



FOCUS

**Newsletter of the
Family Focused
Treatment Association**



Family
Focused
Treatment
Association



WINTER 2022 • Volume 28/Number 4

Organizational Health: Thriving Cultures Built Upon Core Values —by Jenni Lord

We will either enjoy the culture we promote or tolerate the one we con- done. Either way, our culture is shaped by the behavior, interaction, and conflict within our team as we work to accom- plish our mission and vision. Healthy cultures can be innovative and overcome significant challenges to achieve results. Toxic cultures rob our teams of engage- ment, buy-in, and performance.

Culture is the lifeblood of any organization. Let's think about that

for a moment. Your blood carries oxy- gen, nutrients, fuel—life—to every part of your body. Your cultural blood is also carrying oxygen, nutri- ents, and life to every part of your organizational body.

What is in your blood that powers the work? Your feet carry out your mission. Your hands serve the vulnerable. Your brain thinks critically, imagines new realities, and executes. Your heart

extends compassion as the soul of the organization. So what is coursing through your veins? Hopefully, passion and vision reinforced by your core values. Conversely, if it is fear, a scarcity mindset, or lack of vision, you will not have a thriving organization.

Start With Why

Your people all probably know what you do. But as Simon Sinek has taught us, we must start with WHY we do it.

Why we do what we do determines the how. And if we have lost sight of our why, the how will be shoddy at best and negligent at worst.

Further, if we lose sight of our why as leaders, we will definitely flounder and negatively impact the people looking to us for direction. Which, of course, hinders our noble missions and outcomes.

Ask yourself, Why do I do what I do?



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A *FOCUS* on Leadership

Organizational Health: Thriving Cultures Built Upon Core Values

Editor's Column

Race to Lead Revisited: An Executive Summary

Equitable Mentorship

When A Millennial Becomes your Boss

Self-Care as an Engagement Strategy

Why here? Do some serious reflection. Write it down. And then go talk to your people. And ask them their why.

If we lose our why, the vision will not be clear.

Today, we're really talking about the how. Culture defined by core values determines how you live out your why and the mission of the organization.

The Great Resignation

The reality is that with the mass exodus of the American workforce, you can obviously choose where you work. Economists are calling it the Great Resignation. Caseworker turnover is higher

continued on pg. 2

EDITOR'S COLUMN

by Shahrukh Chishty, MS

The world as we know it will probably never return to what it was prior to our generation's experience of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. This unseen enemy has impacted practically every facet of our lives, and the struggle has been especially trying for our leaders, particularly in the human services sector. Our work has historically been one of heart-wrenching realities with at times uphill battles as we strive to help create the world our communities deserve. The leaders and pioneers of this work have herculean missions of transforming our world for the better. This pandemic has tested our leaders in ways never seen before, but with that said, we find hope in their resilience, bolstered by all the great support and love shared among one another as we find ways of getting to the other side of this mammoth mountain in front of us.

This edition of *FOCUS* is a compilation of tips and strategies to assist our esteemed leaders not only in bringing support to the agencies they so bravely lead but also by offering an opportunity for graceful, healing hope within their own personal journeys. I appreciate the diversity of topics presented in this edition and hope that you will be able to take a tip or two to help in your courageous voyage ahead!

Let's start with a wonderfully in-depth article entitled "Organizational Health: Thriving Cultures Built Upon Core Values" written by Jenni Lord. Jenni's words give us hope and clarity in the midst of all the chaos. She provides solid pillars to realign ourselves and our teams around. Jenni refers to Simon Sinek's simple yet profound concept of starting with the "why" and how knowing why we do what we do helps strengthen our mission and vision. This article presents many theoretical and practical points about how the culture of one's agency most definitely defines its future trajectory. Also in this edition are some fascinating excerpts from the Race to Lead report that support the overall content of Jenni Lord's article. The report points to

continued on pg. 3

Organizational Health: Thriving Cultures Built Upon Core Values

I continued from pg. 1

than it has ever been in many states. Clearly, we have room to improve as a sector. No one gets into child welfare with malicious intent, and it's heartbreaking to see professionals leave the field who statistically are unlikely to come back. These people got into our profession to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children. And yet, we are killing off this hopeful, idealistic bunch.

We have to pave a different way to get different results. Let's create vibrant agencies where people *want* to stay.

To make a
fundamental shift
focused on healing
and thriving families,
there has to be a
cultural shift in our
organizations.

Time to Double Down

The premium is on culture. Prioritizing a healthy culture impacts every facet of your organization.

People are reevaluating how and where they spend a huge amount of their waking hours. How will you and your organization not be a casualty of the Great Resignation as we recover from this pandemic?

My why for this article:

I long to see systemic transformation. We must shift from a child welfare system primarily focused on safety to a thriving child and family well-being system. Slight change in words. But profoundly different meanings.

To make a fundamental shift focused on healing and thriving families, there has to be a cultural shift in our organizations. I posit that as a sector, we must change the way we think and do the work. Change begins with a leader's commitment.

To make this shift, what is best for children and families should be the perspective that drives the work. It pains me to see the work driven by rules, regulations, and licensing. I'm all for structure and accountability, but if the rules and regs shape our culture, we are really missing the mark.

continued on pg. 3

EDITOR'S COLUMN

continued from pg. 2

the vast nonprofit racial leadership gap and suggests ways to prevent and prevail over practices that have continued for decades on end. I am so hopeful to see the comprehensive work being done to positively pivot our passage.

