



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

Embracing the Autumn Hues: Pathways to Harvesting Your Impact and Peaking the Leadership/Staff Dynamic

Virginia Department of Social Services BPRO Fall 2024 Conference

Are you a director or supervisor juggling the ever-changing seasons of expectation? Are you an administrative, self-sufficiency, benefits or workforce front line staff member raking up that seemingly never-ending pile of leaves?

If you answered yes, then this workshop is for YOU! As the responsibilities of both supervision and staff change, we must juggle the acorns of self-care, work life balance and managing mutual expectations. To strengthen the relational roots during this new season we'll emphasize intentional relationship building, establishing professional boundaries and mutual respect at all levels.

During this workshop we'll sway the crisp breeze of willpower toward appreciating the work that you do and the difference you make while marking the trails to strengthen your pursuits.





Pathways to Harvesting Your Impact and Peaking the Leadership/Staff Dynamic

- Leadership, Supervision and Staff Relationship
- Employee Retention
- Hope Rising DSS
- Self Care/Work Life Balance



Before we get started.....

In thinking about leadership and staff challenges and barriers, what are you struggling with the most?

What do you hope to gain from this workshop?



Leadership, Supervision and Staff Relationship



Leadership

➤ Qualities of Successful Leaders

- Integrity
- Resilience
- Self Awareness
- Confidence
- Delegator
- Transparency
- Creativity
- Decision Making
- Humility
- Lead by Example
- Strategic Thinking
- Adaptability
- Conflict Resolution
- Respect
- Innovation
- Courage
- Communicate Effectively
- Empathy
- Vision
- Accountability



Supervision

- **Qualities for Successful Supervision**
 - Problem Solving
 - Time Management
 - Effective Interpersonal Communication
 - Critical Thinking
 - Emotional Intelligence
 - Teamwork
 - Confidence
 - Cultural Humility
 - Diversity Awareness
 - Flexibility
 - Willingness to Learn
 - Empathy
 - Cooperation
 - Mentorship
 - Active Listening
 - Positivity
 - Adaptability
 - Delegation
 - Goal Oriented



The Goal of Supervision

Focus on the
development and
learning of staff

Assist staff in
understanding required
outcomes

Acknowledge staff skill
level and clearly convey
expectations

Three Roles of Supervisors

Teacher

Helps staff learn new strategies to work with clients

Consultant

Collaborates with staff to take the lead in identifying appropriate strategies to work with clients

Counselor

Assists staff in exploring the relationship between them and their clients

Supervisory Relationship

Listening

Attending
Reflecting
Questioning
Summarizing
Encouraging

Modeling

Reflecting on Coaching
Making observations
Providing Feedback
Using Metaphors

Assessing

Boundary analysis
Expectation analysis
Scope of practice

Staff

- **Qualities of Successful Staff**

- Problem Solving/Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Reliability
- Honesty
- Enthusiasm
- Teamwork
- Motivated
- Work Ethic
- Adaptability
- Proactive
- Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
- Social Intelligence
- Dedication
- Ambitious
- Detail Oriented
- Independence
- Confidence
- Autonomy



Interactive #1- Leadership, Supervision and Staff Relationship

Please share examples of your experience with leadership, supervision and staff relationship dynamics.

What qualities of success represented in the previous slides were relatable to you?

What goals do you have in mind to strengthen relationships and what are some pathways you can navigate to get there?

How can VDSS assist with strengthening your efforts?



