

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

April 30, 2004

MEMORANDUMWhat is inside:

- Background on annual CD staff survey
- Take the opportunity to participate in the survey
- Confidentiality of responses is ensured

TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS AND  
ALL CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: FREDERIC M. SIMMENS, DIRECTOR

REFERENCE: ANNUAL EMPLOYEE SURVEY

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce our third year of participation in the Survey of Organizational Excellence (SOE). During May 10-21, 2004, every person in the Children's Division will have the opportunity to participate in this online employee satisfaction survey. This includes clerical and other support staff whose duties are performed within the Children's Division.

**Why Assess Employee Satisfaction?**

Assessment of employee satisfaction is a way to gather vital information from our organization's most valuable resource, our employees. The SOE allows us to obtain detailed and comprehensive information from all staff in the Children's Division to use in the development of strategies to improve identified areas of need. In the last two years, the Children's Division utilized the Survey of Organizational Excellence (SOE) as a tool to gauge employee perceptions about critical areas of their work environment. As this is the third year of participation in the SOE, benchmark data from previous years will be used as a comparison for this year's data.

**The Survey of Organizational Excellence**

The SOE is an online survey that is designed to link scores on the survey to issues impacting the organization. Survey questions are drawn from empirical and theoretical literature on organizations and specifically examine five key dimensions of life within our organization: work team, work setting, general organizational features, communication patterns, and personal demands. This year there will again be some additional questions at the end of the survey which assess staff perceptions about their ability to perform certain tasks within the agency.

**Administration of the SOE**

The SOE is an online survey that can be accessed directly from the Outlook email system or from any computer that is connected to the Internet. The SOE can be

completed at your work terminal, at home, at a public library, or any other location that has access to the World Wide Web.

On May 10, 2004, all Children's Division staff will receive an email from the University of Texas inviting them to take the SOE. The email will contain an embedded hotlink to the survey site. Beginning May 10, 2004, staff may take the SOE during work hours and from a work terminal. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Circuit and Regional Administrators are expected to encourage all levels of staff to participate in the survey. This includes ensuring staff have access to a work computer and are allowed sufficient time and privacy in which to take the survey in a confidential manner. Staff may take the survey anytime from May 10, 2004 to May 21, 2004.

### **Instructions for taking the SOE**

1. Each staff member will receive an e-mail that includes a hot-link to the web address where the survey is located. Clicking on the hot-link will take staff directly to the survey site.
2. Note the instructions on the website.
3. Under **Please select from the list of Organization's**, select **170-Children's Division** from the drop down menu.
4. Click on the **Next** icon and begin taking the survey.
5. When finished answering the survey questions, click on **Submit Survey**. This will automatically process the survey responses and end your session.

### **Confidentiality of Responses**

***Anonymity is the key to receiving honest and forthright responses on the survey.***

All responses are completely confidential and to assure anonymity, no identifying information is collected. Because the agency does not receive data on any question in which there are fewer than five responses, it is not possible to associate any item on the survey with any individual staff person. Additionally, if an individual is uncomfortable answering any of the questions on the survey, they may opt to not answer that particular question.

### **How Will Information From the SOE Be Utilized?**

The assessment of employee satisfaction is connected to a larger purpose, the development of strategies to improve identified areas of need. Like last year, the results were reviewed by the Division Director, Regional Administrators, Circuit Managers, and frontline staff. SOE data from 2003 was used in a variety of ways to evaluate circuits, programs, and pilots. Data from the SOE this year will be posted on the intranet. All levels of staff have the responsibility not only to review these findings in their CQI meetings, but also to develop and recommend strategies that address the identified areas of need.

### **An Open Invitation**

We are very excited about utilizing the SOE again this year and continuing to obtain feedback about our organization from all levels of staff. The decision to continue participation in this process is driven by our ongoing commitment to improve the quality of organizational life for our employees as well as the quality of services that we provide

to children and families. As with any other type of survey, please feel free to complete the SOE during work time. Your thoughtfulness and honesty in your responses are critical to our organizational improvement.

Additional information about this survey is available on the Internet at <http://www.utexas.edu/research/cswr/survey/>. Any questions regarding the SOE or its administration should be addressed to the survey liaison for this year, Susan Savage, at (573)751-4319 or via email.

**NECESSARY ACTION:**

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division staff and Clerical Support staff.
2. Regional and Circuit Administrators are expected to encourage all levels of staff to participate in the survey. This includes ensuring staff have access to a work computer and are allowed sufficient time and privacy in which to take the survey in a confidential manner.
3. Any questions regarding the survey should be directly addressed to this year's survey liaison, Susan Savage.

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