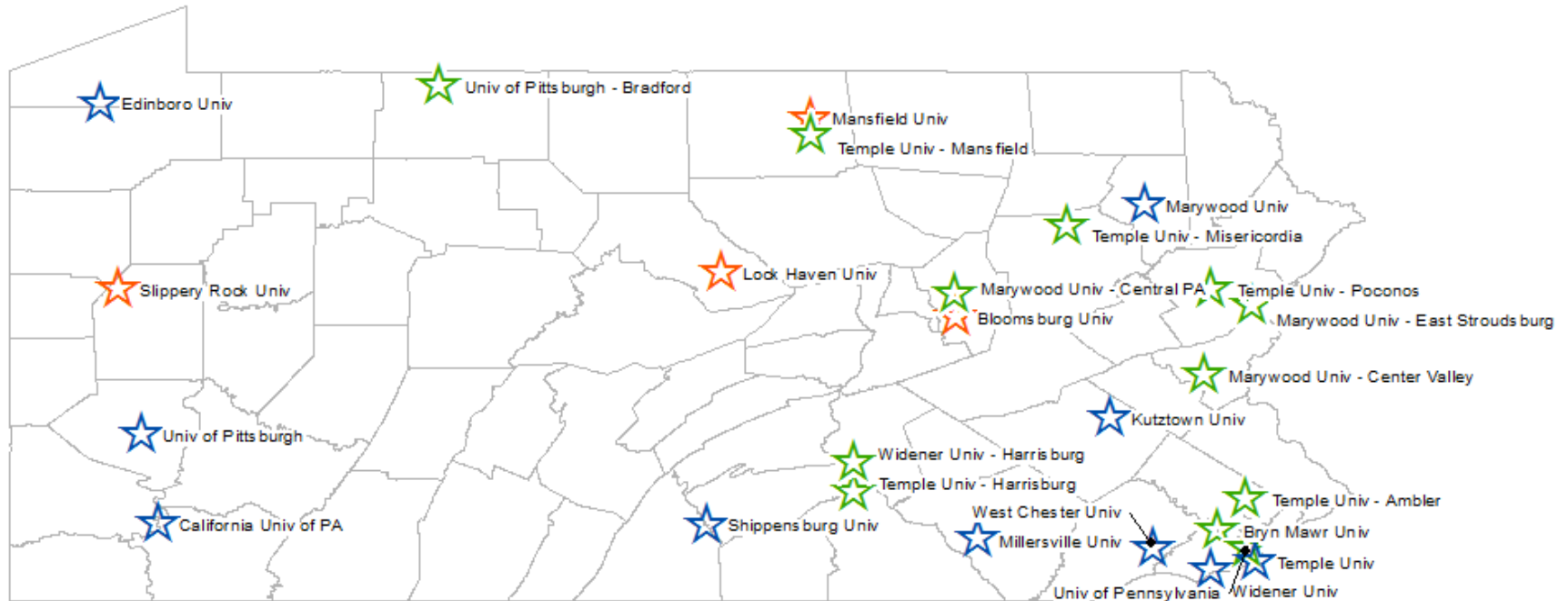
**Table I**  
**Participating School Programs**

School	MSACS	CSWE	CWEB Only	CWEB/CWEL	CWEL Only	Entry into Program
Bloomsburg University	2024	BSW 2016	X			2001
Bryn Mawr College	2015	MSW 2016			X	1995
California University	2015	BSW 2018 MSW 2018		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 2004
Edinboro University	2020	BSW 2021 MSW 2017		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 2006
Kutztown University	2023	BSW 2018 MSW 2018		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 2007
Lock Haven University	2016	BSW 2016	X			2001
Mansfield University	2017	BSW 2022	X			2001
Marywood University	2021	BSW 2016 MSW 2016		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 1995
Millersville University	2015	BSW 2019 MSW 2022		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 2010
Shippensburg University	2024	BSW 2018 MSW 2022		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 2010
Slippery Rock University	2016	BSW 2022	X			2001
Temple University	2015	BSW 2023 MSW 2023		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 1995
University of Pennsylvania	2019	MSW 2017			X	1995
University of Pittsburgh	2017	BSW 2020 MSW 2020		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 1995
West Chester University	2016	BSW 2019 MSW 2021		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 2001
Widener University	2022	BSW 2021 MSW 2021		X		CWEB 2001 CWEL 1995

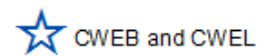
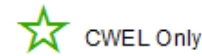
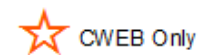
# **Appendix B**

## **CWEB and CWEL School Participation Map**

# Child Welfare Education and Research Programs Participating Schools



## School Program



CWEB Only    CWEL Only    CWEB and CWEL



# Appendix C

## Table II

University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Courses  
2015-2016

**Table II**

**University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Courses**

**Fall Term 2015**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
Children and Families at Risk	25
Child and Family Advocacy	15
Child and Family Policy	17
Child Welfare Services	13
Direct Practice with Children	15
Family Conferencing and Teaming	9
Intimate Partner Violence	20
Issues in Child Maltreatment	9
Social Work with Drug & Alcohol Abuse (two sections)	47

**Spring Term 2016**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
Children and Families at Risk (two sections)	47
Child and Family Policy (three sections)	57
Child Welfare Services	26
Clinical Social Work With African-American Families	14
Social Work with Drug & Alcohol Abuse	25
Social Work Practice with Families	25
Social Work and Traumatic Stress	25

**Summer Term 2016**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
Children and Families at Risk	9
Social Work and Drug & Alcohol Abuse	22
Social Work Practice with Families	18

# Appendix D

## Table III

Undergraduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of  
Approved CWEB Schools  
2015-2016

**Table III**  
**Undergraduate Child Welfare Course Offerings**  
**Of**  
**Approved CWEB Schools for 2015-2016**

School	Course Title
Bloomsburg University	Child Welfare
California University	Child Welfare
Edinboro University	Child Welfare
Kutztown University	Child Welfare and Social Work Practice
Lock Haven University	Child Welfare
Mansfield University	Child Welfare
Marywood University	Child Welfare Practice and Services
Millersville University	Social Work and Child Welfare
Shippensburg University	Introduction to Child Welfare
Slippery Rock University	Introduction to Child Welfare
Temple University	Child Welfare Policy
University of Pittsburgh	Child Welfare Services <sup>26</sup>
West Chester University	Child Welfare Practice and Policy
Widener University	Families at Risk

---

<sup>26</sup> In addition to the undergraduate course, *Child Welfare Services*, University of Pittsburgh undergraduate students are able to register for the graduate courses *Child and Family Advocacy*, *Child and Family Policy*, and *Children and Families at Risk* (shown in Table II, [Appendix C](#)) as electives, with the permission of the BASW Program Director and the students' academic advisor.

# Appendix E

## Table IV

Graduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of Approved  
CWEL Schools  
2015-2016

**Table IV**

**Graduate Child Welfare Course Offerings of Approved CWEL Schools for 2015-2016**

**(University of Pittsburgh is shown in Table II)**

<b>School</b>	<b>Course Title</b>
<b>Bryn Mawr College, Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research</b>	Child Welfare Policy, Practice and Research
	Clinical Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents
	Clinical Social Work and Substance Abuse
	Clinical Social Work and Trauma
	Family Therapy: Theory and Practice
	Child & Family Integrative Seminar
<b>California University, Department of Social Work and Gerontology</b>	Practice with Children and Youth in Rural and Small Town Environments
	Social Work with Substance Abuse/Addictions
	Advanced Practice in Child Welfare
<b>Edinboro University, Department of Social Work</b>	Clinical Practice for Families and Children in Child Welfare
	Addictions
<b>Kutztown University, Department of Social Work</b>	Interventions with Substance Abusing Populations
	Maltreatment in the Family
	Child Permanence
	Practice of Family Group Decision Making
	Social Work Crisis Intervention with Families
<b>Marywood University, School of Social Work*</b>	Critical Issues in Chemical Dependence
	Child Welfare Services
	Family Focused Social Work Practice
	Social Work Perspectives on Trauma
	Social Work Practice with Children
<b>Millersville/Shippensburg Universities, Department of Social work/Department of Social Work and Gerontology</b>	Child Welfare
	Children and Youth at Risk
	Addictions
	Advanced Behavioral Healthcare

School	Course Title
<b>The University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Work</b>	Under review: Mental Health Challenges in Childhood & Adolescents.
	Middle Childhood and Adolescence
	Policies for Children and Their Families
	Poverty, Welfare, and Work
	Practice with Families
	Practice with At-Risk Youth
	Prenatal and Early Childhood Development
	Practice with Children and Adolescents
	Substance Abuse Interventions
	Violence in Relationships through the Lifespan
	Clinical & Macro CW Practice
	Integrative Seminar in CW
<b>Temple University, School of Social Administration</b>	Alcohol and Substance Abuse
	Assessment and the DSM-IV
	Child and Family Human Behavior in the Social Environment
	Child and Family Policy
	Emotional Disorders of Children and Adolescents
<b>West Chester University, Graduate Department of Social Work</b>	Advanced Social Work Practice with Families
	Child Welfare: A Resilience and Trauma-Informed Approach
	Substance Use Disorders
<b>Widener University, Center for Social Work Education</b>	Advanced Social Work Practice with Families
	Biographical Timeline
	Child Welfare: Practice and Policy
	Social Work Practice with Addicted Persons and Their Families
	Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents
	Social Work with Urban Youth
	Treating Trauma
	Children & Families at Risk

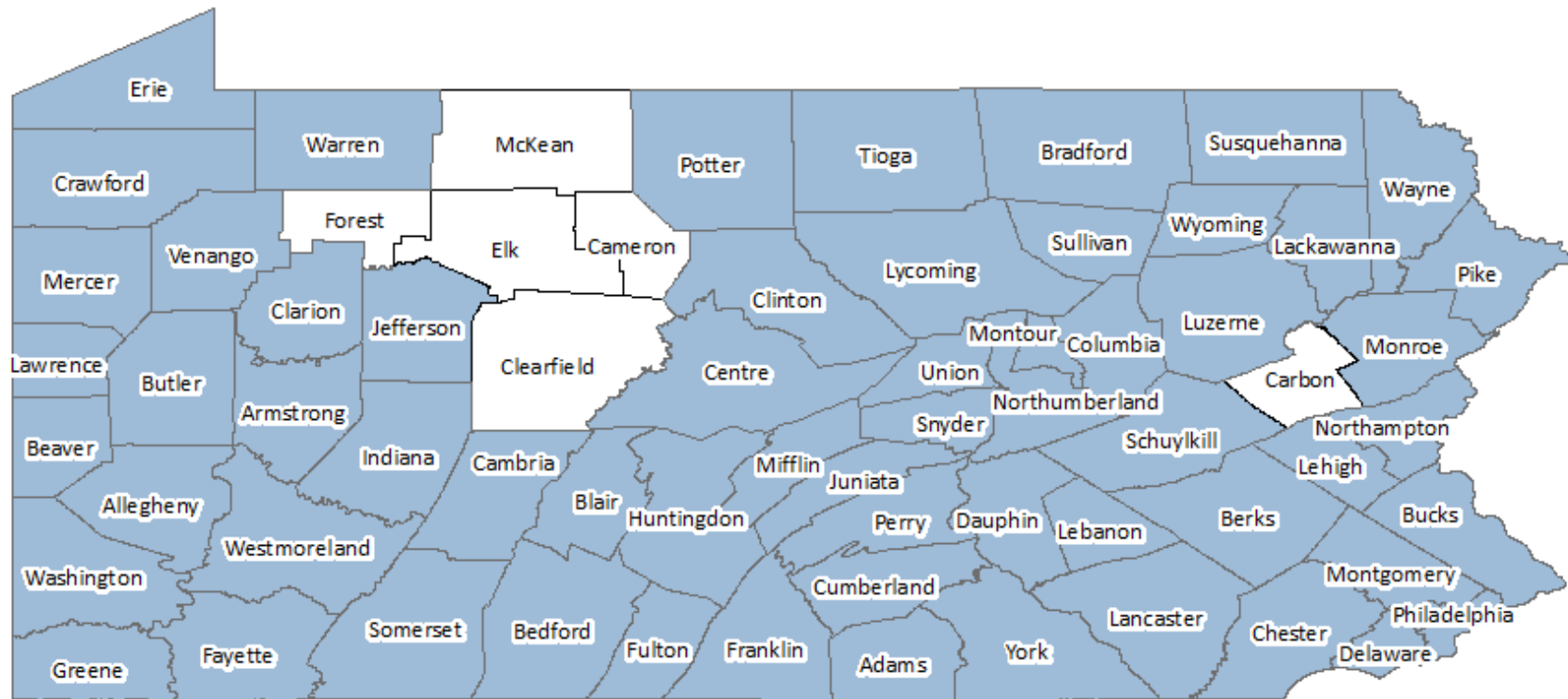
\*Advanced standing students attending Marywood University must take an additional course beyond that's required for the MSW in order to meet the child welfare course requirements.

# **Appendix F**

CWEB County Participation Map



**Counties Providing Student Internships and/or Employment for  
Graduates of the Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates Program  
2001-2016**



Includes history from beginning of CWEB program through Summer 2016

Modified: 11/1/2016

- CWEB Internship and/or Employment History
- No CWEB Internship or Employment History

