



Health, Wellbeing, and Cultural Safety Policy

Purpose

There are 5 components of The Center’s plan to create an intentionally connected and collaborative community. This policy focuses on how we treat ourselves and each other and how that relates to creating an innovative, culturally safe, and well space.

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- No one should have to hide, protect, or deny their identity to feel safe
- Dominant cultural values are not always best just because they are dominant

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- It is vital that we can give each other feedback, building on each other’s strengths
- It is vital that we are open to receiving feedback, so we can grow and learn

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- Innovation requires an active learning environment, where mistakes are allowed.
- Leadership is an action, not a position. Leaders share power, and open doors for others.

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- When employees take care of themselves, they can better care for the community.
- When communities take care of their members, they are healthier and more connected.

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- Everyone who walks into the Center in any capacity agrees to these basic guidelines of how we treat each other

Cultural Safety

Purpose

For an environment to be safe for all, it needs to be spiritually, socially, and emotionally safe and no one should have to hide, protect, or deny their identity. Cultural safety is the outcome for all groups when staff are aware of and actively countering implicit bias. An environment that promotes cultural safety is one that recognizes that dominant cultural values are not “best” just because they are dominant.

Strategies to Promote Cultural Safety

- Self-reflection
 - Reflecting on one’s own culture, attitudes and beliefs about “others”
 - Understanding how implicit bias forms our world view
- Direct Communication
 - Clear, value free, open and respectful communication
 - Developing trust
 - Practice of receiving feedback without defensiveness or invalidating critique
- Practice
 - Recognizing and avoiding stereotypes
 - Value marginalized voices and take action based on feedback from the most vulnerable in our community
 - Understand patterns played out when we uphold dominant cultural values above all else and adjust when necessary
- Centering marginalized groups
 - Cultural humility: we cannot know everything about every community AND we should never speak for another community
 - Indigenous voices are often completely erased from the conversation and our Center is on the unceded land of the Wiyot Tribe. Indigenous voices must be a part of our conversations and practices.
 - Language barriers often keep the most vulnerable from being able to access services. Bilingual workers should be supported and valued for the additional work they do to be a bridge to these communities.

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Purpose

Naming and acknowledging strength is foundational to growth. Naming and acknowledging areas where we can grow is also vital. We are committed to supporting each other and promoting growth, through transparent communication and relationship development, drawing on the strength and knowledge of our coworkers.

Strategies for Giving Feedback

- Communicate when someone has done a task well, or when you see a skill in them that you appreciate
- When there is an area of growth that needs to be addressed:
 - Be direct and clear about what has happened and why it needs to change
 - Offer support to facilitate that change
 - Listen and hold space for understanding
- Feedback should be given as soon as possible after an event occurs:
 - Find a private space, unless it's absolutely necessary to address immediately
 - Take time to process, breathe and find a calm head space
- Feedback should be given regardless of power differentials
- Supervisors are always available to advise on feedback or facilitate intervention and must be present if the code of conduct has been violated.

Strategies for Receiving Feedback

- Say, "Thank you."
 - If positive, accept the compliment! Let it sink in.
 - All feedback is a gift and it's important to acknowledge emotional labor involved
- It is normal to need time to process feedback before responding and if this is the case, acknowledge it and plan a time to follow-up.
- Say, "I am sorry", if appropriate. Avoid non-apologies such as, "I am sorry you were offended," or, "I am sorry you feel that way."
- Practice active listening:
 - Summarize what has been said to make sure everyone is on the same page.
 - Interpret and unpack what was said. Go deeper.
- Don't focus on intent. Most of us have good intentions, but what matters is the impact of our words. If you caused harm unintentionally, focus on the harm, not your good intentions.

Strategies for Avoiding Third Party Conversations

- If there is conflict between two individuals, it is important that it is addressed directly between those two individuals.
- Hold each other accountable. If Employee A talks to me about Employee B, I say "when are you going to address this with Employee B" and facilitate the conversation if necessary

Learning Community

Purpose

We believe that health and safety are dependent on the ability of a community to learn, grow and adapt. By committing to continued learning we hold space for innovation and collective leadership. As co-located service providers, we work to provide comprehensive and integrated services to clients by valuing collaboration with each other and the wider community.

Strategies for Innovation

- Innovation happens when it's okay to take risks
- Mistakes happen and are expected
- When learning is a part of the plan, there is room for new ideas

Strategies for Leadership

- All voices are important. We might miss valuable input if we don't listen
 - Example: Hospital janitor sees a patient given medication, then sees another doctor come in to administer medication--janitor has the information needed to keep patient healthy
- Leadership is an action, not a position
- Leaders share power and open the door for others

Strategies for Collaboration

- Workgroups based around activities, like "Case management" helps workers learn from each other and develop strategies around better support for community
- Collaboration helps streamline services so everyone who needs a case manager has one and no one has 3 case managers
- Multi-disciplinary teams provide comprehensive and integrated services to clients interacting with more than one partner at the Center

Health and Wellbeing

Purpose

It is essential to the work of The Center that staff be healthy and supported. When we are not caring for ourselves, we can hurt other people. This effect is worse when one person has more power, i.e. a supervisor can hurt a supervisee or a worker can hurt a client.

