



Improving efficiency through a culture of engagement



Nina Freier
CHRO, North America



Sara Hennings
Director of Total Rewards, North America




MaKayla Knaut
Center Director,
Brand Champion

Quick facts

 **Company:** BrightPath Early Learning and Child Care

 **Headquarters:** Toronto, Canada

 **Industry:** Early childhood education

 **Employees:** 7,000+

 **ADP products:** ADP Workforce Now®

BrightPath Early Learning and Child Care (BrightPath) is part of Busy Bees Global, one of the world's largest child education and care providers. With more than 236 centers in North America, BrightPath provides child care services and education to children ages six weeks to five years. Known for its hands-on, inquiry-driven "BeeCurious" curriculum, BrightPath's holistic approach blends play and exploration with STEM, essential skills, language and literacy, global citizenship and environmental stewardship to nurture children's social, emotional, physical and academic growth.

Goals

- Foster a culture of inclusivity, engagement and care with employees
- Provide employees with opportunities for growth and professional development
- Ensure consistent delivery of its mission, vision and values and give every child the best start in life

A culture of growth

Over the past few years, BrightPath has more than doubled in size and will continue to grow through expansion and acquisition. Knowing that engaged employees create value for the children and families they support, BrightPath is focused on delivering an exceptional employee experience. Nina Freier, CHRO of North America, states, "We're focused on living our values, especially as we've been growing through acquisition, and are deliberate and focused on building a great culture for our employees. Engagement is critical to us as we believe that engaged employees create an enriched learning environment for the children and families that we support."

BrightPath offers many high-quality programs. One example is its BeeAmazing recognition program that allows employees to recognize each other and be recognized by their leaders when they're going above and beyond. BrightPath offers a global talent exchange program where select employees have the opportunity to work in a Busy Bees location abroad. They have cohorts of employees participating in their National Childcare Development Associate (CDA) credentialing program for early childhood educators and they also offer a significant discount on child care tuition, continuing education tuition reimbursement, and professional development days to ensure employees are continuously growing and learning.



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Being curious drives engagement

BrightPath drives a culture of engagement with its BeeCurious curriculum, a proprietary early years program, thoughtfully designed to ignite curiosity and drive engagement in young learners and educators. Drawing from a wide array of early years pedagogies, it equips educators with age-appropriate instructional practices and child-guided programming that foster cognitive, emotional, social and physical development. Educators are actively involved and engaged in developing individualized and group learning plans, ensuring each child receives a bespoke educational experience. By nurturing a holistic learning environment, the curriculum empowers educators to respond to the unique needs of every child, creating a supportive and engaging journey for all.

BrightPath also engages in active listening with its employees to help create a culture that everyone can thrive in. A 30-, 60-, 90-day and exit survey cadence provides insights that employees value. Results from biannual engagement and on-the-spot surveys serve as the basis for customized action plans at the center and office level.

As a growing organization, BrightPath needs the ability to quickly and efficiently staff its centers. Having one system that can quickly integrate new employees' personal information and payroll data is key. By implementing ADP's applicant tracking system, they can easily process 200 to 300 new hires every month. Knaught says, "ADP has made onboarding new employees efficient for Center Directors. It is seamless."

Utilizing analytics in the system, BrightPath supports the business with location- and job-based wage information that helps ensure they offer competitive wages. Sara Hennings, Director of Total Rewards for North America, remarks, "One of the key products we utilize is the analytics dashboard. The turnover probability report drives us to look at factors that we hadn't previously considered. For example, we now consider commuting distance and time because they are important factors when an employee is considering taking another role. The benchmarking data allows us to make compensation and business decisions based on real market data. I have information right at my fingertips and I trust it."

The child care industry has strict standards for compliance. BrightPath uses the talent profiles within their ADP platform to track first aid and other important industry certifications required for licensing. The system provides prompts when a certification is set to expire to help ensure BrightPath remains compliant.

Employees utilize the ADP mobile app to clock in and geofencing ensures that they're in the center when doing so, enabling employees to get right to their classrooms instead of waiting at a time clock. Employees can also access their benefits via the mobile app. If they have a life event such as getting married or having a baby, they can process that event through the app, eliminating the manual processes previously required of HR.

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—MaKayla Knaudt,
Center Director, Brand Champion



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Focusing on culture delivers business results

Prioritizing culture has significantly improved employee retention, positively impacting bottom-line financial performance. Reduced turnover translates to lower recruitment and training expenses. Moreover, consistent educator presence enhances the learning experience for children and fosters trust and appreciation among the families they serve.

Hennings states, "We've seen an overall improvement in our retention, and we've also streamlined so many processes that we've experienced a 20 percent reduction in hours within HR."

On winning the Culture at Work award

The Culture at Work award celebrates an organization that embraces diversity and drives sustained employee engagement through a dynamic, best-in-class workplace culture. BrightPath is being honored as the recipient of this year's award for their purposeful pursuit in building and refining a culture of growth and learning.

"As an organization that is rapidly growing through acquisition and new developments, it's really important that we create a unified culture by aligning people with our mission, vision and values, and make them feel like they're part of a larger family. When we learned that we won the Culture at Work award, we were very excited and proud. This is a testament that what we are doing is working and being recognized externally," comments Freier.

Hennings remarks, "The intricacies of employee engagement are not always measurable, so it was an amazing feeling to be recognized for the hard work that's gone into our bridging all of those cultures into one with one common mission."

"I take great pride in working for a company that genuinely supports and cares about me. I believe this commitment is a significant factor in winning the Culture at Work award," adds Knaut.

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