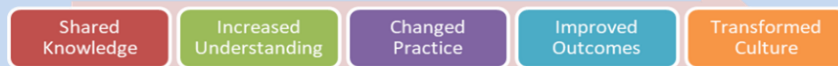




Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC) Cohort 2: Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture

TOOLKIT OF PROMISING STRATEGIES

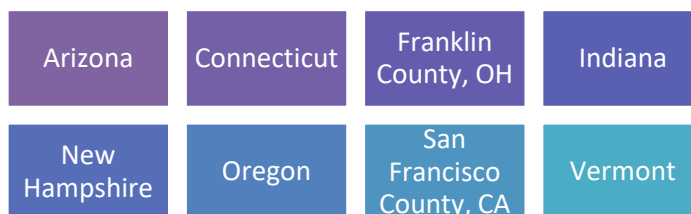
The vision for the National Partnership on Child Safety’s Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC) is to **share knowledge** in ways that increase understanding; and **change practice** in ways that **improve outcomes and transform systems**. The goal is to create, teach, and share content in ways that participants can then teach and share that content within their agencies. The I2LC strives to help jurisdictions operationalize practices, strategies, and tools that bring Safety Culture to life.



A Brief Overview of Cohort 2: Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture

Cohort 2 of the I2LC focused on **Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture**. The work was anchored in the Workplace Connectedness scale of the Safety Culture Assessment and was further informed by research done on workplace connectedness, team cohesion, and psychological safety. Specifically, topics included an understanding of what workplace connectedness looks like in child welfare, how it is experienced differently by individuals of different identities, and how workplace connectedness is related to accountability, racial justice, bias, psychological safety, and decision-making.

This cohort included eight teams, each representing different programs of a public child welfare jurisdiction (either state- or county-administered). Participating jurisdictions included:



Why Workplace Connectedness?

The Workplace Connectedness scale in the Safety Culture Assessment is focused on how connected a staff person feels to coworkers and other members of their agency. It includes four items that respondents are asked to rate.

The National Partnership’s University of Kentucky team has established strong relationships between the constructs measured in the Safety Culture Assessment in child welfare teams. For example, professionals with higher levels of workplace connectedness also report higher levels of psychological safety. Psychologically safe professionals have higher retention rates, lower levels of emotional exhaustion, and better teamwork and mindful organizing skills, all of which are elements thought to improve case practice among child welfare professionals.¹

WORKPLACE CONNECTEDNESS

Workplace connectedness measures an employee’s sense of connectedness with their coworkers, other members of the agency.

This is one of the standard scales in the organizational assessment, along with others like psychological safety and mindful organizing

Questions in the workplace connectedness scale:

1. I am able to work with my coworkers without sacrificing my principles.
2. I use “we/us” rather than “they/them” when I talk about my coworkers to others.
3. When I face challenges, my coworkers provide the help and support I need.
4. I have things in common with my co-workers.

WORKPLACE CONNECTEDNESS

in other industries, constructs similar to workplace connectedness (like team cohesion) are important buffers against things like burnout.

preliminary NPCS data suggests the same might be true in the child welfare workforce

with increasing workplace connectedness, we see:

- higher intent to remain employed in child welfare
- higher psychological safety
- lower emotional exhaustion

The Flow and Content of the I2LC

The I2LC began meeting in March 2022 and met almost monthly through November 2022. The topics and focus of each monthly call are listed below. Agendas for each call were developed based on a combination of the UKY team’s knowledge of workplace connectedness; an

¹ See Appendix A for a brief infographic on Psychological Safety.

understanding of each jurisdiction’s goals, strengths, progress, challenges, and interests; and the desire to move from innovation (small tests of change) to sustainable implementation in a short-period of time (eight months allotted for this learning community). Below is a brief summary of the agendas for each of these calls. Additionally, key readings and videos associated with the various topics can be found in Appendix B.

Call	Key Content and Topics Covered
March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome, orientation, and tone setting • Cross-team sharing and community building (model workplace connectedness within the group by developing psychological safety) • Individual team development / sharing of WC Vision Statements • Ask “What makes you feel most connected at work?” Brainstorm strategies to test • Model for Improvement questions and PDSAs²
April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • Unpacking trust as key to workplace connectedness and safety culture • Skills, competences, and strategies to build trust
May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • The Trust Triangle • Moving from Self-Care to Organizational Care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relational pauses ○ Collective adversity / Collective resilience ○ Racial justice and cultural approaches to working (surfacing authentic identities and selves)
June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • Update on individual team Consultation Calls • Implementation science / Bringing others in • Elevator speeches
July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • Shift from planned agenda based on participant opening -- model connectedness, honoring the group, and addressing racial justice as critical to this work • Naming and addressing moral injury • Building systems where staff do not need to be resilient in order to thrive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promoting and supporting vulnerability ○ Debunking / dismantling the “need to be strong” ○ Dismantling racism and white supremacy culture ○ Debunking “hero culture”

² See Appendix C for a sample PDSA worksheet.

Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC)
Cohort 2: Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture: Toolkit of Promising Strategies

Call	Key Content and Topics Covered
August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • Reflecting back on goals, intentions, and progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revisit Vision Statements ○ Review and begin categorizing work done to date • Planning forward in the context of child welfare culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staying connected in the midst of “fires” ○ Giving and receiving grace when emotions are high ○ Preventing (or reducing) the impulse to stay in crisis mode
September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • Assessing progress to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As an I2LC team ○ As an agency ○ Indicators of progress • Implementation Science: Scaling up, spreading, and sustaining improvements • What is ready to be scaled up and spread? • What is needed to sustain this work? • What can we take off people’s plates? What can we replace with this “new and improved” way of doing things?
November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-team sharing / updates • Plans for spread and scaling up promising strategies • Plans for sustaining a focus on workplace connectedness overall

The Work of Participating Jurisdictions: Themes and Strategies

The eight participating jurisdictions began their engagement in the I2LC by creating individual visions to serve as their foundations. With these visions as anchor points, the collaborative community, led by the UKY team, explored various topics and aspects of workplace connectedness. Teams then identified potential strategies to test and implement that would help them achieve their individual visions.

At the conclusion of the I2LC, the strategies tested by these eight jurisdictions clustered into four overall categories.

Foundational Aspects: Developing Knowledge and Leadership Buy-In

Strategies focused on raising awareness and gaining buy-in from leadership on what Workplace Connectedness is; why it is important; and how it impacts our work with children and families.

- Organizational Alignment
- Leadership Engagement
- Staff Awareness and Buy-In

Behaviors and Practices that Create and Promote Connectedness

Strategies focused on events, activities, and practices that help staff develop connectedness and form relationships in ways that are not necessarily anchored in their everyday child welfare work.

- Team Activities and Events
- Workplace Practices
- Appreciation and Gratitude

Processes, Structures, and Strategies that Actively Support Workplace Connectedness

Strategies focused on practices and structures in the context of everyday child welfare work that continue to support connectedness and relationships in a variety of ways.

- Promoting Teamwork and Connection
- In-Meeting Practices
- Coaching and Supervision
- Supporting Staff of Color

Processes, Structures, and Strategies that Respond to Events and Situations

Strategies focused on practices and structures that continue to support connectedness in response to incidents that may arise in the course of everyday child welfare work.

Strategies by Category

In the spirit of innovation, jurisdictions were encouraged to start small as they tested strategies and ideas, often using Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles. Following are brief descriptions, by category, of strategies that teams in the I2LC tested related to workplace connectedness. (Note: Strategies that cross multiple categories are listed only once.)

Foundational Aspects: Developing Knowledge and Leadership Buy-In <i>Strategies focused on raising awareness and gaining buy-in from leadership on what Workplace Connectedness is; why it is important; and how it impacts our work with children and families</i>
A. Organizational Alignment
Aligning with Existing Work: Intentionally align workplace connectedness values and strategies with agency principles, values, frameworks, key initiatives, strategic priorities, etc.
Creating a Common Vision: Create an office wide vision statement related to workplace connectedness. Use Microsoft Teams to pose key questions and get input and buy-in from all staff: What does connectedness mean to you? What does connectedness look like to you? For leaders: How do you keep your staff connected?
B. Leadership Engagement
Sharing Materials and Resources with Leadership: Share materials (articles and videos) related to workplace connectedness specifically with agency leadership. Use various materials and exercises shared through I2LC Basecamp site ³ .
Engaging Leaders: Share work / provide updates at Executive Team / leadership meetings. Focus on a few things that are going well with workplace connectedness, including any impacts you see. Provide concrete examples of how teams are living core values and then provide areas to talk through and learn.
Presenting at Leadership Institutes: Present various materials regarding safety culture and safety systems. Explicitly connect psychological safety, mindful organizing, staff retention, and child outcomes.
C. Staff Awareness and Buy-In
Sharing Materials and Resources with All Staff: Share materials (articles and videos) related to workplace connectedness with all staff. Create and actively use a Microsoft Teams channel focused on Safety Culture and find ways to keep it engaging.
Increasing Visibility with Staff: Create and share a bimonthly statewide newsletter on Safety Culture.
Expanding the “Team”: Continue to expand the core team focused on workplace connectedness. Continuously invite others to join.

