Disseminating Information to Child Welfare Managers: Strategies to Support Knowledge Transfer, Effective Leadership & Systems Change Initiatives

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM)

- **Target Audience**
  - Key change leaders in middle management positions with an identified Change Initiative (CI)
  - Maximum of 35 participants per Academy
  - Targeted recruitment through state & tribal leadership

- **Curriculum**
  - Comprehensive & research based

- **Residential Academy**

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Reach of the LAMM

- **Regional Involvement**
  - Regions I-X completed – 8 LAMMs
  - Denver, Dallas & New York (2 LAMMs each); Philadelphia & Seattle (1 LAMM each)

- **Tribal Participation**
  - Regions I, II, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX & X (Denver, New York, Dallas & Seattle)

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Dissemination Priorities for the LAMM

1. Support transfer of learning (TOL) from residential academy training
2. Strengthen development & implementation of Change Initiatives (CIs)
3. Provide example of effective dissemination strategies so that participants can model with their own staff & organizations
LAMM Dissemination Plan Development

1. Literature Review
2. Internal Stakeholder Feedback
3. External Stakeholder Feedback
14 Common Dissemination Challenges (1)

Traditional dissemination planning, product development & activities

1. Rely on incorrect assumptions about definition/purpose
2. Overlook strategic planning
3. Leave out stakeholder input
4. Aren’t tailored to match needs of specific/varied audiences
5. Are written with overly academic/jargon-filled language
6. Use unappealing/inaccessible product formats
7. Employ communication methods that fail to reach the field
8. Are focused on one single study or project
9. Don’t offer practical implications or realistic recommendations
10. Don’t include fugitive literature (e.g., convenings, agency reports, unpublished manuscripts, dissertations, etc)
14 Common Dissemination Challenges (2)

**Busy practitioners and administrators**

11. Don’t have time, interest or expertise necessary to locate, review, synthesize & assess information quality/implications

12. Lack easy, just-in-time access to resources/information

13. May view the “research-context” as distinct from the "real-world" experience of practice and policy

14. Often aren’t provided with organizational support (beyond training) for locating, understanding or using new information (e.g., learning organizations, results-oriented culture, supervision using new information, learning circles/peer support, coaching, Breakthrough Series Collaborative, pilots, policy/program changes, follow-up training, data gathering related to new information/knowledge, etc)
# Essential Components

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>End users: Who will apply it in practice?</td>
<td>Take full account of potential adopters’ needs &amp; perspectives, with particular attention to the balance of costs &amp; benefits for them</td>
<td>To whom should research knowledge be transferred (the target audience)?</td>
<td>Who is the primary audience?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Message/Product</strong></td>
<td>Research findings and products: What is going to be disseminated?</td>
<td>Use a message with appropriate style, imagery &amp; metaphors</td>
<td>What should be transferred to decision makers (the message)?</td>
<td>What innovations &amp; messages from science should be disseminated, depending on the purpose?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Messenger</strong></td>
<td>Dissemination partners: Through which individuals, organizations or networks can you reach end users?</td>
<td>Tailor different strategies to the different demographic, structural, &amp; cultural features of different subgroups</td>
<td>By whom should research knowledge be transferred (the messenger)?</td>
<td>Who should help to deliver these?</td>
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<td><strong>Channel</strong></td>
<td>Communication: How will you convey the research outcomes?</td>
<td>Identify and use appropriate communication channels</td>
<td>How should research knowledge be transferred (the knowledge-transfer processes &amp; supporting communications infrastructure)?</td>
<td>By what methods should dissemination occur?</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Evaluation: How will you determine what worked?</td>
<td>Incorporate rigorous evaluation &amp; monitoring of defined goals and milestones</td>
<td>With what effect should research knowledge be transferred (evaluation)?</td>
<td>What is the effect?</td>
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</table>
Take-Away Messages

High quality dissemination plans and products include:
1. Analysis and understanding of audience needs and interests
2. Information users identify as important **AND** information users may not know to request but are likely to need
3. Different kinds/levels of information into preferred forms/language
4. Varied methods (e.g., written, electronic, etc)
5. Proactive **AND** reactive channels
6. Recognition of the "natural flow" of diffusion & change
7. Existing resources, relationships & networks
8. Activities to build new resources, relationships & networks
9. Effective quality control & evaluation to ensure accuracy & relevance, and gain feedback from audience to make adjustments
Internal & External Stakeholder Feedback

- **Feedback** provided on product topics, types, formats and communication methods from
  - NCWWI Project Partners (2 teleconferences & 2 in-person meetings)
  - National Advisory Committee (4 teleconferences & 2 in-person meetings)
  - National Experts (20 interviews)
  - National Needs Assessment Survey (156 middle managers, supervisors and other agency leaders)
  - LAMM participant surveys (at 3, 6 & 12-months post-residential training)
Stakeholder Feedback

- **Functions:** Communicator & Repository
- **Topics:** Supervision, leadership, organizational climate/culture, caseload/workload, retention, training & data/accountability; specific CI topics
- **Types:** Summaries of best/promising practices, and policies
- **Format:** Short 1-page documents with bullets, and resource lists
- **Communication Methods:** Email, webinars, teleconferences
In Their Own Words…

- Enormous policy revisions & directives sent out in paper form/report are seldom read.

