

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

September 28, 2004

MEMORANDUM**WHAT IS INSIDE?**

- Improved Response rate
- Overview of staff survey results
- Links to more specific survey data

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

**FROM:** FREDERIC M. SIMMENS, DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT:** STATEWIDE RESULTS OF SURVEY OF ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE (SOE)

**DISCUSSION:**

In May 2004, all Children's Division staff were invited to participate in the annual online employee survey, the Survey of Organizational Excellence (SOE). I would like to commend staff on the increase in response. Staff input is an important piece of our success as an organization. I urge you to review the results of the survey to see where staff believe our organization is and where it has improved from last year. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a summary of the statewide results from the SOE.

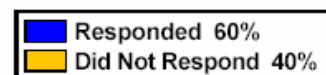
**Overview**

The SOE assessment is designed to link scores on the survey to issues affecting our organization. It examines five key Workplace Dimensions (Work Group, Accommodations, General Organizational Features, Information, and Personal Demands) which capture various aspects of the total work environment.

Data received from the SOE is very extensive. For purposes of this memo, the statewide data from the SOE is briefly summarized. More detailed statewide information and executive summaries for 2003 and 2004 for each circuit, worker type and program area, can be found at on the Children's Division intranet site at <http://dssweb/cs/soe/index.shtml>.

**Who responded to the survey statewide?**

**Response Rate:** High response rates mean that employees have an investment in the organization, want to see the organization improve and generally have a sense of responsibility to the organization. Out of the 2237 employees who were invited to take the survey, 1336



responded. As a general rule, rates higher than 50 percent suggest soundness. At 60%, our response rate is considered high and comparable to other organizations of similar size whom have also participated in the survey. Response rate last year was 56%.

**Employee Retention:** Of those who responded, 77% indicated they would be working for the agency in two years. Compared to other organizations, we have a higher than average employee retention score. Statewide retention score last year was 73%.



Working in 2 yrs 77%  
Not working 23%

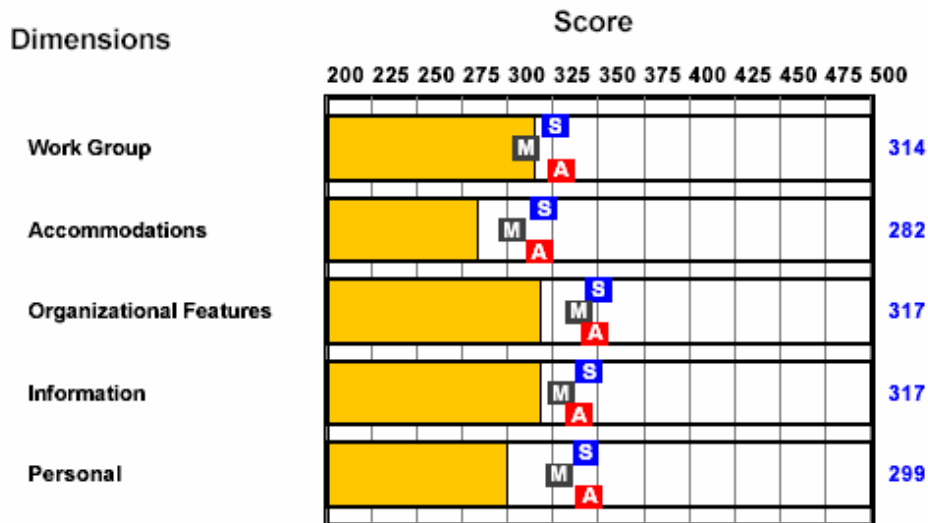
|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Less than 1 year | 7.3%  |
| 1 – 2 years      | 14.6% |
| 3 – 5 years      | 23.8% |
| 6 – 10 years     | 20.1% |
| 11 – 15 years    | 13.3% |
| Over 15 years    | 19.9% |

**Length of Service:** This chart shows the statewide distribution for length of service of survey responders. Of those who responded, over 53% reported being employed with the agency for over six years.

**What did the respondents say?**

Data from the SOE allows us to compare survey responses in three ways: against other organizations who have participated in the SOE, against ourselves over time, and internally between categories of staff.

