



**Report from the  
Child Welfare Workforce Survey:  
State and County Data  
and Findings**

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# Report from the Child Welfare Workforce Survey

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## **Report of the Child Welfare Workforce Survey**

### **Executive Summary**

#### Survey Process and Response Rate

- This was a collaborative survey done by APHSA, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), and the Alliance for Children and Families in fall of 2000. APHSA mail surveyed all state public child welfare agencies and a sample of county agencies; CWLA and the Alliance mail surveyed a sample of their private agency members. This report presents findings from the APHSA portion of the study.
- A total of 43 states (84%) completed the survey. Thirty-five of the 43 states responding use a state-administered child welfare system, and eight are locally administered. Two additional locally administered states provided a sample of counties in lieu of responding themselves.
- A total of 48 counties in seven locally administered states responded to the survey, with 42 coming from samples done by three states (Minnesota, California, and North Carolina). Survey findings from the county data are presented at the conclusion of the report.

#### Definitions of Key Terms Used in Survey

Direct Service Workers: all agency professional staff persons who carry cases and provide services directly to children and/or families (i.e., including case managers, but excluding paraprofessional staff). For the purposes of this survey, we divided direct service workers into two groups:

1. Child Protective Service (CPS) Workers: workers that provide services to families in which a child has been identified as a victim of or at risk of abuse or neglect. The core CPS services are report taking, safety assessment, investigation, risk assessment, family assessment, and case service planning and implementation.
2. All Other Direct Service Workers: all agency professional staff who carry cases and provide services, other than CPS, to children and/or families (i.e., including case managers, but excluding paraprofessional staff). While agencies will have different service and position names for such direct service staff, some of the large service areas include family support services, out-of-home care, foster care and adoption services, family therapy, and individual and group counseling.

Supervisors: assigned agency staff persons who provide formal direction for and oversight of the performance of direct service workers.

Preventable turnovers: workers who leave the agency for reasons other than retirement, death, marriage/parenting, returning to school, or spousal job move. The balance of staff leaving the agency for other reasons is defined as “preventable turnovers,” which are of particular concern to human service agencies. Exit interviews are a common source of such information.

### Summary of State Survey Findings

1. Vacancy rates are relatively low for all four staff groups. Using the “snapshot” date of Sept. 1, 2000, median vacancy rates were between 5-7% for CPS workers, all other direct service workers, supervisors, and total staff of the agency. Additionally, the time required to fill vacancies is relatively short—between six and seven weeks for all staff groups. With this quick replacement, the number of positions vacant at any time appears to be only slightly higher than the general experience of the public sector. For example, state and local governments routinely apply across the board vacancy factors of 2-4% or more for budgeting purposes.
2. Annual staff turnover rates, however, are quite high for all staff groups except supervisors. The median turnover rates (i.e., person left for any reason) from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000 (FY 2000) were 22% for child CPS workers, 18% for all other direct service workers, 13% for total agency staff, and 6% for supervisors. In other words, 22 out of every 100 CPS workers left the typical state agency in FY 2000. Also the turnover rate for CPS workers is 76% higher than the rate for total agency staff, and the turnover rate for all other direct service workers is 39% higher than total agency staff.
3. Annual preventable turnover rates also are high for all staff groups except supervisors. The median CPS worker rate is 15%, compared to 9% for all other direct service workers and total agency staff, and 4% for supervisors. This means that the typical state agency lost 15 out of every 100 CPS workers to preventable turnover in FY 2000. The CPS preventable turnover rate is 67%, or two-thirds again, higher than the rate for both all other direct service workers and total agency staff.
4. Analyzed another way, the median percentage of all turnovers that was preventable in FY 2000 was very high—50% for supervisors and all other direct service staff, 60% for total agency staff, and 67% for CPS workers. In some states, 75% or more of staff turnovers are preventable. For example, seven of the 16 states responding reported that more than 78% of CPS turnovers was preventable.
5. The impact on child welfare agencies of vacancies caused by turnovers is compounded by commonly required pre-service training and phased-in caseload policies. The average mandatory pre-service training for CPS workers is 136 hours, or about 3.5 weeks, and 98 hours, or 2.4 weeks, for all other direct service staff. While some states do not require pre-service training, most states do and for some states the training period is substantial (e.g., 440 hours or 11 weeks). Even after pre-service training, many states phase in caseloads with the new workers, thus continuing the pressure on the existing staff to carry the overall caseload and workload during the new staff “gearing-up” period.

6. The dimensions and factors involved in staff recruitment problems are varied, complex, and wide spread. Some highly problematic factors are internal (e.g., perceived imbalance of the demands of the job and the financial compensation) while others are more external (e.g., other attractive labor market alternatives for job seekers). At the same time, most states are not being hampered by other factors, like non-competitive benefits, hiring freezes, and union constraints.
7. While states have implemented many strategies and approaches in response to recruitment problems, there are no “magic bullets or quick fixes.” Many responses have been either collaborative (e.g., early and aggressive recruitment at schools of social work) or technical (e.g., posting job announcement on employment web sites). A troubling finding, however, is that states rated as many implemented strategies as “not effective” (12%) as they rated “highly effective” (11%). Even raising salaries beyond normal inflationary increases was only rated as highly effective by one of the 14 states that implemented it. The overwhelming majority of implemented strategies are judged to be “somewhat effective” (77%).
8. Similarly, preventable staff turnover problems are complex, multi-dimensional, and widespread. States have rated a number of retention issues as highly problematic, most notably in descending order:
  - Workloads that are too high and/or demanding
  - Caseloads are too high
  - Too much worker time is spent on travel, paperwork, courts, and meetings
  - Workers not feeling valued by the agency
  - Low salaries
  - Supervision problems
  - Insufficient resources for families and children
9. States have implemented many strategies and approaches to deal with preventable turnover problems, but their effectiveness generally has been modest. Because turnover is an even more complex issue than recruitment, there are more potential strategies and a greater connectivity among strategies for addressing preventable turnover. The range of strategies can be grouped into two main categories. First are those that usually require large or moderate levels of new resources (e.g., increased salaries, reduced caseloads, educational financial support). Second are those strategies that might be considered “softer” or generally require little or no new resources (e.g., valuing of workers, training, improved worker safety, mentoring program, flex time). Only 8% of all strategies implemented, however, were judged by the states implementing them to be “highly effective,” compared to 18% that were judged to be “not effective.” Three out of four implemented strategies were judged by the states that implemented them as “somewhat effective.”
10. There is an apparent gap between the states’ rated severity of staff recruitment and retention problems and the states’ implementation of effective strategies to address these problems. Around *recruitment*, states identified 62% of the factors as either “somewhat problematic” or “highly problematic,” with only 38% being judged “not problematic.” When we look at the recruitment strategies, however, the numbers are almost reversed, with only 37% of the

strategies being implemented and 63% not implemented. Turning to *retention*, 71% of the problem factors were rated as “somewhat or highly problematic” leaving only 29% as “not problematic.” Again almost in reverse, however, only 36% of the strategies were implemented, while 64% were not implemented.

11. “Softer” strategies for addressing staff preventable turnover are important. Six of the eight retention strategies rated as most effective by states fall into the “softer” category, or those strategies that are within the volition and authority of managers to change (and often requiring little or no new resources), including:
- Increased in-service training
  - Increased educational opportunities
  - Increased/improved supervisory training
  - Increased/improved orientation
  - Increased worker safety
  - Flex time and/or changes in office hours
- (All of these strategies were rated as more effective than special efforts to raise salaries.)

Feedback from 10 states that conducted worker satisfaction surveys confirms the importance of softer retention strategies. The most frequent recommendations from workers dealt with improved supervision, management, and staff communications, and fairness on the job (30%). While increased wages and decreased caseloads (requiring more resources and higher level approval) were the next most frequent recommendations (23 % each), the softer strategies of an improved work climate (10%) and improved training (7%) followed immediately.

12. Some states are having success and reported that their recruitment and/or preventable turnover situation improved in FY 2000 compared to the prior two years. While there were only one or two states that reported that their situation was “much better,” nine states indicated that things were “some better.” This finding is consistent with the “no quick fix or magic bullet” nature of these staffing issues as discussed earlier. When asked what their state agencies did to achieve this improvement, these positive outcome states shared 32 actions and strategies, with the most frequent responses being in descending order:
- Increased/improved staff training, including three states that specifically targeted supervisor training
  - Strengthened recruitment techniques (e.g., job fairs, use of job websites)
  - Formed stronger and more consistent partnerships with schools of social work
  - Lowered caseloads
  - Raised salaries
  - Implemented innovated new recruitment strategies (e.g., realistic “job preview” video)

13. States (and for this question also including counties) have many ideas about the most important actions and initiatives child welfare agencies and their partners must take to successfully recruit and retain qualified child welfare direct service workers. In response to an open-ended question, 35 states and 45 counties provided 441 responses. The most

frequently recommended actions or initiatives, making-up over half of all responses, were in descending order:

- Increased salaries (14%)
- Staff training (12%)
- Reduced caseloads and workloads (11%)
- Service delivery and management improvements (8%)
- Changes to job conditions (e.g., flex time, mentoring) (8%)

14. Finally, significant amounts of data are missing from some survey responses. While this varies from question to question, missing data ran as high as 42% for vacancy rates, 56 % for turnover rates, and 63% for preventable turnover rates. Even more basic questions, like average annual salaries (49% missing) and mandatory training hours (33% missing), had high rates of missing data. That states did not provide the data does not necessarily mean that the data do not exist, but does raise concerns about the easy availability of such data for state program and management decision-making.

#### Observations from Findings

1. From this vacancy and turnover data, one can conclude that turnovers, particularly preventable turnovers, are fueling staff recruitment problems, especially among CPS workers. In response to this phenomenon, states have become quite efficient in filling the vacancies quickly, resulting in relatively small vacancy rates at any time. While some states previously have had infusions of moderate or large numbers of new child welfare staff positions to be filled (e.g. state of Washington in 1998-99), most vacancies are a direct result of turnovers, with half or more being identified as preventable.
2. Because there are many dimensions and factors at play with staff turnovers and vacancies, considerable variations and differences can occur from state to state, and often from county to county. This challenges states and counties to do a careful analysis of their particular situation in order to develop strategies and approaches for responding. One important source of information in this assessment process is the direct service workers themselves through worker surveys, focus groups, and exit interviews.
3. A lack of magic bullets or quick fixes for turnovers and vacancies challenges states and counties to use an intentional mix of multiple, well-coordinated strategies and approaches that are customized to address the specific turnover and vacancy problems they have. While increasing salaries and reducing caseloads are the most obvious and publicized strategies, states rated them as only “somewhat effective” in addressing these challenges. The survey findings affirm that competitive salaries and manageable caseloads are a necessary, but not sufficient, component of the ultimate resolution of this problem.
4. Many of the strategies and approaches identified by states throughout the survey clearly fall within the current volition and authority of many, or even most managers to implement. These “softer” strategies and actions often deal with the nature of work itself rather than monetary issues and rarely require significant new resources. The good news of these survey

findings is that many of the strategies and changes that could contribute to reducing preventable turnover and vacancies are already available to child welfare administrators.

5. States that were not able to answer a number of survey questions may want to consider what they need to do in order to have important on-going data for decision-making.

## Survey Process and Response Rate

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- A total of 43 states (84%) completed the survey. Thirty-five of the 43 states responding use a state-administered child welfare system, and eight are locally administered. Two additional locally administered states provided a sample of counties in lieu of responding themselves.
- A total of 48 counties in seven locally administered states responded to the survey, with 42 coming from samples done by three states (Minnesota, California, and North Carolina). Survey findings from the county data are presented at the conclusion of the report.

