

Family Support Workforce Study
Year 1 Report
Phase II: Administrators Survey
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Summary of Findings

Iowa Family Support Administrators Survey

Family support programs play a vital role in supporting Iowa families, but to date there is no comprehensive profile of the organizations and workforces providing these services. To gain a clearer understanding of the family support workforce and its organizational contexts, the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice under sponsorship from the Iowa Department of Public Health developed a survey of family support administrators intended to gather the experiences of these support programs from the viewpoint of its leadership. The Iowa Family Support Administrators Survey, as well as a previously administered Iowa Family Support Workforce Survey, are part of a larger research effort to understand the organizational factors in which these programs operate in the state and to assess the relationship between workforce characteristics and family support outcomes.

The survey of administrators was designed to extract information about family support programs from the perspective of management. The survey was constructed using the REDCap software program, which allowed most responses to be pre-programmed in response categories to reduce the likelihood of data entry errors. The survey of administrators was distributed between May and July 2014 through email. Surveys were distributed to a list of program directors maintained by the Iowa Department of Public Health, and to a list of contractors for the MIECHV home visiting program. Out of 189 non-duplicated surveys distributed, 24 were returned as not deliverable, for a valid population size of 165. Surveys were completed by 86 program administrators, for a response rate of 52%. We note that some of 165 survey recipients may not have self-identified as administrators and therefore did not complete the survey. Therefore 52% may represent a conservative estimate of the response rate.

This report focuses first on family support organizations throughout the state, assessing the regions and areas where these programs reside, the organizational functions of each, and the annual budgets dedicated to family support work. The study then transitions to a focus on the workforce, highlighting the number of employees and their job functions, salaries and benefits, promotional opportunities, and turnover rates. Open-ended responses related to challenges and strengths of the workforce and organizations are also included.

Family Support Organizations

To better understand the family support workforce across the state of Iowa, it is important to understand the organizations in which these individuals work. The survey responses encompass family support organizations from each region of the state and represent an expected distribution of rural, small town, urban, and suburban areas. It is also clear that organizations of numerous types, sizes, and functions are represented in the data. The information included therefore likely represents the breadth of family support organizations active in the state.

Geographic Distribution

The survey was distributed to family support organization administrators across Iowa, and the responses reflect the perspectives of administrators working in each area of the state. There were responses from each IDPH region identified in the survey, with the northwest region most represented in the results. The regions covered by these various support programs are highlighted below in table 1.

Table 1: IDPH Region(s)

Region	Frequency	Percentage
Central	12	14.0%
Northeast	17	19.8%
Northwest	20	23.3%
Southwest	12	14.0%
Southeast	18	20.9%
East Central	10	11.6%

As another indicator of geographic makeup, respondents were asked to characterize the area that their program serves as mostly urban, mostly suburban, mostly small town, or mostly rural. It is clear from the results that the areas served by these programs are also representative of the state's varied communities, with 33.7% describing the area as mostly small town, 31.4% mostly rural, 26.7% mostly urban, and a minority of 8.1% mostly suburban.

Organization Type

Respondents were asked to describe the type of organization they worked in, which allowed researchers to gain a clearer understanding of the purpose and structures of the organizations. Table 2 highlights the reported organization types.

Table 2: Type of Organization

Organization Type	Frequency	Percent
Private non-profit	36	41.9%
Public health	25	29.1%
Community action	14	16.3%
Hospital	4	4.7%
Governmental	2	2.3%
Other health organization	2	2.3%
Other	2	2.3%
AEA	1	1.2%

Consistent with results of the previously administered Iowa Family Support Workforce Survey, the modal organization type was the private non-profit, followed by the public health organization. Additionally, 16.3% worked for community action organizations, while smaller numbers worked for hospitals, the government, other health organizations, and area educational agencies.

