Assessing and Changing Organizational Social Context for Effective Children's Services

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Effective Mental Health and Social Service Organizations

- **Adopt best practices (e.g., EBPs, ESTs)**

- **Maintain fidelity to best practice protocols**

- **Facilitate positive alliances with clients**

- **Ensure services are available, responsive, & characterized by continuity**

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The Socio-technical Model Assumes that these Service Characteristics

– Are as much *social processes* as technical processes

– Are **embedded** in an *Organizational Social Context* **(OSC)**

– Are *affected* by Organizational Social Context (OSC)

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Culture and Climate are Key Dimensions of Organizational Social Context (OSC)

- **Organizational Culture**
  – System norms and values
  – "The way things are done"
  – What is expected and rewarded

- **Organizational Climate**
  – Work environment's psychological impact on employees
  – Employees' affective response to their work environment
  – Employees' sense of "psychological safety"

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Our Work to Date has Focused on

- Creating a valid measure of social context

- Linking social context to service characteristics

- Designing organizational strategies for creating positive social contexts

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A Review of Three OSC Studies

- Nationwide Study of Mental Health Clinics that Serve Youth

- Nationwide Study of Child Welfare Agencies

- Randomized Clinical Trial of Organizational Change Strategy (ARC)

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**Organizational Social Context Profiles of
Mental Health Clinics that Serve Youth**

Clinical Systems Project (CSP)
Research Network on Youth Mental Health

funded by
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

CSP Organizational Survey

■ **On-site survey of nationwide sample** of 1,154
therapists (and directors) in 100 clinics in 75 cities

■ **Confirmed full OSC measurement model**

■ Established **first OSC norms** for mental health clinics

■ Linked **OSC profiles** to therapist attitudes, turnover
and   sustainability of new treatment programs

**Organizational Social Context (OSC)
Measurement System**

Organizational Culture

  1. *Proficiency* – expectation that service providers will be
competent, have up-to-date knowledge, and place the well-
being of clients first

  2. *Rigidity* – expectation that service providers will have
limited discretion and flexibility, and closely follow extensive
bureaucratic rules and regulations

  3. *Resistance* – expectation that service providers will
show no interest in change or new ways of providing services

**Examples of Mental Health Clinic
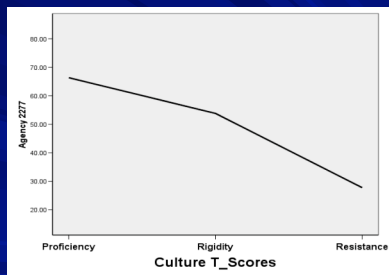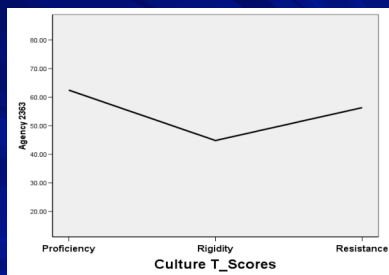OSC Culture Profiles
from the National Sample**
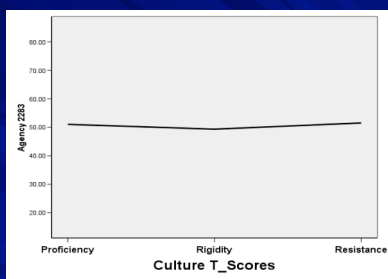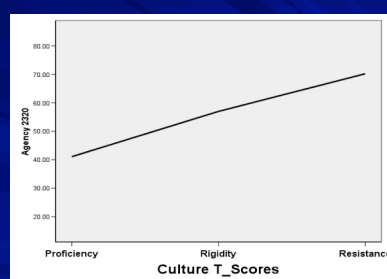
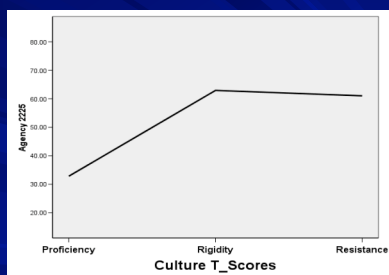
Example of Worst Culture Profile
in the National Sample
(approximately 10% of clinics)
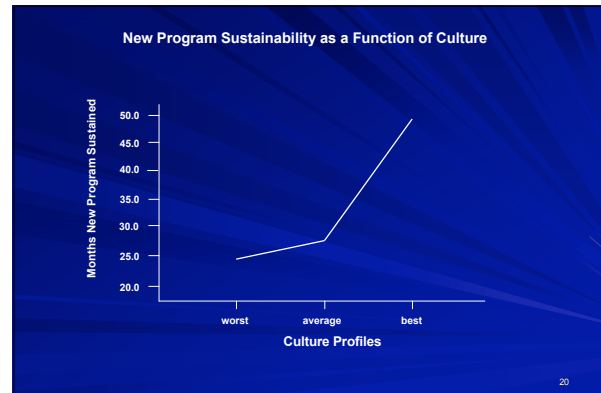