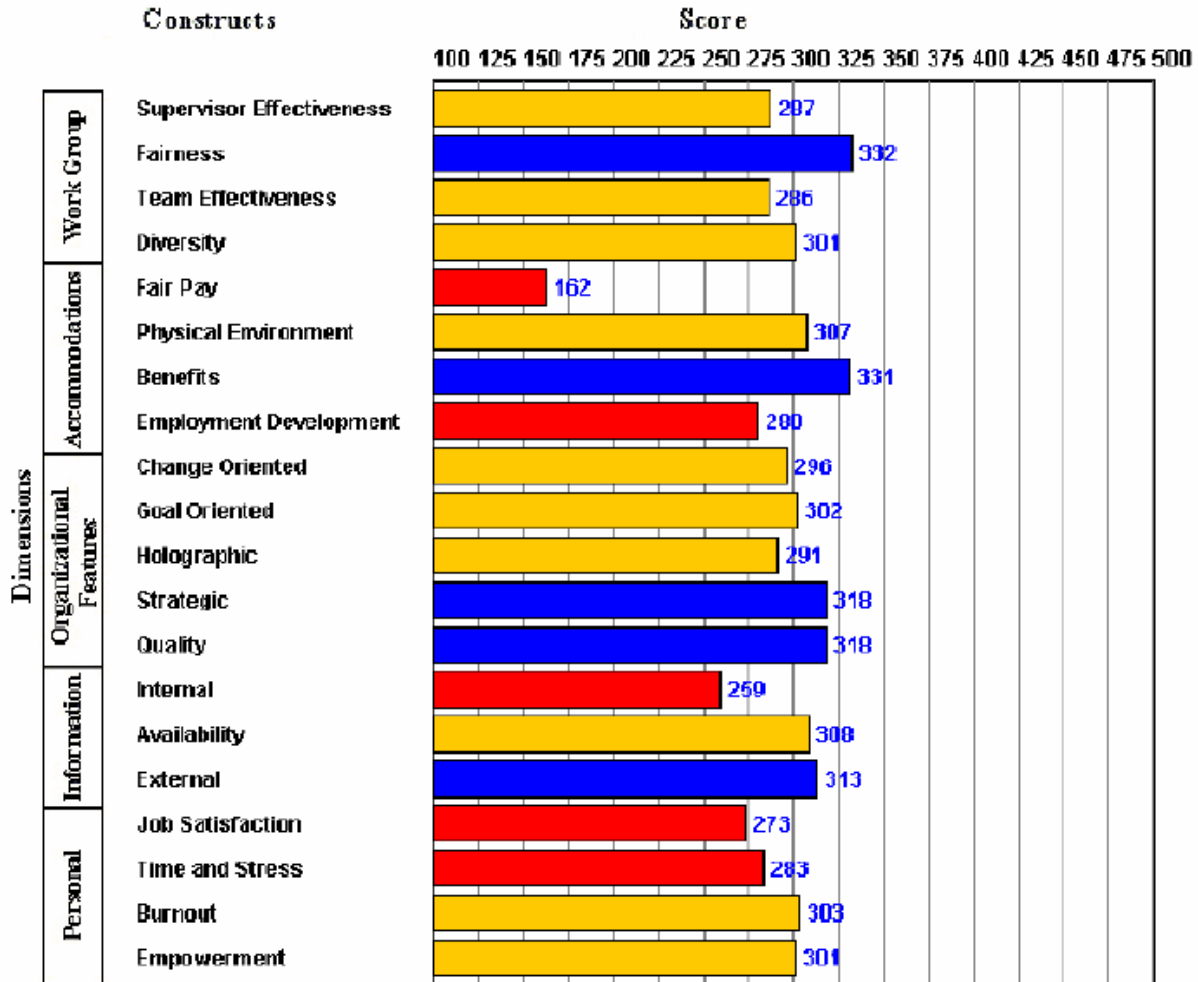
**Comparison to other organizations on Dimension Benchmarks:** The graph below shows the benchmark data for each of the broader Workplace Dimensions. It illustrates how we performed relative to other organizations of similar size, similar mission and all organizations that participated in the survey. Our score appears to the right of the chart in blue. \*For definitions of each dimension, see the definitions section at the end of this memo.



