

# Fostering Psychological Safety: Langs' Journey to a Healthier Workplace



## Background

Langs, a Community Health Centre (CHC) and community hub, nestled in the communities of Cambridge and North Dumfries, has embarked on a transformative journey to enhance workplace culture. Langs is not merely responding to, but actively shaping a workplace culture that resonates with resilience, adaptability, and a shared commitment to the well-being of both our staff and the communities we serve.

Langs' staff comprises of over 100 individuals across diverse roles. From healthcare practitioners and community workers to peer supports, administrators, and management personnel, this team epitomizes the spirit of CHCs, fostering inclusivity and collaboration.

The organization faced substantial challenges, including sudden leadership changes, staff turnover, and signs of employee burnout. Langs has initiated a comprehensive program to create a psychologically safe workplace.

Moreover, with the complexity of operating across multiple satellite sites, the challenge extended beyond the immediate issues, emphasizing the need for a cohesive social and wellness strategy that could transcend organizational boundaries.

## Objectives

- 1) Understand Langs' Social and Wellness Program and its impact on employee well-being.
- 2) Explore the role of leadership commitment in fostering a socially and mentally healthy workplace.
- 3) Gain insights into evaluating and enhancing organizational well-being.

## Our Approach

Our journey at Langs focuses on creating a psychologically safe workplace by addressing leadership changes, turnover, and burnout while staying aligned with our organizational goals.

### Strategic Alignment

- Proactively adjust our strategic plan for staff well-being.
- Ensure alignment with organizational objectives and values.

### Engage Leadership

- Prioritize senior leadership buy-in and participation.
- Provide targeted training and ongoing engagement.
- Track leadership participation and evaluate workshops.

### Social & Wellness Committee

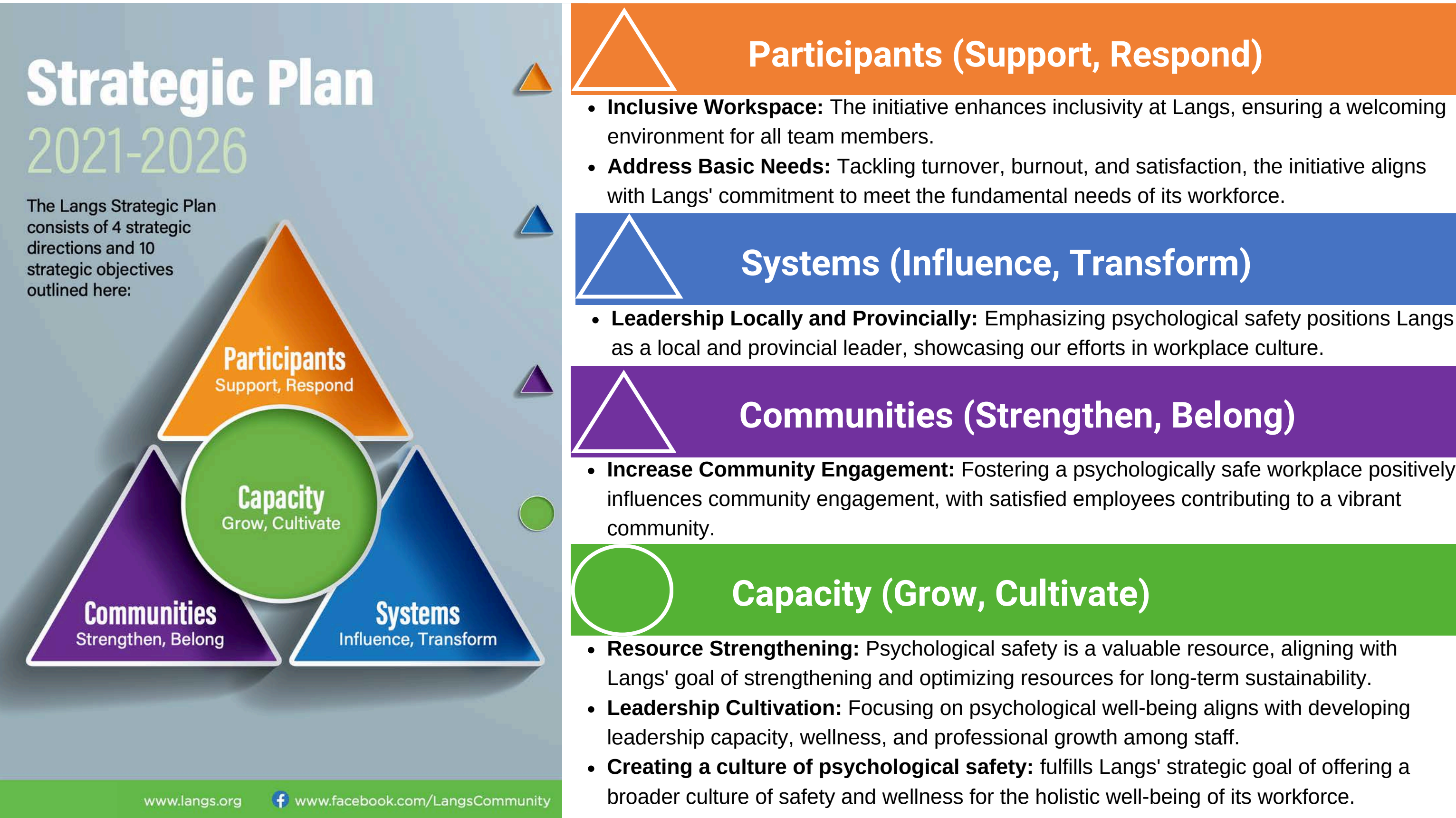
- Ensure diverse representation across departments.
- Promote inclusivity and collaboration.
- Encourage transparent dialogue via Suggestion Box, Moments of Excellence, and Dinosaur Challenge.

