FLASH SURVEY #4: FULL REPORT

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Child Welfare Worker Satisfaction in the State of Wisconsin

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Contents

Background

In June and July of 2020, DCF administered a flash survey to the state's child welfare workforce to explore job satisfaction and an array of elements that may contribute to it. The survey was administered electronically by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center (UWSC) under the direction of Nathan Jones, and sent to all workers (excluding supervisors) who have child welfare cases in eWiSACWIS and who perform the following job functions: Access/Intake, Initial Assessment, Case Manager/Case Worker (Ongoing), Case Aide, and Foster Care Coordinator/Licensing Specialist.

Altogether, 850 workers responded out of 1,732 who were sent the survey, for a final response rate of 49%. This is on par or better than the response rate in previous flash surveys administered to the Wisconsin child welfare workforce.

This survey was a point-in-time snapshot of workers' views about their jobs. Questions included items and scales to gauge job and workload satisfaction; job stressors and stressors specific to foster care responsibilities; workers' intention to stay in their jobs and in the field of child welfare; colleague, supervisor, and agency support; and views about their jobs in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Appendix A provides additional tables on job stressors, broken down by education and demographic comparisons not covered in the main report text. Appendix B includes the survey questionnaire.

Key Takeaways

Education. A general theme throughout the survey was that higher education levels were associated with more dissatisfaction, stress, and intention to leave one's job and the field of child welfare. Those with higher education levels (i.e., a Master's degree) had higher scores on a range of job stressors compared to those with a Bachelor's degree only, and there tended to be a somewhat linear increase across multiple job stressors that was lowest for those without a social work degree, followed by those with a BSW only, and those with an MSW degree. Fewer differences emerged across these three categories for workers with foster care responsibilities, but when differences did emerge, those with an MSW reported higher levels of stress.

Findings were more mixed for those with and without a social work license; among all workers, the former group indicated more stress related to concerns on behalf of families and the latter group indicated more concerns related to their job knowledge and performance. Among workers with foster care responsibilities, concerns about insufficient staff coverage of cases and an overall summary score of stressors were both higher for those with a social work licensure than for those without one.

Similarly, those with a Master's degree and those with an MSW, specifically, had lower levels of general job satisfaction than those with a Bachelor's or those with either a BSW degree or no social work degree. The same pattern emerged with respect to intention to stay in (or leave) a current job or the field of child welfare. Those with a Master's degree or an MSW, specifically, were least likely to report intention to stay in their current job or in the field of child welfare. There were no statistically significant differences in plans to stay in one's job or the field of child welfare by social work licensure status.

Those with a Master's degree, an MSW, or a social work license reported less support from their agency than those without these educational credentials; in addition those with a social work

license reported less supervisor support than those without (or who were unsure of their) licensure status.

Region. Variation across regions was also evident. Respondents from Northern and Western regions reported the most workload dissatisfaction, and those in the Southern region the least. There were no statistically significant differences across regions on an overall summary score of stressors, and the top three stressors in all regions were the amount of case documentation, making difficult decisions, and lack of resources for families. There was less consistency in which regions scored highest or lowest on individual stressors.

Across regions, top stressors reported by those with foster care responsibilities involved time to work with community members to recruit and support families (although this was not as much of an issue in Milwaukee), the amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records, pressure to create placement resources, mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being in a supervisory role, being held accountable for things "over which I have no control", and being blamed for something that goes wrong.

Respondents in the Northeastern and Milwaukee regions reported the lowest scores for job satisfaction and those in the Western region of the state scored highest on this measure. Respondents in the Western region were least likely to report a likelihood of near-term leaving and long-term staying, and respondents from Milwaukee reported the highest levels of intent to leave. Milwaukee respondents were most likely to feel supported by their supervisors and Northeastern region respondents were least likely to feel supported by their agencies. Milwaukee respondents reported the lowest decrease in job satisfaction compared to all other regions except the balance of the Southeastern region. Respondents from the Northeastern region were least likely to report that their agencies handled the COVID-19 response effectively.

Demographic Characteristics. Female-identifying respondents reported more workload dissatisfaction than non-female-identifying respondents. However the former group was less likely to report intention to leave the child welfare field in the short-term than the latter group, and reported being less negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of their jobs. Respondents who identified their race as White (non-Hispanic) reported higher rates of job satisfaction, less intention to leave their job or the child welfare field in both the near- and longer-term, and reported the least adverse impact of COVID-19 on their jobs. Importantly, in terms specific stressors, identifying as a person of color was associated with feeling less safe in the field and a greater likelihood of experiencing discrimination in one's job (Appendix Tables 5H and 5I). There were no differences by sex on any individual stressors (Appendix Table 5G).

Summary of Key Findings by Survey Section

The majority of respondents were between ages of 25 and 44. Most identified as female and non-Hispanic white, and nearly all respondents have at least a bachelor's degree. The majority of respondents hold a social work degree (the highest degree for 42% is a BSW; an additional 25% hold an MSW. Fifteen percent reported receiving Title IV-E funding in their social work degree program, and over three-quarters hold a social work license. All regions of the state were represented in the survey respondent sample. In this report, Milwaukee County was considered separately from the remainder of the Southeastern region, so analyses involving regions account for six groups, rather than five.

Key findings related to workload satisfaction:
- Respondents report a moderate level of dissatisfaction with their workloads; those holding an MSW degree reported the highest level of dissatisfaction; the Northern and Western regions reported the most dissatisfaction and the Southern region the least dissatisfaction, although even the Southern region respondents reported moderate levels of dissatisfaction.

Key finding related to time spent with families:
- Workers spend significantly less time with families than they feel is necessary to be effective in their roles.

Key findings related to job stressors:
- The biggest stressors for caseworkers include the amount of case documentation, the lack of resources for families, and making difficult decisions. This did not vary across bachelor's vs. master's education levels or social work degree status, and for the most part, social work licensure status.

- Compared to those with only a bachelor's degree, those with a master's or higher degree reported greater degrees of stress across a broad range of stressor types.

- Regional variation in job stressors indicated that inadequate training for the job was a more frequent stressor in Southern and Western regions and least common in Milwaukee; stressors related to stakeholders were most common in the Northeastern and Milwaukee regions and least common in the Northern region; workers in Milwaukee reported the lowest levels of feeling safe while working in the community, and were most likely to report discrimination in their job based on their characteristics; and stressors related to lack of resources for families was lowest in the Northeast and Milwaukee regions compared to all other regions.

- Asked why they highlighted particular job stressors in their answers, workers provided qualitative feedback indicating issues with leadership, such as lack of support, lack of supervision, or poor management; a work culture pervaded by "politics" and "drama"; observing poor practice among colleagues and other service providers; high staff turnover; feeling devalued in court and legal proceedings; client-related issues, such as dealing with parents with personality disorders, fearing parents' responses, and "no-shows" to meetings and visits; and issues with community partners, such as lack of familiarity with the child welfare worker's job, and feeling like one does the community partner's work for them.

- Pressure to create placement resources was ranked highest among stressors for child welfare staff with foster care responsibilities, followed by the amount of documentation, and being held accountable for things outside one's control. There was some variation by social work degree status and social work licensure.

- Across regions, top stressors reported by those with foster care responsibilities involved time to work with community members to recruit and support families (although this was not as much of an issue in Milwaukee), the amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records, pressure to create placement resources, mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being in a supervisory role, being held accountable for things "over which I have no control", and being blamed for something that goes wrong.

- When asked what changes to their job would be needed to allow more time allocated to clients, parents, kin and foster parents, respondents with foster care responsibilities cited a need for reduced administrative burden, more rigorous recruitment and retention of foster parents, reduced caseloads workloads, and a shifting of tasks that are outside their job purview.

Key findings for job satisfaction:
- Respondents with a bachelor's degree reported higher levels of job satisfaction than those with a master's degree or higher. The scores for respondents with a BSW or no social work degree were also higher than the scores for those with an MSW. Respondents in the Northeastern and Milwaukee regions reported the lowest scores for job satisfaction and those in the Western region of the state scored highest on this measure.

Key findings for job and child welfare field intention to leave and intention to stay:
- Having a higher respondent age (specifically, those nearing retirement age), education level, and social work degree status was associated with a greater likelihood to report a desire to leave one's job in the near future, as was true for respondents with a non-White racial or ethnic identity. Respondents in the Western region were most likely to report a desire to stay in their jobs and across multiple summary measures of staying in the job and the field. Largely similar patterns were observed for longer term commitments to one's job and to the field of child welfare. Workers in the Milwaukee region reported being least likely to stay in the child welfare field for the short or longer-term. Those with a Master's degree in Milwaukee were least likely to report intention to stay over the longer-term, in their current job or the field of child welfare. There were no differences by education in the Western region.

Key findings related to support from colleagues, supervisors, and agencies:
- Respondents largely feel supported by their colleagues, and supervisors, and feel neutral to slightly positive about support from their agencies. Some variation in perceived support was observed across demographic groups for supervisor and agency support, but no differences emerged across demographic groups with respect to support from colleagues. Milwaukee respondents were most likely to feel supported by their supervisors (and those with less than a Master's degree and those identifying as female felt more supported than those with a Master's degree or those who did not identify as female). Northeastern region respondents were least likely to feel supported by their agencies. There were no statistically significant differences by education level, sex, or race/ethnicity.

Key findings related to job satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic:
- Respondents reported feeling moderately satisfied with their agencies' responses to the pandemic and felt that their workloads, on average, have decreased or stayed the same. Similarly, job satisfaction during the pandemic has, on average, declined or stayed the same. Those identifying as non-White or non-female reporting lower levels of job satisfaction than White non-Hispanic and female respondents. Milwaukee respondents reported the least decrease in job satisfaction compared to all other regions except the balance of the Southeastern region. Respondents from the Northeastern region were least likely to report that their agencies handled the COVID-19 response effectively.

There were no statistically significant differences across demographic or education groups on these measures in Milwaukee and the Northeastern region.

- Respondents' comments and questions related to their jobs during the pandemic distributed across several themes: Both positive and negative responses to working from home, positive and negative effects on mental health, concerns about inability to adequately serve families (including lack of available service providers), great concerns for one's health as well as tension between one's own health and children's safety, and a lack of clear direction and inconsistent instructions from one's agency.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Sample (N=850)		
Demographic	Percentage	N
Age		
<25	6.37	54
25-34	40.21	341
35-44	25.35	215
45-54	20.05	170
55+	8.02	68
Education Level		
<Bachelor's	2.64	22
Bachelor's	65.59	547
Master's or higher	31.77	265
Social Work Degree		
Neither	27.18	231
BSW	47.41	403
MSW	25.41	216
Received IV-E Funding		
No / Not sure	84.93	524
Yes	15.07	93
Social Work License		
No / Not sure	22.94	142
Yes	77.06	477
Gender		
Female	89.02	754
Other	10.98	93
Race		
White non-Hispanic	85.76	728
Black non-Hispanic	4.23	36
American Indian	1.29	11
Asian	1.06	9
Pacific Islander	0.10	1
Two or more races	1.76	15
Missing	2.34	20
Hispanic / Latinx		
Yes	2.96	25
No	97.04	821
Region		
Northern	14.13	102
Northeastern	25.65	218
Western	19.11	138
Southern	22.99	166
Southeastern	14.24	121
Milwaukee	12.35	105

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 presents the overall demographic characteristics of the sample. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 25-34 (40.2%), identified as female (89.0%), and identified as White non-Hispanic (85.8%). For educational level, most respondents had at least a bachelor's degree (97.4%), with 41.7% having a bachelor's in Social Work (BSW) and 25.4% with a master's in Social Work (MSW). Most respondents reported licensure in social work (77.1%) and reported that they did not receive or were unsure of receiving IV-E funding (84.9%). Six geographic regions of Wisconsin were represented with 14.1% from Northern, 25.7% from Northeastern, 19.1% from Western, 23% from Southern, 14.24% from the Southeastern regions (excluding Milwaukee), and 12.4% from Milwaukee.

Within the sample, 94.5% (N=803) of respondents reported having cases assigned to them in the past 12 months, but before the pandemic, that required face-to-face interaction with children, parents or caregivers (including foster caregivers). Of this group, 72.4% (N=581) reported having in-home cases in the past 12 months, but before the pandemic. Of the same group who had any cases requiring face-to-face interaction, 81.2% (N=652) reported having family cases assigned to them were at least one child was placed in out-of-home care.

WORKLOAD SATISFACTION

Table 2 presents results for the workload satisfaction scale by demographic group. Higher scores reflect more *dissatisfaction* with workload. The scale included the following items: 1) I have too much work to do in the amount of time that I have; 2) I don't have enough time to do my job effectively, and; 3) My workload is too high. Respondents could select from one of five response options ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree), indicating higher dissatisfaction.