Example of Best Culture Profile
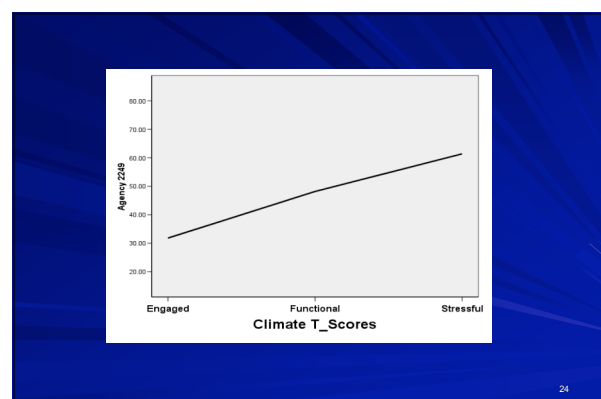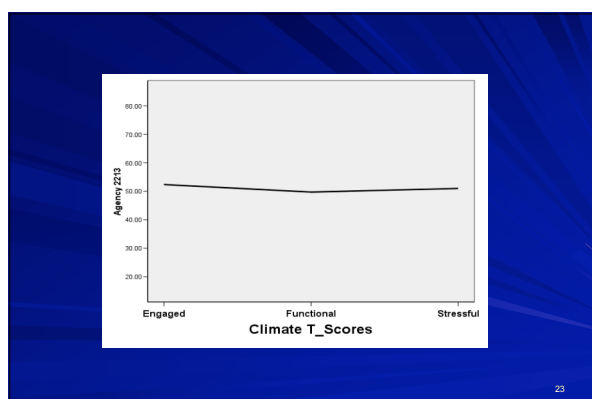in National Sample
(approximately 10% of clinics)

**Organizational Social Context (OSC) Measurement System**
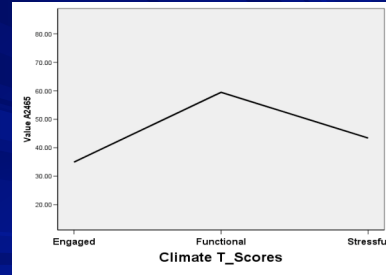
Organizational Climate

1. *Engagement* – service provider perceptions of personal accomplishment, involvement and concern for clients

2. *Functionality* – service provider perceptions that they receive the needed cooperation and support to do their jobs

3. *Stress* – service provider perceptions that they are emotionally exhausted and overloaded in their work

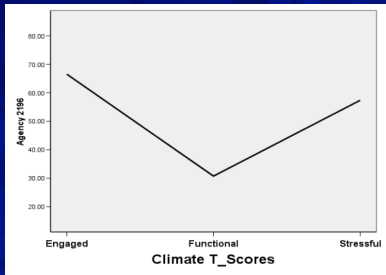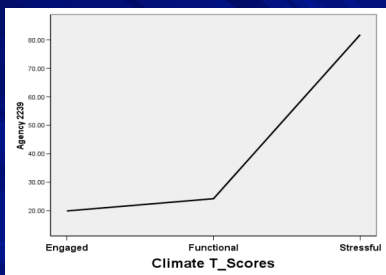**Examples of Mental Health Clinic OSC Climate Profiles from the National Sample**
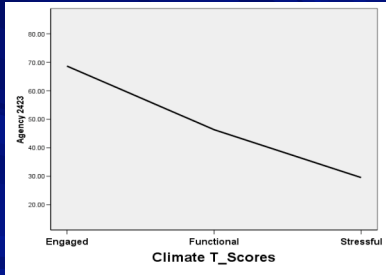
Example of Worst Climate Profile
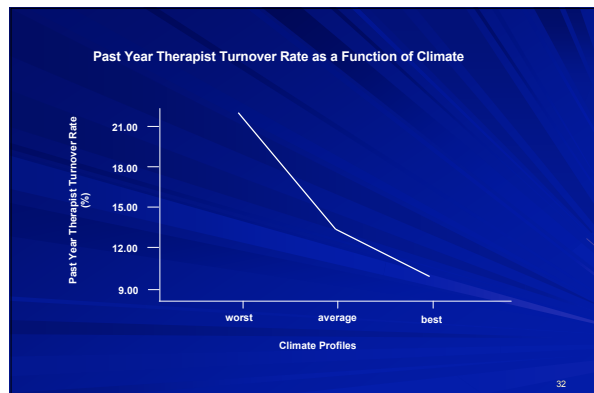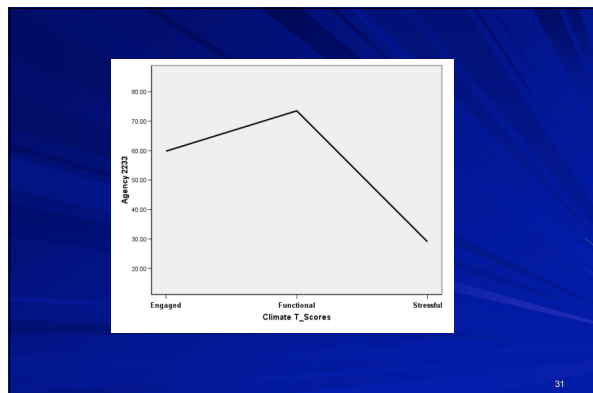in the National Sample
(approximately 10% of clinics)

