



Building a Resilient Workforce to Address Trauma and Enhance Well-Being

PROVIDING OPERATIONAL WORKFORCE SUPPORTS

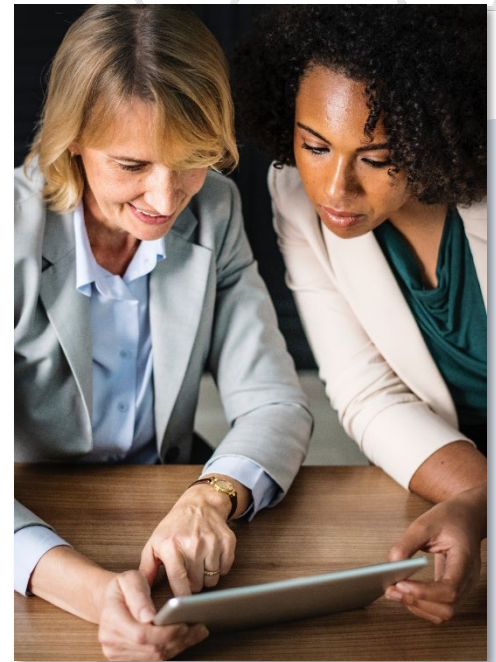
KEY TAKEAWAYS

Structural Supports

- Use physical building to promote resiliency – murals and art on walls, suite relaxation station, common area with comfy chairs and place to take time away
- Design buildings for a mobile workforce including 24-hour access for staff who need a work station
- Provide apps to alert law enforcement when needed (e.g., [SafeSignal app](#))
- Send alerts to staff phones such as road closures, shootings, protests, etc., so staff know to stay away from certain areas
- Establish a worker safety support program and/or critical incident response team that provides support after an assault, threat, or other incident
- Offer option to continue to work from home and create telework agreements
- Improve benefits such as hazard pay, health care coverage, and IT support
- Host weekly all-staff team meetings

Process Supports

- Implement a [National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#), including what is associated with good mental health in the workplace



SESSION 1 OF 5

Discussion with Nancy Carre-Lee, Deputy Director for CP&P Operations, NJ

Event date:

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Recording available:

<https://vimeo.com/543769685>

- Use psychological safety measures and multi-disciplinary teams to explore systemic issues contributing to critical incidents without blaming the worker
- Send out polls frequently to get staff feedback. Have opportunities for staff to meet in small groups to debrief.
- Establish a process where the director conducts stay interviews with individual staff (rotating so each staff gets one interview a year)
- Establish an exit interview process
- Implement a LEAN process focused on less waste, utilizing all talents, and giving all a voice in agency changes
- Implement rapid improvement events where a representative group from the agency meets for a concentrated week-long session to identify current processes, identify root causes, and provide out-of-the-box thinking on new processes, comprised of value-added activities

Practice Supports

- Consider keeping the option of virtual visits to foster homes – these give staff more time
- Strengthen clinical supervision
- Use a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) approach to help workers feel supported and have the tools they need to be successful
- Implement a [safety science approach](#) to incident reviews
- Mandate a buddy policy for responding to CPS reports
- Assign a “debrief” – a person staff can go to discuss an issue they are having personally or professionally
- Conduct more research on how trauma is affecting staff decisions to stay in this work environment
- Have open-door communication and an accessible director, have the director send a “good morning” email on Mondays

Wellness Supports

- Establish a wellness lead/coordinator focused on employee well-being available to debrief and check in on staff who have had a critical incident/trauma. Supervisors can also request staff check-ins.
- Have local therapists available for debriefing weekly or as needed
- Set up an EAP where staff can have 7 sessions that deal with any issue, no limit to how many issues you can have



- Establish a confidential workforce resilience team to support anyone needing to talk about a difficult case or work, and use unit psychologists short-term to help process high profile or difficult cases
- Create wellness teams that plan self-care activities to do together (i.e., virtual stretching, yoga, walks as a group, morning coffee, or connecting in person while socially distant)
- Establish a wellness committee to hold events and health challenges and share ideas (e.g., how to have the best staycation)
- Create events where staff engage in a fun way that is not work-related, e.g., compiling an office cook book with profits donated to client needs or local charity
- Designate “Mindful Mondays” and “Refresh Fridays” where staff take 15 min breaks to do mindful activities
- Create worker-focused support groups
- Establish a “no emails after work hours” policy
- Clarify boundaries between work and home
- Develop weekly wellness plans with staff and supervisors and modify as needed
- Use weekly clinical supervision not to discuss job performance or work needs but to check in on staff (self-care, supports needed, how are you feeling, etc.)
- Use [Professional Quality of Life Scale](#) regularly during supervision
- Offer support animals for staff, trauma-informed yoga, and nature walks
- Give staff space and permission for self-care
- Use meetings to share stresses, concerns, and challenges

Training

- Be mindful of when to implement trainings
- Have workforce consultants who help mentor new hires during their first year and provide hands-on training/support
- Train all staff and leadership in trauma-focused care
- Provide ongoing training and professional development for new and experienced workers
- Hold monthly trainings with themes – trauma, resilience, vicarious trauma
- Create trauma-informed workgroups where people learn about a particular area of trauma-informed care and then present information to the rest of staff



- Build staff leadership skills through Leadership Academies for supervisors and executive management.
- Create a responsive curriculum, i.e., cultural humility, implicit bias training, etc.
- Focus on psychological safety ([Amy Edmonson's](#) work), which is crucial to addressing important workplace issues and comes from leaders and everyone else being vulnerable. [Bill Brovsky](#) trains to this approach.

Support a Collaborative Orientation

- Use a relational approach with staff
- Assess staff needs through surveys and open discussions (town halls, unit meetings)
- Use committees to communicate with management so everyone has a voice
- Provide structured opportunities for peer support including affinity groups, morale groups, and retention groups
- Establish a peer support program that includes all organizational levels, allows space for folks to go to a non-judgmental mentor
- Establish peer-to-peer and worker-to-worker programs focusing on staff ACES and building protective factors
- Establish a “buddy system”
- Keep connections to past workers who can talk with current workers about trauma
- Collaborate with other departments, agencies, and sectors more. Learn from their expertise. Feel safe to step outside of our child welfare silo.
- Create teams of Black and Indigenous staff to work with community and staff
- Create coffee collaboratives
- Communicate, interact, and connect with staff; have leaders be proactive about resiliency – talk to staff about possible issues before they become a problem
- Include staff in every decision the agency makes

Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- Hold town halls on racial equity as an opportunity to discuss and share and prioritize DEI work
- Hold a bi-weekly meeting with director to informally discuss diversity, inclusion, and racial equity issues



- Understand how politics affect our agencies across the U.S.
- Include clients in the planning of crisis situations, diversity, and inclusion trainings
- Identify constructive structure for small group conversations on diversity
- Establish a diversity committee/team
- Hold youth racial justice groups and weekly huddles for quality and accountability
- Establish a racial justice task force
- Explore how to be a social change agency instead of a social services agency
- Look specifically at biases and examine curricula around DEI
- Hold diversity trainings
- Offer the [Intercultural Development Inventory](#)
- Work with universities to access data, support management, and address DEI issues

