



# Breaking the Stigma: Prioritizing Organizational Wellness to Retain a Resilient and Diverse Workforce

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Ohio Association of Community Health Center (OACHC)

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# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- Review the principles of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (JEDI-B) and understand its crucial role in advancing workforce wellness
- Identify barriers in the workplace, such as silos and stigma, that affect the retention of an engaged and satisfied workforce
- Interpret the various areas of organizational wellness and how change is needed to create positive and healthy outcomes for the workforce
- Define the critical role of leadership plays in advancing and securing staff well-being
- Review OACHC initiatives and resources



# WORKFORCE IS THE FUEL

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A health center with a **full tank** identifies workforce as an essential organizational issue, invests in appropriate operational and staffing resources, and has some key features...



# CORE COMPONENTS

Data-Informed  
Workforce Plan

Equitable &  
Effective  
Compensation  
Structure

Positive Culture  
Focused on  
Engagement

Tested  
Recruitment &  
Retention  
Strategies

Health  
Professions  
Training Program

Chief Workforce  
Officer

High-Functioning  
Managers

Policies that  
Support Diversity  
& Cultural  
Respect

# WHY IT MATTERS?



Resignation  
Headaches  
Insomnia  
Hopelessness  
Tired  
Cynicism  
Loneliness  
Moral Distress  
Depression  
Isolation  
Lacking Support  
Triggering  
Moral Injury  
Frustration  
Compassion  
Fatigue  
Worry  
Exhaustion  
Pain  
Mental Health  
Anxiety  
Stress  
Burnout  
Suicidality  
Maladaptive Behaviors  
Crisis  
Vulnerable  
Guilt  
Vicarious Trauma





**JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION**

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO APPLY A LENS?

Putting on Our JEDI-B Glasses



**“[A lens is simply a] framework to guide decision-making policies, procedures, programs, or decisions that are being considered.”**



# JEDI-B DEFINITIONS



**(Social) Justice:** An analysis of **how power, privilege, and oppression impact the experience of our social identities**. It reflects a society, community, and institution mutually shaped to meet the needs of all groups through full and equal participation and creates physically and psychologically safe and secure spaces for all.

**Equity:** Actively working to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented full participation across differences in culture and circumstance. It reflects processes and practices that both acknowledge that we live in a world where **everyone has not been afforded the same resources and treatment while also working to remedy this fact**.

**Diversity:** Having a **variety of social identities** (sex, race, gender, class, religion, ability, health, ethnicity, migration history and many others) that spend time in shared spaces, communities, institutions or society.

**Inclusion:** Creating environments in which individuals and groups feel **welcomed, respected, supported, and valued** by eliminating practices and behaviors that marginalize. An inclusive climate **embraces differences** and offers respect in words and actions so that all people can fully participate in the organization's opportunities.

**Belonging:** At work, belonging takes the form of employees actively wanting to bring their **true selves** to work because they know it will be **celebrated and admired**.



# JEDI-B (BELONGING)



**INCLUSION**

Action



**BELONGING**

Feeling



**A CULTURE OF RETENTION**





A CULTURE OF...

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# RETENTION

- Engaged
- Consistent
- Positive
- Transparent



# STAFF SATISFACTION CHALLENGES



- Staffing
- Work Load
- Tools and Resources
- Pay and Promotion Inequity
- Scheduling
- Management
- Homogeneity
- Microaggressions, Discrimination
- Boundaries
- Toxicities (across a spectrum)



# BREAK THE SILOS!



Leadership needs to  
**reflect** the  
organization's values in  
its day-to-day actions

Alignment of a health  
center's mission with  
the beliefs and values  
of its workforce is  
**critical**







