

Buffett  
Early Childhood  
Institute

*at the University of Nebraska*

# **Be Well to Teach Well: Supporting Wellbeing Among Early Childhood Teachers**

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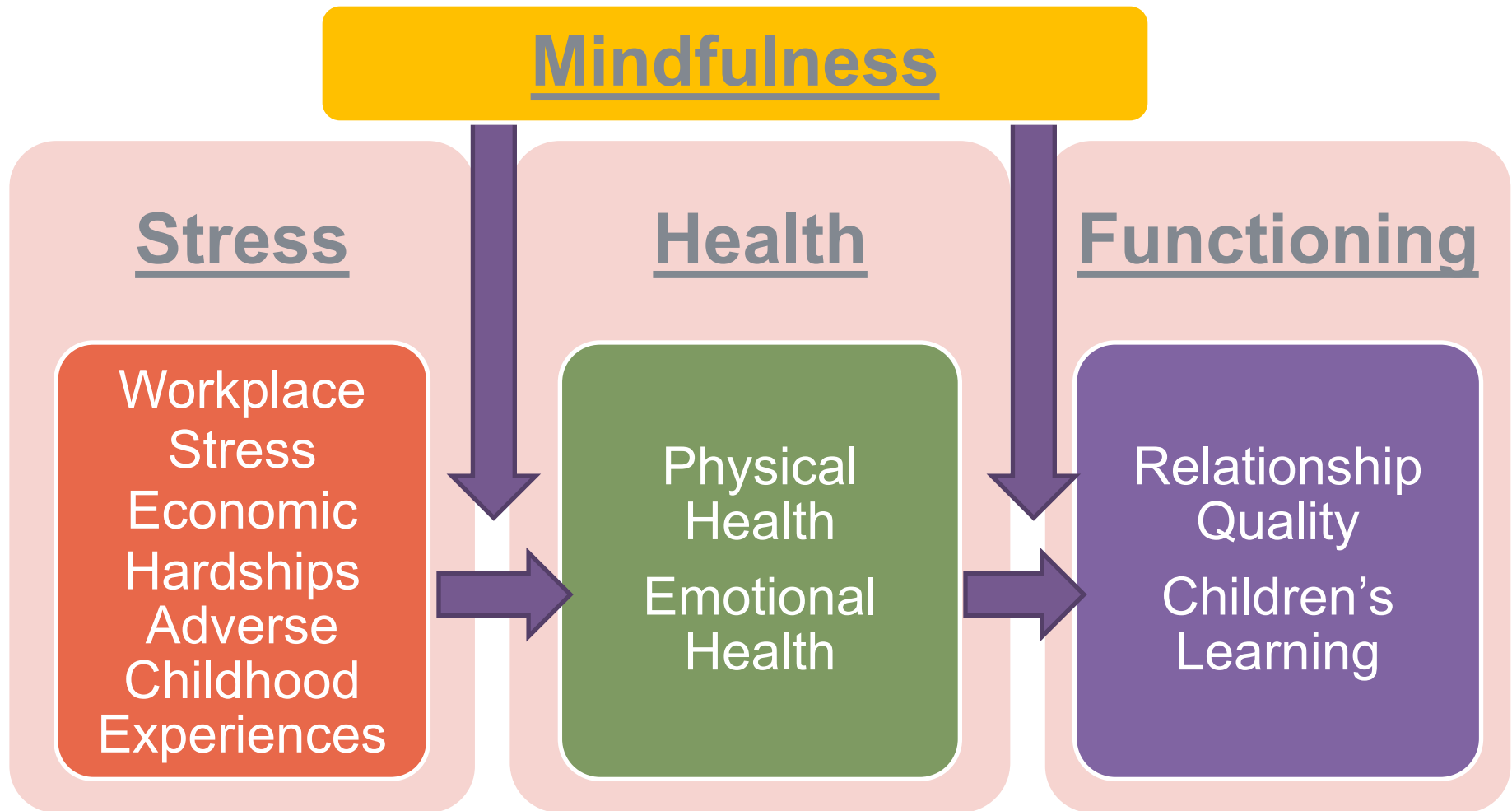