Worker dissatisfaction was significantly different and higher for those with higher educational credentials, females, and respondents from the Northern and Western regions of the state. The average score was 3.72, indicating moderate dissatisfaction. Tests for statistically significant differences between groups showed that the score for those with less than a bachelor's degree (3.24) was lower than the score for respondents with a master's degree or higher (3.82), although few respondents had less than a bachelor's degree. The score for respondents without a social work degree (3.61) was lower than the score for those with an MSW (3.83). The score for females was higher (3.74) than the score for those that identify as another gender (3.52). Lastly, there were some significant differences in scores across regions in Wisconsin. The Northern region reported the highest score at 4.02, indicating more workload dissatisfaction. Respondents from the Southern region reported the lowest levels of dissatisfaction with workload.
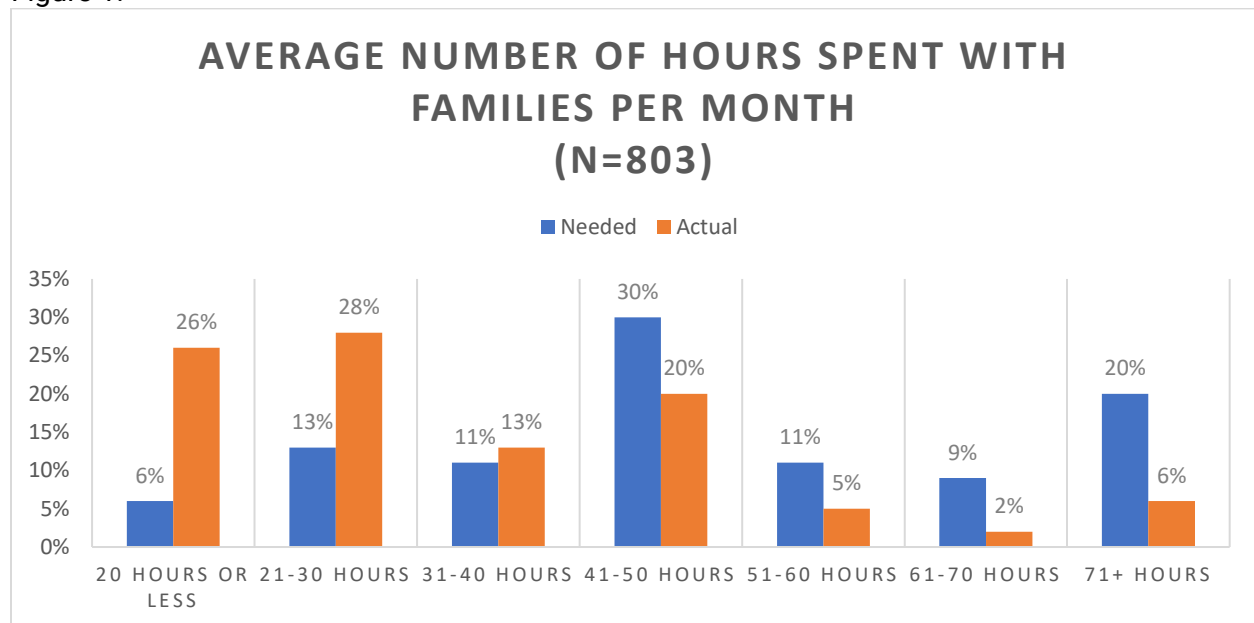
Table 2: Workload Dissatisfaction (N=850)		
Demographic	**Mean (SD)**	**N**
Age (N=847)		
<25	3.49 (1.07)	54
25-34	3.71 (1.02)	341
35-44	3.80 (1.08)	215
45-54	3.71 (0.99)	170
55+	3.71 (1.11)	67
Education Level (N=833)		
<Bachelor's	3.24 (1.02)	22
Bachelor's	3.68 (1.05)	546
Master's or higher	3.82 (1.02)	265
Social Work Degree (N=849)		
Neither	3.61 (1.14)	230
BSW	3.72 (1.00)	403
MSW	3.83 (0.99)	216
Received IV-E Funding (N=617)		
No / Not sure	3.74 (0.99)	524
Yes	3.85 (1.06)	93
Social Work License (N=619)		
No / Not sure	3.64 (1.02)	142
Yes	3.79 (0.99)	477
Gender (N=846)		
Female	3.74 (1.03)	753
Other	3.52 (1.09)	93
Race (N=850)		
White Non-Hispanic	3.72 (1.02)	728
All Other Racial Groups (or Missing)	3.68 (1.16)	117
Hispanic / Latinx (N=845)		
Yes	3.53 (1.21)	25
No	3.72 (1.04)	820
Region (N=721)		
Northern	4.02 (0.95)	101
Northeastern	3.66 (1.14)	218
Western	3.89 (0.90)	138
Southern	3.58 (1.06)	166
Southeastern	3.65 (1.01)	121
Milwaukee	3.72 (1.04)	105
Overall	3.72 (1.04)	849

Red text indicates significant differences at $p<.05$

Workers with any cases requiring face-to-face interaction with children, parents, or caregivers (including foster caregivers, (N=803) were asked what percentage of face-to-face time, on average, they felt they needed to spend with family members in the course of one month, to most effectively serve them. They were also asked about the actual time spent with families in a month, on average. A full 70% of the sample reported that at least 41 monthly hours was needed to effectively serve each family, while only 33% reported actually spending this much time with families.

Figure 1.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS SPENT WITH FAMILIES PER MONTH (N=803)

■ Needed ■ Actual

Hours	Needed	Actual
20 hours or less	6%	26%
21-30 hours	13%	28%
31-40 hours	11%	13%
41-50 hours	30%	20%
51-60 hours	11%	5%
61-70 hours	9%	2%
71+ hours	20%	6%

JOB STRESSORS

Table 4 presents answers to questions on job stressors (asked of all respondents). Respondents could select from one of four response options ranging from 1 (Never) to 4 (Often), with an option to select "not applicable". The biggest stressors for caseworkers include the amount of case documentation (3.48), the lack of resources for families (3.41), and making difficult decisions (3.22). White workers did not report issues with discrimination at significantly higher rates. However, on average, non-white workers also rated discrimination last in terms of their stressors. An overall average stress score was computed by summing responses to all stressor questions (for those who provided answers to all stressor questions) and dividing by the number of stressors. This summary measure provides a sense of the *average degree of stress across all stressor types*. It yields an average score of 2.78, indicating that caseworkers feel a moderate degree of stress in their positions.

Tables 4A-4D present the averages for caseworker job stressors by education level, social work degree, license, and region in Wisconsin. Qualitative themes and quotes about caseworker job stressors are also provided at the end of this section.

Table 4: Caseworker Job Stressors (N=840)	Mean (SD)	N
Inadequate information to do my job	2.71 (0.81)	840
Amount of case documentation	3.48 (0.77)	836
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.08 (0.90)	829
Inadequate training for the job	2.44 (0.88)	834
Stakeholders	2.76 (0.92)	818
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.89 (0.90)	832
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.74 (0.96)	832
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.30 (0.79)	824
Making difficult decisions	3.22 (0.80)	835
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.41 (0.89)	836
Fear of making a mistake	3.09 (0.85)	839
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.78 (0.85)	834
Lack of resources for families	3.41 (0.78)	827
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.87 (0.89)	833
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.61 (0.83)	834
Summary score (Cronbach's alpha=0.85)	2.78 (0.49)	768

Table 4A presents the averages for the caseworker job stressor question by education level. Only 22 respondents reported having less than a bachelor's degree, so this subgroup was dropped from the analysis. The top three stressors for those with a bachelor's degree included a lack of resources for families (3.38), the amount of case documentation (3.47), and making difficult decisions (3.20). The summary score for caseworks with only a bachelor's degree was 2.73. For those with a master's degree or higher, the top three stressors also included the lack of resources for families (3.49), the amount of case documentation (3.53), and making difficult decisions (3.30).

There were significant differences across education levels. Compared to those with only a bachelor's degree, those with higher degrees reported more frequent stress related to inadequate information to perform one's job, stakeholders, being held accountable for things out of one's control, being blamed for something that goes wrong, seeing families get treated unfairly, and experiencing discrimination in one's job based on one's own characteristics. The summary score for individuals with a master's degree was also higher than the score for those with only a bachelor's degree.

Table 4A: Caseworker Job Stressors by Education Level (N=800)	Bachelor's Mean (SD) N=536	Master's or Higher Mean (SD) N=264
Inadequate information to do my job	2.66 (0.78)	2.79 (0.85)
Amount of case documentation	3.47 (0.95)	3.53 (0.76)
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.04 (0.91)	3.15 (0.86)
Inadequate training for the job	2.40 (0.89)	2.48 (0.85)
Stakeholders	2.68 (0.91)	2.97 (0.90)
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.85 (0.90)	3.00 (0.90)
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.69 (0.94)	2.90 (0.98)
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.27 (0.78)	2.34 (0.82)
Making difficult decisions	3.20 (0.81)	3.30 (0.76)
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.40 (0.87)	2.49 (0.92)
Fear of making a mistake	3.09 (0.85)	3.13 (0.83)
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.71 (0.84)	2.94 (0.84)
Lack of resources for families	3.38 (0.80)	3.49 (0.75)
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.85 (0.88)	2.94 (0.90)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.55 (0.78)	1.71 (0.91)
Summary score	2.73 (0.48)	2.87 (0.50)

Red text indicates significant differences at $p < .05$

Table 4B presents the averages for caseworker job stressors by social work degree. Those with an MSW reported the highest summary score across all items (2.88), in comparison to respondents with a BSW (2.76) and those with neither credential (2.70). The greatest stressors across all degree types (BSW, MSW, or neither) were a lack of resources for families, the amount of case documentation, and making difficult decisions. There were significant differences across groups. The most prevalent statistically significant differences are found when comparing those with an MSW degree to those without a social work degree (with the former consistently reporting higher frequencies of job stressors than the latter). MSW degree holders were more likely than non-social work degree holders to report frequent stressors related to the amount of case documentation, stakeholders, being held accountable for things outside of one's control, being blamed for something that goes wrong, making difficult decision, lack of job discretion, seeing families get treated unfairly, lack of resources for families, and having a higher summary score. MSW degree holders were more likely than BSW degree holders to have a higher summary score and experience stressors related to inadequate information, stakeholders, being blamed for something that goes wrong, and unfair family treatment.

Table 4B: Caseworker Job Stressors by Social Work Degree (N=839)	Neither Mean (SD) N=228	BSW Mean (SD) N=396	MSW Mean (SD) N=215
Inadequate information to do my job	2.72 (0.83)	2.64 (0.77)[1]	2.82 (0.84)[1]
Amount of case documentation	3.34 (0.86)[2,3]	3.53 (0.72)[2]	3.53 (0.75)[3]
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.04 (0.92)	3.07 (0.90)	3.12 (0.88)
Inadequate training for the job	2.42 (0.90)	2.41 (0.89)	2.51 (0.84)
Stakeholders	2.58 (0.91)[1-3]	2.74 (0.92)[1-3]	2.99 (0.90)[1-3]
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.77 (0.92)[3]	2.89 (0.90)	3.02 (0.87)[3]
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.58 (0.98)[3]	2.72 (0.94)[1,3]	2.93 (0.95)[1]
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.30 (0.82)	2.30 (0.78)	2.31 (0.80)
Making difficult decisions	3.11 (0.84)[3]	3.22 (0.80)	3.32 (0.73)[3]
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.31 (0.87)[3]	2.41 (0.87)	2.52 (0.93)[3]
Fear of making a mistake	3.00 (0.85)	3.12 (0.87)	3.14 (0.82)
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.72 (0.86)[3]	2.69 (0.85)[1,3]	3.01 (0.79)[1]
Lack of resources for families	3.28 (0.84)[2,3]	3.44 (0.77)[2,3]	3.50 (0.73)[3]
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.81 (0.97)	2.88 (0.86)	2.93 (0.88)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.65 (0.91)	1.56 (0.77)	1.65 (0.86)
Summary score	2.70 (0.53)[3]	2.76 (0.47)[1,3]	2.88 (0.47)[1]

1=BSW − MSW; 2=BSW − neither; 3=MSW − neither
Red text indicates significant differences at p<.*05*

Table 4C presents the averages for caseworker job stressors by social work licensure status, among those with a BSW or MSW degree (N=566 out of 622 possible respondents). For those with a social work license, the top three stressors were the amount of case documentation (3.55), a lack of resources for families (3.52), and making difficult decisions (3.29). The summary score for those with a social work license was 2.80. For those without a license, the top three stressors were the amount of case documentation (3.45), fear of making a mistake (3.33), and a lack of resources for families (3.26). The summary score for those without a license was 2.80. There were statistically significant differences between licensure groups for the following stressors: inadequate information to do my job and fear of making a mistake (both higher for those without a license or unsure if they had a license compared to those with a license), as well as seeing families getting treated unfairly and a lack of resources for families (both lower for those with a license compared to those without or who were unsure if they had a license).