### Strategic Wellness Plan

- Get senior leadership endorsement.
- Reflect core values: trust, proactive self-care, receptive feedback.
- Establish clear goals aligned with Langs' values.

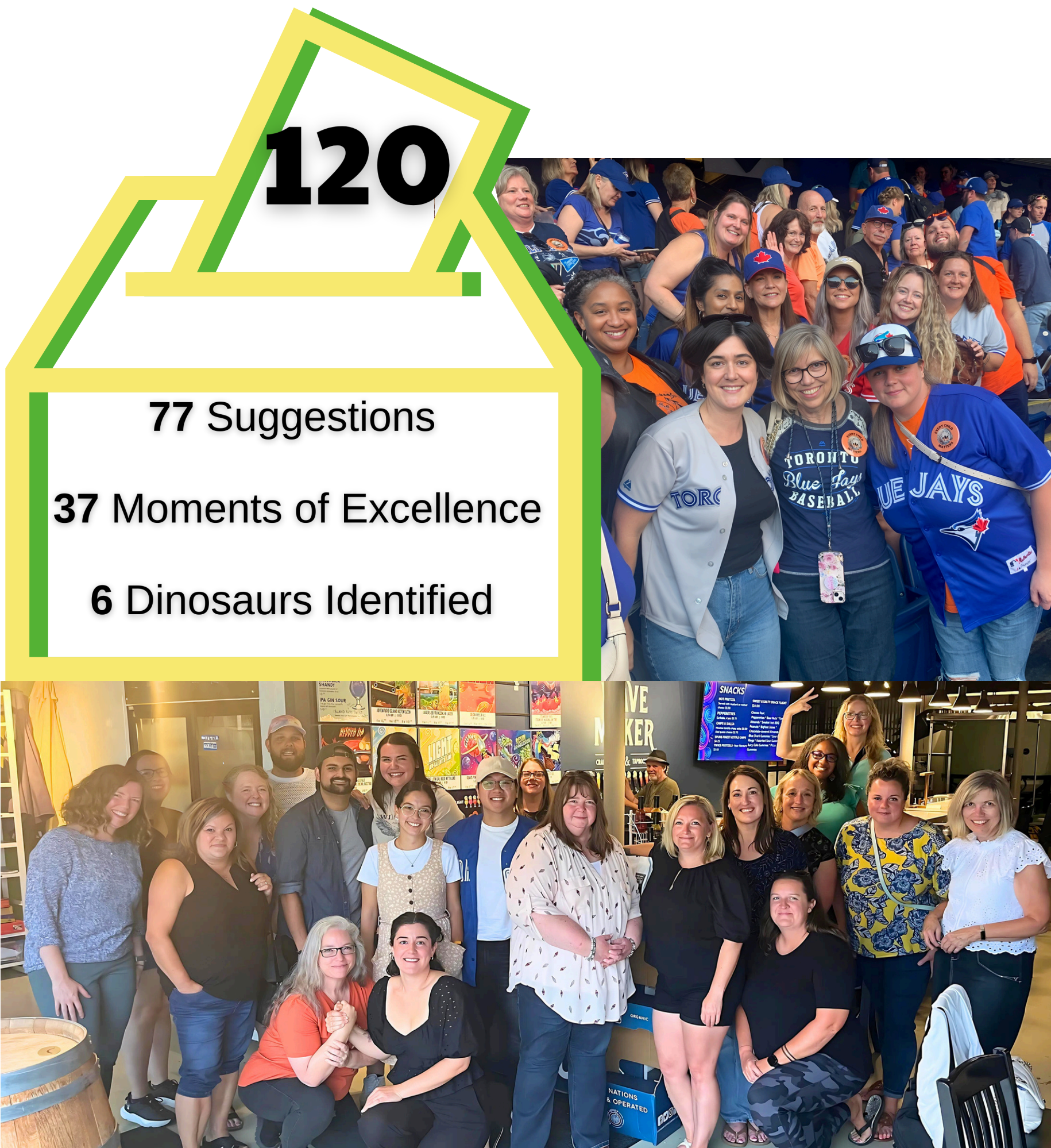
## Measure

- Implement a measurement plan.
- Use quantitative and qualitative survey questions.
- Form working groups for tailored interventions.
- Produce quarterly and bi-annual reports.



## Guiding Principles

- 01 Ideas, suggestions and feedback will be continuously encouraged and welcomed.
- 02 A feeling of trust and permission will be encouraged.
- 03 All staff will consistently demonstrate the values of the organization.
- 04 A wellness approach will be considered by everyone to guide decision-making.
