



# GROWING A RESTORATIVE AGENCY

# PRESENTERS



**Katisha Everett**  
Program Manager



**Neely McElroy**  
Deputy Director



**Nicole Saltzman**  
Program Coordinator



**Rhonda Smith**  
Administrator

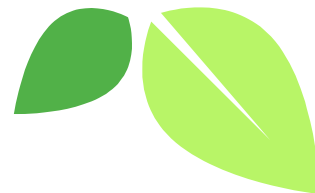
## Audience Team Members



**Rachel Fulton**  
Social Worker III



**Richard Livingston**  
Program Supervisor





# REFLECTION

- Thinking about yourself, write down one thing you do to **help** your relationships with those that work with you
- Now, write down one thing that might **hinder** your relationships with those you work with



2019: The Dirt was Dry

1

2021: Sowing the Seeds

3

2023: Plants Sprouting

5

2020: Cultivating the Soil

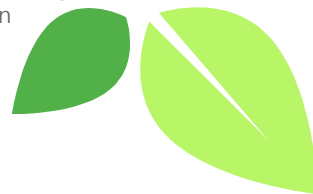
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2022: Watering the Seeds

4

2024 & Beyond: Tending to the Garden

6





# THE DIRT WAS DRY

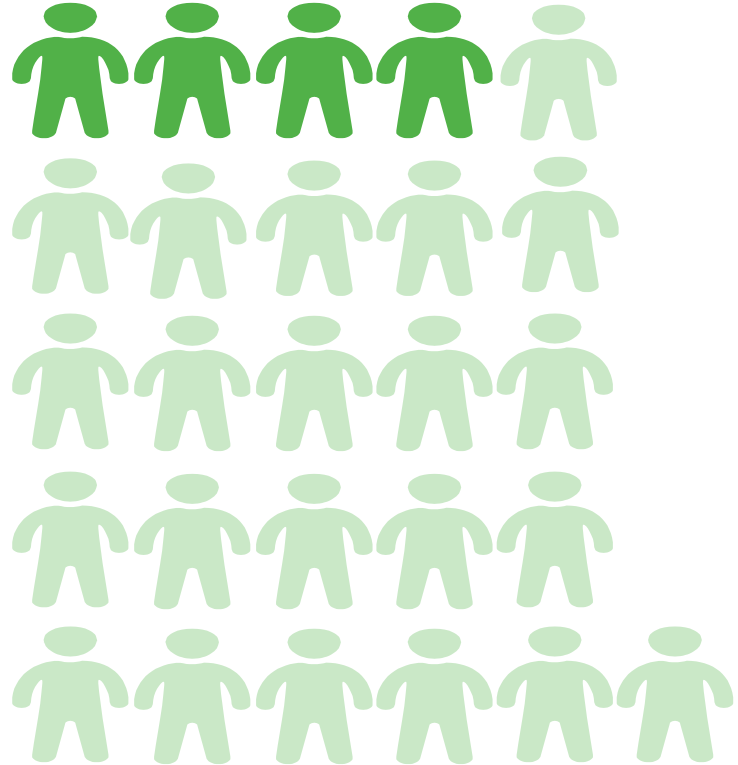
- Staff Retention was a big problem
- There was a Grand Jury report and a Consultant hired to assess and provide feedback to the agency

70%  
Retention Rate

29%  
Turnover Rate

12%  
Vacancy Rate (17 of 141 FTE)

## HIRES VS. SEPARATIONS



# STRATEGIES

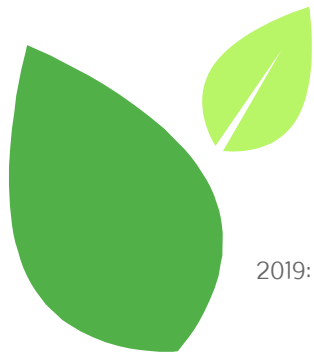
Hire, Hire, Hire!

Track our Statistics

Conduct Exit Interviews

What can we do differently?

CREATE A TRAUMA  
INFORMED WORKPLACE!