Table 4C: Caseworker Job Stressors by License (N=566)	No License/Not Sure Mean (SD) N=142	License Mean (SD) N=424
Inadequate information to do my job	2.83 (0.86)	2.66 (0.78)
Amount of case documentation	3.45 (0.76)	3.55 (0.72)
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.16 (0.91)	3.07 (0.88)
Inadequate training for the job	2.53 (0.91)	2.42 (0.86)
Stakeholders	2.73 (0.99)	2.85 (0.09)
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.9 (1.01)	2.95 (0.86)
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.65 (1.05)	2.84 (0.92)
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.32 (0.82)	2.30 (0.78)
Making difficult decisions	3.14 (0.83)	3.29 (0.76)
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.40 (0.90)	2.47 (0.89)
Fear of making a mistake	3.33 (0.84)	3.07 (0.85)
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.66 (0.92)	2.84 (0.81)
Lack of resources for families	3.26 (0.87)	3.52 (0.71)
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.89 (0.94)	2.90 (0.84)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.56 (0.84)	1.60 (0.71)
Summary score	2.80 (0.52)	2.80 (0.46)

Red text indicates significant differences at p<.05

Table 4D presents the averages for case worker job stressors by region in Wisconsin. Across all regions, the top three stressors included the amount of case documentation, the lack of resources for families, and making difficult decisions. Results from one-way ANOVA tests showed that there were significant differences across regional groups for several stressors. Inadequate training for the job was a more frequently cited stressor in Southern and Western regions and the least cited stressor for Milwaukee workers; stressors related to stakeholders were most common in the Northeastern and Milwaukee regions and least common in the Northern region; workers in Milwaukee reported the lowest levels of feeling safe while working in the community, and were most likely to report discrimination in their job based on their characteristics; and stressors related to lack of resources for families was lowest in the Northeast and Milwaukee regions compared to all other regions.

Table 4D: Caseworker Job Stressors by Region (N=845)	Northern Mean (SD) N=100	Northeastern Mean (SD) N=193	Western Mean (SD) N=136	Southern Mean (SD) N=164	Southeastern Mean (SD) N=121	Milwaukee Mean (SD) N=103
Inadequate information to do my job	2.71 (0.76)	2.73 (0.83)	2.61 (0.75)	2.74 (0.84)	2.69 (0.76)	2.73 (0.87)
Amount of case documentation	3.6 (0.68)	3.47 (0.75)	3.57 (0.72)	3.39 (0.82)	3.53 (0.82)	3.41 (0.80)
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.2 (0.94)	3.09 (0.92)	3.18 (0.81)	2.98 (0.88)	2.97 (0.9)	3.03 (0.92)
Inadequate training for the job	2.39 (0.75)	2.44 (0.86)	2.53 (0.87)	2.6 (0.91)	2.3 (0.9)	2.25 (0.93)
Stakeholders	2.48 (0.9)	2.89 (0.91)	2.71 (0.89)	2.73 (0.95)	2.77 (0.86)	2.86 (1.01)
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.79 (0.86)	2.97 (0.87)	2.82 (0.87)	2.88 (0.95)	2.81 (0.91)	3.02 (0.96)
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.66 (0.93)	2.80 (0.89)	2.8 (0.94)	2.71 (1.01)	2.63 (0.94)	2.79 (1.09)
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.38 (0.84)	2.31 (0.78)	2.3 (0.7)	2.17 (0.76)	2.22 (0.84)	2.52 (0.88)
Making difficult decisions	3.27 (0.85)	3.15 (0.79)	3.37 (0.73)	3.23 (0.81)	3.18 (0.82)	3.12 (0.81)
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.47 (0.97)	2.48 (0.90)	2.31 (0.87)	2.49 (0.83)	2.32 (0.8)	2.37 (0.98)
Fear of making a mistake	3.13 (0.86)	3.12 (0.82)	3.18 (0.83)	3.03 (0.82)	3.1 (0.91)	2.96 (0.93)
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.64 (82)	2.92 (0.90)	2.78 (0.81)	2.86 (0.85)	2.71 (0.81)	2.84 (0.96)
Lack of resources for families	3.52 (0.72)	3.28 (0.83)	3.59 (0.63)	3.54 (0.75)	3.4 (0.82)	3.18 (0.84)
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.98 (1)	2.92 (0.90)	2.9 (0.89)	2.79 (0.88)	2.78 (0.81)	2.89 (0.90)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.62 (0.9)	1.59 (0.79)	1.54 (0.76)	1.57 (0.82)	1.52 (0.71)	1.89 (1.02)
Summary score	2.77 (0.51)	2.80 (0.49)	2.82 (0.41)	2.75 (0.50)	2.72 (0.47)	2.78 (0.59)

Red text indicates significant differences at p<.05.

QUALITATIVE THEMES RELATED TO JOB SATISFACTION AND STRESSORS

Respondents were asked this open-ended question: *"What are ways you wish you could change your job to allow for more time to meet with families?"* The themes are bolded below and relate to different types of stressors that inhibit time spent with families. Where relevant, quantitative findings are highlighted throughout this section. Please note, all responses reflect the period prior to COVID-19.

Paperwork and administrative tasks. This theme was mentioned by nearly half (45.2%) of survey respondents. While some respondents only mentioned one theme, other respondents illustrated the interconnectedness of these themes. For example, when some respondents mentioned that paperwork is an impediment to the time spent with families, they also indicated that the process was redundant or that the technology increased the amount of administrative paperwork. Examples of quotes that related to paperwork and ways that the process can be improved for respondents:

> "Less repetition in paperwork, more automation (automatically notify schools of child placed in district, automatically notify county of child placed there, pull in case notes for last face to face on perm plans), more ability to utilize admin aides for referrals."

> "Less paperwork, quicker and more efficient way to complete necessary case notes and paperwork so more time can be spent with the families."

In addition to paperwork and documentation, respondents report being taxed by *other auxiliary tasks* such as too much driving, too many administrative duties, too many meetings, and too many seemingly unrelated tasks. Examples of quotes related to auxiliary tasks and ways that this can be improved included:

> "A large portion of time goes into documenting cases, completing assessments, and responding to crisis. If there was more time dedicated to meeting with families and youth to work on skill development and strengthening relationships, I feel my job would be more impactful."

> "More administrative help with behind the scene phone calls, filing, coordination."

> "Less paperwork, less administrative meetings, more time available to see families, better service options."

> "In order to meet with families, we would have to have a reduction in the administrative work and reports that need to be filed. Although we have service providers who contact our clients regularly, due to the requirements of my job as a Youth Justice Case Manager, there is not enough time to have adequate face to face contact more than once or twice a month."

Quantitative results support the theme of too much paperwork and onerous administrative tasks for specific sub-groups of the sample. Specifically, the amount of case documentation was identified as a stressor more often for workers without a social work degree (see Table 4B), for workers who received IV-E funding (see Table 4F in the Appendix), and for females (see Table 4G in Appendix).

Case Loads. Many respondents (16.2%) report that large caseloads prevent them from spending time with families. Of those that cite number of cases as an impediment, many ask for smaller

caseloads and/or supervisors that consider severity or intensity of cases. Examples of quotes included:

> "I wish it were possible to have a smaller caseload to be able to dedicate as much time to families as possible while also managing the amount of behind the scenes administrative work that is required. Smaller caseloads would allow for more time overall to be spent on both tasks meaning that I could spend more time working with each family to truly effectuate changes."

> "…keeping the same requirements and having a maximum of 15 cases. It would also be helpful for our supervisors to more carefully consider the types of caseloads people have. Things in our county that take up a lot of time and effort on the "paperwork" side is ICWA cases, Family Treatment Court cases, TPR/guardianship cases, and large sibling groups. It isn't fair to have a combination of all of those, and others don't--but everyone is held to the same standards. 15 cases wouldn't necessarily mean the same amount of work for all and that needs to be considered so everyone has a fair load, leaving appropriate time to work with families.

> "Less cases. While my current caseload (12 cases) is less than most counties, the cases I have are intense/high needs and I actually feel like I'm managing a case load of about 20. If I was able to maintain a caseload of about 8-9 cases, I would be able to devote more face-to-face time with them."

Quantitative results indicate the pressure from a high perceived workload could have a greater impact on certain staff over others. Insufficient staff as a reason for this is cited more often by workers who received IV-E funding. Workload dissatisfaction is also more often endorsed by workers with an MSW compared to those with no social work degree (see Table 2). Workload is also perceived to be higher for workers in the Northern and Western regions compared to other regions of the state. For a wide range of concerns (amount of case documentation, inadequate staffing, stakeholders, accountability concerns, fear of being blamed, feeling unsafe, making difficult decisions, fear of making a mistake, lack of resources for families, and carrying others' workloads), female workers were more likely than those not identifying as female to indicate a concern (see Tables 2 and 4G).

Technology. Responses include those that mention hardware or software. Technology was another recurrent and interconnected factor prohibiting respondents from meeting with families, mentioned by 6.7% of respondents. Most respondents that mentioned technology also mentioned WiSACWIS suggesting that the system is outdated, redundant and problematic. Examples of quotes included:

> "WiSACWIS is extremely cumbersome and inefficient. Despite working with it for 7 years, there are still things I am unable to find, or times when there is a problem that takes time out of my day to solve. The paperwork we do is overwhelming--especially in a day and age when we have technology that should streamline things. As Ongoing workers, we are the people that everyone comes to have their problems solved. We are the "middlemen" for everyone, which is a huge time waster."

> "If I were able to cut out some of the technical work (mostly with wiSACWIS) it would allow more time to actually spend with families"

"More help with administrative/E-WiSACWIS case documentation to reduce the amount of time needed for this area to increase availability to spend more time with families to ensure best practice and safety for children."

"Streamline WiSACWIS forms to eliminate duplication, out of home placement forms and related courtwork and permanency plans can be more than 25 hours of work per child who is placed, and leaves little time for engagement with a child and family."

Other respondents who mentioned technology were concerned with hardware and having access to tablets and laptops. Examples of quotes included:

"Having laptops and technology to meet with families through Zoom has been very helpful. Having a remote phone number was also very helpful. It was difficult to plan for kids that were struggling due to the lack of resources during COVID-19. It was difficult when families couldn't have meaningful contact with their providers because of COVID-19 restrictions."

"While case notes are a pain and a huge time suck, I do think they are important, but it would be easier to keep up with Case notes if I had a laptop instead of a desktop since I am often in my car and/or far away from the office. There is also a lot of redundancy and "button" clicking in WiSACWIS that could be streamlined to make documentation quicker. Also, I just live in a big rural county so I can be driving for more than an hour to do a home visit. No real solution but it is an issue."

"Less paperwork, less duplicate entry, being able to bring a tablet/computer with to do all casework on the computer to include getting signatures, etc."

"I wish that there were ways we could better utilize technology to help automatically document things like text messages, phone calls, voicemails, and emails. Constantly feeling behind on paperwork and documentation is a huge source of burnout when you spend more time writing about what you are doing on a case than actually doing it."

Standout Solutions. There were some standout responses that proposed innovative solutions worth highlighting. Examples of quotes included:

"An ability to have one day working from home to dedicate to paperwork."

"Collaborative note taking with families."

"Having technology which could assist in the input of the information would be helpful. Voice activated, or even having clerical who could transcribe and enter would be helpful."

"LOWER CASELOADS, no more than 12 to 15 cases assigned to any worker at any given time which would be mandated by DCF and WI Law 2. Hire enough social workers to keep the caseloads down which would be funded through county and state monies so that the county board can't deny DSS enough employee's to appropriately do our jobs. 3. For my CPS Supervisor to allow the workers to "specialize" and either do on-going or IA or JI, not all 3 case styles at once. 4. For there to be a requirement that counties have a certain number of support staff relative to the number of Social Workers and caseloads. The support staff would assist with supervised visitations, transportation of clients, office work and documentation. 5. While it is not a direct correlation, Social Workers and support staff need

to be paid appropriately for the extremely difficult and stressful jobs they are doing. This would promote retention in the field and mean less turnover of workers for the families. Families regress substantially when they have to constantly be switching workers."

Respondents were also asked to provide more information around why they selected their particular response to the question: "Please indicate how often you have felt stress for the following reasons in the last 12 months but before the COVID-19 pandemic began," in relation to the list of job stressors previously discussed. Themes are bolded below and relate to different types of stressors:

Issues with Leadership. Only 5% of respondents mentioned supervisors or leaders in general. Most respondents that mentioned leadership cite "lack of support," "lack of supervision," "too much supervision", or "poor management" as the reason for stressors. Responses indicating an issue with leadership were equally split between those with and without a master's degree.

"Lack of support/response from upper management when discussing stressful work environment, including high caseloads and staff shortage."

"Under qualified supervisors micromanaging employees and continuously providing wrong information and no support."

"Inadequate/inconsistent supervision."

"Lack of autonomy; Too much supervision."

Some respondents were even more critical of their supervisors indicating fear, favoritism, lack of trust and devaluation caused them stress before the pandemic.

"Superiors in the agency devaluing my input and waging personal attacks on me/my work."

"Feeling devalued by administration and their lack of knowledge about what our jobs actually entail."

"Fear of retribution if I question supervisors."

"Lack of positive support from supervisor and feel like you can trust them."

"Leaders who bully."