Another very interesting article about mentorship and the term's expanded use comes to us from Brianna Esparza. She presents a unique perspective on the supportive enhancing and extracting of valuable experiences from mentors that perhaps may not fit the traditional box when the term comes to mind. Equitable mentorship is a most wonderful concept of truly learning from the rich understandings of one another, lifting up those who have lived experiences that can enrich our lives and the work that we do. Sheldon Parker has contributed an insightful article entitled "When a Millennial Becomes Your Boss." I thoroughly enjoyed the valuable takeaways from this very clear depiction of the differences between generations that at times can be challenging but may also have some wonderful benefits! Top off all this great information with a dose of self-care tips and techniques in Annette Gannaway-Hudson's enlightening article "Self-Care as an Engagement Strategy." She offers practical ways to foster hope and healing for yourself and your team as you create long-term relationships that are healthy and sustainable.

As leaders you are responsible not only for the countless lives within your agencies and communities but also for those that are to come. It is an honor to serve alongside all of you esteemed mentors, guides, coaches, transformers, innovators, and all the different titles each of you adopts at any given point! Please take time to give yourself permission to be human... you have so much on your shoulders and there are many horizons ahead! Take care of yourself and the rest will follow. On behalf of all of us here at FFTA, we wish you and yours a most healthy, hopeful, and blissful start to the new year!

Shahrukh Chishty, MS, is the Director of Child and Family Programs at Sacramento Children's Home in Sacramento, California. She chairs the Editorial Committee and serves on the FFTA Board of Directors.

Organizational Health: Thriving Cultures Built Upon Core Values

I continued from pg. 2

How Culture Is Shaped: Core Values Must Be Tied to Expected Behaviors

One of my business coaches was a Culture Curator from the iconic Southwest Airlines. She taught me how Southwest developed such a strong culture. The organization intentionally tied expected behaviors to core values. Team alignment on how you expect each other to show up is critical.

Years ago, our team went through an organizational exercise to tie behaviors to core values. Without that connection, core values are just ideals on a wall or in a handbook. How are you actually living out your core values? Do your teammates know how they are expected to show up?

As it is for many of you, integrity is one of our core values. But integrity is about more than just being honest. We expect each other to use candor with kindness. Unclear, indirect communication hinders the mission. We hear this phrase regularly around our virtual hallways. It's actually unkind to be unclear.

Having this expectation gives people permission and freedom to show up with authenticity and say hard things. Crucial conversations are vital to the health of any organization.

You can find more examples of behaviors tied to core values here.

Accountability

The cure-all is accountability. Core values define culture. Once people understand the expectations tied to core values, they must be held accountable. I'm not suggesting a fear-filled environment. Actually, it's the antithesis. When we know our *why* and have an inspiring mission, living from our core values is extremely fulfilling. And certainly, if you're walking the walk, you want to see your teammates doing the same.

So how do we hold people accountable for living from core values? What gets measured gets done. What gets recognized and rewarded gets repeated. You need a system for both.

Your consistent meeting rhythms are opportunities for staff shout-outs whereby you recognize how Suzy operated with excellence. Share an example inside a real story with the team. Pop some bubbly, bring cake, or send a small gift to reward excellence.

continued on pg. 4

Organizational Health: Thriving Cultures Built Upon Core Values

I continued from pg. 3

You know core values are sticking when you hear staff at all levels recognizing core values in their peers. Facilitate that intentionality with a place holder in meetings to give staff headlines. Recognition can't just be top down to help shape culture.

Assessments are just as important. But don't wait for the annual anonymous survey to check your cultural health. Incorporate ways in which your people are behaviorally abiding by the core values into their quarterly or monthly reviews.

In our organization, the supervisor rates the staff member, and the staff member rates themselves with a simple plus or minus. This approach allows for healthy discussion and the opportunity to address the gaps.

Directors should be the protectors, promoters, and preservers of core values. The assumption is that they are already demonstrating your core values. If not, you must take deliberative steps to address the gap quickly.

The labor shortage can't be an excuse to not hold people accountable. Our most vulnerable children deserve the best care and service possible. And it is the children who suffer the most when we neglect to hold team members accountable.

I have witnessed how motivating it is when people see the high standards of their peers in action. Everyone wants to be part of a winning team!

Practical Next Steps

Have you defined the expected behaviors tied to core values? If not, that is Step 1. Define your core values *with* behaviors together as a team. Use a facilitator to help you involve your whole team.

If you've already done that, be sure you are reinforcing your core values.

Start or utilize key traditions to recognize, reward, and celebrate people living from core values.

The power of story cannot be overstated. Share stories internally and externally with all of your key stakeholders. Stories are the perfect opportunity to reinforce core values that strengthen the culture.

Culture Defines Trajectory

Some agencies promote based on longevity. That is a terrible reason to promote. Growth is crucial to meriting



Everyone wants to be part of a winning team!

promotion. A demonstrated commitment to and aptitude for learning are essential for developing talent.

Budget for professional growth per individual and include it in your employee benefits. We won't have healthy cultures if we don't invest in our people.

Beyond continuing education units (CEUs), there must be opportunity to foster management and leadership abilities. As leaders, we are often overloaded with leadership training materials. In my experience, junior staff need guidance to find the appropriate

professional development pathways. I have found that workers of all levels in child welfare frequently have had very little, if any, opportunity for professional growth. This lack of opportunity for growth must change for our sector to thrive.

Another component of a healthy culture is a commitment to developing your bench strength. An easy way to do this is by delegating special projects. Special projects give staff a "little more ground" where they have space to stumble, grow, learn, and even fail without sinking the organization.

For example, we recognized that a direct care staffer really enjoyed data and was fast at maneuvering technology to gather, sort, and report. After a trial period, this team member was able to take on more responsibility and eventually grow into a management role.

