

**PCWCP
SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS**

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- Overall **program satisfaction and feelings of preparedness** by PCWCP graduates remain moderate, while **retention rates exceed the state and national average for new workers.**
 - **Retention for the PCWCP program is extremely good** through the second year of employment at **87%**. Over the 16 year period examined, the percent of graduates remaining with the Cabinet after 2 years of employment ranges between **82% and 100%**.
 - Whereas data gathered the first twelve years of the program found the need for additional training in legal documents and court proceedings, this is among the strongest element in the past few years.
 - Respondents **ranked highest the skills** of: (1) Dealing with resistant clients. (2) Demonstrating knowledge of the law and the use of legal documents, and (3) Demonstrating knowledge of the dynamics and indicators of child sexual abuse.
 - Respondents **ranked lowest the skills** of: (1) Celebrating client success. (2) Asking appropriate questions during an intake, and (3) Building a positive working relationships with clients.
 - **Workers rated the program positively** but there has been a **slight decrease in satisfaction with the PCWCP program the past few years.**
 - **Feeling supported by one's supervisor predicts voicing concerns as they arise.**
 - **Job satisfaction, quality supervision and lower levels of secondary traumatic stress are strong predictors of commitment to remain at the cabinet.**
 - **Greater feelings of positivity about leadership and team cohesion and less role overload and secondary traumatic stress predicted feelings of satisfaction with the job.**
 - Qualitative results noted the need for better field experiences during their BSW program to better prepare them for the job, more focus on time and stress management and self care as well as more understanding of all parts of the job including work with juveniles, foster care, adoption.

PCWCP PROGRAM RETENTION

According to our data, as of mid- 2015 there have been **866 graduates of the PCWCP program**. **Seven hundred and eighty one** of those graduates have been out 2 years or more. Of those 781 graduates, 102 were no longer working for the Cabinet at the two year mark.

- The retention rate for PCWCP graduates 2 years from the hire date is **87%**. Over the first 16 years of the program, the retention rate at 2 years has ranged from 82%-100%. Thus, this effect is quite robust across all of the years of the program.

However, at about the 2.5 year mark, another 102 PCWCP graduates left employment for a **74%** retention rate shortly after completion of the contractual obligation. There has been an improvement the past four years in that of the 157 PCWCP graduates employed between 2010 and 2013, 35 left the agency **for a retention rate of 77% at the 2.5 year mark**. **All of these retention rates for PCWCP graduates are much higher than the 52% retention rate of other new workers after the one year mark.**

PCWCP SIX MONTH DATA ANALYSIS

Between mid-2012 and mid-2015, there were **109 graduates of the PCWCP program** who were placed in employment and out long enough for the 6-month post-employment interview. Ninety-nine were still with the agency at this point in time for a 91% retention rate. Eighty-eight percent (N = 87) completed our survey.

Table 1: Demographics of PCWCP Graduates Interviewed

	Gender	Race
59 PCWCP Graduates from late 2012 through 2013	88% Female 12% Male	91% Caucasian 8% African American 1% Hispanic
28 PCWCP Graduates from mid-2014 to early 2015	93% Female 7% Male	85% Caucasian 11% African American 4% Multiracial 1% Hispanic

WORKER PERCEIVED PREPAREDNESS

The PCWCP graduates at six months rated themselves moderately on job preparedness, which was measured by a mean score across all of the items related to specific job duties. Their overall mean score was 85.45 (possible range 29-145) or 2.95 on a 5 point scale. This was based on their scores on 29 job duties rated on a 5-point scale. See Table 2 for means of each sub-scale.

Table 2: Worker Job Preparedness Rating

Sub-Scale	Number of Items	Possible Range	Overall Mean (Standard Deviation)	Overall Mean / # of Items (S.D.)
Attitude & Relationship Skills	8	8-40	21.80 (10.68)	2.73 (1.34)
I&I / Assessment	14	14-70	38.80 (16.73)	2.77 (1.20)
Case Planning	4	4-20	10.72 (4.60)	2.68 (1.15)
Court Proceedings	2	2-10	6.02 (2.39)	3.01 (1.20)
Case Closure	1	1-5	2.77 (1.11)	2.77 (1.11)

- Confidence in court proceedings ranks highest among PCWCP graduates (3.01).
- Tasks that PCWCP graduates felt most prepared to accomplish are listed in Table 3 and are ranked highest to lowest.

