EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
XXX ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS FOR CHANGE (ORC-SA) SURVEY

Texas Institute of Behavioral Research at TCU
(insert date)

During (*insert month/year*), a survey was conducted at the (*insert agency name*) for evaluating staff perceptions of organizational structure, functioning, and performance. Nineteen staff members participated, and their surveys were collected after completion and mailed to TCU for scoring and analysis (the Director was not included as a respondent in this report). Participation was voluntary and staff was assured that responses would be kept confidential. Survey completion rates were high and data quality appeared to be good.

The *TCU Survey of Organizational Functioning* was developed and published in 2002 as part of an organizational research program at Texas Christian University (see Simpson, 2002; and Lehman et al., 2002). Since then, it has been widely used internationally and validated across several health and social service related settings. Its content and purpose are described on page 5-6 of this report, along with a graphic presentation of results on page 7. To insure confidentiality, all staff responses were averaged to represent an overall view of organizational functioning. While not everyone gave exactly the same ratings for each item/scale, of course, this procedure is commonly used and gives reliable assessment indicators reflecting "central tendency."

Summary of Findings

The chart on page 7 shows results on the 20 ORC-SA scales designed to assess several domains of organizational functioning. These scales are grouped into four areas – needs, resources, staff attributes, and organizational climate (see page 5-6). Findings are discussed below in terms of mean scores on the scales, paying particular attention to how positive or negative they are on the response scale of 10 to 50 (with 10 = strongly disagree, 50 = strongly agree, and 30 being neutral). Survey results from 2006 are discussed first and then comparisons are made with the 2004 survey findings for this agency.

Overview of 2006 Staff Survey

A. Agency Needs/Pressures for Change information represents staff attitudes about program needs, training needs, and pressures for change. The graphic summary of results shows in general that staff members express moderate needs in terms of agency operations and specialized training, but they are not extreme (with scores in the 30-35 range). To gain clearer interpretations of these three indices, tabulated responses to individual items are included in page 8-9.

The far right column shows levels of agreement for each item and those with over 50% staff agreement are in shaded boxes. The specific items under "**program needs**" show the highest staff concerns involved *assigning or clarifying staff roles* (Item 3, 72%), *improving communication among staff* (Item 7, 68%), *improving record keeping and information systems* (Item 8, 63%), esta*blishing accurate job descriptions* (Item 4, 59%), and *evaluating staff performance* (Item 5, 53%).

With respect to "**training needs,**" the highest concerns involved *specialized computer applications* (Item 11, 83%), *new methods or developments in your area of responsibility* (Item 12, 63%), and *new equipment or procedures* (Item 13, 63%).

Finally, staff viewed "**pressures for change**" as coming primarily from *supervisors or managers* (Item 19, 89%) and *accrediting or licensing authorities* (Item 23, 71%).

B. Resources (i.e., facilities/equipment, staffing levels, and computer resources), the second major category of functioning, were given ratings ranging from 30 to 43. The most favorable scores went to office and computer-related resources, with modest ratings for overall adequacy of staff training/educational resources.

C. Staff Attributes were given positive marks overall. This shows staff members are confident about their abilities and performance – as represented by their favorable ratings on self-efficacy, mutual influence, and adaptability scales (all with scores of 35-41). The highest score of any scale in the survey was for job satisfaction (with a score of 44), providing an overall indicator of "good agency health."

D. Organizational Climate is the final area of assessment focus, and is among the most important because it is based on staff relationships and agency infrastructure. These scales had moderately favorable ratings (32-40), and it is noteworthy that none were in the "negative" zone (that is, below 30). *Stress* level remained moderately high (36), which is consistent with expectations given the mission and responsibilities of the staff. The lowest rating by staff was for *communication* (32).