## Description of State Survey Respondents

- The mean (average) state operating budget was \$285 million, with a range from \$4.5 million to \$1.3 billion.
- Two state child welfare agencies were accredited and an additional nine were in the process of seeking accreditation.
- A Bachelors level degree was the predominant minimum academic degree required for all levels of staff among state child welfare workers. Eighty-nine percent of state CPS workers, 79% of other direct service workers, and 72% of supervisors required undergraduate degrees. Six states (15%) require a Masters degree for supervisors.
- One-third (13) of the states responding have a social work license requirement for CPS workers, with only one-quarter requiring this of other direct service workers and supervisors.
- Mandatory pre-service training for state CPS workers exceeds that for other direct service workers and supervisors, although there is significant variation. The average state requires 136 hours of pre-service for CPS workers compared to 98 hours for other direct service workers and 47 hours for supervisors. Mandatory in-service training is more consistent and averages between 23 and 28 hours for the three groups, although there much variation.
- A majority of states responding provide educational financial support for child welfare workers to pursue BSW (25 states), MSW (34 states), and related degrees (11 states). The most common sources of funding for this educational support are: Title IV-E funds and state revenue (23 states each), federal child welfare training funds (9 states), and federal SSBG funds (5 states).
- Two-thirds of the responding states provide a career ladder (structured mobility in job series) for CPS workers and other direct service workers (25 and 20 states respectfully), while about half the responding states have such ladders for supervisors (18 states).

## Workforce Salary Data

- The average annual salary of CPS worker incumbents is \$33,436, with an average minimum of \$27,459 and an average maximum of \$44,642.
- The average annual salary of other direct service worker incumbents is \$32,861, with an average minimum of \$26,725 and an average maximum of \$43,717.
- The average annual salary of supervisor incumbents is \$41,939, with an average minimum of \$34,441 and an average maximum of \$53,267.
- In all salary categories there was a broad range of salaries, although low and high outliers tended to offset each other, resulting in means and medians that were very similar.

## Average Caseload Size Per Worker and Supervisor Ratios

- When the child is defined as a case, CPS workers have an average caseload of 24 children and other direct service workers have an average caseload of 31 children. The range is 10 to 40 children for CPS workers and 12 to 110 children for other direct service workers.
- When the family is defined as a case, CPS workers have an average caseload of 17 families and other direct service workers have an average caseload of 20 families. The range is 8 to 27 families for CPS workers and 4 to 41 families for other direct service workers.
- The average child welfare supervisor supports seven full-time equivalent CPS workers (6.7 workers) or seven other direct services workers (7.2 workers). The range is four to twelve workers per supervisor for both groups.

## Staffing Issues

Table 1: Authorized Full Time Equivalent Positions in Agencies on Sept. 1, 2000

	<b>CPS Workers</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	632	676	176	2,866
Median	272	494	130	1,812
Total	17,710	22,298	5,802	106,047
N=	28	33	33	37

Table 2: Number of Positions Vacant on Sept. 1, 2000

	<b>CPS Workers</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	62	76	13	228
Median	18	33	6	79
Total	1,606	1,910	397	6,158
N=	26	25	30	27

Weeks Required to Fill Vacant Positions from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000

- The average (and median) number of weeks required to fill vacant positions during this one period was between six and seven weeks for CPS, other direct service workers, supervisors, and total agency staff. The range was between one and 13 weeks.

Table 3: Number of Staff That Left Agency for Any Reason during July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000

	<b>CPS</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	164	116	15	509
Median	52	107	8	237
Total	3,114	2,314	322	9,670
N=	19	20	22	19

Table 4: Number of Staff Leaving Agency Above That Are Estimated to be Preventable Turnovers

A “preventable turnover” is defined as a staff person leaving the agency for reasons other than retirement, death, marriage/parenting, returning to school, or spousal job move.

	<b>CPS</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	104	51	6	320
Median	29	23	4	140
Total	1,669	859	130	5,125
N=	16	17	20	16

Estimated Average Tenure of Agency Incumbents on Sept. 1, 2000

- The average tenure was seven years for CPS incumbents, eight years for all other direct service worker incumbents, 13 years for supervisors incumbents, and nine years for total agency staff incumbents.

**State Agency Vacancy and Turnover Rates**

Table 5: State Vacancy Rates on Sept. 1, 2000

Calculated by dividing the number of positions vacant in Table 2 by the authorized FTE positions in Table 1 for each worker group.

	<b>CPS</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	9.3%	11.8%	7.4%	8.1%
Median	6.4%	7.3%	5.4%	6.5%
Range	2-33%	0-54%	1-20%	1-27%
N=	25	25	29	27

Table 6: State Turnover Rates from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000

Calculated by dividing the number of staff that left the agency for any reason in Table 3 by the authorized FTE positions in Table 1 for each worker group.

	<b>CPS</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	19.9%	19.4%	8.0%	13.9%
Median	22.3%	17.6%	5.7%	12.7%
Range <sup>2</sup>	4-38%	5-43%	0-26%	4-32%
N=	19	20	21	19

Table 7: State Preventable Turnover Rates from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000

Calculated by dividing the number of estimated preventable turnovers in Table 4 by the authorized FTE positions in Table 1 for each worker group.

	<b>CPS</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	12.3%	9.8%	3.6%	8.5%
Median	14.7%	8.6%	3.8%	8.8%
Range	0-23%	2-27%	0-10%	1-19%
N=	16	16	19	16

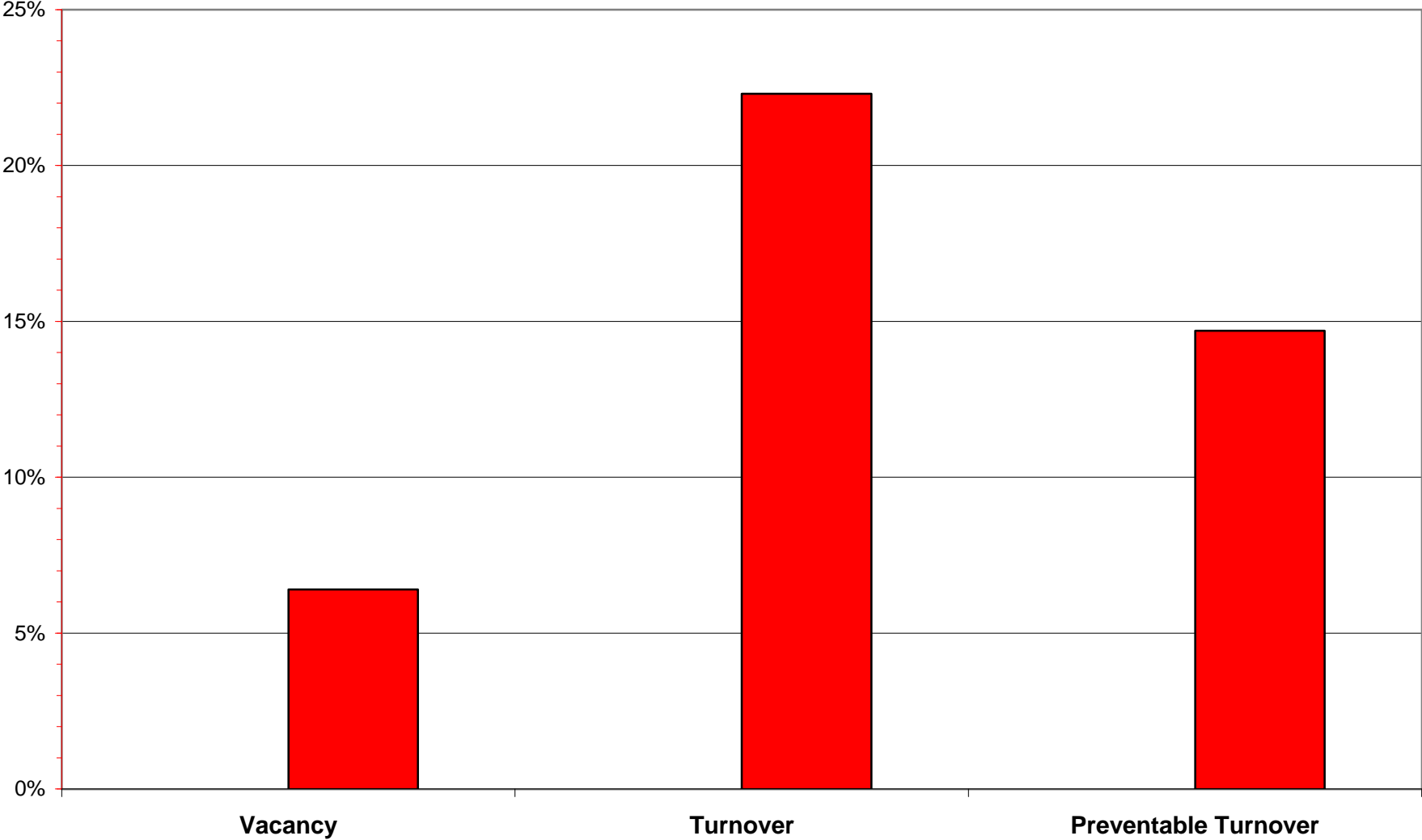
Table 8: Percentage of State Turnover That Was Preventable

Calculated by dividing the number of preventable turnovers in Table 4 by the number of staff leaving the agency for any reason in Table 3 for each worker group.

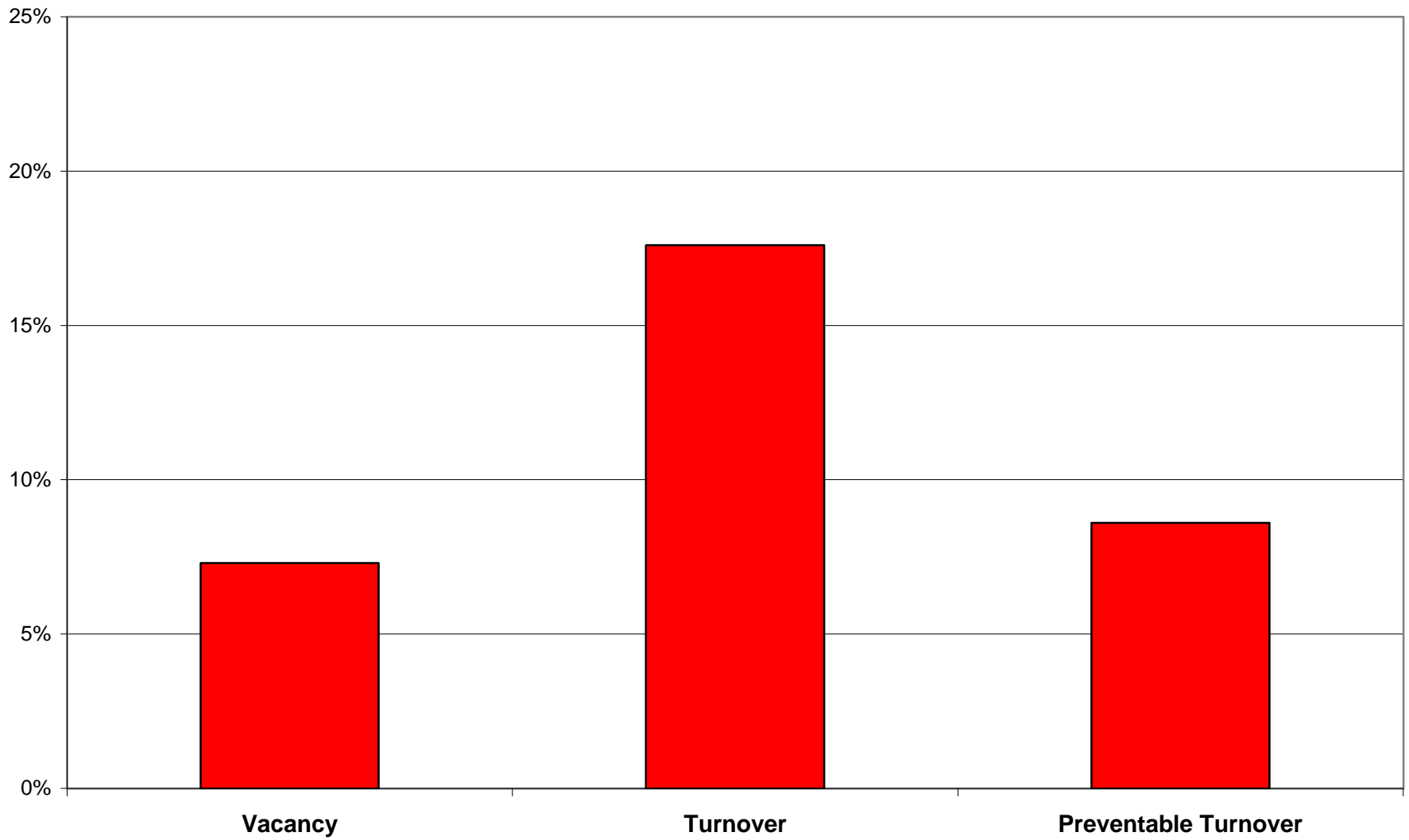
	<b>CPS</b>	<b>All Other Direct Service Workers</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>Total Staff in Agency</b>
Average	57.4%	57.0%	49.3%	60.0%
Median	66.6%	50.9%	50.0%	59.8%
Range	0-94%	10-100%	0-100%	21-100%
N=	16	16	19	16

- The bar graphs (A-E) on the next five pages show the median rates for each group of workers and a combined graph depicting the percentage of turnover that was preventable. Median rates (half are larger and half are smaller) are used rather than averages in order to mute the impact on the rates of particularly large or small outlier states that can heavily influence averages.

