**Three Page Summary of Key Organizational Theories**

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| **Theory or Model (also speaks to underlying philosophy and values)** | **Key Points** | **Problems or criticisms** | **Organization Practices that are derived from the theory** | **Implications for Child Welfare and Practice Model Implementation** |
| **Organizational Culture and Climate Theory**  **Parallel Process**  Has ties to Psychodynamic Theory and Social Learning Theory and Systems Theory as well. | The rules and norms of an organization (the culture) and the feelings that people have as a result of being a part of that organization (the climate) have a great impact on organizational effectiveness.  How top administration treats middle management (including front line supervisors) in terms of policies, procedures, organizational culture and climate, etc. affects those middle managers. Healthy treatment and culture leads to positive manager behavior towards workers. Unhealthy treatment and culture leads to negative manager behavior towards workers.  How a worker is treated by his or her supervisor affects how they in turn treat families. Healthy treatment and culture leads to positive worker behavior towards families. Unhealthy treatment and culture leads to negative worker behavior towards families.  One mechanism of this transfer is modeling (social learning theory).  Another mechanism of this transfer is transference or displacement (Psychodynamic Theory)  A third mechanism of this transfer is the effect of the stressful environment on cognition and affect which lead to negative behavior unless there is a mediator of social support. | Inferred from research on organizational culture and climate- needs more research to uncover the various mechanisms and when certain mechanisms are likely to drive outcomes.  Little research on Parallel process, though this is widely used as a framework to discuss organizational culture and climate. | Ensuring alignment between organizational practices and orientation and practice with clients (for example= if the agency wants to prevent re-traumatization of clients, then organization needs to be trauma informed).  Serves as a foundation for supporting a practice model through organizational policy, procedures, tools, training, supervision/coaching, CQI process as well as organizational culture and climate. | **Gives** an overarching approach of the organization to commit to a practice model.  Leadership must attend to organizational culture and climate in order to assure organizational effectiveness in serving children and families. This includes assessing culture and climate, and developing strategies, policies, procedures, training and support systems to improve it.  Elevates the role of the supervisor in practice.  **If** we want to be strengths based, solution focused and humanistic in our orientation and approach towards clients, then management must use that same lens when thinking about the workforce.  **If** we want to understand families in context of stress and trauma- then we must understand workforce behavior in that same context of stress and secondary trauma.  **If** we want to understand the underlying cause of maltreatment and intervene with families using cognitive-behavioral approaches that help prevent future maltreatment and ensure future safety of children- then we must understand worker behavior using root cause analysis and other tools that help to identify community level, organizational level, team level, supervisor level and individual level contributors to the breakdown and intervene accordingly.. |
| **Organizational Culture and Climate Theory**  **Trauma Informed organizations and systems (could be considered a part of the Systems of Care Approach)** | A system is trauma informed when it understands the impact of traumatic stress on the children and families it serves and understands how the system can mitigate the impact of trauma or prevent re-traumatization  It also understands secondary trauma and its impact on the workforce and resource families that work with families and children as well as on the system itself (how trauma affects the child welfare system)  The system becomes trauma informed when it can make use of the information about the trauma adults, children and staff experience, the impact of that trauma on thoughts, feelings and behaviors as well as the lens and culture of families and the system so as to improve services and prevent re-traumatization. | Still working on building an evidence base of what a trauma informed organization looks like, acts like- what policies should be in place, procedures, practices, etc. | **Attend to the essential elements of trauma-informed practice.**  According to NCTSN (Wilson, 2008)- essential elements of a trauma informed child welfare agency include:  1, Maximize the child’s sense of safety.  2. Assist children in reducing overwhelming emotion.  3. Help children make new meaning of their trauma history and current experiences.  4. Address the impact of trauma  and subsequent changes in the child’s behavior, development, and relationships.  5. Coordinate services with other agencies.  6. Utilize comprehensive  assessment of the child’s trauma experiences and their impact on the child’s development and  behavior to guide services.  7. Support and promote positive and stable relationships in the  life of the child.  8. Provide support and guidance to child’s family and caregivers.  9. Manage professional and personal stress.  **Assure that staff know about, and clients have access to trauma informed services that are evidence-based.**  Recent research has pointed to the effectiveness of treatment that includes key ingredients:  Building a strong therapeutic relationship  Psychoeducation about normal responses to trauma  Parent support, conjoint therapy, or parent training  Emotional expression and regulation skills  Anxiety management and relaxation skills  Cognitive processing or reframing  Construction of a coherent trauma narrative  Strategies that allow exposure to traumatic memories and feelings in tolerable doses so that they can be mastered and integrated into  the child’s experience  Personal safety training and other important empowerment activities  Resilience and closure | Administration needs to change policies, procedures, practices that could further traumatize parents and children who come into contact with our system.  Administration needs to pay close attention to secondary trauma of the workforce, and assure that mechanisms are in place to prevent secondary trauma and minimize its impact on the workforce and clients.  Supervisors need certain skills and need to be rewarded for supervising with support, care of the staff to prevent and treat STS, burnout and vicarious trauma.  Workers need space to talk about traumatic events they experience (Resilience Alliance), watch out for one another, learn social support strategies and have places to seek help if necessary to prevent or treat STS, burnout and vicarious trauma.  Recognize that exposure to trauma is the rule, not the exception, among children in the child welfare system.  Recognize the signs and symptoms of child traumatic stress and how they vary in different age groups. |
| **Organizational Culture and Climate and Open Systems Theory both undergird Organizational Learning and**  **The Learning Organization (Argyris, Senge, 2008)-** Where the organization and its employees can learn to learn. | Characteristics of the Learning Organization-  Adaptation must happen so quickly that traditional, planned development is not fast enough  The entire organization must contribute to developing new products, structures and processes  The org must be structured and managed in a way that allows the employees to constantly form new ideas based on surroundings, which are collected, tested and implemented  The organization sets up systems which secure the assessment of the sustainability of the assumption that controls the organization- single loop learning  Where the org learns from consequences of previous actions and ensures that the same mistakes are not made again (like a thermostat). Double loop learning- the system is intelligent and considers what works and what does not work. All parts of the organization think independently based on the assumption that all employees are different and have different interpretations of a given situation. These different interpretations can all help the organization move in a new direction | Complicated concepts and tools  People have to be able to handle ambiguity | Leadership and management must give employees room to think, learn, have the opportunity to develop as a result of being exposed to learning innovations. There needs to be creative tension between the vision for the future and the current situation.  Managers have role of designer, teacher and servants. | When a child welfare agency becomes a learning organization, there is a shift in the hierarchy and attitudes of leadership throughout the organization (for example, central office staff focus on facilitating learning, problem solving, and serving the field).  Management by data, robust CQI processes and use of environmental scanning tools can facilitate understanding of how the environment affects the organization and can serve as a platform for creative solutions through cross functional learning teams.  The learning organization is open to change and facilitates change. This is a perfect setting for the installation of a practice model because resistance will be lower and teams will be ready to develop and adopt new products, structures and processes.  The Learning Organization is one with a healthy organizational culture and climate of openness, flexibility, teamwork, creativity and learning. It is a healthy environment to install a practice model that is strengths based, solution focused, client/family centered, culturally competent, humanistic, developmentally aware and clear about the antecedents to maltreatment so that unhealthy family cycles can be interrupted, maltreatment prevented and safety, permanency and well-being obtained. |