Example of Best Climate Profile
in the National Sample
(approximately 10% of clinics)

## Nationwide NSCAW Study of Organizational Climate and Outcomes in Child Welfare Agencies

funded by DHHS Administration for Children and Families

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Wellbeing (NSCAW)

- **National probability sample** of 97 child welfare systems

- Assessed systems' climates with two scales from our **Organizational Social Context** (**OSC**) measure

- Collected **repeated measures** of the psychosocial functioning of children served by each system

Three-level HLM Model of Child Problems in Psychosocial Functioning (CBCL)

1. Time (months following intake)

2. Child (age, gender, family income, race, level of maltreatment)

3. Child Welfare System (location, engagement, stress)

Results of 3 level HLM
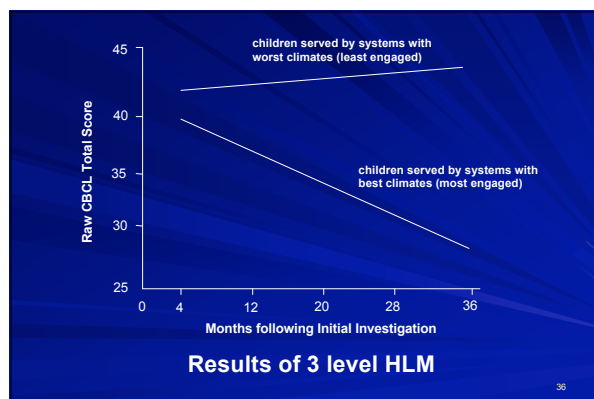
Five Studies to date link Culture to:

- **Individualized care** by 408 service providers in 30 social service organizations (Glisson, 1978)

- **Family-centered care** by 131 service providers in four emergency rooms (Hemmelgarn, Glisson & Dukes, 2001)

- **Turnover, work attitudes,** and **service quality** among 283 caseworkers in 33 child welfare and juvenile justice case management teams (Glisson & James, 2002)

- **Service quality** in 15 child welfare teams serving 21 urban and rural counties (Glisson & Green, 2006)

- **New program sustainability** in nationwide sample of 100 mental health clinics (Glisson, Schoenwald, Kelleher et al., 2008)

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Five Studies to date link Climate to:

- **Job satisfaction** and **commitment** among 319 service providers in 22 human service organizations (Glisson & Durick, 1988)

- **Service quality** and **outcomes** among 250 children served by 32 children's services offices (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998)

- **Work attitudes** and **service quality** in 33 child welfare and juvenile justice service teams (Glisson & James, 2002)

- **Service outcomes** for 1,678 children in 88 county child welfare offices in nationwide NSCAW sample (Glisson, 2008)

- **Therapist turnover** in national sample of 100 mental health clinics (Glisson, Schoenwald, Kelleher et al., 2008)

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We Need Organizational Intervention Strategies to:

– Create positive OSCs in mental health and social service organizations

– Improve service provider work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and commitment) and reduce turnover

– Support the effective implementation of evidence-based treatments and other service innovations

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Effects of ARC Organizational Intervention on Child Welfare Agency Climate and Turnover

funded by
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

(Glisson, Dukes & Green, 2006)

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Study Design

- Randomized blocks true experimental design in one state child welfare and juvenile justice system

- 26 case management units serving 25 urban and rural counties were randomly assigned to the ARC intervention or control

- One year ARC intervention

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Stages, Components and Phases of the ARC Organizational Intervention Model

Stages and Components		Phases			
		I Problem identification	II Direction setting	III Implement-ation	IV Stabilization
Collabo-ration	1. Leadership	xxxxx			
	2. Personal relationships	xxxxx			
	3. Network development	xxxxx	xxxxx		
Participation	4. Team building	xxxxx	xxxxx		
	5. Information and training	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx	
	6. Feedback	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx
	7. Participatory decision-making	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx
	8. Conflict management	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx
	9. Goal setting		xxxxx	xxxxx	xxxxx
Innovation	10. Continuous improvement			xxxxx	xxxxx
	11. Job redesign			xxxxx	xxxxx
	12. Self-regulation				xxxxx

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**Two-level HLM Analyses of
Turnover and Climate**

1. Case manager (age, gender, education, race)

2. Case management unit (location, ARC intervention vs control)

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Results of ARC Intervention

• **ARC improved climate** and **reduced turnover** in both **urban and rural** case management units

• **ARC reduced turnover by over 40%**

• **ARC created less stressful climates**

• **ARC created more engaged climates**

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Current Work

■ Linking OSC to service provider behavior and child outcomes

■ Linking ARC to OSC, service provider behavior and child outcomes

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