



Peer Support and Workforce Retention

Sedivy, J. A., Rienks, S., Leake, R., & He, A. S. (2020). Expanding our understanding of the role of peer support in child welfare workforce retention. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 14*(1), 80-100.

WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

This article explores how different types of peer support are associated with staff retention. The study is based on data from 1,703 child welfare workers employed in one county and two statewide agencies across the country.

WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL FINDINGS?

This study looks at two types of peer support:

Social-emotional support:

- ✓ Listening to concerns
- ✓ Allowing opportunities to talk
- ✓ Offering encouragement



Operational support focused on task-related behaviors:

- ✓ Covering cases
- ✓ Offering tangible resources
- ✓ Consulting on cases



- Both types of peer support were associated with more favorable views of organizational climate, greater job satisfaction, and greater intent to stay.
- Caseworkers reported that the number one reason they stay in their job is the opportunity to make a difference for children and families.
- The number two reason that they stay is because of their relationships with their coworkers.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR WORK?

Workplace climate is improved when staff can rely on each other for support. Agency leaders can provide more opportunities for peer support by offering: mentoring programs, informal discussion and support groups, social gatherings, and unit and team meetings (virtual or in-person).