2019: The Dirt was Dry

1

2021: Sowing the Seeds

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2023: Plants Sprouting

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2020: Cultivating  
the Soil

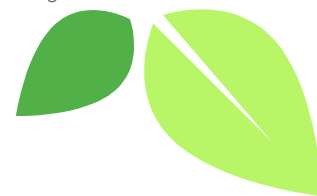
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# CULTIVATING THE SOIL

- Partnered with Advancing CA's Trauma Informed Systems (ACTS)
  - Conducted an Assessment
  - Identified Secondary Traumatic Stress & Psychological Safety as Focus Areas

# STRATEGIES

Surveyed Staff

Introduced Trauma 101

Trained Supervisors on Reflective Supervision

82%

Retention Rate

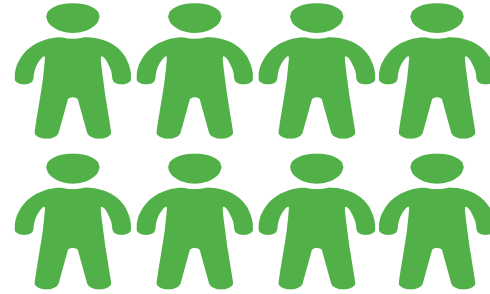
28%

Turnover Rate

15.5%

Vacancy Rate (22 of 142 FTE)

## HIRES



## SEPARATIONS





2019: The Dirt was Dry

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2021: Sowing the Seeds

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2020: Cultivating the Soil

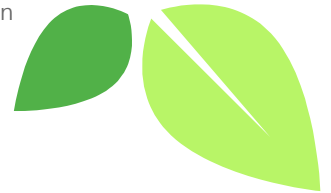
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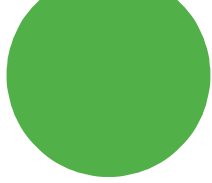
2024 & Beyond: Tending to the Garden

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2021

# SOWING THE SEEDS

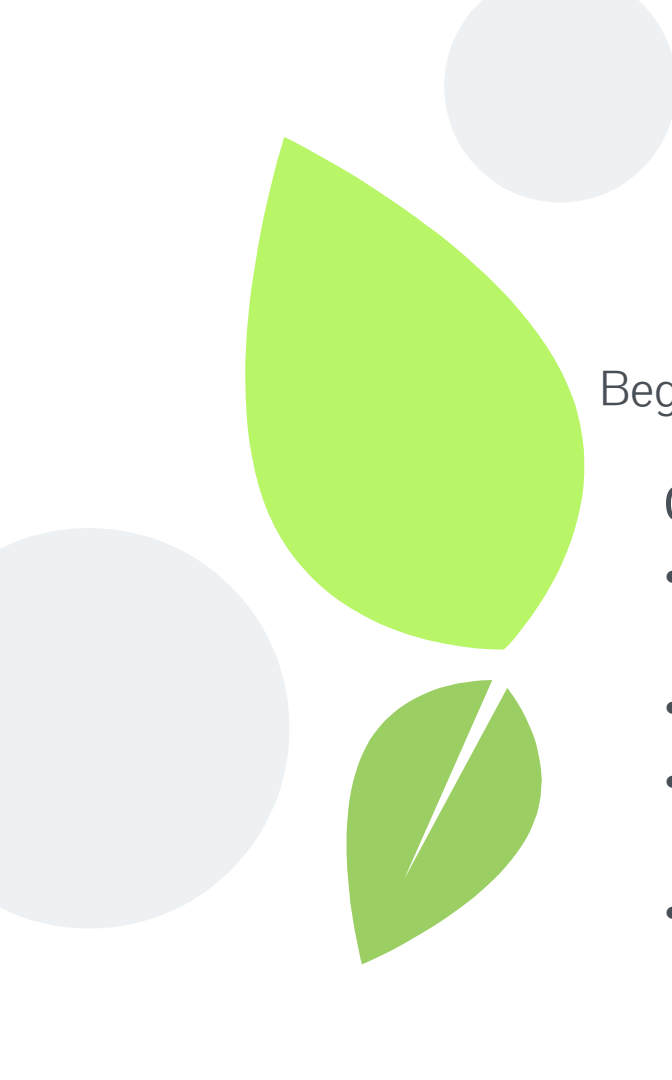


# STRATEGIES

Formed TILT

Continue to Survey Staff

Launched Reflective  
Supervision Consultation



# TRAUMA INFORMED LEADERSHIP TEAM (TILT)

Began Meeting in May 11, 2021

## CHANGE VISION

- Reduction in Staff Turnover
- Improve Morale
- Improve Client Outcomes
- Improve Staff Satisfaction

## FOCUS

Create Structured Mechanisms to Identify and Reduce the Impact of Secondary Traumatic Stress on the Workforce and Improve Staff Well-Being and Safety

# REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION CONSULTATION

Contracted with



Pilot Groups began in January 2022:

2 Social Worker Groups: 14 staff

1 Support Staff Group: 7 staff

1 Supervisor Group: 6 staff

Pilot Groups completed before & after surveys, with staff reporting:

- Being better able to identify potential trauma responses within themselves and the individuals they work with
- A higher confidence in effectively managing any signs or symptoms of burnout within themselves





# ON-DEMAND REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION CONSULTATION

Confidential, collaborative session with an outside Reflective Consultant. Allows space to slow down and navigate through the thoughts, feelings, and interactions experienced within your professional role.

Professional development approach designed to help reduce the risks of burnout and Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS), strengthen reflective capacity, and provide tools and resources to help you succeed in your professional role.

***January 2022-August 2023: 130 Sessions have been held!***

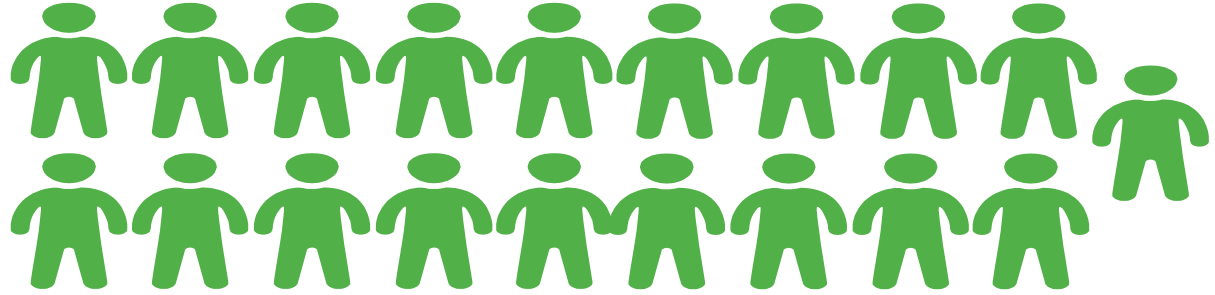
# ACTS STAFF SURVEY ON SUPERVISOR USE REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION



Revealed Trust Issues

Low Response Rate

# HIRES



# SEPARATIONS



67%

Retention Rate

33%

Turnover Rate

19%

Vacancy Rate (27 of 142 FTE)



# REFLECTION

Thinking about someone you work with  
– could be someone who reports to you, a co-worker, a community partner.

- What might this person say about what you do to **help** your relationship?
- What might they say **hinders** your relationship?



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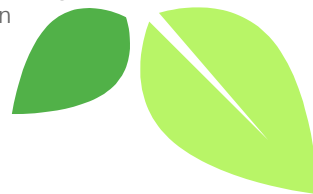
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2022: Watering the Seeds

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2022

# WATERING THE SEEDS

- Change in Leadership
- Cast a Vision and Promoted Resilience Values

# AGENCY VALUES

RESPECT

EMPOWERMENT

SYSTEM EFFICIENCY

INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

LISTENING & LEARNING

INQUIRY & CURIOSITY

ENGAGEMENT

NIMBLE

CREATIVITY

EMPATHY



# STRATEGIES

Discuss Workforce  
Challenges with  
Supervisors and  
Prioritize Action Steps

Write a Staffing White Paper

Conduct a Staff Satisfaction Survey

Restructured the Organization



# STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

## One

Hire and assign Extra Help Social Worker IIs to provide case management assistance

## Two

Hire Extra Help Social Worker IIIs and Supervisors to fill gaps

## Three

Create flexible job options (i.e. divide 1 FTE into two 0.5 FTE)

## Four

Investigate the Social Worker I classification to provide a pipeline to Social Worker III

## Five

Reclassify Social Worker III positions to Social Worker II positions

## Six

Add a fourth Social Services Manager

# 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## One

Added 1  
Manager  
position and  
expanded  
from 3 to 4  
sections


## Two

Added 3  
Supervisor  
positions

## Three

Under filled  
positions to  
create  
additional SW  
II positions to  
support the  
SW IIIs

# BASELINE SURVEY QUESTIONS



Reflecting on the past 6 month period, does leadership communicate information effectively, transparently, and in a timely manner?

Considering the agency today, how hopeful do you feel for the future of Solano County Child Welfare Services?