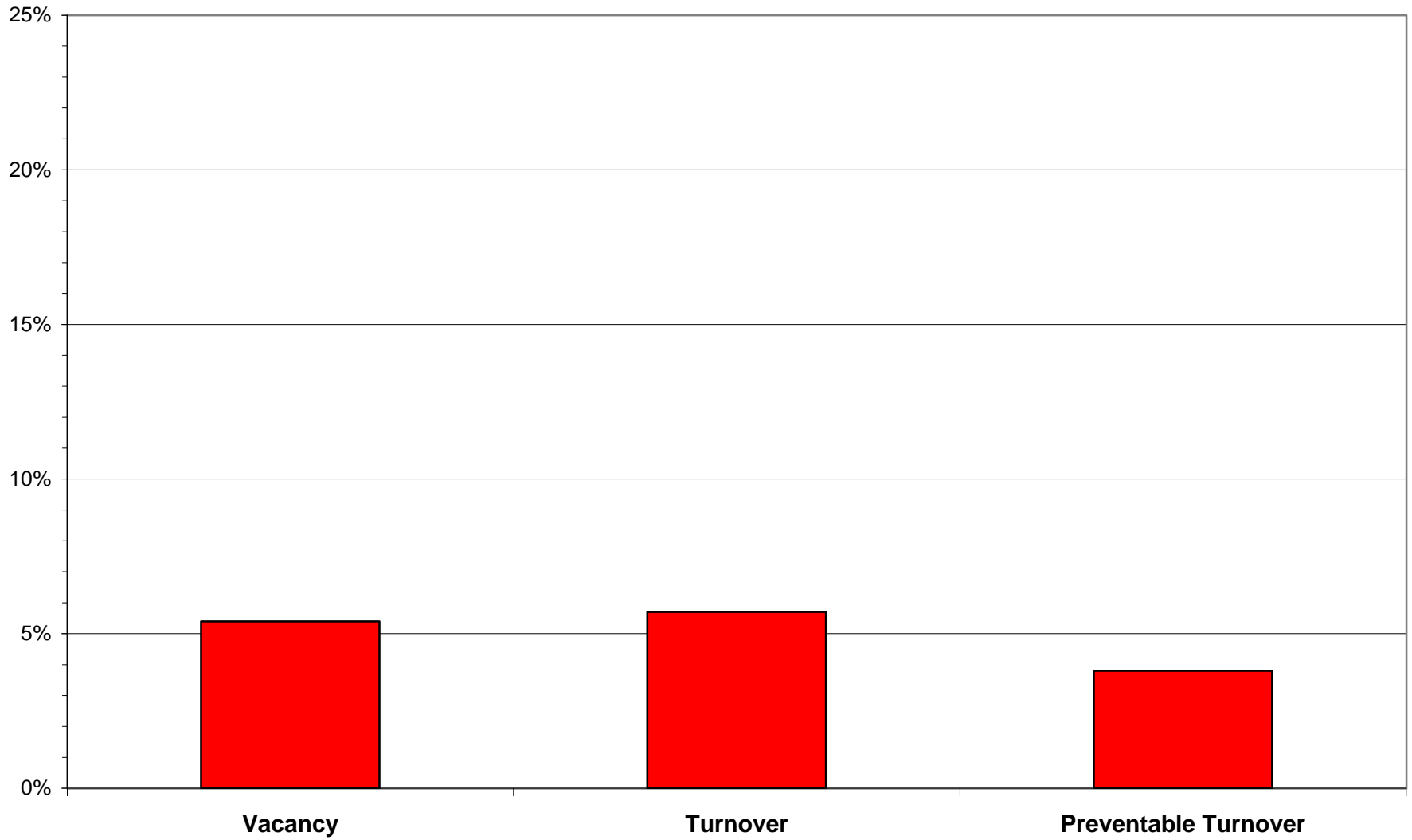
**Graph A: CPS Worker Rates for States (Medians)**



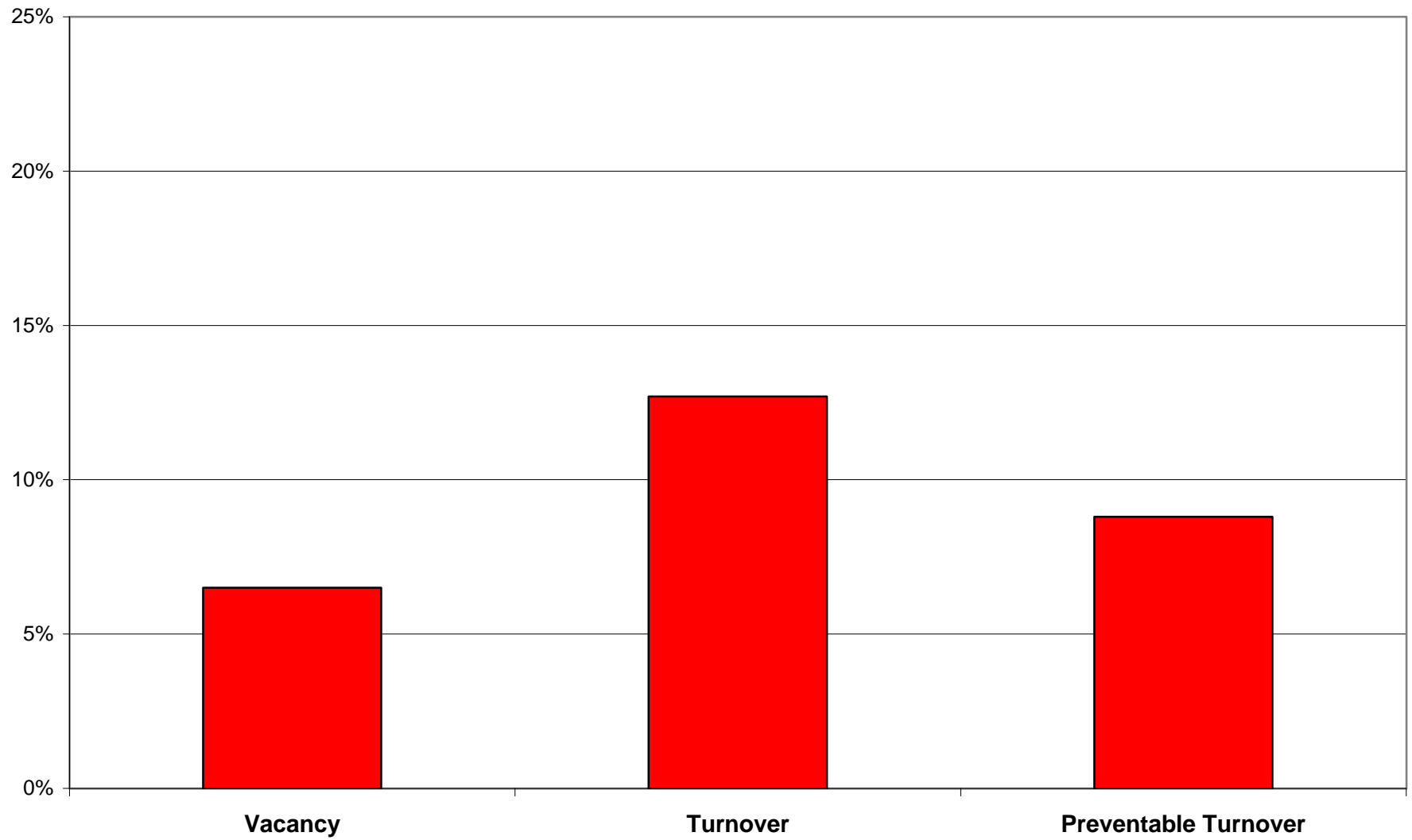
**Graph B: Other Direct Service Worker Rates for States (Medians)**



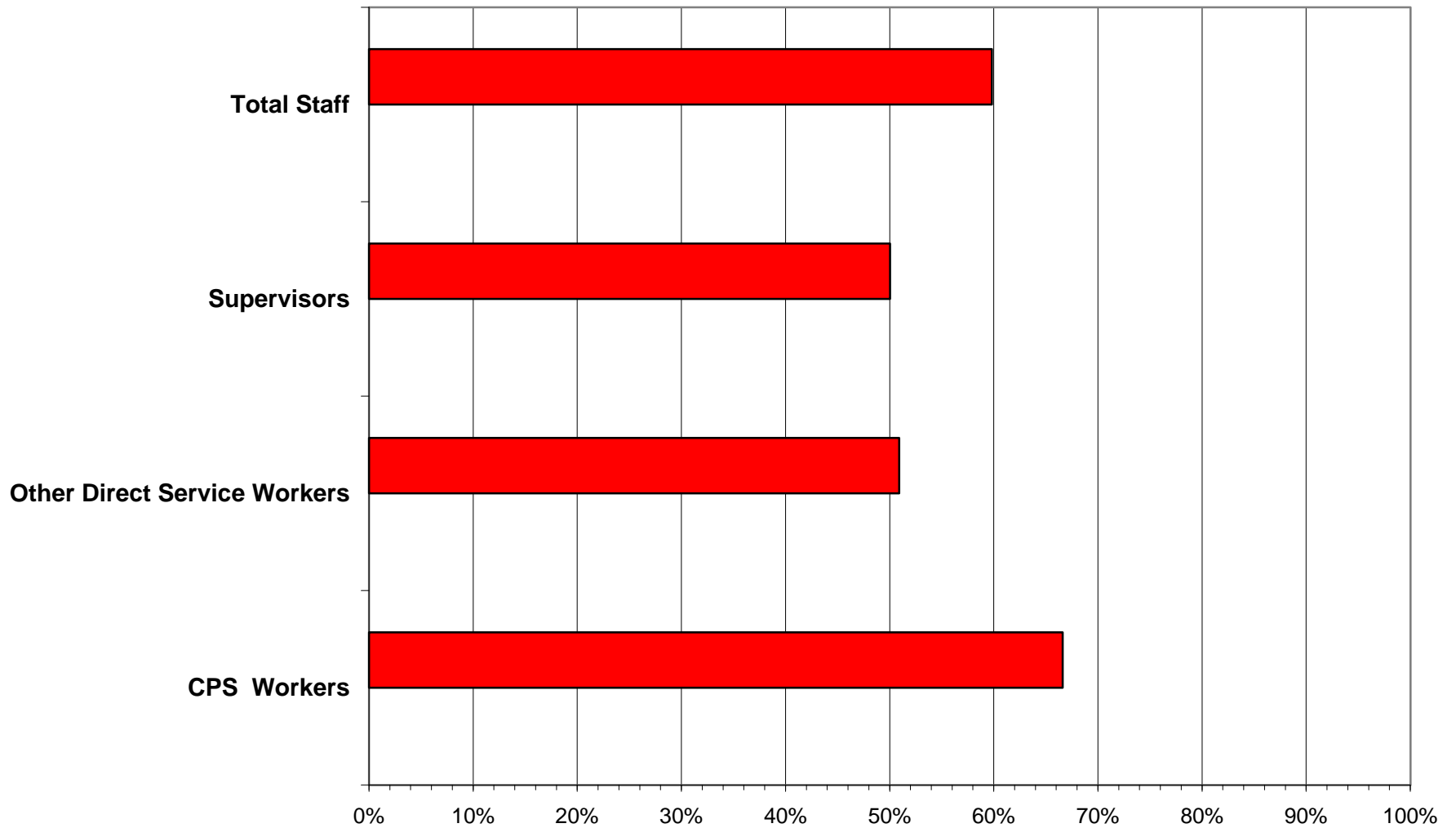
**Graph C: Supervisor Rates for States (Medians)**



**Graph D: Total Staff Rates for States (Medians)**



**Graph E: Percentage of State Turnover Deemed Preventable by Worker Group (Medians)**



## Staff Recruitment and Retention Problems and Strategies

Table 9: Recruitment and Hiring Problems

- State child welfare agency staff rated a number of problems they had experienced in recruiting and hiring new direct service workers during the past 12 months, with: 0=not problematic, 1=somewhat problematic, and 2=highly problematic. Problems are listed below in descending order.