Employee Retention



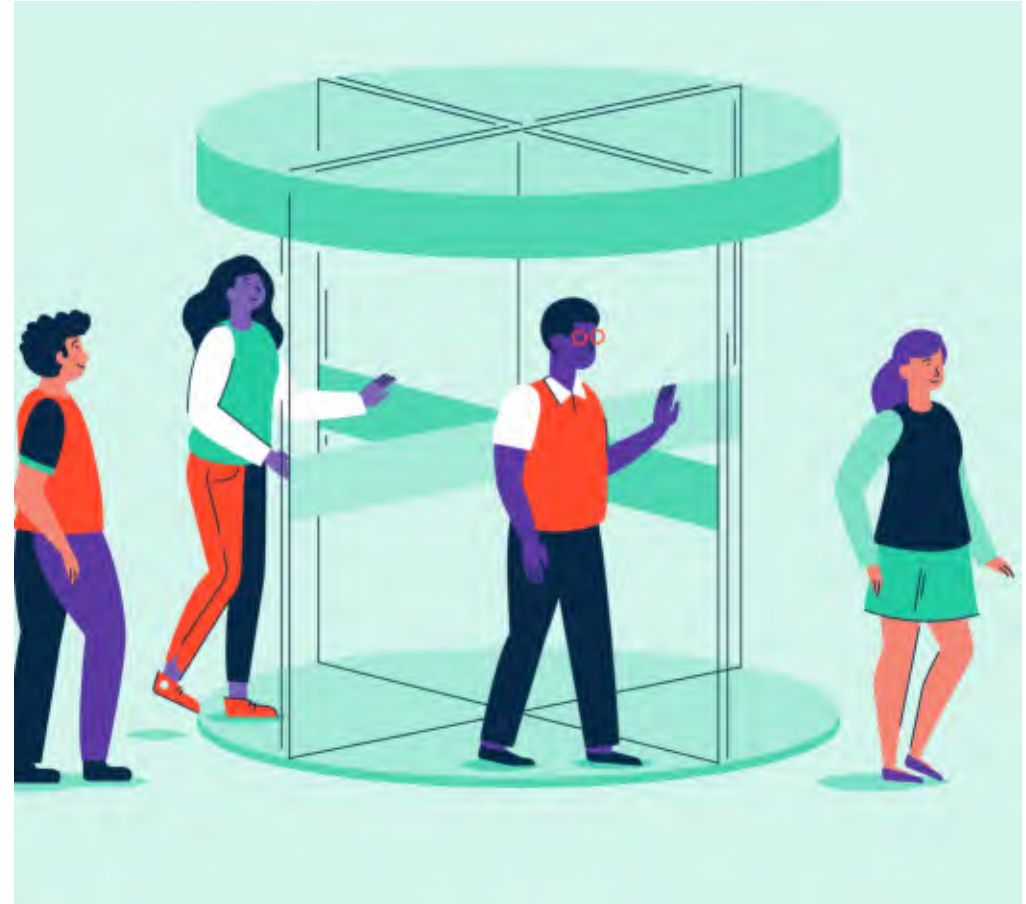
High Turnover Effects on the Local Agency

- Lack of historical knowledge
- Employee burnout as their capacity is overextended
- Constant cycle of training
- Supervisory burnout due to competing priorities with programmatic expectations, leadership role requirements and staff needs
- Accuracy, timeliness and customer service goals face many roadblocks
- Limited time to engage in leadership and professional development opportunities



High Turnover Effects on VDSS as a Whole

- Increased automation processes provide both assistance and challenges to the human component
- Regional level impacts require staff to provide intensive services and support to localities with capacity constraints and knowledge gaps
- Challenges programmatic areas to maneuver policy requirements while also balancing systematic flow with minimal impact to local agency business processes
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Ongoing evaluation of the effects on the vulnerable citizens that we serve



The Three R's of Employee Retention

Respect

"The Cornerstone of Trust"

Recognition

"The Power of Appreciation"

Reward

"The Motivational Catalyst"

Respect

- **Integrity is the cornerstone**
- **Respect is a two-way street**
 - Mutual respect and understanding between leadership, supervision and staff members
 - Respect for our clients and their circumstances
- **We need to differentiate between expectations and respect**
 - Professional emotional intelligence
 - Acknowledge that “microwave service” is not always available or reasonable
- **Recognize that we are all diverse individuals with different backgrounds, personalities, thought processes and learning styles**

Recognition

- **Recognition comes in many forms and must be fair and consistent**
 - Staff have different desires for recognition and supervision should adapt to suit the individuals' preferences
- **Highlighting accomplishments fuels a positive work environment and encourages engagement**
- **Peer to peer recognition can help foster growth, development and mutual appreciation**
- **The impacts of recognition can have a profound effect on both the giver and receiver**

Reward

- “Show Me the Money”
- Monetary and Non-Monetary
 - Incentives
 - Time
 - Flexibility
 - Work Life Balance
 - Salary Increases
 - Opportunities for Promotion
 - Professional Development



Interactive# 2- The Three R's of Employee Retention

In thinking through The Three R's Respect, Recognition and Reward...

Do you think the dynamic in the local agency has changed with respect to the Three R's pre vs. post pandemic? Please provide some examples.

How do you prefer to receive recognition? Does your agency provide you this support based on your preference?

Please share a positive experience relating to a time when you received recognition and or a reward for your accomplishment.