Table 3: Tasks Workers Felt Most Prepared to Perform

Task	Rank	Range	Mean
Dealing with resistant clients	1	2-5	3.14
Demonstrating knowledge of the law and the use of legal documents	2	1-5	3.11
Demonstrating knowledge of the dynamics and indicators of child sexual abuse	3	2-5	3.05

- Tasks that PCWCP graduates felt least prepared to accomplish are listed in Table 4 and are ranked from lowest to highest.

Table 4: Tasks Workers Felt Least Prepared to Perform

Task	Rank	Range	Mean
Celebrate success	1	1-5	2.62
Asking appropriate questions during an intake	2	1-5	2.68
Building a positive working relationship with clients	3	1-5	2.77

WORKER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Workers answered a series of questions (based on a 5-point scale) asking them to recommend PCWCP. Overall, they rated the program highly and recommended that it continue. See Table 5 for their mean responses. Numbers in italics represent mean scores in 2010.

Table 5: Program Recommendation Items Mean Responses (Range: 1-5)

Question	Worker's Mean Response (Standard Deviation)
To what extent to you recommend the program continue?	3.91 (1.51) <i>4.30</i>
How likely will you be to recommend the program to other students?	4.20 (1.11) <i>4.07</i>
Overall how well did the program prepare you for work?	3.54 (1.15) <i>4.02</i>

WORKER RECOMMENDATION OF PCWCP PROGRAM OVER TIME

- The average scores on recommendation the program continue have ranged from a low of 3.91 in 2015 to a high of 4.80 in 1999.

WORKER RATINGS OF PREPAREDNESS OVER TIME

- The averages in preparedness (on a 5 point scale) have ranged from a low of 2.95 in 2015 to 3.63 in 2005 to 3.91 in 2010 to a high of 4.17 in 1999. So the scores have gone up and down but overall are on a downward trajectory over the 16 year period under consideration.

Other data gathered at the 6 month follow up period.**Measures**

The questionnaire consisted of demographic items including gender, age, race, ethnicity, educational background including whether or not they were graduates of the PCWCP program, type of team they worked on (e.g., Intake, Investigations, Ongoing work with children 12 and under, the Adolescent team, R&C, Adoption, etc.), years with DCBS and in the current position, number of hours worked per week, and dimensions of their caseload and workload. Then the questionnaire included 16 scales. The scales fell into personal risk and resiliency factors that could affect practice and future turnover, local level and larger organizational culture and climate factors that could affect future turnover, practice, as well as outcomes.

Personal Risk and Resiliency Measures

The personal risk and resiliency factors included measures of stress (TCU, 2005), secondary trauma (Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale, Bride, Robinson, Yegidis & Figley, 2004), and empathic concern (Davis, 1980, 1983). A measure of job satisfaction included both personal items of actual satisfaction with the job as well as some local and organizational level items such as pay, benefits, resources and fairness (Spector, 1994).

Local Level Climate Measures

Local level climate scales included measures of supervisor quality (Saylor & Wright, 1996), supervisor support (McCarthy, 2010), co-worker support (Ellett, 2010), team cohesion (McCarthy, 2010), and shared vision by colleagues (Ellett, 2010).

Organizational Culture and Climate Measures

Larger organizational level culture and climate scales measured leadership (Leake, 2010), role overload (Barbee, 2011, and professional development (Leake, 2010). Some of the professional development items also focused on preparation for the job which could also be considered a personal risk or resiliency factor.

Outcome Measures

Finally outcome measures included organizational commitment (which also could be a resiliency factor) (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1979) and a scale that uses a differentiated approach to assessing ways employees approach work and view leaving the organization. The key factors are exit and voice (Liljegren, Nordlund, & Ekberg, 2008, Naus, van Iterson & Roe, 2007).

PCWCP Regressions with 58 Participants

Based on the PCWCP correlation table, having empathy and supervisor support was correlated with more confidence in key child welfare behaviors. The regression analysis using these two variables as predictors showed that one was almost significant, $b = 28.80$, $t(51) = 1.89$, $p < .06$. *Supervisor Support* explained a significant proportion of variance in *confidence* scores, $R^2 = .46$, $F(1,51) = 13.82$, $p < .001$.

Also based on the PCWCP correlation table, most variables were correlated with the professional development scale. Regression analysis showed that the combination of positive *leadership* and less *secondary trauma* predicted the positive impact of *professional development* on the work, $b = 30$, $t(45) = 3.65$, $p < .001$. *Leadership* and *less secondary trauma* also explained a significant proportion of variance *professional development* scores, $R^2 = .50$, $F(2,45) = 22.33$, $p < .0001$.