We share the responsibility for creating a safe and healthy environment (Community Care), with greater responsibility falling on those with more power. Though we recognize that individual self care is not enough to overcome systemic problems, each of us is responsible for caring for ourselves (Self Care).

Strategies for Community Care

- Leaders set the tone
 - Model self care, support staff to do the same
 - Normalize and value the work of caring for yourself
 - Receive feedback
 - Supportive supervision
 - Valuing time to come together one on one
 - Language around sick days etc.
- Community practices that build relationships:
 - Check in *definition below
 - Acknowledgements *definition below
 - Low impact disclosure
 - Giving and receiving feedback
 - Reflection
- Staff have access to formal supports:
 - All staff meeting, valuing time together relationship building, professional development, etc.
 - Supervision
 - Affinity Groups
 - Peer to peer consultation cohorts

Strategies for Self Care

- Take breaks, take time off
- Care for your physical body: eat, drink water, go outside
- Notice how you are feeling
- Notice how others are feeling
- Practice Gratitude
- Give Acknowledgments
- Know your capacity (this is fluid)
- Build relationships
- Seek Support using Low impact disclosure *definition below

- Give fair warning
- Get consent

Definitions

Check in: (From On the Verge) Takes place at the beginning of a meeting or work day. Ideally check-in is not “catch up.” The purpose of check-in is to get everyone in the room and to take the “temperature” of the group. It allows people to practice vulnerability (i.e. I had a rough morning getting the kids in the car or I’m overwhelmed with all that I have to do, etc.). A check-in question provides a way for people to get to know each other and it helps manage time. You can go in a circle or do popcorn style.

Acknowledgements: (from On the Verge) We do this at the end of each meeting/gathering as a way to close our time together. The purpose is to both offer gratitude and receive it. It is short, 3-4 minutes, and not everyone has to go. The idea is we offer gratitude to a person in the group and the whole group experiences that gratitude. When you offer gratitude, say “I acknowledge you” and speak directly to the person. When accepting acknowledgement say “thank you” or say nothing.

Low Impact Debriefing: Almost all helpers acknowledge that they have, in the past, knowingly and unknowingly traumatized their colleagues, friends and families with stories that were probably unnecessarily graphic. Using Low Impact Debriefing can help with this: it involves four key steps: self-awareness, fair warning, consent and the debrief, also called limited disclosure.

- **Increased Self Awareness**--Try to become more aware of the stories you tell and the level of detail you provide when telling a story. Ask yourself: Were all those details really necessary to the storytelling?
- **Fair Warning**--Giving fair warning allows the listener to brace themselves to hear the story. If I know that you are coming to tell me a traumatic story, I will be prepared to hear this information and it will be less traumatic for me to hear.
- **Consent**--Once you have warned the listener, you need to ask for consent. The listener then has a chance to decline, or to qualify what they are able/ready to hear.
- **Limited Disclosure**--Start on the outer circle of the story (i.e. the least traumatic information) and slowly move in towards the core (the very traumatic information) at a gradual pace. You may, in the end, need to tell the graphic details, or you may not, depending on how disturbing the story has been for you.

Code of Conduct

Purpose

The Center at McKinleyville and its surrounding spaces, including parking lot, playground, and garden, are a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for everyone. This Code of Conduct applies to everyone at The Center including guests, staff, and volunteers. We reserve the right to remove any person who does not adhere to the Code of Conduct. We do not tolerate harassment of any kind, including:

- Intimidation or threats
- Inappropriate disruption of programs or meetings
- Invasion of another guest's right to privacy
- Hurtful language
- Physical assault of any type
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwanted sexual attention
- Bullying or stalking

Especially in connection to:

- Race or ethnicity
- National origin
- Gender identity or presentation
- Sex or sexual orientation
- Age
- Disability, medical condition or pregnancy
- Religion
- Citizenship status

Strategies for Action

- If you are asked to stop any behavior, STOP immediately.
- If you experience or witness any form of harassment, please contact the nearest staff member. Lead staff will address the situation.
- You may also provide feedback via the Suggestion Box in the lobby or by email at mckinleyville.frc@gmail.com. Please provide detailed information and your contact information
- If you feel unsafe in your immediate situation, alert our staff, move to a safe location and if appropriate dial 911