³ Many of these are included in the Key Links and Resources in Appendix C.

Behaviors and Practices that Create and Promote Connectedness <i>Strategies focused on events, activities, and practices that help staff develop connectedness and form relationships in ways that are not necessarily anchored in their everyday child welfare work</i>
A. Team Activities and Events
<p>Knowing Team Members’ Strengths: Use the DiSC (or other personality / strength inventory) within the team to understand strengths and teamwork.</p>
<p>Sharing Personal Interests: Establish a bulletin board for team members to share personal things about themselves, such as a “Pet Wall” or “Human Library.”</p>
<p>Hosting Activities Out of the Office: Invite staff to <u>optional</u> activities outside of the office. These might be during the work day, e.g., walk in the park during lunch, or after hours, e.g., family picnic. When planning these, remember to ensure the activity and venue is inclusive and appealing to all who will be invited to join. Consider activities that are fun, focus on team building (sometimes, but not always), and involve food!</p>
<p>Hosting Open Forums Solely for Connection: Host monthly “Colleague Connect” events with rotating topics related to relationships, connection, vulnerability, wellness, etc. Invite others to “host” and lead topics of interest to them.</p>
<p>Leading Health and Wellness Workshops: Host periodic workshops to share and model various practices, strategies, resources, and tools. Rotate across the jurisdiction to make them small. Use a theme, e.g., “Lean on Me” to engage staff in the spirit of the work.</p>
B. Workplace Practices
<p>Using Icebreakers to Start Meetings: Begin certain (not all) meetings with various types of icebreakers. These can be related to the work or more personal in nature, depending on the group and meeting purpose. If it is a standing meeting, the group can take turns with who comes up with the icebreaker from meeting to meeting.</p>
<p>Leading Intentional Relationship-Focused Staff Meetings: Schedule and lead periodic staff meetings that are more informal (e.g., over breakfast) and encourage staff to be open, honest, and vulnerable. Use this time to talk authentically about how people are feeling. In doing this, it is essential for leaders to model vulnerability about their own emotions and experiences.</p>
<p>Focusing on the Positive: Encourage staff to practice positive psychology through the practice of <i>Three Good Things</i>⁴. This can be encouraged on an individual basis, e.g., recommendation that staff do this on their own in the evening, or as part of workplace rituals, e.g., Friday afternoon team huddles.</p>
C. Gratitude and Appreciation
<p>Visibly Sharing Appreciation: Create and use a “Kudos Chat” on Microsoft Teams that includes all staff. Use it to share praise and encourage others to join in. (Leaders can model this by doing it regularly and authentically, making sure that praise is concrete and specific.) Remember to celebrate people <u>before</u> they leave (rather than only celebrating at retirement or goodbye parties).</p>

⁴ See the *Team First Field Guide* for more information on *Three Good Things* as a safety culture practice.

Behaviors and Practices that Create and Promote Connectedness

Strategies focused on events, activities, and practices that help staff develop connectedness and form relationships in ways that are not necessarily anchored in their everyday child welfare work

Performing Random Acts of Kindness: Leave post-it notes for staff in random places to let them know they're appreciated and that they matter.

Processes, Structures, and Strategies that Actively Support Workplace Connectedness

Strategies focused on practices and structures in the context of everyday child welfare work that continue to support connectedness and relationships in a variety of ways

A. Promoting Teamwork and Connection

Encouraging Camaraderie and Teamwork around the Work: Create a "competition" to encourage staff to do work in a timely way. One team used the visual of an ice cream cone with Neapolitan ice cream – each flavor reflecting something different about the phase of work. As each phase of work was completed, the supervisor added a scoop to the cone. This showed incremental progress, helped with supervision and management, and inspired others to help one another. Challenges were visually identified and the ice cream reinforced that everyone is on the same team. (Ice cream party to celebrate when completed, of course!)

Holding Morale Meetings Regularly: Schedule and lead focused "Morale Meetings" every month in each office. Provide time for staff to share how they are feeling and share ideas for what needs to happen to improve morale. Make sure to respond to and enact these ideas! This strategy helped move from "self-care" to "we-care."