# Where we started...

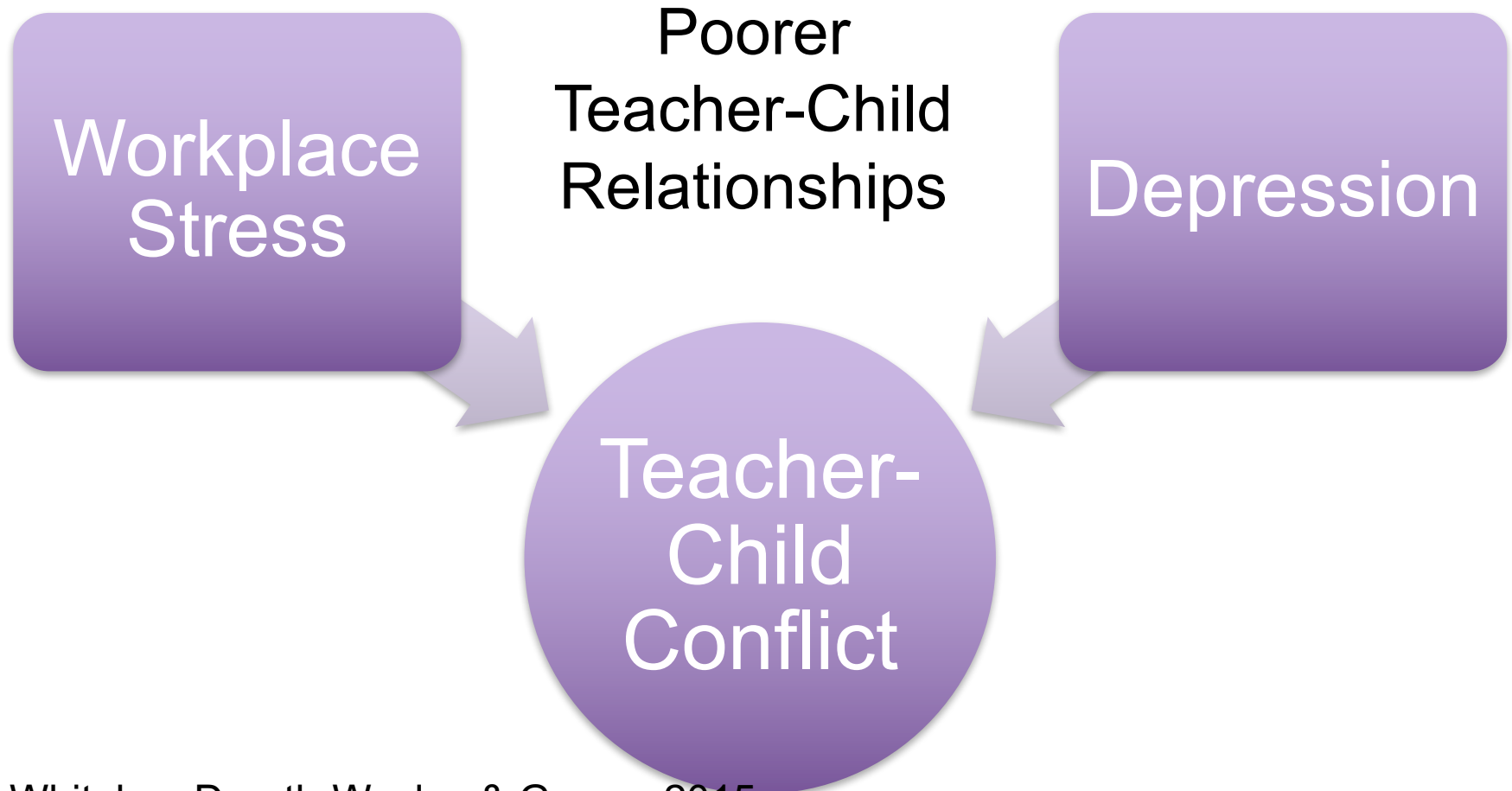


- **Depression**  
(Roberts, et al., in press)
- **Turnover**  
(Roberts, et al., in press)
- **Health**  
(Whitaker, et al., 2014)