Another tactic is to use cross-team and cross-functional task forces to solve problems. We had a program that was fantastic conceptually but wasn't yielding the results we wanted. Rather than taking a top-down approach to redesign, we created an ad hoc mini task force and let the junior staff tell us how to modify the program. This approach empowered creative, critical thinking, which led to impact. This mini project reinforced core values and fostered trust, yielding positive cultural benefits.

As the CEO, I have learned that among my many roles, that of Chief Reminding Officer cannot be overstated. Living from your core values requires continual reinforcement to hear and see the healthy culture you undoubtedly desire, so that together, we can be the change we want to see.

Jenni Lord is the CEO of Chosen, an organization that equips caregivers with tools to help children heal. Chosen is based in the San Antonio area and provides telehealth services throughout the country.

RACE TO LEAD REVISITED: Obstacles and Opportunities in Addressing the Nonprofit Racial Leadership Gap

Executive Summary

Race to Lead Revisited: Obstacles and Opportunities in Addressing the Nonprofit Racial Leadership Gap presents findings from a 2019 survey of more than 5,000 paid nonprofit staff on their experiences of race and leadership in nonprofit settings, including many of the same questions asked in BMP's 2016 national survey of nonprofit employees, which showed that people of color in the sector were similarly qualified as white respondents and had more interest than white peers in becoming a nonprofit leader.

This report also presents new data and analysis that explores how respondents experience diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in the workplace; personal and organizational financial circumstances; and views on how to both increase the diversity of organizational leaders and support people of color already leading in the nonprofit sector. The data demonstrates that nonprofit organizations are defined by a pervasive and systemic *white advantage*, a term used in this report to describe the concrete ways that structure and power in nonprofit organizations reinforce the benefits of whiteness. This is particularly evident when comparing organizations run by white people and organizations led by people of color. The data shows notable differences in the experiences of both people of color and white respondents based on the racial composition of their organization's leadership.

Race to Lead Revisited focuses on three key findings that illustrate what is required of individual organizations and the sector at large to move toward greater equity and inclusion:

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“

I am usually the only or one of a handful of BIPOCs [Black, Indigenous, and people of color] in the room. It's such an isolating, frustrating and infuriating dynamic ... The lack of leadership of color at every organization I've worked at has impacted not only the running of the organization, but my own professional and even personal development.”

—Black Woman

“

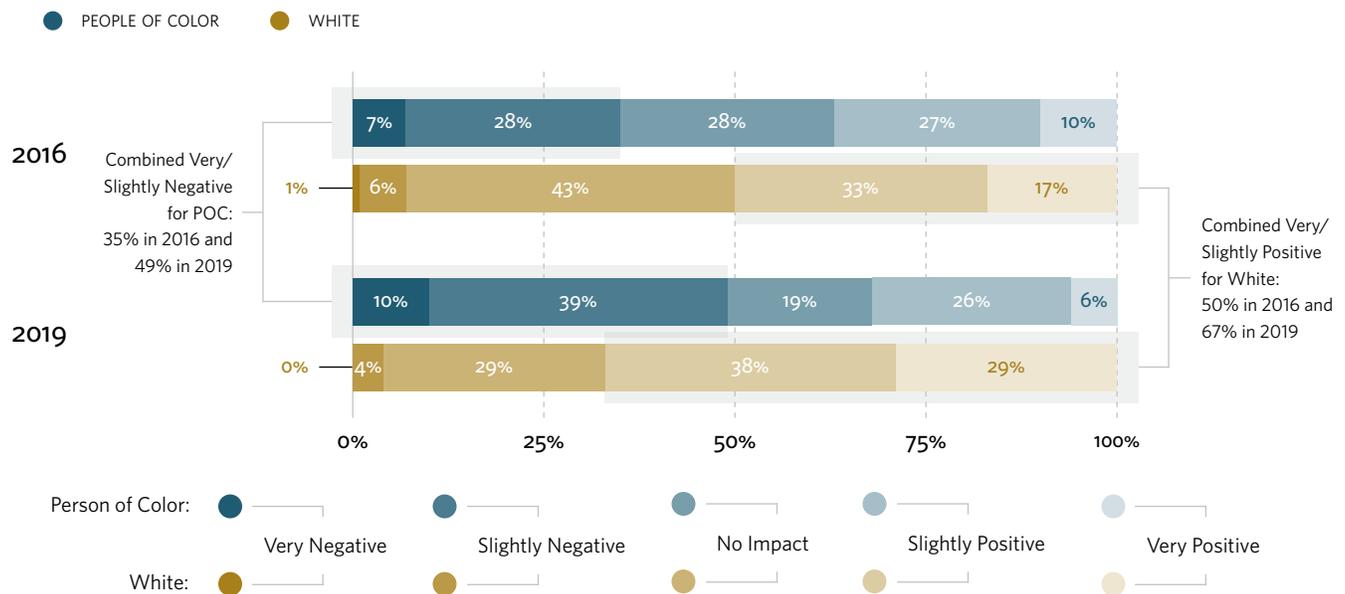
I was hired by a white woman and became part of a long line of white women who have led [the organization] as directors. It doesn't feel great to point that out, but I think our former director could relate to me and identified me as a leader partly due to race and culture.”

—White Woman

1 THE FINDINGS OF THE ORIGINAL *RACE TO LEAD* REPORT STILL HOLD THREE YEARS LATER

Race to Lead Revisited confirms findings in the original 2017 report that people of color have similar leadership qualifications as white respondents. As in the first *Race to Lead* report, more people of color aspire to become nonprofit leaders than their white counterparts, and the 2019 results show the gap between the two groups is widening. In contrast to three years prior, people of color were substantially more likely to state that race is a barrier to their advancement, while white respondents were more likely to agree that their race provides a career advantage. People of all races were more likely to agree with statements describing obstacles people of color face in obtaining leadership positions. Both these findings point to greater awareness of the problem but a lack of change in actual conditions. There were incremental improvements among all respondents about the career support available to them, and respondents overall reported fewer instances of encountering specific career obstacles. However, white respondents reported more types of support and fewer challenges than people of color, and the gap between the two groups on these experiences either remained constant or grew compared to the original *Race to Lead* report.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK YOUR RACE HAS PLAYED A ROLE IN YOUR OWN CAREER ADVANCEMENT?