In general, though, quantitative scores on supervisor support (detailed in Table 8) were relatively high, averaging 3.9 on a 5-point scale. Workers with a social work license felt less supported by their supervisors, on average, than workers without a license. Those with an MSW degree reported feeling less discretion in doing their jobs than workers with no social work degree (see Table 4B). Conversely, workers were more likely to report having inadequate information to do their job if they had a master's degree or higher (compared to a bachelor's degree), if they had an MSW (compared to those with a BSW), and if they identified as non-White (see Table 4H). A comparison of those with a master's degree vs. those without one (not shown) found that the former group was twice as likely as the latter group to report a leadership concern.

Workers reported feeling moderately supported by their agency (average score of 3.5 on a 5-point scale), with those with a master's degree or higher feeling least supported by their agency, those with an MSW degree feeling less supported than those without any social work degree, and those with a social work license feeling less supported by their agencies than those without a social work license (see Table 8). Those in the Northeastern region felt least supported by their agencies, and those in the Western and Southeastern regions felt most supported by their agencies.

Work Culture. Work or organizational culture was mentioned by 11% of survey respondents. Items include responses that discuss social and cultural norms within the workplace as being responsible for stress. Examples:

> "Office politics."

> "Office drama unrelated to work."

> "Work culture (favoritism, judgment, bias, lack of boundaries)."

> "Politics and drama."

Quantitative findings pertaining to particular stressors may shed further light on views about work culture. For example, those with a master's degree (compared to those with a bachelor's degree), those with an MSW (compared to those without a social work degree), those who received IV-E funding for their social work degree (compared to those who did not receive IV-E funding for their social work degree) all reported higher levels of stress related to being held accountable for things over which they have no control, and being blamed for something that goes wrong (see Tables 4A and Appendix table 4F).

Observing Poor Practice. This theme was mentioned rarely (by only 1% of respondents). Responses indicate that workers observing poor social work practice caused them stress. Examples:

> "Resistance to doing better practice by other workers in this county"

> "Other service providers not doing their jobs."

> "Hearing other workers disrespect birth families; having other workers devalue and condescend me; not having all supervisors on the same page regarding the definition of impending and present danger threats."

> "Observing co-workers with difficult cases receive little support from other team members."

Quantitative findings show that those with a master's degree or higher (compared to those with a bachelor's degree) and those with an MSW (compared to those with a BSW only or no social work degree) exhibited greater stress over seeing families get treated unfairly (see Table 4B). Similarly, workers with a social work license reported more stress than workers without a license on this item.

Workers also worried about the lack of resources for families, and were more likely to cite this stressor if they had an MSW or BSW (compared to no social work degree), if they had a social work license, identified as female, were older, or worked in the Western, Southern, or Northern regions (see Tables 4B and 4D)

Turnover. Only 1% of respondents report turnover as a cause of stress. They include various instances of supervisor, staff and worker turnover.

Court & Legal Proceedings. Respondents (3.5%) report various ways in which interactions with the legal system caused stress. Examples:

> "Court proceedings – Testifying, court not understanding the concerns, etc."

> "Court system devaluing my input and cases going SLOWLY."

> "Prepping attorneys for court, encouraging Pub. Defenders to talk to their youth or doing work for the DA who does not trust our work."

> "Stress from HIC Court and how the attorneys within HIC treat FCM's."

Client-related. Approximately 4% of respondents mentioned factors related to families served were considered client related. Examples:

> "Emotional exhaustion from ongoing, intense interactions with adults (usually parents) who have symptoms/diagnoses of personality disorders."

> "Fear of parent being angry at me."

> "No show/call by family."

> "Feeling families are borderline unsafe but not enough to have an open case statutorily according to supervisor."

Related findings from the quantitative data reveal that those with an MSW degree (compared to those with no social work degree) and females experienced greater stress about making difficult decision, and workers without a social work license (compared to those with a license) and younger workers were more likely to fear making a mistake (see Tables 4B, 4C, and Appendix Table 4G).

Community Partners. Five percent of respondents cited issues with community partners as a reason for stress before the pandemic. Examples:

> "Doing community partners work for them."

> "Educating the public/other professionals."

> "Working with teams that don't understand my job duties and I don't understand theirs."

> "Law Enforcement blaming/not understanding what Youth Justice workers actually do."

On this theme, workers with a master's degree or higher reported higher levels of stress related to stakeholders than those with only a bachelor's degree, and those with an MSW (followed by those with a BSW) reported higher levels of stakeholder stress than those without a social work degree (see Tables 4A and 4B). Females (see Table 4G) and workers from the Northeastern region (see Table 4D) scored higher on this stressor, and those working in the Northern region scored lowest on this stressor.

Protected Groups/Discrimination.

Age
Although it was infrequently identified as a stressor overall, there was an age difference where older workers felt more unsafe in the field. Specifically, workers aged 55 and over were more significantly more likely than 25-34 year-olds to indicate they feel unsafe in the field (see Table 4E). This age group was also uniquely concerned about experiencing discrimination in their job.

Race
Differences in stressors were mostly small across racial groups, but workers who self-identified with a race other than White were more likely to indicate stress due to "inadequate information to do my job" and "experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics". Non-White workers who worked with foster care also identified "feeling unsafe while working in the field" and "experiencing discrimination" as stressors (see Table 4H). Workers who identify as Hispanic/Latinx also reported feeling unsafe in the field as a stressor (see Table 4I). Non-White workers in Foster Care also indicated feeling unsafe while working in the field and experiencing discrimination (see Table 5H and 5I).

Table 5 presents the overall item averages for job stressors related to those who carry foster care responsibilities (29% of the respondent sample; N=247). Respondents could select from one of four response options ranging from 1 (Never) to 4 (Often) and had the choice of selecting "not applicable", as well. (The sample size varies on items related to this subgroup, depending on the number of respondents who selected "not applicable".) Pressure to create placement resources was the most frequently occurring stressor (2.94). Feeling unsafe in the field (1.76) and experiencing discrimination (1.44) were cited as the least frequently occurring stressors. The summary score across all scale items was 2.45, indicating that workers rarely to sometimes feel stressed due to their foster care responsibilities.

Tables 5A-5C present the averages for stressors related to foster care responsibilities by demographic groups: social work degree, license, and region in Wisconsin (Note: education level differences are not shown due to some subgroups being too small). Qualitative themes and quotes about stressors related to foster care responsibilities are also provided at the end of this section.

Table 5: Stressors Related to Foster Care (N=247)	Mean (SD)	N
Inadequate information to do my job	2.57 (0.85)	247
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.84 (1.00)	207
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.65 (1.00)	211
Inadequate training for the job	2.36 (0.94)	225
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.49 (1.01)	228
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.72 (0.96)	239
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.59 (0.98)	243
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.76 (0.78)	240
Mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being in a supervisory role	2.72 (1.07)	225
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.21 (0.95)	235
Fear of making a mistake	2.66 (0.97)	242
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.56 (1.06)	213
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.62 (1.00)	233
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.63 (1.09)	199
Pressure to create placement resources	2.94 (1.04)	213
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.61 (1.09)	208
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.44 (0.76)	227
Summary score (Cronbach's alpha=0.90)	2.45 (0.61)	253

Table 5A presents job stressors related to foster care responsibilities by social work degree status. The summary scores did not significantly differ statistically between respondents with neither a BSW or MSW (2.39), respondents with a BSW (2.42), and respondents with an MSW (2.58). For respondents with a BSW, the top stressors were pressure to fill additional roles with the agency and

pressure to create placement resources (both 2.92). The third top stressor related to the amount of documentation for home studies or updating provider records (2.89). For those with an MSW, the top stressors were also related to the amount of documentation for home studies or updating provider records (2.86), but differentially included inadequate information to do my job (2.71) and insufficient staff to cover the number of foster homes and active license applications (2.67). For those with neither degree, the top stressors were pressure to create placement resources (2.87), the amount of documentation related to home studies for updating provider records (2.73) and setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners (2.68).

There were significant differences between certain groups for several stressors. Those with an MSW degree reported higher stress related to inadequate training for the job compared to those with no social work degree; the same pattern was evident for the stressor "being blamed for something that goes wrong." In addition, those with an MSW reported higher stress levels for "setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners" than those with only a BSW degree.

Table 5A: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Social Work Degree (N=247)	Neither Mean (SD) N=66	BSW Mean (SD) N=119	MSW Mean (SD) N=62
Inadequate information to do my job	2.53 (0.88)	2.52 (0.85)	2.71 (0.8)
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.73 (1.05)	2.89 (1.01)	2.86 (0.96)
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.6 (1.08)	2.67 (0.99)	2.67 (0.99)
Inadequate training for the job	2.19 (0.88)[3]	2.35 (0.92)	2.57 (1.02)[3]
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.51 (0.96)	2.46 (0.99)	2.53 (1.12)
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.59 (1.03)	2.72 (0.92)	2.83 (0.94)
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.38 (1.02)[3]	2.62 (0.95)	2.77 (1.00)[3]
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.77 (0.79)	1.68 (0.71)	1.9 (0.89)
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being in a supervisory role	2.6 (1.09)	2.79 (1.04)	2.75 (1.09)
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.06 (0.87)	2.22 (0.96)	2.35 (1.01)
Fear of making a mistake	2.49 (0.93)	2.67 (0.93)	2.82 (1.06)
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.43 (1.06)	2.51 (1.02)	2.82 (1.09)
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.68 (1.04)	2.49 (0.96)[1]	2.83 (1.03)[1]
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.57 (1.13)	2.69 (1.08)	2.57 (1.1)
Pressure to create placement resources	2.87 (1.08)	2.92 (1.01)	3.06 (1.06)
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.67 (1.14)	2.92 (1.06)	2.51 (1.1)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.52 (0.81)	1.39 (0.69)	1.47 (0.85)
Summary score	2.39 (0.68)	2.42 (0.56)	2.58 (0.61)

1=BSW − MSW; 2=BSW − neither; 3=MSW − neither
Red text indicates significant differences at p<.*05*

Table 5B presents job stressors related to foster care responsibilities by licensure status (among those with a social work degree; N=192)). For those with a social work license, the top three stressors were pressure to create placement resources (3.02), the amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records (2.91) and mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being in a supervisory role (2.85). The top three stressors for respondents without a social work license were fear of making a mistake (2.83), pressure to create placement resources (2.79), and the amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records (2.77). There were statistically significant differences between license groups for "insufficient staff to cover the number of foster homes and active license applications" and the summary score.

Table 5B: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Licensure Status (N=192)	No/Not Sure Mean (SD) N=43	Yes-Licensed Mean (SD) N=149
Inadequate information to do my job	2.55 (0.92)	2.60 (0.81)
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.77 (0.94)	2.91 (1.01)
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.25 (0.77)	2.80 (1.01)
Inadequate training for the job	2.44 (0.88)	2.41 (0.98)
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.36 (1.14)	2.53 (1.00)
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.63 (0.99)	2.80 (0.91)
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.53 (0.98)	2.71 (0.96)
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.93 (0.80)	1.70 (0.77)
Mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being in a supervisory role	2.54 (1.02)	2.85 (1.06)
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.12 (0.98)	2.31 (0.97)
Fear of making a mistake	2.83 (0.95)	2.69 (0.99)
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.32 (0.94)	2.70 (1.07)
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.46 (0.98)	2.65 (1.00)
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.47 (1.07)	2.70 (1.09)
Pressure to create placement resources	2.79 (0.98)	3.02 (1.03)
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.36 (1.05)	2.65 (1.08)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.41 (0.75)	1.42 (0.75)
Summary score	2.21 (0.60)	2.53 (0.57)

Red text indicates significant differences at p<0.05

Table 5D presents job stressors related to foster care responsibilities by region. Across all regions, top stressors involved the time to work with community members to recruit and support families, the amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records, pressure to create placement resources, mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being in a supervisory role, being held accountable for things over which I have no control, and being blamed for something that goes wrong. ANOVA tests showed a significant difference across groups for the following stressors: inadequate training for the job (scores highest in the Western region and lowest in Milwaukee), feeling unsafe in the field (scores lowest in the Western and Southern regions and highest in Milwaukee), mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being a supervisor (scores lowest in the Southeastern region [excluding Milwaukee] and highest in the Northeastern region) and time to work with community members to recruit and support families (scores lowest in the Southeastern region and Milwaukee and highest in the Northern region).