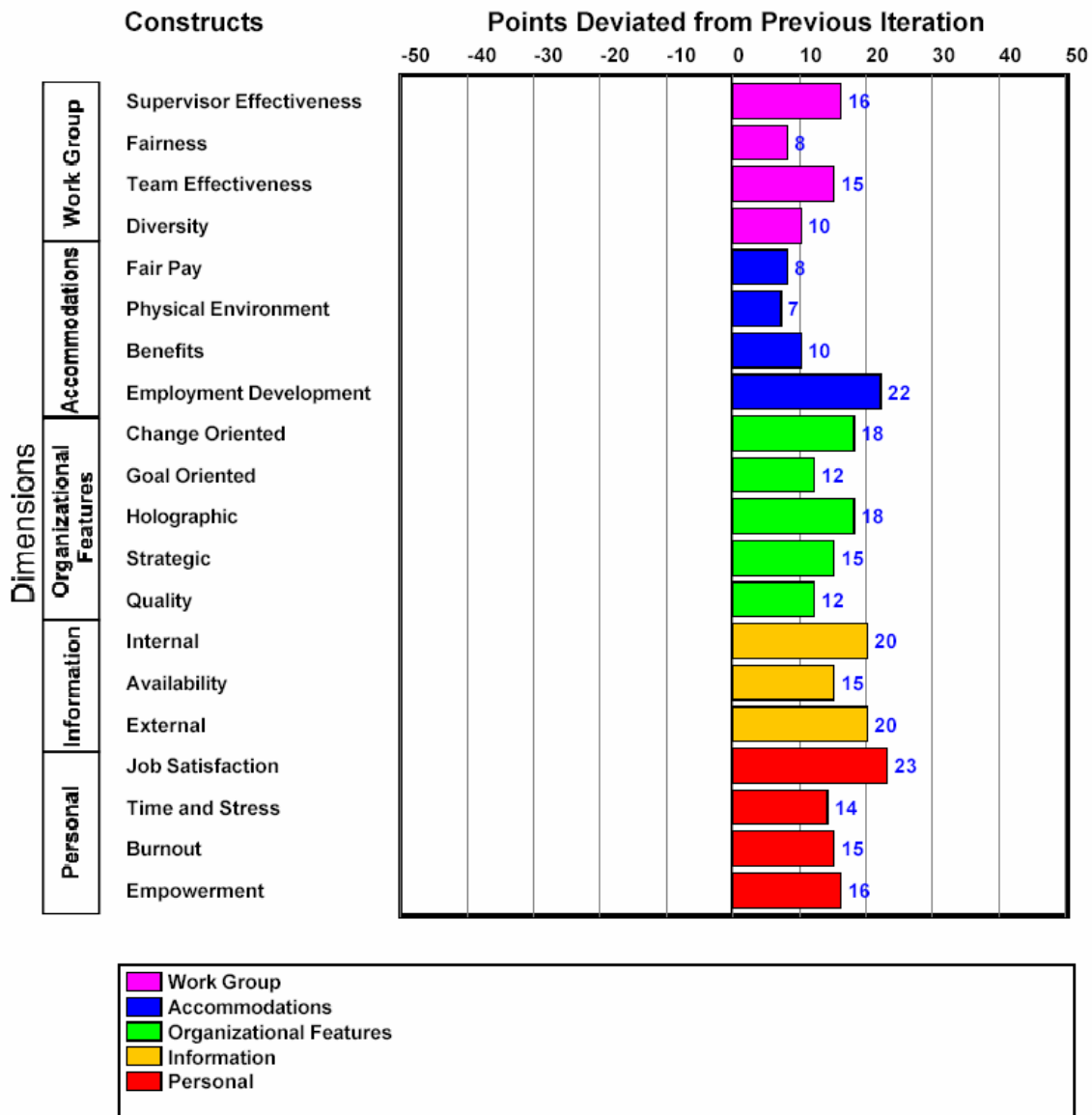
  Scores for your Organization (Numeric Score to the right in Blue)  
S Size - Benchmark for similar size organizations  
M Mission - Benchmark for organizations with a similar mission  
A All Respondents - Benchmark for all of the survey respondents

**Construct Analysis:** Each Workplace Dimension is composed of several Survey Constructs which are designed to broadly profile organizational strengths and weaknesses so interventions may be targeted appropriately. Statewide Construct scores can range from 100 (lowest possible score) to 500 (highest possible score) and are displayed in the chart below. \*Specific definitions for each construct can be found on the last page of this memo.

**NOTE:** Scores less than 200 indicate significant source of concern. Scores below 300 suggest employees perceive issue more negatively than positively. Scores above 300 suggest employees perceive issue more positively than negatively. Scores of 400 or higher indicate a substantial strength.



**Comparison to last year's survey responses on each Construct:** One of the benefits of continuing to participate in the survey is that over time data shows how employees' views have changed. Positive changes indicate that employees perceive the issue as improved since the previous survey. Negative changes indicate that the employees perceive that the issue has worsened since the previous survey. The chart below illustrates positive change from last year's iteration of the survey in all construct areas.