Comparisons of 2004 and 2006 Survey Results

The graphic summary of results on page 7 illustrates the overall stability of staff ratings from 2004 to 2006. Only two scales showed changes of 4-5% (generally considered to represent "significant" or reliable changes in these scores). Ratings of *staff resources* rose from 32 to 36, and staff perceptions of their personal *influence* in the organization rose from 35 to 39. Other fluctuations are smaller in magnitude and may not represent meaningful changes, but the overall trends for ratings for *Resources* and *Staff Attributes* are consistently positive and encouraging.

As noted above, the mean scores plotted in the chart for ratings of *Needs* can be amplified by examining individual items. In comparison to *Program Needs* expressed by staff in 2004, there were major improvements during 2006 in record keeping systems, job descriptions, and staff evaluation procedures (71-79% of staff cited these areas as needing improvements in 2004, compared to 53-63% in 2006). But not everything has gotten better. Namely, there is a notable rise in concerns about clarity of staff roles (increasing from 50% in 2004 to 72% in 2006) and about agency communications (increasing from 50% to 68%).

Individual items for *Training Needs* showed there were drops in staff concerns from 2004 to 2006 (with the largest for certifications and credentials, falling from 50% in 2004 to 11% in 2006). Some of this change presumably has resulted from progress made in relation to installation and usage of the agency records software in the past 2 years.

The major shift in staff perceptions of *Pressures for Change* involved the influence of agency accreditation and licensing authorities, with a rise from 36% in 2004 to 71% in 2006 in the staff noting these concerns.

Conclusions

Results from the 2006 organizational evaluation indicate that the (name) agency is generally operating in the "favorable" zone of staff ratings in regard to needs, resources, professional attributes, and climate. This conclusion is based on the fact that all of the average scores for the organizational functioning scales were above 30 (i.e., the mid-point "mean score" between agree-disagree ratings). In addition, the overall score profile tends to be high in comparison to other agency assessments conducted by the TCU Institute of Behavioral Research. (More information on the development and applications of this "organizational functioning" assessment is available on the Internet at www.ibr.tcu.edu.)

The graphic summary of the findings show some of the most favorable staff ratings and improvements from the last agency survey (i.e., conducted in 2004) occurred in the areas of Resources and Staff Attributes. This is encouraging and reflects well on current staff efforts to use resources effectively, and is supported by the overall agency improvements in its financial status during the past 2 years.

However, there are significant Program Needs that deserve attention. In particular, tabular breakouts for items in this scale show that roughly 70% of staff wants better *clarification of staff roles and agency communication*, up from about 50% who reported these needs at the time of the last survey in 2004. There also are lingering concerns about the *accuracy of job descriptions, performance evaluations, and quality of agency information systems*, as indicated by ratings above 50% – but it also should be emphasized that there has been notable progress in these areas in the past 2 years. In addition, these typically are areas of continual concern to staff at mid-sized agencies that operate with complex interdependencies of staff functions and which are under constant pressures to perform and adapt. In effect, it means that the agency director and supervisory team must give constant attention to these issues while at the same time realizing that they are not completely solvable!

Training Needs revolve primarily around new or specialized computer applications, but all items in this scale showed modest drops in levels of concerns since 2004 so progress therefore is being made. These needs appear to be driven in part by the large increase in Pressures for Change attributed by staff to accreditation and licensing authorities. While it is important to acknowledge staff concerns about these needs, they in general reflect the dynamic nature of technology as well as the "politics of regulatory agencies." As such, they require balanced allocations of agency resources and careful monitoring of changing needs.

Finally, the critical area of Organizational Climate deserves comment. Scale scores (on the graphical summary) for these important indicators of organizational functioning fell in the "moderately favorable" zone of 30-40. The highest score in these scales was for *cohesion* (39), confirming the strong personal interrelations that generally characterize this agency staff. The lowest score was for *communication* (32). While agency leadership might prefer to see these scores in the top zone of possible scores (i.e., 40-50), previous evaluations of hundreds of social service agencies show this is rare and an unrealistic expectation. Experience shows that organizational complexities mitigate against very high scores, even in seemingly straightforward matters such as agency *mission*.