Family Support Budget

The average family support organization in the state is relatively small, and the budgets of these organizations reflect that fact. The survey asked respondents to categorize their annual family support budget into one of four categories, ranging from under \$100,000 to over \$1,000,000 annually. Many of the organizations also serve other roles outside of family support, so the survey also inquired, “Thinking about the larger organization in which your family support program is located, what is the approximate percentage of the organizations resources spent on the family support program?”

There is wide variation in the family support budgets themselves, and even more variation in the percentage of total organization resources spent on the family support program. The majority of family support budgets in the state are small, with 87.1% of programs receiving \$500,000 per year or less. Some organizations fall above this threshold, with four operating on a budget of over one million dollars per year. Table 3 below shows estimated family support budgets by category.

Table 3: Estimated Annual Family Support Budget

Budget	Frequency	Percentage
Under \$100,000	24	28.2%
\$100,001 - \$500,000	50	58.8%
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	7	8.2%
Over \$1,000,000	4	4.7%

The approximate percentage of organization resources spent on the family support program also varies widely from a minimum of 0% to a maximum of 97%. The median is a better indicator of distribution than the mean because of the large standard deviation; with a median at 16% it is clear that while there is variation in percentage of budget dedicated to family support, only a small portion of most organization budgets are reserved for family support programs. Table 4 below represents the percentage of each budget dedicated to family support by quintiles. It is evident that family support organizations across the state are diverse in their expenditures on family support each year. We also note that a substantial number of respondents (n=20) did not answer this question, possibly because they did not have sufficient knowledge of the larger organization’s resources.

Table 4: Percentage of Organization Resources Spent on Family Support

Percentage of Resources Spent on Family Support	Frequency	Valid Percentage in Quintile
0% to 19%	34	51.5%
20% to 39%	20	30.3%
40% to 59%	5	7.6%
60% to 79%	3	4.5%
80% to 99%	4	6.1%

Family Support Workforce

The survey of administrators intended to gather the experiences of the family support workforce from the viewpoint of its leadership. Inquiring about years in the field and job, number of employees by organization and position, salaries and benefits, promotions, and transfers allowed researchers to understand the varied experiences of the workforce. The final section of the survey allowed administrators to provide free responses to questions about the challenges and strengths of both the workforce and family support organizations.

Years in Family Support Administration

Several questions were specific to the administrator completing the survey, asking how long they had worked in family support program administration and how long they had worked in the family support field. The median administrator has considerable experience in the field, with twelve years of experience in all family support positions. Some report as little as one year of experience while one administrator reported forty years in the field. The results of this question are listed in table 5 and are organized by quartile.

Table 5: Years in Family Support Field

Years in Family Support	Frequency	Percentage
1 to 10	39	45.3%
11 to 20	28	32.6%
21 to 30	13	15.1%
31 to 40	6	7.0%

These individuals also reported a median of seven years in family support program administration, ranging from one to thirty years. The results in table 6, organized into quintiles, indicate an administrative workforce with sizable experience in administrative roles as well.

Table 6: Years in Family Support Program Administration

Years in Family Support Administration	Frequency	Percentage
1 to 6	39	45.3%
7 to 12	24	27.9%
13 to 18	12	14.0%
19 to 24	9	10.5%
25 to 30	2	2.3%

Number of Employees Working for Family Support Program

As another way to assess the size of family support organizations, respondents were asked, “How many employees (including yourself) currently work for your family support program?” There is large variation in the number of employees working in each family support organization, ranging from a minimum of one employee to a maximum of 127. The mean number of employees was 9.3, with a standard deviation of 17.4; therefore, the median of five is a better indicator of the average

number of employees. Thus the majority of family support programs in the state have a small number of employees dedicated to family support work, as depicted in table 7.

Table 7: Total Employees in Family Support Program

Total Employees	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 4	37	43.0%
5 to 9	32	37.2%
10 to 19	11	12.8%
20 +	6	7.0%

Next, the survey asked administrators how many direct service, supervisory, and program management employees worked in both full-time and part-time positions. It is evident from table 8 that there are more full-time than part-time employees, particularly in higher level positions. The “typical” family support program has three full-time and one part-time direct service employees, one supervisor and one program manager.

