Welcome to this online, self-guided powerpoint training. Please read these supplemental notes for each slide. After you have completed the training, download the knowledge check from BlackBoard, complete it, and email or fax it to your district office’s CPE educational liaison. Thanks, and enjoy the training!
Spending cuts have the potential to deeply impact those who rely on many social service programs. Some services that may be affected include programs that assist families struggling with child abuse/neglect, low income children and families, the severely ill and uninsured, substance abusers, the mentally ill and people struggling with domestic violence and legal issues.

TRYING ECONOMIC TIMES

During times of economic stress, social workers may face two types of challenges:

• Program Reductions

• Program Eliminations
WHAT MIGHT THIS MEAN FOR CHILD PROTECTION?

DOING MORE WITH LESS!

- Increased caseloads
- More intense cases
- Fewer employee benefits & raises
- Greater scrutiny overall
- Fear of demotion or job loss

**Increased caseloads:** If tight budgets lead to hiring freezes, agency cost cutting, and fewer community resources oftentimes the worker is asked to carry more cases than typical.

**More intense cases:** Due to greater intake restrictions, waitlists and difficulties accessing preventative services, oftentimes cases are more intense and symptoms more advanced once program involvement begins.

**Fewer employee benefits:** As a way to avoid layoffs, many agencies reduce “perks” like affordable health and dental insurance, pension and retirement contributions and/or training opportunities. In addition, there are often pay “freezes” where people do not get raises, bonuses or cost of living increases that otherwise would be standard.

**Greater scrutiny:** Due to the higher pressure environment overall, the social worker may find themselves being scrutinized more by supervisors, referral sources and even coworkers. Additionally, successful outcomes will be seen as more important for overall program survival and sustainability.

**Fear of demotion or job loss:** With unemployment rates and job pressure higher, it makes sense that the social worker would be concerned about their own ability to support themselves and their families.
WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF BURNOUT?

Maslach & Jackson (1986)

A syndrome of Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Reduced Personal Accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do `people work' of some kind."

Please take a moment and think about what this definition of burnout means to you. Do you agree with the Maslach & Jackson definition or do you think of burnout as something else?
Maslach & Jackson (1986)

**Emotional exhaustion**- Employees often feel they lack adaptive resources and therefore cannot give more to their job. Feel depleted with nothing left to give.

**Depersonalization (cynicism and disengagement)** start to detach from their job and develop uncaring attitudes toward their job, their performance and those associated with the job (clients, coworkers, etc.). Develop “empathy fatigue.”

**Reduced personal accomplishment (self efficacy)**—diminished perception of their ability to do their job. Feel they can no longer perform their job as they once could, even in the face of evidence to the contrary,
When differentiating between “burnout” and “stress”, it may help to think about burnout as LESS - less engaged, less motivated, less attached to job/clients/outcomes, whereas stress can be thought about as MORE/TOO MUCH - overly engaged, constant urgency, too much attachment or thought about job/clients/outcomes.

As you view the next few slides, consider how you approach trying situations.
1) Do you find that you tend to react with burnout or stress?
2) Do you find that certain types of trying situations lead to burnout and others lead to stress?

Self-awareness of your own reaction to specific, trying situations may be a valuable tool.
**WARNING SIGNS OF BURNOUT**

- Increased illness, absenteeism and tardiness
- Decreased performance and productivity
- Attitude changes
- Difficulty with coworkers or clients
- Detachment from clients, position and outcomes of cases

**Performance and productivity:** This may be especially obvious when comparing current productivity with past (evident when comparing evaluations from year to year).

**Attitude changes:** The employee is usually up-beat, but now appears quiet, somber, sullen, disagreeable or even moody.

**Difficulty with team members or client relations:** Coworkers mention that "something is wrong." Decrease in positive interaction with other employees. He "just doesn't get along" as well with others anymore.

**Detachment:** No longer seems to care about clients, coworkers, team involvement or the outcomes of cases. Often can be seen as a cynical attitude.

COULD THESE SIGNS INDICATE ANYTHING ELSE ASIDE FROM BURNOUT FROM WORK?
REFLECT...

Do you notice any of these signs in yourself or your team members?