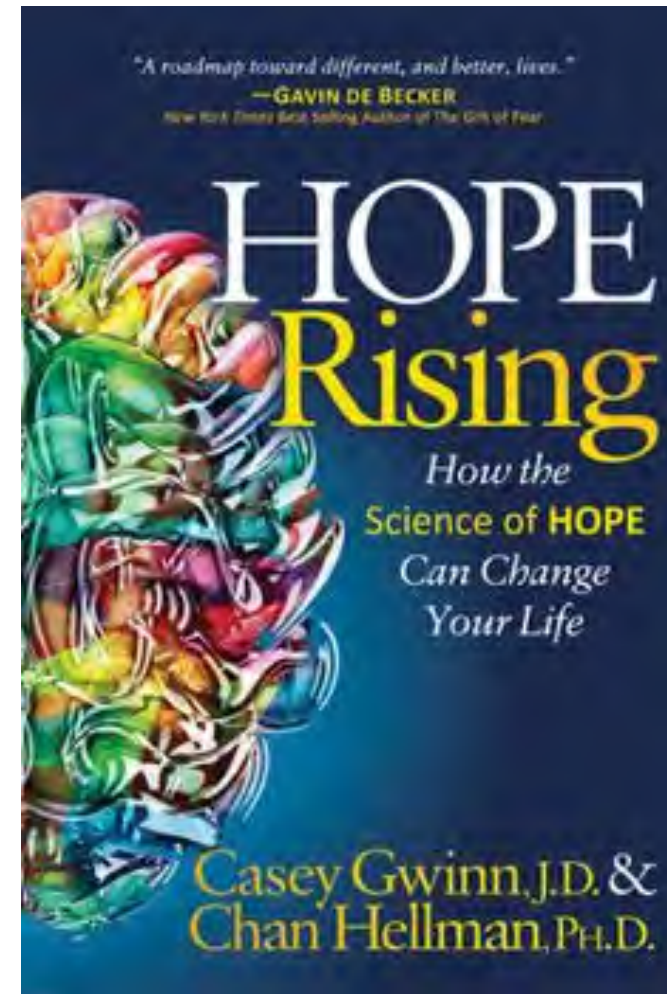


Hope Rising DSS



The Office of Trauma and Resilience Policy (OTRP) identified a primary goal to facilitate culture change within the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) to more fully embody trauma-informed and healing-centered practice and policy. The Science of Hope is well established as a vital coping resource and protective factor for children, adults, and families across the lifespan, and has a strong research record for being one of the best protective measures for psychological well-being. VDSS has selected a multi-phase project aimed to infuse hope into the agency by way of organizational culture, organizational policies, and organizational services.

Based on *Hope Rising: How the Science of HOPE Can Change Your Life* by Casey Gwinn and Dr. Chan Hellman



The Science of Hope

HOPE is the belief that the future can be better than today, and you have a role to play in pursuing that future. YOU have the power to make it so!

Three simple concepts of Goals, Pathways, and Willpower. Each of us sets and pursues goals every day. Hope centers on our capacity to set and pursue the pathways toward the goals and dedicate the willpower to sustain those pathways pursuits.

Pathways are the roadmap or routes to our goals

Willpower is the ability to focus or direct mental energy (attention and intention) on those identified pathways to our goals.

Both Pathways AND Willpower are required for hope.

Wishing is having the desire (willpower) but NOT having the pathways
Wishing is passive toward our goals.

Hope is about taking action to pursue the future you desire.



Hope is ONE of the Strongest Predictors of Well-Being

Hope can improve workforce well-being

Hope can assist to mitigate the negative effects of burnout and secondary traumatic stress
The University of Oklahoma's research shows that leaders who incorporate hope centered activities can reduce turnover and increase job satisfaction and employee well-being

Hope can be measured

What is **The Science of Hope?**

Hope is the belief that your future can be better than today, and you have the power to make it so! Hope is not a wish - it can be measured, and you can learn how to use it to reach your goals.

Create Pathways that will Lead to Your Goals

Pathways are routes to your goals. You may have to adjust pathways when there are obstacles along the way.

Why implement the Science of Hope?