<u>Problems</u>	<u>Not Problematic</u>	<u>Somewhat Problematic</u>	<u>Highly Problematic</u>	<u>N=</u>	<u>Average Rating</u>
Perceived imbalance of demands of job and financial compensation	3	10	28	41	1.61
Other attractive labor market alternatives for job seekers	2	19	20	41	1.44
Lack of qualified candidates	5	18	20	43	1.35
Non-competitive starting salaries	8	10	21	39	1.33
Problematic recruitment/selection requirements or procedures	8	21	11	40	1.08
Budget constraints other than hiring freezes	17	7	13	37	0.89
Insufficient number of bi-lingual candidates	16	18	4	38	0.68
Non-competitive benefits	22	13	1	36	0.42
Hiring freezes	32	4	3	39	0.26
Union constraints	32	4	2	38	0.21
Other problems	8	4	2	14	0.57
Total	153	128	125	406	--
Total Percentages	37.7%	31.5%	30.8%	100%	

- The bar graph (F) on the next page depicts the five problems rated as most problematic.

**Graph F: Most Problematic Recruitment Issues**

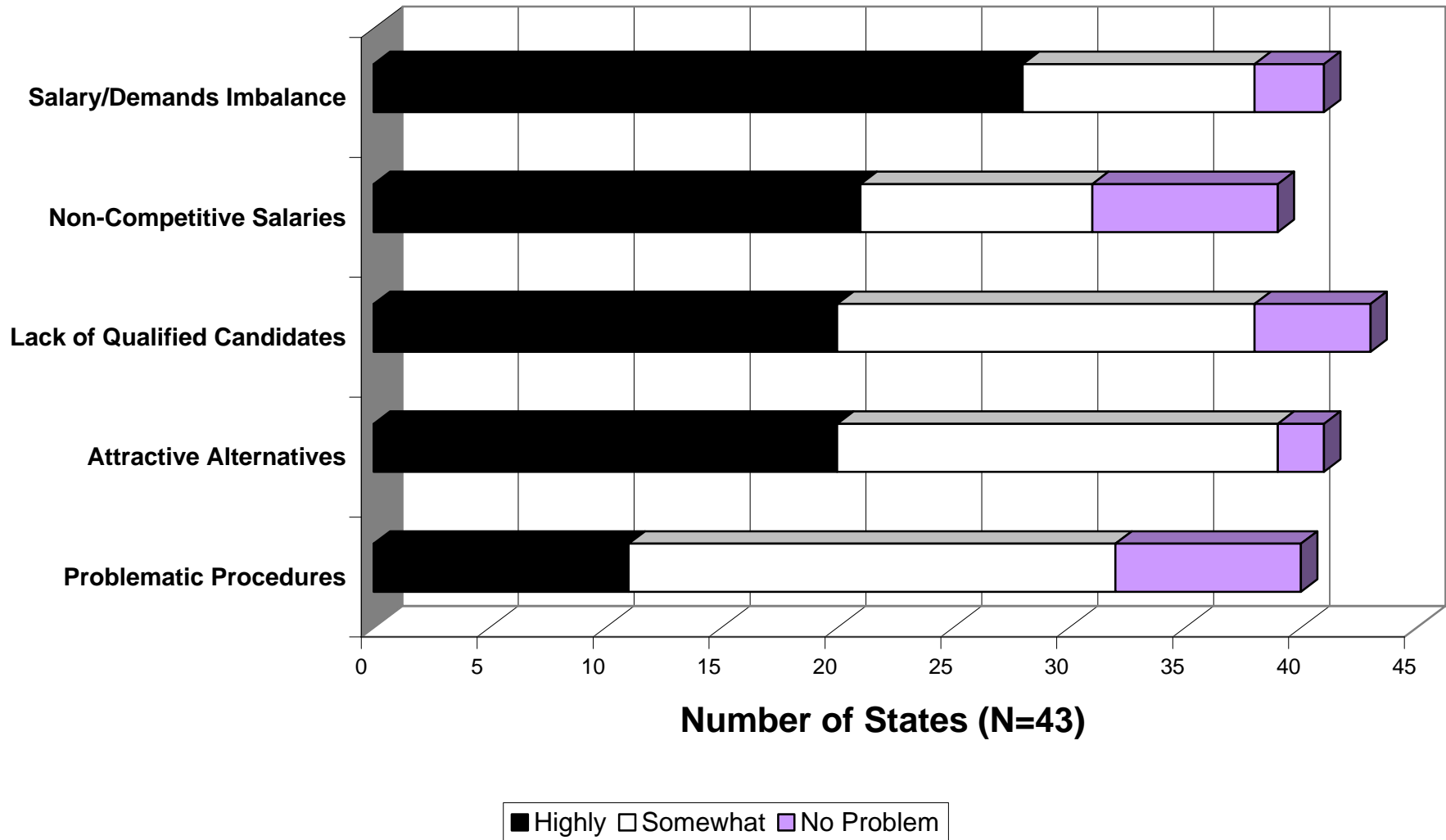


Table 10: Staff Recruitment Strategies and Approaches

- State child welfare agency staff rated a number of strategies or approaches their agencies employed over the past two years specifically for the purpose of recruiting and hiring direct service workers, with: 0=did not implement this strategy, 1=implemented and found it not effective, 2=implemented and found it somewhat effective, and 3=implemented and found highly effective. Strategies are listed below in descending order of frequency of implementation and effectiveness.

Strategies and Approaches	Not Implemented	Not Effective	Somewhat Effective	Highly Effective	N=	Average Rating
Early/aggressive recruitment at schools of social work	10	3	24	4	41	1.54
Posting job announcements on employment websites	9	6	21	4	40	1.50
Public appeals through the media	21	4	12	1	38	0.82
Salaries raised beyond normal inflationary increases	25	0	13	1	39	0.74
Strategies to address gender and racial issues	31	0	6	1	38	0.39
Strategies to address language and cultural competencies	30	1	6	0	37	0.35
Enhanced/more flexible benefit package	34	1	4	0	39	0.23
Hiring bonuses	37	0	1	0	38	--
Other strategies	7	0	6	2	15	1.20
Totals	204	15	93	13	325	--
Total Percentages	62.8%	4.6%	28.6%	4.0%	100%	--

- The bar graph (G) on the next page depicts the five strategies rated as most effective in dealing with recruitment and hiring problems.

**Graph G: Most Effective Recruitment Strategies**

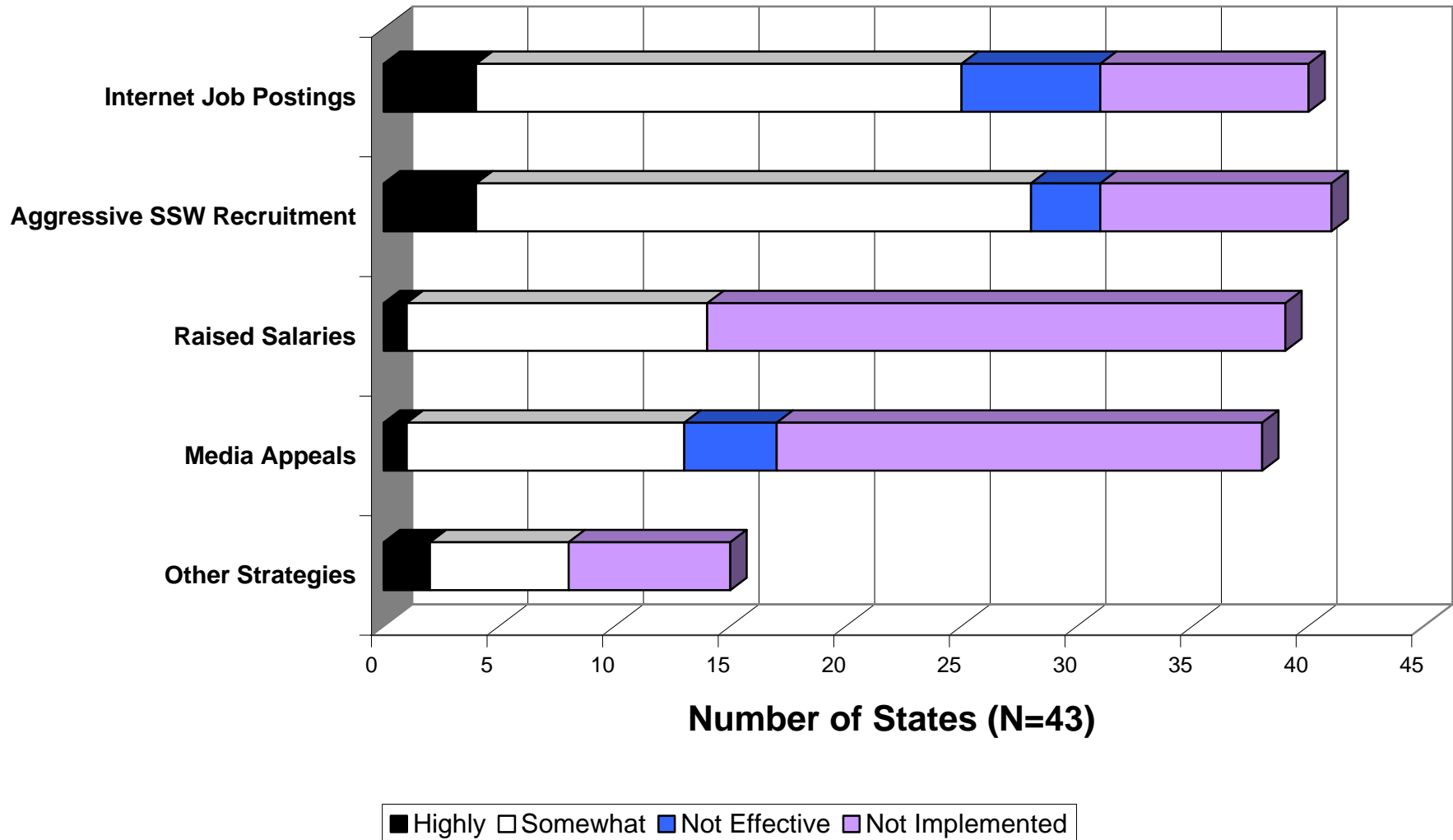


Table 11: Preventable Turnover Problems

- State child welfare agency staff also rated a number of problems they had experienced regarding preventable turnover of direct service staff during the past 12 months, with: 0=not problematic, 1=somewhat problematic, and 2=highly problematic. Problems are listed below in descending order

<u>Problems:</u>	<u>Not Problematic</u>	<u>Somewhat Problematic</u>	<u>Highly Problematic</u>	<u>N=</u>	<u>Average Rating</u>
Workloads too high and/or demanding	1	6	32	39	1.79
Caseloads too high	3	12	24	39	1.54
Too much time spent on travel, paperwork, courts, meetings	4	18	17	39	1.33
Low salaries	10	11	18	39	1.21
Workers do not feel valued by agency	5	20	13	38	1.21
Supervision problems (amount or quality)	7	18	14	39	1.18
Insufficient service resources for families and children	7	20	11	38	1.11
Insufficient promotion and career advancement opportunities	9	22	7	38	0.95
Worker concerns about physical safety	7	29	3	39	0.90
Poor working conditions (eg, plant, equipment)	13	21	3	37	0.73
Agency management problems (eg, high manager turnover)	16	18	4	38	0.68
Inadequate training (amount or quality)	22	12	4	38	0.52
Lack of professional development opportunities	21	15	2	38	0.50
Inadequate benefits	32	7	0	39	0.18
Other problems	1	0	1	2	1.0
Totals	158	229	153	540	--
Total Percentages	29.3%	42.4%	28.3%	100%	--

- The bar graph (H) on the next page depicts the seven problems rated as most problematic.