Onboarding New Staff in Supportive Ways: Develop a two-year onboarding plan for new case carrying child welfare workers that intentionally supports the building of connections along many dimensions, in addition to continuing to build their skills. Facilitate continued relationships and connections within the new staff cohort. Create mentor and coach opportunities for new staff as they join an office, program, or work unit. Ensure staff have connection-points in a variety of places in the agency.

B. In-Meeting Practices

Preparing for Huddles: Prior to a huddle⁵, hold a meeting that allows staff to prepare and practice. This practice session is also a way to get other involved and can help with assigning tasks and planning activities ahead of time.

Bringing Positivity into the Work: Incorporate *Three Good Things* into the weekly huddle. Do this after there is a review of the week's data and other things that went on during the week. Pay special attention when it is difficult for a team member to think of three good things (and be prepared to respond).

⁵ See the *Team First Field Guide* for more information on *Huddles* as a safety culture practice.

Processes, Structures, and Strategies that Actively Support Workplace Connectedness

Strategies focused on practices and structures in the context of everyday child welfare work that continue to support connectedness and relationships in a variety of ways

Using Structured Debriefs⁶: Following regular “Alignment Meeting,” include management team, direct supervisors, unit leads, support staff, and others who were involved into a brief discussion using a structured debrief format. Discuss what went well, what could have been done differently, what systemics challenges or themes were identified, etc.

Starting Meetings with Red Ball⁷: Use the Red Ball to begin team meetings as a way to be mindful as well as to check-in with teammates about where they are. When the ball is high, ask “what can I take off your plate?” When the ball is low, ask “how can I help you regain some energy?”

Leading Brief Micro-Check-Ins: Do a brief check-in every other day with the team to see where each person is, what’s going on, and what challenges they may be having. Use a specific strategy such as Red Ball or Rainbow Heart (what color is your heart?). Remind team that this is intended to be supportive.

Debriefing with Local Office Directors and Supervisors: Debrief in the form of supportive conversations and what staff need to feel supported in their work. Come together as a group of colleagues to figure out what staff need. Strive to identify themes that support positions as well as support retention of those they supervise. Allow for processing, discussing, and feeling validated from peer group. [Note: Anonymous surveys showed this to be very positive for managers and for those who work for them.]

C. Supporting Staff of Color

Creating Opportunities for Staff of Color: Create a “Joy Society” that is specific for Black, Indigenous, and other staff of color (BIPOC staff). Include clinical supports if the group desires. Invite BIPOC staff to come and share their experiences in ways that feel psychologically supportive and safe for them.

Providing Intentional Support for Staff of Color: Create and facilitate a Support Group specifically for Staff of Color. Provide dedicated time and skilled facilitation by a Person of Color for this group to share experiences and perspectives that are unique to them. Ensure Staff of Color design and define this group to best meet their own preferences and needs.

Providing Mentoring for Staff of Color: Develop and provide mentorship programs specifically for Staff of Color. Ensure Staff of Color design and define this program to best meet their own preferences and needs. Ensure this mentorship is available for all Staff of Color regardless of level or role in the agency.

D. Coaching and Supervision

Focusing on Staff Professional Development: Create expectations for supervisors to talk to their staff about their goals and career goals. Encourage conversations about who they are as people and what they need in order to achieve what they hope to achieve. Use a template to support and nurture this.

⁶ See the *Team First Field Guide* for more information on *Structured Debriefs* as a safety culture practice.

⁷ See the *Team First Field Guide* for more information on *Red Ball* as a safety culture practice.

Processes, Structures, and Strategies that Actively Support Workplace Connectedness

Strategies focused on practices and structures in the context of everyday child welfare work that continue to support connectedness and relationships in a variety of ways

Providing Coaching and Supervision Out of the Office: When doing one-on-one coaching sessions with supervisors, choose somewhere to meet out of the office. Encourage supervisors to be creative and think about where each individual staff would feel most comfortable.

Using Stay Questions for Staff: Have supervisors and managers incorporate “stay questions⁸” into periodic supervision. Ensure there are concrete and specific plans to respond to issues that are raised and that professional development opportunities are created based on these.

Shifting to Supervisory Reflective Coaching: Engage in reflective coaching to find out how staff person is doing. This does not require supervisors to be “therapists,” just to move from staffing cases to being compassionate with their staff as a system-level response across the board. At every level of supervision, open each conversation with a simple “how are you doing?” to create a norm where it is okay to be vulnerable, honest, and authentic.