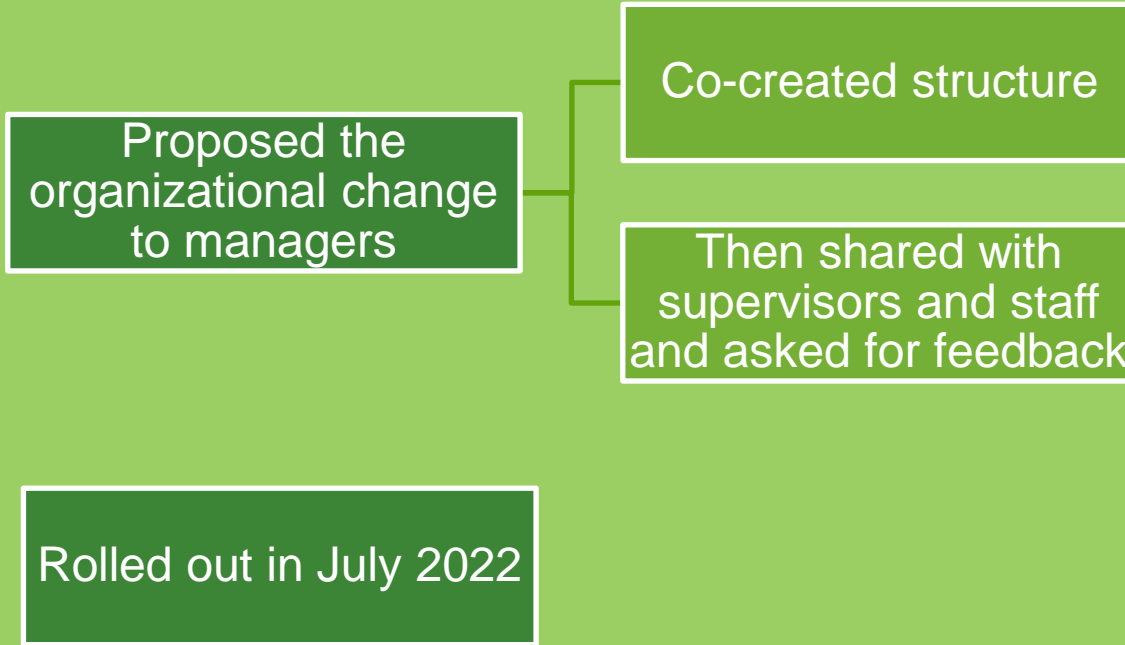
Over the past six months, how valued have you felt for your contributions to Solano County Child Welfare Services?

# BASELINE SURVEY

Overall, since you began your employment how would you describe Solano County CWS' culture in one word?

Positive (22)	Neutral (4)	Negative (22)
Collaborative (x2), Strengths-based, Dynamic, Family, Strive, Moving, Supportive, Transparent, Changing (x2), Driven, Hopeful, Improving (x2), Transitioning (x2), Better, Manageable, Caring, Passionate, Promising	Typical, "Aight", Teetering, Unsure	Chaos, Stressful (x3), Petty, Negative, Segregated, Entitled, Conservative, Inconsistent (x2), Toxic (x2), Punitive (x2), Unhealthy, Taxing, Adverse, Cynical, Overwhelmed, Abusive, Siloes

# Organizational Change Management



# STRATEGIES

## TRANSPARENCY & COMMUNICATION

Hold Quarterly Staff Meetings

Write Weekly Emails

Create Suggestion Box



# TRANSPARENCY & COMMUNICATION

- Consistent All Staff Meetings
- Weekly Emails keep staff up to date with all things CWS (hiring, staffing changes, tips, resources, etc.)
- Received 77 Suggestions to date

# STRATEGIES



## SYSTEM EFFICIENCY

Created Workgroup called SET

Added Policy Supervisor

Managers Conducted Section Analyses

Restructured the Office Assistants



# SYSTEM EFFICIENCY



# STRATEGIES

COLLABORATION AND  
SHARED DECISION  
MAKING

Agency Collaboration Team (ACT)

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# COLLABORATION & SHARED DECISION MAKING

- Created Agency Collaboration Team (ACT) Meetings – first meeting held December 2022
- Team approach to brainstorm, problem solve, and develop action plans
- Critical incident debriefings, complex case decisions, time sensitive placement arrangements, practice conversations
- Have had 9 ACT Meetings to date

# STRATEGIES

## CULTURE

Emotional Intelligence for Managers

Listening Sessions Concept

# CULTURE – IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness (Empathy)
- Relationship Management



# LISTENING SESSIONS

- When are you at your best at work? What are you doing? What are the conditions? What is present?
- On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your wellbeing at work right now? What do you think might be influencing that score?
- Do you feel there is anything that can be done to improve things at the moment with your wellbeing at work?
- What would increase your score?
- What worries you most when you're at work?
- What can we do to show our appreciation for the work you do and recognize you for your efforts?
- Are there any other assignments or positions you are interested in?