**Graph H: Most Problematic Turnover Issues**

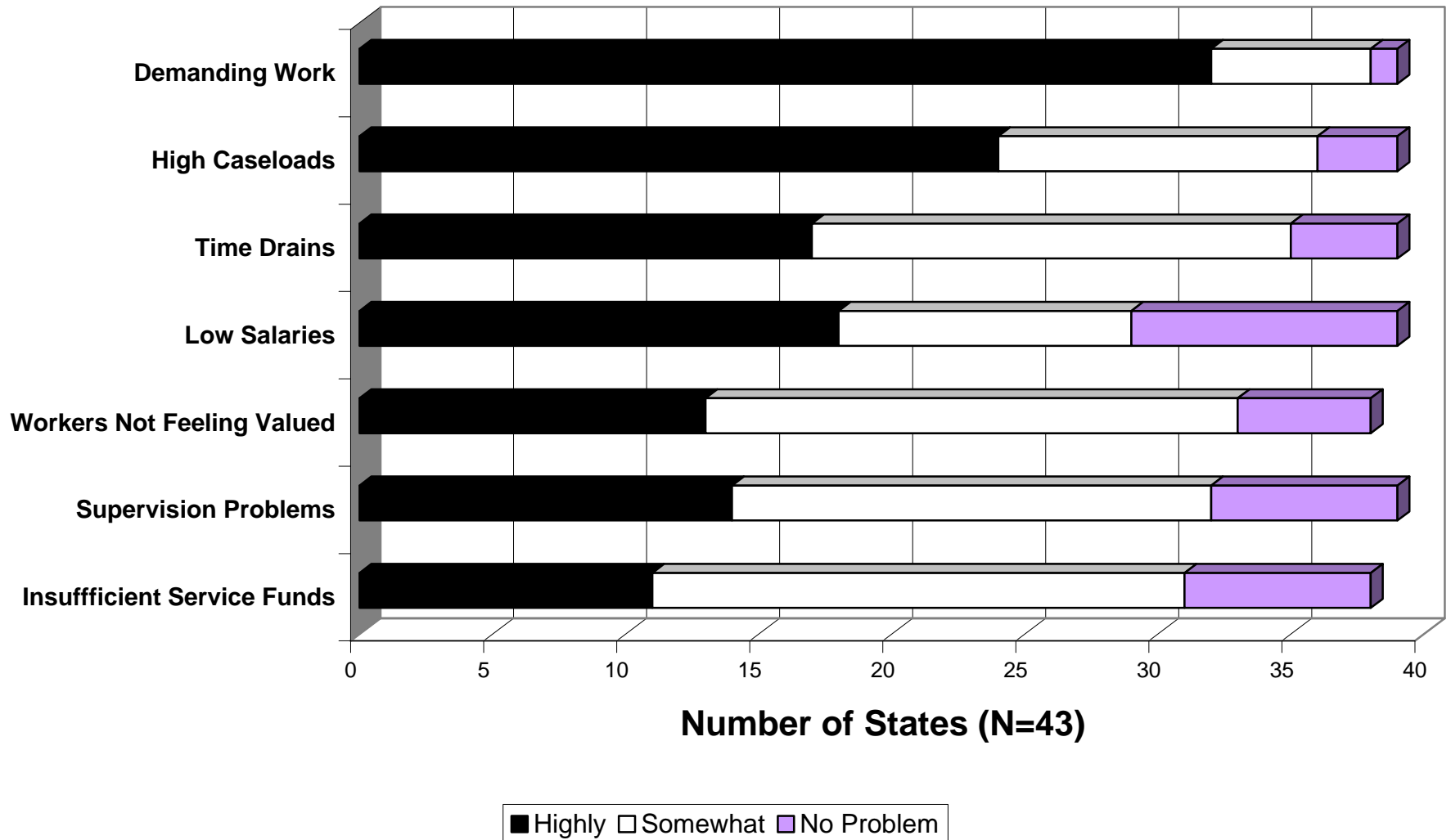


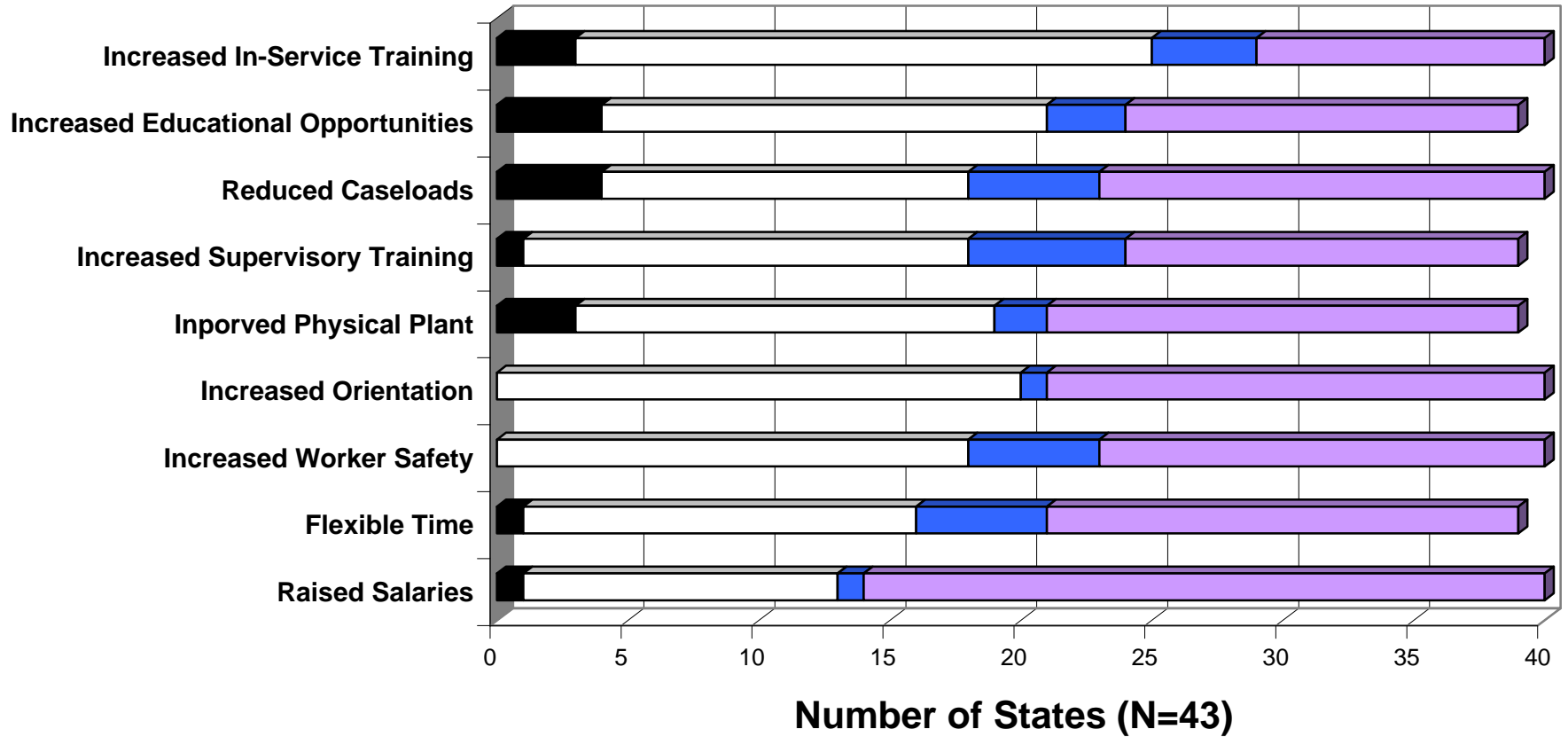
Table 12: Preventable Turnover Strategies and Approaches

- State child welfare agency staff rated a number of strategies or approaches their agencies employed over the past two years specifically for the purpose of retaining direct service workers, with: 0=did not implement this strategy, 1=implemented and found it not effective, 2=implemented and found it somewhat effective, and 3=implemented and found highly effective. Strategies are listed below in descending order of frequency of implementation and effectiveness.

Strategies and Approaches	Not Implemented	Not Effective	Somewhat Effective	Highly Effective	N=	Average Rating
Increased in-service training	11	4	22	3	40	1.43
Increased educational opportunities	15	3	17	4	39	1.26
Reduced caseloads	17	5	14	4	40	1.13
Increased/improved supervisory training	15	6	17	1	39	1.10
Improved physical plant	18	2	16	3	39	1.10
Increased/improved orientation	19	1	20	0	40	1.02
Increased worker safety	17	5	18	0	40	1.02
Flex time and/or changing office hours	18	5	15	1	39	0.97
Special efforts to raise salaries	26	1	12	1	40	0.70
Developed strategies based on exit interviews	27	4	7	0	38	0.47
Established formal mentoring program	32	1	6	1	40	0.40
Strategies to address language and cultural competencies	29	2	6	0	37	0.38
Job sharing	30	3	4	1	38	0.37
Strategies to address gender and racial issues	31	2	4	1	38	0.34
Cash bonuses	35	0	3	0	38	0.16
Job rotation	35	0	3	0	38	0.16
On-site child care	37	0	2	0	39	0.10
Increased benefits	37	1	1	0	39	0.08
Other strategies	4	0	1	0	5	0.40
Totals	453	45	188	20	706	--
Total Percentages	64.2%	6.4%	26.6%	2.8%	100%	--

- The bar graph (I) on the next page depicts the nine strategies and approaches rated as most effective by the states.

**Graph I: Most Effective Turnover Strategies**



■ Highly □ Somewhat ■ Not Effective ■ Not Implemented

Table 13: Uses of Technology

- One way that some child welfare agencies are assisting direct service workers to perform their work more efficiently is to provide or to make accessible various technological devices and applications. State child welfare agencies were asked to estimate what portion of the direct service workers in their agencies have ready access (i.e., almost always available when needed) to a number of devices and applications. The state responses in descending order of availability to staff are provided in the table below.