Job satisfaction was correlated with many variables but ultimately the regression analysis showed that only low *STS* and *team cohesion* predicted *job satisfaction*, $b = 103$, $t(48) = 9.23$, $p < .0001$. *Low STS and cohesion* also explained a significant proportion of variance *job satisfaction* scores, $R^2 = .51$, $F(2,48) = 24.57$, $p < .0001$.

Intent to exit was also correlated with many variables. Regression analyses showed that more *STS* and less *supervisor quality* predicted *intent to leave* the organization, $b = 16$, $t(49) = 3.11$, $p < .003$. *Leadership* and *less secondary trauma* also explained a significant proportion of variance *professional development* scores, $R^2 = .29$, $F(2,49) = 10.03$, $p < .0001$.

Table 6: Variables impacting outcomes 2012-2013

PCWCP	Outcome Number	Outcome Descriptor
Supervisor Support	1	Confidence
Leadership	2	Professional Development
STS	2	Professional Development
STS	3	Job Satisfaction
Team Cohesion	3	Job Satisfaction
	3	Job Satisfaction
STS	4	Exit
Supervisor Quality	4	Exit

PCWCP regression analyses with 28 participants

Based on the PCWCP correlation table, seven variables were correlated with the professional development scale. Regression analysis showed that the combination of positive *leadership* ($b = .68, t(17) = 4.40, p < .001$), *supervisory support* ($b = .46, t(17) = 2.72, p < .02$), *commitment* ($b = .52, t(17) = 3.25, p < .007$) and *job satisfaction* ($b = .63, t(17) = 2.75, p < .02$) as well as less *overload* ($b = -.37, t(17) = -2.59, p < .02$) predicted the positive impact of *professional development* on the work. All of these variables explained a significant proportion of variance *professional development* scores, $R^2 = .91, F(3,12) = 17.21, p < .0001$.

Job satisfaction was correlated with many variables but ultimately the regression analysis only showed that only less *overload* ($b = -.45, t(21) = -3.90, p < .001$), *leadership* ($b = .49, t(21) = 4.20, p < .001$) and *team cohesion* ($b = .25, t(21) = 2.50, p < .02$) predicted *job satisfaction*. *Low STS, leadership and cohesion* also explained a significant proportion of variance *job satisfaction* scores, $R^2 = .83, F(3,18) = 30.16, p < .0001$.

Intent to exit was also correlated with many variables. Regression analyses showed that less *supervisor quality* ($b = -.84, t(11) = -2.68, p < .02$) and less *satisfaction* ($b = .86, t(11) = 2.25, p < .05$) predicted *intent to leave* the organization. *Less quality and satisfaction* also explained a significant proportion of variance in *exit* scores, $R^2 = .78, F(2,11) = 4.83, p < .009$.

Only supervisory support predicted voicing concerns ($r = .76, p < .01$).

Table 7: Variables impacting outcomes 2014-2015

PCWCP	Outcome Number	Outcome Descriptor
Overload	1	Professional Development
Supervisory Support	1	Professional Development
Leadership	1	Professional Development
Commitment	1	Professional Development
Job Satisfaction	1	Professional Development
Overload	2	Job Satisfaction
Team Cohesion	2	Job Satisfaction
Leadership	2	Job Satisfaction
	2	Job Satisfaction
Job Satisfaction	3	Exit
Quality Supervision	3	Exit
Supervisor Support	4	Voice
	4	Voice

QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

PCWCP graduates were fairly positive about their gains in knowledge and skills. They indicated that they learned how to interact with clients, develop rapport with a diverse range of people, engage families, child development, indicators of abuse and neglect including sex abuse, the flow of a case from investigation to ongoing to closure, how to conduct a basic investigation, (i.e. SOP, protocol, what's expected in my documentation), indicators of domestic violence, interviewing skills, how to conduct an assessment, case planning, court etiquette, case management, how to conduct an ongoing visit, how to navigate TWIST, other forms of documentation, how to work with difficult clients, how to work with community partners, collaboration, time management, and coping skills.

Why did graduates recommend that PCWCP continue?

Many were positive about their overall preparation for the job, believing it was better than that for other new workers.

“I recommend the PCWCP continue because without it I would have never gone into this field that I have grown to love. It also prepared me for what was ahead with specific job duties and tasks.”