Focusing on Professional Development as Part of Supervision: Ask staff in supervision where they want to go next in the agency and what they need in order to get there. Invite staff to share how you (the supervisor) can support them in their professional development goals. Make this part of regular (quarterly or bi-annual) supervisory practice.

Sharing Job Opportunities Transparently: Send weekly agency job postings via email to all staff to increase awareness of professional opportunities. Ensure that staff are continuously aware of professional development opportunities within the agency.

Processes, Structures, and Strategies that Respond to Events and Situations

Strategies focused on practices and structures that continue to support connectedness in response to incidents that may arise in the course of everyday child welfare work

Creating a Staff Support Team/Staff in Central Office: Develop a model of staff support that is based in a Central Office structure, within an Office of Health and Wellness. Create formal processes and structures so that staff know how to access and utilize this team or person. Ensure that staff working within this team have necessary training, skills, and support to do this work.

Supporting Peer Support Teams: Develop a structured and systematic Peer Support Group or Team. Create and maintain clear policies, protocols, and trainings around these groups/teams. Consider specific groups that are anchored in shared experiences, e.g., loss of a child on the caseload. Ensure these are truly peer-to-peer support to facilitate psychological safety and authentic empathy and compassion.

Debriefing after Critical Incidents: Create systematic and structured opportunities for staff to debrief after critical incidents. Ensure staff have regular opportunities to share with others who can help reflect and connect to larger system issues.

⁸ See Appendix D for sample Stay Interview Questions.

Providing Clinical Support: Have a clinical support person under contract along with a team that gets trained by that person to provide stabilization and support to staff without specific clinical responsibilities. Consider and detail what situations or events may initiate a clinical response and ensure the response models psychological safety.

Ensuring Changes Are Improvements

Because the I2LC is rooted equally in innovation and implementation, a continuous focus for the group was ensuring the strategies and changes they were testing were resulting in improvements. Early in the Collaborative, the group discussed the differences between once-and-done activities and longer-term sustainable strategies and practices.

All participants agreed that various ways of knowing if staff and teams were feeling more connected was essential. And ultimately, they wanted to ensure that an increased connection among staff correlated with improved outcomes for children and families.

Early data from the UKY team shows high correlations between the psychological safety and workplace connectedness scales. And data from Illinois shows that teams that are more mindfully organized have fewer disruptions in placement and increased family visits. These are exciting long-term outcomes that reinforce the power of workplace connectedness. In addition to these long-term outcomes, participants wanted to identify short-term indicators of progress to help gauge whether the specific workplace connectedness strategies they were testing were promising and would lead them in this direction.

On the September 2022 call, participants were asked to share indicators they were seeing that they felt signaled “progress” in their workplace connectedness work, as well as indicators they would like to see going forward. Both are combined below:

Staff Behaviors and Practices as Indicators

- Staff asking for help
- Staff noticing that someone else needs help
- Checking in with staff / colleagues
- Staff using Peer Support
- Staff being able to describe what connectedness looks like and how it feels for them
- Staff participating in connectedness-related activities/events

Organizational and Leadership Behaviors and Practices as Indicators

- Intentional collaboration across teams
- Management/leadership intentionally inviting feedback and listening to staff
- Leadership modelling and clearly valuing the behaviors
- Teams having difficult conversations with psychological safety
- Hearing less “us versus them”

- Supervisors building “connectedness” strategies into supervision and employee plans, including Stay Interviews
- Using restorative practices rather than punitive responses
- Dedicating time and/or focus on connectedness (awareness and trainings)
 - Dedicated Month
 - Celebrations
 - Trainings
 - Intentional / dedicated conversations
 - On regular agendas, e.g., staff/unit meetings
 - Communications about connectedness, e.g., newsletters, Teams Channels, emails
- Hearing workplace connectedness terms used more frequently
- Holding regular huddles

Long-Term Outcomes

- Reductions in staff turnover rates
- Increased staff lengths of stay, including promotions
- Happier employees
- Improved child and family data for teams/staff with higher connectedness

Self-Assessed Progress (March-September 2022)

Participants on the September 2022 call were also asked to reflect on the progress they felt they made on workplace connectedness since March 2022. The reflection was on three levels: 1) with their I2LC team; 2) within their “pilot” area (however that was defined); and 3) with their agency overall. They ranked progress individually on a scale of 1-10 with 1 being “no progress at all” and 10 being “significant progress achieved.” The diagram below shows the average for each, with the colored curve behind each statement showing the range of responses. Over this six-month period, all participants experienced at least some progress within their I2LC team, but much work remained to be done, especially with their agencies overall.

