

# **GROWING WORKFORCE STRATEGIES: ONBOARDING AND RETENTION OF STAFF**

---

**EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTE  
NOVEMBER 6, 2024**



# Agreements

How can we make this a space that is comfortable and brings a level of security by allowing all participants to share openly and honestly without fear of judgment?



# 3 G's Activity

What's something you're GRATEFUL for?



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

What's something GOOFY about you?



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

What's one GOAL you have for this session?



# Objectives

- Identify strategies that lead to staff retention
- Describe the onboarding process
- Develop action-oriented goals to be implemented immediately

# Discussion

What's needed:

- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 5 minutes and discuss the question at your table.

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights



**What are some barriers to staff retention?**

# Barriers to Staff Retention

- Staff pay
- Education level
- Non-wage benefits
- Program organization and structure
- Climate/Culture of the program

# Activity



What's needed:

- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 2 minutes and record the answers to the question:

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights

**“What makes a great workplace?”**

# Self-Reflection

**How can we create a workplace we would never want to leave?**

**What can we control regarding barriers to staff retention?**



# Barriers We Can Control

- Opportunities for educational advancement
- Program organization and structure
- Culture/Climate of the program



# Program Organization and Structure

- Clear Vision
- Clearly defined goals and objectives
- Tight systems and processes; policies and procedures
- Staff is equipped to do the job properly
- Staff understand their roles and responsibility
- Staff input is valued and encouraged
  - Exit survey
  - Staff input survey
- Stable, predictable environment

# Self-Reflection

- What's your vision?
  - Is it well communicated to your staff?
  - Is there buy-in from your staff?
- Are your systems producing a chaotic or stable, predictable environment?
- Does your staff know what they are responsible for? Are they equipped to do their job successfully?
- Are your procedures outlined for your staff and administrator?

# Action Planning



Record the following on your handout:

What is your vision?

What do you need to help bring your vision to life?

How does your staff share responsibility in bringing the vision to fruition?

# Program Organization and Structure



## Onboarding vs. Orientation



# Discussion

What's needed:

- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 5 minutes and discuss the question at your table.

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights



**What's the difference between onboarding and orientation?**

# Onboarding

Orientation is the first step in the onboarding process. It's the initial welcome and introduction to the organization's history, mission, vision, values, and organizational structures. Common orientation activities include completion of new hire paperwork, benefits enrollment, and introduction to payroll procedures, administrative and technology services, and policies. The human resources department usually leads the orientation process, which typically lasts one or two days.

<https://www.tasb.org/news-insights/explaining-the-differences-between-orientation-and-onboarding#:~:text=Orientation%20is%20the%20first%20step,how%20long%20will%20it%20last?>

# Orientation

Onboarding is the ongoing, comprehensive process of integrating new employees with an organization and its culture. The process, which can last up to a year or more, mainly occurs at the department or campus level between supervisors and employees.

Successful onboarding allows new hires to learn the social and performance aspects of the job, while securing the tools and information needed for their new positions. Advantages include, but aren't limited to, quicker employee assimilation into the organization, higher productivity in the job, and increased probability of retention for the organization.

<https://www.tasb.org/news-insights/explaining-the-differences-between-orientation-and-onboarding#:~:text=Orientation%20is%20the%20first%20step,how%20long%20will%20it%20last?>



# Onboarding

- Should have a written plan and processes
- Orientation 1&2
- Staff mentor
- Time for reflection
- Working in all classrooms
- Journal/workbook for reflection



# Discussion



What's needed:

- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 5-8 minutes and discuss the question at your table.

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights

## What does onboarding look like in your program?

# Self-Reflection

- Does your onboarding procedure allow staff to become a part of the culture?
- Does your onboarding procedure allow staff to learn your program?
- How long is your onboarding process? Is that enough time for staff to become acclimated to your program's processes?

# Action Planning



How would you like to improve your onboarding procedure?

What do you need to improve your onboarding procedure?

What's the estimated date of completion?

# Opportunities for Educational Advancement

- High-quality professional development
- Information about the KY Apprenticeship Program
- Understanding the KY Career Lattice
- Access to higher learning institutions
- Opportunities for growth within the program/organization
- High-quality coaching

# Self-Reflection

- How do you offer opportunities for educational advancement?
- How do you challenge your staff to grow as professionals?
- What resources do you have available to assist your staff that seek to grow as professionals?

# Action Planning



What can you do to enhance the opportunity for educational advancement for your staff?

What do you need to make it happen?

What's the estimated date of completion?

# Program Culture and Climate

- Trust and psychological safety
- A sense of belonging
- Professional development opportunities
- Flexibility
- Supportive environment
- Inclusive workplace



# Discussion



What's needed:

- writing instrument
- Paper
- reporter/recorder

Take 5-8 minutes and discuss the question at your table.

Have a recorder take notes and be ready to share insights

## What kind of culture and climate does your program have?

# Self-Reflection

- How do you build trust with your staff?
- Does every employee feel like they are valued?
- Do staff members feel valued?
- Are staff members represented?
- How do you keep your program drama-free?

# Action Planning



Think about something you do well regarding your program's climate and culture.

How can you make it even better?

What's needed to enhance your practice/policy?

Estimated date of completion

# Questions

## Questions and Comments

## Contact Information

---

Elizabeth Quisenberry

Touchstone Early Learning Partners

[e.mays@amaysingtrainings.com](mailto:e.mays@amaysingtrainings.com)

# References and Resources

- <https://kystats.ky.gov/Latest/ECW>
- <https://cscce.berkeley.edu/publications/report/financing-early-educator-quality-a-values-based-budget-for-every-state/>
- <https://www.tasb.org/news-insights/explaining-the-differences-between-orientation-and-onboarding#:~:text=Orientation%20is%20the%20first%20step,how%20long%20will%20it%20last>
- <https://www.wellright.com/resources/blog/7-essential-traits-of-a-healthy-inclusive-workplace>
- <https://professional.dce.harvard.edu/blog/why-workplace-culture-matters/>
- <https://fpg.unc.edu/news/investigating-teaching-staff-turnover-early-childhood-education#:~:text=Researchers%20examined%20measures%20including%20job,Hispanic/Latina%20or%20white%20sta%EF%AC%80.>
- [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL\\_2021069.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2021069.pdf)