- 05 All staff will be proactive with self-care versus retroactive self-care.



### Leadership Commitment

We, the leaders of Langs, commit to fostering a culture of wellness in alignment with Langs values. We pledge to actively support and demonstrate integrity, respect, and accountability. Our proactive approach includes participating in wellness activities, supporting leadership training, and creating a psychologically safe workplace. By signing, we affirm our dedication to a thriving, supportive environment for all Langs staff.

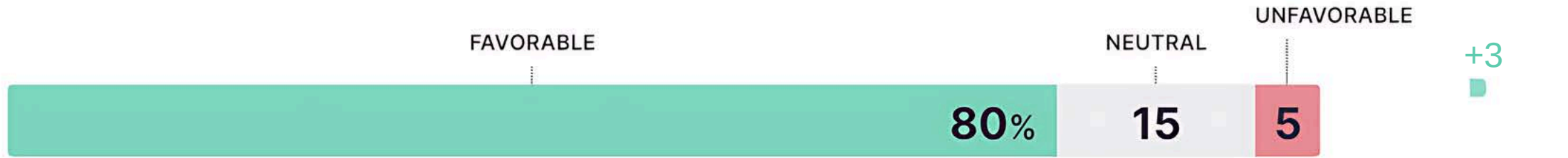
*William Homerston*  
*Debbie Hollahan*  
*W. Homerston*  
*J. Strome*  
*K. Conrads*

Baseline survey February & September 2023. Recent data from February 2024.