Table 8: Number of Full and Part-Time Employees by Position

Employment Status	Direct Service	Supervisor	Program Manager
Full-Time	<i>X:</i> 5.07 <i>SD:</i> 8.72 <i>Mdn:</i> 3.00	<i>X:</i> 1.23 <i>SD:</i> 2.73 <i>Mdn:</i> 1.00	<i>X:</i> 1.29 <i>SD:</i> 2.92 <i>Mdn:</i> 1.00
Part-Time	<i>X:</i> 1.43 <i>SD:</i> 1.62 <i>Mdn:</i> 1.00	<i>X:</i> 0.30 <i>SD:</i> 0.58 <i>Mdn:</i> 0.00	<i>X:</i> 0.24 <i>SD:</i> 0.57 <i>Mdn:</i> 0.00

Family Support Salaries and Benefits

Respondents were queried about the range of wages and benefits available to the workforce. The median reported lowest hourly rate of pay for direct service providers was \$13.41. This number ranged from a minimum of \$8.75 to a maximum of \$27.10 per hour. The median highest hourly rate of pay was \$17.00, ranging from \$12.00 to \$40.00 per hour. The survey also asked administrators to report the lowest and highest rates of pay for supervisors; the median lowest rate of pay was \$20.00 and the highest was \$23.00. The lowest rate of pay ranged from \$12.00 to \$37.61, while the highest ranged from \$14.07 to \$40.00. There is considerable variation in these figures, with a standard deviation of more than \$6.00 per hour for supervisory positions. These data show that there is great variation in hourly rates of pay, depending on the organization and demands of the job. Table 9 provides summary data on salary figures.

Table 9: Lowest and Highest Salaries of Direct Service and Supervisory Positions

Position	Direct Service	Supervisory
Lowest Hourly Rate of Pay	X: \$14.39 SD: \$3.57 Mdn: \$13.41	X: \$21.18 SD: \$6.14 Mdn: \$20.00
Highest Hourly Rate of Pay	X: \$18.83 SD: \$5.54 Mdn: \$17.00	X: \$23.48 SD: \$6.43 Mdn: \$23.00

Another essential component of compensation is benefits, and administrators were asked to indicate whether medical insurance, dental insurance, vacation leave, sick leave, flexible hours, and/or tuition for training/classes were available to full-time and part-time employees. Among full-time employees and as shown in table 10, the majority (90.7%) had access to medical insurance and 76.7% had access to dental insurance. Vacation leave and sick leave were also the norm, with 98.8% and 91.9% having access to these benefits, respectively. Flexible hours were available to 82.6% of full-time employees. The only benefit which was offered to a minority of employees was tuition for training and classes, as only 43.0% of full-time employees had access to tuition. This may be an area of growth for the field in the coming years as a way to train and retain workers.

Table 10: Full-Time Benefits

Full-Time Benefit	Medical Insurance	Dental Insurance	Vacation Leave	Sick Leave	Flexible Hours	Tuition for Classes
Available	78	66	85	79	71	37
Percentage Available	90.7%	76.7%	98.8%	91.9%	82.6%	43.0%

Benefits are less common among part-time employees, as indicated in table 11. A minority of 46.5% of employees has access to medical insurance, and only 43.0% have dental coverage. Vacation leave, sick leave, and flexible hours are somewhat available to these individuals, with 72.1%, 64.0%, and 74.4% reporting availability of each benefit. Tuition for classes and training is even less common among part-time workers, with only 30.2% receiving this benefit.