Thus, agency leadership should consider reviewing survey results in non-confrontational discussions with staff and explore ways of identifying and addressing particular concerns being raised, especially how they might be connected with staff responsibilities and roles in making

constructive changes (see Simpson & Dansereau, 2007). Several strategies are available for guiding this process, such as using a manual on Mapping Organizational Change (Dansereau & Simpson, 2006) available from the IBR Website (www.ibr.tcu.edu).

Although the present findings suggest currently there are no major agency organizational emergencies (i.e., represented by scales scores below 30), staff and leadership nevertheless are likely to benefit from discussions about needs, training resources, and communication patterns. Strategic review and related action plans require leadership commitments in order to be sustained over time, and appropriate "task teams" might be appointed to help guide and give procedural oversight.

References

Dansereau, D. F., & Simpson, D. D. (2006). *Mapping organizational change: A guidebook on program needs*. Texas Institute of Behavioral Research, Fort Worth TX. (Available electronically from http://www.ibr.tcu.edu/_private/manuals/TMA/TMA(06Jun)-MOC.pdf).

Lehman, W. E. K., Greener, J. M., & Simpson, D. D. (2002). Assessing organizational readiness for change. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 22*(4), 197-209.

Simpson, D. D. (2002). A conceptual framework for transferring research to practice. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 22*(4), 171-182.

Simpson, D. D., & Dansereau, D. F. (2007, April). Assessing organizational functioning as a step toward innovation. *Science & Practice Perspectives*, 3(2), 20-28. (Full text available electronically at http://www.drugabuse.gov/PDF/Perspectives/vol3no2/Assessing.pdf).

Description of Scales in the
<u>Survey of Organizational Functioning</u>
in Social Agencies

This survey includes 115 questions that represent 20 content domains of organizational functioning. Items are grouped conceptually into four major areas – agency needs/pressures for change, institutional resources, performance attributes of staff, and organizational climate. Interpretations of scores are typically made on the basis of (1) degree of agreement or disagreement on the subset of items for each scale, (2) variance in staff responses, reflecting the level of diversity in their collective perceptions or opinions, and (3) comparisons between response patterns for different agencies or staff subgroups.

The Likert-type items are scored on the basis of 5-point "disagree-agree" responses, which are then averaged within scales and multiplied by 10 to yield final scores that range from 10-50. On average, each scale includes about six items. Higher scale scores (i.e., above 30) represent *stronger agreement*, and lower scores (i.e., below 30) represent *stronger disagreement*. Technical psychometric information, scoring guides, and related research on these assessments are available at the www.ibr.tcu.edu Website. (Information also is available on this Website for "response norms" such as 25th and 75th percentile scores that can help interpret findings in the broader context of how other organizations operate.)

A. Agency Needs/Pressures for Change
Unless key agency needs are identified and motivational pressures are "activated," individuals within an organization are unlikely to initiate *positive* change behaviors. Three fundamental areas (scored as summed indices) are regarded as particularly important to consider.

1. <u>Program needs</u> for improvement reflect valuations made by agency staff about its strengths/weaknesses and issues that need attention. These revolve around goals, performance, staff relations, and information systems.

2. <u>Training needs</u> assess perceptions of training in several technical and knowledge areas that may be needed by staff.

3. <u>Pressure for change</u> that should be identified usually come from internal (e.g., target constituency, staff, or leadership) or external (e.g., regulatory and funding) sources.

B. Institutional Resources
In addition to the psychological climate that envelops an organization, the facilities, staffing patterns, training, and equipment also are important influences on organizational behavior. Five areas are assessed in this survey.

1. <u>Offices</u> refer to the adequacy of office equipment and physical space available.

2. <u>Staffing</u> focuses on the overall adequacy of staff assigned to do the work.

3. <u>Training resources</u> address emphasis and scheduling for staff training and education.

4. <u>Computer access</u> deals with adequacy and use of computerized systems and equipment.