<u>Device or Application:</u>	<u>None/Few</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Many</u>	<u>Most/All</u>	<u>N=</u>
Agency email	1	2	1	36	40
Agency intranet (document access)	2	3	5	28	38
Internet access	2	10	7	21	40
Cellular phones	3	16	11	9	39
Lap-top computers	10	23	3	3	39
Telecommuting	23	10	2	2	37
Hand-held computer devices	35	3	0	0	38
Other (e.g., transcription services)	0	1	2	3	6

Agency Worker Satisfaction Surveys

- Fifteen of 41 states responding (37%) indicated that their agency has conducted a worker satisfaction survey in the past two years. Several additional states said they are planning on doing a survey or focus groups in the future. Ten of the fifteen states reported the following 30 most important worker satisfaction survey findings for improving staff retention:
  - Improve supervision, management, communication, and fairness on the job (9)
  - Increase wages (7)
  - Decrease caseloads (7)
  - Improve work climate (3)
  - Increase or improve resources (e.g., computer system, service resources) (2)
  - Improve training (2)

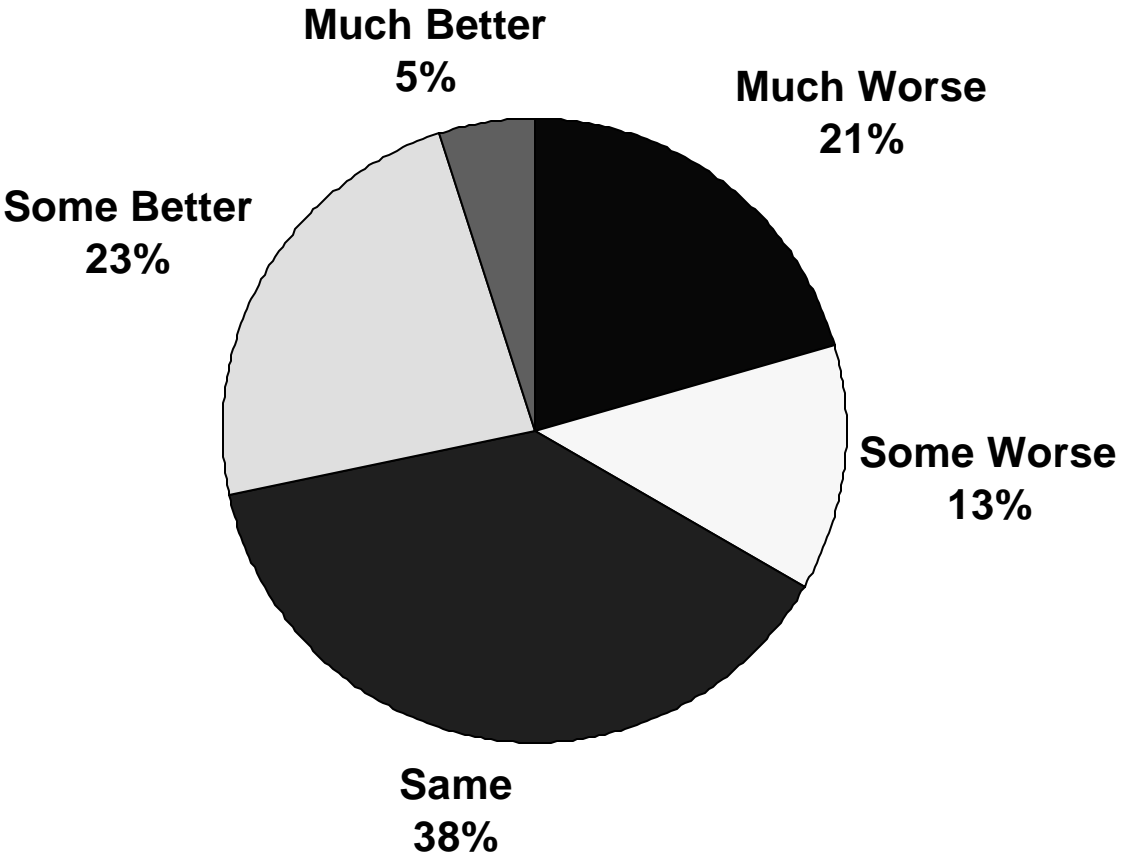
Seeking of Additional Resources

- The survey asked whether a workforce crisis in the state resulted in the child welfare agency seeking additional resources from the governor/state legislature. Twenty-one of 41 states responding (51%) had done so, and 13 of the 21 states reported that this request had been successful.

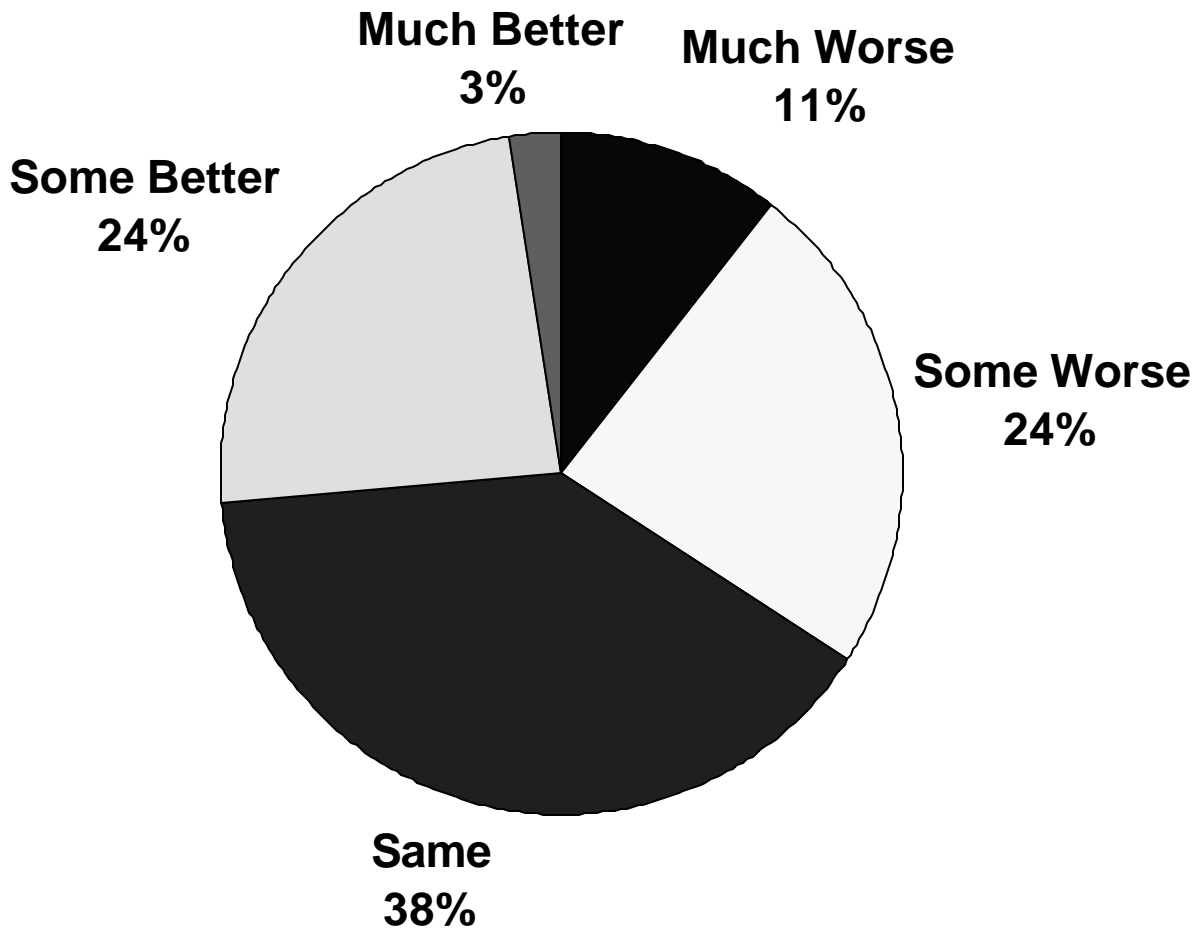
**Extent of Change Experienced by State Agencies**

- The survey asked respondents to compare the period of July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000 with the prior two years and to rate the extent of change their child welfare agencies have experienced with regard to recruitment/hiring and preventable turnovers among child welfare direct service staff. The pie charts (J and K) on the next two pages depict the ratings.

# Graph J: Recruitment Change--3 Year Period



# Graph K: Preventable Turnover Change -- 3 Year Period



- The ratings for recruitment and preventable turnovers are very similar, with 15 states (38%) indicating “about the same” for both recruitment and turnover. This “about the same” rating includes states with prior problems that remained the same as well as a smaller number of states with little or no prior problems that remained unchanged. For both recruitment and turnover, more states rated the problems as worse (13 or 33% for both) than rated the problems as better (11 and 10 states, or 28% and 27% respectfully). Two times as many states rated recruitment and hiring problems as “much worse” (8 states) than rated turnover problems as “much worse” (4 states).
- The survey then asked states that reported their recruitment and/or preventable turnover changes were “some better” or “much better” to describe what their agencies did to achieve this improvement. The 12 states that responded in this manner (i.e., positive outcome states) identified the following 32 actions taken:
  - Increased/improved staff training, including three states that specifically targeted supervisor training (6)
  - Strengthened existing recruitment techniques (e.g., job fairs, statewide media campaign, recruitment websites) (6)
  - Formed stronger and more consistent partnerships with schools of social work (5)
  - Lowered caseloads (3)
  - Raised salaries (3)
  - Innovated new recruitment strategies (e.g., new selection instruments, realistic “job preview” video for candidates) (3)
  - Implemented career ladder and leadership development programs (2)
  - Improved physical working environment (2)
  - Increased service resources for children and families (1)
  - Established employee recognition program (1)

**Table 14: Most Important Agency Actions and Initiatives**

The final question on the survey was open-ended and asked: “Assuming the continuation of current labor supply shortages in the U.S. economy generally, what do you believe are the four or five most important actions and initiatives child welfare agencies and their partners must take to successfully recruit and retain qualified child welfare direct service workers?”

In addition to responses by 35 of the 43 state child welfare agencies, responses from 45 of the 48 county child welfare agencies who completed surveys are also separately included. With the exception of about six action/initiative codes, the responses of the two groups are very similar. The 80 agencies provided 441 responses, which are listed in descending order of frequency.

<u>Actions and Initiatives:</u>	<u>States</u>	<u>Counties</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>Cumulative %</u>
Increased salaries—competitive and commensurate; & related strategies (pay for performance, incentives)	25	37	62	14.1%	14.1%
Staff training—pre- and in-service, supervisory, better practices and skill-based	27	24	51	11.5	25.6
Reduced caseloads, workloads, and supervisor ratios, & monitoring caseloads for equity and manageability	21	26	47	10.7	36.3
Service delivery and management improvements, including more service resources	18	19	37	8.4	44.7
Changes to jobs conditions—flex time, mentoring, job rotation/sharing, time off/sabbaticals	21	15	36	8.2	52.9
Improved recruitment techniques & partnering with schools of social work, including curriculum changes	16	18	34	7.7	60.6
Educational financial support—BSW, MSW, loan repayment, & continuing education	14	15	29	6.6	67.2
Career ladders and promotional opportunities, personal and professional growth	18	5	23	5.2	72.4
Valuing of workers and “softer” strategies—respect, rewards, voice in decision-making, communication	12	10	22	4.9	77.3
Improved supervision, support, TA, & supervisory accountability	15	7	22	4.9	82.2
Improvements in worker safety and physical work environment	10	11	21	4.8	87.0
Changed uses of time, especially paperwork, courts, funding mandates/regulations	8	13	21	4.8	91.8
Improved public image through media; utilize communications grad student interns	9	10	19	4.3	96.1
Improved/increased benefits	2	9	11	2.5	98.6
Better use of technology—more user friendly and flexible, reduce unnecessary computer processes	2	4	6	1.4	100.0
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>218</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Child Welfare Workforce Survey

### Findings from County Responses

#### Survey Process and Response Rate

- In addition to surveying all state public child welfare agencies, APHSA also sent the exact same mail questionnaire to local public agency administrators serving on the Board and Executive Committee of the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA) in late fall 2000. Eleven of 15 surveys were returned for a response rate of 73%.
- In the course of reviewing the survey, two locally administered states decided that rather than respond themselves, they would ask a sample of their counties to respond. North Carolina sampled three states from each of its three local size categories and three surveys were returned. Minnesota sampled 22 of its counties and 21 surveys were returned (95%).
- Additionally, the state of California, a locally administered state, completed and submitted a survey itself, but felt that it would be important also to get data from its counties. The state sent the questionnaire to its 58 counties, and a total of 18 counties (including five counties in the NAPCWA sample) responded, or 31%.
- The total number of county responses to the survey was 48 (a list is attached). While the responses from Minnesota and North Carolina used representative samples with high response rates, **the data for the county group as a whole cannot be considered generally representative of counties across the country**. The data are presented, rather, to illuminate the discussion and for comparison and contrast with the findings from the state responses.