Table 11: Part-Time Benefits

Part-Time Benefit	Medical Insurance	Dental Insurance	Vacation Leave	Sick Leave	Flexible Hours	Tuition for Classes
Available	40	37	62	55	64	26
Percentage Available	46.5%	43.0%	72.1%	64.0%	74.4%	30.2%

Promotional Opportunities

Opportunity for advancement is important for retaining workers in any field. To assess promotional opportunity at the organizational level, the survey asked respondents to identify how many employees in direct service, supervisory, and program management positions had received a promotion within the last five years. Out of the 86 organizations represented in this survey, 54 (63%) reported no promotions of direct service workers, 60 (70%) reported no promotions among supervisors, and 61 (71%) reported no promotions among program managers.

As depicted in table 12, the largest number of promotions occurred among direct service employees, who also comprise the largest segment of the family support workforce. Thirty-two of the agencies promoted between 1 and 13 direct service employees. Twenty-six agencies reported promotions among supervisors, and 25 agencies reported promotions among program managers—primarily for one individual or at most, two employees.

Table 12: Promotions by Position

Number Promoted within agency	Direct Service		Supervisor		Program Manager	
0	54	62.8%	60	69.8%	61	70.9%
1	15	17.4%	19	22.1%	23	26.7%
2	8	9.3%	7	8.1%	2	2.3%
3	4	4.7%	0	-	0	-
4	3	3.5%	0	-	0	-
5	1	1.2%	0	-	0	-
13	1	1.2%	0	-	0	-

Opportunities for promotion may increase worker satisfaction and retention even among supervisors and program managers, so this may subsequently be an area of growth for the workforce in the coming years.

Turnover Rate

To determine the organizational retention and turnover rates of various types, the survey asked administrators to report how many direct service staff and supervisors were employed during the previous calendar year, how many left due to voluntary quitting, how many left due to budget cut-related layoffs, how many were terminated for poor performance, and how many left due to retirement.

In this study the highest turnover rate was due to voluntary quitting, and this demonstrated high variability across organizations. The mean turnover rate for direct service workers was 15.5% (SD = 20) and for supervisors, 8.5% (SD=24). With such large standard deviations, the median better represents average turnover, which was 10.6% for direct service workers and 0% for supervisors. However, the picture is more complicated than averages would indicate. We note that 40 agencies reported no voluntary turnover among direct service workers and 68 agencies reported no voluntary turnover among supervisors. But in the 46 agencies that did experience voluntary turnover of direct

services staff, the rate ranged from a low of 6% (in one agency) to 100% (in two agencies), with 27 agencies losing 25% or more of their staff in the year. In the 12 agencies that reported voluntary turnover among supervisors, the rate ranged from 4% (in one agency) to 100% (in four agencies); 10 agencies lost more than one-third of their supervisors to voluntary turnover during the year. In sum, the data on voluntary turnover suggest that some organizations have a very stable workforce while others experience a problematic level of turnover.

The survey also asked about leaves due to budget cuts, termination, and retirement to measure other types of workforce turnover. Results indicate that turnover is quite low in these areas and is particularly low due to budget cuts; in fact, administrators reported that no supervisors were cut due to budgetary constraints in the last year. Table 13 provides the mean, standard deviation, and median for the different types of turnover by position.

Table 13: Turnover Rates by Position

Position	Voluntary Turnover Rate	Budget Cuts/Layoff Rate	Termination Rate	Retirement Rate
Direct Service	X: 15.5% SD: 20. Mdn: 10.6	X: .73% SD: 3.9. Mdn: 0	X: 1.82% SD: 5.4 Mdn: 0	X: .79% SD: 4.2 Mdn: 0
Supervisory	X: 8.52% SD: 24.2 Mdn: 0	X: 0 SD: 0 Mdn: 0	X: .42% SD: 3.7 Mdn: 0	X: 1.25% SD: 7.9 Mdn: 0

Challenges Facing Organizations and the Family Support Workforce

Two open-ended survey questions allowed administrators to provide their thoughts on the challenges facing both family support organizations and the workforce. It is notable that at least 79 of 86 respondents (91.9%) provided comments in each section, often referring to multiple challenges in their comments. Several common themes were identified among these responses, and the predominant themes have been categorized and compiled into the tables below. Table 14 highlights responses to the question, “from your perspective, what are the greatest challenges facing your family support program?”

