
**Researcher Notes**

**Categories addressed:** Retention, training, turnover.

**Participants:** The study involved 598 participants in 14 child welfare agencies, during its first phase. 417 workers participated in all three phases of the study (13 of 14 counties).

**Method:** Longitudinal research study. During the first phase of the study, the Transfer Potential Questionnaire (TPQ) was administered to all child protective services worker participants who attended training and agreed to participated in the study, during a three-month period at the Northeast Ohio Regional Training Center at Summit County Children Services in Akron, Ohio. In the second phase of the study, a Human Services Training Effectiveness Postcard (HSTEP) was sent assessing transfer of learning three months after training to the 598 participants resulting in 441 returns (74% return rate). The final phase, was performed 7 years after completing the Transfer Potential Questionnaire, the participants were categorized according to the following employment status: (1) still employed, (2) left the agency, (3) retired. 13 of the 14 agencies participated in this phase of the study.

**Independent variable:** Transfer or learning: supervisory support, coworker support, application planning, caseload size, participant motivation, participant prior experience, and pre-training preparation. Demographic variables: experience, age, education, and gender.

**Dependent variable:** Staff retention.

**Purpose of the study:** The identified transfer of learning factors were used to predict staff retention among 416 child protective services workers in northeast Ohio. Employment longevity beyond 7 years was used for the purpose of this study.

**Findings:**
- Caseload size, gender, age, education, coworker support, supervisor support, and application planning were retention factors for low experienced workers.
- Education, application planning, tenure, and coworker support were retention factors for high experienced workers.
- Tenure, gender, education, caseload size, application planning, and supervisor support were retention factors for both low and high experienced workers.
- More experienced workers perceived less supervisor support.
- Female workers were more likely to remain in child welfare.
- Workers who attended graduate school left at higher rates than those already with master’s degrees, with both leaving at higher rates than those with bachelor’s degrees.