5. <u>e-Communications</u> refer to staff access and use of e-mail and the internet for professional communications, networking, and obtaining work-related information.

C. Staff Attributes

There are many important aspects of staff competence and performance, but those related to "professional self-esteem" and perceptions of personal competence are especially significant. These have been reduced to five key areas in this survey.

1. <u>Growth</u> reflects the extent to which staff members value and make use of opportunities to advance their own professional growth.

2. <u>Efficacy</u> measures staff confidence in their own professional skills and performance.

3. <u>Influence</u> is an index of staff interactions, sharing, and mutual support.

4. <u>Adaptability</u> refers to the ability of staff to adapt effectively to new ideas and change.

5. <u>Satisfaction</u> measures general satisfaction with one's job and work environment.

D. Organizational Climate

Collective appraisals (e.g., based on aggregated staff ratings) of an organizational environment indicates its "climate." Several key dimensions are commonly identified, particularly the seven areas described below.

1. <u>Mission</u> captures staff awareness of agency mission and clarity of its goals.

2. <u>Cohesion</u> focuses on workgroup mutual trust and cooperation.

3. <u>Autonomy</u> addresses the freedom and latitude staff members have in "doing their jobs."

4. <u>Communication</u> focuses on the adequacy of information networks to keep everyone informed and having bi-directional interactions with leadership.

5. <u>Stress</u> measures perceived strain, stress, and role overload.

6. <u>Change</u> represents staff attitudes about agency openness and efforts in keeping up with changes that are needed.

7. <u>Leadership/Supervision</u> reflects staff confidence in agency leadership structure and perceptions of co-involvement in the decision making process.

Staff Ratings of Organizational Functioning
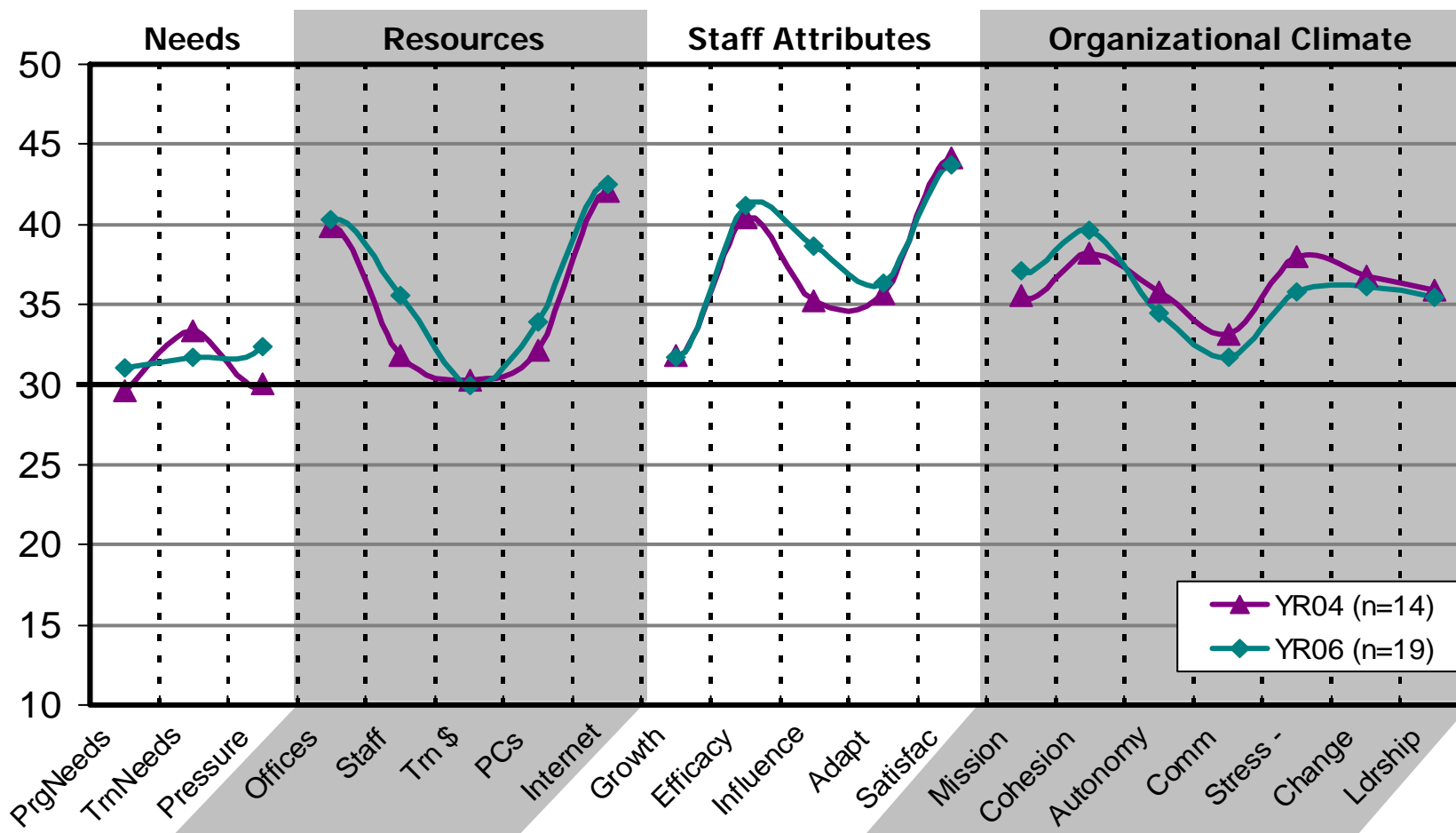
TCU Organizational Readiness for Change (ORC-SA) Scores