Table 5D: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Region (N=201)	Northern Mean (SD) N=27	Northeastern Mean (SD) N=53	Western Mean (SD) N=50	Southern Mean (SD) N=39	Southeastern Mean (SD) N=32	Milwaukee Mean (SD) N=40
Inadequate information to do my job	2.67 (0.88)	2.68 (0.77)	2.68 (0.79)	2.49 (0.91)	2.44 (0.84)	2.38 (0.94)
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	3.08 (1.02)	3.08 (1.04)	2.77 (1.13)	2.75 (1.02)	2.61 (0.89)	2.67 (0.83)
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.69 (1.05)	2.96 (1.03)	2.83 (1.05)	2.47 (1.02)	2.38 (0.82)	2.31 (0.89)
Inadequate training for the job	2.26 (0.9)	2.37 (0.98)	2.61 (0.99)	2.42 (1)	2.22 (0.85)	2.14 (0.82)
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.16 (0.8)	2.47 (1.08)	2.57 (1.07)	2.3 (1.13)	2.59 (0.78)	2.76 (1.00)
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.54 (0.86)	2.73 (1.02)	2.6 (1.01)	2.66 (0.91)	2.9 (0.91)	2.85 (0.97)
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.41 (0.89)	2.66 (1.00)	2.46 (0.99)	2.55 (0.95)	2.78 (0.97)	2.68 (1.07)
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.69 (0.62)	1.78 (0.73)	1.57 (0.82)	1.57 (0.65)	1.74 (0.82)	2.21 (0.86)
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being in a supervisory role	2.56 (1.04)	3.02 (1.05)	2.93 (0.94)	2.54 (1.12)	2.04 (1.13)	2.86 (0.92)
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.27 (0.87)	2.32 (0.86)	2.17 (1.04)	2.13 (1.04)	1.97 (0.85)	2.32 (1.00)
Fear of making a mistake	2.81 (0.75)	2.78 (1.03)	2.65 (0.91)	2.53 (1.03)	2.63 (1.13)	2.55 (0.89)
Pressure to produce families without agency	2.6 (1)	2.85 (1.06)	2.51 (1.19)	2.53 (1.11)	2.26 (1.02)	2.44 (0.88)

Table 5D: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Region (N=201)	Northern Mean (SD) N=27	Northeastern Mean (SD) N=53	Western Mean (SD) N=50	Southern Mean (SD) N=39	Southeastern Mean (SD) N=32	Milwaukee Mean (SD) N=40
culture that supports foster families						
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.36 (0.91)	2.79 (0.97)	2.66 (1.03)	2.51 (1.12)	2.48 (0.96)	2.73 (1.01)
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	3.12 (0.93)	2.77 (1.15)	2.93 (1.07)	2.47 (1.14)	2.17 (0.92)	2.18 (0.98)
Pressure to create placement resources	2.96 (0.93)	3.02 (1.16)	3.12 (1.1)	2.7 (1.12)	3 (0.91)	2.76 (0.96)
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.89 (1.15)	2.70 (1.08)	2.68 (1.19)	2.65 (1.05)	2.43 (0.99)	2.34 (0.99)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.35 (0.45)	1.39 (0.71)	1.52 (0.93)	1.43 (0.87)	1.17 (0.38)	1.73 (0.84)
Summary score	2.44 (0.52)	2.61 (0.65)	2.53 (0.54)	2.30 (0.69)	2.45 (0.55)	2.50 (0.66)

Red text indicates significant differences at $p < 0.05$

QUALITATIVE THEMES RELATED TO FOSTER CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

Respondents with foster care responsibilities (N=247) were asked to discuss the ways in which their job could change to allow for more time to carry out these responsibilities. The top five most common qualitative themes are bolded below. Please note, responses reflect the period prior to COVID-19.

Administrative tasks. Respondents (12.6%) indicated that alleviating the administrative burden would afford them more time to work with foster families. Responses included requests for less paperwork, better technology, less redundancy. Examples:

> "Get rid of childcare certification responsibilities hire another foster care coordinator get rid of billing responsibilities get rid of entering placements in WiSACWIS get rid of rate setting."

> "Having fiscal do more of the foster care rates and dealing with payment issues. having the licensing agency worry about licensing questions."

Shift tasks to appropriate position. Respondents (12.2%) discussed a desire to shift tasks to more appropriate job descriptions, which would allow more time for foster care responsibilities. Some respondents suggest that ongoing case responsibilities should be separate from foster care responsibilities. Specifically, there were requests to delegate tasks to support staff, or to a foster care coordinator position designated to working with foster parents and kinship placements. Overall, respondents feel that they are doing tasks not in their job description, and that they were doing too many tasks; particularly those who reported being in smaller counties. Examples:

> "I am a licensed social worker, but the amount of work that is required of me has turned me into a case manager, and there is a difference."

> "Family support workers to supervise visits, provide services, etc. so I can focus on working with foster parents to try to retain these families since they become overwhelmed."

> "Every county needs to have a foster care coordinator that has the time and ability to provide support and problem solve with foster families. An ongoing social worker. like myself, already has more responsibilities and duties and not all of them are accomplished in a day and roll over to the next day. It would also be helpful if there were tools that social workers could utilize to educate foster families."

> "In our small county, the role of foster care coordinator is only one small part of my job responsibilities in addition to ongoing, access, youth justice, and CLTS. It is difficult to put the time in for recruitment and retention when I am pulled in so many other directions. I also feel at times that because we do not have a large need for foster homes, the role of FCC is not valued as it should be."

Relevant findings from the quantitative data include a greater level of reported stress related to _mediating between foster families and other caseworkers without being a supervisor_ for those in the Northeastern and Western regions (see Table 5D), and a lower level of stress on this item for

workers from the Southeastern region. Those with an MSW degree reported a greater degree of stress about being blamed for something that goes wrong than those with only a BSW or no social work degree (see Table 5B)

Increase time allocated to clients, parents, kin and foster parents. Seventeen percent of workers with foster care responsibilities report a desire for more time spent supporting and educating foster parents, more time to doing trainings in home. Other respondent's express bio parents not empowered. Responses indicate that there is not enough time for rapport building. Examples:

> "I am mostly talking about more time for "provider support". Foster homes licensed by the tribes receive no training, and several of my homes are relatives licensed as foster parents who need extra support to deal with difficult behavioral issues. I would like to change my job by reducing the amount of time I spend typing and spend more time face-to-face providing support."

> "Additional services and supports for foster parents and the children placed in their homes. Additional real-life situation training that could be individualized for the situation More supports for relative providers."

> "Time to allow more education and support to our foster families."

> "Depending on the child placed and the child's needs, dictates what kind of support a foster parent is going to need. There are times when I have felt I have needed to provide additional support to a foster parent which may have prevented disruption in placement."

> "Sit in their living room and help them to process and validate their worries."

Caseloads & Workloads. Some respondents (10.5%) expressed a desire to lighten large caseloads and workloads because they do not allow for adequate time for foster families. Of those that cite number of cases as an impediment, some ask for smaller caseloads and/or supervisors that consider severity or intensity of cases. Examples:

> "I don't feel I have the ability to dedicate the one-on-one time (conversations, information sharing, support, etc.) with kinship and foster families due to my current overall workload."

> "Decreased case load to allow for more thorough assessments of foster homes."

> "Smaller case load that will lead to less face to face meetings with families meaning I can spend more time doing paperwork and working with providers."

> "If child protection intake and ongoing cases weren't so high or their paperwork requirements so high, we would have more time to adequately care for foster parents and foster children's needs."

> "Smaller caseloads so there is more time to spent supporting foster parents."

From the quantitative data, workers under 25 and ages 35-54 reported the highest stress related to insufficient staff to cover the number of foster homes and active license applications (see

Appendix Table 5E). This stressor was greater for those with a social work license compared to those without a license (see Table 5C).

Recruitment and Retention of Foster Parents. A more minor theme among respondents (6%) report a desire to spend more time and resources on outreach, recruiting and retaining foster parents. Examples:

> "My county only has one foster home. I would love to do outreach efforts to recruit more homes but do not have the time or resources to do so."

> "Be given the time and ability with other job responsibilities to focus on foster care recruitment and retention."

> "We are in a crisis in placements right now. So many children are going into care and truly no place to put them. With the implementation of SAFE, training requirements and other requirements the licensing process."

> "More time for recruitment. This is always placed on the back-burner."

> "In our small county, the role of foster care coordinator is only one small part of my job responsibilities in addition to ongoing, access, youth justice, and CLTS. It is difficult to put the time in for recruitment and retention when I am pulled in so many other directions.

Related to this theme, quantitative data reveal that workers in the Northern and Western regions have the greatest stress related to insufficient time to work with community members to recruit and support families; this stress was lowest in the Southeastern region (see Table 5D). Greater stress related to setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners was more common among workers with an MSW (compared to those with a BSW; see Table 5B).

JOB SATISFACTION

Table 6 presents the average scores for the general job satisfaction scale by demographic group. The scale included the following items: 1) All in all, I am satisfied with my job; 2) In my work, I have a feeling of success and accomplishment; 3) My work has the right level of challenge, and; 4) I feel appreciated for the work that I do. Respondents could select from one of five response options ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The overall score for the 849 respondents was 3.72, indicating good general work experiences, on average. T-tests and ANOVA tests were used to assess differences across demographic groups. The score for respondents with a bachelor's degree (3.75) was higher than the score for those with a master's degree or higher (3.61). The scores for respondents with a BSW or no social work degree were also higher than the scores for those with an MSW. There was a statistically significant (albeit substantively small) difference between the average score for White non-Hispanic respondents (3.52) and the score for all other respondents (3.57). Lastly, there were some differences across regions within Wisconsin. Northeastern and Milwaukee region respondents reported lower scores than those in other regions of the state. The scores for the Western region were also significantly higher than other regions of the state.

Table 6: General Job Satisfaction Scale (N=850)		
Demographic	**Mean (SD)**	**N**
Age (N=848)		
<25	3.81 (0.75)	54
25-34	3.73 (0.84)	341
35-44	3.73 (0.86)	215
45-54	3.62 (0.90)	170
55+	3.79 (0.92)	68
Education Level (N=834)		
<Bachelor's	3.91 (0.98)	22
Bachelor's	*3.75 (0.80)*	547
Master's or higher	*3.61 (0.94)*	265
SW Degree (N=850)		
Neither	*3.78 (0.83)*	231
BSW	*3.75 (0.82)*	403
MSW	*3.58 (0.94)*	216
IV-E Funding (N=617)		
No / Not sure	3.72 (0.86)	524
Yes	3.55 (0.92)	93
Social Work License (N=619)		
No / Not sure	3.70 (0.84)	142
Yes	3.69 (0.88)	477
Gender (N=847)		
Female	3.73 (0.85)	754
Other	3.57 (0.91)	93
Race (N=845)		
White non-Hispanic	*3.74 (0.83)*	728
All Other Racial Groups (or Missing)	*3.57 (1.02)*	117
Hispanic / Latinx (N=845)		
Yes	3.52 (1.08)	25
No	3.72 (0.85)	820
Region (N=721)		
Northern	*3.66 (0.82)*	101
Northeastern	*3.54 (0.85)*	195
Western	*3.90 (0.83)*	138
Southern	*3.69 (0.88)*	166
Southeastern	*3.66 (0.85)*	121
Milwaukee	*3.58 (.90)*	
Overall	3.72 (0.86)	850

Red text indicates significant differences at p<0.05

JOB/FIELD COMMITMENT

Table 7 presents the results for the questions surrounding respondents' intentions to leave or stay in their job and in the child welfare field for each demographic group. Respondents could select from one of five response options ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

The first question reported in Table 6 concerned workers' plans to leave their job in the future. The average across all groups was 2.47, indicating that the response is trending towards disagree or neutral (e.g., respondents neither agree nor disagree).

Item on questionnaire	I plan to leave this job in the near future	I expect to still be working at this job in 5 years	I plan to leave the child welfare field in the near future	I expect to still be working in child welfare in 5 years
Table 7: Worker Retention Expectations (N=850)				
	N=849	**N=849**	**N=849**	**N=849**
	Mean (SD)	**Mean (SD)**	**Mean (SD)**	**Mean (SD)**
Age				
<25	2.44 (1.39)	3.26 (1.4)	2.11 (1.21)	3.56 (1.33)
25-34	2.57 (1.35)	3.09 (1.32)	2.38 (1.26)	3.42 (1.25)
35-44	2.32 (1.26)	3.59 (1.19)	2.1 (1.2)	3.75 (1.15)
45-54	2.25 (1.26)	3.51 (1.32)	2.25 (1.18)	3.58 (1.29)
55+	2.93 (1.5)	2.84 (1.63)	2.94 (1.47)	2.76 (1.58)
Education Level				
<Bachelor's	2.45 (1.34)	3.68 (1.43)	1.95 (1.29)	3.91 (1.31)
Bachelor's	2.4 (1.3)	3.41 (1.32)	2.26 (1.23)	3.57 (1.26)
Master's or higher	2.64 (1.38)	3 (1.34)	2.45 (1.31)	3.28 (1.32)
Social Work Degree				
Neither	2.42 (1.35)	3.41 (1.29)	2.3 (1.27)	3.54 (1.25)
BSW	2.38 (1.3)	3.41 (1.35)	2.22 (1.21)	3.59 (1.29)
MSW	2.69 (1.36)	2.95 (1.33)	2.49 (1.32)	3.26(1.31)
Received IV-E Funding				
No / Not sure	2.46 (1.32)	3.3 (1.35)	2.3 (1.24)	3.49 (1.3)
Yes	2.63 (1.37)	2.97 (1.37)	2.43 (1.31)	3.38 (1.33)
Has Social Work License				
No / Not sure	2.66 (1.38)	3.06 (1.4)	2.42 (1.25)	3.38 (1.37)