“it is a great opportunity for those who wish to further their education and it forces a new worker to give it 2 years to really see what it is like instead of a non-PCWCP worker who might get frustrated early on and consider leaving the Cabinet before they give it enough time - plus I think it is giving the Cabinet a higher caliber of new workers.”

“Because it prepares frontline workers for DCBS, assists with educational costs, and helps ensure a career after graduation. I would also think it reduces turnover because workers are familiar with job requirements and are able to determine if it is suitable for them prior to employment. Otherwise DCBS hires and trains people who quit.”

“Knowledge of just knowing what to expect when you get on the job was huge help. I wasn't going in blind and not knowing what to do.”

“PCWCP gives students a chance to actually practice what they will be doing in the workplace. It prepares students with the tools that they will be using every day in the field.”

“Time spent with someone teaching the class that had actually been out in the field and shared real experiences helped prepare me for what I would actually be doing including preparing for some of the negative experiences and frustrations.”

“Due to the extra classes, trainings, and being required to complete practicum with the Cabinet, I feel that I was much more knowledgeable than new employees who did not complete the program.”

“It cuts down on the training time after hire.”

“PCWCP helped link me with people higher up at the Cabinet and ask them for knowledge and tips about doing this job.”

Ways to improve PCWCP

This cohort of PCWCP graduates had some criticisms of the program and ideas for improvement:

“The training for PCWCP needs to be revamped. The training focuses on issues that are not important. For example, during the court training we learned more about how to dress in court (which should be common knowledge) when what I needed to know were topics such as the difference between an adjudication and a disposition.”

“The practicum I completed with PCWCP did not prepare me at all. I only focused on ongoing duties, and in Jefferson County. I got hired on in Hardin County and was expected to understand how to complete an investigation. No matter what training I received, I would never be able to complete an investigation before first observing. In hindsight, with practicum, it would be more beneficial to be able to conduct practicum hours in all fields of CPS.”

“It seemed like being a part of the PCWCP places extra pressure on a new worker. They are expected to know much more, despite being new.”

“I would recommend that PCWCP as a whole be more aware of what is required "on the job". A lot of the training I received did not always match up with expectations my supervisor has. A prime example is what documentation is necessary to complete an ADT. There are major discrepancies in what training teaches and what's expected in the field.”

“Overall I believe that my practicum experience was more valuable than the PCWCP experience. PCWCP requires trainings over a two year period of time and my practicum occurred only during my final semester of college. While I retained a lot of the information from PCWCP trainings, it would be more valuable to either condense the trainings to a 12 month time period or require that students complete practicums in both their junior and senior years of college. Absent any opportunity to practice the skills and knowledge learned in PCWCP trainings, it was difficult to retain the vast amount of information received over two years.”

“It would be nice to be paired up with someone who has also graduated from PCWCP and been on the job in the Cabinet for a while - like an ambassador or a partner who could navigate through the first few months after graduation while still finishing up academy classes.”

“I think it would be helpful to include more information on commonly abused substances and mental health issues/treatment. Many of my clients struggle with substance abuse and mental health issues and it would be beneficial if I knew more about their conditions and treatment process.”

“Legal jargon and legal terminology. I learned all of my knowledge about the law (pre-employment) from my social work and the law class. If I hadn’t taken this class, I would have been very lost when it came to understanding legal proceedings.”

“I think students should be allowed to do a short practicum their sophomore year before committing to the program so they know exactly what they are committing 2 years of their life to.”

“Better connection with in the field expectations. A majority of my trainers spoke about what they did in the field or how things were when they were working on the front line and it's simply not the same now. I feel there is a disconnect between training and actually being on the job.”

“CPS needs to improve along with PCWCP. This agency does not create a healthy environment for workers, which helps none of our clients in return.”

“1. Make sure that the PCWCP extra requirements are explicitly explained to incoming PCWCP students. 2. The advisors should be better equipped to guide PCWCP students when making decisions and should refrain from singling them out in a classroom setting. 3. There should be practicum positions available for PCWCP students in the county their school is located in. Driving back and forth to a different county is time consuming and very costly on a college student budget. 4. The extra trainings once a month should be better screened for overlap between them and the class that we take at our perspective school. 5. The new employee trainings provided by the cabinet should also be screened for overlap. I spent most of my new hire trainings reviewing the exact information that I was taught as a PCWCP student. That being said I feel that we missed a lot of training regarding investigations. 6. Being forced to move county's due to a job offer and scaring your PCWCP students into taking the first offer that they receive is not the way to hire on new employees. We have already made the decision to be in the program and this job is hard enough as it is let alone having to move away from a support system. Giving students more of an option after graduation will reduce burn out rates and PCWCP's leaving when their contract is up.”