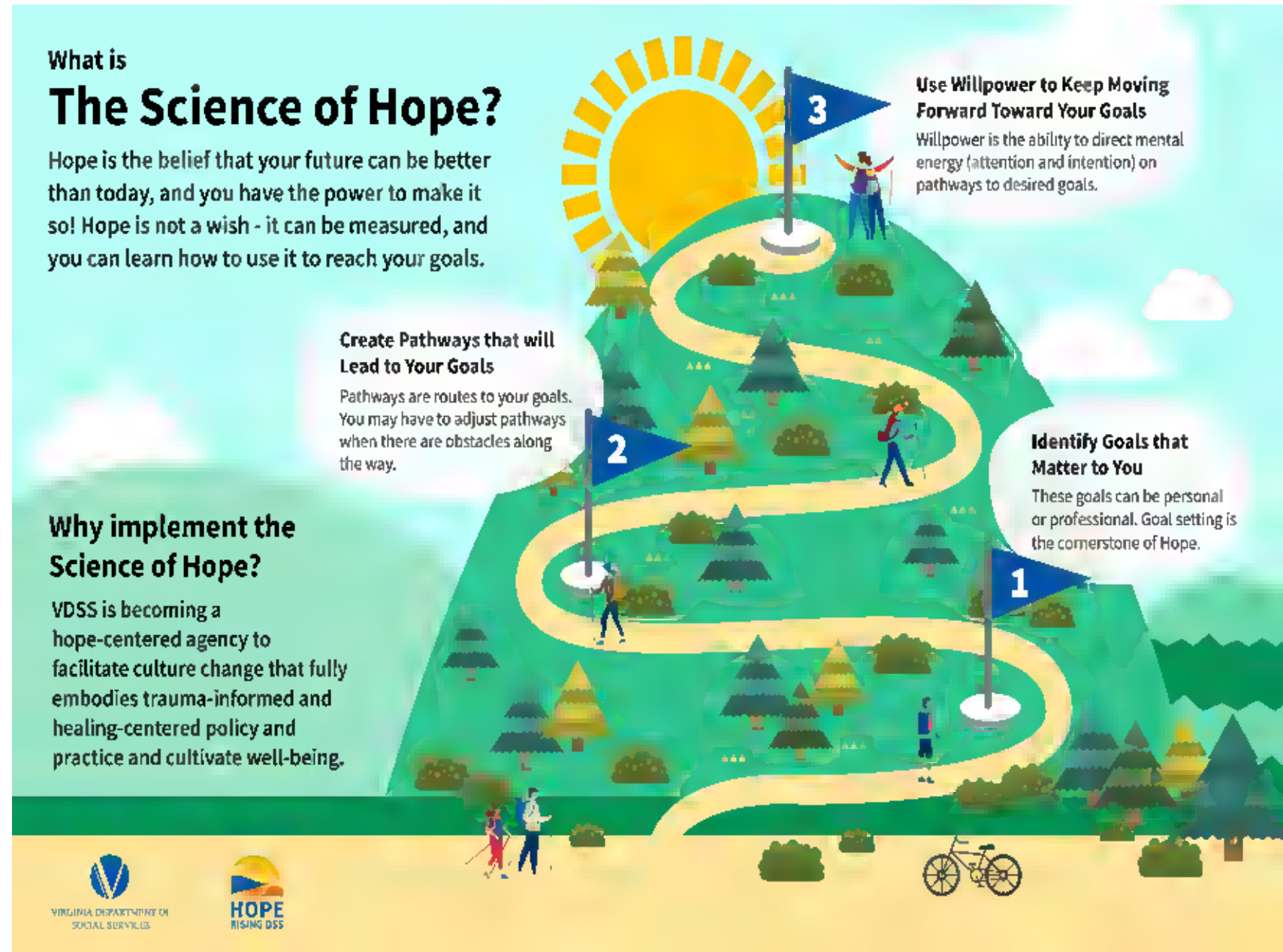
VDSS is becoming a hope-centered agency to facilitate culture change that fully embodies trauma-informed and healing-centered policy and practice and cultivate well-being.

Use Willpower to Keep Moving Forward Toward Your Goals

Willpower is the ability to direct mental energy (attention and intention) on pathways to desired goals.

Identify Goals that Matter to You

These goals can be personal or professional. Goal setting is the cornerstone of Hope.



Hope Rising DSS FUSION Page/Resources

➤ [Hope Rising DSS- FUSION Page](#)

➤ [Hope Rising DSS- Resources Page](#)

➤ [Science of Hope Published Research](#)

- *Recently published research by Dr. Angela Pharris. In this research, she evaluated hope awareness training and its impact on workforce burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and knowledge/application of hope. The results show training is a protective factor for the workforce with lower burnout, STS, and increased knowledge of hope*



Interactive#3- The Science of Hope

Burnout occurs when job demands exceed the available job resources. This can lead to work disengagement, emotional strain, and intrusive thinking. Burnout is linked to lower Hope. This occurs when you have goals you desire in your work, but the pathways become blocked, or you cannot overcome barriers, and the job demands deplete your willpower or mental energy. Burnout can lend itself to an experience of lost Hope or apathy.