Item on questionnaire	I plan to leave this job in the near future	I expect to still be working at this job in 5 years	I plan to leave the child welfare field in the near future	I expect to still be working in child welfare in 5 years
Table 7: Worker Retention Expectations (N=850)				
Yes	2.43 (1.31)	3.31 (1.34)	2.29 (1.26)	3.5 (1.29)
Gender				
Female	2.46 (1.34)	3.3 (1.35)	2.28 (1.26)	3.52 (1.29)
Other	2.55 (1.35)	3.23 (1.32)	2.57 (1.25)	3.26 (1.29)
Race				
White non-Hispanic	2.41 (1.3)	3.34 (1.33)	2.25 (1.23)	3.54 (1.27)
All other racial groups (or missing)	2.84 (1.5)	3.02 (1.37)	2.65 (1.4)	3.21 (1.36)
Hispanic / Latinx				
Yes	2.8 (1.44)	3.16 (1.25)	2.48 (1.42)	3.28 (1.21)
No	2.45 (1.33)	3.3 (1.34)	2.3 (1.25)	3.5 (1.29)
Region				
Northern	2.58 (1.25)	3.39 (1.31)	2.37 (1.23)	3.5 (1.28)
Northeastern	2.56 (1.33)	3.17 (1.38)	2.42 (1.28)	3.42 (1.32)
Western	2.1 (1.19)	3.62 (1.16)	1.96 (1.08)	3.77 (1.17)
Southern	2.51 (1.35)	3.37 (1.31)	2.29 (1.27)	3.51 (1.22)
Southeastern	2.49 (1.43)	3.15 (1.39)	2.31 (1.26)	3.49 (1.35)
Milwaukee	2.71 (1.41)	2.92 (1.38)	2.57 (1.34)	3.15 (1.33)
Overall	2.47 (1.34)	3.29 (1.34)	2.31 (1.26)	3.49 (1.29)
Average of all scale items, higher scores = greater likelihood of staying (alpha=0.92) = 3.50 (1.17)				
Average of "leaving" items, reverse-coded so that higher scores = greater likelihood of staying (alpha=0.87) = 3.61 (1.22)				
Average of child welfare field- specific items, higher scores = greater likelihood of staying (alpha=0.87) = 3.39 (1.24)				

Red text indicates significant differences at p<0.05

Table 7 (Cont). The second question focused on workers' plans for the next five years. The average across the sample for this question was 3.29, suggesting that some respondents may see themselves making a transition during the future. The third question focused on plans to leave the field of child welfare. The average response for this question was 2.31 (1.26), indicating that respondents may be less interested in leaving the field. The last question in Table 6 focused on long-term plans to stay in child welfare. The average across the sample was 3.49, indicating respondents can predominately see themselves staying in the field five years in the future. The average of all scale items was 3.20. The average of the items that focused on leaving the job and field in the near future was 3.25.

Respondents were more likely to report a likelihood of leaving their job in the near future if they were older, had a master's degree or higher, or had a non-White racial or ethnic identity. Respondents in the Western region were least likely to report a likelihood of near-term leaving and long-term staying, and respondents from Milwaukee reported the highest levels of intent to leave. Respondents age 35 – 54 were most likely to report that they expect to be in their current job in five years. Those with an MSW and those who received IV-E funding during their education were less likely than those with a BSW or no social work degree, or those who did not receive IV-E funding, to expect to be in their current job in five years. Non-White respondents were less likely to say that they would stay in their current job longer-term. Similar patterns were observed for intentions to leave the child welfare field in the near term: older respondents, those with an MSW, and those identifying as non-White were most likely to report leaving the field in the near future. Additionally, those identifying as non-female reported a greater likelihood of leaving. Western region respondents were again the least likely to expect to leave the child welfare field in the short-term and Milwaukee respondents were most likely to report an intention to leave the field. Inverse patterns were observed for plans to stay in the child welfare field for at least five years: older respondents, those with an MSW, and non-White respondents were least likely to expect such a tenure in the field. Additionally, those age 35-44 were most likely to express a longer-term commitment, those with at least a master's degree were less likely to do so compared to those with only or less than a bachelor's degree. There were no statistically significant differences in long-term child welfare tenure across regions.

At the bottom of Table 7, three summary scores are provided: one encompassing all four worker retention questions; one encompassing the two questions that ask about leaving (job and field), reverse coded; and one focused on retention items specific to the child welfare field. All three summary scores are coded such that higher scores indicate a greater likelihood of *staying*. Table 7a shows the scores for these summary measures according to worker characteristics. Those ages 35-44 are most likely to remain in the child welfare field compared to other age groups. Those 55 and older are least likely to stay across all three summary measures of staying. Those with a master's degree or higher and those with an MSW are least likely to stay across all summary measures. Workers in the Western region are most likely to indicate a desire to stay, and those in Milwaukee report being least likely to stay, across all summary measures.

Table 7A: Worker Retention Scales (N=850)			
Item on questionnaire	Full retention scale	Scale of "leaving" items	CW Field-specific items scale
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Age			
<25	3.56 (1.20)	3.72 (1.23)	3.41 (1.29)
25-34	3.39 (1.16)	3.52 (1.22)	3.26 (1.20)
35-44	3.73 (1.06)	3.79 (1.16)	3.67 (1.09)
45-54	3.65 (1.13)	3.75 (1.15)	3.54 (1.25)
55+	2.93 (1.40)	3.07 (1.43)	2.80 (1.52)
Education Level			
<Bachelor's	3.80 (1.20)	3.80 (1.18)	3.80 (1.27)
Bachelor's	3.58 (1.14)	3.67 (1.19)	3.49 (1.21)
Master's or higher	3.30 (1.20)	3.45 (1.28)	3.14 (1.25)
Social Work Degree			
Neither	3.56 (1.16)	3.64 (1.24)	3.47 (1.20)
BSW	3.60 (1.14)	3.70 (1.17)	3.50 (1.24)
MSW	3.26 (1.20)	3.41 (1.28)	3.11 (1.24)
Received IV-E Funding			
No / Not sure	3.51 (1.17)	3.62 (1.21)	3.39 (1.25)
Yes	3.32 (1.19)	3.47 (1.26)	3.17 (1.26)
Has Social Work License			
No / Not sure	3.34 (1.19)	3.46 (1.23)	3.22 (1.31)
Yes	3.52 (1.17)	3.64 (1.21)	3.40 (1.24)
Gender			
Female	3.52 (1.17)	3.63 (1.22)	3.41 (1.24)
Other	3.34 (1.17)	3.44 (1.20)	3.24 (1.23)
Race			
White non-Hispanic	3.56 (1.15)	3.67 (1.19)	3.44 (1.22)
non-White	3.34 (1.26)	3.44 (1.34)	3.25 (1.29)
Hispanic / Latinx			
Yes	3.29 (1.21)	3.36 (1.35)	3.22 (1.20)
No	3.51 (1.17)	3.62 (1.22)	3.40 (1.24)
Region			

Table 7A: Worker Retention Scales (N=850)			
Item on questionnaire	Full retention scale	Scale of "leaving" items	CW Field-specific items scale
Northern	3.49 (1.18)	3.52 (1.19)	3.47 (1.26)
Northeastern	3.40 (1.17)	3.51 (1.23)	3.30 (1.26)
Western	3.83 (0.98)	3.97 (1.04)	3.69 (1.08)
Southern	3.52 (1.18)	3.60 (1.25)	3.44 (1.20)
Southeastern	3.46 (1.19)	3.60 (1.25)	3.32 (1.26)
Milwaukee	3.20 (1.24)	3.10 (1.29)	3.29 (1.29)

Red text indicates significant differences at p<0.05

COLLEAGUE, SUPERVISOR, AND AGENCY SUPPORT

Table 8 examines colleague, supervisor and agency support for workers. The colleague support questions included: 1) I feel supported by my co-workers, and; 2) I feel like part of the team at work. The supervisor support questions included: 1) My supervisor is available for me when I need input and guidance; 2) I feel supported by my supervisor, and; 3) My supervisor helps me create effective plans for clients. The agency support questions included: 1) I feel valued as a staff member at this agency; 2) The agency supports staff efforts to maintain a work-personal life balance, and; 3) I am treated with respect at my agency. Respondents could select from one of five response options ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Each category's items were summed and averaged to create a scale measure of each source of support for workers. The average score for colleague support was 4.10 (1.01), indicating that respondents feel supported by their colleagues, on average. The average score for supervisor support was 3.90, indicating that on average workers mostly feel supported by their supervisors. The average score for agency support was 3.54 (1.08), indicating that workers feel neutral to slightly positive about support from their agencies.

Those with a bachelor's degree feel the most support from their supervisors, and those with a master's degree or higher feel least supported by their agencies. Those without a social work degree report the highest levels of perceived support from their agencies and among those with a social work degree, those with a social work license feel less supported than those without a social work license with respect to both supervisor and agency support. Respondents from the Northeastern region report the least amount of agency support (although still greater than "neutral"), and respondents from Milwaukee report the greatest amount of supervisor support. No statistically significant differences were observed across other demographic categories for supervisor or agency support, and no differences emerged at all across demographic categories for support from colleagues.

Table 8: Colleague, Supervisor, and Agency Support				
Demographic	Colleague Mean (SD)	Supervisor Mean (SD)	Agency Mean (SD)	N
Age (N=848)				
<25	4.17 (1.06)	4.07 (1.12)	3.83 (0.98)	54
25-34	4.16 (0.97)	3.96 (1.06)	3.59 (1.04)	341
35-44	4.10 (1.00)	3.86 (1.09)	3.51 (1.06)	215
45-54	3.95 (1.08)	3.77 (1.20)	3.4 (1.16)	170
55+	4.07 (0.98)	3.92 (1.22)	3.53 (1.18)	68
Education Level (N=834)				
<Bachelor's	3.68 (1.34)	4.48 (0.72)	4.09 (0.95)	22
Bachelor's	4.09 (0.98)	3.90 (1.13)	3.59 (1.05)	547
Master's or higher	4.16 (1.02)	3.85 (1.11)	3.39 (1.13)	265
Social Work Degree (N=850)				
Neither	4.11 (0.99)	4.00 (1.09)	3.71 (1.09)	231
BSW	4.04 (1.01)	3.87 (1.14)	3.53 (1.06)	403
MSW	4.19 (1.01)	3.85 (1.09)	3.38 (1.10)	216
Received IV-E Funding (N=617)				
No / Not sure	4.09 (0.99)	3.85 (1.14)	3.51 (1.06)	524
Yes	4.10 (1.12)	3.91 (1.02)	3.36 (1.14)	93
Social Work License (N=619)				
No / Not sure	4.08 (0.97)	4.20 (0.97)	3.69 (1)	142
Yes	4.09 (1.03)	3.76 (1.15)	3.42 (1.09)	477
Gender (N=847)				
Female	4.09 (1.01)	3.90 (1.12)	3.54 (1.08)	754
Other	4.12 (0.98)	3.89 (1.12)	3.51 (1.05)	93
Race (N=845)				
White non-Hispanic	4.11 (0.99)	3.87 (1.12)	3.55 (1.07)	728
All other racial groups (or missing)	4.01 (1.09)	4.05 (1.05)	3.42 (1.16)	117
Hispanic / Latinx (N=845)				
Yes	4.20 (1.13)	4.04 (1.11)	3.64 (1.08)	25
No	4.09 (1.00)	3.89 (1.12)	3.54 (1.08)	820
Region (N= 721)				
Northern	4.11 (0.88)	3.77 (1.21)	3.58 (1.22)	101
Northeastern	4.05 (1.11)	3.78 (1.15)	3.34 (1.06)	195
Western	4.09 (0.91)	3.80 (1.10)	3.78 (0.93)	138
Southern	4.04 (1.08)	3.78 (1.20)	3.49 (1.10)	166

Table 8: Colleague, Supervisor, and Agency Support				
Demographic	Colleague Mean (SD)	Supervisor Mean (SD)	Agency Mean (SD)	N
Southeastern	4.16 (0.97)	4.01 (1.00)	3.63 (1.04)	121
Milwaukee	4.12 (1.02)	4.28 (0.93)	3.55 (1.16)	105
Overall	4.10 (1.01)	3.90 (1.12)	3.54 (1.08)	850

Red text indicates significant differences at $p < 0.05$

Table 9 presents the results for questions concerning workers' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first question concerned the effectiveness of local CPS agencies in dealing with the pandemic. Respondents could select from one of five response options: 1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Neither agree nor disagree; 4) Agree, and; 5) Strongly agree. The average for the sample was 3.58 (1.19), indicating that there is a range in how workers perceive that agencies are dealing with the pandemic. Northeastern respondents reported the lowest score on this measure, which was statistically different from all other regions of the state.

The second question concerned the impact of the pandemic on daily workloads. Response options included: 1) My workload has decreased a lot; 2) My workload has decreased a little; 3) My workload is about the same; 4) My workload has increased a little, and; 5) My workload has increased a lot. The average for this question was 2.88 (1.10), indicating that workloads have decreased or stayed the same for the majority of child welfare workers.