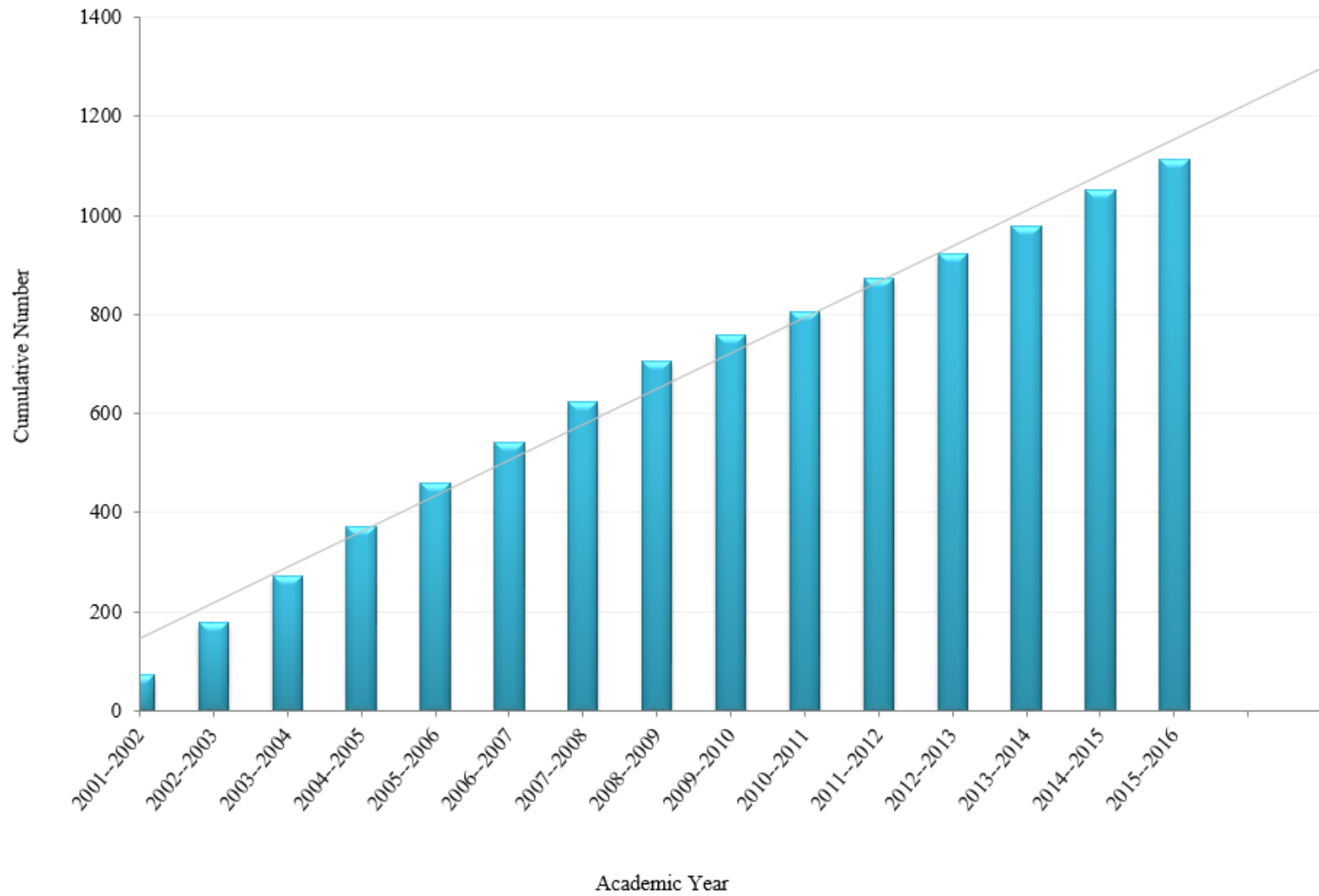
# Appendix G

CWEB Overview

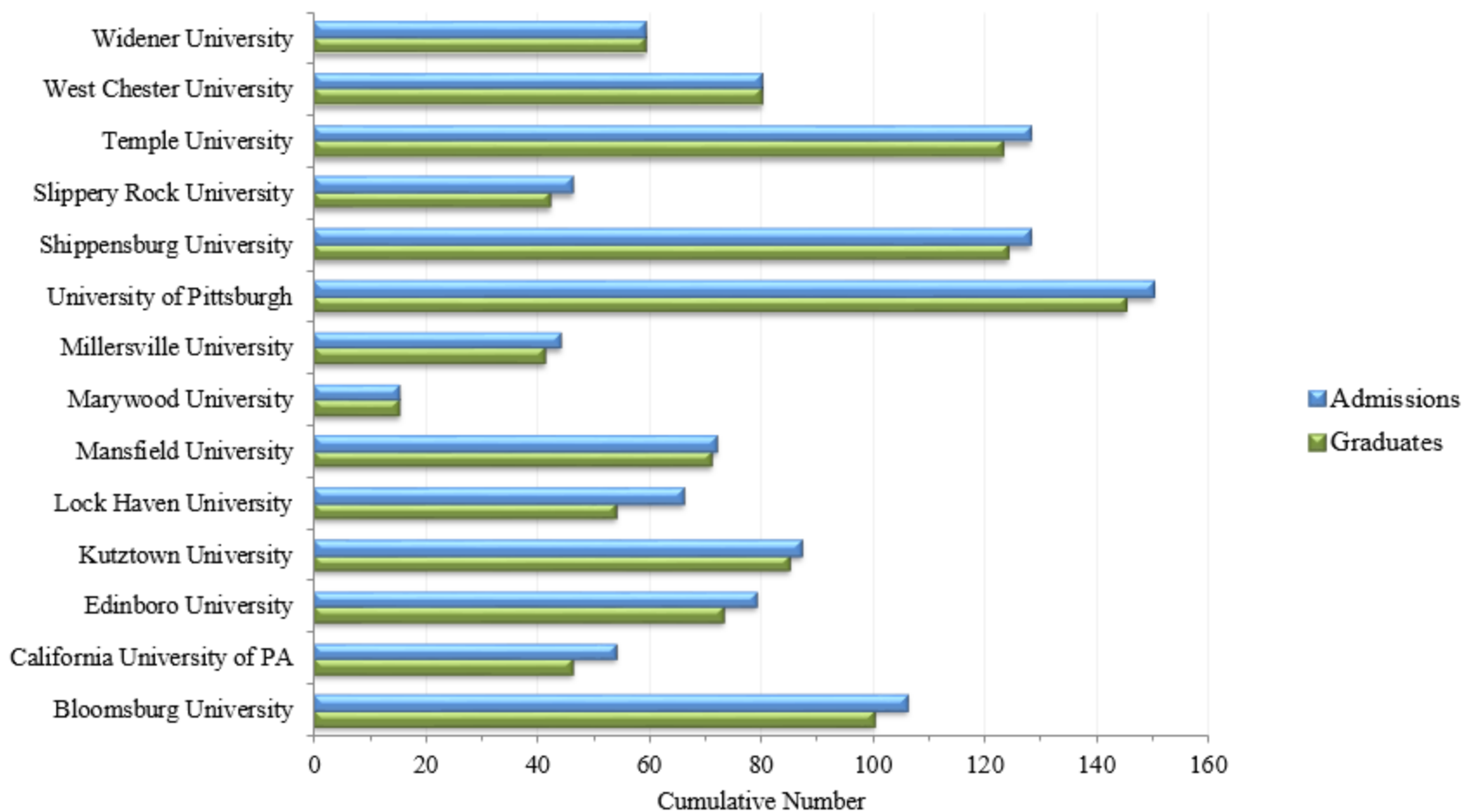
2001-2016

Charts 1-6

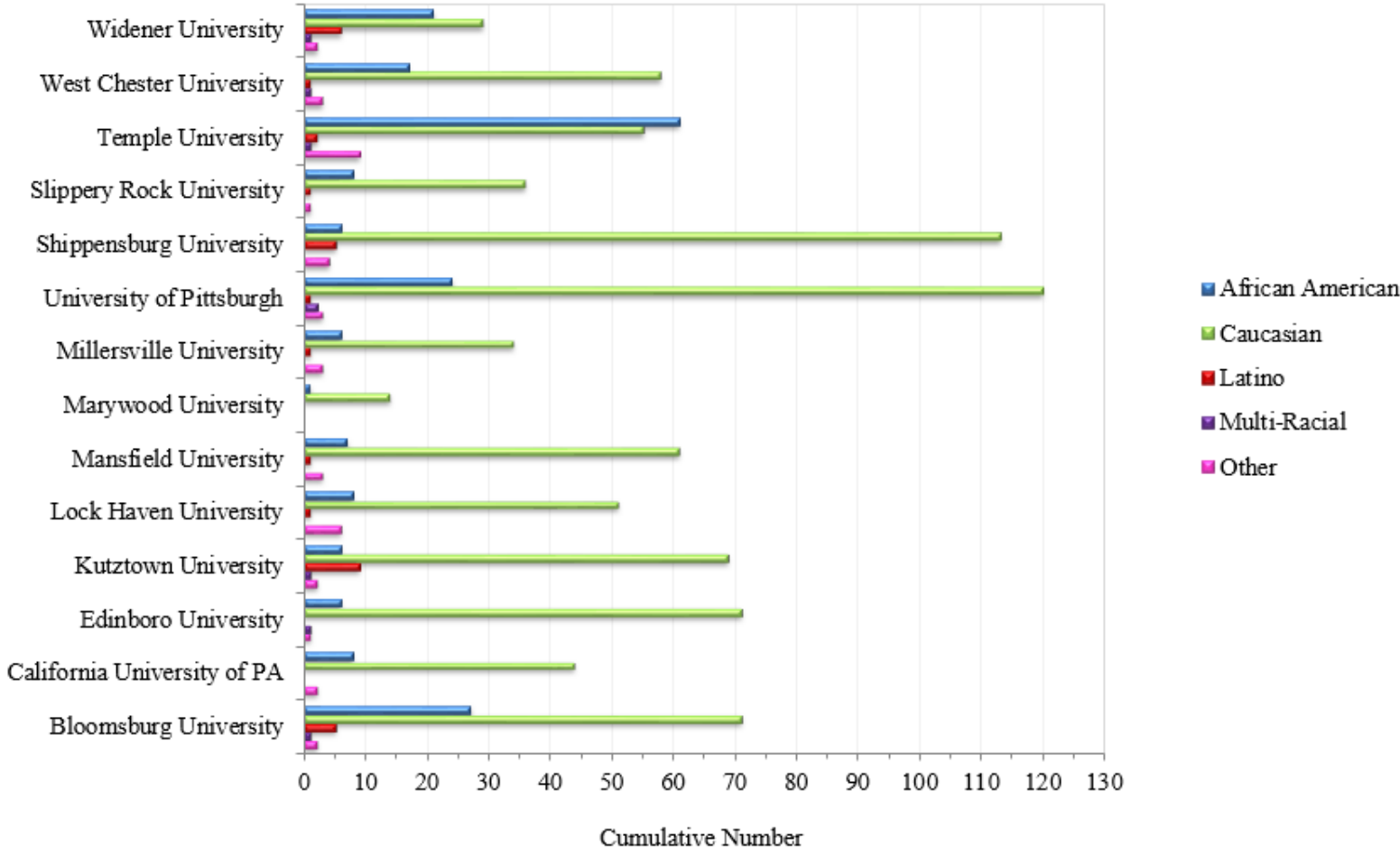
**Chart 1**  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates**  
**2001-2016 New Admissions (Projected Through 2018)**



**Chart 2**  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates**  
**2001-2016**  
**Student Admissions & Graduations**

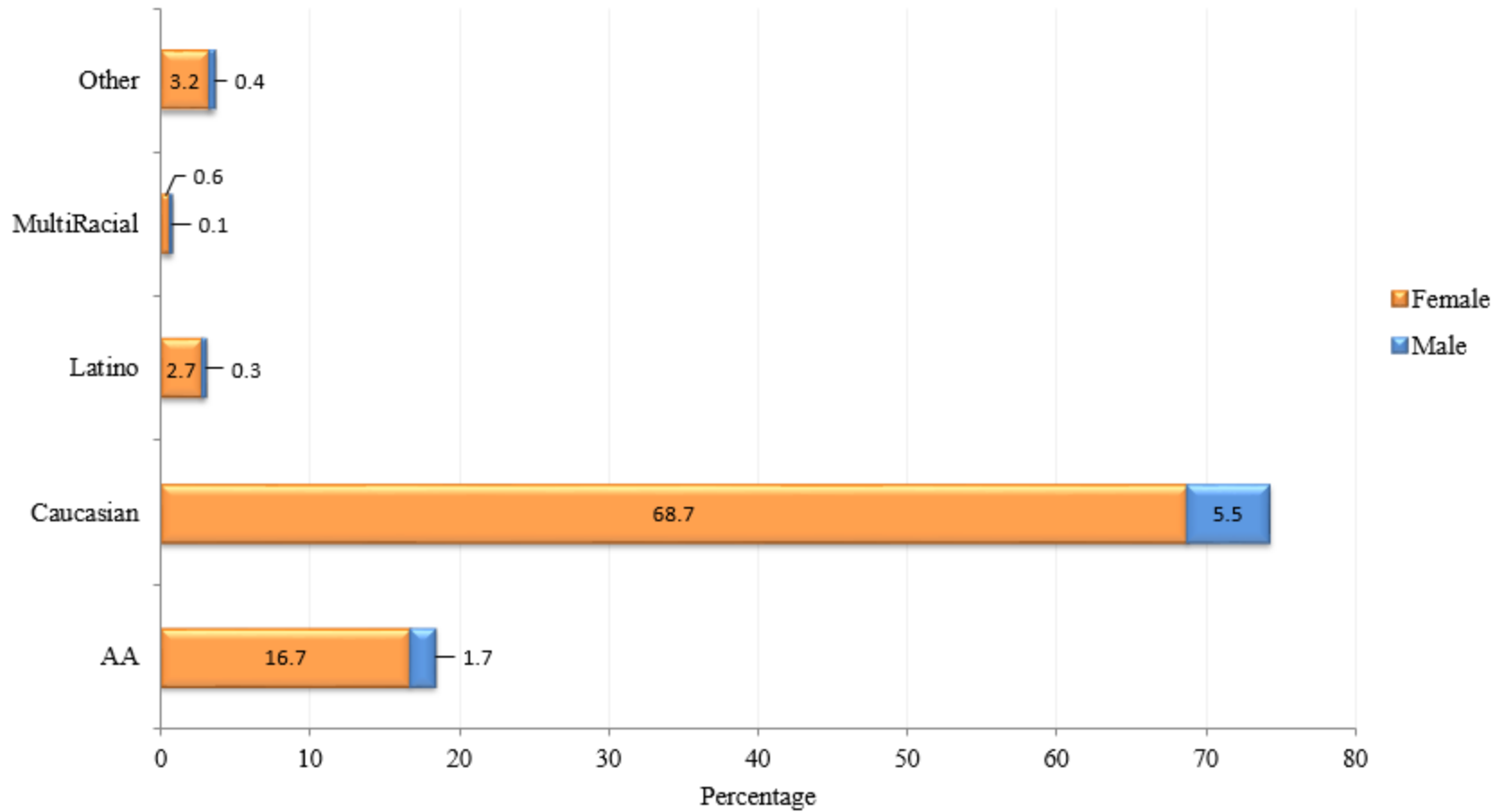


**Chart 3**  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates**  
**2001-2016 Admissions by School and Ethnicity**

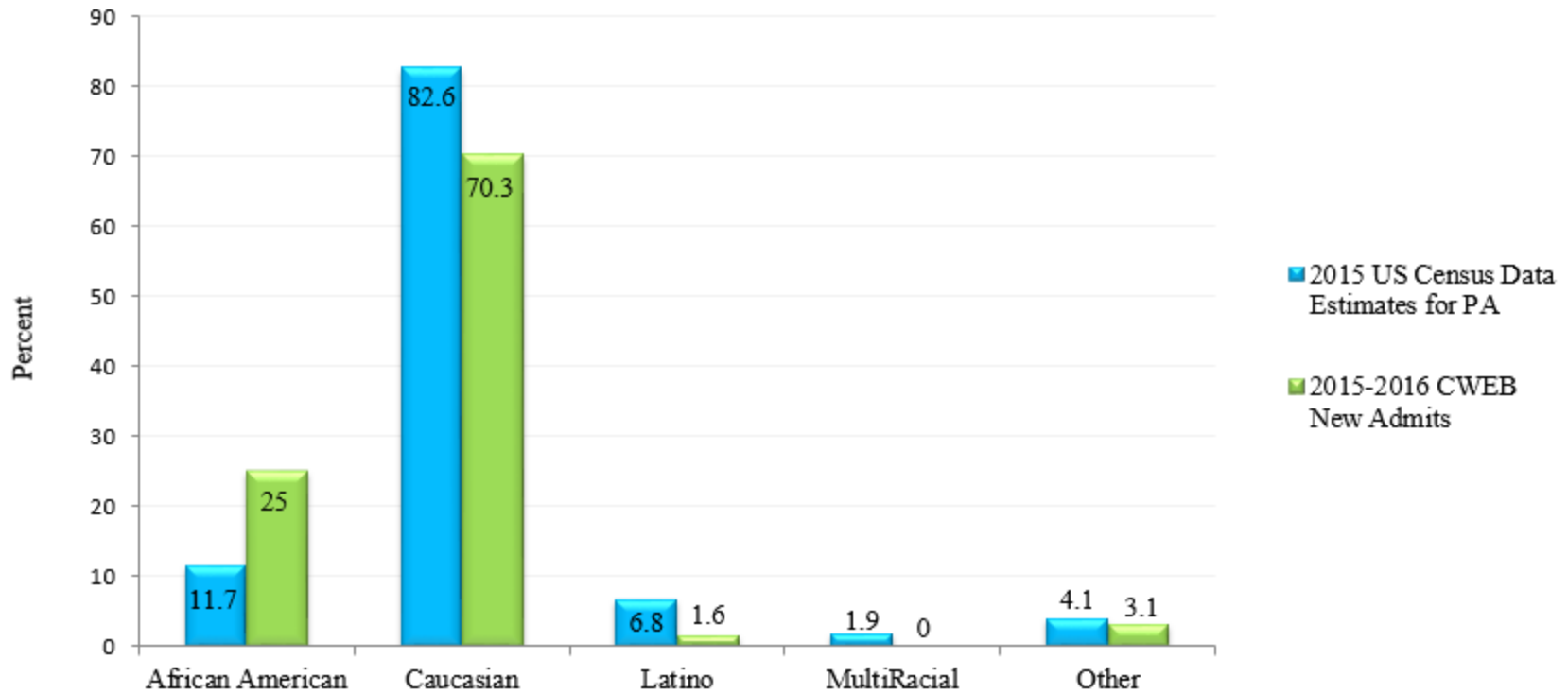


Note: Latino category includes Hispanics of any race

**Chart 4**  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates**  
**2001-2016 Admission Demographics**

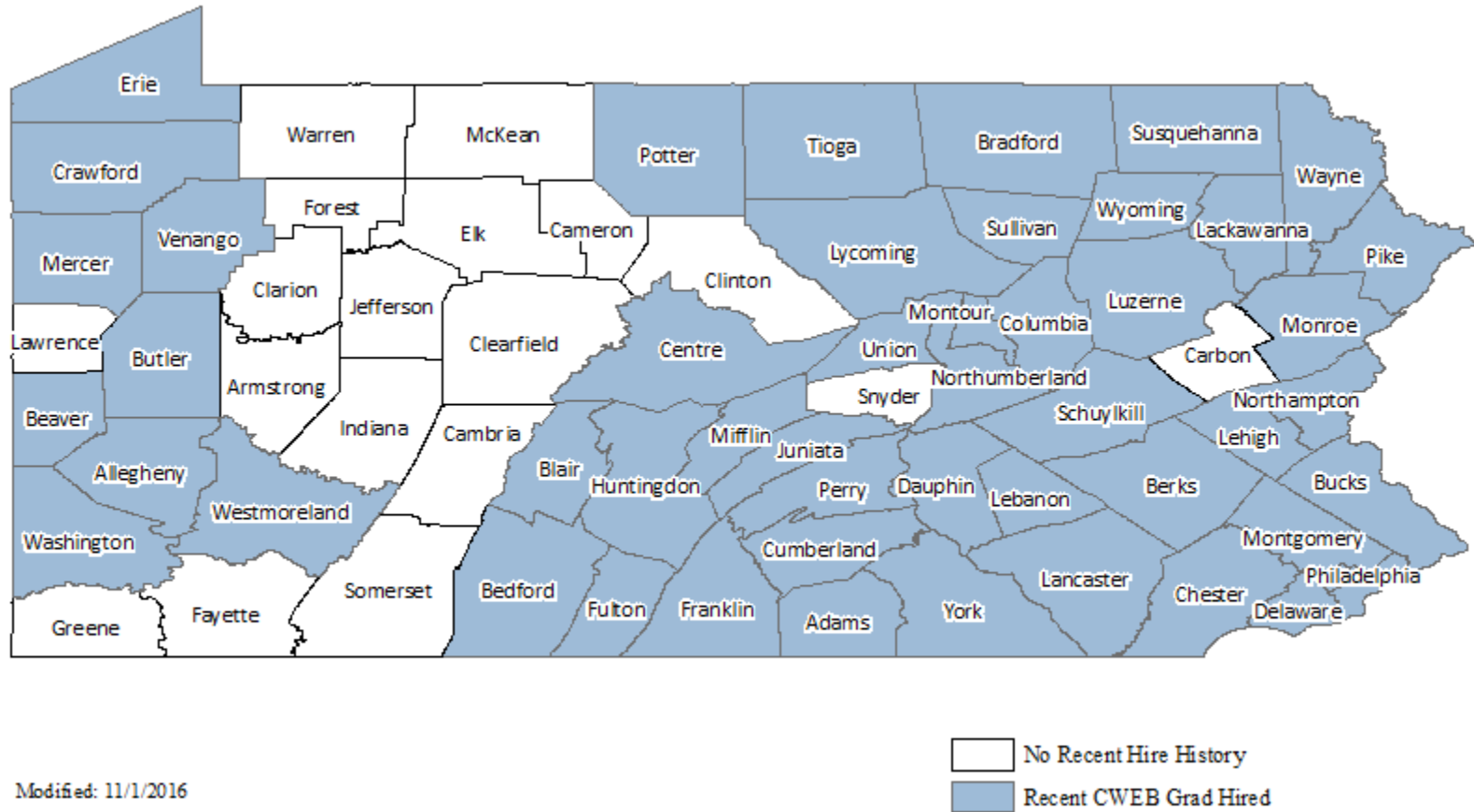


**Chart 5**  
**Ethnicity Comparison**  
**2015 US Census Data Estimates for Pennsylvania and**  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates 2015-2016 New Admissions**



Note: Latino category includes Hispanics of any race.

**Chart 6**  
**Recent CWEB County Employment**  
**Employment for Graduates- Summer 2011 thru Summer 2016**





# **Appendix H**

CWEB Leadership Development Series

**CWEB Leadership Development Series:**  
***Trauma-Informed Principled Leadership***

A series of educational modules incorporating the five practices of exemplary leadership defined by Kouzes & Posner<sup>27</sup> are combined with the application of trauma education, self-care, and cultural competence skills to provide CWEB students with a model of professional development that supplements traditional, classroom-based instruction and transfer of learning in the field. Educational modules are completed in five monthly sessions that include readings, videos, discussion blogs, experiential exercises, and discussion groups.

Module I	Introduction to Trauma-Informed Leadership: Model the Way
Module II	Inspire a Shared Vision
Module III	Challenge the Process
Module IV	Enable Others to Act: Experiential Exercise
Module V	Encourage the Heart

---

<sup>27</sup> Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2012). *The leadership challenge: How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Wiley.  
Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2012). *The leadership challenge workbook* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Wiley.