**What should we do with the survey information now?**

Assessment of employee satisfaction is connected to a larger purpose, the development of strategies to improve on identified areas of need. Statewide, staff at all levels are expected to review the SOE data available at <http://dssweb/cs/soe/index.shtml> and to discuss the results during their next CQI meeting. Local analysis of the data should be used to identify strengths as well as used to develop strategies for improvement.

**Next Year**

We are appreciative that so many staff participated in the survey this year. The SOE will continue to be administered on a yearly basis. We would also like to thank Susan Savage, PDS in Central Office, who has dedicated extensive time to assure that this information is useful and used throughout the agency. The next administration is scheduled for Spring 2005 and staff will be notified about the survey in advance. Any

questions regarding the SOE should be addressed to the survey liaison for this year, Susan Savage, at (537) 751-4319 or via email.

### **\* Definitions of Five Workplace Dimension and Survey Constructs**

1. **Work Group:** This dimension relates to employees' immediate work environment and includes factors such as interaction with peers, supervisors and other persons involved in day-to-day work activity.

#### **Constructs**

**Supervisor Effectiveness:** Examines the nature of supervisory relationships in the organization including the quality of communication, leadership, and fairness employee perceives exist between supervisors and themselves.

**Fairness:** Measures extent to which employees believe that equal and fair opportunity exists for all members of the organization.

**Team Effectiveness:** Examines perceptions of work group effectiveness and the extent to which the organizational environment supports appropriate teamwork among employees.

**Diversity:** Addresses the extent to which employees feel individual differences such as ethnicity, age and lifestyle, may result in alienation and/or missed opportunities for learning or advancement.

2. **Accommodations:** This dimension looks at the physical work setting and factors associated with compensation, work technology and tools.

#### **Constructs**

**Fair Pay:** Examines the competitiveness of the total compensation package when employees compare it to similar jobs in their own communities.

**Physical Environment:** Examines the work setting and the degree to which employees believe that a safe and pleasant working environment exists.

**Benefits:** Provides an indication of the role the employment benefit package plays in attracting and retaining employees.

**Employment Development:** Examines priority given to the career and personal development of employees by the organization.

3. **Organizational Features:** This dimension addresses organizational interface with external influences and the ability to assess changes in the environment and make needed adjustments.

#### **Constructs**

**Change Oriented:** Examines organizational capability and readiness to change based on new information and ideas.

**Goal Oriented:** Examines organizational ability to include all its members in focusing resources towards goal accomplishment.

**Holographic:** Refers to the degree to which decision-making and activity are consistent within the organization.

**Strategic:** Refers to how the organization responds to external influence, including those who play a role in defining the mission, services and products provided by the organization.

**Quality:** Focuses upon the degree to which quality principles, such as customer service and continuous improvement, are part of the organizational culture.

4. **Information:** This dimension refers to how consistent and structured communication flow is within the organization and to outside groups. It examines the degree to which communication is directed towards work concerns, how focused and effective it is, and how accessible information is to employees.

**Constructs**

***Internal:*** Captures the extent to which information exchanges within an organization are perceived as open and productive.

***Availability:*** Provides insight into whether employees know where to get needed information and whether they have the ability to access it in a timely manner.

***External:*** Examines how information flows in and out of the organization and focuses on the organizational ability to synthesize and apply external information to work performed by the organization.

5. **Personal:** This dimension reports on how much internalization of stress is occurring and the extent to which debilitating social and psychological conditions appear to be developing at the level of the individual employee. It addresses the interface between employees' home and work lives, and how this relationship may impact job performance.

**Constructs**

***Job Satisfaction:*** Addresses employees' satisfaction with their overall work situation and is weighted heavily by employees' evaluation of the availability of time and resources needed to perform job duties.

***Time and Stress:*** Examines how realistic job demands are given time and resource constraints. Captures employee's feelings about their ability to balance home and work demands. (Note: The higher the score the lower the level of stress)

***Burnout:*** Examines employees' feelings of extreme mental exhaustion, which can negatively impact physical health and job performance, leading to lost resources and opportunities in the organization. (Note: The higher the score the lower the level of burnout)

***Empowerment:*** Measures the degree to which employee's feel they have some control over their jobs and the outcome of their efforts.

**ACTION TO BE TAKEN:**

1. All staff should review this memorandum and other SOE data during their next CQI meeting and develop strategies to address areas of concern.
2. Forward strategies and ideas through the CQI process.
3. All questions regarding these procedures should be referred through normal supervisory channels.

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