- It would really be ideal to have the time to search and acquire as much information as we need to assist us in doing this job, but due to our low staff count, our workload is double, which doesn't leave much time for us to obtain the information we desire about supporting the workforce.

- Since being in this position, I have been focusing more on promising practices in service delivery & realize that I need to also focus more on promising practices related to the workforce. I would definitely use information if it was in an easy to review format with the ability to dig deeper on a particular topic.
In Their Own Words…

- I'd also like to see an easy link to the NRCs’ resources in this area, with possibly a contact person and list of topics on which information is available. We need information fast and easily accessible and digestible.

- It would be helpful to have the information sent via email about best practices as the agency does not provide updated information and does not always have the "latest" in workforce policy and practices.
Customizing LAMM Dissemination

1. Audience
2. Messages
3. Messengers
4. Channels
LAMM Audience

- LAMM participants
  - 190 graduates, plus 300 future LAMM graduates
  - Busy managers
    - Who work in a high risk & often high profile environments
    - Whose ability to hold the course is challenged daily by constantly changing priorities
    - Who haven’t had many opportunities to connect to other colleagues or the national child welfare environment

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LAMM Messages

- **Change Initiative Topical Areas**
  - Developed out of Federal Reviews, community needs, legislation, and lawsuits/consent decrees

- **Implementation Science**
  - Evidence-based practice to support ‘sustainable’ change

- **Adaptive Leadership**
  - Ability to provide leadership in the midst of turbulence

- **Other Training Content**
  - Cultural Humility
  - Effective Partnership and Collaboration

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LAMM Messengers

- LAMM Management Team: Principal Investigator, Project Manager, Peer Network/Distance Learning Instructor & NICWA Liaison
- LAMM Trainers & Coaches
- National Peer Networking Coordinator
- National Dissemination Coordinator
- Participants

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LAMM Channels

1. NCWWI Website
   - Online resource lists (packets & individual charts)
   - 1-page resource summaries
   - Resource Library

2. Wikispace

3. Facebook Page

4. Webinars & Teleconferences
   - Check-ins & Barrier Busting
   - Content Presentations
   - Tribal Peer Network Sessions
   - National Webinar Series

5. Small Group Coaching

6. One-on-One Coaching
Dissemination for the LAMM

EXAMPLES
# Online Resources to Support LAMM Participants’ Change Initiatives

## Leadership Academy for Middle Managers: New York City, August 2011

Prepared by
Sara Munson & Nancy McDaniel, National Child Welfare Workforce Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics Included</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Child Abuse Hotline</td>
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<td>2. Child &amp; Family Team Meetings</td>
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<td>3. Community Partnerships</td>
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<td>4. Cultural Responsiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Decision-making Models</td>
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<td>6. Differential Response</td>
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<td>7. Family Engagement</td>
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<td>8. Family Leadership</td>
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<td>9. Family Violation/Parent-Child Visits</td>
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<td>10. Forensic &amp; Sequential Interviewing Curricula</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Implementing Change</td>
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<td>13. Kinship Care</td>
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<td>14. Matching Children &amp; Families for Adoption</td>
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<td>15. Peer Mentoring/Teaching/Coaching</td>
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<td>16. Practice Models</td>
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<td>17. Qualitative/Quality Service Review</td>
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<td>18. School-Linked/Based Services</td>
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<td>19. Service Array</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Supervision</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Systems of Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Tribal Child Welfare Development &amp; Services</td>
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<td>24. Tribal Residential Care</td>
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<td>25. Tribal-State Partnerships/Agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAMILY ENGAGEMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Websites/Resource Pages</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Child Welfare Information Gateway: Engaging &amp; Involving Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Child Welfare Information Gateway: Family Group Decision Making Approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Child Welfare Information Gateway: Family Engagement &amp; Involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Child Welfare Information Gateway: Topical Training for Caseworkers - Family Involvement &amp; Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Louisiana Child Welfare Comprehensive Workforce Project: Meaningful Family Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>- National Quality Improvement Center on Non-Resident Fathers &amp; the Child Welfare System</td>
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<tr>
<td>- TA Partnership for Child &amp; Family Mental Health: Family Involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reports/Guides/Manuals/Overviews/Tools</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Engagement: A Web-based Practice Toolkit</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Involvement in Public Child Welfare Driven Systems of Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Meaningful Family Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Importance of Family Engagement in Child Welfare Services</td>
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<td>- 2007 CSFR ToolKit for Youth Involvement: Engaging Youth in the Child &amp; Family Services Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Working with Parent Partners to Achieve Better Case Outcomes for Families</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum/Training Materials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Engaging Clients from a Strengths-Based Solution-Focused Perspective</td>
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<td>- Expanding the Family Circle</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Engagement in Case Planning &amp; Case Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Introduction to Family-Centered Practice: A Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>State/Local Examples</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Engagement (Virginia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Engagement: Maximizing Family Resources &amp; Kinship Connections (New Mexico)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Five Counties, Many Voices: Profiles of Family Engagement in Colorado’s Child Welfare System</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family Team Meeting Toolkit: Participant Guide (Iowa)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
91 charts developed to date, in these clusters:
- Child & Family Engagement (10)
- Cultural Responsiveness (2)
- Foster Care & Adoption Issues (15)
- Service Delivery (15)
- Systemic Improvement (3)
- Systems Integration & Collaboration (12)
- Practice Models (3)
- Quality Assurance (6)
- Tribal Child Welfare Development (14)
- Workforce Development, Training & Support (8)
- Youth in Transition (3)
**Workforce Resource One-Page Summary #2: Caseload/Workload**