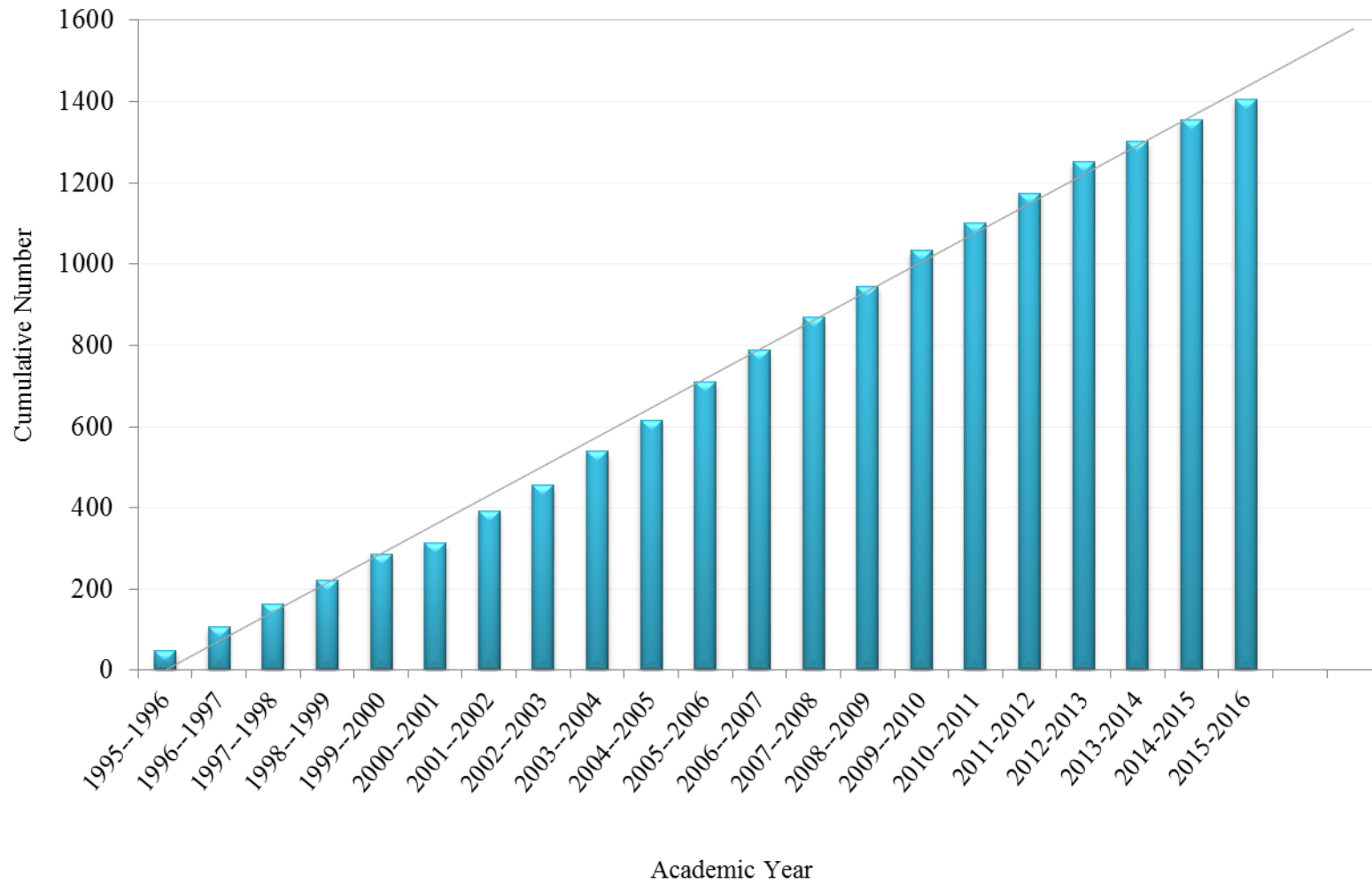
# **Appendix I**

CWEL Overview

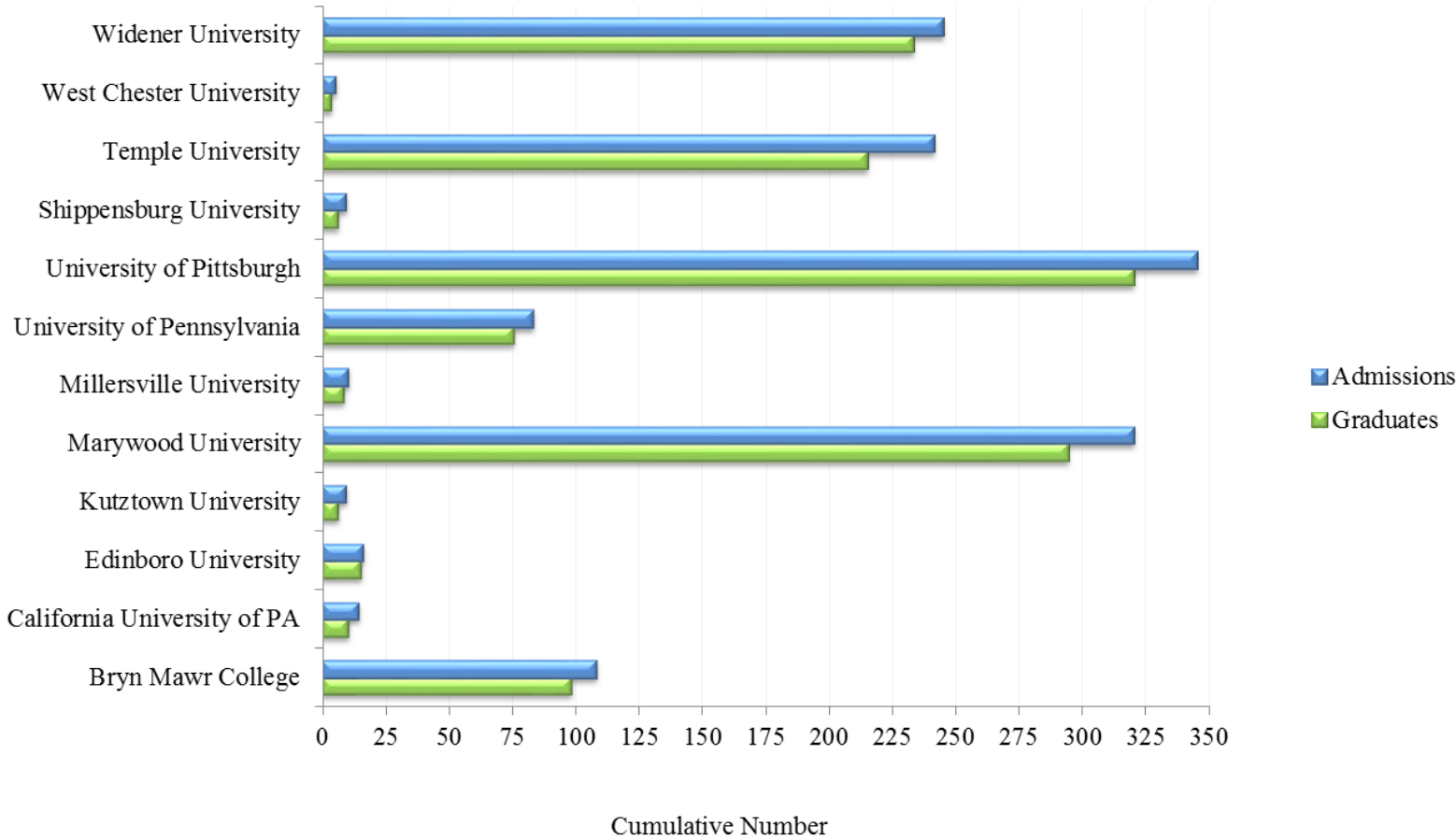
1995-2016

Charts 1-8

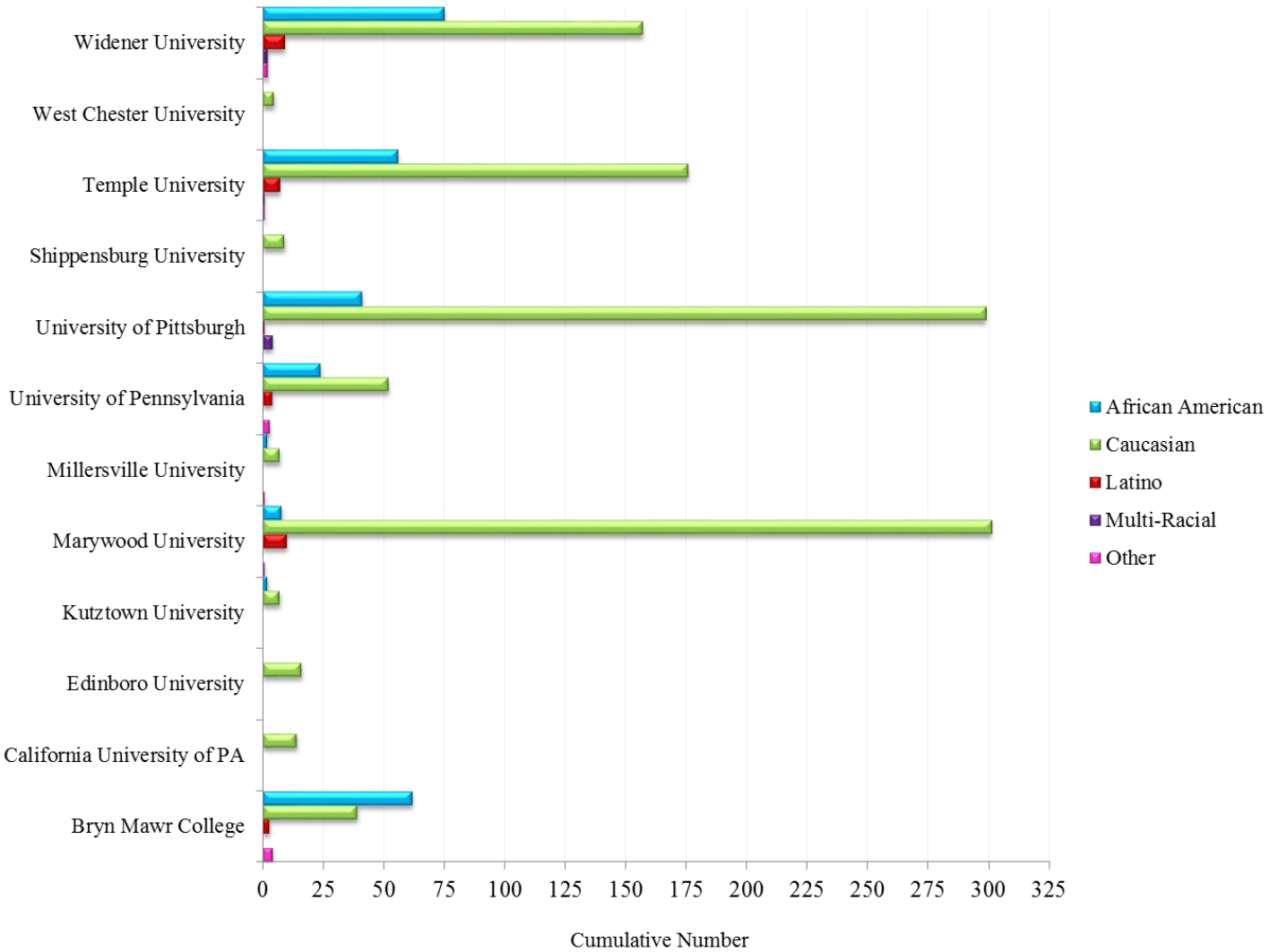
**Chart I**  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership**  
**1995-2016 New Admissions (Projected Through 2018)**



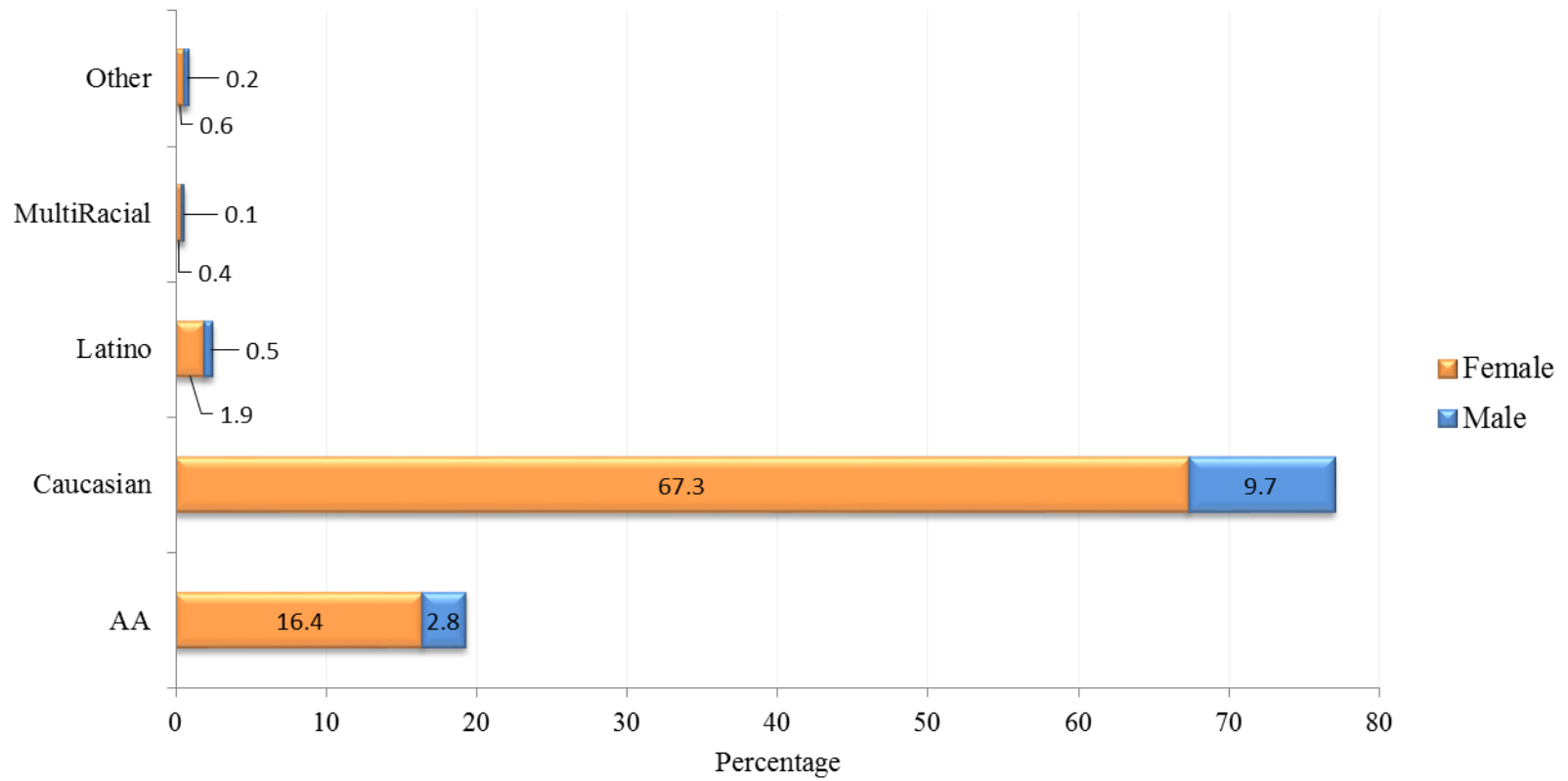
**Chart 2**  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership**  
**1995 - 2016**  
**Student Admissions and Graduations**



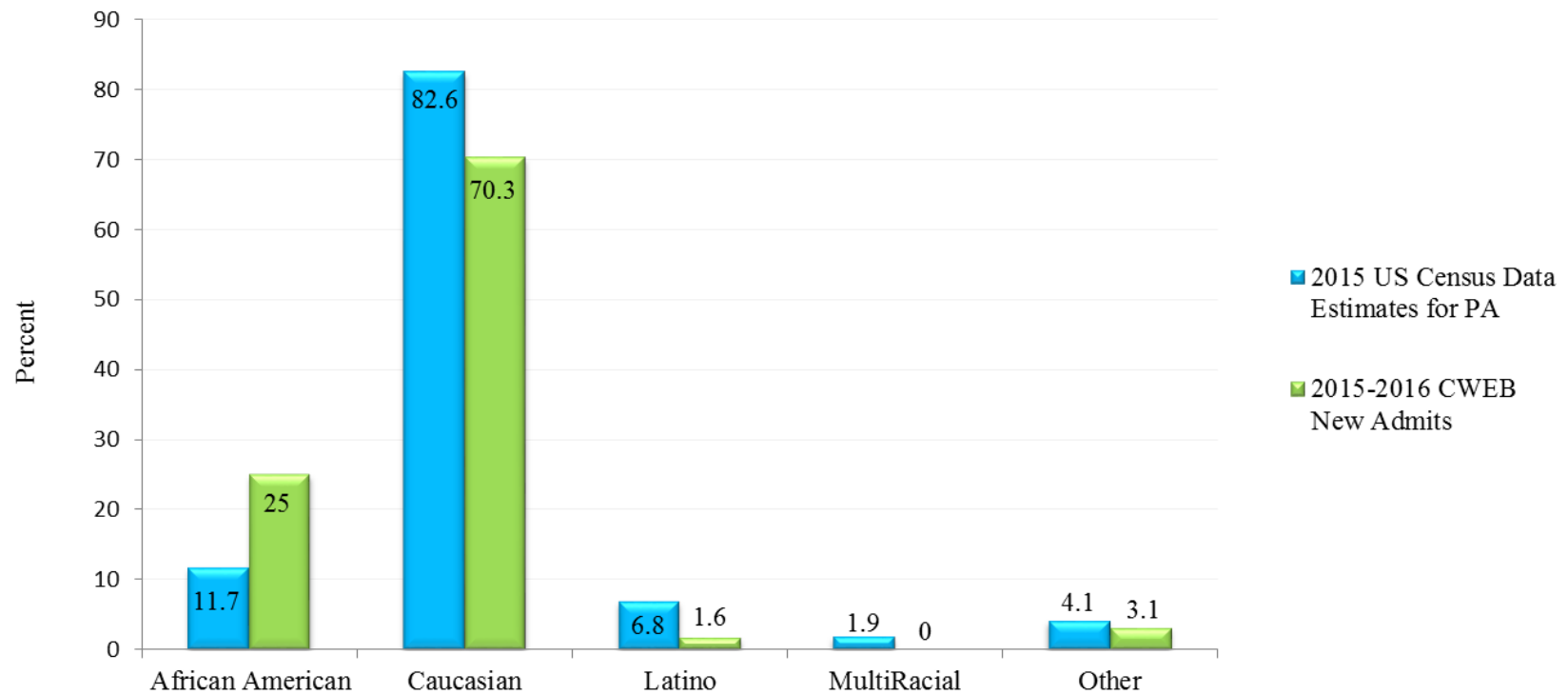
**Chart 3**  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership**  
**1995-2016 Admissions by School and Ethnicity**