83 (of 98) participants from Langs

### Engagement

n = 81



Comparison to Engagement Survey.

Powered by Culture Amp

83 (of 98) participants from Langs

### Psychological Safety

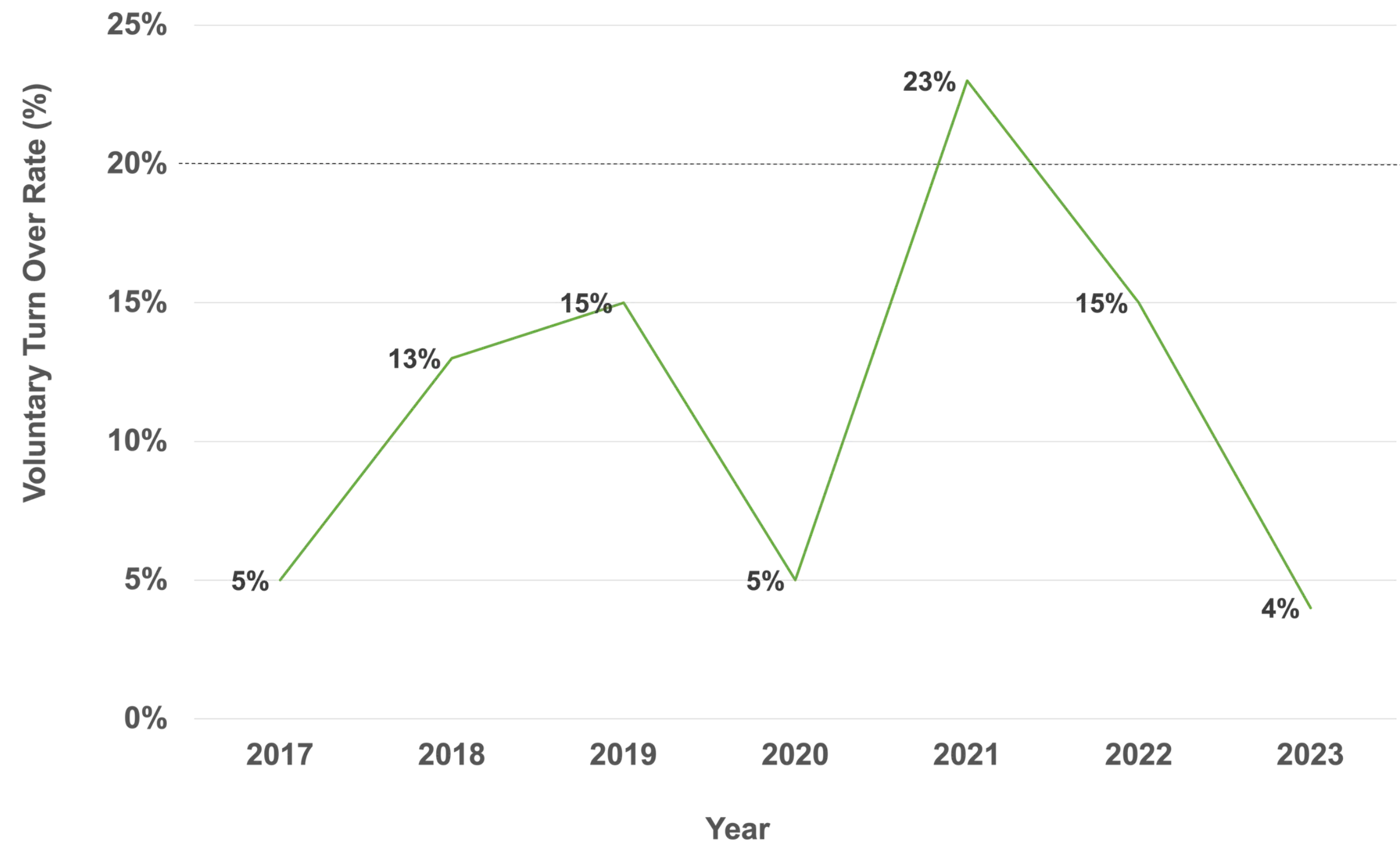
n = 82



Comparison to Psychological Wellbeing Survey.