# RESILIENCE & WELL-BEING

# EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

## Resilience

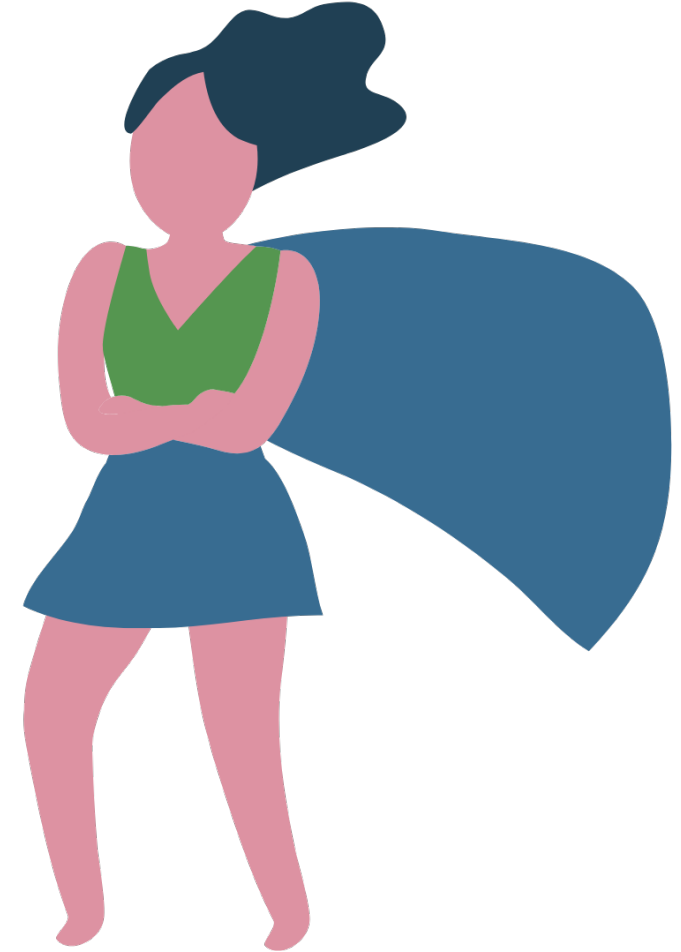


## Individual Resilience

- We are all resilient, it is about how you develop this skill
  - Involves behaviors, thoughts, actions
- Ability to adapt well to adversity, chronic stress, trauma, etc.
- It is not a linear path, there is no definitive end
- Takes time, practice, intentionality

## Organizational Resilience

- Embraces a culture of wellness and employee engagement
- Adapts to and anticipates change
- It is proactive not reactive



# EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

## Building Resiliency Muscles



### Positivity

See opportunities and hope in difficult situations.

### Priorities

Focus your attention on the most important things.

### Connection

Reach out to others for assistance.



### Confidence

Recognize your own capability to deal with challenges.

### Creativity

Generate new possibilities, ideas and approaches.

### Structure

Plan, organize and systematize your actions.



# PILLARS OF WELLNESS



Physical

Emotional

Financial

Communication

# A CULTURE OF WELLNESS



**WELLNESS**



**HEALTHISM**

# HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

## Physical

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- Having a wide variety of offerings that benefit physical wellness is a great start.
- Potentially offerings:
  - Free **wellness screenings** and health **risk assessments**
  - Hosting speakers onsite or via video call – utilize your own staff if they are interested
  - Host a **learning session** with your health insurance provider (especially around open enrollment)
  - Having flyers, posters, TV monitor announcements, intranet articles about seasonal wellness topics can inspire and remind your team to stay active and safe
  - Onsite gym or discount to local fitness centers
  - Schedule walking meetings when possible or just **offer space/time** to get the blood moving a bit

# HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

## Emotional



- Put **work-life balance** programs into place
- Offer flexible work schedules and hybrid work when possible
- Consider inclusive, creative benefits and leave packages
- Provide an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Work to **end mental health stigma** and offer emotional wellness tips and strategies visibly
- Create a **culture that doesn't demand overtime work** in a high-pressure environment

Source: [Open Source Workplace](#)

# HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

## Financial

- Provide **financial literacy classes** either online or onsite
- Host speakers and training opportunities for employees on some of the major financial considerations that they may be facing
- Offer solutions to ease your employee's financial stress
- Hold annual workshops for retirement planning help and setting long-term financial goals
- Pay employees a **thriving wage**
- Work towards **pay equity** at your organization.