Assessing Your Progress This Year (a rough guesstimate)

Mentimeter



23

To quote Dr. Gabor Mate', MD, as we did at the end of each I2LC call:

“Safety is not the absence of threat, it is the presence of connection.”

APPENDIX A

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Overview

- *Psychological safety is a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking.*
- Amy Edmonson
- This scale measures whether team members feel accepted, respected, part of a team and take interpersonal risks
- Psychological safety is a foundational component of safety culture

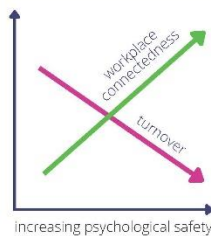
Why it matters



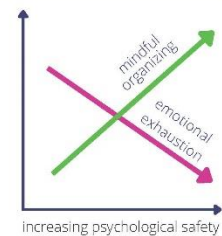
In healthcare, psychological safety is linked to lower rates of medical errors and better patient outcomes.
(Grailey et al., 2021)



Psychologically safe teams working in information technology are more innovative and productive (Delizonna, 2017)



Child welfare professionals who report feeling more psychologically safe also report **lower emotional exhaustion, more connection** to their colleagues, **better teamwork** and higher likelihood to **remain in the field** (NPCS data, 2021).



How do we measure psychological safety?

The Safety Culture Survey uses a scale taken from the research literature, developed by Amy Edmonson, to measure psychological safety. Survey participants rate how much they agree with the following statements:



If you make a mistake on my team, it is often held against you.

It is safe to take an interpersonal risk on my team.

The people on my team value each others unique skills and talents.

Members of my team are able to bring up concerns and challenges.

On my team, people are sometimes rejected for having different ideas.

It is difficult to ask other team members for help.

How do we build psychological safety?

We progress through the stages as the team's respect and permission for us to participate and influence the team increase

1. Inclusion Safety

Belonging in a group, feeling safe being yourself, being accepted for who you are

2. Learner Safety

Learning and growing by asking questions, giving and receiving feedback, experimenting and making mistakes

3. Contributor Safety

Making a difference by using your skills and abilities to make a meaningful contribution

4. Challenger Safety

Making things better by speaking up and challenging the status quo when there are opportunities for improvement

The Four Stages of Psychological Safety
Dr. Timothy Clark

STRATEGIES TO BUILD PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

LEADERS

can model, facilitate, and create group norms to build psychological safety on their teams



Clear, direct, candid communication

- Invite input from all team members, particularly around challenges/concerns
- Actively support all team members intentionally, particularly those whose voices may have been marginalized in the past
- Look for instances in the past, or policies in the present, where psychological safety may have been undermined
- Acknowledge the limits of leadership knowledge, including fallibility and mistakes
- Explore and understand the different skills and talents on your team
- Promote discussions of mistakes as opportunities to learn and innovate
- Teach how to give and receive feedback
- Offer diverse ways for employees to share thoughts and ideas

Phrases to support psychological safety:

"Thanks for pointing out my mistake! I appreciate it."

"It's fine to disagree, it is important. That's why we're talking through this together."

"Maybe someone has a different perspective. I'd like to hear some other views."

"We're not here to blame. We're here to see how we can do better next time."

"If you have concerns, I'd really like to hear them."

TEAMS

can test and practice strategies that promote psychological safety, until they become habits



PRACTICE

- Candor and vulnerability
- Speaking up about mistakes, concerns and challenges
- Sharing and inviting diverse ideas
- Valuing each other's talents and skills
- Asking for help

BRAINSTORM AND TEST



Teaming practices like huddles, debriefs, and blame-free discussions of mistakes (and how to learn from them) help support psychological safety in teams.

Pick a strategy to try, establish a timeframe to test the strategy, then evaluate how it went and where to go next!



The *TeamFirst Field Guide for Safe, Reliable and Effective Child Welfare Teams* describes these and other strategies and how they can be implemented.

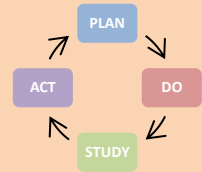
APPENDIX B. PDSA WORKSHEET

Office Name: _____ Date: _____

PDSA Title: _____ Cycle #: _____

THREE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ⇒ What are we trying to accomplish? (aim or goal for this PDSA cycle)
- ⇒ How will we know a change is an improvement? (measure)
- ⇒ What ideas do we have that will result in an improvement? (change ideas)



PLAN

- ⇒ What is your first test?
- ⇒ What do you predict will happen?
- ⇒ What is the plan for the cycle? What are the steps to execute the cycle (who, what, where, when)?
- ⇒ What data will you collect? (who, what, when, where)

DO

- ⇒ Carry out the cycle. In brief terms, did it work as you expected?