Powered by Culture Amp

## Langs Voluntary Turnover Rate



“The culture is supportive and welcoming. I feel respected by my team and that we support one another very well.”

“The Social and Wellness committee does a great job promoting well-being at Langs. The WW Self-Management Program provides excellent sessions for staff to engage in. IDEA journey information is excellent and much appreciated.”

“I think the Langs CHC has the most inclusive, positively structured environments that I have ever worked in. We have many opportunities to grow and to share that growth to create change and continue to be relevant in our current social environment.”

## Significant Outcomes

- High staff engagement with over 85% response rate in our surveys.
- Increased participation in social and wellness events, with 35% average attendance and strong turnout at key events.
- Enhanced idea-sharing through our feedback forum.
- Reduced voluntary turnover, now at 4%, well below our 20% target.

<b>1</b> What two factors are currently contributing most strongly to the long-term <b>SUCCESS (S)</b> and <b>RISK (R)</b> of your initiative? (See APPENDIX A, Definitions)	<b>2</b> CONTRIBUTING FACTORS: <b>SUCCESS</b> What activities or strategies are supporting each of the two success factors you identified?
<b>S R</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Commitment to the improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Skills and capabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Team functioning <input type="checkbox"/> Resources in place <input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitored for feedback and learning <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of benefits <input type="checkbox"/> Robust and adaptable processes <input type="checkbox"/> Alignment with organizational culture and priorities <input type="checkbox"/> Support for improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Alignment with the political and financial environment	<b>Factor #1:</b> Supportive and respected leaders actively advocate for the improvement, communicate the vision effectively, and are available to help solve problems as needed. <b>Factor #2:</b> Initiative is integrated with organizational priorities, secure leadership commitment, and an increase in participation in feedback mechanisms from staff. <b>3</b> CONTRIBUTING FACTORS: <b>RISK</b> Identify what is contributing to the risk associated with each of the long-term success factors you identified. <b>Factor #1:</b> Team members and staff irregularly informed about successes and areas for improvement, potentially leading to disengagement, mistrust and hindered progress. <b>Factor #2:</b> The absence of succession planning for key human resources who champion and support the initiative poses a risk to its sustainability.
<b>4</b> SUSTAINABILITY GOAL What is your ultimate goal for each of the top two success and risk factors you identified?	
<b>Goal for Success Factor #1:</b> Identify "informal" leaders to aid in the support of spread and sustainment of psychological health and safety.	<b>Goal for Risk Factor #1:</b> Integrate regular updates related to the initiative across all staff and sites.
<b>Goal for Success Factor #2:</b> Ensure the sustained integration of this initiative into the organization's daily operations.	<b>Goal for Risk Factor #2:</b> Establish a succession strategy to ensure the sustained leadership support and continuity of the initiative for long-term sustainability.

(Screenshot from Healthcare Excellence Canada (HEC) sustainability planner template, the Long-Term Success Tool from Healthcare Excellence Canada, adapted from Laura Lennox and Imperial College London, was used.)

## Next Steps

- Implement a sustainability plan to ensure the long-term success of initiatives.
- Sustain positive outcomes by fostering a culture of continuous improvement and well-being.
- Investigate integrating psychological safety, communication, and conflict resolution training into the onboarding process for new staff.
- Explore the feasibility of implementing peer mentoring and employee assistance programs to support individual well-being needs.
- Investigate potential enhancements to support mechanisms for staff, focusing on targeted training and mentoring initiatives.