Source: [Open Source Workplace](#)



# HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

## Communication

- What you say and what you do matters
- How you say it and the actions you take matter
- When and where you say it matters
- Practice **multi-directional communication** that is clear, concise, direct, and mindful
  - Create a dialogue
  - Don't be dismissive
  - Be open – listen, learn, adapt
- Take a **strengths-based perspective**
- Appreciation goes a long way!

Source: [Open Source Workplace](#)





# PRACTICE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



Psychological safety is the **freedom to make mistakes, challenge the status quo, and express your thoughts, ideas, concerns, and opinions at work without fear of negative repercussions or judgement.**

- One component of a psychologically healthy workplace
- Focuses on healthy communication
- Allows workers show up authentically
- Helps improve workforce well-being
- Drives ideas, innovation, and success
- Acknowledges mistakes are healthy

Sources: [American Psychological Association](#); [Center for Creative Leadership](#); [Harvard Business Review](#); [McKinsey & Company](#)



# CREATING A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

## Self-Care: Organization



- Adopt robust anti-discrimination policies
- Reduce administrative burden
- Acknowledge feelings of grief and loss
- Share resources to support mental health
- Nurture a supportive work environment



# CREATING A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

## Self-Care: Employees



- Sleep
- Avoid doomscrolling
- Set boundaries and take breaks
- Practice something you love to do every day
- Acknowledge feelings of grief and loss
- Nurture gratitude







