Supporting the Virtual Workforce

Physical, Emotional, and Psychological Safety

Hosted by Alexis Howard, MSW, LCSW-R
National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI)
Welcome!

This learning exchange is sponsored by:
Please respond to the poll question by selecting your answer and then clicking “submit”
Today’s Webinar

- Laying the Foundation
- Experience From the Field
- Psychological Safety
- Learning Exchange of Your Questions, Resources, and Ideas
Let’s Center Ourselves
Supporting the Virtual Workforce | Learning Exchange Series

- Virtual Supervision
- Workforce Well-being
- Physical, Emotional, and Psychological Safety
- Converting the Classroom from In-person to Online
- Coaching Remotely
- Using Social Media and Technology to Engage Children, Youth, and Families
Laying the Foundation
Creating Workforce Safety

- Communicate that well-being includes all three aspects – physical, emotional, and psychological needs all must be addressed.
- Understand the experiences of staff through regular check-ins and dissemination of information.
- Create organizational resources and structures to support worker safety.
Experience From the Field
Physical and Emotional Safety
Poll Question:

Are your child welfare staff identified as First Responders?
Fear, Learning, and Growth Zones

Who do I want to be during COVID-19?

FEAR ZONE
- I think of others and see how to help them
- I start to give up what I can't control
- I spread emotions related to fear and anger
- I recognize that we are all trying to do our best

LEARNING ZONE
- I make my talents available to those who need them
- I stop compulsively consuming what hurts me, from food to news
- I identify my emotions
- I evaluate information before spreading something false

GROWTH ZONE
- I live in the present and focus on the future
- I am empathetic with myself and with others
- I identify my emotions
- I look for a way to adapt to new changes

https://code4counseling.com/
Chat Question

What resources or other supports do you need to move your workforce forward from fear, to learning, to growth?
Physical Safety Protocols

- Establish “First Responder” status
- Provide clear expectations while also addressing worries
- Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and guidelines for usage
Chat Question

What protocols has your agency put in place to strengthen physical safety for your workforce?
Front-End Protocol Example

1. Screen
2. Determine
3. Respond
Organizational Communication

- Send weekly or daily emails
- Create forums for worries and questions
- Create and train on revised protocols
- Provide immediate access to decision-makers
- Connect with community partners supporting families
- Daily supportive messages
A soft reminder as we enter a new week:

We (all of us) are currently going through a collective traumatic experience. Trauma is often thought of as "too much, too fast..." which is exactly what's happening. Of course you're exhausted. Of course you're afraid. Of course you're overwhelmed. Of course you're clinging to certainty in the midst of so much unknown. Of course you aren't as productive, feeling foggy, or wondering how you can possibly go through so many waves of emotions all in the same day. This all makes so much sense in the context of our circumstances. Be gentle with yourself. Have compassion for your process. Give yourself grace. You are good, no matter how you are managing this completely new experience.

Lisa Olivera
Psychological Safety
Psychological Safety in the Work Environment

Employees:
- Feel respected
- Are interested in each other as people
- Feel safe to experiment and take risks

(Edmondson, 2004; Newman, Donohue, & Eva, 2017)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Psychological Safety</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Macro level</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Child Welfare professionals are important</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Organizational–systemic shift in values and practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>CARE &amp; COMPASSION</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mezzo level</strong></td>
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<td>- Group supervision</td>
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<td>- Peer groups</td>
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<td>- <strong>WE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Micro level</strong></td>
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<td>- Individual worker: loss</td>
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<td>- Intersection of physical safety</td>
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<td>- Peer to peer</td>
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<td>- Supervision</td>
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<td>- <strong>PURPOSE</strong></td>
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Characteristics of Psychological Safety

- Relationships Mutual Aid
  (Gitterman, 2004; Shulman, 2012)

- Care and Compassion in Organizations
  (Rynes, Bartunek, Dutton, & Margolis, 2012)

- Humanity
  (Ortega, 2017)
Components of the Group

- Share concerns, individual stressors, and the impact of the pandemic on families and communities
- Think critically about child welfare practices
- Problem-solve collectively
- Take risks—focus on creativity
A group supervision model: Experiences of front line child welfare workers
Q & A’s
Idea and Resource Exchange
Join us for our next Learning Exchange:

*Converting the Classroom from In-person to Online*

April 28 and May 1
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Evaluation

Please fill out the evaluation.

We are always learning and growing and want to improve this Learning Exchange series to meet your needs.
Contact info for our Presenters:

Alexis Howard | Alexishoward@AOL.com

Michelle Dossey | MDossey@arapahoegov.com

Sharon Kollar | skollar@albany.edu
Thank you!