# ECE Teacher Wellbeing: The PA Head Start Staff Wellness Survey

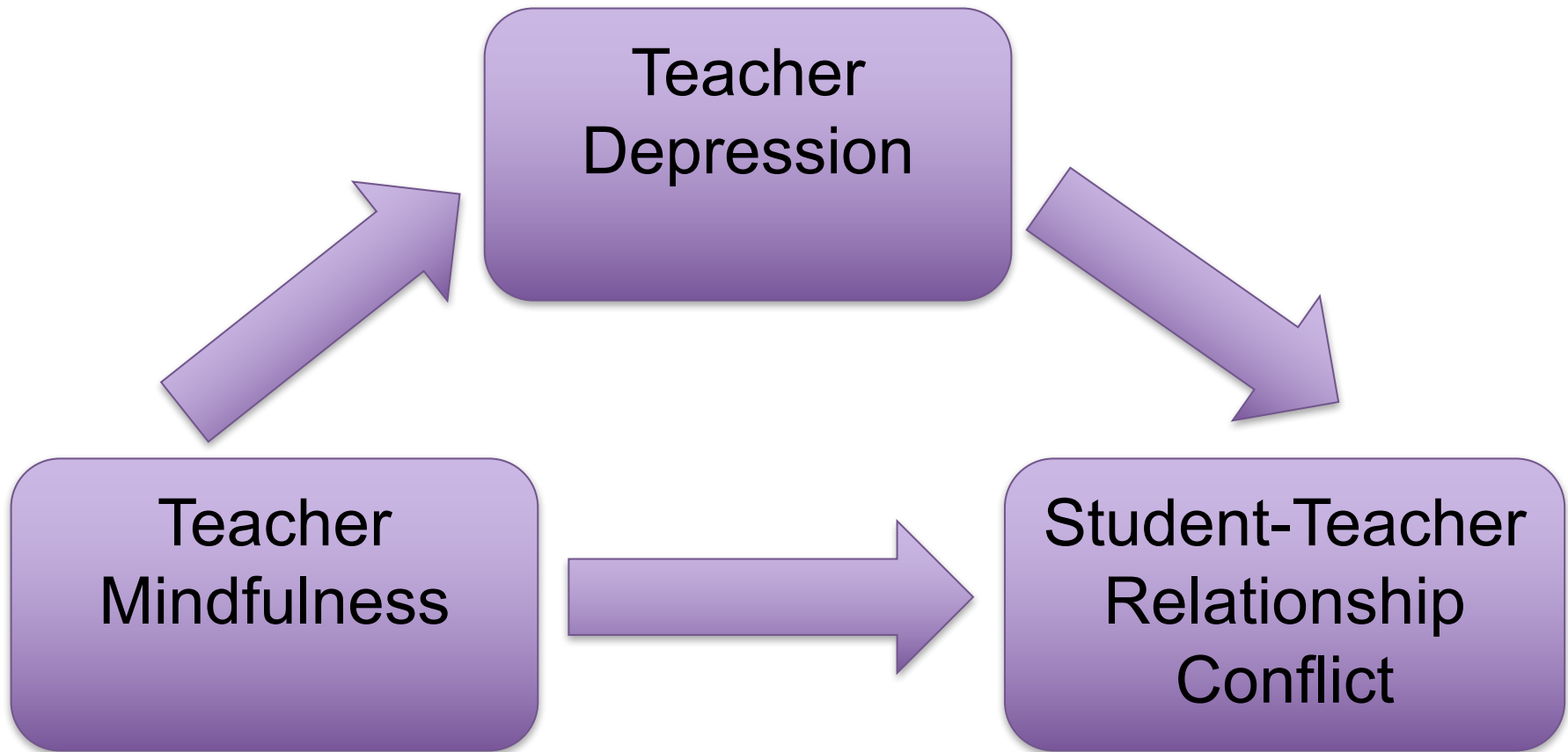


# Workplace Stress and Depression



Whitaker, Dearth-Wesley & Gooze, 2015

# Mindfulness and Student-Teacher Relationship Quality



Becker, Gallagher & Whitaker, 2017

# Meaningful Work and Stress

*“My job requires more and more of my time and energy each year with little to no monetary or emotional compensation. The main reason I choose to stay with Head Start is that I believe in the program and enjoy working with the children and families to help them succeed in life. I wish our program showed more care and concern for its staff.”*

