

# Building and Sustaining Healthy Program Cultures Overview

## WHO?

All programs providing care and education for Oklahoma's children.

## WHY?

These practices improve employee job satisfaction and longevity, continuity of care for children, and help create a more sustainable program that effectively serves families and children.

## WHAT?

- Regular personnel meetings: programs use personnel meetings to facilitate open communication, strengthen team building, review policies, discuss program updates and changes, implement program planning and goal setting, and provide relevant professional development opportunities.
- Participatory decision-making: includes a diverse range of stakeholders in the processes of brainstorming ideas, discussing options, and coming to decisions that maximize benefits to all. Participatory decision-making takes full advantage of shared wisdom, strengthens collaboration, fosters connection, and fuels ownership of the decisions made.
- Classroom observation and mentoring: Helps teachers develop new insights, builds respect and improves relationships, aids in continuous growth and improvement, and supports teachers while benefitting the whole program. Mentors are either internal or external.
- Communities of practice (CoP): are groups of people with a shared interest who meet regularly to discuss and reflect on the topic with the goal of learning from each other. They can meet in person or online. Communities of practice strengthen the group of learners and provide a safe space to practice skills and develop competency. Group members may include coworkers from the same organization and others with similar interests in their region, or nationally.
- Employee benefits: may include benefits such as personnel salary scale based on education level, position responsibilities, experience or longevity, paid health insurance, wellness activities, paid sick and vacation days, employer contribution to retirement plan, designated break and lunch times away from program responsibilities, personnel break room, free or discounted child care, financial aid for professional development, annual training in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resiliency, health and wellness education, and paid gym memberships.