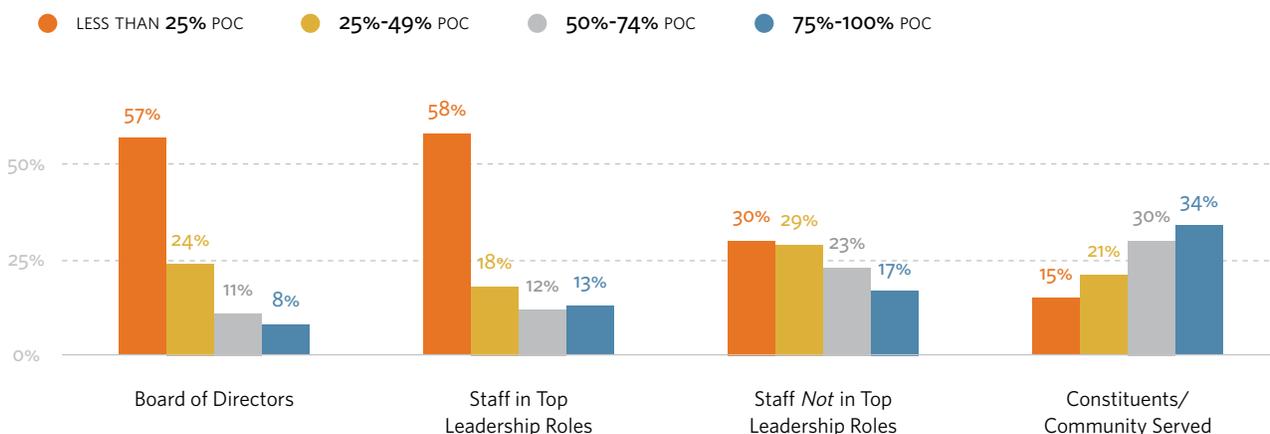


2 THERE IS A *WHITE ADVANTAGE* IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR

This report categorizes the nonprofit workplaces of survey respondents into three organizational types: *White-run* organizations in which the board and leadership is more than 75% white; *POC-led* organizations in which more than 50% of the board and leadership are people of color; and *All Other* organizations with leadership configurations in between the other two categories. Notably, the All Other category also skews significantly toward leadership demographics that are predominantly white. Among these three organization types, almost half of survey respondents worked in White-run organizations, followed closely by All Other organizational configurations, and a much smaller share of survey respondents worked in POC-led organizations. People of color in White-run organizations reported the least positive experiences compared to people of color working in the two other

organizational categories. The white advantage is also evident in the financial status of both organizations and individuals in the nonprofit sector. White-run organizations are more likely to have larger organizational budgets than those led by people of color. Also, white people in the sector are more likely than peers of color to have another source of household income, more likely to receive additional income like bonuses or cost of living increases, and less likely to support other family members outside their household.

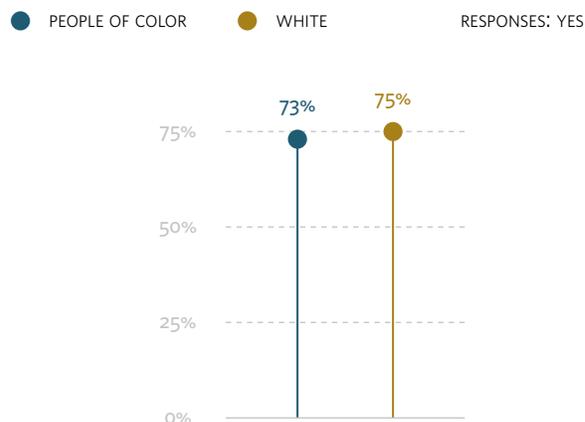
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUR CURRENT ORGANIZATION?



3 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) EFFORTS ARE WIDESPREAD AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IS UNCERTAIN

New survey questions show that close to three quarters of respondents work for organizations with DEI initiatives, and training was the most frequently reported activity. Despite the prevalence of these efforts, people of color in focus groups reported few shifts toward equity in the workplace. Among respondents working for White-run organizations and All Other organizations with the exception of groups led by people of color, respondent experiences with DEI efforts were less positive for people of color than white people; that racial gap shrunk among respondents working for POC-led groups. Extensive DEI efforts among nonprofits seem to have resulted in increased awareness of race and equity issues among both respondents of color and white people compared to the first survey, but there are substantial differences in how people of color and white people understand the role of race in the nonprofit world. Overall, the increased awareness of race and equity has yet to change the racialized experiences of people working in the sector.

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION ENGAGE IN ANY DEI INITIATIVES OR ACTIVITIES?



Hundreds of write-in responses and focus group observations indicate an exhaustion experienced by people of color in the nonprofit sector. People of color shared reflections about the constant demands of both job responsibilities and navigating issues related to race, and particularly the intersection of race and gender. Whether their frustrations related to being among the only people of color in a predominantly white organization, or considering whether to challenge racially fraught incidents given the potential for retaliation, or simply being overlooked and unheard, these reflections exemplify the disparity of nonprofit sector experiences among people of color compared to white peers.

