

## Changing Times



### **SRS is an agent of change.**

Most SRS staff manage change on a daily basis through their mission of protecting children and promoting adult self-sufficiency. As a legacy, SRS has changed on innumerable occasions in response to shifts in social policy and community needs.

**Change continues to this day.** The need to provide excellent services within budget limitations requires innovative modifications to established ways of doing business. All staff are being asked to think creatively together about ways of creating efficient and effective service delivery systems.

Change is complex and multi-dimensional, at times paradoxical. In order to gain, one must often lose. It can be a tincture of excitement, concern, creativity and loss. Even the most innovative of thinkers can find change counter-intuitive.

### **As an agent of change, SRS has learned a few lessons:**

- Change **works best** when all those affected are immersed in the planning and implementation.
- The best ideas often come from the **least vocal** staff member.
- Effective change is a function of both **quality ideas and participation**.
- **Commitment and resistance** to change are mirrors of the same process.
- **Basic human needs** must be addressed before some staff can fully participate in change.
- **Individual attention** to each staff member is imperative during times of great change.
- Change must be linked to **mission** in order for it to be accepted and supported.

- Staff want to be **recognized** for their contributions to the agency, especially when being asked to take on new or different responsibilities.
- A **safety net** is critically important for those being asked to make sacrifices.
- Staff want to know they are **remembered and supported** after making significant changes.
- Staff want to know they are **cared about** and addressed as important human beings.

### **Tips for Managing Change:**

- , **Involve** all stake holders, including appropriate community partners.
- , **Share** information. Communicate openly with individuals and groups.
- , **Encourage** each person to participate in a positive process.
- , **Identify** how change promotes the SRS mission, while remembering not all may agree.
- , **Acknowledge** the willingness and courage of those supporting change.
- , **Foster** flexibility and trust.
- , **Identify** practical helping resources for those experiencing loss.
- , **Remind** others of the successful SRS track record in negotiating change.
- , **Distribute** information on available resources such as field and central office HR staff, access to financial, legal and mental health assistance through LIFELINE (1-800- 284-7575), availability of Employee Relation Counselors, and the agency toll free, confidential number (1-877-277-1369) or TTY (1-785-296-1491) for those wanting to talk over specific work related problems.

