



Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM)

Introduction to the LAMM Curriculum



National Child Welfare Workforce Institute

A Service of the Children's Bureau, a member of the T/TA Network

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For more information

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Residential LAMM Schedule at a Glance

Sunday Module: Sunday Evening at a Glance

- I. Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of the Week
- II. Description of the Training
- III. Evening Trainer Activities

Module I: Day One at a Glance

- I. Overview and Review of Day's Activities
- II. Unit 1: Leadership in Child Welfare
 - a. Group Agreement for Participation
 - b. Whitewater Activity
 - c. Leading in Child Welfare
 - d. Introduction to Middle Managers as Leaders
 - e. Making the Distinction Between Managers and Leaders
- III. Unit 2: The NCWWI Leadership Model
 - a. Presentation on the Leadership Model
 - b. Large Group Application of Leadership Quadrants to Group Change Initiative
 - c. Small-Group Application of the Leadership Model to the Group Change Initiative

Break

 - d. Large Group Application of the Leadership Pillars to the Group Change Initiative
 - e. Sharing Individual Change Initiatives
 - f. Applying the Leadership Model to Individual Change Initiatives
 - g. Partner Activity
 - h. Reconvene
 - i. Summarize Model

Lunch
- IV. Unit 3: Strength-Based Leadership
 - a. Activity
 - b. The Leadership Challenge—Leading with Strengths
 - c. Strength-Based Assessment
 - d. Leaders Need Followers
 - e. Collective Talents of a Team
 - f. Feedback and Summary

Break

- V. Unit 4: Adaptive Leadership
 - a. Technical and Adaptive Work
 - b. Applying Adaptive Leadership to the Group Change Initiative
 - c. Behaviors of Adaptive Leadership
 - d. Summarize
- VI. Unit 5: Learning Circle
 - a. Learning Circle
 - b. Review of the Day

Module II: Day Two at a Glance

- I. Opening and Review of Day's Activities
- II. Unit 6: Stages and Drivers in Implementing Change
 - a. Opening Discussion and Introduction to the NIRN Framework
 - b. Considering the "What"
 - c. Surfing in Service of the What
 - d. Introduction to CW T/TA
 - e. Reviewing the NIRN Stage Model

Break

- f. Implementation Drivers
- III. Unit 7: Communicating and Implementing Vision
 - a. Leader's Role as Keeper of the Vision
 - b. Group Change Initiative (Terry's Vision Statement)
 - c. Individual Change Initiative Vision Statements

Lunch

Individual Change Initiative Vision Statements, Continued

- IV. Unit 8: Implementing Change
 - a. Designing Change Initiatives that Work

Break

- b. Small-Group Consultations
- c. Roles People Play
- V. Unit 9: Learning Circle
 - a. Learning Circle
 - b. Review of the Day

Module III: Day Three at a Glance

- I. Opening and Review of Day's Activities
- II. Unit 10: Introduction to Leading in Context
 - a. Introduction to Leading in Context
 - b. Ecomap of Group Change Initiative
 - c. Applying the Ecomap to Individual Change Initiatives
 - d. Ecomap Walk-Around Activity

Break

 - e. Differences in World Views
 - f. Cultural Humility
 - g. Apply Concepts of Cultural Humility to Group Change Initiative
 - h. Skill Application to Individual Change Initiatives
 - i. Summary

Lunch
- III. Unit 11: Orchestrating Conflict
 - a. Orchestrating Conflict
 - b. Orchestrating Conflict Paired Discussion
 - c. Regulating the Temperature Activity
 - d. Regulating the Temperature Group Discussion

Break
- IV. Unit 12: Partnering with Families
 - a. Family Partnerships: Ruth's and Angela's Stories
 - b. Application to Change Initiatives
 - c. A Closer Look
 - d. Family Partner Closing/Questions
- V. Unit 13: Learning Circle
 - a. Learning Circle
 - b. Review of the Day

Modules IV and V: Day Four at a Glance

- I. Opening and Review of Day's Activities
- II. Unit 14: Leadership Role in Creating an Organizational Culture of Results
 - a. Leadership Role in Creating an Organizational Culture of ResultsBreak
- III. Unit 15: Performance Measurement and Your Change Initiative
 - a. Performance Improvement Cycle
 - b. Using a Logic Model
 - c. Logic Model and Personal Change Initiatives
 - d. Measurement and Personal Change Initiatives
 - e. Learning and Action Plan JournalLunch
- IV. Unit 16: Workforce Development and Implementing Change
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Key Issues in Workforce Development
- V. Unit 17: The Role of Agency Leadership in Workforce Development
 - a. Foundations of Workforce Development
 - b. Promising Practices in Workforce Development
 - c. WalkaboutBreak
 - d. Large Group Review
- VI. Unit 18: Accomplishing Group Goals
 - a. Teams
 - b. Cultural Responsiveness and Leveraging Diversity
 - c. Large Group Debrief
- VII. Unit 19: Leader's Demonstrated Commitment
 - a. Learning Circle
 - b. Review of the Day
 - c. Workforce Development Fair