#### Summary of County Survey Findings and Comparison with State Findings

1. Vacancy rates are relatively low for all four staff groups and are lower than state vacancy rates for all staff groups. Using the “snapshot” date of Sept. 1, 2000, the median vacancy rate was 5% for CPS workers, all other direct service workers, and total staff of the agency (the supervisor rate was 0%). The time required to fill vacancies was relatively short—10 weeks, but this was several weeks longer than needed by states to fill their vacancies. Average (mean) vacancy rates for counties were higher than medians for each group of workers (between 6-8%), and the county means were generally much closer to the mean vacancy rates for states.
2. Annual county staff turnover, like states, is quite high for all staff groups except supervisors. The median turnover rates (i.e., person left for any reason) from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000 (FY 2000) were 12% for county CPS workers, 10% for total agency staff, 7% for all other direct service workers, and 1% for supervisors. Although all county turnover rates are lower than comparable state rates, the basic pattern prevails—CPS rates being the highest of all worker groups and supervisor rates being the lowest. Looking at average rates, which incorporate outliers, finds the state and county rates identical—20% for states CPS workers and 21% for county CPS

workers. With several very large counties in the sample, the similar county and state rates using averages reflect the higher turnover experience of the larger counties and states.

3. Annual county preventable turnover rates are very low for all worker groups. The median CPS worker rate is 2% (compared to 15% to state respondents), and all other direct service workers and supervisors median rates are zero, with the total agency staff being just 1%. When averages are examined, however, the preventable turnover rates jump considerably for counties, with the CPS worker rate being 10% compared to 4% for other direct service workers and total agency staff, and 1% for supervisors.
4. Analyzed another way, the median percentage of all turnovers that are preventable in the responding counties are between 27% and 47% for all worker groups except supervisors. While the percentage is much lower for county CPS workers than states (29% vs. 67%), the percentage for other direct service workers (47%) is very comparable to state other direct service workers (51%). Like the rates themselves, mean percentages for counties are higher than medians and are closer to the mean percentages for states.
5. Counties and states responding to the survey view the factors involved in staff recruitment problems in a similar way. The four highest rated problems are the same for both groups, although the order varies somewhat:
  - Lack of qualified candidates
  - Other attractive labor market alternatives for job seekers
  - Perceived imbalance of demands of job and financial compensation
  - Non-competitive starting salaries

Where the two groups differ somewhat is in the perceived severity of the problems. Overall, county respondents responded “no problem” to 44% of the factors compared to 38% for the states. For those factors identified as problems, the states generally rated the factors as more highly problematic. Like the state responses, counties are not generally being hampered by union constraints, hiring freezes, and non-competitive benefit packages. The county data, does however, affirm the states’ views that staff recruitment problems are varied, complex, and widespread.

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.” Both groups of survey respondents identified their top two strategies as:
  - Posting job announcements on employment websites
  - Early/aggressive recruitment at schools of social work

Overall, counties have been slightly less likely to implement the range of strategies (32% compared to 37% for states). Like states, counties also overwhelmingly assess those strategies they do implement as “somewhat effective” (65% compared to 77% for states). Counties are more likely than states, however, to rate implemented strategies as highly effective” (17% vs.

11% for states). Interestingly, counties implemented the strategy of raising salaries beyond normal inflationary increases less frequently than the responding states (22% vs. 36% for states), but similarly found this strategy as only somewhat effective.

7. Counties also rated preventable turnovers as less problematic than states did. Counties indicated that 52% of the factors were “not problematic” compared to only 29% of the same factors as rated by states responding to the survey. For those factors identified as being problematic, counties rated them slightly less “highly problematic” than states did (34% and 40% respectfully). There were striking similarities also:

- The top rated factors were the same for counties and states, with slight variations in the order:
  - Workloads too high and/or demanding
  - Caseloads too high
  - Low salaries
  - Too much time spent on travel, paperwork, courts, and meetings
  - Supervision problems (amount or quality)
  - Workers do not feel valued by agency
  
- Three of the four lowest rated factors were the same for counties and states: lack of professional development opportunities, inadequate training, and agency management problems.

8. Like states, counties have implemented many strategies and approaches for addressing preventable turnover problems, but their rated effectiveness is higher than states. While counties are only slightly more likely to implement the range of strategies (39% vs. 36% for states), 21% of the strategies counties implement are rated as “highly effective” compared to only 8% for state-implemented strategies. At the same time, the predominant rating for county-implemented strategies is “somewhat effective” (64%), just like the states (74%). Very confirming of the state survey findings, the counties rated three of the top four strategies the same:

- Increased in-service training—rated most highly by far by both counties and states
- Increased/improved supervisory training
- Increased educational opportunities

While states rated the reduced caseloads strategy third, it was rated sixth by the counties. Like the states, however, counties rated special efforts to raise salaries much lower in implementation and effectiveness (eighth for counties and ninth for states). Further confirming the state survey data, counties and states rated the same four strategies lowest ( in somewhat different order):

- On-site child care
- Cash bonuses
- Job rotation
- Increased benefits

9. Counties also see “softer” strategies as important for addressing preventable turnover. Six of the top seven strategies identified by counties can be characterized as “softer,” in that these approaches are within the volition and authority of most managers to implement and they often can be done with little or no new funding. The top soft strategies identified by counties are:
- Increased in-service training
  - Increased/improved supervisory training
  - Increased educational opportunities
  - Flex time
  - Increased orientation
  - Increased worker safety
10. County child welfare agencies were somewhat more likely to seek additional resources from county boards as result of the workforce crisis than states did with governors/state legislatures. Thirty-eight percent of county agencies sought such resources, compared to 28% of states, and counties were somewhat more successful than states in these requests (88% and 62% respectfully).
11. The extent of change experienced by counties was somewhat more positive than states. The survey asked respondents to compare the period of July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000 with the prior two years and to rate the extent of change their child welfare agencies have experienced with regard to recruitment and retention among child welfare direct service staff. *For recruitment*, almost half of counties (46%) reported that the situation was “about the same” compared to 38% for states. Counties had a smaller percentage of “some or much better” than states (24% vs. 28%) and a smaller percentage of “some or much worse” than states (30% vs. 34%). *For preventable turnover*, counties differed from states more heavily. Many more counties reported that turnover was “about the same” than states (60% vs. 38%). While the percentages of “some or much better” ratings were very similar for counties and states (29% vs. 27%), counties were far less likely to rate the change as “some or much worse” (11% vs. 33%).

# Appendices

## **43 States Responding to the Child Welfare Workforce Survey**

Alabama	Montana
Alaska	Nebraska
Arizona	Nevada
California	New Hampshire
Colorado	New Jersey
Connecticut	New Mexico
Delaware	North Dakota
District of Columbia	Oklahoma
Florida	Oregon
Georgia	Pennsylvania
Hawaii	South Carolina
Idaho	South Dakota
Illinois	Tennessee
Indiana	Texas
Iowa	Utah
Kentucky	Vermont
Louisiana	Virginia
Maine	Washington
Maryland	West Virginia
Michigan	Wisconsin
Mississippi	Wyoming
Missouri	

Minnesota and North Carolina, both locally administered states, provided a sample of counties in lieu of directly responding to the survey.

## **48 Counties Responding to Child Welfare Workforce Survey**

**California (18)**—Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Monterey, Nevada, Riverside, Sacramento, Shasta, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, Sonoma, and Yolo

**Colorado (1)**—El Paso

**Maryland (2)**—Baltimore, and Prince Georges’

**Minnesota (21)**—Aitkin, Benton, Chisago, Clay, Cook, Crow Wing, Faribault-Martin, Fillmore, Hennepin, Kandiyohi, Morrison, Mower, Pipestone, Pope, Ramsey, Rice, St. Louis, Scott, Swift, Todd, and Washington

**New York (2)**—New York City and Oswego

**North Carolina (3)**—Anson, Craven, and Guilford

**Wisconsin (1)**—Milwaukee



October 4, 2000

Dear Colleague:

RE: Child Welfare Workforce Survey

The ability of public and private sector organizations to recruit and retain the workforce necessary to appropriately provide for the needs of the children and families our member agencies serve has emerged as a significant national issue. Difficulties in recruiting qualified workers and high turnover rates threaten our ability to sustain and further advance the many achievements and improvements made in this field by both government and private agencies.

We are pleased to announce that our three organizations are collaborating on an important project by initially conducting a child welfare workforce survey. As all of us in the field know, the recruitment and retention of qualified staff has become a major impediment to the delivery of excellent services to children and families.

In order to analyze and address these challenging workforce issues, the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), and the Alliance for Children and Families (Alliance) have formed a tripartite partnership in order to accomplish the following goals:

- Gather data about the scope and nature of the workforce problems.
- Gather best practice information from agencies that are having a positive impact.
- Prepare findings, implications, and recommendations to be shared with the new Administration and Congress in early 2001.
- Provide the basis for future surveys and studies if foundation support can be obtained.

An important first step is the surveying of member agencies to obtain consistent, high quality data from both public and private sector perspectives. The enclosed questionnaire is the result of the collaborative work of our research staffs, and has been pre-tested by 12 of our collective members. The 10-page questionnaire covers the following areas:

- background information.
- salary, minimum education and licenses, caseload, and supervisor/worker ratios.
- staff recruitment and retention—vacancies and turnovers.
- worker training, mentoring, and career ladders.
- use of technology.
- agency strategies and initiatives.

*Joint Letter Transmitting Child Welfare Workforce Issues Survey—Page Two*

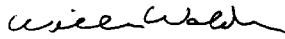
The sample for this survey will be: APHSA's public child welfare agency in the 50 states, District of Columbia, three territories, and 14 localities; a random sample of approximately 475 of CWLA's private member agencies; and a sample of 100 of the Alliance's private member agencies. Your agency has been selected as part of the sample, and we invite and encourage your participation. Our ability as a partnership to advocate for your workforce needs depends on a solid response rate. We intend to have a final report in early 2001 and we will send all agencies that complete the survey a copy as soon as it is ready. We hope you will agree to participate.

If you have any questions about the survey, please call [research contact at each organization]. Please fax the completed survey to [contact and fax number] by Friday, October 27, 2000. Thank you for your attention to this important endeavor.

Sincerely,



Shay Bilchik  
Executive Director  
Child Welfare League  
of America



William Waldman  
Executive Director  
American Public Human  
Services Association



Peter Goldberg  
President and CEO  
Alliance for Children  
and Families

Enclosure: Child Welfare Workforce Issues Survey



## SURVEY OF CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE ISSUES

### Completed Survey Cover Sheet

Child Welfare Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person  
Completing the Survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fax this cover sheet, the completed questionnaire, and any attachments  
**by October 27, 2000** to Gary Cyphers at 202-289-6555  
(or mail to APHSA, 810 First St., NE, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20002)

*Thank you for your assistance.*

## **SURVEY OF CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE ISSUES**

### Instructions for Completion of Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete the attached survey, which was pre-tested by a number of public and private agencies, and was revised, based on their very helpful feedback. Specific questions may need to be answered by different people in your agency, and we appreciate your coordinating their responses. We are interested in getting as precise information as possible from your agency. However, we would prefer that you provide an informed estimate rather than skip a question altogether. If additional space is needed for any question, please attach a separate sheet with the question number(s) indicated and/or attach pertinent materials.

### Definitions of Terms

**Direct Service Workers:** all agency professional staff persons who carry cases and provide services directly to children and/or families (i.e., including case managers, but excluding paraprofessional staff). For the purposes of this survey, we are dividing direct service workers into two groups:

1. **Child Protective Service (CPS) Workers:** workers that provide services to families in which a child has been identified as a victim of or at risk of abuse or neglect. The core CPS services are report taking, safety assessment, investigation, risk assessment, family assessment, and case service planning and implementation.
2. **All Other Direct Service Workers:** all agency professional staff who carry cases and provide services, other than CPS, to children and/or families (i.e., including case managers, but excluding paraprofessional staff). While agencies will have different service and position names for such direct service staff, some of the large service areas include family support services, out-of-home care, foster care and adoption services, family therapy, and individual and group counseling.

**Supervisors:** assigned agency staff persons who provide formal direction for and oversight of the performance of direct service workers.

**Preventable turnovers:** workers who leave the agency for reasons other than retirement, death, marriage/parenting, returning to school, or spousal job move. The balance of staff leaving the agency for other reasons is defined as “preventable turnovers,” which are of particular concern to human service agencies. Exit interviews are a common source of such information.