Although the challenges generated by the COVID-19 pandemic will likely affect the sector for months and years to come, this should not serve as a justification for nonprofits to set aside issues of race equity in the workplace. Instead, the disruption and tension of this moment can help accelerate change, as is visible in the unprecedented protest over the killing of Black people. The nonprofit sector can similarly embrace the opportunity to begin renewed work to deal with the long-term inequities and social ruptures made even more visible by the global health and economic crisis.

Based on survey and focus group findings, *Race to Lead Revisited* offers recommendations for how the nonprofit sector and individual organizations can think differently and change behavior to make more significant progress toward racial equity. The persistent gaps between the experiences of people of color and white respondents highlight the need for nonprofit leaders, funders, and supporters to understand and acknowledge the systemic white advantage that permeates the sector. To take effective action to meaningfully address racial inequities, existing DEI efforts on race and racism must move beyond awareness and discussion to enact tangible changes in organizational policies and practices. To do that, organizational leadership must examine the formal and informal rules guiding their workplaces that maintain white dominance. Change in the sector can only happen when nonprofit groups identify the concrete, structural factors that reproduce racial leadership disparities, and undertake new and transformative steps to fundamentally include and expand the voices and experiences of people of color.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“

When we tried to have a conversation about white supremacy culture internally, our white female ED shut down and tried to leave the room. Further conversations about white supremacy culture were equally as unproductive.”

—Pacific Islander and White Multiracial Woman

“

It is challenging constantly being the only Latina in all-white and mostly male circles. It is a constant challenge of knowing when to be strategic to stand up for my community and when I need to hold back or else be left out of decision-making circles and labeled as the ‘angry Latina.’”

—Latina Woman



Building Movement Project

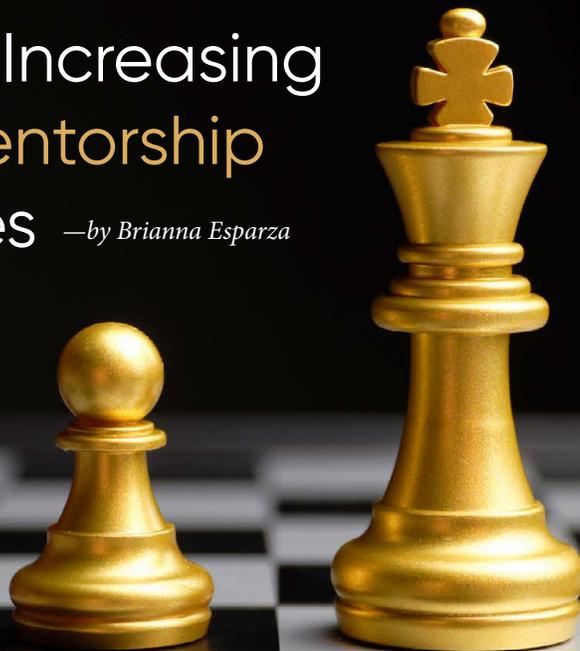
For more information, please visit
The Building Movement Project at
www.buildingmovement.org

or contact us at
info@buildingmovement.org



Four Tips for Increasing Equitable Mentorship Opportunities

—by Brianna Esparza



Mentorship is often misperceived as a relational dynamic that solely benefits the individual who receives guidance from a more experienced leader.

This common misconception, however, can prevent an individual or organization from reaping the full reward of mentorship in the workplace. Mentorship in the workplace provides holistic benefits to all parties involved, including the mentee, the mentor, and the organization as a whole.

A mentor can be described as an experienced individual who provides personal or professional guidance to a mentee with the goal of helping the mentee develop skills and expertise in a given field. However, the opportunity to become a protégé is most commonly provided to individuals who most resemble the mentor in terms of socioeconomic status, gender, sex, race, or religion (Center for Talent Innovation, 2019). Historically this approach has excluded individuals and groups whose identities have been underserved, over-

looked, and underappreciated in the workplace. Although a level of comfort may be associated with interacting with an individual who reminds us of ourselves, think about the benefits that can ensue from taking on a mentee whose experience, lifestyle, or culture differs from our own.

Equitable mentorship can help not only the mentee but also the mentor and the company's bottom line. When a protégé is mentored by an individual with greater seniority and influence, their likelihood of future promotion increases (Allen et al., 2004) not only through the acquisition of skills but also through the mentor's connections and network. Mentors, though knowledgeable in their given area of expertise, can also benefit from the unique perspectives of their mentees. Reverse mentorship allows a lower seniority

team member to share information with higher seniority members (Lee, 2020). Information exchanged may include computer literacy and digital skills. In addition, the process may promote workplace retention. The organization as a whole benefits from equitable mentorship in the workplace. From diverse leadership comes diverse thought, promoting innovative solutions and robust problem-solving skills. According to a Boston Consulting Group study, organizations with a diverse leadership increased their innovation revenue 19 percentage points higher than that of similar organizations with nondiverse leadership (Lorenzo et al., 2018). Furthermore, when companies expand their leadership roles to include women, studies have shown that employment policies become more generous (Ingram & Simons, 1995) and that sexual harassment in the workplace decreases (Hunt et al., 2018).

From diverse leadership comes diverse thought

continued on pg. 10

Four Tips for Increasing Equitable Mentorship (continued from pg. 9)

To begin providing more equitable mentorship opportunities and to make equity in your workplace more robust, consider implementing the following four tips.

