

Early Childhood Work Environment Survey

The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey (ECWES) can help you assess the organizational climate of your early childhood program. The resulting Work Environment Profile summarizes staff perceptions about different organizational practices and can serve as a springboard for creating a great place to work. Since the ECWES was developed in 1985, more than 40,000 early childhood practitioners working in 3,500 programs have completed the survey and received a summary profile.

WHY ASSESS THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE OF YOUR PROGRAM?

Assessing attitudes about organizational practices can help you . . .

- better understand the collective perceptions of staff
- identify ways to improve overall morale
- validate why things are going well in the program
- isolate those areas that need to be strengthened

The ECWES measures staff perceptions in ten areas:

- Collegiality
- Opportunities for professional growth
- Supervisor support
- Clarity
- Reward system
- Decision-making influence
- Goal consensus
- Task orientation
- Physical environment
- Innovativeness



The ECWES also looks at staff's level of commitment and the degree to which their current work setting resembles their ideal. The ECWES is designed to be completed by all administrative, teaching, and support staff who work more than 10 hours per week. In order to ensure sufficient variance for the data analysis, there should be a minimum of five surveys completed at each site receiving a Work Environment Profile. This profile provides group averages for the dimensions of organizational climate. Individual responses are not reported.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

The ECWES costs \$15 for each person completing the online survey. Thus, if you have a staff of ten the total cost for conducting an organizational climate assessment of your program and receiving a Work Environment Profile of the aggregate results would be \$150.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Orders can be placed online on the New Horizons website (www.newhorizonsbooks.net). There are five steps in the process:



Place your order. On the ECWES order form, indicate the total number of surveys you need. Remember, the ECWES is designed for all administrative, teaching, and support staff who work more than 10 hours per week and you need a minimum of five staff at each site to generate a meaningful Work Environment Profile. Indicate whether you will be paying by credit card (Visa or MasterCard) or have a purchase order and wish to be invoiced. *Please note that unused surveys may not be returned for credit.*



Register each site. Once your payment has been verified (or your purchase order approved), you will be e-mailed a registration form asking for the name of the center(s), a contact person for each center, the number of surveys designated for each site, and the name and e-mail of the individual to whom the summary Work Environment Profile should be sent. If you are registering only one center, you will not need to hit the 'Add Center' button on the form.



Complete the Center Background Information Form. When registration is complete, the designated contact for each center will be sent an e-mail with a link to a Center Background Information Form to complete. This form includes the center's unique Center ID. Save this number. It will serve as the reference number for the program should you decide to do an organizational climate assessment for this center in the future and want to compare results. When you have completed the form click the button 'Save Changes.' You can go back and adjust the information on this form any time during the assessment process. Your profile cannot be generated without this form on file.



Distribute the survey. The e-mail the designated contact person for each site receives will also include a survey link to send to each staff member. Some directors send this link to each employee's personal e-mail so they can complete and submit the survey from home. Other directors have staff complete the survey on a computer at the center. If you go this route, make sure that individuals have privacy when they are completing the ECWES.

The directions for completing and submitting the survey are included in the ECWES link, but it is always a good idea to inform staff beforehand about the purpose of doing a climate assessment, the confidentiality of their individual responses, and how the resulting Work Environment Profile will be used. When distributing the link, let staff know the survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete but they can take as much time as they need. Also let them know they should plan to complete the survey in one sitting as partially completed surveys cannot be saved. The survey link will remain active for 30 days.



Download your Work Environment Profile. Once the total number of surveys purchased for each site have been submitted or your 30-day window has expired, the data will be processed and a Work Environment Profile summarizing the aggregate results will be sent to the person designated to receive the summary profile. This individual will also receive information for how to interpret the results as well as helpful resources for turning the results into an action plan for continuous quality improvement.

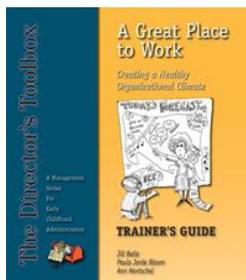
TRAINING AND FOLLOW-UP CONSULTANT SERVICES

Training on organizational climate and consultation to help you interpret the results of your Work Environment Profile is available by faculty at the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University. Contact Dr. Jill Bella, jill.bella@nl.edu, 847-947-5059. Dr. Bella is also the person to contact if you would like to learn more about how the ECWES is being used in local and state quality improvement initiatives.

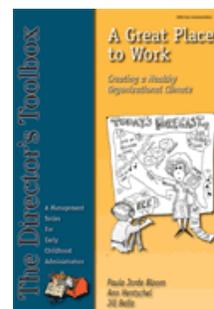
For research support relating to ECWES results including descriptive statistics, item analysis, or pre/post comparisons, contact Dr. Mike Abel, Director of Research and Evaluation, at the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, michael.abel@nl.edu, 847-947-5312.

YOU MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN THESE RESOURCES

For a more complete description of the 10 dimensions of organizational climate and dozens of practical strategies you can implement immediately to improve the quality of work life at your center, be sure to order a copy of *A Great Place to Work: Creating a Healthy Organizational Climate*.



If you are interested in conducting a workshop on ways to improve the organizational climate in early childhood programs, the trainer's guide for *A Great Place to Work* can serve as your trusty guide.



"The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey offers early learning programs a snapshot of their organizational climate. Survey results can be used by administrators, boards, and staff to bridge the gap between the real and ideal conditions needed for success."

Janice Moenster, Children's Home + Aid

"The ECWES was an easy-to-administer tool that resulted in opportunities to understand staff perceptions of the workplace, open up honest dialogue between the staff and our management team, and support the living system called Clayton Early Learning. I hope to use the ECWES in my program annually to provide ongoing documentation of our journey as a community of practice."

Catherine McCarty, VP, Clayton Early Learning