

## Staff Wellness

### Procedure

The program will provide the following support and will regularly review and revise the Staff Wellness Policy to ensure that the needs of the staff are being met.

1. Staff will receive effective and comprehensive orientation training upon hire, this includes agency training to ensure that staff understand program and agency policies and procedures and are aware of their rights as employees. Ongoing training is provided while on site with the work team and with the manager. The program also offers a variety of program wide in-service training and staff can request to also attend outside training opportunities. In addition, Scholarship dollars are available for staff to further their education. Depending on the position, CDA or Family Service Credential training is provided at no cost.
2. Staff will participate in annual training on policies and procedures and strategies that will support them with being successful in their positions. Policies such as Behavior Guidance, Active Supervision, Child Transportation, Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually.
3. Staff will receive annual Health and Safety Training, specific to their role including Medication Administration, Maltreatment of Minors, Emergency Preparedness, Allergy Prevention and Response, Handling & Disposal of Bodily Fluids, Risk Reduction Plan, CACFP/Nutrition Training, Civil Rights, Abusive Head Trauma – and Sudden Unexpected Death Syndrome (SUDDS), and transportation trainings. Staff will also be provided with Pediatric First Aid/CPR training every two years and Car Seat Safety training every five years depending on their role.
4. Teaching staff receive coaching and support through monthly TLC's and onsite coaching provided Practiced Based Coaching as determined and through request. These coaching practices offer a time for reflective practice, peer reflection and mentoring. All classroom staff participate in the monthly TLCs. Regular site visits conducted by the Program Managers allow time for checking in and reflection on challenges, concerns or support needed.
5. All staff training includes time for networking and socializing and offer time for movement and regular breaks.
6. The program's monthly newsletter provides teaching tips, mental health and wellness information and resources, nutrition information, introduction to new staff, celebrations of staff achievements, site events and more.
7. In the Head Start Classrooms, a team-teaching approach is required. All classroom staff participate in planning, prep, assessments, teaching and supervision regardless of their position.
8. All Head Start Staff are required to be vaccinated and staff and children follow masking requirements. Covid testing is provided bi-weekly for the staff onsite and will continue throughout the pandemic.
9. The program will provide ongoing and regular support with social emotional concerns, development, and behavior management in the classrooms through training and regular, or requested visits with the Disability and Mental Health Manager and the Program Manager assigned to the site.

10. The program will support staff through implementation of the Conscious Discipline curriculum to promote effective and appropriate social emotional support in the classroom.

11. Classrooms include outside time, as weather permits, in their daily routine to support the children and the staff with incorporating regular time for physical activity.

12. Staff will be provided with breaks throughout the day and site staffing patterns in the classrooms have been structured to allow for this. Each full day classroom has 3 full-time staff and a part time assistant that relieves staff for breaks. Staff are also encouraged to take a break at any time if they are feeling overwhelmed or need to have time to collect themselves.

13. AEOA-Head Start provides a very generous paid leave system for staff along with 2 additional personal days and paid holidays. In addition, fulltime (Full time) staff are offered health, life, disability, dental and vision insurance and an HSA medical savings plan with agency contribution and a retirement plan with agency contribution.

14. AEOA employees have access to a variety of supports through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This includes confidential emotional support for managing anxiety, depression, stress, grief, loss and life adjustments and relationship/marital conflicts. The EAP also offers resources and support with finding child and elder care, hiring movers or home repair contractors, planning events, locating pet care, legal guidance regarding divorce, adoption, family law and wills. There is also funeral and burial instruction and support and a variety of financial services.

15. Staff receive regular pay increases upon completion of probation, at 6 Months and at 12 Months, 24 Months, 42 Months, 60 Months, 10 Years, 15 Years, 20 Years. Bonuses or increases may be provided as determined by the program for hazard pay or other situations that may warrant this.

16. Classroom teaching staff that obtain their CDA, AA or BA credentials related to their positions will be moved up in grade and pay level.

17. Workplaces are monitored to ensure that they are safe and free of hazards. Staff can report safety concerns by calling their Program Manager or the Director. They also enter site concerns in the Child Plus system to alert their manager. Through a process of internal monitoring the concern will be addressed and closed out in Child Plus when completed. These reports are monitored at bi-weekly management team meetings as part of the program's compliance monitoring system. Regular onsite monitoring documentation includes safety checks, and an annual health and safety check is completed at each site. Head Start Management staff participate on the AEOA safety committee to provide input and gather information to further support safety practices at the sites.

18. AEOA incorporates a Bee Active initiative that encourages and supports staff wellness through trainings and physical activity challenges.

19. Reflective Practice activities are offered during staff training, small groups, or teams, and individually. All management staff use reflective supervision techniques when working with staff.