- 1.** If you are a leader within your role or organization, refer diverse people in your network for stretch opportunities, and advocate for those individuals.
- 2.** Connect individuals with diverse backgrounds to others in your network because personal connections can lead to career growth.
- 3.** Reevaluate what it means to be an expert. Are there any individuals who would not typically be considered for leadership opportunities but who could share a wealth of knowledge or expertise in a historically overlooked realm of work? By participating in reverse mentorship, younger employees may bring a modern strategy to your workforce by sharing their technological literacy advantages.
- 4.** Share ongoing feedback from all levels of the organization regarding equity and mentorship opportunities—we cannot fix a problem if we do not know that it exists. Assessing the trends as reported by employees may reveal trends that would otherwise go unnoticed. This information can serve as the start for planning short-term and long-term strategies to truly implement equal opportunities for all staff, regardless of sex, gender, race, or religion.

In order for a workforce to be competitive, it must allow for innovation. Innovation can be born from diversity of thought created by a more inclusive team. Equity serves as the foundation for providing opportunities for thought leaders to be acknowledged, developed, and appreciated.

Brianna Esparza is the Refugee Post Release Supervisor for Bethany Christian Services. In her first supervisory role with Bethany, she has benefited from equitable mentorship and continues to thrive in her leadership role.

References

- Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., Poteet, M. L., Lentz, E., & Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentoring for protégés: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*(1), 127–136.
- Center for Talent Innovation. (2019, January 8). *Senior leaders are misunderstanding the role of sponsorship—and missing out on its rewards, according to new research by the Center for Talent Innovation*. Cision PR Newswire. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/senior-leaders-are-misunderstanding-the-role-of-mentorship-and-missing-out-on-its-rewards-according-to-new-research-by-the-center-for-talent-innovation-300774196.html>
- Hunt, V., Yee, L., Prince, S., & Dixon-Fyle, S. (2018, January 18). *Delivering through diversity*. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>
- Ingram, P., & Simons, T. (1995). Institutional and resource dependence determinants of responsiveness to work-family issues. *Academy of Management Journal, 38*(5), 1466–1482. http://www.jstor.org/stable/256866?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
- Lee, Y. (2020, January 6). *Mentorship as a tool for growth, inclusion, and equity*. Idealist. <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/mentorship-diversity-inclusion>
- Lorenzo, R., Voigt, N., Tsusaka, M., Krentz, M., & Abouzahr, K. (2018, January 23). *How diverse leadership teams boost innovation*. Boston Consulting Group. https://www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2018/how-diverse-leadership-teams-boost-innovation?zd_source=hrt&zd_campaign=5804&zd_term=chiradeepbasumallick



kcare

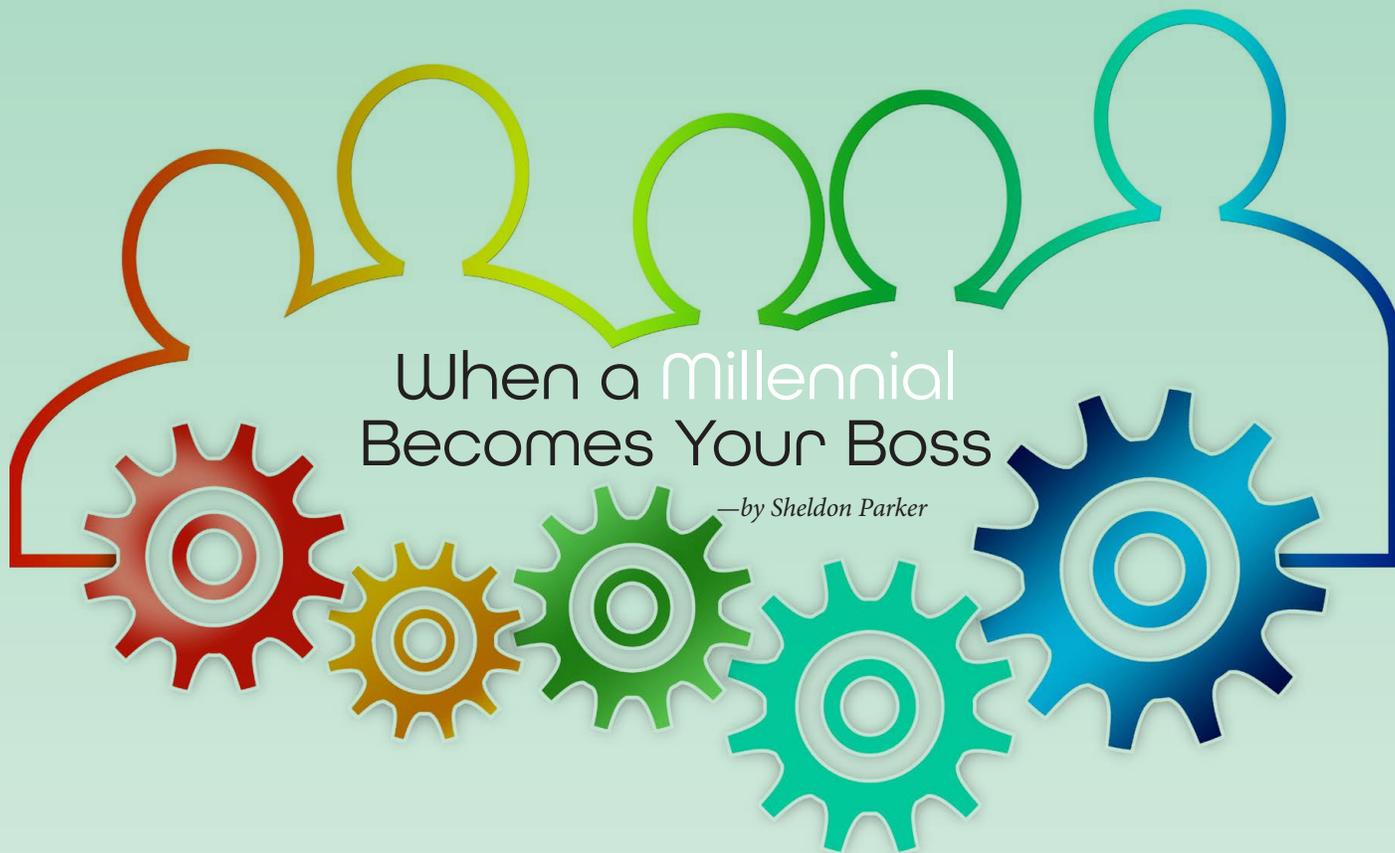
DESIGNED WITH YOU IN MIND

Discover Modernized Case Management

Our comprehensive solution, extendedReach, includes features such as:

-  A fully customizable database with detailed compliance tracking.
-  A user-friendly online portal for inquiries, applicants, and homes.
-  Unlimited data storage backed by top-tier AWS infrastructure.
-  Thousands of tools to help your agency save time and money!