The last question concerned how the pandemic has affected job satisfaction. Response options included: 1) My job satisfaction has decreased a lot; 2) My job satisfaction was decreased a little; 3) My job satisfaction is about the same; 4) My job satisfaction has increased a little; 5) My job satisfaction has increased a lot. The average for this question was 2.76 (0.94), indicating that the pandemic has decreased job satisfaction for some, but for others that job satisfaction has stayed relatively the same. Those identifying as non-White or non-female reported larger decreases in job satisfaction than White non-Hispanic and female respondents. Milwaukee respondents reported the highest increases in job satisfaction compared to all other regions except the balance of the Southeastern region. Respondents from the Northeastern region were least likely to report that their agencies handled the COVID-19 response effectively.

Item on questionnaire	To what extent do you agree that the CPS system in your local agency is dealing effectively with the COVID-19 or coronavirus pandemic?	How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the daily workload in your job?	How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your job satisfaction?	Sample Size
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	N
Age (N=848)				
<25	3.30 (1.35)	2.94 (1.16)	2.63 (0.85)	54
25-34	3.63 (1.13)	2.94 (1.10)	2.69 (1.00)	341
35-44	3.61 (1.15)	2.80 (1.05)	2.87 (0.92)	215
45-54	3.50 (1.27)	2.84 (1.14)	2.78 (0.93)	170
55+	3.62 (1.26)	2.84 (1.09)	2.79 (0.82)	68
Education Level (N=834)				
<Bachelor's	3.95 (1.17)	2.86 (1.25)	2.91 (0.97)	22
Bachelor's	3.58 (1.16)	2.83 (1.08)	2.78 (0.94)	547
Master's or higher	3.57 (1.24)	2.96 (1.11)	2.69 (0.95)	265
Social Work Degree (N=850)				
Neither	3.68 (1.19)	2.81 (1.16)	2.75 (0.97)	231
BSW	3.54 (1.16)	2.86 (1.06)	2.82 (0.91)	403
MSW	3.54 (1.25)	2.98 (1.11)	2.65 (0.97)	216
Received IV-E Funding (N=617)				
No / Not sure	3.58 (1.19)	2.88 (1.08)	2.79 (0.92)	524
Yes	3.33 (1.18)	3.03 (1.09)	2.61 (1.00)	93
Has Social Work License (N=619)				
No / Not sure	3.59 (1.20)	2.99 (1.13)	2.86 (0.86)	142
Yes	3.53 (1.19)	2.88 (1.06)	2.73 (0.96)	477
Gender (N=847)				

Table 9: Working During COVD-19

Table 9: Working During COVD-19				
Item on questionnaire	To what extent do you agree that the CPS system in your local agency is dealing effectively with the COVID-19 or coronavirus pandemic?	How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the daily workload in your job?	How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your job satisfaction?	Sample Size
Female	3.58 (1.19)	2.89 (1.10)	2.79 (0.95)	754
Other	3.60 (1.23)	2.81 (1.09)	2.52 (0.84)	93
Race (N=845)				
White non-Hispanic	3.60 (1.18)	2.85 (1.09)	2.78 (0.93)	728
All other racial groups (or missing)	3.46 (1.28)	3.03 (1.14)	2.59 (1.01)	117
Hispanic / Latinx (N=845)				
Yes	3.68 (1.28)	3.20 (0.96)	2.84 (0.99)	25
No	3.57 (1.19)	2.87 (1.10)	2.75 (0.95)	820
Region (N=721)				
Northern	3.52 (1.25)	2.86 (0.99)	2.60 (0.90)	101
Northeastern	*3.39 (1.20)*	2.85 (1.14)	2.73 (0.86)	195
Western	3.69 (1.04)	2.95 (1.11)	2.73 (0.90)	138
Southern	3.53 (1.24)	2.78 (1.08)	2.73 (0.99)	1.66
Southeastern	3.77 (1.16)	3.02 (1.01)	2.83 (1.09)	121
Milwaukee	3.74 (1.20)	2.85 (1.19)	2.95 (0.94)	105
Overall	3.58 (1.19)	2.88 (1.10)	2.76 (0.94)	850

Red text indicates significant differences at $p<0.05$

QUALITATIVE THEMES RELATED TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Respondents were also asked: "What comments or questions do you have, if any, related to your job in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?" The most frequently mentioned qualitative themes are discussed in bold below:

Related to Remote Work. Respondents reported both positive (11.3%) and negative (9.3%) feelings about working from home. It seemed as if those whose job description calls from more paperwork appreciate working from home, while those whose job is concerned with safety find remote work distasteful. Respondents report that remote work improved morale, mental health and ability to manage workload. Some respondents report a lack of consideration around remote work including technological needs required to do job, and the worker home demands. Examples:

> "Being able to work from home has helped with the stress of the workplace/work environment. However, it has been difficult to be as affective in the job when you cannot see the families face to face."

> "It's very difficult for workers to balance their job responsibilities while working from their home. Not only are you dealing with families often in crisis, but you now have the added pressure of dealing with your own family and mental health needs."

> "COVID-19 has allowed me to do more work from home, which is helpful. It's a nicer work environment for me, less distractions, I get to see sunshine through my windows, I get fresh air, I'm able to take some breaks, have lunch almost every day, which is a wonderful change, and have restroom breaks throughout the day without having to limit the amount of water intake. I enjoyed doing some visits via video, as there are some homes that are quite a distance for me, which then utilizes a lot of time driving to those places, which is time that I need to fulfill my other responsibilities. I truly hope that allowing some time working from home will continue to be allowed as it helps with my overall health."

> "I love having the work life balance that I have now since working remote. It really helps me devote the time I need for families and also spending time with mine. I have a lot less stress trying to figure out childcare and making release times for after school pick up. I have more energy to spend time with my kids in the evenings after work."

Worker Mental Health. Four percent of respondents mentioned mental health, with some reporting an improvement during COVID, while others experiencing negative effects on their mental health. Examples:

> "I'm able to now have a better work-life balance. I'm able to take more lunches and leave on time more. Because of the lower caseload, I have been able to catch up on my case notes."

> "When balancing work/passion and also your own health and life (If diabetic and/or pregnant or battling any other major health issue) during a pandemic, your anxiety and mental health and physical is challenged in a whole different indescribable way."

"Working in the Health and Human Services field, COVID-19 as removed a lot of the 'Human' aspect of the job by reducing our contacts and numbing the warmth we give towards individuals. While at the same time putting 'Health', primarily physically health, above everything else. This has placed mental health, both of the worker and client, at the back of the line during a time when it is most vulnerable."

"It would be helpful for supervisors to understand we, as frontline workers, may not be functioning to our full potential. While we are navigating our "new normal" work environment we are also navigating it in our personal lives as well. COVID-19 and associates stressors are impacting workers' mental health."

Inability to Serve Families. Eleven percent of respondents reported being concerned about their ability to serve families. This included concerns for safety and a lack of available service providers. Examples:

"It's been frustrating to help families and kids when you are not able to see them. Also, I feel like the state has done a poor job of prioritizing how to help kids in placement when parents/ providers/professionals have limited time to see them. If the goal is to reunify kids I do not see how this is helpful at all!"

"One of the challenges is the lack of resources for children and families shut down due to the pandemic, causing increased stress and unsafe situations for families, requiring our intervention. Additionally, it has been very challenging to have other Departments within the agency not be allowed to have face to face contact with families, making teaming and supporting families much more difficult."

"The families we work with are already in crisis and struggling. Having a pandemic impact them in so many areas has created additional stress and strain upon them. Access to services and treatment providers has been decreased and limited the amount of support they can receive. This has been a major concern. Not being able to have face to face interaction with parents and children does not feel like an effective way to provide solid case management services."

"Working from home and doing virtual contact is not effective. In addition, there are virtually no service providers to use, so I have had to pick up much of the additional workload (transportation, supervising visits, no ability for drug testing or psych evals). Added internet and electric usage, more mileage, and less effective with time due to the added travel time has made keeping up with paperwork very difficult."

"Without being able to see my youth justice clients in person, this has been a very challenging and difficult time to be a social worker."

Health Concerns. Eight percent of respondents mentioned social distancing, PPE, or health concerns in general in response to this question. Respondents report great concerns for their health and mention the tension between their health and children's safety. Examples:
"Protocol needs to be made and followed not left to the employees to choose. Out of office following of CDC and Health Department guidelines needs to be strongly encouraged. We owe that to the most vulnerable of children, those we serve. I am constantly asked if others need to wear masks around me. YES. It should be standard. Stop asking and just do it."

"Our county has not supported workers who feel uncomfortable being back in the office or in client's homes. Masks are rarely worn by coworkers and it has caused a lot of tension within the unit."

"My agency's plan to reopen is dangerous and only protects the leaders who created it. Forcing us out into the community and not being able to provide proper PPE."

"PPE should be readily available for staff at every agency, even the simple things of having make for employees. Our YJ had a fundraiser for masks, which as a staff we then had to buy our own from the fundraiser or online as there were limited to no masks available. The supervisor's reactions were inappropriate when workers expressed worries about going out into the field for cases. There seemed to be a disconnect as it was easy for the supervisors to say, "no you have to go", while we are the ones on the front line putting ourselves and our families at risk of increased exposure. There should be additional hazardous pay or increased compensation to front line CPS workers."

"We are still required to meet with families (all house hold members) face to face, even if some household members were not in the home during the maltreatment or don't know about the maltreatment so I think this is unnecessarily exposing us to the virus."

Lack of Consistency & Direction. Just under 6% of respondents felt a lack of clear direction and inconsistent instructions. They cite the agency, the fact that counties have different protocol, and the supervisors for contributing to confusion. Examples:

"There is a lack of consistency between counties. Some are working from home and limiting F2F contacts. Some, like our county, are required to be back in the office doing F2F business as usual. This discrepancy has been difficult to coordinate needed services such as courtesy supervision as some counties have refused to accept the request. The result is that we end up traveling more throughout the state to accomplish the visits or meet with families."

"We were initially told not to wear masks in March/April. Now if we don't wear a certain color mask, document the screening questions and happen to contract COVID as employees we will have to have a conversation about fault. The fault of where or how we got COVID and what our documentation looked like. There was no hand sanitizer that any supervisor could find for me when I had a same day assignment. This happened recently."

"There has been a lack of direction specific to how we are supposed to change ways of practice. DCF puts out guidelines; however, those are not updated. Our County will then put in additional guidelines; however, the follow through is minimal. It seems as though the expectation has been different for initial assessment workers during the COVID pandemic and those Workers have been placed in extenuating circumstances that other workers were withheld from. In terms of PPE, our county has been implementing guidelines on the requirements of using PPE, but then fails to provide us with the necessary PPE. For example, placing Workers in quarantine because they wore the "wrong mask" when they had never provided direction on that or provided the Workers with the right masks. There are things they have provided to us, but tell us we can only use them for very specific cases, and not on a general basis, which has caused many Workers to be

forced to use their own cleaning supplies or equipment. Also, being told that if we are not using the correct PPE, there will be "conversations" or potential for disciplinary action and you will be faulted for getting sick. COVID paid time has not been able to be used consistently. The county has also sent us all home to work, most likely through the rest of this year, yet has not provided the necessary technology and equipment to be able to do our jobs effectively at home (using a flip work phone and my personal computer; no access to a printer or fax and we aren't allowed to email outside of the county)."

"It has been confusing. There has been mis messaging from management. There has not been enough supplies to make me feel safe. I do not feel supported."

"There was very little information, communication and support for workers as we transitioned into COVID. Often times information about face to face contacts, protocols, or necessary equipment to perform job came weeks to months after workers had to come up with plans for families."

Appendix A: Additional Tables Related to Demographic Differences in Measures

Tables 4E-4I present the averages for caseworker job stressors by the following demographic variables: age, IV-E funding, gender identification, race, and Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity. T-tests and one-way ANOVA tests were used to determine significant differences between or across groups.

Table 3E: Caseworker Job Stressors by Age	<25 Mean (SD) N=53	25-34 Mean (SD) N=338	35-44 Mean (SD) N=213	45-54 Mean (SD N=169)	55+ Mean (SD) N=68	One-Way ANOVA
Inadequate information to do my job	2.96 (0.72)	2.71 (0.79)	2.63 (0.79)	2.68 (0.82)	2.78 (0.97)	
Amount of case documentation	3.38 (0.84)	3.48 (0.79)	3.53 (0.72)	3.50 (0.75)	3.37 (0.85)	
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.04 (0.88)	3.07 (0.93)	3.09 (0.88)	3.08 (0.84)	3.09 (1.00)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.65 (0.88)	2.45 (0.88)	2.41 (0.84)	2.39 (0.89)	2.41 (0.98)	
Stakeholders	2.47 (0.95)	2.77 (0.94)	2.80 (0.92)	2.78 (0.87)	2.79 (0.97)	
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	3.02 (0.98)	2.91 (0.93)	2.86 (0.93)	2.86 (0.77)	2.88 (0.98)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.88 (1.00)	2.75 (1.02)	2.75 (0.92)	2.66 (0.85)	2.73 (1.04)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.19 (0.76)	2.22 (0.81)	2.39 (0.82)	2.33 (0.71)	2.47 (0.86)	*
Making difficult decisions	3.38 (0.69)	3.25 (0.77)	3.21 (0.81)	3.12 (0.86)	3.19 (0.85)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.51 (0.90)	2.35 (0.86)	3.41 (0.90)	2.52 (0.89)	2.40 (0.99)	
Fear of making a mistake	3.6 (0.60)	3.18 (0.82)	3.05 (0.86)	2.9 (0.85)	2.88 (0.95)	**

Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.75 (0.90)	2.84 (0.90)	2.76 (0.85)	2.70 (0.71)	2.74 (0.86)	
Lack of resources for families	3.19 (0.93)	3.37 (0.78)	3.46 (0.76)	3.53 (0.75)	3.37 (0.79)	*
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.77 (0.92)	2.85 (0.91)	2.98 (0.92)	2.92 (0.83)	2.61 (0.87)	*
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.75 (0.97)	1.53 (0.76)	1.58 (0.83)	1.59 (0.8)	2.03 (1.01)	**

*Indicates significant differences at *= p<0.05 or **=p<0.01 for one-way ANOVAs.*
ANOVA was used to account for correlated errors using the Bonferroni correction.