*Please take a minute to reflect on yourself or your team members.*

*Do you notice any warning signs for burnout? If so what are those?*

*Can you pinpoint one or two workers that you would really like to work with this on?*

*Are there any workers who DO NOT show signs of burnout but probably would be a candidate for it given caseload, case intensity, personal stress, etc? Can you think of what protective factors (personal and professional) they may have to avoid burnout?*
WHY BURNOUT MATTERS

- Social worker burnout is a critical supervisory issue because it negatively effects:
  - Consistency
  - Quality of client services
- Burnout also increases:
  - Depression
  - Sick leave absence
  - Turnover intention and actual turnover
  - Self reported health problems

Increases in turnover intention and actual turnover are especially common in a social worker’s first 2-5 years in the field of child protection, when burnout tends to be highest.
**Personal Factors**: include a strong desire to be of help, innate personality characteristics, and willingness to seek help.

**Role Clarification**: this includes ensuring that workers understand their role, how they fit into the larger organization and what job expectations are. Realistic job previews are helpful in understanding this. Additionally having “the tools to do the job” is essential to preventing burnout. (Example: Not asking workers to function outside their expertise)

In research conducted in 2005, Stalker et. al found that despite having high levels of emotional exhaustion, child welfare workers with a strong desire to help, skill mastery, problem solving capability and an ability to access organizational social support were less likely to suffer from burnout.
Please take a moment and reflect on what you think you could do within the supervisory role to prevent and address burnout among your team members?

Are there things you are already doing? Are there things you have thought about that you would like to do? What would make this possible? What are any barriers that would need to be overcome?
Encouraging these factors may help the supervisor to minimize or mitigate burnout among team members.
As we review these factors over the next few slides, consider which are well implemented in your team and which might present opportunities for growth.
Supervisory communication allows team members to access information about resources, intervention strategies and gain support. When a supervisor communicates in a supportive and helpful manner, workers not only have less role conflict but also feel more attached to the organization (Kim & Lee, 2009)

Open door policies encourages questions, feedback and support. Personal relationship (within professional limits) promotes comfort and ease of communicating between supervisor and team members.

Organizational communication
Organizational changes- alleviates staff concerns or worries and makes frontline workers feel listened to
Worker feedback- often best ideas come from those “closest to clients”
**SOCIAL SUPPORT**

- Formal
  - Peer Supervision
  - Collaboration
  - Mentoring
  - Cross training

- Informal
  - Office rituals
  - Some openness to sharing important personal life events

**Social Support** – establishing an environment where team members feel comfortable with other team members and their supervisor to discuss and ask questions related to their work.

*On a scale of 1-10 how do you feel your team members feel about their overall social support within the workplace?*

*Do you feel all members of the team would agree?*

*If not, what is the challenge to social support?*

**Peer Supervision/Team Meetings** - allows all members an opportunity to seek input from other team members, hear about difficulties in the field and vent frustration about accessing resources, etc

**Collaboration**: allows team members to work together on cases/special projects and understand how other team members function

**Mentoring**: This would allow a more senior worker/one with expertise to mentor a newer worker or one who is looking for greater expertise in a given area

**Cross training**: This allows for greater job flexibility, greater feelings of accomplishment and exposure to other departments, work teams, referral sources, etc.

Informal supports are meant to increase team member buy in/inclusion. However supervisors need to be careful to ensure activities are appropriate for all team members to take part in. (Example: a holiday party vs a Christmas party if team members do not celebrate Christmas)
**Job autonomy** - not micromanaging, allowing worker freedom to do their job.

**Flexible scheduling** - allows workers to feel a greater sense of control related to their own personal needs and how to balance those with work needs.

**Decision making inclusion** - people that feel personally invested in decision making, take greater ownership and greater connection to the role which can reduce burnout. However supervisors have to be careful not to over involve direct care workers in decision making processes that may be seen as an added burden to their already heavy caseloads (Bojas & Wind, 2010)

**Requesting feedback** - when team members know that you care about their thoughts and concerns, they are more likely to make suggestions for improvement, creatively problem solve and feel part of the team. Additionally research conducted by Lewandowski (2003) stated that organizations that value client feedback for program and service improvement also contributed to lower rates of worker burnout.