Discover why over 500 agencies nationwide trust KCare at www.extendedreach.com or email us at sales@extendedreach.com to schedule a free demonstration.



When a Millennial Becomes Your Boss

—by Sheldon Parker

The workforce of today is like no other in the history of the United States. Approximately four different generations are now actively contributing to the workforce: baby boomers (born 1946–1964), Gen X (1965–1980), millennials (1981–1996), and Gen Z (1997–2012). Millennials are quickly becoming the largest generation in the labor force—56 million as of 2017, and that number continues to increase.

Because the numbers of millennials are steadily increasing in the workplace, this article will focus on the management style of millennials and how that style influences the workplace. Unlike their baby boomer and Gen X predecessors, millennials have chosen a more collaborative, all-inclusive management method. This style is more communicative and focuses on building relationships and empowerment.

The management style of millennials can be challenging for someone who is accustomed to management being more direct. As a Gen Xer who entered the workforce at a time when management was less concerned about employees' personal feelings and who was promoted through this more restrained system, I can attest that initial interactions with millennial managers and staff can be arduous.

Part of the management style of millennials is to request input from everyone who may be impacted by a decision. Millennials want consensus when making decisions that affect the lives of others. The amount of time it takes to get feedback from each staff member slows down the decision-making process. It also gives the illusion of shared responsibility. Many millennials have adopted the "everyone's a winner" mentality, thus making competition in the workplace less cutthroat.

continued on pg. 12

ACCREDITATION MATTERS

- Choice of programs included in survey, such as Foster Family/Kinship Care and Specialized or Therapeutic Foster Care
- Transparent fee structure, not revenue based
- Consultative peer-review process

Scan the QR code or go to
www.carf.org/Programs/CYS



carf INTERNATIONAL

(888) 281-6531 cys@carf.org

Get started today!

When a Millennial Becomes Your Boss | continued from pg. 11

This process is contradictory to how I, a Gen X manager, would approach a decision. It is important to get others' points of view; however, the responsibility, success, and consequences of a decision still sit squarely on the shoulders of the manager, regardless of how many opinions you get.

A positive takeaway from the management style of millennials is the level of collaboration it creates. I requested more feedback from staff on decisions that had an impact on their workload and implemented changes that created a more cohesive work environment.



These changes helped staff feel more invested in the company and created a deeper commitment to the organization.

Working now in the age of the millennial, Quin Gatlin, LCSW, shared her observation that most jobs continue to gravitate toward a focus on technology. Unfortunately, if you're not adapting to these changes, you can be coached out of your position.

One can only wonder what the workplace will encompass when the next generation takes the lead.

Sheldon Parker is a Senior Consultant for Savannah Renee Consulting (drkayrenee.com).

A positive takeaway from the management style of millennials is the level of collaboration it creates.

3 REASONS TO CHOOSE



1. EXPERIENCE & EFFICIENCY

2. SAVE TIME & STAY FOCUSED

3. TRAINING & GUIDANCE

Services Include:

- Onsite accreditation readiness assessment, including facilities review
- Development of accreditation-compliant policies, procedures and plans
- Customized training

- Strategic planning
- Mock accreditation surveys
- Proactive maintenance of accreditation



Take our FREE Readiness Assessment - [AccreditationGuru.com/READY](https://www.AccreditationGuru.com/READY)

Self-Care as an Engagement Strategy

—by Annette Gannaway-Hudson, PHR, SPHR

Working in one of the most stressful occupations, child welfare professionals often experience burnout, a psychological syndrome emerging as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job (U.S. Travel Association, 2019).

This syndrome is seen mainly among those child welfare professionals who provide direct-service care. With the overabundance of cases, visits, meetings, and impromptu phone calls on any given day, I believe we can all acknowledge that working in the field of child welfare makes it challenging to establish and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

In 2019, occupations related to child welfare ranked in the top 10 of all stressful occupations (Williams, 2021). During the current pandemic, the same occupations were ranked third among occupations most likely to be infected with COVID-19. As we all know, the pandemic also ushered in the Great Resignation in a field that already has high turnover rates. These elements combined have exacerbated the current stressors prevalent within the field.

As leaders within child welfare who are affected by our own occupational stressors, what can we do to help employees in an already stressful occupation known to be riddled with burnout and high turnover rates, coupled with a pandemic? With no easy answers to this age-old question, I believe child welfare leaders can help their employees by actively practicing and modeling self-care. This approach can be demonstrated in such ways as taking paid time off (PTO) and infusing self-care into organizations.