73%  
Retention Rate

29%  
Turnover Rate

16%  
Vacancy Rate (23.5 of 145 FTE)

# HIRES & SEPERATIONS





2019: The Dirt was Dry

1

2021: Sowing the Seeds

3

2023: Plants  
Sprouting

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2020: Cultivating the Soil

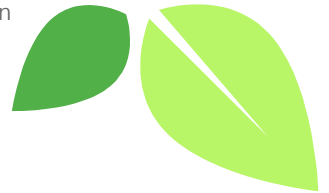
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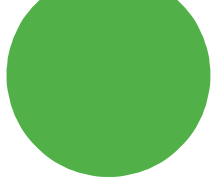




# PLANTS SPROUTING



- Restorative Agency Vision Refined
  - “Drip” Good Works into all Areas
  - Sections are Building Teams with In-Person Meetings, Soliciting Feedback
- Expanded Emotional Intelligence Training to Supervisors



2023

# VISION

Building open its RESILIENCE values, Solano CWS is building a Restorative Agency that leads with empathy, listens with curiosity, responds to challenges with creativity and evolves into a trauma-responsive, healing environment where its staff thrive, feel competent and are provided the resources to support the restoration of families and protection of children.



# STRATEGIES

## BUILDING MORALE

All Staff Appreciation



Team Building



Adding CWS Wins Box



# STRATEGIES



## DIG DEEPER INTO PROBLEM AREAS

Listening Sessions

Analyzing Exit Interview Data

Analyzing Survey Results

# LISTENING SESSIONS

- Kicked off in 2023
- Voluntary
- Held by the manager at time of passing
- Completed 53 Listening Sessions
- Well received



## LISTENING SESSION QUOTE

***“The fact that I am sitting here talking to you means a lot, I mean, that's big, really big”***



# EXIT INTERVIEW DATA FOR 12/2019-10/2022

## *WHY OUR STAFF RESIGN*

### Neutral Reasons

- Relocation/Promoting\*
- Promotion
- Remote Position
- Personal Reasons
- Closer to Home
- Stay at Home w/  
Children
- Explore Opportunities
- Childcare
- Health

### Job Specific

- Workload/Caseload\*
- Stress\*
- Burnout\*
- Change in Supervisor
- Not Feeling Joy
- Unit Assignment
- Unpredictability

### Leadership

- Supervisor/Manager  
Relationship Difficult
- Lack of Support
- Unavailable
- Involuntary Transfer
- New Sups & New  
Employees
- Conflict w/ Supervisor\*

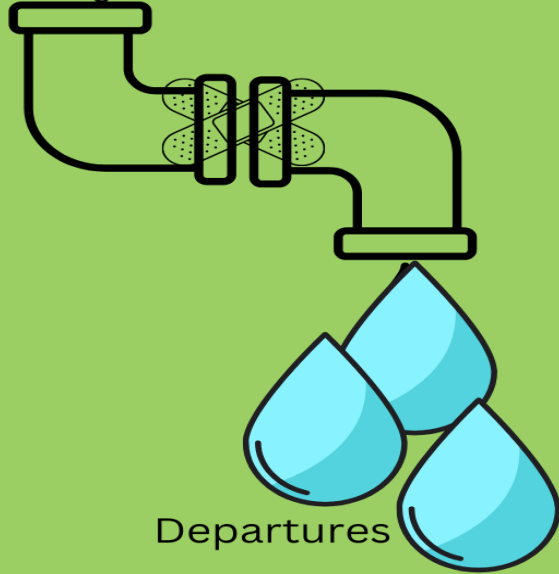
### Training

- Didn't Feel Prepared\*
- Needed more Support
- Poor Training
- Role Specific Training
- Dependent on Co-  
Workers\*
- Inconsistent
- Figure it Out