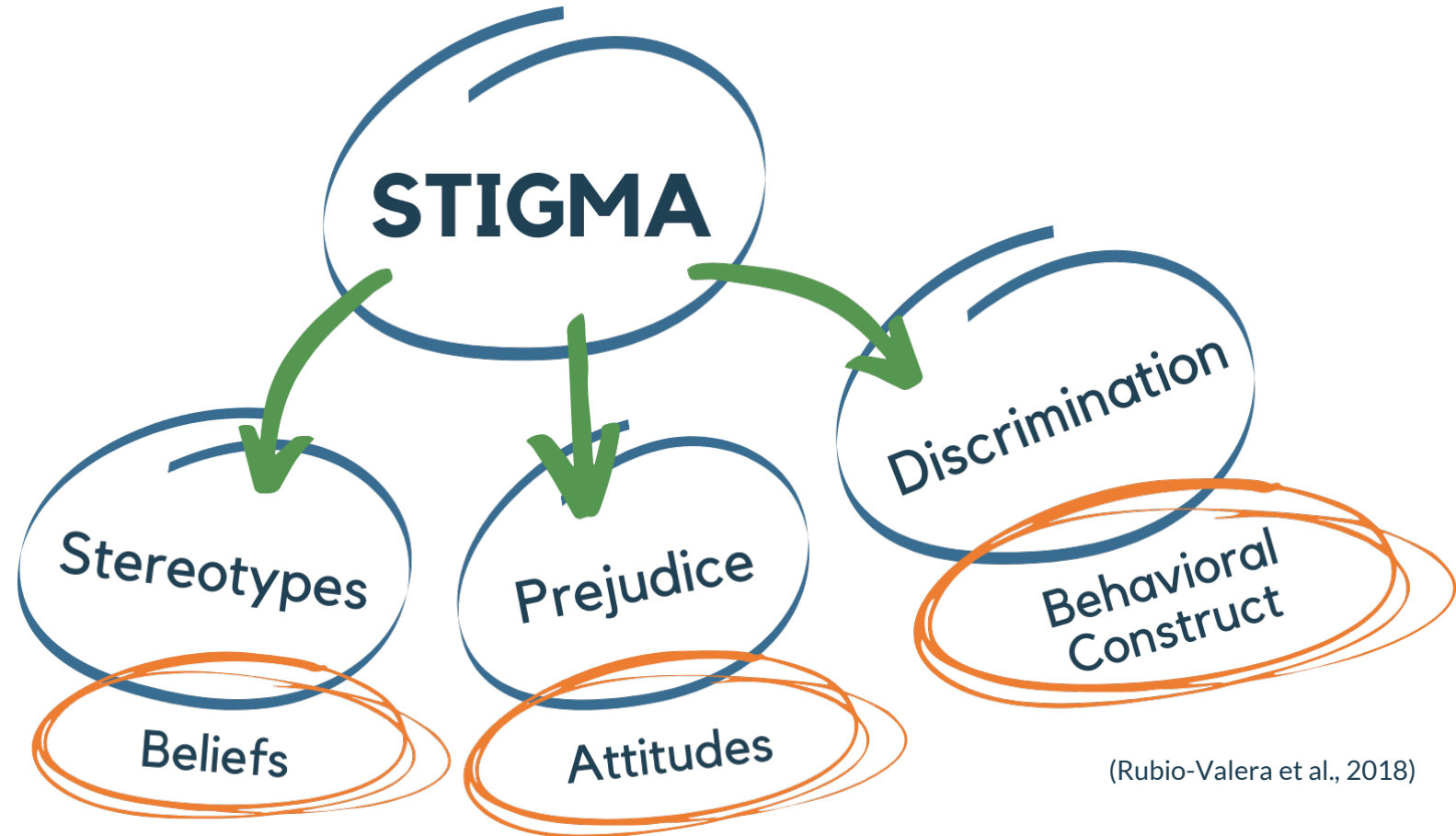
**BECOME STIGMA-FREE**



# WHAT IS STIGMA?

**Stigma** is a phenomenon that highlights the strong power differentials that exist in society

(Calvo et al., 2018)



(Rubio-Valera et al., 2018)