“Condense the lessons and the books because the instructors never get through them and some are outdated. Spend more time practicing ADT's with better scenarios that are more like we will see in the field. Also cover more about court and court behavior. Put a more strict requirement on the supervisors that are taking in students.”

“PCWCP could be improved by condensing the duration of the training to 12 months or offering a short 2-3 day "refresher" training towards the end of the program. While I understand that budgets and monetary concerns are always prevalent, the amount of stipend could also be increased or students could be reimbursed for travel mileage. The stipend is most often utilized quickly for book

expenses and college students are faced with travel requirements of sometimes up to 6 hours. Rotating the location of PCWCP required trainings may also be more equitable. Why should students at other universities across the state always be mandated to travel to ECU? Retreats and other trainings should be rotated between partnering universities much like academy classes are.”

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The PCWCP program continues to be a strong program that enhances staff retention, confidence in practice and resilience. Scale means showed that they believed they and their co-workers had a shared vision. But, for the second time in a row (across a two year period of evaluation), they had the lowest rating of their professional development compared to MSW Stipend graduates and CFL graduates. The larger cohort had the highest organizational commitment scores and were less likely to indicate an intent to leave the organization, but the later cohort had lower organizational commitment scores and they scored lowest in ratings of supervisor quality. They also scored lowest on giving voice to concerns they have with the agency. However, their open-ended responses also showed a slightly greater sophistication in answers and an appreciation for knowing more than the average new hire.

In spite of the continued successes of the PCWCP program, there continue to be areas that could be covered in more depth during the field placement or in classes. These same issues arose throughout the first evaluation that occurred in a continual basis from 1997-2010. The program also seems to be smaller than originally planned (110 per year), even with the addition of the University of Louisville BSW program. In addition, PCWCP graduates complained that supervisors believed they were more prepared than they were and were given high caseloads upon employment. These issues were born out in their higher scores on seeing staffing as a problem, levels of secondary trauma and feeling overloaded. STS scores were predictive of almost all outcomes for PCWCP graduates. If the agency is not careful, they could burn out these promising practitioners.

The PCWCP instructors and UTC trainers may want to closely examine the comments made by PCWCP graduates to ensure that PCWCP students are as prepared as possible for the stark realities of the current DCBS workplace.

1. Coursework should include information on how to best help families who enter our system largely due to substance abuse or severe mental illness. Exposing students to some didactic information about these types of families along with case examples of families with these struggles could go a long way in preparing students for the types of complex cases they will encounter on the job. Since the types of families served and the workplace has changed a great deal over the last decade, PCWCP course instructors may want to shadow workers in the field currently so as to update their sense of what students will face.

2. We would suggest that field placements be more structured and intensive. Students need to be given experience in all areas of CPS practice, particularly investigations, since it is unknown what role they will play upon employment. Thus, they need to rotate across different types of teams beginning with investigations so that they learn the entire job. They also need to be oriented to all of the forms that are required in each phase of the job (investigations, ongoing, foster care, adoption, R&C, independent living). Since agency forms are not part of “best practices” taught in PCWCP courses, exposing them to the forms during field will help them hit the ground running faster when they get to the actual job.

3. Reduce the burden on PCWCP students while they are in school as much as possible. Perhaps have some retreats at other Universities (other than ECU). Also, work to place PCWCP students as close to their home as possible for both field placements and job placements.

4. Several PCWCP graduates asked to have a PCWCP graduate mentor. This could occur during field or once they enter the workforce. We have talked about doing this for years, but this may be a crucial time to enlist the help of former PCWCP graduates in this effort.

5. One student who spread her coursework and practicum over a two year period felt that something was lost in that arrangement. Students need hands on practice while taking classes so that the material will “stick.”

6. SRAs, SRAAs and supervisors need to be advised to take care of their PCWCP graduates and not load too much work onto them as they come into the agency. While they have more experience than other new workers, they are still new to the workplace and need time to grow into a larger caseload. Leaders in the field may also want to develop a crash course in their local court system for new employees to supplement what is learned in the Academy or the PCWCP program. Each court and judge is so different that raising competence in this area for new workers can go a long way in retention efforts. Finally, leaders in the field need to attend to organizational culture and climate. Negative OCCs are cutting into the high retention rate of PCWCP graduates post completion of their obligation.