**What are these resources?**

These three research briefs provide information summarizing recent studies and reports that underscore the importance of manageable caseloads and workloads for child welfare professionals.

**What are the critical findings?**

High caseloads and workloads negatively impact a number of important child welfare indicators, including:

- Worker retention
- Timeliness, continuity, and quality of service delivery
- Family engagement and relationship-building
- Safety and permanency outcomes for vulnerable children, youth, and families.

The following graphic underscores the domino effect of high caseloads and workloads, and the toll taken on children, youth, families, communities, child welfare systems, and state/county budgets.

**What are the implications for our work?**

Caseworkers must have manageable caseloads and workloads in order to effectively engage vulnerable children, youth and families, meet professional standards, and implement evidence-informed services. As agencies increasingly focus on addressing issues of practice quality, they must, along with their partnering state and county governments, also attend to issues of quantity and capacity. These findings make clear that child welfare agencies should take steps to accurately estimate how much caseworker time and how many caseworker positions are required to meet the best practice standards they adopt for the children, youth, and families they serve.

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National Child Welfare/Workforce Institute
A Service of the Children's Bureau, a Member of the T/TA Network
February 1, 2011

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Challenge
Challenge
Peer Community Wikispace, with the following features:

1. Discussion forum
2. Event listings
3. Participant information
4. Photos from each training event
5. Coaching resources
6. Archived webinars
Response

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers
Peer Network
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WELCOME TO YOUR LAMM WIKI

Let's build our knowledge base together!

Do you ever wish you could pick your peers' brain to solve a problem at work? Do you spend hours browsing through search engine results to find a resource that actually answers your question? Do you find it hard to fit continuing education into your busy schedule?

This wiki provides a vehicle through which you can share resources, participate in discussions, create best practices, and find solutions to challenges in the field of child welfare, all on your own schedule. We encourage you to explore this site and contribute. You are an expert - share your thoughts and experience to benefit your peers and the communities they serve.

How can you get involved?

- **Discussion Forum** - start new discussion threads and comment on existing posts. Treat it as a blog and share your thoughts. Participate in weekly discussion topics and find solutions together. Your peers want to hear from you.
- **Announcements** - check frequently for LAMM updates and add your own announcements.
- **Calendar of Events** - check frequently for upcoming LAMM events and add events of interest to your peers.
- **List of Participants** - find and connect with peers who are working on a similar change initiative. Add your contact information.
Leadership Academy for Middle Managers

Sign up now for the webinar "ChildStat: Leading systems-level improvements based on case-level experiences". This is the first in a series of webinars called "What Works for the Workforce: Leadership Competencies in Action". At this webinar you will see how the NCWI leadership framework applies to a very innovative project in NYC.

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36 minutes ago • Like • Comment • Share

Leadership Academy for Middle Managers This will be a wonderful webinar. Click the link for a full description and to register.
34 minutes ago • Like

Write a comment...
Challenge
1. Check-in & Barrier Busting Teleconferences
2. Content Presentation Teleconferences
3. Tribal Peer Network Teleconferences
Challenge
Response

- Small Group Coaching, focused on
  - Implementation of Change Initiatives (CIs)
  - How to define a problem/time management
  - Strengths-based organizational change leadership

Hearing others’ successes and obstacles was also helpful in moving forward and making changes when necessary.
Challenge
One-on-One Coaching

- Skilled coaches
- Supports the transfer of learning through Change Initiative (CI) implementation
- Goals set by participant along with coach
- Focus on leadership development and skills
- Both technical and reflective in style
Disseminating to Managers & Other Busy CW Professionals

- Know your audience and gain feedback
- Develop a specific dissemination plan
- Prepare products in
  - multiple formats (e.g., short summaries, resource lists, online postings, coaching sessions)
  - using multiple communication strategies (e.g., email, webinar, teleconference, online)
  - via multiple messengers (focus on folks they know or can access easily)
- Gain more feedback and course correct as needed

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Questions, Comments, Ideas?

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