# WHY WE STIGMATIZE?



Fear of the Unknown



Victim Blaming

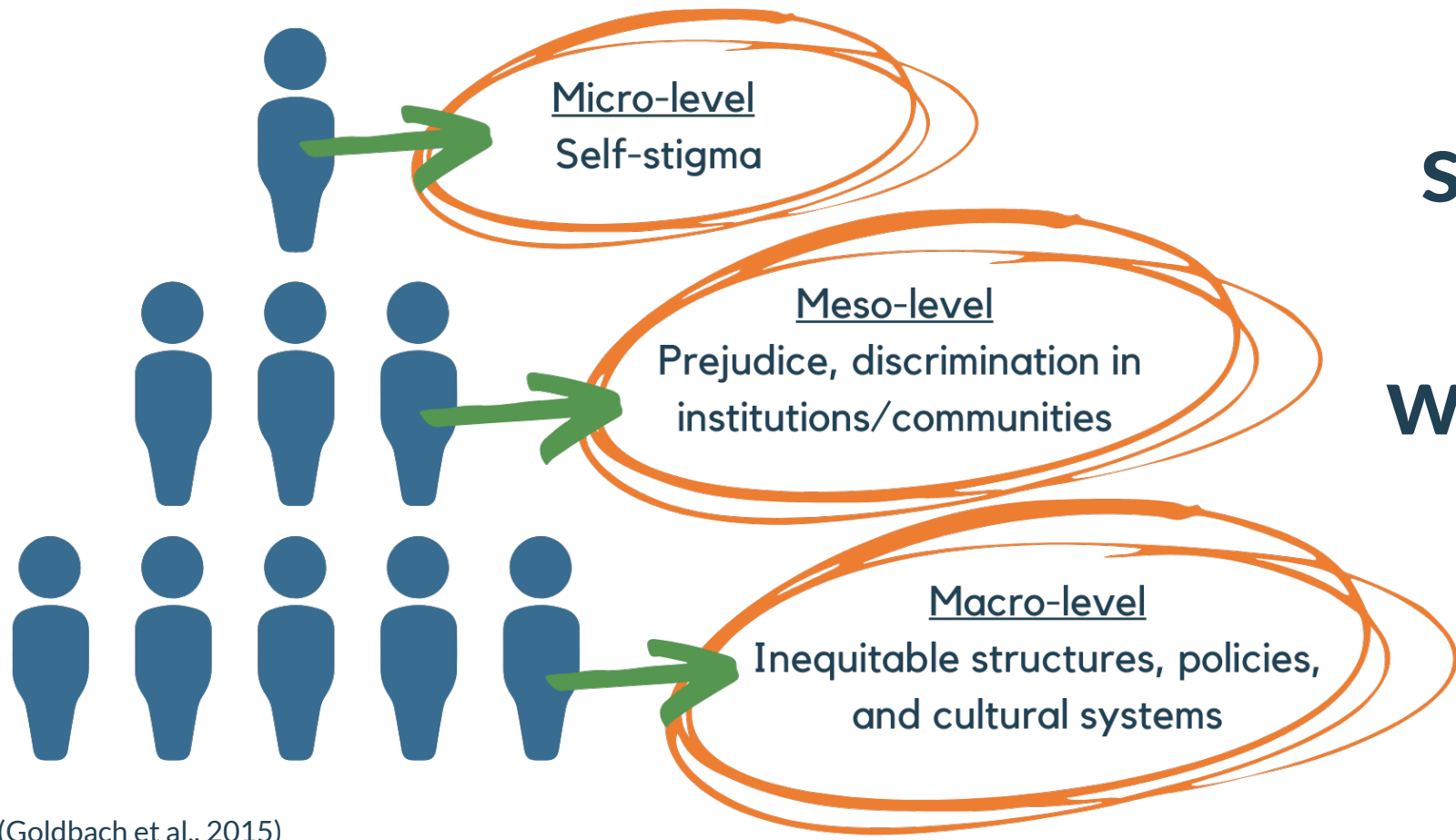


Misinformation



Lack of Control

# LEVELS OF STIGMA



Don't let stigma be a barrier to wellness and growth!

(Goldbach et al., 2015)





# STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

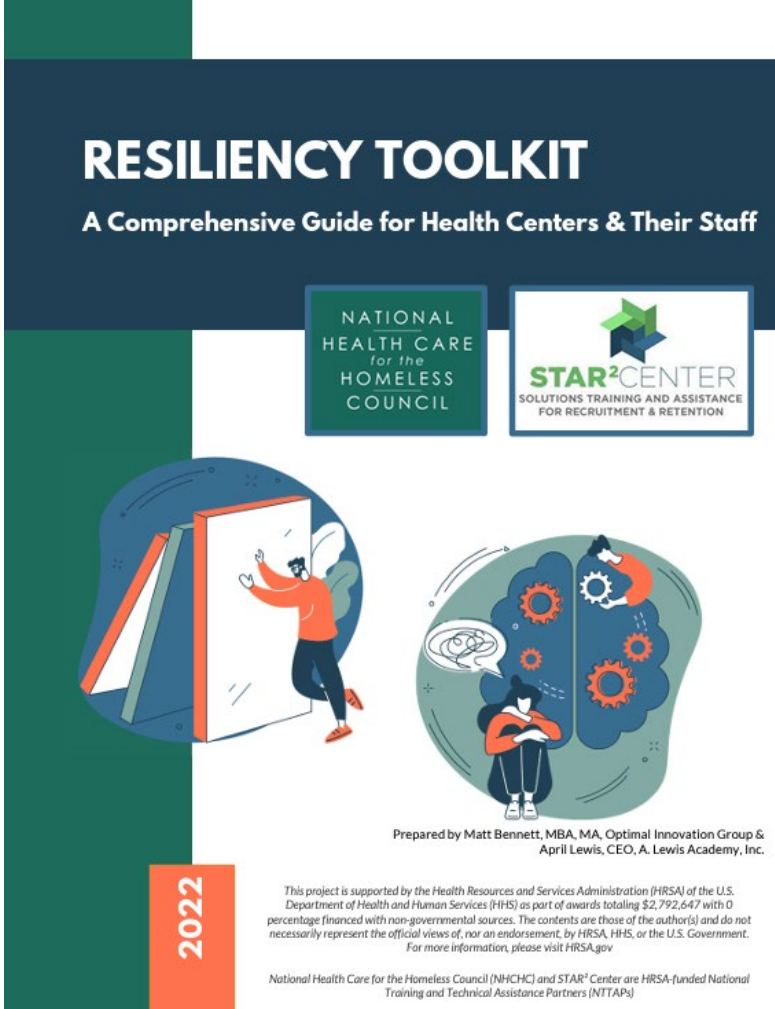
## Organizational Leadership & Resiliency Toolkit