**Chart 4**  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership**  
**1995-2016 Admission Demographics**



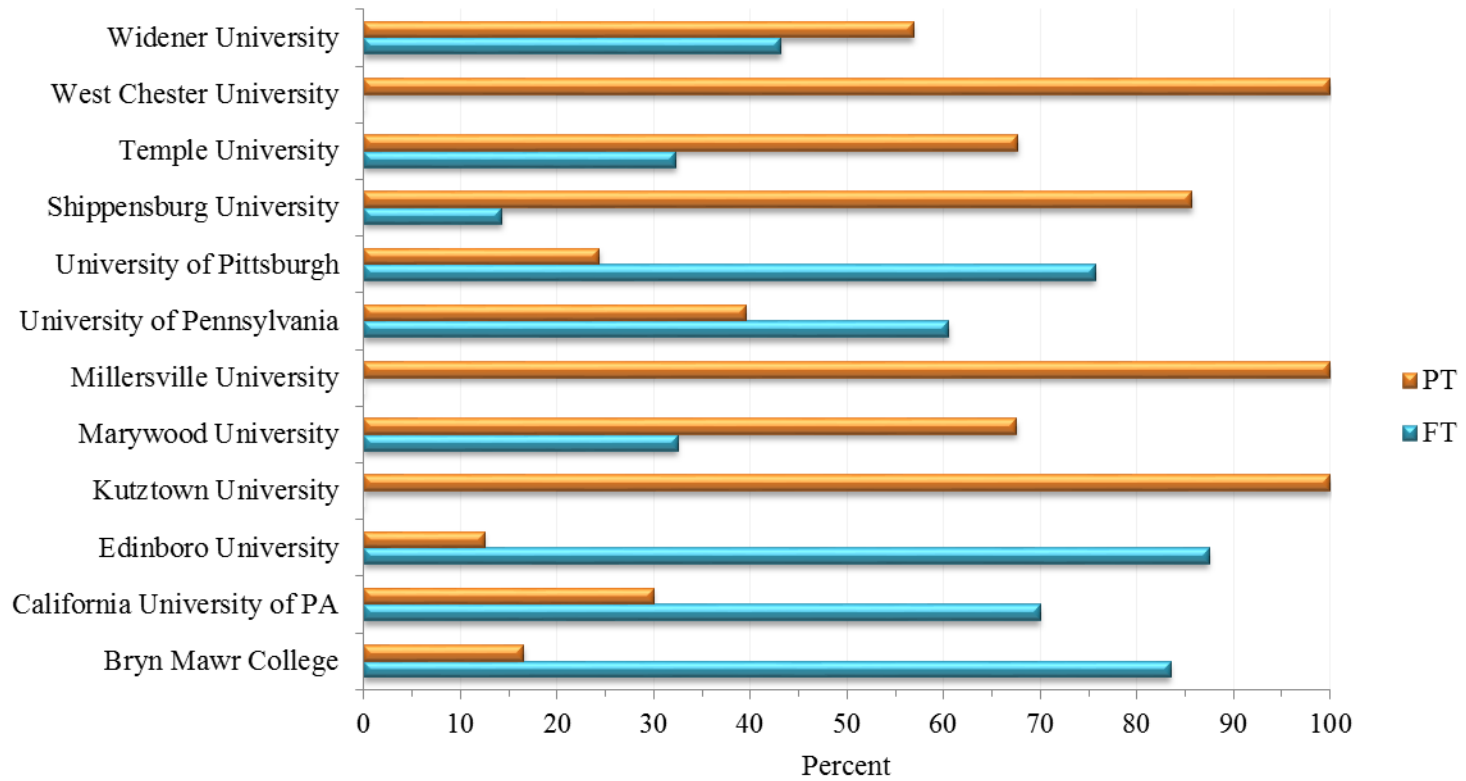
**Chart 5**  
**Ethnicity Comparison**  
**2015 US Census Data Estimates for Pennsylvania and**  
**Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates 2015-2016 New Admissions**



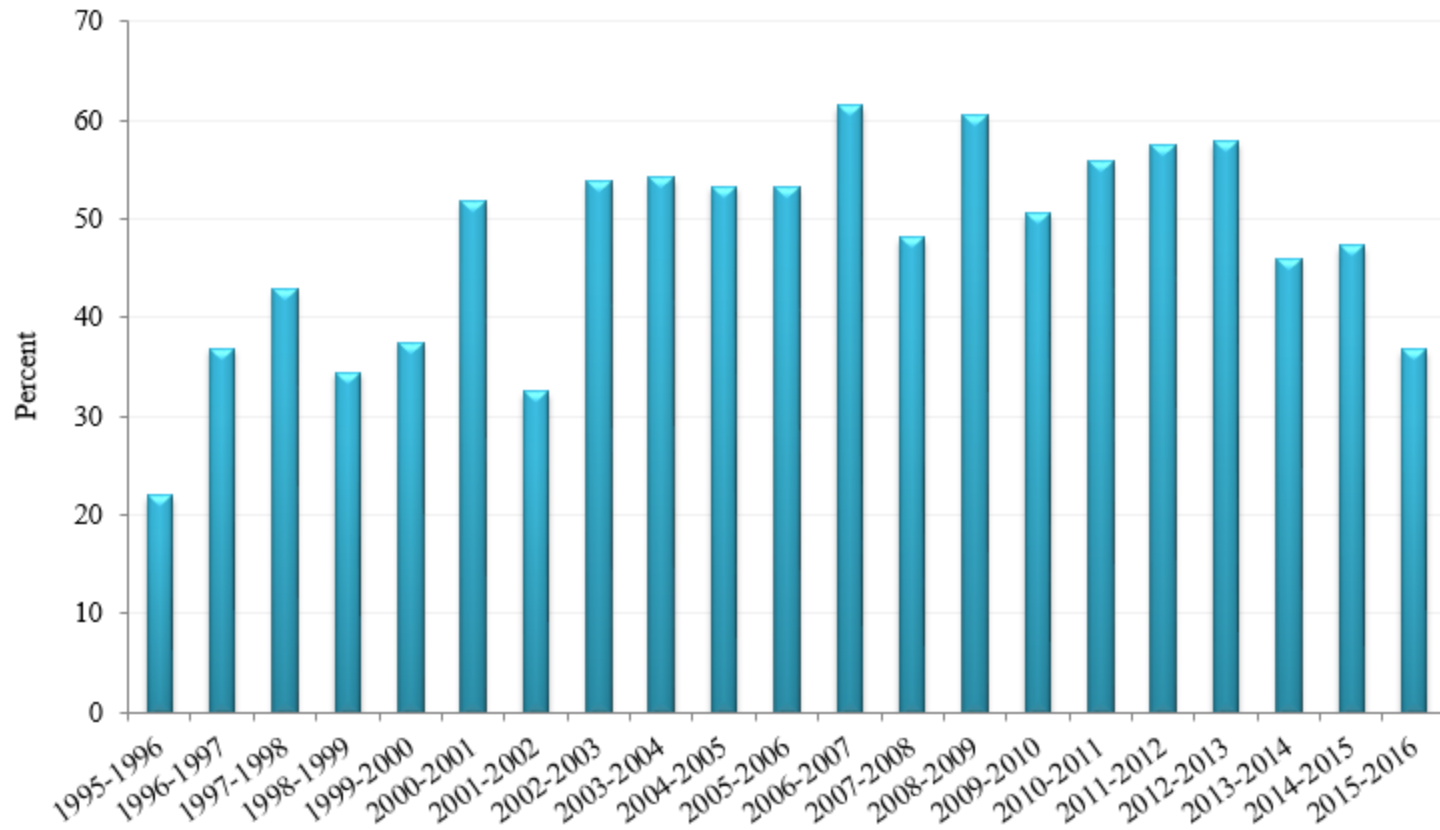
Note: Latino category includes Hispanics of any race



**Chart 6**  
**Child Welfare for Leadership**  
**1995-2016 Admissions**  
**by School and Full-time/Part-time Status**



**Chart 7**  
**Child Welfare for Leadership**  
**1995-2016 Admissions**  
**Part-Time Trend**





# **Appendix J**

CWEL Applicant Pool and  
Admissions by Position and Years of Service  
1995-2017 Academic Years

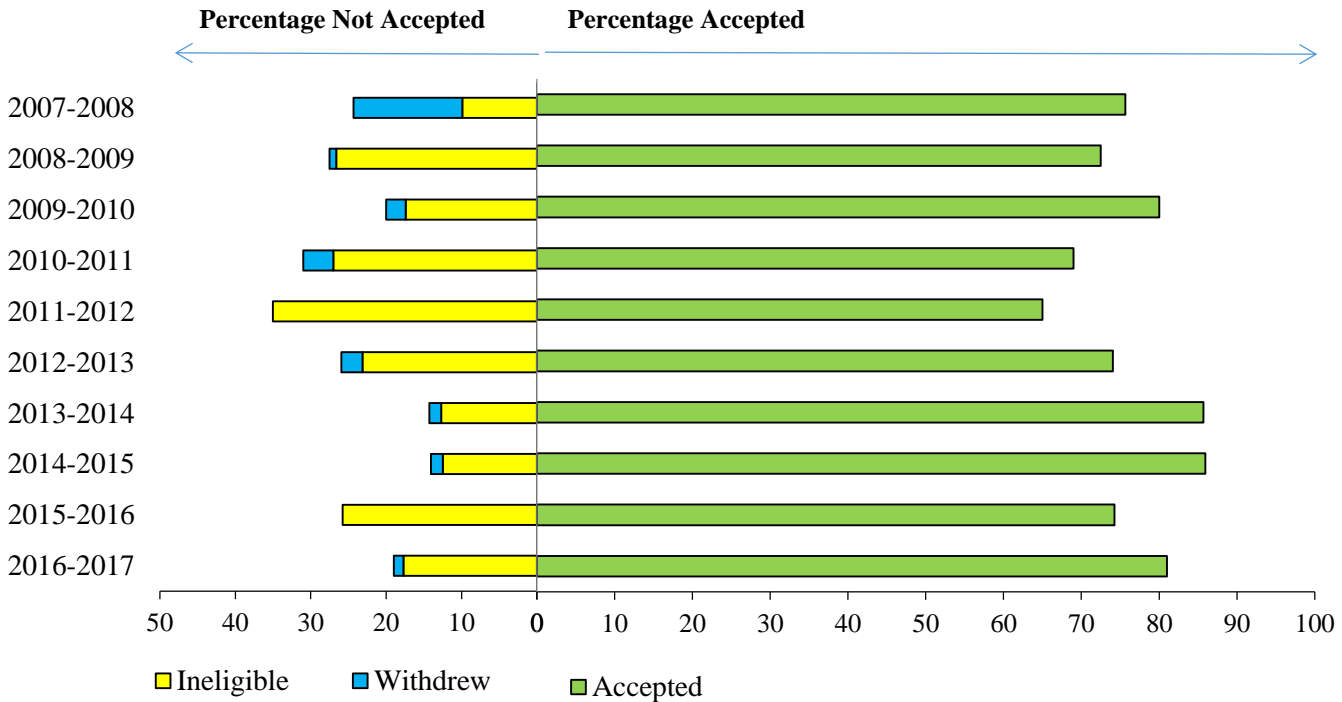
**Table I**  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership**  
**1995-2017 Academic Year Applicant Pool**

Counties Represented			
95-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
64	26	30	32

Students Admitted*			Applicants Eligible but Unfunded			Applicants Ineligible**			Applicants Withdrew			Spring 2017 Pending Applicants	Total Applications***		
95-15	15-16	16-17	95-15	15-16	16-17	95-15	15-16	16-17	95-15	15-16	16-17	16-17	95-15	15-16	16-17
1379	49	64	27	0	0	507	17	14	104	0	1	1	2028	66	80

\*The category of “Students Admitted” for the 2013-2014 year includes 4 people admitted for 2013-2014 academic year who decided not to participate in CWEL immediately prior to the start of school.

\*\*The category of “Ineligible” includes those not approved by their county, school, or the CWEL Admissions Committee, those with less than two years of services, and applicants not employed by child welfare agencies. It also includes those who did not complete their application, for personal or other reasons not known to CWEL.



**Table II**  
**Child Welfare Education for Leadership**  
**1995-2017 Academic Year Admissions by Agency Position and Years of Service**

Position	Number				Average Years in Present Agency			
	1995-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	1995-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Caseworker	1121	53	39	40	4.9	5.8	9.0	9.3
Supervisor	129	1	2	4	9.7	11.0	7.9	9.9
Other*	69	2	2	5	10.0	10.2	9.9	7.8

\* “Other” includes Regional Representative, Program Representative, Program Analyst, Program Specialist, Foster Care Coordinator, Social Services Manager, Program Coordinator, Program Manager, Agency Director, Associate Director, Director of Social Services, Special Assistant, Caseworker Manger, Social Work Service Manager, Family Advocate Specialist, and Administrator.

# **Appendix K**

## **Program Evaluation Data Tables**

**Table 1****Average Scores per Item by Program Type and by Status for Current Students**

(1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Somewhat Disagree; 3=Neither Agree Nor Disagree; 4=Somewhat Agree; 5=Strongly Agree)

<b>Item</b>	<b>CWEB n=40</b>	<b>CWEL, Full-Time n=51</b>	<b>CWEL, Part-Time n=40</b>
<i>CWERP Program Processes</i>	<i>Average (SD)</i>	<i>Average (SD)</i>	<i>Average (SD)</i>
The program information clearly explains the CWEB/CWEL program	4.41 (0.69)	4.54 (0.93)	4.48 (0.91)
The application form instructions are clear	4.61 (0.64)	4.56 (0.88)	4.50 (0.85)
I understood the contract <sup>a</sup>	4.68 (0.47)	4.38 (0.99)	4.38 (1.06)
The website is easy to use	4.42 (0.79)	4.08 (1.12)	4.45 (0.75)
I use the handbook when I have a question	4.11 (1.00)	3.96 (1.20)	4.23 (0.96)
The faculty (University of Pittsburgh) respond to my phone calls/email	4.58 (0.86)	4.64 (0.96)	4.83 (0.93)
The staff (University of Pittsburgh) respond to my phone calls/email	4.65 (0.79)	4.74 (0.92)	4.75 (0.84)
The faculty (University of Pittsburgh) helped me when I had a problem	4.55 (0.89)	4.76 (0.94)	4.93 (1.00)
The staff (University of Pittsburgh) helped me when I had a problem	4.59 (0.73)	4.84 (0.82)	4.83 (0.81)
<i>Current Degree Program</i>			
My academic advisor is familiar with the CWEB/CWEL program	4.42 (0.76)	4.48 (0.89)	4.10 (0.98)
The child welfare courses that I have taken are relevant	4.76 (0.68)	4.74 (0.83)	4.68 (0.97)
The faculty who teach the child welfare courses relate the content to practice	4.68 (0.81)	4.80 (0.70)	4.50 (1.01)
I have been able to apply what I learn in the class to field/internship or job	4.74 (0.64)	4.76 (0.69)	4.68 (0.62)
<i>Field/Internship Experiences</i>			
I have felt supported in the process of arranging my field/internship <sup>a</sup>	4.61 (0.64)	3.98 (1.20)	4.43 (1.38)
I have received good supervision in the field <sup>b</sup>	4.63 (0.79)	4.37 (1.15)	4.95 (1.01)
I was able to try new ideas or skills from class in my field	4.63 (0.59)	4.57 (0.89)	4.90 (0.98)
This field/internship has been a valuable learning experience <sup>a</sup>	4.89 (0.31)	4.57 (0.87)	4.75 (1.13)



<b>Item</b>	<b>CWEB n=40</b>	<b>CWEL, Full-Time n=51</b>	<b>CWEL, Part-Time n=40</b>
<i>Agency/Field Interface</i>	<i>Average (SD)</i>	<i>Average (SD)</i>	<i>Average (SD)</i>
My field supervisor is familiar with the requirements of the CWEB program	4.39 (0.72)	--	--
My field supervisor is familiar with the requirements of the State Civil Service	4.37 (1.00)	--	--
I was able to easily arrange the time needed to go to classes	--	--	4.38 (1.13)
I was able to easily arrange the time needed to do my field placement	--	--	4.05 (1.63)
My agency was able to accommodate my return in the summer	--	5.14 (1.13)	--
When I returned in the summer, I had supplies to do my work	--	5.14 (1.14)	--
<i>Value of the Degree to the Field</i>			
My degree will help me to contribute to the field	4.89 (0.32)	4.68 (0.60)	4.82 (0.56)
I will be able to use what I am learning when I am employed or return to a child welfare agency	4.86 (0.36)	4.76 (0.75)	4.55 (0.89)
The CWEB or CWEL program gave me an educational opportunity that I would not have had otherwise	4.91 (0.29)	4.76 (0.83)	4.87 (0.41)
The CWEB or CWEL program has positively impacted my development as a social work professional	4.77 (0.73)	4.90 (0.59)	4.85 (0.43)
The CWEB and CWEL program should be made available to more students and child welfare workers	4.89 (0.32)	4.90 (0.62)	4.82 (0.61)
Using a scale from 1-10, with 1 having the least value and 10 the greatest value, what is the value of the CWEB or CWEL program to the public child welfare system?	9.11 (1.00)	9.61 (1.10)	9.11 (1.23)

<sup>a</sup>= $p < .05$  CWEB compared to CWEL

<sup>b</sup>= $p < .05$  FT CWEL compared to PT CWEL

**Table 2****Average Scores per Item by Program Type for Recent Graduates**

(1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Somewhat Disagree; 3=Neither Agree Nor Disagree; 4=Somewhat Agree; 5=Strongly Agree)

Item	CWEB n=46	CWEL n=47
	Average (SD)	Average (SD)
My program prepared me for working in a child welfare agency	4.48 (0.92)	4.57 (0.72)
My skills were equal to better to other caseworkers no in the program <sup>b</sup>	4.33 (1.01)	4.68 (0.56)
I have a better understanding of the complex problems of our families	4.52 (0.87)	4.77 (0.43)
My education had helped me to find new solutions to the problems that are typical of our families	4.67 (0.56)	4.57 (0.62)
I am encouraged to practice my new skills in my position	4.61 (0.88)	4.26 (1.03)
I am encouraged to share my knowledge with other workers	4.54 (0.94)	4.19 (1.04)
I am given the opportunity and authority to make decisions	4.57 (0.96)	4.30 (1.06)
There is current opportunity for promotion in my agency	3.57 (1.59)	3.45 (1.54)
I can see future opportunities for advancing in my agency	4.00 (1.30)	3.79 (1.14)
I plan to remain at my agency after my commitment period is over	4.07 (1.25)	3.61 (1.16)
My long term career plan is to work with children and families <sup>b</sup>	3.91 (1.13)	4.43 (0.80)
I would recommend my agency to others for employment in social work	4.30 (0.92)	3.93 (1.12)
I would recommend public child welfare services to others looking for employment in social work	4.13 (1.05)	4.00 (0.95)
I have seriously considered leaving public child welfare (lower scores=greater commitment)	3.02 (1.47)	3.16 (1.30)
If I were not contractually obligated to remain in public child welfare for my commitment, I would leave (lower scores=greater commitment) <sup>b</sup>	2.33 (1.18)	2.89 (1.29)
On a scale of 1-10, with 1 having the least value and 10 the greatest value, what is the value of the CWEB and CWEL program to the public child welfare system <sup>a</sup>	8.38 (1.84)	9.24 (.95)

<sup>a</sup>= $p < .01$  CWEB compared to CWEL

<sup>b</sup>= $p < .05$  CWEB compared to CWEL

# Appendix L

Supplemental CWEB and CWEL Materials Available  
Online

<http://www.socialwork.pitt.edu/researchtraining/child-welfare-education-research-programs>

- CWEB and CWEL Applications
- CWEB Frequently Asked Questions
- CWEL Frequently Asked Questions
- CWEB Student Handbook
- CWEB Expense Reimbursement Guide
- CWEB Informational Video
- Child Welfare Realistic Job Preview Video
- CWEL Student Handbook
- CWEL Expense Reimbursement Guide
- Program Evaluation Instruments

# Appendix M

Child Welfare Research Sampler:  
Training Outcomes, Recruitment, and Retention



# University of Pittsburgh

*School of Social Work*  
*Child Welfare Education and Research Programs*

2329 Cathedral of Learning  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260  
412-624-6310  
Fax: 412-624-1159

## Workforce Recruitment and Retention in Child Welfare: A Research Sampler

Every year, the University of Pittsburgh, Child Welfare Education and Research Programs releases this report\* on the Title IV-E education programs in Pennsylvania. As a part of this annual review, the evaluation team includes a research sampler pertaining to child welfare practice and workforce development. This research sampler is updated every year with at least 3 current journal articles regarding workforce retention.