Table 14: Greatest Challenges Facing Family Support Program

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage of All Respondents (n=86)	Percentage of Those who Commented (n=83)
Funding instability and insufficient budgets	40	46.5%	48.2%
Paperwork and data collection (includes reporting duplicity or inconsistency, system difficulty)	12	14.0%	14.5%
Family motivation and retention (cancellations, not following through on goals)	6	7.0%	7.2%
Inadequate pay	9	10.5%	10.8%
Staff workloads and stress	13	15.1%	15.7%
Hiring and training staff	10	11.6%	12.1%
Increased client needs	8	9.3%	9.6%
Obtaining family referrals	6	7.0%	7.2%
Transportation/mobility issues	5	5.8%	6.0%
Lack of community resources and support	7	8.1%	8.4%

As evident from the table above, the most cited challenge for family support organizations was funding instability and insufficient budgets. Administrators often cited a lack of funding for some of the other challenges these organizations face, including an inability to hire more staff and to provide training. Examples of responses in each category are listed below.

Funding Instability

“The constant battle for funds is ongoing and taxing.”

“Continuing to provide for families who have more needs every year...with flat or less funding.”

Staff workloads and stress

“There is quite a bit of work to do and not enough time to do it.”

“We serve the neediest families and that comes with immense challenges working with mental health, domestic violence and substance abuse issues. These elements are very trying for our Home Visitors.”

Paperwork

“Dealing with the administrative paperwork in addition to what is being required by the program.”

“Much less time to spend developing a trusting relationship with families because of a push for them to complete paperwork.”

Family Motivation

- “The turnover rate of clients that start the program and then stop coming.”
- “Parents with risk factors...are more difficult to engage and inconsistent in their commitment.”

Inadequate Pay

- “Being able to pay staff what they deserve for the work they do.”
- “High stress and low paying (from the workers’ perspectives).”

Hiring and Training Staff

- “Our program has strict requirements for staff members so the hiring process takes time.”
- “Being able to recruit qualified staff...[and] more comprehensive training of staff to fully understand their role.”

Increased Client Needs

- “Families who have more needs every year (we serve a significant number of refugees and immigrants).”
- “Family Support Workers become close to burn out as a result of the higher needs of families.”

Obtaining Family Referrals

- “Referrals and keeping capacity.”
- “Getting a full caseload for staff due to the randomization process.”

Transportation/Mobility Issues

- “The amount of travel required to reach families in rural/isolated areas.”
- “Client transportation and mobility.”

Lack of Community Resources and Support

- “Lack of funding from community resources and a lack of understanding of the need for programs.”
- “Community awareness.”

The challenges facing the workforce itself were also characterized in responses to the question, “What are the greatest challenges facing your family support workforce?” The most frequently cited challenge for the workforce was inadequate pay of employees, which often impacts employee recruitment and retention. Frequencies for key responses are depicted in table 15 and examples of the challenges facing the workforce are listed below.

Table 15: Greatest Challenges Facing Family Support Workforce

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage of All Respondents (n=86)	Percentage of Those who Commented (n=79)
Inadequate pay and benefits	27	31.4%	34.2%
Staff workloads and stress	17	19.8%	21.5%
Paperwork	9	10.5%	11.4%
Increased client needs	12	14.0%	15.2%
Staff recruitment and retention	11	12.8%	13.9%
Training difficulties (includes need for training, increased requirements)	8	9.3%	10.1%
Funding instability	12	14.0%	15.2%
Family recruitment, retention, and motivation	10	11.6%	12.7%

Inadequate Pay

“Salaries have risen over the last two year but remain low for the level of competency that is needed to successfully perform their duties.”

“High educational requirements, but low pay. Most college graduates move away to get pay comparable to their degree.”

Staff Workloads and Stress

“Sometimes the chaos and the crisis families are involved in gets to be too much”.