Table 4F: Caseworker Job Stressors by Receipt of IV-E Funding	Yes Mean (SD) N=92	No/Not Sure Mean (SD) N=518	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.78 (0.82)	2.69 (0.80)	
Amount of case documentation	3.74 (0.49)	3.05 (0.76)	**
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.26 (0.84)	3.06 (0.90)	*
Inadequate training for the job	2.55 (0.82)	2.43 (0.88)	
Stakeholders	2.97 (0.88)	2.80 (0.93)	
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	3.12 (0.81)	2.91 (0.90)	*
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	3.04 (0.85)	2.75 (0.96)	**
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.18 (0.77)	2.32 (0.79)	
Making difficult decisions	3.37 (0.82)	3.24 (0.77)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.57 (0.91)	2.43 (0.89)	
Fear of making a mistake	3.18 (0.81)	3.12 (0.86)	
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	3.02 (0.78)	2.77 (0.85)	**
Lack of resources for families	3.57 (0.63)	3.45 (0.77)	

Carrying some of the workload for others	2.86 (0.88)	2.91 (0.86)	
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.68 (0.85)	1.58 (0.79)	
*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01			

Table 4G: Caseworker Job Stressors by Gender	Female Mean (SD) N=745	Not Female Mean (SD) N=92	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.70 (0.81)	2.77 (0.84)	
Amount of case documentation	3.51 (0.76)	3.21 (0.86)	**
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.11 (0.89)	2.82 (0.96)	**
Inadequate training for the job	2.45 (0.88)	2.34 (0.82)	
Stakeholders	2.78 (0.93)	2.57 (0.82)	*
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.92 (0.91)	2.70 (0.86)	*
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.76 (0.96)	2.59 (0.95)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.33 (0.80)	2.12 (0.71)	*
Making difficult decisions	3.24 (0.79)	3.04 (0.89)	*
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.41 (0.88)	2.40 (0.93)	
Fear of making a mistake	3.11 (0.85)	2.92 (0.83)	*
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.78 (0.85)	2.76 (0.84)	
Lack of resources for families	3.43 (0.76)	3.22 (0.92)	*
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.91 (0.89)	2.60 (0.89)	**
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.59 (0.80)	1.77 (1.02)	
*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01			

Table 4H: Caseworker Job Stressors by Race	White Mean (SD) N=721	Non-White Mean (SD) N=117	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.68 (0.81)	2.86 (0.83)	*
Amount of case documentation	3.49 (0.77)	3.43 (0.80)	
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.07 (0.88)	3.10 (0.98)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.42 (0.87)	2.51 (0.95)	
Stakeholders	2.76 (0.92)	2.76 (0.98)	
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.88 (0.88)	2.97 (1.02)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.74 (0.94)	2.72 (1.07)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.28 (0.77)	2.42 (0.92)	
Making difficult decisions	3.24 (0.80)	3.09 (0.81)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.40 (0.87)	2.51 (0.97)	
Fear of making a mistake	3.09 (0.84)	3.11 (0.91)	
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.76 (0.83)	2.92 (0.94)	
Lack of resources for families	3.42 (0.76)	3.34 (0.90)	
Carrying some of the workload for others	2.87 (0.89)	2.91 (0.91)	
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.53 (0.74)	2.04 (1.14)	**
*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01			

Table 4I: Caseworker Job Stressors by Hispanic / Latinx	Hispanic Mean (SD) N=25	Non-Hispanic Mean (SD) N=25	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.76 (0.83)	2.70 (0.81)	
Amount of case documentation	3.48 (0.87)	3.48 (0.77)	
Insufficient staff to cover cases	3.20 (0.96)	3.07 (0.90)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.48 (1.08)	2.43 (0.87)	
Stakeholders	2.64 (1.15)	2.76 (0.92)	
Being held accountable for things which I have no control	2.60 (1.22)	2.90 (0.89)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.40 (1.26)	2.75 (0.95)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.28 (1.06)	2.30 (0.79)	
Making difficult decisions	3.08 (0.64)	3.22 (0.81)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.57 (1.12)	2.41 (0.88)	
Fear of making a mistake	3.12 (1.01)	3.09 (0.85)	
Seeing families getting treated unfairly	2.80 (0.87)	2.78 (0.85)	
Lack of resources for families	3.44 (0.71)	3.41 (0.79)	
Carrying some of the workload for others	3.00 (0.87)	2.87 (0.90)	
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.72 (1.06)	1.60 (0.82)	

*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01
Note: There were no significant differences between groups.

Tables 5E-5I present the averages for stressors related to foster care by the following demographic variables: age, IV-E funding, gender, race, Hispanic/Latinx. ANOVA or t-tests were used to determine significant differences between groups.

Table 4E: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Age	<25 Mean (SD) N=12	25-34 Mean (SD) N=84	35-44 Mean (SD) N=71	45-54 Mean (SD) N=59	55+ Mean (SD) N=20	One-Way ANOVA
Inadequate information to do my job	2.83 (1.19)	2.51 (0.80)	2.54 (0.88)	2.64 (0.80)	2.60 (0.88)	
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.33 (1.12)	2.64 (0.94)	2.90 (1.02)	3.12 (1.03)	2.88 (0.99)	
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.90 (1.10)	2.37 (0.90)	2.88 (1.05)	2.75 (1.00)	2.53 (1.12)	*
Inadequate training for the job	2.82 (1.17)	2.26 (0.88)	2.38 (0.95)	2.43 (0.91)	2.16 (1.07)	
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.80 (1.32)	2.46 (1.03)	2.46 (1.03)	2.50 (0.97)	2.50 (0.92)	
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.90 (1.10)	2.88 (0.85)	2.75 (0.95)	2.50 (1.01)	2.47 (1.12)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.64 (1.29)	2.80 (0.85)	2.54 (0.95)	2.45 (1.08)	2.32 (1.11)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.64 (0.92)	1.81 (0.80)	1.80 (0.77)	1.59 (0.71)	1.94 (0.87)	
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being a supervisor	2.8 (1.23)	2.72 (1.01)	2.76 (1.05)	2.75 (1.12)	2.58 (1.22)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.90 (1.20)	2.08 (0.89)	2.10 (0.89)	2.37 (0.96)	2.32 (1.11)	*
Fear of making a mistake	2.55 (1.21)	2.87 (0.86)	2.54 (0.89)	2.64 (1.01)	2.32 (1.29)	
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.44 (1.33)	2.51 (0.96)	2.74 (1.09)	2.54 (1.07)	2.25 (1.18)	
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.90 (1.20)	2.65 (0.98)	2.62 (0.99)	2.52 (1.06)	2.63 (1.01)	

Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.91 (1.14)	2.63 (1.02)	2.78 (1.07)	2.60 (1.16)	1.93 (1.10)
Pressure to create placement resources	3.27 (0.90)	2.96 (1.00)	3.00 (0.99)	2.94 (1.10)	2.35 (1.17)
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.64 (1.29)	2.52 (1.04)	2.82 (1.08)	2.47 (1.08)	2.53 (1.23)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.50 (0.97)	1.40 (0.72)	2.40 (0.76)	1.44 (0.71)	1.78 (1.00)

Table 5F: Stressors Related to Foster Care by IV-E Funding	Yes Mean (SD) N=26	No/Not Sure Mean (SD) N=155	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.69 (0.79)	2.57 (0.85)	
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.95 (1.17)	2.87 (0.96)	
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.83 (1.03)	2.64 (0.98)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.71 (1.06)	2.37 (0.93)	
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.22 (1.00)	2.53 (1.04)	
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.72 (0.84)	2.77 (0.94)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.65 (0.89)	2.67 (0.98)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.60 (0.58)	1.78 (0.81)	
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being a supervisor	2.92 (0.97)	2.75 (1.07)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.32 (0.90)	2.25 (0.99)	
Fear of making a mistake	2.62 (0.98)	2.74 (0.98)	
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.42 (0.88)	2.65 (1.08)	

Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.52 (1.00)	2.62 (1.00)
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.74 (1.05)	2.63 (1.09)
Pressure to create placement resources	2.68 (1.17)	3.02 (0.99)
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.84 (1.07)	2.53 (1.07)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.38 (0.77)	1.43 (0.75)

*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01
Note: There were no significant differences between groups.

Table 5G: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Gender	Female Mean (SD) N=218	Not Female Mean (SD) N=29	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.58 (0.86)	2.5 (0.79)	
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.82 (1.01)	2.96 (1.00)	
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.62 (1.02)	2.92 (0.91)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.36 (0.96)	2.33 (0.83)	
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.48 (1.02)	2.54 (1.00)	
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.74 (0.97)	2.52 (0.91)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.61 (0.99)	2.48 (0.99)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.75 (0.79)	1.83 (0.71)	
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being a supervisor	2.73 (1.09)	2.74 (0.94)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.21 (0.97)	2.19 (0.79)	

Fear of making a mistake	2.69 (0.99)	2.44 (0.75)
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	1.55 (1.06)	2.64 (1.04)
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.63 (1.02)	2.57 (0.96)
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.67 (1.10)	2.33 (1.05)
Pressure to create placement resources	2.98 (1.03)	2.62 (1.06)
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.61 (1.11)	2.61 (0.99)
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.42 (0.75)	1.61 (0.83)

*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01
Note: There were no significant differences between groups.

Table 5H: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Race	White Mean (SD) N=213	Non-White Mean (SD) N=32	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.58 (0.84)	2.44 (0.91)	
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	2.81 (1.01)	3.00 (1.00)	
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.66 (1.00)	2.64 (1.06)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.38 (0.94)	2.17 (0.93)	
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.49 (1.00)	2.47 (1.11)	
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.73 (0.93)	2.63 (1.13)	
Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.59 (0.96)	2.59 (1.13)	

	Hispanic Mean (SD)	Non-Hispanic Mean (SD)	T-Test Results
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	1.70 (0.74)	2.09 (0.93)	**
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being a supervisor	2.72 (1.04)	2.80 (1.24)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.20 (0.93)	2.19 (1.03)	
Fear of making a mistake	2.66 (0.96)	2.63 (1.07)	
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.55 (1.03)	2.63 (1.24)	
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	2.58 (0.99)	2.84 (1.10)	
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.66 (1.07)	2.46 (1.24)	
Pressure to create placement resources	2.95 (1.02)	2.90 (1.18)	
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.61 (1.10)	2.56 (1.08)	
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.38 (0.71)	1.81 (0.94)	**

*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01*

Table 5I: Stressors Related to Foster Care by Hispanic/Latinx	Hispanic Mean (SD) N=8	Non-Hispanic Mean (SD) N=237	T-Test Results
Inadequate information to do my job	2.50 (1.07)	2.57 (0.84)	
Amount of documentation related to home studies or updating provider records	3.14 (1.07)	2.83 (1.01)	
Insufficient staff to cover number of foster homes and active license applications	2.67 (1.21)	2.66 (1.00)	
Inadequate training for the job	2.57 (1.13)	2.34 (0.94)	
Decisions by the court that challenge the ability to retain foster homes	2.57 (1.27)	2.48 (1.01)	
Being held accountable for things over which I have no control	2.57 (1.13)	2.72 (0.95)	

Being blamed for something that goes wrong	2.43 (1.13)	2.59 (0.98)	
Feeling unsafe while working in the field	2.71 (0.95)	1.72 (0.76)	**
Mediating between foster families and other caseworks without being a supervisor	2.71 (1.38)	2.74 (1.06)	
Lack of discretion in doing my job	2.14 (1.35)	2.20 (0.93)	
Fear of making a mistake	2.57 (1.27)	2.66 (0.96)	
Pressure to produce families without agency culture that supports foster families	2.86 (1.35)	2.55 (1.05)	
Setting expectations for foster families that are not followed through with by partners	3.14 (1.21)	2.60 (1.00)	
Time to work with community members to recruit and support families	2.50 (1.38)	2.64 (1.09)	
Pressure to create placement resources	3.29 (1.11)	2.93 (1.04)	
Fill additional roles within the agency	2.83 (0.98)	2.60 (1.10)	
Experiencing discrimination in my job based on my own characteristics	1.57 (0.98)	1.43 (0.75)	
*p=<0.05 & **p=<0.01			