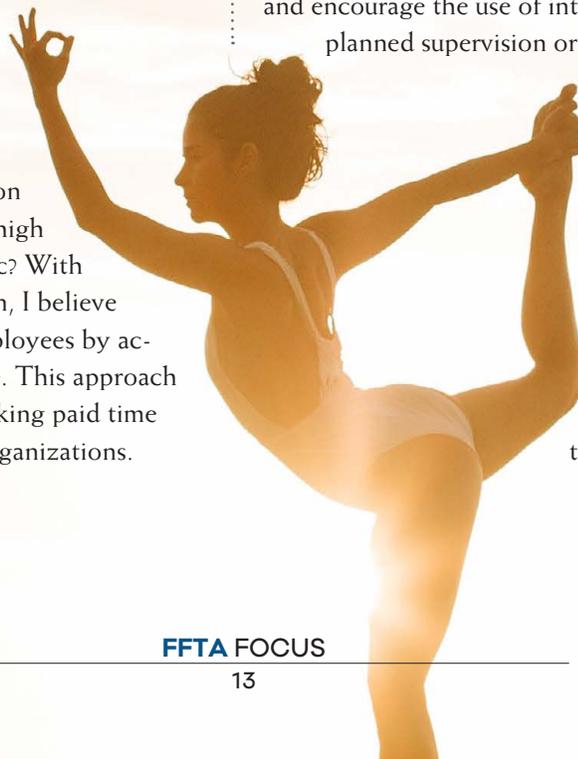
Taking PTO and Vacation Time (*and Meaning It*)

Studies show that in 2018, U.S. workers failed to use 768 million days of PTO, with more than half not using all their PTO. In addition, child welfare employees often do not take all their PTO provided by their employer.

By using PTO and vacation time throughout the year, one can stave off the burnout that occurs so frequently within our industry. To model this solution, leaders will need to take time off and use this time as a protected time during which they are not working. Taking time off not only models optimal PTO usage but also shows employees that it is acceptable to use their PTO days and have that time to themselves without fielding “quick calls” or emails.

Leaders can also monitor their employees’ PTO usage and encourage the use of internal communications during planned supervision or during performance evaluations. By promoting the usage of PTO, leaders encourage employees to seek opportunities to take time off and plan accordingly to do so. This planning will also eliminate employees’ use of emergency “mental health days” when their duties repeatedly outweigh the number of hours in the day.

continued on pg. 14



Self-Care as an Engagement Strategy | continued from pg. 13

Infusing Self-Care Into Your Organization

By infusing self-care into an organization's culture, a leader can devote protected time to establishing the importance of self-care and can set the expectation that self-care is important enough to provide protected time to practice it.

My agency, Our Children's Homestead, hosted weekly self-care Zoom meetings led by Jacqueline Stogsdill, Director of Community Relations and Development. The sessions were held with employees and foster parents throughout the height of the pandemic. In January 2022, to coincide with the new year, Our Children's Homestead will host a self-care vision board party that will include all staff. After the party, there will be cyclical check-ins with supervisors and peers to gauge the vision board's usage for the remainder of the year. This idea was sparked by a focus on our employees' well-being outside the wellness benefits offered currently through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and health benefits.

As leaders implement the strategies mentioned in this article, the workplace culture will experience less turnover, less burnout, and an overall higher level of engagement and camaraderie among employees.



Annette Gannaway-Hudson, PHR, SPHR is the Executive Vice President of Administrative Services for Our Children's Homestead. She serves on the FFTA Board of Directors and the FFTA Editorial Committee.

References

- U.S. Travel Association. (2019, August 16). *Study: A record 768 million U.S. vacation days went unused in '18, opportunity cost in the billions* [Press release].
<https://www.ustravel.org/press/study-record-768-million-us-vacation-days-went-unused-18-opportunity-cost-billions>
- Williams, G. (2021, March 15). The 25 most stressful jobs. *U.S. News and World Report*.
<https://money.usnews.com/careers/company-culture/slideshows/the-most-stressful-jobs>



binti
Re-inventing foster care with technology



Online applicant portal
Recruit & approve 60% more families

Approval/licensing tracking system
Save 20-40% of social worker time

Matching/placements software
Find the best family for each child

Modern end to end case management system
For states, counties and private agencies

To request a free demo, email: partnerships@binti.com

Call for Proposals:

FFTA 36th Annual Conference on Treatment Family Care July 17-20, 2022 ~ New Orleans, LA

Proposals due: February 18, 2022

Review the Call: ffta.org/call2022



FOCUS

*Newsletter of the
Family Focused
Treatment Association*



The Family Focused Treatment Association strengthens agencies that provide family focused treatment services.

FFTA CHARTER CLUB

FFTA Founders

Action Youth Care, Inc.
Ripley, WV

Alternative Family Services
Santa Rosa, CA

Beech Brook
Cleveland, OH

Boys Town
Boys Town, NE

CONCERN
Fleetwood, PA

EMQ/FamiliesFirst
Campbell, CA

Family Alternatives, Inc.
Minneapolis, MN

Lilliput Children's Services
Citrus Heights, CA

The MENTOR Network
Boston, MA

National Youth Advocate Program
Columbus, OH

PATH, Inc.
Fargo, ND

People Places, Inc.
Staunton, VA

Pressley Ridge
Pittsburgh, PA

Seneca Family of Agencies
Oakland, CA

Specialized Alternatives for
Families and Youth
Delphos, OH

Volunteers of America
New Orleans, LA

Get in FOCUS

FOCUS is a newsletter distributed to all Family Focused Treatment Association agency members. Agency membership ranges from \$700 and \$4,750 annually.

To join FFTA contact:
FFTA Headquarters, 466 Hackensack Ave,
#1069, Hackensack, NJ 07601-7504,
phone: (201) 343-2246,
e-mail: ffta@ffta.org.
Visit our Web site at www.ffta.org.

Appearance of advertising and listings in this publication does not indicate endorsement or support by the FFTA of the product or service.

Phone: (201) 343-2246 E-mail: ffta@ffta.org Web: www.ffta.org