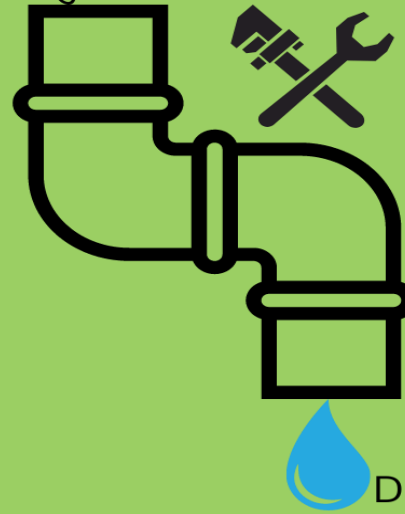
# DIGGING DEEPER INTO RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

New Hires



New Hires

Restorative





# SURVEY

Overall, since you began your employment how would you describe Solano County CWS' culture in one word?

Positive (56)	Neutral (5)	Negative (15)
Positive, Diverse (x2), Supportive (x5), Improving (x6), Teamwork (x2), Evolving (x12), Committed, Conscious, Transparent (x2), Progressive (x2), Positive (x2), Inviting, Thriving, Restorative, Progress (x2), Hard Working, Family Centered (x2), Better, Changing, Hopeful (x2), Optimistic (x2), Safe, Welcoming (x2), Transitioning (x2), Shifting, Growing	Wearisome, I don't know, Neutral, Random, Fibrillating	Slow, Unequal, Messy, Disorganized, Overwhelming, "High Schoolish", Disingenuous, Stagnant, Decling, Demanding, Tired, Resistant, Confused, Controlling, Draining

60/100

Mar. 2022

Mar. 2023

72/100

Reflecting on the past 6 month period, does leadership communicate information effectively, transparently, and in a timely manner?

*From 55 to 88 responses*

Considering the agency today, how hopeful do you feel for the future of Solano County CWS?

*From 54 to 88 responses*

64/100



**Mar. 2022**

**Mar. 2023**



75/100



55/100

Mar. 2022

Mar. 2023


66/100

Over the past six months, how valued have you felt for your contributions to Solano County CWS?

*From 54 to 89 responses*

# RETENTION & TURNOVER

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Retention	70%	82%	67%	73%
Turnover	29%	28%	33%	29%



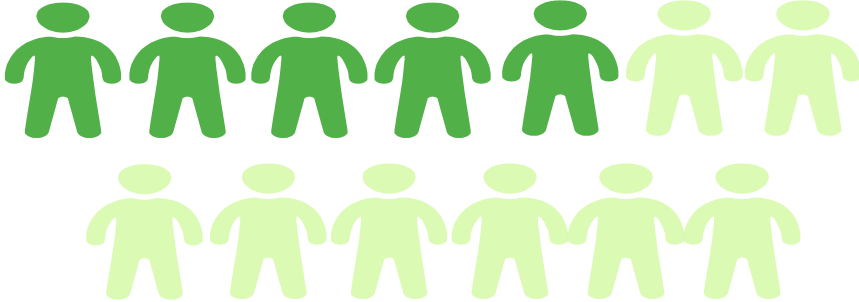
	New Hire	Seperation	Net Gain/ Loss
2019	26	22	+4
2020	8	18	-10
2021	19	21	-2
2022	26	11	+15

Pending  
Retention Rate

Pending  
Turnover Rate

11.7%  
Vacancy Rate (17 of 145 FTE)

# HIRES/ SEPARATIONS





# REFLECTION

- What is something that you can do to build upon your strengths
- What is something you can do to address the potential hindrances?





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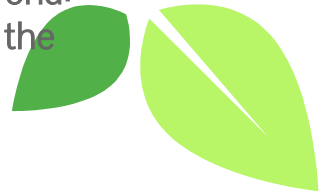
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2022: Watering the Seeds

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2024 & Beyond:  
Tending to the  
Garden

6





Relationships Matter

Be Creative

Push the Boundaries

Listen to What's Being Said Between the Lines

# LESSONS LEARNED

Maintain a Sense of Urgency to Hiring

Learn from Exit Interviews and Listening Sessions

Take Risks

Have a Communication Feedback Loop



# MOVING IN THIS DIRECTION



“*Trauma-sensitivity means being in direct contact with the truth of how difficult it can be to be a human, and making an effort to create an internal environment where individuals can grow, develop, and thrive – not in spite of those hardships but right along with them.*”