“Not having time for a day off without having to come back and do extra visits and paperwork.”

Paperwork

“Extra data collection that is time consuming and takes away from direct client contact.”

“We are spending more time reporting (i.e. entering the same data into two separate systems.”

Increased Client Needs

“Higher needs of families result in increased stress and workloads for staff”.

“There is more unemployment, poverty, and abuse in our area than before.”

Staff Recruitment and Retention

“Paying highly educated, quality staff and retaining them. Once staff get through a master’s program, they leave the position for higher pay.”

“Lack of qualified workers who are willing to take lower pay.”

Training Difficulties

“Staff also need to be trained in some many areas to assist families that it becomes a challenge when they themselves often times only have a high school diploma.”

“Attending all the various trainings that are required of them for the position they are in.”

Funding Instability

“Having the grants and funding available to keep our programs going.”

“Paying competitive wages and continuing to provide increases each year when funding is cut.”

Family Retainment and Motivation

“Getting families to return calls and keep appointments.”

“Getting families to follow through with what they have been educated on and say they are going to do.”

Strengths of Family Support Programs and the Family Support Workforce

Respondents were also asked, “What are the greatest strengths of your family support program?” and “What are the greatest strengths of your family support workforce?” The majority of respondents (83 of 86, or 97%) identified one or more strengths of the programs and workforce. The tables below highlight the most commonly reported strengths.

Table 16: Greatest Strengths of Family Support Programs

Strengths	Frequency	Percentage of All Respondents (n=86)	Percentage of Those who Commented (n=83)
Staff experience, compassion, and dedication	35	40.7%	42.2%
Community resources and support	17	19.8%	20.5%
Achieving positive outcomes	15	17.4%	18.1%
Model and curriculum	15	17.4%	18.1%
High client interest and engagement (includes attendance)	9	10.5%	10.8%
Communication and teamwork within organizations	7	8.1%	8.4%
Support from organization and leadership (includes organizational resources and quality of supervision)	14	16.3%	16.9%
Diversity and cultural competence	7	8.1%	8.4%

The most frequently cited strength for family support programs was the staff, including their experience and knowledge, compassion, training, and dedication. Examples from each category are listed below.

Staff Experience, Compassion, and Dedication

“The home visitors have excellent skills in working with the neediest families...parent educators are passionate about the work they do and the impact the program has.”

“Our greatest strengths are our qualified, dedicated staff.”

Community Resources and Support

“Good support from the community.”

“The program is well-received by the physicians and the public in our community.”

Achieving Positive Outcomes

“Outcomes are excellent and easily reported to the state and federal funding sources.”

“Outcomes. We hear every day about the difference we are making.”

Model and Curriculum

“A broad array of services are offered in addition to case management and outreach.”

“Our program is evidence-based so it works.”

High Client Interest and Engagement

“We stay at capacity with a long waiting list, have high group attendance.”

“Families stay in our program until their child ages out and we have families call for service when they have a new child.”

Communication and Teamwork within Organizations

“We work together as a program...we are team players for our agency.”

“Great working team who support each other.”

Support from Organization and Leadership

“Workers that are supported by not only their supervisor, [but] by the administration of the agency.”

“Large organization with many resources.”

Diversity and Cultural Competence

“We are successful in providing a service to a diverse population.”

“We place a strong emphasis on cultural awareness and have resources to assist us with our changing community.”

Table 17: Greatest Strengths of Family Support Workforce

Strengths	Frequency	Percentage of All Respondents (n=86)	Percentage of Those who Commented (n=83)
Dedication to clients, the model and organization	38	44.2%	45.8%
Compassion towards clients	17	19.8%	20.5%
Motivation (includes enthusiasm and passion for the work)	21	24.4%	25.3%
Teamwork and organizational support	9	10.5%	10.8%
Effective training	10	11.6%	12.1%
Flexibility	6	7.0%	7.2%
Experience in the field	14	16.3%	16.9%
Knowledge of workforce	9	10.5%	10.8%

The most frequently cited strength for family support programs was the dedication of staff to the work and to the program model. Employee compassion, motivation, and experience were also highly regarded. Examples of the cited strengths of the family support workforce can be seen below.