\*Past Title IV-E annual reports can be found on the School of Social Work's webpage:  
<http://www.socialwork.pitt.edu/researchtraining/child-welfare-ed-research-programs/cweb-cwel-annual-report>

Research has identified three major themes when exploring the dynamics influencing workforce retention: organizational factors; personal factors; and supervisory factors. This document is organized using a similar framework; however, these themes are not mutually exclusive. For that reason, we have included a category of organizational/personal factors, which capture research studies that examined the combined effects of these interrelated influences on workforce retention. In addition, we have included supervisory factors in the overview of studies that explored organizational factors. Empirical evidence has demonstrated that an educated workforce is more likely to stay within the child welfare field. Journal articles related to this topic can be found in the university/agency partnership section. After identifying the factors contributing to workforce turnover, what can be done to retain skilled child welfare professionals? The next section focuses on retention strategies to retain our child welfare workforce. The final section incorporates research related to youth voice regarding caseworker retention and to training initiatives and transfer of learning of new skills with the child welfare workforce.

For convenience, hyperlinks to each section are provided below. The references are listed in alphabetical order along with a synopsis of the article, and hyperlinks to the full article.

[Organizational Factors](#)

[Personal Factors](#)

[Organizational/Personal Factors](#)

[University/Agency Partnership](#)

[Retention Strategies](#)

[Other](#)

## Organizational Factors

**Annie E. Casey Foundation, (The). (2003). The unsolved challenge of system reform: The condition of the frontline human service workforce. Baltimore: Author.**

**Available at:** <http://www/aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-theUnsolvedChallengeSystemReform-2003.pdf>.

This extensive report prepared by the Annie E. Casey Foundation outlines preliminary findings regarding job conditions of frontline social services workers and the problems they face. Findings show that the reasons child welfare social workers leave their jobs are heavy workload, low status, low pay, and poor supervision. Motivations to stay in their jobs are sense of mission, good fit with the job, investment in relationships, and professional standing. The report identifies eight fundamental problems that cripple all human services sectors: not finding sufficient numbers of quality staff, difficulty retaining quality staff, lower salaries to frontline workers than those in other jobs at comparable levels, limited opportunity for professional growth and advancement, poor supervision, little guidance and support, rule-bound jobs, and education and training that do not match the roles and demands actually encountered on the job.

**Ashby, C.M. (2004). Child Welfare: Improved federal oversight could assist states in overcoming key challenges. Testimony before the subcommittee on human resources, committee on ways and means, House of Representatives. Washington, DC: United States Government Accounting Office.**

**Available at:**

[http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=vc4RVFHxvQAC&oi=fnd&pg=PA13&dg=Ashby,+C.+M.,+\(2004\).+Child+welfare:+Improved+federal+oversight+could+assist+states+in+overcoming+key+challenges.+Testimony+before+the+subcommittee+on+human+resources,+committee+on+ways+and+means,+house+of+representative&ots=djFAhkmPKv&sig=rrze2NCsLpciWcgSLDKcmK9MYE#v=onepage&q=&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=vc4RVFHxvQAC&oi=fnd&pg=PA13&dg=Ashby,+C.+M.,+(2004).+Child+welfare:+Improved+federal+oversight+could+assist+states+in+overcoming+key+challenges.+Testimony+before+the+subcommittee+on+human+resources,+committee+on+ways+and+means,+house+of+representative&ots=djFAhkmPKv&sig=rrze2NCsLpciWcgSLDKcmK9MYE#v=onepage&q=&f=false)

This testimony, which is based on findings from three reports, finds that child welfare agencies face a number of challenges related to staffing and data management that impair their ability to protect children from abuse and neglect. Low salaries hinder agencies' ability to attract potential child welfare workers and retain those already in the profession. Additionally, high caseloads, administrative burdens, limited supervision, and insufficient training reduce the appeal of child welfare work. This report also finds that high-quality supervision and adequate on-the-job training are factors that influence caseworkers to stay in the child welfare profession.

**Auerbach, C., McGowan, B., Ausberger, A., Strolin-Goltzman, J., & Schudrich, W. (2010). Differential factors influencing public and voluntary child welfare workers' intention to leave. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(10), 1396-1402.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740910001684>.

This study investigated the factors that contribute to job retention and turnover in both public and voluntary child welfare agencies. Two hundred and two (202) workers from voluntary agencies and 144 workers from a public agency participated in the research study, which consisted of a survey.

Results from the study suggest that public agency workers are more content with their promotional opportunities, benefits, and the nature of work when compared to voluntary agency workers. Conversely, volunteer agency workers expressed greater satisfaction with their co-workers and a higher commitment to child welfare work than public agency workers.

**Cahalane, H. & Sites, E.W. (2008). The climate of child welfare employee retention. *Child Welfare*, 87(1), 91-114.**

**Available at:**

[http://media.proquest.com/media/pq/classic/doc/1534440261/fmt/pi/rep/NONE?hl=&cit%3Aauth=Cahalane%2C+Helen%3BSites%2C+Edward+W&cit%3Atitle=The+Climate+of+Child+Welfare+Employee+Retention&cit%3Apub=Child+Welfare&cit%3Avol=87&cit%3Aiss=1&cit%3Apg=91&cit%3Adate=2008&ic=true&cit%3Aprod=ProQuest+Psychology+Journals&a=ChgyMDE2MDMxNzE0NDQwMTM5MDo1NzU1MTASBTk1NTQzGgpPTkVfU0VBUkNIIg4xMzYuMTQyLjIxMy41MioFNDA4NTMyCTIxMzgwNDMwMT0NRG9jdW1lbnRjbWFnZUIBMFIGT25saW5lWjJG VGIDUEZUagoyMDA4LzAxLzAxZGoyMDA4LzAyLzI4egCCASIQLTEwMDcxMDYtMTQ3MDktQ1VTVE9NRVItMTAwMDAxNjAtMTE2NTI1NzIBBk9ubGluZcoBPU1vemlsbGEvNS4wIChXaW5kb3dzIE5UIDYuMTsgVHJpZGVudC83LjA7IHJ2OjExLjApIGxpa2UgR2Vja2%2FSARJTY2hvbGFybHkgSm91cm5hbHOaAgdQcmVQYWlkqgIoT1M6RU1TLVBkZkRvY1ZpZXdcYXNlWldldE1lZGlhVXJsRm9ySXRlbc0CD0FydGljbGV8RmVhdHVyZdICAVniAggBaHR0cDovL3NjaG9sYXluc29vZ2xlLmNvbS9zY2hvbGFyP2FzX3E9JmFzX2VwcT0mYXNfb3E9JmFzX2VxPSZh c19vY2N0PWFueSZhc19zYXV0aG9ycz0lMjJk0NhaGFsYW5lJTlyJmFzX3B1YmxpY2F0aW9u PSZh c195bG89MjAwOCZhc195aGk9MjAwOCZidG5HPSZobD1lbiZhc19zZHQ9MCUyQzM56gl IZ3NjaG9sYXlyAgA%3D&\\_s=Cl3mpyrTNB6lqPpCmQBR5Djj6IE%3D](http://media.proquest.com/media/pq/classic/doc/1534440261/fmt/pi/rep/NONE?hl=&cit%3Aauth=Cahalane%2C+Helen%3BSites%2C+Edward+W&cit%3Atitle=The+Climate+of+Child+Welfare+Employee+Retention&cit%3Apub=Child+Welfare&cit%3Avol=87&cit%3Aiss=1&cit%3Apg=91&cit%3Adate=2008&ic=true&cit%3Aprod=ProQuest+Psychology+Journals&a=ChgyMDE2MDMxNzE0NDQwMTM5MDo1NzU1MTASBTk1NTQzGgpPTkVfU0VBUkNIIg4xMzYuMTQyLjIxMy41MioFNDA4NTMyCTIxMzgwNDMwMT0NRG9jdW1lbnRjbWFnZUIBMFIGT25saW5lWjJG VGIDUEZUagoyMDA4LzAxLzAxZGoyMDA4LzAyLzI4egCCASIQLTEwMDcxMDYtMTQ3MDktQ1VTVE9NRVItMTAwMDAxNjAtMTE2NTI1NzIBBk9ubGluZcoBPU1vemlsbGEvNS4wIChXaW5kb3dzIE5UIDYuMTsgVHJpZGVudC83LjA7IHJ2OjExLjApIGxpa2UgR2Vja2%2FSARJTY2hvbGFybHkgSm91cm5hbHOaAgdQcmVQYWlkqgIoT1M6RU1TLVBkZkRvY1ZpZXdcYXNlWldldE1lZGlhVXJsRm9ySXRlbc0CD0FydGljbGV8RmVhdHVyZdICAVniAggBaHR0cDovL3NjaG9sYXluc29vZ2xlLmNvbS9zY2hvbGFyP2FzX3E9JmFzX2VwcT0mYXNfb3E9JmFzX2VxPSZh c19vY2N0PWFueSZhc19zYXV0aG9ycz0lMjJk0NhaGFsYW5lJTlyJmFzX3B1YmxpY2F0aW9u PSZh c195bG89MjAwOCZhc195aGk9MjAwOCZidG5HPSZobD1lbiZhc19zZHQ9MCUyQzM56gl IZ3NjaG9sYXlyAgA%3D&_s=Cl3mpyrTNB6lqPpCmQBR5Djj6IE%3D)

This study explored differences in perceptions of the child welfare agency work environment among Title IV-E education individuals who remained employed within public child welfare and those who sought employment elsewhere after fulfilling a legal work commitment. Job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, and personal accomplishment were predictive of staying versus leaving. The evidence suggests that efforts to retain highly skilled and educated workers should focus upon creating positive organizational climates within agencies, including innovative ways to use the increased skills and abilities of MSW graduates.

**Chen, Y.Y., Park, J., & Park, A. (2012). Existence, relatedness, or growth? Examining turnover intention of public child welfare caseworkers from a human needs approach. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(10), 2088-2093.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.07.002>

Research suggests that pay and benefits alone are ineffective to sustain a stable workforce in public child welfare. It is important to know what other mechanisms would motivate caseworkers to stay at the job. However, the relation of factors contributing to the prevalent problem of turnover in public child welfare remains unclear in part due to a lack of theoretical base in research. This study, therefore, develops a conceptual framework based on the human needs theory of Alderfer (1969, 1972) to examine what motivates caseworkers' turnover intention. The three categories of needs are existence needs regarding pay and benefits, relatedness needs regarding at-work relationships



and life-work balance, and growth needs regarding career development and fulfillment. With a secondary dataset of 289 caseworkers in a northeastern state, our structural equation modeling results show the dynamics between caseworkers' needs and their differential impact on turnover intention. The effect of existence needs on turnover is completely mediated by growth needs. Moreover, the variable of growth needs is found to have the strongest total effect among the three need categories. Administration and management may attenuate turnover intention by enhancing caseworkers' growth needs with respect to meaningfulness of daily practice, contingent rewards, and development of personal career goals.

**Collins-Camargo, C., Ellett, C.D., & Lester, C. (2012). Measuring organizational effectiveness to develop strategies to promote retention in public child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*(1), 289-295.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth2011.10.027>

Public child welfare agencies are under pressure to improve organizational, practice, and client outcomes. Related to all of these outcomes is the retention of staff. Employee intent to remain employed may be used as a proxy for actual retention. In this study, public child welfare staff in one Midwestern state were surveyed using the Survey of Organizational Excellence (Lauderdale, 1999) and the Intent to Remain Employed (Ellett, Ellett, & Rugutt, 2003) scales to assess the extent to which constructs such as perceptions of organizational culture, communication, and other areas or organizational effectiveness were associated with intent to remain employed. A number of statistically significant relationships were identified which were presented to the public agency for use in the development of strategies for organizational improvement. Data were also analyzed regionally and based on urban/suburban/rural status to enable development of targeted approaches. This case study presents an example of how ongoing measurement of organizational effectiveness can be used as a strategy for organizational improvement over time in the child welfare system.

**Curry, D., McCarragher, T., & Dellmann-Jenkins, M. (2005). Training, transfer, and turnover: Exploring the relationship between transfer of learning factors and staff retention in child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 27*(8), 931-948.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740904002592>

A longitudinal research design with 416 participants was used to determine the effect that training and transfer of learning (TOL) in child welfare has on child welfare worker job retention. Study results support the notion that job training contributes to job retention in child welfare workers. Training and TOL may "communicate an investment in the worker's career development which in turn increases the likelihood of a longevity investment by the worker to the agency." Results also emphasize the importance of the supervisor's and coworker's roles in job retention. The researchers suggest, however, that continued research is necessary to clarify the relationship between training, transfer of learning, and child welfare worker job retention.

**Eaton, M., Anderson, G., & Whalen, P. (2006). Resilient child welfare worker interviews. Michigan State University, School of Social Work.**

**Available at:** <http://www.socialwork.msu.edu/outreach/docs/ResilientCWWinterviews.pdf>

This study involved interviews with 21 child welfare supervisors and frontline workers who were identified as “resilient” by their child welfare agency director. The goal was to identify factors related to worker and supervisor resiliency. Telephone survey interviews were conducted that included 26 open-ended questions. Results suggested a number of strategies to inform child welfare training curriculum and recruitment efforts. This includes providing internship or volunteer opportunities for individuals interested in child welfare work prior to their actual application, maintaining a friendly, flexible, and positive work environment, enhancing supervisory support for new workers in their first year, and having clear job descriptions. Veteran workers also reported that lower caseloads, higher salary, training, workshops and attentiveness to prevent burnout have also contributed to their tenure in the agency.

**Farber, J., & Munson, S. (2010). Strengthening the child welfare workforce: Lessons from litigation. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 4(2), 132-157.**

**Available at:** <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/155487310037993#tabModule>

The recruitment, preparation, support, and retention of public and private agency child welfare staff working with abused and neglected children and their families are important and ongoing concerns. During the past two decades, many questions have been raised about the adequacy of the child welfare workforce and the supports provided to it. This article provides the findings from a review of efforts to strengthen the child welfare workforce in the context of class-action litigation for system reform. The lessons learned provide a useful framework for current and future efforts to improve the child welfare workforce, both within and without the context of litigation.

**Fernandes, G.M. (2016). Organizational climate and child welfare workers’ degree of intent to leave the job: Evidence from New York. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 60, 80-87.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740915300980>

With increasingly unstable workforce in child welfare agencies, it is critical to understand what organizational factors lead to intent to leave the job based on job search behaviors. Using recent survey data collected among 359 child welfare workers from eight agencies in New York State during 2009–2011 and a Structural Equation Model (SEM) method, this study examines the relationship between employee perceptions of organizational climate and the degree of intent to leave the job (thinking, looking and taking actions related to a new job). Fifty-seven percent (n = 205) reported that they had considered looking for a new job in the past year. Bivariate analyses indicated that there were significant differences between those who looked for a job and those who did not look for a job in the past year. SEM analysis revealed that four organizational climate factors were predictive of decreasing the degree of intent to leave the job: Perceptions on organizational justice was most predictive factor for thinking of a new job followed by organizational support, work overload and job importance. The findings of this study help us understand the employee perceptions of different organizational factors that impact employee turnover especially from the time an employee thinks of leaving the job to actually taking concrete actions related to a new job.

**Glaser, S.R., Zamanou, S., & Hacker, K. (1987). Measuring and interpreting organizational culture. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 1(2), 173-198.**

**Available at:** <http://mcq.sagepub.com/content/1/2/173>

Organizational culture is a construct with varying definitions. The construct-theoretical in scope has not been properly operationalized and studied in the research literature. For the purposes of this study, six components of organizational culture were studied: teamwork-conflict, climate-morale, information flow, involvement, supervision, and meetings. The Organizational Culture Survey was administered to 195 governmental employees in the Pacific Northwest. In addition to surveying the 195 employees, a representative sample of 91 of the employees were chosen to participate in a 45-minute interview. The interviews were coded along the six dimensions examined in the Organizational Culture Survey. The results of the Organizational Culture Survey revealed significant differences in the perception of organizational culture between the different divisions of the governmental employees. Employees at the top of the organization were satisfied with the organizational culture, whereas line workers, line supervisors, and clerical staff were dissatisfied on all of the components of organizational culture that was measured. Additional themes of organizational culture emerged from the qualitative interviews. These themes include: (1) the belief that top management does not listen to, or value, employees, (2) an organizational culture of confusion due to limited interactions amongst departmental divisions, (3) meetings lacking interaction, (4) employees feeling uncertain about their job roles, and (5) supervisors providing subpar supervision and not recognizing exceptional employees.