**Advocacy**: It is important for supervisors to be “in the loop” about legislation and state/fed budget issues that effect the population they are serving. In addition it is important for supervisors to be advocacy role models by getting involved in coalitions/advocacy groups and by allowing supervisees to do the same.

NOTE: Any advocacy must address issues of concern to child protection and must focus on those issues and NOT on specific candidates for public office.
Recognition includes both formal and informal acknowledgment of a job well done or a specific knowledge base.

**Expressing confidence**: Doing this individually, in a group setting and in communication with your own supervisor makes team members feel recognized for their ability to do the job.

**Highlighting Skillset/Expertise**: Using other team members as “experts” for their given talent allows confidence building not only from the supervisor but also other team members.

Examples: Someone who is able to engage “hard to reach” clients can speak with someone struggling to engage a family about strategies that have worked for them in the past. If someone has great community resource knowledge, encouraging others to ask questions about resources but also what that person found helpful in navigating the system (personal relationships with agency people, calling the front desk and asking questions, internet research, etc?)

*How do you believe your department/team does with recognition on a scale of 1-10? What would make it a point higher? Lower? What types of rituals are there around recognition? Are there other ways that recognition could occur?*
Professional Development includes understanding the worker’s long term and short term goals, educational aspirations and areas of interest.

Encourage workers to expand skillsets and facilitate this as possible. Make workers aware of promotional opportunities and special projects that may fit their areas of interest.

How comfortable are you as a supervisor speaking with your supervisees about career goals and exploration? Is it different with different team members? With limited resources\opportunities to offer, can this discussion still be valuable?

How comfortable do you think your supervisees are discussing their career goals such as continuing education and specialized training with you?

How comfortable are you speaking with your supervisor about your own career goals and aspirations? If not, what makes it uncomfortable? If so, what about that relationship makes that a possibility? Is there something that would make it more comfortable to discuss both with your supervisor and supervisees?
SELF CARE SUPPORT

- Role modeling self care
- Encouraging workers to create balance:
  - Taking time off
  - Turning off agency cell phone/ not checking email while at home
  - Rotating on call duties
- Assistance for difficult cases/ periods of time
- Asking about self care
- Practicing self care as a group

Self Care Support includes:

**Role modeling**: Practicing self care yourself; role models this healthy behavior for workers. If they see you taking time off, they may feel more comfortable utilizing time off themselves.

**Encouraging balance**: Workers need true time away from the position to recharge. **Assistance**: Although the supervisor needs to be careful about not allowing case “dumping”, it is important for the supervisor to acknowledge when job demands are too high and making caseload adjustments as needed.

**Practicing self care as a group**: Perhaps as part of integrating “recognition” and “social support”, team members could take a lunchtime yoga class together, take a walk or get a massage student to come and provide chair massage for free as part of practice hours. It is important for social workers to practice what we preach in terms of setting limits and making sure we take time to recharge regularly.

*Overall do you have a sense of how team members take care of themselves? Is this part of supervision/team meeting conversation? What are your personal beliefs about the importance of self care and how do you practice self care?*
BENEFITS OF BURNOUT PREVENTION

- Improved client service
- Increased worker engagement and commitment
- Potential reduction in turnover
- More positive work environment
- Reduced spending

**Improved client service:** Client service should improve with workers that feel more supported, more empowered and practice greater self care strategies.

**Supervisee Engagement and Commitment, Reduction in turnover and Positive Work Environment:** When workers feel better about the work they do and their work environment, it makes sense that they are more likely to engage in supporting others, get involved with special projects and are less likely to leave their positions.

**Reduced Spending:** With less staff turnover and the training time/costs related, it is logical to assume that there would be more resources overall.
Please take a moment and think your own beliefs about your supervisory role as a protective factor from burnout.

_Are there barriers to implementing these changes?_  
_Once completed, are there ways to work around these barriers?_  
    _Implement just one?_  
    _Poll your staff about which of these they might think would be most helpful to them?_

_Do you feel these factors are present in your relationship with your supervisor? If not, what barriers exist and how might they be overcome?_