Staff Dedication to Clients and the Program

“Staff seem dedicated to the work they are asked to do and are willing to go above and beyond to make programs/services the best they can be for the clientele being served.”
 “Committed employees to the mission of the program.”

Compassion towards Clients

“They are supportive of the families they work with. They truly care about what they do.”
 “Compassion...for their families.”

Motivation

“Passion to help families be the best they can be.”
 “Staff who enjoy their work and the families they serve.”

Teamwork and Organizational Support

“All working together to provide education, support and encouragement to families.”
 “The staff knows that everyone is here to help out and to give each other support!”

Effective Training

“Training offered that allows for our growth and learning.”
 “We provide as many opportunities as we can for continued learning.”

Flexibility

“Flexibility. Staff can adjust their schedules to allow for higher education, working from home in the event of bad weather, or flextime for a weekend if they have a personal appointment during the week.”

“Flexibility and willingness to learn.”

Experience in the Field

“We have many employees with a lot of years of service in the field and in our program.”

“They each have their own unique experiences and expertise that they bring to the group.

They are a diverse group both by age and backgrounds and have different input on situations which provides perspective to their colleagues.”

Knowledge of Workforce

“Intelligence to work with a variety of families.”

“Knowledge of parenting and resources.”

Summary

This survey of Iowa’s family support program administrators is broadly representative of the state’s geographic regions, types of communities, and organizational auspices. The three predominant organizational types: private, non-profits, public health, and community action agencies, were similar between this survey of administrators and the previous Family Support Workforce Survey. The Administrators Survey represents a slightly higher percentage of rural programs and slightly lower percentage of urban programs compared to the previous survey. The administrators that completed this survey reported a median of 12 years in the family support field, compared with a median of 15 years in the previous survey. The response rate of 52% is acceptable by survey research standards but does not preclude the possibility of selection bias in terms of the programs that are represented in these findings.

Based on the survey results, the average family support program in Iowa is small and operates on an annual budget of less than \$500,000. Staff sizes vary widely, with a median number of five employees, typically three or four direct service workers, one supervisor, and one program manager. Salaries demonstrate considerable variability, with a range of \$8.75 to \$27.10 per hour for direct service workers and range of \$12.00 to \$37.61 per hour for supervisors. Full-time employees most frequently are eligible for medical benefits, vacation and sick leave, to less extent dental benefits and flexible hours, while the most frequently reported benefits for part-time employees were vacation leave, flexible hours, and sick leave. Tuition for classes was not widely available for either full-time or part-time employees.

Opportunities for advancement in these family support programs are limited, with the majority of programs reporting no promotions for direct service workers, supervisors, or managers in the past five years. Among the organizations that did report promotions, these were most frequent for direct

service workers. No more than two supervisors and two program managers were promoted in any of the organizations in the past five years.

With regard to turnover, voluntary turnover was far more common than turnover due to budget cuts, poor performance, or retirement. Voluntary turnover demonstrated widely divergent patterns, with many programs reporting no turnover whatsoever among direct service workers and supervisors and others, turnover rates of up to 100%. The fact that 27 agencies lost more than 25% of their direct service staff and 10 agencies lost more than one-third of their supervisors suggests that voluntary turnover is a significant problem in some of these family support programs.

In their open-ended comments, family support administrators identified key challenges facing their programs and their workforces, including: funding instability, staff workloads and stress, paperwork, inadequate pay and benefits, staff recruitment, retention, and training increased family needs, and others. They also noted significant strengths, among them staff experience, compassion, motivation, and dedication, community resources and support, strong program models and outcomes, and organizational support, including teamwork and effective training. Survey results indicate that family support programs and their workforces are striving to serve families in the face of limited budgets and high demands, often with limited extrinsic rewards.