**Glisson, C., & Hemmelgarn, A. (1998). The effects of organizational climate and interorganizational coordination on the quality and outcomes of children's service systems. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 22(5), 401-421.**

**Available at:** [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0145-2134\(98\)00005-2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0145-2134(98)00005-2)

Human service organizations rarely analyze the impact of intra-organizational and inter-organizational variables as predictors of overall organizational effectiveness. Both constructs are rarely integrated in research, and thus human service organizations cannot compare their relative effects on outcomes. The state-sponsored AIMS pilot project was initiated in Tennessee to increase service coordination. The study collected both qualitative and quantitative data over a three year period in Tennessee. Services to 250 children provided by 32 public children's service offices in 24 different state counties were examined. The study yielded four significant findings. First, significant improvements in children's psychosocial functioning were apparent for children who were serviced by offices with more positive climates. Second, improved service quality does not ensure additional positive outcomes for children. For example, removing a child from one problematic residential placement into a new residential placement does not ensure that the child will be devoid of any additional problems in a new environment. Third, organizational climate positively effects service outcomes and service quality. Lastly, this study found that increased service coordination often decreases service quality as caseworker responsibility can weaken when services are centralized.

**Johnco, C., Salloum, A., Olson, K.R., & Edwards, L.M. (2014). Child welfare workers' perspectives on contributing factors to retention and turnover: Recommendations for improvement. *Children and Youth Service Review, 47, 397-407.***

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740914003879>

This qualitative study assessed how factors impact employee retention and turnover in focus groups with 25 employees at different stages of employment: resigned case managers, case managers employed for less than one year and more than three years, and supervisors. Two broad themes emerged for retention: supportive environment (including themes relating to children/parents, co-workers, and the organization) and opportunities within the agency (including new positions, experience and knowledge and job security). Two broad themes emerged for turnover: organizational issues (including themes about low compensation, challenging work demands, and system issues) and stress. Workers expressed a strong desire to be heard by management. A number of unique issues were identified, including workers' desire for clear communication flow through hierarchies, increased collaboration, and revisions to the way data is used/integrated.

**Mitchell, L., Walters, R., Thomas, M.L., Denniston, J., McIntosh, H., & Brodowski, M. (2012). The Children's Bureau's vision for the future of child welfare. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 6(4), 550-567.***

**Available at:**

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15548732.2012.715267#.VGyjRMt0y70>

This article sets forth a broad vision for the future of the Children's Bureau that focuses on the goals of reducing maltreatment and achieving optimal health and development of children and families. To accomplish these goals the Children Bureau charts a path to strengthen the ability of States, tribes, and communities to offer a range of universal and effective services to families within a systems of care framework; improve public policy and financing of child welfare services; build public engagement in and support for systemic child welfare changes; and develop initiatives to strengthen and support the child welfare workforce.

**Nunno, M. (2006). The effects of the ARC organizational intervention on caseworker turnover, climate, and culture in children's services systems. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 30, 849-854.***

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2006.03.001>

This is a summary article of Glisson, Duke, and Green's (2006) randomized study of the Availability, Responsiveness, and Continuity (ARC) program on child welfare organizational culture, climate, and turnover of child welfare workers. The article highlights the saliency of this research in that it demonstrates one of the first strong links between organizational intervention in child welfare and child and family outcomes. The author highlights the important components of the ARC intervention, including the need to emphasize child welfare internal working capacity and the work environment over inter-organizational relationships with other community providers, which in previous research has shown to negatively influence service quality. The author

encourages research to replicate Glisson's work, and to compare outcomes for organizations, children, and families when implementing different models of organizational change.

**Schweitzer, D., Chianello, T., & Kothari, B. (2013). Compensation in social work: Critical for satisfaction and a sustainable profession. *Administration in Social Work, 37*(2), 147-157.**

**Available at:** <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03643107.2012.669335#.VGykSct0y70>

Challenges with social worker satisfaction and subsequent high staff turnover rates are not new to the profession. For decades researchers have studied social worker satisfaction from several perspectives, though generally with child welfare staff. This exploratory study examined responses from a statewide survey of 838 social workers across a broad spectrum of employment settings to determine which variables had the greatest impact on satisfaction. Standard multiple regression results indicate that social workers' level of satisfaction with their jobs and employment benefits were best predicted by variables that translate into improved compensation. These findings suggest that efforts to improve social work satisfaction, and subsequently lower turnover rates, should focus on improving factors that directly or indirectly influence compensation to preserve this vital workforce. Limitations and next steps for future research are discussed.

**Shim, M. (2010). Factors influencing child welfare employee's turnover: Focusing on organizational culture and climate. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(6), 847-856.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.02.004>

Organizational culture and climate elements have not been extensively considered in the social welfare literature, especially in the domain of child welfare. This article addresses this gap by systematically exploring these factors and their effects on child welfare employee turnover. This exploration uses data collected by the New York State Social Work Education Consortium in 2002 and 2003. Organizational culture is organized by factors of achievement/innovation/competence, cooperation/supportiveness/responsiveness, and emphasis on rewards (ER). Organizational climate is classified by role clarity, personal accomplishment, emotional exhaustion (EE), and workloads. A logistic regression model was used to analyze a worker's intent to leave his or her current job. Findings suggest that both organizational culture and climate factors, particularly ER and EE, are significantly related to a worker's intention to leave. Thus, employees emphasizing the values of organizational culture and climate have less intention to leave their current positions. This is an indication that child welfare agencies may improve organizational culture and climate by appropriately addressing elements (i.e. reinforcing ER and minimizing EE).

**Spath, R., Strand, V.C., & Bosco-Ruggiero, S. (2013). What child welfare staff say about organizational culture. *Child Welfare, 9*(2), 9-31.**

**Available at:** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23984484>

This article examines the factors that can affect job satisfaction, organizational culture and climate, and intent to leave at a public child welfare agency. Findings from focus group data collected from direct line, middle, and senior managers revealed a passive defensive culture. The authors discuss concrete organizational interventions to assist the agency in shifting to a constructive oriented

culture through enhancements in communication, including supervision and shared decision making, recognition and rewards, and improvement in other areas related to working conditions.

**United States General Accounting Office. (2003). Child Welfare: HHS Could Play a Greater Role in Helping Child Welfare Agencies Recruit and Retain Staff (GAO-03-357). Washington, DC: Author.**

**Available at:** <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-03-357>

This extensive report prepared by the GAO identifies the challenges child welfare agencies face in recruiting and retaining child welfare workers. Nearly 600 exit interview documents completed by staff who severed their employment from 17 state, 40 county, and 19 private child welfare agencies and interviews with child welfare experts and officials were primarily analyzed to get the results. The findings show that low salaries, in particular, hinder agencies' ability to attract potential child welfare workers and to retain those already in the field. Other factors affecting retention are disparities in the salaries between public and private child welfare workers, high caseloads, administrative burdens, limited supervision, and insufficient training.

**Westbrook, T.M., Ellett, A.J., & Asberg, K. (2012). Predicting public child welfare employee's intentions to remain employed with the child welfare organizational culture inventory. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(7), 1214-1221.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2012.02.010>

High employee turnover continues to be a serious problem in the field of public child welfare. In a statewide study of public child welfare employees in a southern state, the Child Welfare Organizational Culture Inventory was used to assess employees' perceptions of organizational culture and to examine which factors might be predictors of employee's intentions to remain on the job as measured by the Intent to Remain Employed-Child Welfare scale. Logistic regression was used to examine the relationship between organizational culture and employees' intent to remain in child welfare. These analyses provide a view into which employees might be at higher risk for leaving their positions and which organizational factors are contributing to the problems of high worker turnover.

**Westbrook, T., Ellis, J., & Ellett, A. (2006). Improving retention among public child welfare workers: What can we learn from the insights and experiences of committed survivors? *Administration in Social Work*, 30(4), 37-62.**

**Available at:** [http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J147v30n04\\_04](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J147v30n04_04)

This study examined long-term child welfare workers' reasons and motivations for their job retention. Over three focus-group interviews, a sample of 21 child welfare workers and supervisors from urban, suburban, and rural areas were interviewed. Three major themes emerged to explain the sample's continued employment in child welfare: movement, both beyond the boundaries of the agency and within it; importance of local management, including the need for professional and personal support from supervisors and local administrators; and educating novice workers, the need to adequately prepare and mentor new child welfare workers.

**Zeitlin, W., Augsberger, A., Auerbach, C., & McGowan, B. (2014). A mixed-methods study of the impact of organizational culture on workforce retention in child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 38, 36-43.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740914000085>

The study uses mixed methods to examine the impact of perceived organizational culture on workers' intention to remain employed. Results indicated that intention to remain employed was significantly related to organizational culture. Results from the analysis of the open ended survey questions and focus groups revealed two important dimensions of agency culture: values and agency relationships. Several respondents reported a desire for their personal and professional values to be congruent with the values of the agency. It was important to respondents that the agency mission was clear and consistent with their personal and professional goals. Respondents who intended to remain employed at their agency had a positive outlook on their work. They felt a need to serve others and believed the tasks they performed made a difference in the lives of the children, families, and communities they served. They believed they could impact positive change and felt a sense of accomplishment when they were able to see positive results of their work. Workers whose values were more congruent with their organizations', as identified in higher scores on service orientation and satisfaction with the purpose and nature of work domains, were more likely to plan to stay at their jobs.

## **PERSONAL FACTORS**

**Augsberger, A., Schudrich, W., McGowan, B.G., & Auerbach, C. (2012). Respect in the workplace: A mixed methods study of retention and turnover in the voluntary child welfare sector. *Children and Youth Services*, 34(7), 1222-1229.**

**Available at:** [http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0190740912001041/1-s2.0S0190740912001041-main.pdf?\\_tid=40b94440-59a8-11e2-8ffd-00000aacb361&acdnat=1357659175\\_627c014d19164704e67bbdb8c51480b](http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0190740912001041/1-s2.0S0190740912001041-main.pdf?_tid=40b94440-59a8-11e2-8ffd-00000aacb361&acdnat=1357659175_627c014d19164704e67bbdb8c51480b)

Previous studies focused on child welfare worker retention identify individual and organizational factors that influence one's job satisfaction and likelihood of job turnover. This article extends this work further by examining how an employee's perception of respect in the workplace influences their decision regarding whether they retain their position or turnover the job. Child welfare workers' perceptions of respect in the workplace have largely been under-studied due to difficulties surrounding the operationalization and measurement of respect in human services. This study sampled 538 workers in 202 voluntary agencies in a northwestern city. A mixed methods design was implemented with respondents taking a survey of both open- and closed-ended questions and participating in focus groups. Qualitative analysis revealed that workers' perceptions of respect in the workplace do influence their decisions regarding whether to leave an agency of employment. The research yielded five sub-themes of respect, including: (1) organizational support; (2) fair salary and benefits; (3) fair promotion potential; (4) adequate communication; and (5) appreciation or contingent rewards. Workers who scored the lowest on the quantitative Respect Scale were significantly more likely to intend to leave their current positions. Quantitative findings also

revealed that older employees were more likely to retain their positions, while employees with a social work degree were more likely to leave.

**Boyas, J., Wind, L.H., & Kang, S.Y. (2012). Exploring the relationship between employment-based social capital, job stress, burnout, and intent to leave among child protection workers: An age-based path analysis model. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(1), 50-60.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.106/j.chilyouth.2011.08.033>

Research suggests that age and organizational factors are consistently linked with job stress, burnout, and intent to leave among child protection workers. However, no study has contextualized how age matters with regards to these adverse employee outcomes. This study conducted a theory drive path analysis that identifies sources of employment-based social capital, job stress, burnout, and intent to leave among two age groups. A statewide purposive sample of 209 respondents from a public child welfare organization in a New England state was included in the study. Results suggest that the paths to job stress, burnout, and intent to leave differed by age group. Social capital dimensions were more influential in safeguarding against job stress for older workers compared to younger workers. The results justify creating workplace interventions for younger workers that target areas of the organization where relational support could enhance the quality of social interactions within the organization. Organizations may need to establish intervention efforts aimed at younger workers by creating different structures of support that can assist them to better deal with the pressures and demands of child protection work.

**Chenot, D., Boutakidis, I., & Benton, A.D. (2014). Equity and fairness perceptions in the child welfare workforce. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 44, 400-406.**

**Available at:**

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/pitt.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0190740914002552>

The current study follows the finding from a previous study in which African American (AA) social workers were significantly less likely to report that they would remain in their CWS agencies than European American (EA) workers. Utilizing a mixed methods approach, the authors explored whether inequity from bias in CWS agencies related to ethnicity was a contributor to intentions to stay/leave. The results revealed no significant relationships between ethnicity and job satisfaction or intentions to stay in CWS agencies among EA, AA, or Hispanic/Latino (HL) workers. However, findings emerged related to worker perceptions of court duties concerning inequitable workloads and pay. Results indicated that job satisfaction and retention did not vary by worker ethnicity. Reports of bias related to ethnicity among the workforce in CWS agencies were rare. Perceptions concerning inequitable workloads were related to court work assignments.

**Cohen-Callow, A., Hopkins, K.M., & Hae Jung, K. (2009). Retaining workers approaching retirement: Why child welfare needs to pay attention to the aging workforce. *Child Welfare*, 88(5), 209-228.**

**Available at:** <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?sid=0e0626a3-8cfb-4c56-a09d-2d35bcda162a%40sessionmgr10&vid=1&hid=10&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=i3&AN=45830368>



The loss of talented older child welfare workers will cause substantial staff shortages in the foreseeable future. Some strategies that mitigate the loss of this work force provide a partial solution. However, thus far child welfare-related research has not examined the differences between older and younger workers in terms of retention-related issues. To address this gap, this study utilizes an integration of two theoretical perspectives--organizational climate theory and the life course perspective--as a guiding framework. Data from a sample of 432 public child welfare workers were analyzed in terms of moderating effects of age on the relationship between individual and organizational factors on work and job withdrawal. Results indicate that age moderates the relationship between perceived stress and work withdrawal (i.e., disengagement from work while remaining in the job) and between organizational commitment and job withdrawal (i.e., leaving the job entirely). Practice and research implications are discussed for retention and delaying retirement of talented and engaged mature workers interest in remaining employed.

**Jayaratne, S. & Faller, K.C. (2009). Commitment of private and public agency workers to child welfare: How long do they plan to stay? *Journal of Social Science Research*, 35(3), 251-261.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01488370902900972>

Two hundred and sixty-nine child welfare workers completing training in foster care were asked to complete questionnaires regarding their reasons for taking their positions, their commitment to their agencies, and their commitment to the child welfare field. The analyses compared the results on new public agency foster care workers, public agency workers making lateral transfers, and new private foster care workers. Results show that private agency foster care workers rated their commitment to their agencies and to the child welfare field lower than public foster care workers. The private foster care workers also were more likely to say they took the position because it was the only one available.

**Mandell, D., Stalker, C., deZeeuw Wright, M., Frensch, K., & Harvey, C. (2012). Sinking, swimming and sailing: Experiences of job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion in child welfare employees. *Child & Family Social Work*, 18(4), 383-393.**

**Available at:** <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2012.00857.x/pdf>

The authors conducted a mixed-method study after a previous study of child welfare employees revealed a subgroup exhibiting surprisingly high levels of emotional exhaustion (EE) and job satisfaction (JS). This subgroup included direct service workers, supervisors, and managers. As these findings appeared to conflict with previous studies, we re-reviewed the literature and undertook the current study to account for the co-existence of EE and JS. The authors explored and compared this subgroup with two others: workers who found their work satisfying without experiencing high levels of EE and those whose high levels of EE were associated with low JS. Using a survey that included several standardized measures with 226 employees and semi-structured interviews with a criteria-based subsample of 25, the authors explored the role that personality, career expectations, coping styles, stage of life, education, gender, and social networks play in outcomes for individual employees. Analyses of quantitative and qualitative data yielded a profile for each subgroup, offering insights into the subjective experiences of workers within

individual, social, and organizational contexts. These findings have implications for recruitment, training, and support of child welfare workers.

**McGowan, B.G., Auerbach, C., & Strolin-Goltzman, J.S. (2009). Turnover in the child welfare workforce: A different perspective. *Journal of Social Science Research*, 35(3), 228-235.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01488370902900782>

This study explores the crisis involving increased staff turnover rates in child welfare agencies. The aim of the exploration was to determine which previously identified relevant variables (organizational, personal, and supervisory) are most related to a worker's intent to leave urban and rural child welfare settings. A survey was administered to 447 employees in 13 agencies to address organizational, personal, and supervisory factors. Data analysis included ANOVA, logistical regression, and structural equation modeling. Organizational and supervisory variables were not found to be significant when data were applied to structural equation modeling. Results did suggest that career satisfaction and satisfaction with paperwork are key factors related to a worker's intention to stay.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL/PERSONAL FACTORS**

**Anguiniga, D.M., Madden, E.E., Faulkner, M.R., & Salehin, M. (2013). Understanding intention to leave: A comparison of urban, small-town, and rural child welfare workers. *Administration in Social Work*, 37(3), 227-241.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03643107.2012.676610>

This study compared the influence of personal and organizational factors on intention to leave among 2,903 public child protection caseworkers and supervisors residing in urban, small-town, and rural counties in Texas. Although geographical location was not found to be a predictor of intention to leave, underlying factors that may influence and explain the differences between urban, small-town, and rural employee's intention to leave were identified. Social workers residing in urban areas were more likely to have a master's degree and be members of a racial/ethnic minority group, while social workers in small-town counties were older and had longer tenure in their agencies.

**Bednar, S.G. (2003). Elements of satisfying organizational climates in child welfare agencies. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 84(1), 7-12.**

**Available at:** <http://alliance1.metapress.com/content/4w164340131104v8>

This review examines research into job satisfaction in child welfare systems and on other factors that influence a worker's decision to leave a job or stay, including organizational climate factors. Studies reviewed in this article report that the most satisfying work environment is one in which staff engage in self-actualizing work with clients, are encouraged to achieve, experience feelings of accomplishment, work collaboratively with their colleagues, and enjoy trust and permission to express anger appropriately. Motivational factors such as salary and working conditions can be individualized depending on the needs of employees. Studies that focus on factors affecting the decision to stay or leave report that workers who remain in their child welfare positions despite burnout and other negative factors are those who come to the work with a sense of personal and

professional mission, who have been well-matched in their positions, or who have the flexibility to move to more suitable positions as their interests and needs change, and who enjoy supportive relationships with supervisors who relate to them in a consultative manner. Supervisors, who are able to promote trust; foster good communication; encourage input into decision making, creativity, and innovation; engage staff in goal-setting; clearly define roles; improve cooperation; and maintain open systems that are capable of taking in and responding to new information have a significant and positive impact on organizational climate.