Gallagher & Whitaker, under review

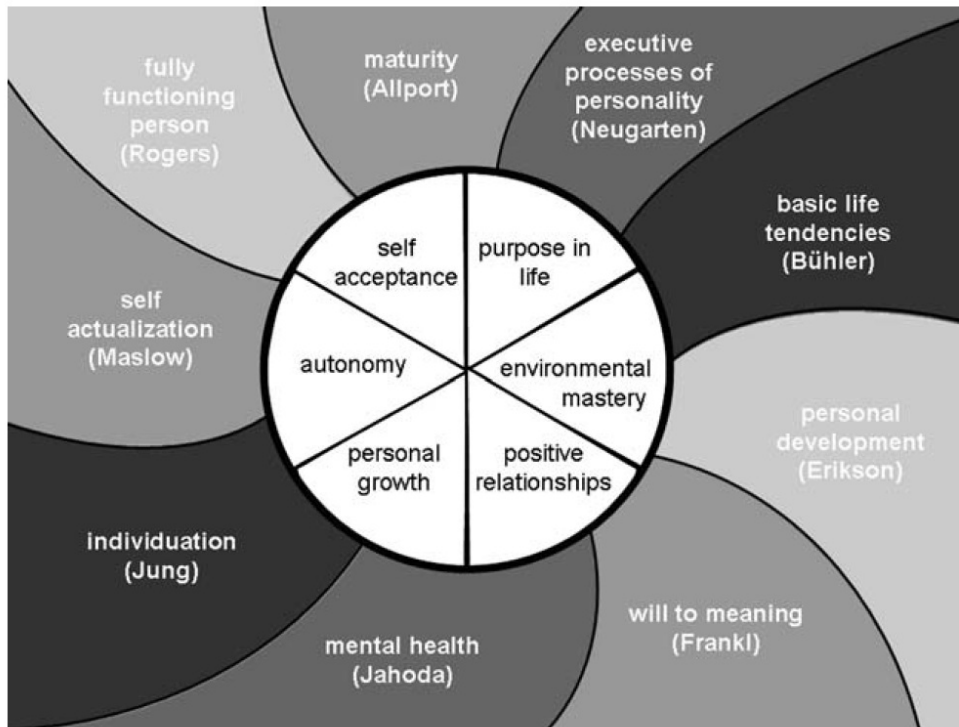
# Definition of Health

“more than merely the absence of disease – it is an **evolving human resource** that helps children and adults **adapt to the challenges of everyday life**, resist infections, cope with adversity, feel a **sense of personal well-being**, and interact with their surroundings in ways that **promote successful development.**”

~ Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University

# What is WELL-BEING?

*The state of being happy, healthy or prosperous; flourishing*



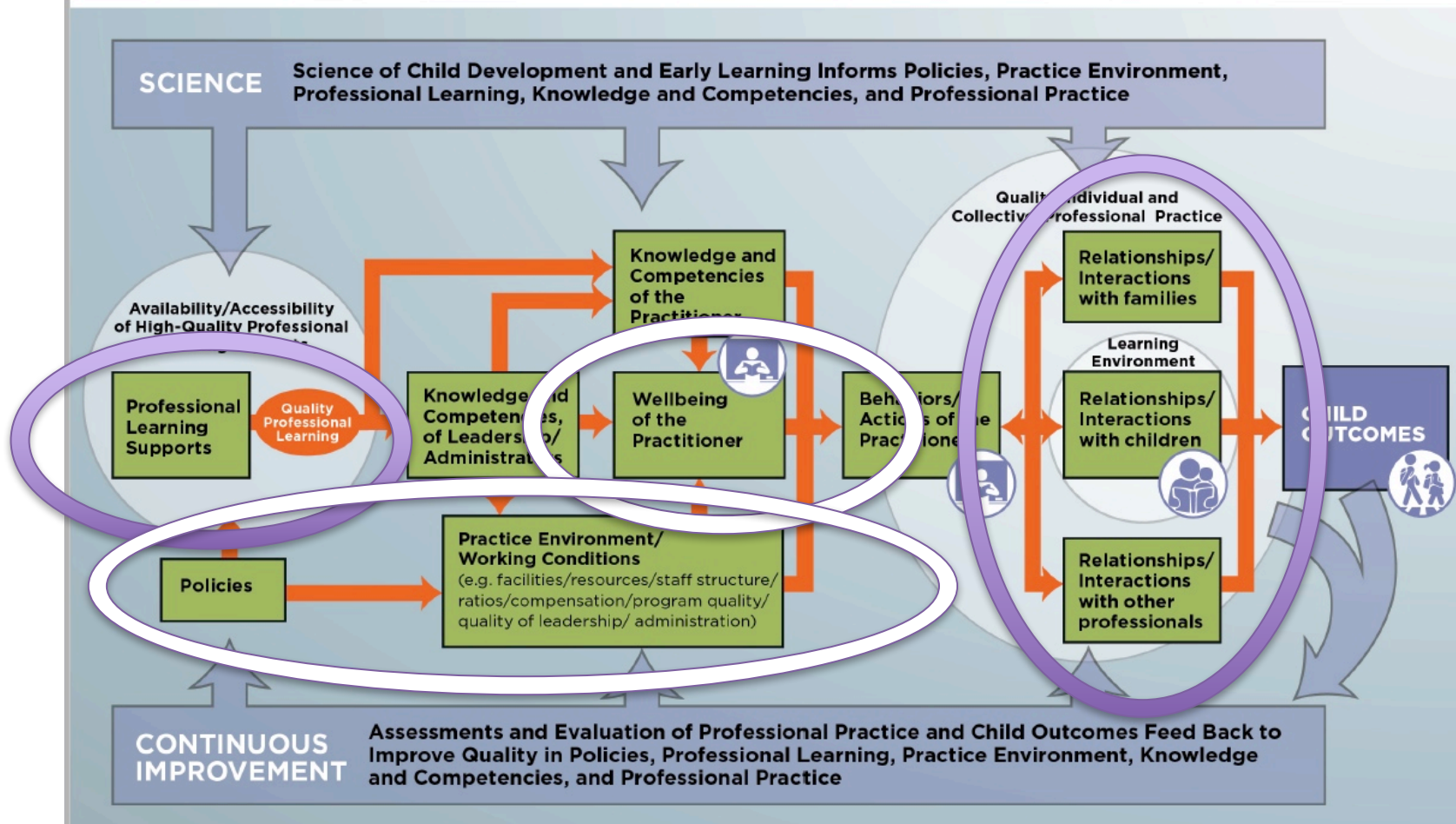
- ❖ Self-acceptance
- ❖ Personal growth
- ❖ Purpose in life
- ❖ Positive relations with others
- ❖ Environmental mastery
- ❖ Autonomy