STUDY

- ⇒ Summarize and analyze the observed results. What did you learn from this cycle? What does the data tell you? Include descriptions of successful interactions, unexpected challenges, and other special circumstances that may or may not have been part of the plan.

ACT / ADJUST

- ⇒ What actions are you going to take as a result of this cycle? (check one)
 - Adjust the Test
 - Expand the Test
 - Abandon the Test
- ⇒ Plan for the next cycle. What changes are needed? If expanding or adjusting, what will you do to continue your learning while beginning to spread the successes? What questions do you still have?

Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC) Cohort 2: Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture

APPENDIX C. KEY LINKS AND RESOURCES

The second cohort of the Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC) of the National Partnership for Child Safety met from March - November 2022. The eight participating jurisdictions focused on various aspects of Workplace Connectedness, guided by the UKY team and the work of the other teams. Below are highlights of links and resources that were shared over the course of the I2LC to deepen understanding of concepts, promote different ways of thinking, describe concrete strategies, and provide inspiration.

Psychological Safety

Title	Brief Description
The Difference between Trust and Psychological Safety	ARTICLE: Brief online article with some easy to digest graphics that describes the differences between trust and psychological safety
How Toxic Work Cultures Are Driving the Great Resignation	PODCAST: This podcast is a data driven conversation about Workplace toxicity by Brene Brown.
Psychological Safety Is No Accident	INFOGRAPHIC: Infographic from Eve Purdy focused on emergency medicine, but fully relatable for child welfare
Creating Psychological Safety in Teams	ARTICLE: AHRQ's early publication of creating psychological safety in healthcare teams
Three Ways to Create Psychological Safety in Healthcare	VIDEO: A brief 5 minute Amy Edmondson video with strategies!
Building a Psychologically Safe Workplace	VIDEO: Video from the guru of psychological safety: Amy Edmondson
Conversations that Build Psychological Safety	INFOGRAPHIC: This is an infographic with smart cartoons that provide real, concrete, specific questions and language that can be used to build and support psychological safety.
Safety Culture: Why Feeling Connected to Your Colleagues Matters	PODCAST: Podcast created by the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership at the University of Vermont with special guest star, Mike Cull

Workplace Connectedness, Diversity, and Racism

Title	Brief Description
Racism as a Public Health Crisis	ARTICLE: The American Public Health Association's declaration asserting the same (can be used to support buy-in with leadership)
Addressing Moral Injury in Our Profession	ARTICLE: In the author's own words: "I was struggling for a way to stay in child welfare and feel good about it. I felt committed to the work. But I also felt conflicted between being a member of a marginalized community that has historically experienced poor outcomes from government service and being a professional implementing the rules and protocols of that system."
Unconscious Bias Training That Works	ARTICLE: Harvard Business Review article with the premise: "Increasing awareness isn't enough. Teach people to manage their biases, change their behavior, and track their progress."
Workplace Belonging Grows From Dignity, Not Diversity	ARTICLE: A framework for BDJ (Belonging, Dignity, and Justice) as an alternative to DEI for workplace connectedness from the Stanford Social Innovation Review
Ensuring All Black Lives Are United and Represented in the Movement	VIDEO: A Ted Talk by one of our I2LC participants, Eboni Partlow from Franklin County, Ohio, challenging us to honor intersectionality of identities when we think about connectedness.
The Role of Psychological Safety in Diversity and Inclusion	ARTICLE: Excerpted in <i>Psychology Today</i> from Amy Edmonson's <i>The Fearless Organization</i> with a focus on the need for psychological safety in diversity and inclusion work
Why you should not bring your authentic self to work	VIDEO: TedTalk by Jodi-Ann Burey on why People of Color often cannot bring their authentic selves to work

Vulnerability and Trust

Title	Brief Description
Everything Starts with Trust - Trust Triangle	ARTICLE: Harvard Business Review article by Frances Frei and Anne Morriss describing the Trust Triangle
Everything Starts with Trust – Trust Triangle Ted Talk	VIDEO: Ted Talk by Frances Frei talking the article above
The Power of Vulnerability	VIDEO: The great Brene Brown...
The Neuroscience of Trust	ARTICLE: Harvard Business Review article on the neuroscience of trust