**Claiborne, N., Auerbach, C., Lawrence, C., Liu, J., McGowan, B.G., Fernandes, G., & Magnano, J. (2011). Child welfare agency climate influence on worker commitment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(11), 2096-2102.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2011.06.002>

This research examines the relationship of organizational climate to commitment for child welfare workers in private, non-governmental organizations. Four hundred forty-one workers in three not-for-profit agencies under contract with the public child welfare system were asked to complete two surveys, used to determine agency investment and perception of work environment. The results show that Autonomy, Challenge and Innovation subscales were significantly associated with agency investment. This indicates that worker perceptions of having job autonomy, feeling challenged on the job, and the organization's degree of innovation predict greater job commitment.

**Faller, K.C., Grabarek, M., & Ortega, R.M. (2010). Commitment to child welfare work: What predicts leaving and staying? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(6), 840-846.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2010.02.003>

This study reviews results from a 5 year longitudinal study of public and private child welfare workers in one state. Data from 460 new workers were collected at four different time points (baseline, 6 months, 12 months, and 18 months) with specific topics varying among the time points. Data regarding the reasons they took their jobs and chose to work in the child welfare field, their commitment to their agencies and child welfare, and the worker's demographics were compared with whether the workers were still in their positions at two years after their hire date. Results show that public agency workers endorsed slightly higher levels of commitment on three of the four commitment variables in contrast to private workers, and their reasons for taking the job varied. Variables that predicted staying on the job were having viewed the state's Realistic Job Preview before taking the job, good supervision, and higher job satisfaction.

**Hopkins, K.M., Cohen-Callow, A., Kim, H.J., & Hwang, J. (2010). Beyond intent to leave: Using multiple outcome measures for assessing turnover in child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(10), 1380-1387.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740910001660>

In this article, the researchers sought to extend the understanding of child welfare worker turnover beyond workers' intent to leave, to include specific job and work withdrawal behaviors. Six hundred and twenty one child welfare workers from across one mid-Atlantic state participated in the study, which consisted of an online self-report survey. Independent variables included perceptions

of organization/environment, personal and job factors, and attitudinal responses. Dependent variables included job withdrawal, work withdrawal, job search behaviors, and exit from the organization. Research results state that organizational climate, particularly work stress, most directly contributes to job and work withdrawal, job search behaviors, and organization exit.

**Madden, E.E., Scannapieco, M., & Painter, K. (2014). An examination of retention and length of employment among public child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review, 41*, 37-44.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740914000681>

Using longitudinal data collected over a 10 year period from a statewide sample of all new public child welfare caseworkers hired between 2001 and 2010 (N=9195), this study examines personal and organizational factors that affect length of employment among child welfare workers and explores how personal and organizational factors influence caseworker length of employment. The findings of this study suggest that a mixture of personal and organizational factors influenced the length of time that child welfare workers remained with the agency. Of the variables evaluated in the models, gender, social work education, Title IV-E involvement, organizational support, and job desirability were shown to significantly influence longevity with the agency.

**Strolin, J.S., McCarthy, M., & Caringi, J. (2006). Causes and effects of child welfare workforce turnover: Current state of knowledge and future directions. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 1*(2), 29-52.**

**Available at:** [http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J479v01n02\\_03#.VGylyMt0y70](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J479v01n02_03#.VGylyMt0y70)

The authors provide an overview of the causes and effects of workforce turnover in child welfare, which has been a persistent problem for more than four decades. Causes of workforce turnover are categorized into three areas commonly cited throughout the relevant literature: individual factors (e.g. burnout), supervisory factors (e.g. supportive supervision), and organizational factors (e.g. job satisfaction). In comparison to the causes of workforce turnover, empirical research on the effects of such turnover in child welfare is limited. This paper explores the need for innovative empirical knowledge regarding the link between workforce turnover and outcomes in the field of child welfare. The literature concludes with consideration of the gaps and inconsistencies in previous research and related implications for the social work profession, education, and practice.

**Williams, S.E., Nichols, Q.I., Kirk, A., & Wilson, T. (2011). A recent look at the factors influencing workforce retention in public child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(1), 157-160.**

**Available at:** [http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0190740910002896/1-s2.0-S0190740910002896-main.pdf?\\_tid=39ff159e-59a8-11e2-82c0-00000aab0f6c&acdnat=1357659163\\_8bf97e55b54886324bf1f7bb137cd68](http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0190740910002896/1-s2.0-S0190740910002896-main.pdf?_tid=39ff159e-59a8-11e2-82c0-00000aab0f6c&acdnat=1357659163_8bf97e55b54886324bf1f7bb137cd68)

This study explores the retention of child welfare workers in four of Georgia's districts-1, 3, 13, and 17. The retention rates of the workers are explored in relation to management style and supervisor professionalism, multicultural knowledge, values and skills, along with additional factors. A convenience sample of 260 public child welfare workers within four of Georgia's districts were

given a 160 item self-administered survey to complete. All of the survey respondents were either case managers or supervisors of case managers, and all agencies involved (minus Fulton County in District 13) were participants in KSU's Title IV-E program. A mixed methods design was implemented in this study. Quantitative data was collected by utilizing a modified version of the Workforce Retention Survey in conjunction with the Multi-Cultural Counseling Inventory. Personal factors highly associated with job retention were found to be professional commitment to the agency and families as well as job satisfaction. Although efficacy is nationally a highly regarded personal factor, this survey domain was low amongst child welfare workers in Georgia. Georgia surveyed consistently with national responses that negatively impact worker retention, including: burnout, emotional exhaustion, role overload, conflict and stress. The organizational factor contributing to job retention in Georgia was coworker support. Organizational factors that were ranked particularly low amongst Georgia public child welfare workers include: better salaries, reasonable workloads, supervisory support, opportunities for advancement, organizational commitment, and valuing employees.

### **UNIVERSITY/AGENCY PARTNERSHIP**

**Bagdasaryan, S. (2012). Social work education and Title IV-E program participation as predictors of entry-level knowledge among public child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34(9), 1590-1597.***

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.04.013>

This study compared MSW trained child welfare workers and those with other educational backgrounds on objective tests of child welfare knowledge and two additional specific knowledge areas. The authors further distinguished MSW recipients by those who participated in Title IV-E stipend-based programs and those who did not participate in such programs. Results show that those workers with MSW degrees score higher on the objective knowledge tests than their colleagues with differing degrees. Furthermore, workers with MSW who participated in a Title IV-E stipend based program scored higher on the standardized tests than their counterparts who did not participate in these programs.

**Brown, J.K., Chavkin, N.F., & Peterson, V. (2002). Tracking process and outcome results of BSW students' preparation for public child welfare practice: Lessons learned. *Evaluation Research in Child Welfare: Improving Outcomes Through University-Public Agency Partnerships, 15(3/4), 105-116.***

**Available at:**

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Examination+of+racial+imbalance+for+children+in+foster+care:+Implementations+for+training&ots=B6E8sruIF7&sig=Vvju7F9pOxghLTGpn10jiteoenE#v==onepage&q=&f=false>

This study explored a Texas university/agency partnership program to prepare social work students for public child welfare. The results of the outcome study showed that more than 79% of the BSW stipend students were hired upon completion of the internship. Fifty-six percent of those who were hired stayed beyond their commitment and the length of employment ranged from one to nine years.

**Clark, S.J., Smith, R.J., & Uota, K. (2013). Professional development opportunities as retention incentives in child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review, 35*(10), 1687-1697.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org.10.1016/j.childyouth.2013.07.006>

This study examined the career paths of 415 Title IV-E MSW graduates in one state retrospectively over 180 months post-graduation to discover factors that could be important in affecting retention in public child welfare agencies. The Title IV-E educational program is designed to be a retention strategy at the same time as it is a professionalization strategy. We surmised that perceived organizational support (POS) contributes to retention by acknowledging the workers' needs for career development support. The median survival time for these child welfare social workers was 43 months for the first job and 168 months for the entire child welfare career. The initial analysis showed steep drops in retention occurred at 24-36 months post-graduation, approximately at the end of the Title IV-E work obligation. Upon further examination, Kaplan-Meier tests showed organizational factors relevant to workers' professional career development predicted retention. Having access to continuing education and agency-supported case-focused supervision for licensure were correlated with retention at the 24-36 month post-graduation mark. At 72 months post-graduation, promotion to supervisor was a significant factor found to encourage retention. Being a field instructor for MSW students and being promoted to a managerial position were not significantly related to retention.

**Coleman, D., & Clark, S. (2003). Preparing for child welfare practice: Themes, a cognitive-affective model, and implications from a qualitative study. In Briar-Lawson & Zlotnik (Eds.), *Charting the impacts of university-child welfare collaboration. (p. 67-81). New York: The Haworth Press.***

**Available at:**

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=uaHgAVEpolwC&oi=fnd&pg=PA83&dq=Preparing+for+child+welfare+practice:+Themes,+a+cognitive-affective+model,+and+implications+from+a+qualitative+study&ots=gHVAasrcg7&sig=Y3cSURfQW47fHcIWlhW37gEOw-Y#v=onepage&q=Preparing%20for%20child%20welfare%20practice%3A%20Themes%2c%20a%20cognitive-affective%20model%2C%20and%20implications%20from%20from%20a%20qualitative%20study&f=false>

This qualitative study conducted 37 focus groups over four years with approximately 550 Title IV-E MSW students. The most frequent themes centered on direct practice: students emphasized direct practice as the most frequently mentioned strength of the curriculum as well as the most frequently mentioned weakness. Anxiety and apprehension about the emotional challenge of social work emerged as a theme.

**Dickinson, N.S., & Perry, R.E. (2002). Factors influencing the retention of specially educated public child welfare workers. *Evaluation research in child welfare: Improving outcomes through university-public agency partnerships*, 15(3/4), 89-103.**

**Available at:**

[http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA89&dq=Factors+influencing+the+retention+of+specially+educated+public+child+welfare+workers&ots=B6E8sruPF4&sig=4aWCFvzOnwO4gtMaiW\\_u2ma28Q8#v=onepage&q=Factors%20influencing%20the%20retention%20of%20speciality%20educated%20educated%20public%20child%20welfare%20workers&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA89&dq=Factors+influencing+the+retention+of+specially+educated+public+child+welfare+workers&ots=B6E8sruPF4&sig=4aWCFvzOnwO4gtMaiW_u2ma28Q8#v=onepage&q=Factors%20influencing%20the%20retention%20of%20speciality%20educated%20educated%20public%20child%20welfare%20workers&f=false)

This study examined the factors that affect the retention of specially trained social workers in public child welfare positions. Two hundred and thirty-five Title IV-E funded MSW graduates completed the survey instrument. The findings showed that the level of emotional exhaustion, salary, percentage of work week spent doing court related tasks, and the extent to which respondents receive support from work peers and supervisors were significant factors that influenced graduates who remained in public child welfare employment and those who left or planned to leave public child welfare jobs. Worker burnout was the number one reason for leaving child welfare jobs.

**Falk, D.S. (2015). Alumni of a BSW-level specialized title IV-E program voice their experiences in the workplace. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 51(Suppl. 2), S173-S194.**

**Available at:**

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10437797.2015.1072410#.VyOErsvoe70>

This study surveyed 289 alumni of a specialized Title IV-E program that prepares undergraduate social work students for careers in public child welfare, examining factors such as turnover rates, adherence to strengths-based practice principles, perceptions of work conditions, and intent to stay. Findings indicate that graduates of this program were less likely than other caseworkers to leave their positions. Most maintained adherence to strengths-based practice principles, reported satisfaction with the work, felt supported by colleagues, and intended to stay in the field of child welfare. Based on alumni comments, ways that agencies can retain such workers are suggested.

**Fox, S.R., Miller, V.P., & Barbee, A.P. (2003). Finding and keeping child welfare workers: effective use of training and professional development. In Briar-Lawson & Zlotnik (Eds.), *Charting the impact of university-child welfare collaboration*. (p. 67-81). New York: The Haworth Press.**

**Available at:**

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ua=HgAVEPolwC&oi=fnd&pg=PA67&dq=Finding+and+keeping+child+welfare+workers:+effective+use+of+training+and+professional+development&ots=gHVAassaj9&sig=svKJDgBy8yxZZJkYP8KcwHANK4#v=onepage&q=Finding%20and%20keeping%20child%20welfare%20workers%3A%20effective%20use%20of%20training%20and%20professional%20development&f=false>

This article describes an evaluation of the Kentucky Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP) designed to recruit excellent workers from BSW programs who are prepared to take on

complex cases with normal supervision within weeks of employment and to sustain those workers over time. The results of the pilot study show that agency supervisors consider the graduates to be: better prepared to handle complex cases much sooner than other new employees including BSW graduates, less stressed and more confident, more skilled in interaction with clients, more knowledgeable of agency policy and procedures, and much more positive in their attitudes about the agency and their job.

**Gansle, K.A., & Ellett, A.J. (2002). Child welfare knowledge transmission, practitioner retention, and university-community impact: A study of Title IV-E child welfare training. *Evaluation research in child welfare: Improving outcomes through university-public agency partnerships*, 15(3/4) 69-88.**

**Available at:**

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7xDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA69&dq=Child+welfare+knowledge+transmission,+practitioner+retention,+and+University+community+impact:+A+study+of+Title+IV-E+child+welfare+training&ots=B6EsrVx2&sig=Q07yfcPXPzn8HcAvT7GljXP23qY#onepage&q=Child%20welfare%20knowledge%20transmission%2C%20practitioner%20retention%2C%20and%20University-%20community%20impact%3A%20A%20study%20of%20Title%20IV-E%20child%20welfare%20training&f=false>

This study compares child welfare knowledge of Louisiana's MSW and BSW Title IV-E stipend students with non-stipend students using a quasi-experimental design. The study found that on a test of child welfare knowledge, students in MSW and BSW programs scored higher following child welfare training.

**Jones, L. (2002). A follow-up of a Title IV-E program's graduates' retention rates in a public child welfare agency. *Evaluation research in child welfare: Improving outcomes through university-public agency partnerships*, 15(3/4), 39-51.**

**Available at:**

[http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA189&dq=Jones,+L.+\(2002\).+A+follow-up+of+a+Title+IV-E+program%E%80%99s+graduates%E%80%99+retention+rates+in+a+public+child+welfare+agency.++Evaluation+Research+in+Child+Welfare:+Improving+Outcomes+Through+University+%2E2%80%93+Public+Agency+Partnerships,++15\(3/4\)++39-51.&ots=B6E8srVz5&sig=5NFZH AeMBTZzrbU8jJxCx-scqA#v=onepage&qf=false](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA189&dq=Jones,+L.+(2002).+A+follow-up+of+a+Title+IV-E+program%E%80%99s+graduates%E%80%99+retention+rates+in+a+public+child+welfare+agency.++Evaluation+Research+in+Child+Welfare:+Improving+Outcomes+Through+University+%2E2%80%93+Public+Agency+Partnerships,++15(3/4)++39-51.&ots=B6E8srVz5&sig=5NFZH AeMBTZzrbU8jJxCx-scqA#v=onepage&qf=false)

This retrospective study examined the retention rates of a Title IV-E program's graduates in a public child welfare agency. The sample size used was 266. The study found that Title IV-E trained social workers were more likely to have remained employed for a longer period of time than non-IV-E trained employees. Other important predictors were Spanish speaking, having an MSW, and being rehired by the agency.



**Leung, P. & Willis, N. (2012). The impact of Title IV-E training on case outcomes for children served by CPS. *Journal of Family Strengths*, 12(1), Article 9.**

**Available at:** <http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/jfs/vol12/iss1/9>

This study examines administrative data from the state of Texas regarding the impact of social work education provided by Title IV-E stipend programs on better case outcomes as defined by the Child and Family Services Review, which includes recurrence of child maltreatment, reentry into foster care, stability of foster care placements, length of time to reunification, and length of time to adoption. Results did not show a significant difference between Title IV-E stipend program participants and other participants with social work degrees for the first three case outcomes. However, there was a significant difference in improved outcomes for reduction in the recurrence of maltreatment, stability of foster care placements, and reduction in time for adoption for those with a social work degree compared to those with other educational backgrounds. A significant difference between Title IV-E stipend program participant and those with other social work degrees was seen in the length of time for reunification.

**McGuire, L.E. & Lay, K. (2007). Is social work education relevant to child welfare practice? A qualitative analysis from the adult learner perspective. *Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education*, 10(2), 16-25.**

**Available at:** <http://www.profdevjournal.org/articles.102016.pdf>

This study was conducted in conjunction with a federally mandated qualitative study to evaluate a newly developed university/agency Title IV-E education program. This paper reviews findings from a qualitative design used to ascertain Title IV-E participants' experience in the MSW programs and their opinions of the educational cohort model implemented in this partnership. Results show that Title IV-E MSW participants were able to immediately incorporate what they have learned in the classroom into their casework practice. Knowledge gained through core social work courses were beneficial to Title IV-E participants through acknowledging how these values and skills are implemented in their child welfare practice, gave them insight into how policy and political processes affect child welfare, and encouraged them to use the concepts of strengths perspective, collaborative practice, and empowerment to advocate for child welfare involved families. In addition, participants felt that the opportunity to obtain the MSW strengthened their commitment to child welfare work. Title IV-E program participants valued the cohort model of their MSW education because it allowed them to interact with other child welfare workers from different agencies and different levels of casework (e.g., supervisors and administrators). The cohort model enabled the Title IV-E participants to gain a better understanding of different aspects of casework and also provided them with a peer support network. Title IV-E participants appreciated the opportunity to showcase their transfer of learning by applying names to the skills and techniques they have been using in their casework practice. The study also detailed supports and stressors reported by the Title IV-E participants. The stressors were to be used to further enhance the Title IV-E educational program and delineate the expectations for each group of stakeholders (e.g., the university, the agency, and the Title IV-E student).

**Morazes, J.L., Benton, A.D., Clark, S.J., & Jacquet, S.E. (2010). Views of specially-trained child welfare social workers: A qualitative study of their motivations, perceptions, and retention. *Qualitative Social Work*, 9(2), 227-247.**

**Available at:** <http://qsw.sagepub.com/content/9/2/227.full.pdf+html>

University-agency partnerships are on strategy in training, and ultimately retaining, public child welfare workers in the field. California's Title IV-E MSW graduates are surveyed in this study in order to compare and contrast the experiences of students who decided to stay in the field and those who ultimately decided to leave. Surveys were mailed to the MSW graduates within six months to one year of students having completed their work obligation. Students completed the survey, indicated if they would like a follow-up interview, and mailed the surveys back to the graduate-level student researchers. The interviews were conducted over a ten year span, beginning in 1999 and ending in 2005. 791 graduates completed the survey and 386 chose to participate in an in-person or telephone interview. Of the students interviewed, 78.6% chose to stay in the field of public child welfare while 21.2% expressed that they'd be leaving or have already left. Although both "stayers" and "leavers" expressed satisfaction with their program and a feeling of preparedness for the work, the "stayers" had greater access to buffers and experienced the benefits of working in supervision and a positive work environment. "Stayers" were also more likely than "leavers" to report promotion and entry into supervisory roles. The "leavers" reported exiting the field due to a lack of support and respect from supervisors and other staff, high levels of stress, difficulties transferring within or between counties, and other personal/familial obligations and duties. While both "stayers" and "leavers" experienced stressful working conditions, the "stayers" were more likely to discuss the buffering forces (e.g., quality supervision) that helped them alleviate the stress and persevere through challenges.