TCU Institute of Behavioral Research, Fort Worth, Texas

Sample Report ORC-SA (Web09)

Item Responses for Program Needs, Training Needs, and Pressures (n=19)

		Mean	SD	% Agree
	Program Needs (<u>Your organization needs additional guidance in</u> –	**31.1***	**6.0**	
1.	defining its mission.	20.5	10.3	16%
2.	setting specific goals.	28.9	13.2	39%
3.	assigning or clarifying staff roles.	35.6	9.2	72%
4.	establishing accurate job descriptions for staff.	33.5	8.6	59%
5.	evaluating staff performance.	34.1	10.0	53%
6.	improving relations among staff.	24.1	11.2	24%
7.	improving communications among staff.	38.9	11.0	68%
8.	improving record keeping and information systems.	34.7	12.2	63%
9.	improving financial/accounting procedures.	27.1	9.9	12%
	Training Needs (<u>You need more training for</u> –)	**31.7***	**5.4**	
10.	basic computer skills/programs.	30.5	15.4	47%
11.	specialized computer applications (e.g., data systems).	40.6	10.0	83%
12.	new methods/developments in your area of responsibility.	35.3	8.4	63%
13.	new equipment or procedures being used or planned.	35.8	9.0	63%
14.	maintaining/obtaining certification or other credentials.	22.1	9.2	11%
15.	new laws or regulations you need to know about.	30.5	11.8	47%
16.	management or supervisory responsibilities.	27.2	10.7	33%

		Mean	**SD**	**% Agree**
	Pressures for Change (<u>Current pressures to make agency changes come from -</u>)	**32.4***	**4.5**	
17.	the people being served.	32.2	8.8	44%
18.	other staff members.	32.9	9.2	47%
19.	supervisors or managers.	42.2	6.5	89%
20.	board members or overseers.	30.6	10.0	33%
21.	community groups.	22.9	8.5	6%
22.	funding agencies.	26.5	10.6	12%
23.	accreditation or licensing authorities.	38.8	8.6	71%

* Mean scores range from 10 to 50 (scores above 30 indicate agreement; below 30 indicates disagreement).