Leadership

Title	Brief Description
Stop Framing Wellness Programs Around Self-Care	ARTICLE: Harvard Business Review article on why self-care is not the same as employee wellness
How Reverse Mentorship Can Create Better Leaders	VIDEO: A very brief Ted Talk on reverse mentorship, how it works, and its value for leaders
How Leaders Can Build Connection in a Disconnected Workplace	ARTICLE: Brief article from Harvard Business Review with strategies
Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe	VIDEO: The ever entertaining Simon Sinek

Implementation Science

Title	Brief Description
How to Make Change Happen	VIDEO: This short video, using the metaphor of The Elephant, the Rider, and the Path, provides a quick tutorial on what we need to do and consider when thinking about bringing people in
Making Sure Changes Are Improvements	VIDEO: This goofy Bud Lite video from a few years ago is a good example of what happens when we race to do something without thinking it through. It further models how reluctant we can be to change something, even when we know it doesn't make sense. And last, it reminds us that if we're doing something harmful, doing it just a little bit better isn't really the point.

Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC)
Cohort 2: Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture: Key Links and Resources

Title	Brief Description
	<i>[As an important note before watching this video, we hope that it will be received with the humorous intent we are posting it. We realize that watching arrows being shot thoughtlessly (even when done by Bud Lite knights in a commercial) can feel inappropriate or be a trigger. If you are feeling a heightened sensitivity to reading this disclaimer, please do not watch. It is intended to add levity to the teaching of these implementation messages -- NOT to minimize or undermine some of the real trauma that we witness in our daily lives.]</i>
Science of Improvement: Implementing Changes	ARTICLE: The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) has developed many great resources, videos, and tools to support improvement, testing changes, and implementation. Here's a start.
Equitable Implementation at Work	ARTICLE: Stanford Social Innovation Review Issue devoted to concepts, case studies, and lessons learned related to "equitable implementation" in human services. This is the opening article.
Implementation Drivers	ARTICLE: This link will take you to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) with a great description of "implementation drivers" -- key in all implementation work.
Trust as Essential for Sustainable Implementation	ARTICLE: Research-based article that explicitly talks about how trust and relationships are critical for sustainable implementation efforts

Positive Psychology, Gratitude, Inspiration

Title	Brief Description
Know Your Why	VIDEO: When you know your why, your what becomes so much more impactful.
Finding Your Sense of Purpose	ARTICLE: Article with the message: "...you can't run off making a great impact in the world, unless you're working on making a great impact on yourself too.... finding a sense of purpose is an 'inside-out' process and inevitably, you will face your own imposed limitations and seek to overcome them. Most of those limitations reside between your ears."

Innovation and Implementation Learning Community (I2LC)
Cohort 2: Workplace Connectedness in a Safety Culture: Key Links and Resources

Title	Brief Description
Making Change Fun	VIDEO: This is a really short (1.5 minute) video from Volkswagen on how we can support people in wanting to change their own behavior if we make it appealing to them. While nothing about our work is "fun," how might we consider drawing people INTO our change efforts rather than trying to FORCE people to change?
The Happy Secret to Better Work	VIDEO: We believe we should work hard in order to be happy, but could we be thinking about things backwards? In this fast-moving and very funny Ted Talk, psychologist Shawn Achor argues that, actually, happiness inspires us to be more productive.
Everyday Leadership	VIDEO: We have all changed someone's life -- usually without even realizing it. In this funny TedTalk, Drew Dudley calls on all of us to celebrate leadership as the everyday act of improving each other's lives.
Be Someone's Rainbow	VIDEO: Maya Angelou reciting one of her stunning poems
Captain Charlie Plumb's Parachute Packer Story	VIDEO: Reminder to appreciate those who "pack our parachutes"

APPENDIX D. Sample Stay Interview Questions

1. What about this job makes you jump out of bed in the morning? (What do you really enjoy?)
2. What makes you hit the snooze button? (What do you kind of dread?)
3. Share a few examples of specific experiences you've had that make you want to stay at this job.
4. If you had a "practical" magic wand, what would you change about your job?
5. What will keep you here? What would be the one thing about working here that would cause you to leave if it changed?
6. Are we fully using your talents and skills? If not, what talents and skills could we be using better?
7. What would you like to be doing a year from now?
8. What would you need in order to be doing that?
9. What would you like to see change in your practice?
10. What would you like to see change in our office / agency practice?
11. Where do you see yourself fitting into these changes, if they were to happen?