## Survey of Child Welfare Workforce Issues

The purpose of this collaborative survey is to gather data about widely acknowledged workforce problems in many public and private child welfare agencies throughout the country. While such workforce problems exist throughout human services, this initial survey focuses on child welfare. The survey also seeks information about promising strategies and practices that child welfare agencies may use to address these problems. The three partner organizations will use the survey findings to develop recommendations that will be presented to the new Administration and Congress in early 2001.

In completing this survey please describe conditions in effect on September 1, 2000, unless directed otherwise in any specific question.

### Agency Background Information

1. Please check the statement below that best describes the auspices of your agency.

- a) State public child welfare agency (i.e., formally designated or statutory)
- b) County (or multi-county) public child welfare agency
- c) Private child/family serving agency that contracts with public child welfare agency(ies) to provide services.
- d) Private child/family serving agency that does not contract with public child welfare agency(ies)
- e) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please check the statement that best describes the service area (geographic coverage) of your agency.

- a) Multiple states
- b) Statewide (in all localities)
- c) Regional area (e.g., within or across states)
- d) County
- e) Large city and/or metropolitan area
- f) Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_)

3. What is the size of your agency's current annual operating budget for child welfare? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the current status of the accreditation of your agency? *Please check status and indicate the name of the accrediting organization. [Council on Accreditation (COA); American Correctional Assoc. (ACA); Joint Comm. for Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO); Comm. for Accreditation Of Rehabilitation facilities (CARF); other (specify)]*

- a) Agency is fully accredited (name: \_\_\_\_\_)
- b) Agency is provisionally accredited (name: \_\_\_\_\_)
- c) Agency is in process of seeking accreditation (name: \_\_\_\_\_)
- d) Agency is not seeking accreditation at this time
- e) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_)

**Agency Workforce Issues**

5. Please complete the table below about salaries, education and licenses, training and career ladders, and caseloads and supervisory ratios of child protective workers, all other direct services workers, and supervisors (using the definitions on page two). If your agency does not provide child protective services (CPS), please write "NA" in that column. If CPS workers cannot be broken-out from all direct service workers, please write "In All Direct" in the CPS worker column. If your agency has more than one position under any of the three categories of workers, please attach a sheet/materials with that detail. Please use September 1, 2000 as the reference point.

<u>Workforce Issues:</u>	<u>Child Protective Services (CPS) Workers</u>	<u>All Other Direct Service Workers</u>	<u>Supervisors of CPS and Other Direct Service Workers</u>
<b>Salary:</b>			
1. Minimum annual salary			
2. Maximum annual salary			
3. Average annual salary of incumbents			
<b>Education/Licenses:</b>			
4. Minimum academic degree requirements, not substitutable for work equivalencies (specify degree)			
5. Social Work License Requirement (Yes or No)			
<b>Training/Career Ladders:</b>			
6. Number of hours of <u>mandatory</u> pre-service training			
7. Number of hours of <u>mandatory</u> in-service training each year			
8. Career ladder (structured mobility in job series) exists (Yes or No)			
<b>Caseloads and Supervisory Ratios:</b>			
9. Average caseload size per worker for services where the: a) Child is defined as a case			NA
b) Family is defined as a case			NA
10. Average supervisor to FTE worker ratio			NA

a) If your agency has a career ladder(s) for CPS and/or all other direct service workers, please attach existing descriptive materials.

6. Does your agency provide educational financial support for direct service workers to pursue a BSW, MSW, and/or related degrees? *Please check appropriate column for each degree type.*

<u>Degree:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. BSW		
2. MSW		
3. Other (specify)		

- a) If “yes” for any degree, what source(s) of funding is your agency using to provide this educational financial support? *Circle all that are used.*
- a) Federal child abuse state grants
  - b) Federal child welfare training funds
  - c) Federal Social Services Block Grant
  - d) Federal payments to states for foster care and adoptions (Title IV-E funds)
  - e) State revenue sources
  - f) Local revenue sources
  - g) Private revenues (dedicated or unrestricted)
  - h) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### Use of Technology

7. One way that some agencies are assisting direct service workers to perform their work more efficiently is to provide or to make accessible various technological devices and applications. *Please estimate what portion of the direct service workers in your agency have ready access (i.e., almost always available when needed) to the following devices and applications?*

<u>Device or Application:</u>	<u>None/Few</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Many</u>	<u>Most/All</u>
1. Cellular telephones				
2. Lap-top computers				
3. Hand-held computer devices				
4. Agency email				
5. Agency intranet (document access)				
6. Internet access				
7. Telecommuting				
8. Other (specify)				

8. Please briefly describe any new innovations or initiatives your agency has undertaken in the past two years to use technology for service delivery to children and families.

### Staff Recruitment and Retention

9. Please provide as precise information as possible about position vacancies and staff turnovers in your agency. If you do not have exact data please make your best informed estimate. Please use the definitions for child protective workers, all other direct service workers, and supervisors provided on page two. If your agency does not provide child protective services, please write “NA” in that column. If CPS workers cannot be broken-out from all direct service workers, please write “In All Direct” in the CPS Worker column. The last column of “total staff in your agency” includes all workers, supervisors, managers, and support staff. Additionally, we define “preventable turnover” as staff leaving the agency for reasons other than retirement, death, marriage/parenting, returning to school, or spousal job move. The balance of staff leaving the agency is defined as “preventable turnover.”

<u>Recruitment and Retention Issues:</u>	Child Protective Services Workers	All Other Direct Service Workers	Supervisors of CPS and Other Direct Service Workers	Total Staff in Your Agency
<b>Position Vacancies:</b>				
1. Authorized FTE positions on Sept. 1, 2000				
2. Number of positions in # 1 that were vacant				
3. Estimated typical amount of time in weeks required to fill a vacant position during July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000				
<b>Staff Turnovers:</b>				
4. Number of staff that left agency for any reason from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000				
5. Number of staff leaving agency in #4 that you estimate were “preventable turnovers”				
6. Estimated average tenure with your agency of incumbents in years on Sept. 1, 2000				

## Staff Recruitment and Retention Problems and Strategies

10. Which of the following problems has your agency experienced in its recruitment and hiring of new direct service workers during the past 12 months? *Rate each problem on the following three-point scale: 0= not problematic; 1= somewhat problematic; and 2= highly problematic.*

- \_\_\_ a) Hiring freezes
- \_\_\_ b) Other budgetary constraints (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ c) Lack of qualified candidates
- \_\_\_ d) Insufficient number of bi-lingual candidates
- \_\_\_ e) Starting salaries that are not competitive with comparable positions elsewhere
- \_\_\_ f) Benefits that are not competitive with other comparable positions elsewhere
- \_\_\_ g) Other attractive labor market alternatives for job seekers
- \_\_\_ h) A perceived imbalance of the demands of the job and financial compensation offered
- \_\_\_ i) Problematic recruitment and selection requirements or procedures
- \_\_\_ j) Union constraints
- \_\_\_ k) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

11. Which of the following strategies or approaches has your agency employed over the past two years specifically for the purpose of recruiting and hiring direct service workers. *Rate each strategy/approach on the following four-point scale: 0= did not implement this strategy; 1= implemented and found not effective; 2= implemented and found somewhat effective; 3= implemented and found highly effective.*

- \_\_\_ a) Raised salaries beyond normal inflationary increases
- \_\_\_ b) Enhanced and/or more flexible benefit packages
- \_\_\_ c) Hiring bonuses
- \_\_\_ d) Strategies to address language and cultural competencies
- \_\_\_ e) Strategies to address gender and racial issues
- \_\_\_ f) Early and/or aggressive recruiting at schools of social work
- \_\_\_ g) Public appeals through the media
- \_\_\_ h) Posting job announcements through employment websites  
(Which website? \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_ i) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

a) In the space below (or on a separate sheet or attached document) please describe in more detail any of your recruitment strategies or approaches that were particularly effective.

12. Which of the following problems has your agency experienced regarding preventable turnover of direct service staff (i.e., other than due to retirement, death, marriage/parenting, returning to school, or spousal job move) during the past 12 months? Please refer to exit interview information wherever possible. *Rate each problem on the following three-point scale: 0= not problematic; 1= somewhat problematic; and 2= highly problematic.*

- \_\_\_ a) Low salaries
- \_\_\_ b) Inadequate benefits
- \_\_\_ c) Caseloads too high
- \_\_\_ d) Workload too high and/or demanding (e.g., stress, burnout, or being overwhelmed)

**problem codes continued on next page**

Preventable Turnover Question Continued:

- e) Lack of professional development opportunities (e.g., conference attendance)
- f) Inadequate training (amount or quality)
- g) Agency management problems (e.g., high manager turnover)
- h) Supervision problems (amount or quality)
- i) Insufficient opportunities for promotion and career advancement in the agency
- j) Insufficient service resources for families and children
- k) Poor working conditions (e.g., rundown/overcrowded plant, lack of needed equip.)
- l) Worker concerns about their physical safety
- m) Workers do not feel valued by agency
- n) Too much time spent on travel/transport, paperwork, court appearances, and/or meetings
- p) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

13. Which of the following strategies or approaches has your agency employed over the past two years specifically for the purpose of retaining direct service workers? *Rate each strategy/approach on the following four-point scale: 0= did not implement this strategy; 1= implemented and found not effective; 2= implemented and found somewhat effective; 3= implemented and found highly effective.*

- a) Special efforts to raise salaries
- b) Cash bonuses
- c) Increased benefits package/flexibility
- d) Reduced caseloads
- e) Increased/improved agency orientation
- f) Increased/improved in-service training for workers
- g) Increased/improved supervisory training
- h) Increased educational opportunities (e.g., support for BSW and MSW degrees)
- i) Established formal mentoring program
- j) Strategies to address language and cultural competencies
- k) Strategies to address gender and racial issues
- l) Increased worker safety
- m) Improved physical plant
- n) Developed strategies based on exit interviews
- o) Job rotation
- p) Flex time and/or changes in office hours
- q) Job sharing
- r) On-site child care
- s) Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

a) In the space below (or separate sheet or attached document) please describe in more detail your retention strategies or approaches that were particularly effective.

- b) Has your agency conducted a worker satisfaction survey in the past two years? (*Circle*).
1. Yes
  2. No

Worker Satisfaction Survey Continued:

(1) If “yes,” what were the most important survey findings for improving staff retention?

14. Comparing the period of July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000 with the prior two years, how would you describe the extent of change your agency has experienced with regard to recruitment/hiring and preventable turnovers among direct service staff? *Please check the extent of change for each staffing issue.*

<u>Staffing Issue:</u>	<u>Much Worse</u>	<u>Some Worse</u>	<u>About Same</u>	<u>Some Better</u>	<u>Much Better</u>
Recruitment/hiring					
Preventable turnover					

a) If you checked “much better” or “some better” for recruitment/hiring and/or preventable turnover, please briefly describe what your agency has done to achieve this improvement?

15. *Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following three statements, with 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= agree; and 4= strongly agree.*

In my opinion, if staff recruitment and retention problems are not resolved in the near future they will compromise my agency’s ability to:

- a) protect children.
- b) prevent the unnecessary removal of children from their homes.
- c) promote the well-being of children and families.

16. Did a workforce crisis in your state result in your agency seeking additional resources from the governor /state legislators and/or county/city elected officials? *(Circle)*

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If “yes,” was the request successful?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

17. In a typical month, how many requests for information (such as this one) does your agency receive that take at least an hour to research and respond to? \_\_\_\_\_

**Most Important Agency Actions and Initiatives**

18. Assuming the continuation of current labor supply shortages in the US economy generally, what do you believe are the four or five most important actions and initiatives child welfare agencies and their partners must take to successfully recruit and retain qualified child welfare direct service workers? *Please give this careful consideration and include actions and initiatives both internal and external to your agency. The information you provide will help guide recommendations to be developed for the new Administration and Congress.*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

*Thank you for completing this survey*

Please fax this cover sheet, the completed questionnaire, and any attachments  
**by October 27, 2000 to Gary Cyphers at 202-289-6555**  
(or mail to APHSA, 810 First St., NE, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20002)