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

21st Annual Research Conference on Systems of Care
Tampa, FL
February 26, 2008

Charles Glisson, Ph.D.
Children’s Mental Health Services Research Center
University of Tennessee

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

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)

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”

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

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)
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
**Presented in Tampa, February 2008**

**21st Annual RTC Conference**

---

**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

---

**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)

---

**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

---

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

Funded by National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

(Glisson, Dukes & Green, 2006)

---

**Stages, Components and Phases of the ARC Organizational Intervention Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages and Components</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leadership</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Personal relationships</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Network development</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Team building</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Information and training</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Feedback</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participatory decision-making</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Conflict Management</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Goal setting</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Continued Improvement</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Mid-realignment</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Stabilization</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>xxx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

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

1. Case manager (age, gender, education, race)
2. Case management unit (location, ARC intervention vs control)

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

Current Work

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