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Click [here](#) to access the Organizational Leadership and Resiliency Toolkit



### RESILIENCY TOOLKIT

A Comprehensive Guide for Health Centers & Their Staff



Prepared by Matt Bennett, MBA, MA, Optimal Innovation Group & April Lewis, CEO, A. Lewis Academy, Inc.

2022

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National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) and STAR<sup>2</sup> Center are HRSA-funded National Training and Technical Assistance Partners (NTTAPs)

# STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

## Self-Care Checklist



Click [here](#) to access  
the Self-Care  
Checklist



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### Self-Care for the Health Center Workforce

A Practical Guide for Leaders, Organizations, and Individuals

Prepared in partnership with Eileen Barrett, MD, MPH, FACP for  
The Association of Clinicians for the Underserved



#### What is “Self-Care” and the purpose of this guide?

Self-care is critical to every person's mental and physical health. It encompasses nearly any activity that helps a person manage or resolve stress, from both psychological and physiological points. Self-care looks different for everyone, but usually involves a combination of tools to reduce mental strain and fatigue, like making lists or scheduling break time, as well as physical stress relievers, such as exercise or breathing techniques. One of the most critical—but often overlooked—aspects of self-care is the need for organizations to take the lead in creating an environment that lessens stressors and is conducive to practicing these individual techniques. Employers and leaders can take many steps to reduce the stress-inducing aspects of their workplace environments as a whole, and to encourage self-care practices among individuals. Routine self-care, building a workplace that fosters resiliency and supports self-care practices, and properly addressing stressors that we all face is critical to building and maintaining a strong workforce. This guide lays out some tips for organizations, as well as for individuals, to help promote a healthy working environment and to properly manage stress that cannot be avoided.



<sup>1</sup> National Institute of Mental Health. "Caring for Your Mental Health." April 2021. National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health. [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/caring-for-your-mental-health](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/caring-for-your-mental-health)

# STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

## Building A Resilient & Trauma-Informed Workforce



Click [here](#) to access the Building A Resilient & Trauma-Informed Workforce Factsheet!

### Building a Resilient & Trauma-Informed Workforce

*This factsheet explores the intersection between resilience and trauma-informed organizations*



#### Introduction

The terms **resilience** and **trauma-informed** are both closely linked to burnout, compassion fatigue, moral injury, moral distress, and other mental health struggles in the workplace. Studies indicate that physicians and medical residents have some of the highest rates of burnout and suicide.<sup>1</sup> However, when compared to other professions, they also possess higher rates of individual resilience.<sup>2</sup> This dichotomy illustrates a salient point—resilience is a process that involves both individual strengths and organizational structures and practices. A deficit in individual resilience does not automatically equate to poor well-being in the workplace. Instead, a lack of support, inefficient processes and practices, excessive workloads, and poor leadership are leading causes of workplace stressors.<sup>3</sup> Fortunately, organizations that follow a trauma-informed model “demonstrate a commitment to compassionate and effective practices and organizational reassessments,” which positively affect workforce well-being, resilience, and satisfaction.<sup>4</sup>

*Note: This document uses specific terms to speak about well-being; however, language is ever-evolving. While the terms related to well-being may change with new research, the ongoing support for the mental health needs of the workforce is essential and must remain a top priority.*



Organizations that follow a trauma-informed model “demonstrate a commitment to compassionate and effective practices and organizational reassessments.”

# QUESTIONS







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STAR<sup>2</sup> Center Talks Workforce Success Podcast:  
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