**Pierce, L. (2003). Use of Title IV-E funding in BSW programs. In Briar-Lawson & Zlotnik (Eds.), *Charting the impacts of university-child welfare collaboration*. (p. 21-33). New York: The Haworth Press.**

**Available at:**

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=uaHgAVEPolwC&oi=fnd&pg=PA21&dg=Use+of+Title+IVE+funding+in+BSW+programs.+&ots=gHVAast9de&sig=nCET6jzJsgPiizXOkeJE20HkqvM#v=onepage&q=Use%20of%20Title%20IVE%20funding%20in%20BSW%20programs.&f=false>

A survey design was used to find if all BSW programs in 1998-1999 were using Title IV-E funds to provide support for students who would agree to work in public child welfare programs after graduation. Out of 464 schools that were sent a questionnaire, 282 programs returned the questionnaire. The study found that of the schools that responded, 48 received Title IV-E funding for BSW students. Program directors were asked if they included child welfare content in the curriculum. About one-fourth of the programs said they had a child welfare course as required; fifteen percent had child welfare courses as electives; only 4 percent required child welfare courses for all students; 20% had combination of the above; and the rest of the programs (34%) had no child welfare content in their courses.

**Robin, S.C., & Hollister, C.D. (2002). Career paths and contributions for four cohorts of IV-E funded MSW child welfare graduates. *Evaluation research in child welfare: Improving outcomes through university-public agency partnerships*, 15(3/4), 53-67.**

**Available at:** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed.12705464>

This study of 73 MSW graduates from 1993-1996 and 32 survey respondents assesses the extent to which IV-E MSW graduates remain engaged in child welfare following completion of their employment obligations to the IV-E program. The study found that “the vast majority of graduates funded by IV-E dollars became employed in and stayed in child welfare services, and that these social work-educated social workers are actively involved in shaping the practice, policies and administration of child welfare services.”

**Scannapieco, M., & Connell-Corrick, K. (2003). Do collaborations with social work make a difference for the field of child welfare? Practice, retention, and curriculum. In Briar-Lawson & Zlotnik (Eds.), *Charting the impacts of university-child welfare collaboration*. (p.35-51). New York: The Haworth Press.**

**Available at:**

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=uaHgAVEPolwC&oi=fnd&pg=PA35&dq=Do+collaborations+with+social+work+make+a+difference+for+the+field+of+child+welfare%3F+practice,+retention+and+curriculum&ots=gHVAastcdd&sig=FmRXC0M0YBVSgsBuriN4CJW146w#v=onepage&q=Do%20collaborations%20with%20social%20work%20make%20a%20difference%20for%20the%20field%20of%20child%20welfare%3F%20practice%2C%20retention%20and%20curriculum&f=false>

This article provides three areas of evaluation of a partnership between a school of social work and a state department of child protective services. The first study determines the impact and success of the Title IV-E program from both the students’ and the larger community’s perspective. The findings of surveys administered to both MSW Title IV-E students and to supervisors and administrators of Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) showed that approximately 50% of students agreed that their Masters education had improved their skills and relationship with their employers, community, and the profession. Administrator survey results showed 47% agreed that MSW’s have a better ability to use various interventions with clients than do bachelor-level employees. The second study determined the retention of Title IV-E participants in the agency. The study found that the reasons to remain employed at CPS were commitment to work, flexible schedule, and increase in professionalism. Salary was reported as the most frequent reason for leaving CPS. The third study determines the current level of child welfare content in MSW curricula. The study found that 60% of respondents stated that there should be more emphasis on child welfare content in the future. The findings of the three studies suggest that Title IV-E funding is essential to the specialized training and education needed by child welfare workers.

**Scannapieco, M., Hegar, R.L., & Connell-Corrick, K. (2012). Professionalism in public child welfare: Historical context and workplace outcomes for social workers and non-social workers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(11), 2170-2178.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2012.07.016>

In this article the history of the U.S. Children's Bureau in developing and professionalizing child welfare services is summarized along with a literature review regarding the relationships between professional preparation and outcomes in service delivery, job performance and preparedness, social work values, and retention of staff. In addition, results from an evaluation study including longitudinal data from 10,000 child welfare workers in Texas are discussed. A major finding from the evaluation is that significant differences exist between the experiences and perceptions of those with social work degrees and those workers with different educational backgrounds.

## **RETENTION STRATEGIES**

**American Public Human Services Association. (2001). Report from the Child Welfare Workforce Survey: State and county data findings. In conjunction with Alliance for Children and Families and Child Welfare League of America. Washington, DC: Author.**

**Available at:**

[http://books.google.com/books/about/Report\\_from\\_the\\_Child\\_Welfare\\_Workforce.html?id=u4kVHAAACAAJ](http://books.google.com/books/about/Report_from_the_Child_Welfare_Workforce.html?id=u4kVHAAACAAJ)

Forty-three (43) states and 48 counties from seven states with locally administered child welfare agencies participated in this study. The study employed survey methodology. Findings from state data indicate that (1) vacancy rates are low among staff groups; (2) annual staff turnover rates are high for all groups except supervisors; (3) annual preventable turnover rates are high for all staff groups except supervisors; (4) the median percentage of all preventable turnovers in FY 2000 was very high; (5) the impact of vacancies on agencies is compounded by required pre-service training and phased-in caseload policies; (6) the dimensions and factors involved in staff recruitment are varied, complex, and widespread; (7) while states have implemented many strategies and approaches in response to recruitment problems, there are no "magic bullets" or "quick fixes;" (8) preventable staff turnover problems are complex, multi-dimensional and widespread; (9) states have implemented many strategies and approaches to deal with preventable turnover problems, but their effectiveness has been modest; (10) there is a gap between the states' rate recruitment and retention problems and their implementation of strategies to address such problems; (11) "softer" strategies (e.g., in-service training, and educational opportunities) for addressing staff preventable turnover are important; (12) some states are successful and reported that their recruitment and/or preventable turnover situation improved in FY 2000; (13) state have many ideas about actions that should be taken by agencies to recruit and retain qualified child welfare service workers; (14) significant amounts of data are missing from some survey responses. In comparison, county responses indicate that: (1) vacancy rates are relatively low for all staff groups and are lower than state vacancy rates for all staff groups; (2) annual county staff turnover, like state staff turnover, is quite high for all staff groups except for supervisors; (3) annual county preventable turnover rates are very low for all worker groups; (4) the median percentage of all preventable turnovers in the counties are between 27% and 47% for all worker groups except supervisors; (5) counties and states responding to the survey view the factors involved in staff recruitment problems in a similar way; (6) like states, responding counties have implemented many strategies and approaches to lessen recruitment problems, but similarly have not found "magic bullets" or "quick fixes; (7) counties rates preventable turnovers as less problematic than states did; (8) like states, counties have implemented

many strategies and approaches for addressing preventable turnover problems, but their rates effectiveness is higher than states'; (9) counties also see "softer" strategies as important for addressing preventable turnover; (10) county child welfare agencies are somewhat more likely to seek additional resources from county boards as a result of the workforce crisis than states did with governors/state legislatures; and (11) the extent of change experienced by counties was somewhat more positive than states.

**Caringi, J.C., Strolin-Goltzman, J., Lawson, H.A., McCarthy, M., Briar-Lawson, K., & Claiborne, N. (2008). Child welfare design teams: An intervention to improve workforce retention and facilitate organizational development. *Research on Social Work Practice, 18*(6), 565-574.**

**Available at:** <http://rsw.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/18/6/565>

Based on current research of the causes of preventable turnover and theories related to organizational change, an intervention was designed to reduce turnover in public child welfare agencies. The intervention included three components: management consultations, capacity building for supervisors, and an intra-agency design team (DT). The DT intervention was a team of agency representatives who used research and critical thinking to identify and remedy causes of turnover in a particular agency. The DT members included the agency that has members representing units such as foster care and child protective services. The members were at several levels of the agency's hierarchy, including frontline caseworker, senior caseworker, supervisor, director of services, and deputy commissioner. True buy-in and endorsement from the County commissioners was essential to giving DT the authority to collect and review data and testing creative solutions. Preliminary results from four systems in the DT intervention study indicate that from wave 1 (2002) to wave 2 (2005), the nonintervention systems showed no significant improvement of 3% on intention to leave. At wave 1, 81% of the employees identified an intention to leave, while 78% indicated intention to leave at wave 2. On the other hand, the systems that received the DT intervention improved significantly by 22% from 76% down to 54%.

**Gomez, R.J., Travis, D.J., Ayers-Lopez, S., & Schwab, A.J. (2010). In search of innovation: A national qualitative analysis of child welfare recruitment and retention efforts. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(5), 644-671.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.01.001>

A national qualitative study explored recruitment and retention strategies within state child welfare agencies and the perceived effectiveness of such strategies. The study explored 50 state child welfare websites and conducted interviews with 18 individuals across 13 states. Findings suggest that agencies struggle with heightened turnover rates despite continuing identification and implementation of comparable types of recruitment and retention efforts. Nationally well utilized and underutilized strategies to alleviate recruitment and retention challenges are discussed, as well as mechanisms for overcoming these obstacles and promoting innovation. Creativity, new strategies, and other innovative forces have been important factors in improving recruitment and retention in other fields (e.g., nursing).

**Strand, V.C. & Badger, L. (2005). Professionalizing child welfare: An evaluation of a clinical consultation model for supervisors. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 27(8), 865-880.**

**Available at:** <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S019074090400252X>

This study reviews a clinical consultation model that was developed and tested with child welfare supervisors in public and private agencies in a large urban municipality over a three year period. The project involved existing university-child welfare partnerships, faculty from six social work schools, and the child welfare system. Evaluation methods included pre and post self-assessment instruments, a consumer satisfaction questionnaire, and follow-up measures at the three and 15 month post-program participation points. Data demonstrated significant increases in the self-assessment scores from the pilot study (year one) to year two. Intervention fidelity remained consistent across years two and three, with statistically significant changes in self-assessment scores in each year. Findings suggest that the clinical consultation model offers a tool for professional development decision making that is transferable to comparable large cities and child welfare systems with similar staff/client numbers.

**Strolin-Goltzman, J. (2010). Improving turnover in public child welfare: Outcomes from an organizational intervention. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(10), 1388-1395.**

**Available at:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.06.007>

This article focuses on the effects of an organizational intervention on intention to leave child welfare. It is one of only two studies of its kind. A non-equivalent comparison group design was used with 12 child welfare agencies participating in either the Design and Improvement Teams (DT) intervention condition or in a comparison condition. Pre and post intervention assessments of the organizational factors and intention to leave took place. No significant interactions were noted for the organizational variables of workload, salary/benefits, and rewards. Findings do indicate significant interactions for three organizational variables (professional resources, commitment, and burnout) and intention to leave. All of these interactions showed a greater positive improvement for the DT group than the comparison group. A good model of fit demonstrated with pathways leading from the intervening organizational variables to intention to leave. Interventions at the organizational level could help child welfare agencies improve organizational shortcomings, positively affect perceptions of burnout, role clarity, and job satisfaction, decrease intentions to leave, and improve service quality.

**The Butler Institute for Families (2009, May). *The Western Regional Recruitment & Retention Project Final Report*. University of Denver, Graduate School of Social Work, Denver, Colorado.**

The Western Regional Recruitment and Retention Project (WRRRP) addressed recruitment, selection, and retention issues in five rural and urban sites in the greater Rocky Mountain region- Colorado, Arizona, and Wyoming. Multiple training curricula and other resources were developed to attend to cross-site issues. Comprehensive organizational assessments were conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the agency, the worker, and the job. This information was used to create a strategic plan addressing the conditions that impact recruitment, selection, training, and retention. Each site interpreted the information from the organizational assessment,

developed sites' specific strategic plans of needs, priorities, and training intervention strategies. Throughout the five year project, WRRRP staff provided support, technical assistance, and training. Evaluation activities were conducted throughout the project's life to assess process and outcome results and to provide on-going assessment to make mid-course corrections. A major finding of the outcome evaluation was improved retention for caseworkers, supervisors, and aides. A qualitative finding of note was the importance of good supervision in retaining workers. The authors also note that no single intervention will resolve the problems of ineffective recruitment and retention a multi-pronged approach addressing recruitment, selection, training, and retention is necessary.

**Zlotnick, J.L., DePanfilis, D., Daining, C., & Lane, M.M (2005). *Factors influencing retention of child welfare staff: A systematic review of research*. Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research.**

**Available at:** [http://ncwwi.org/files/Retention/Factors\\_influencing\\_retention\\_of\\_CW\\_staff.pdf](http://ncwwi.org/files/Retention/Factors_influencing_retention_of_CW_staff.pdf)

This is a systematic review of 25 different research studies that focus on the retention of child welfare workers. The review aimed to address the question of the primary “conditions and strategies that influence the retention of staff in public child welfare.” The authors found that the most consistent characteristics related to retention were individual's level of education, supervisory support, and worker caseload. The authors highlight the value of Title IV-E educational initiatives to recruit invested workers in pursuing advanced degrees in social work, and the negative impact that role overload and burnout have on retention. Recommendations are to increase the rigor and amount of research that is conducted in this area and to create a clearinghouse to regularly disseminate information about effective strategies in retaining workers and improving services that child welfare workers provide.

### **OTHER**

**Lawrence, C., Zuckerman, M., Smith, B.D., & Liu, J. (2012). Building cultural competence in the child welfare workforce: A mixed-methods analysis. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 6(2), 225-241.**

**Available at:** <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15548732.2012.667747#preview>

This article describes findings from a mixed-methods study of specialized training in cultural competence knowledge, attitudes, and skills for experienced caseworkers in public child welfare. Training participants were recruited through local child welfare agencies; while a sample of convenience, participants reflect the state-wide child welfare workforce's educational background. One hundred and forty participants attended the training and completed pre and post-test measures of knowledge, skills, and awareness of culturally competent practice (adapted from Goode, 2003). Initial findings indicate that training can have an impact on participant's knowledge of cultural competence. Study findings also show that participants believe this new knowledge positively affects how they and their coworkers practice with families.

**Strolin-Goltzman, J., Kollar, S., & Trinkel, J. (2010). Listening to the voices of children in foster care: Youths speak out about child welfare workforce turnover and selection. *Social Work*, 55(1), 47-53.**

**Available at:** <http://sw.oxfordjournals.org/content/55/1/47.full.pdf+html>

This study examined the experiences and opinions of child welfare workforce turnover and retention of youths in the child welfare system, explored the relationship between the number of caseworkers a youth has had and the number of the youth's foster care placements, and harnessed the suggestions of youths in resolving the turnover problem. Youths in the child welfare system ( $N=25$ ) participated in focus groups and completed a small demographic survey. Findings suggest that youths experience multiple effects of workforce turnover, such as lack of stability; loss of trusting relationships; and, at times, second chances. The article concludes with suggestions for caseworkers, state trainers, local and state administrators, and social work researchers on engaging *with* youths in relationships that facilitate genuine systems change around social work practice and the child welfare workforce crisis.

**Wehrmann, K.C., Shin, H., & Poertner, J. (2002). Transfer of learning: An evaluation study. *Evaluation research in child welfare: Improving outcomes through university-public agency partnerships*, 15(3/4), 23-37.**

**Available at:**

[http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA23&dq=Wehrmann,+K.+C.,+Shin,+H.,+%26+Poertner,+J.+\(2002\).+Transfer+of+training:+An+evaluation+study.+Evaluation+Research+in+Child+Welfare:+Improving+Outcomes+Through+University+%E2%80%93+Public+Agency+Partnerships,+15\(3/4\)+23-37.&ots=B6E8srwNCa&sig=y6gdhEGZGieCqdvS6liGcBo-8o#v=onepage&q=&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=T5D7wDnlEhoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA23&dq=Wehrmann,+K.+C.,+Shin,+H.,+%26+Poertner,+J.+(2002).+Transfer+of+training:+An+evaluation+study.+Evaluation+Research+in+Child+Welfare:+Improving+Outcomes+Through+University+%E2%80%93+Public+Agency+Partnerships,+15(3/4)+23-37.&ots=B6E8srwNCa&sig=y6gdhEGZGieCqdvS6liGcBo-8o#v=onepage&q=&f=false)

This study of 129 child welfare workers at the six-month follow-up found that the opportunity to perform new tasks and post-training peer support were important factors explaining training transfer. The results of this study suggest that greater involvement by trainees in the training process may positively influence child welfare workers learning of new skills and their ability to transfer them back to the practice setting.



# Appendix N

## Child Welfare Education and Research Programs

### CWEB/CWEL Faculty and Staff

Name	Position Title	CWEB/CWEL Percent of Effort	Employment Dates
Helen Cahalane, Ph.D., ACSW, LCSW	Principal Investigator	75%	1/20/97-present
Yodit Betru, DSW, LCSW	CWEB/CWEL Field Placement and Coordinator	100%	11/1/12-present
Cynthia Bradley-King, Ph.D.	CWEB Academic Coordinator	100%	8/21/06-present
Joseph DiPasqua, MA	Program Administrator	85%	6/16/14-present
Yvonne Hamm, BA	Senior Program Administrator	85%	6/28/10-present
Lynda Rose, BS	Data/Systems Manager and Student Records Coordinator	90%	8/4/10-present
Marlo Perry, Ph.D.	Research Assistant Professor	35%	8/1/10-present
Mary Beth Rauktis, Ph.D.	Research Assistant Professor	40%	10/1/07-present
Michael Schrecengost, MPPM, CMA	Chief Fiscal Officer	77.5%	3/3/03-present
Elizabeth Winter, Ph.D., LSW	CWEL Academic Coordinator	100%	6/1/06-present
Rachel Winters, M.A.	Evaluation Coordinator	30%	3/16/09-present



Thankyou



Published by

**Child Welfare Education and Research Programs  
School of Social Work  
University of Pittsburgh  
2329 Cathedral of Learning  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260**

**[www.socialwork.pitt.edu/research/child-welfare/index.php](http://www.socialwork.pitt.edu/research/child-welfare/index.php)  
1-866-275-2935**