What does it look like when you experience burnout?

How are the tenants of Hope currently utilized to support staff from burnout? What services/support are offered to staff?

How can you boost your resistance to burnout and compassion fatigue?



Self Care/Work Life Balance



Vicarious Trauma

Vicarious Trauma

The emotional residue of exposure to traumatic stories and experiences of others through work.

Warning Signs

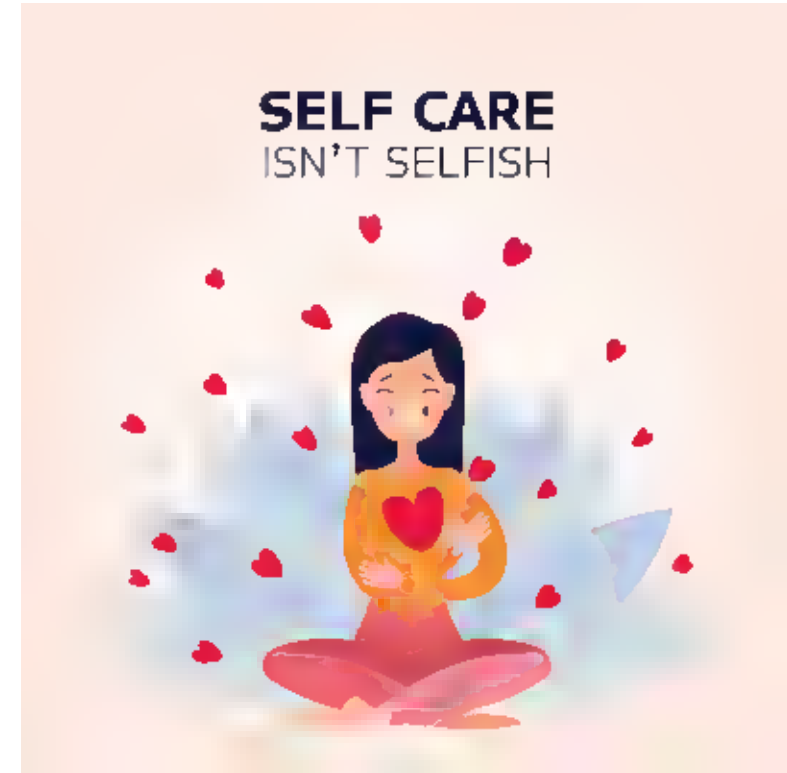
- Lingering feelings of anger, rage and sadness about client victimization
- Becoming overly involved emotionally with the client
- Experiencing bystander guilt
- Being preoccupied with thoughts of clients outside of the work environment
- A change in your world view
- Can lead to fatigue, restlessness or difficulty falling asleep
- Avoidance of work or meaningful interaction with clients
- Feeling vulnerable and worrying excessively
- Withdrawal from personal relationships



Self Care

Meaning of Self Care - The practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own mental and physical health. Self care can help staff respond in a healthy manner to the vicarious trauma that we potentially suffer from/experience daily.

Staff should maximize support from colleagues to avoid isolation and for expression. Nurture yourself so that you can heal from vicarious trauma by making time for things that bring you peace and joy.



Causes of Poor Work-Life Balance

In General:

Increased responsibility at work and in life.

Longer working hours/Feeling the need or having to complete tasks after hours and on weekends.

Specific to Social Services:

Nature of our work-The needs of our citizens, timeliness measures, systems constraints, competing priorities, staffing shortages and training and development.

*Technology has translated into we are never truly away from our personal lives.

Achieving Work-Life Balance

- **Set Boundaries Between Work and Personal Time**
- **Take Breaks Throughout the Day**
- **Schedule Time for Your Social Life, Hobbies and Interests**
- **Say No To Extra Work-(May sometimes seem impossible)**
- **Take Vacations/Time-Off**
- **Practice Self-Compassion**
- **Limit Distractions**
- **Work From Home if Possible (If this is best for you as some individuals prefer an office setting)**
- **Exercise**
- **Communicate Boundaries**



Questions?

Shea McCracken
TANF/VIEW Program Consultant Sr.
emilyshea.mccracken@dss.virginia.gov

Melissa A. Cooke
Eastern Region TANF/VIEW Consultant
melissa.cooke@dss.virginia.gov