Ryff, 2014



# Transforming the Workforce

Figure 8-1. Factors that contribute to quality professional practice and ultimately to improving child outcomes.



# Supporting the Individual

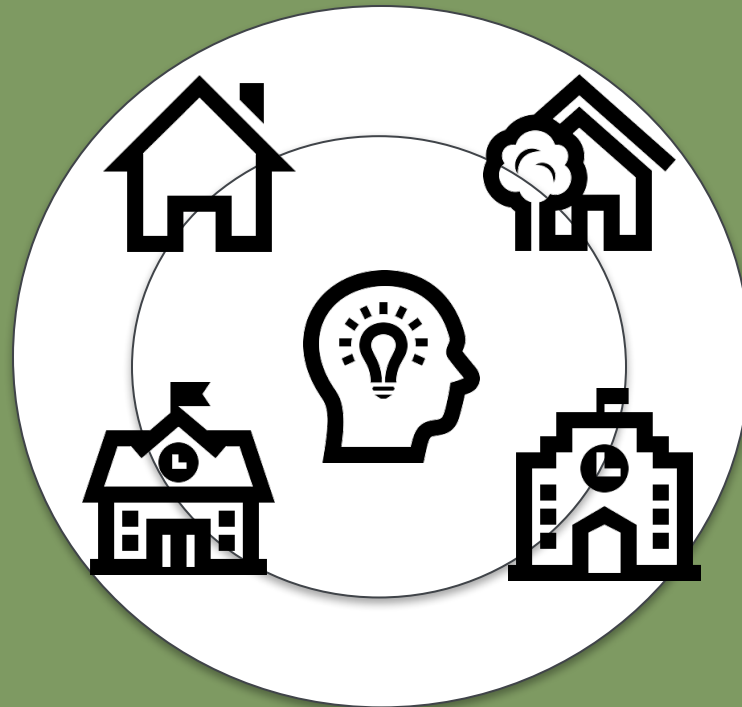


# An Individual Perspective

- Emphasizes psychological and physical health of teachers in the workplace.
- Focuses on building resilience of individual teachers.
- Uses psychological and health interventions.
- Assumes that individual change will be sufficient to support child learning and development.

*Caption*

# Supportive Workplaces



# SEQUAL: Supportive Environmental Quality Underlying Adult Learning

- Teaching Supports
- Learning Community
- Job Crafting
- Adult Wellbeing
- Program Leadership

*Center of the Study of Childcare Employment (2014)*

# Need to Address the System



# Key Themes in Workplace Wellbeing

Arnold, et al., 2007

Jeffrey et al., 2014

**Leadership**

Dana & Griffin, 1999

**Health  
Protection**

**Relationships**

Helliwell & Putnam, 2004

Whitebook, et al., 2017;  
King, et al., 2018;  
Kashen, et al., 2016

**Compensation**

**Individual  
Needs**

Findler, et al., 2007

**Health  
Promotion**

Caver, et al., 2014

# ***Next Steps:***

**How can early childhood programs support the wellbeing of teachers?**

- **Continue to learn from (non-education) literature about workplace wellbeing.**
- **Examine how compensation is associated with EC workplace wellbeing.**
- **Interview teachers about how workplace systems might support wellbeing.**





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