

OCYF

Trauma Team



Trauma-Informed Workforce Development

In the January 2025 OCYF Trauma Tip Sheet, The U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being was introduced. Over the next several months, we will continue to explore these essentials.

The third essential of the Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being is Work-Life Harmony. This essential is grounded in two fundamental human needs: autonomy and flexibility, as seen in the diagram below.

April Activity Suggestion: Head out for a family walk together and see what signs of spring you can find together. It could be buds on trees, new flowers appearing, baby lambs, or the sound of a cuckoo. Add a scavenger hunt with items for everyone to find.

“Organizations must see workers not only for their work roles, but as whole people.”

Essential 3:

Work-Life Harmony



Office of the Surgeon General -
Framework for Workplace
Mental Health & Well-Being

The initial component of the Work-Life Harmony Essential is to provide more autonomy over how work is done. Organizations can help reduce conflicts between work and personal life by giving employees more control over how, when, and where they work. This approach builds trust among coworkers and improves overall health.

The second component of Work-Life Harmony is to make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible. It is understood that in child welfare, emergencies occur; however, keeping schedules as consistent as possible, given the work demands, may help the worker to

- Plan for life events
- Make better economic decisions
- Decrease interpersonal conflict
- Increase overall well-being.

The third component is to increase paid leave. Limited access to paid sick, family, and medical leave increases "presenteeism," spreading infections and causing lower productivity, burnout, and labor shortages.

The fourth component of work-life harmony is respecting boundaries between work and personal time. When leaders establish and uphold clear boundaries without penalizing employees for needing flexibility, workers experience a greater sense of well-being.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: OCYF continues to offer free trauma training facilitated through Lakeside Global for the Pennsylvania child welfare community. Workshops: <https://register.lakesidetraining.org/pa-ocyf-workshops-2025/> and Intensive courses: <https://register.lakesidetraining.org/pa-ocyf-intensive-courses-2025/>. Additionally, the *Developing Trauma Sensitivity for Congregate Care Staff* course has been released through the E-LEARN system at https://www.e-learn.pitt.edu/visitor_catalog_class/show/1557287 This is offered free to all PA licensed child welfare providers.