Module VI: Day Five at a Glance

- I. Opening and Review of Day's Activities
- II. Unit 20: Change Initiative Presentations
Break
Unit 20: Change Initiative Presentations continued
- III. Small-Group Discussion
Reconvene
- IV. Unit 21: Leadership Resilience and Continuous Learning
 - a. Understanding Resilience
 - b. Revise Learning and Action Plan Journal
- V. Online Evaluation
Lunch
- VI. Unit 22: Leadership Academy
 - a. Introduction to Peer Networks, LAS and NCWWI
 - b. Closing Event
 - c. Closing Comments from the Training Team

Overview

No work is more important than the work of child welfare. The many and complicated pressures vulnerable children, youth, and their families face, along with the turbulent time in which we live and work, translate to significant and persistent challenges. The world of child welfare is rapidly changing and highly variable. The skills needed in the workforce are constantly evolving. This condition, sometimes referred to as “permanent whitewater,” compels the need for leadership development.

Effective leadership today requires the ability to be adaptive, flexible, and collaborative. Middle managers have an essential role as leaders in the transformation of child welfare. In particular, they must have the skills to lead change, along with workforce engagement and development. That’s why the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI), through a cooperative agreement with the Children’s Bureau, developed a series of programs that supports the development of child welfare leaders with the goal of building the capacity of the nation’s child welfare workforce to promote positive change and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.

The Leadership Academy for Middle Managers (LAMM) is one of those programs. Based on a model of leadership that is a match for this new world, the NCWWI developed LAMM as a national training program for middle managers who work in public and tribal child welfare systems and in private agencies under contract with a state or county child welfare agency. This competency-based training prepares leaders for the environment of constant change and equips them with new information, skills, and hands-on opportunities to apply practices and principles based on an empirically informed Leadership Model. The purpose of this curriculum is to prepare middle managers to lead meaningful change in our nation’s ability to serve our most vulnerable children, youth, and families.

This introduction gives an overview of the LAMM curriculum content and describes components of the LAMM program, as well as recommended delivery methods.

The NCWWI Leadership Model

The LAMM curriculum centers on a model of leadership and accompanying competencies developed by NCWWI. The online Introductory Module, which participants view prior to coming to the residential program, describes the NCWWI Leadership Model. Trainers also present the Leadership Model during the Sunday night on-site meeting and at the beginning of each training module. The full Leadership Model and Competency Framework are available to review and download from the NCWWI website (www.ncwwi.org).

LAMM Components

While it may be tempting to think of LAMM as just a one-week residential training, this comprehensive program actually consists of three parts:

- A. Preparation and pre-training coaching
- B. Residential training and coaching
- C. Post-training coaching, Peer Network, and distance learning opportunities

The effectiveness of LAMM relies on the faithful delivery of all three components in sequence. This part of the introduction reviews the core components of each part of LAMM.

A. Preparation for LAMM

1. *Recruitment of LAMM participants*

The LAMM is not for everyone. This is not a “basic management” curriculum, though both recently appointed and more experienced middle managers will find value in the training. Whether new or experienced, selected middle managers are those who have demonstrated the desire and ability to grow and change, and in whom the agency places confidence. In order to participate fully, managers must have the authority and responsibility to implement mission-driven, strategic change initiatives that have been prioritized by agency leadership.

Nomination and selection of LAMM participants is a collaborative process.

Recommendations are solicited from individuals and groups that support systems change in child welfare, such as the Regional Children’s Bureau offices and National Resource Centers. State, county, and tribal leaders and executives take those suggestions into account when making the final recommendation of nominees from their state, within the parameters provided by the LAMM and approved by the Children’s Bureau. See the welcome letter example in the appendix for detailed information on pre-LAMM expectations.

Working with agency and tribal child welfare leaders creates the opportunity to choose middle managers who share a similar level of knowledge and ability, as well as similar authority and responsibility. The LAMM curriculum content then can be trained at a consistently high level, keeping participants interested and involved in the creative application of the learning. Participants are more likely to build peer networks with others who share a similar level of accountability and experience.

2. *Selection of a Change Initiative*

The learner’s Change Initiative—a program or project the middle manager is accountable for implementing—is the center of the entire LAMM experience. Applicants describe the Change Initiative on which they will focus during LAMM. Applying lessons learned to a concrete, real-world situation makes learning much more powerful in the long run, and increases the immediate value of the training for both the manager and his or her agency.

The Change Initiative should involve the participant in a lead role, and state or tribal leadership should support the Change Initiative as a priority. Change Initiatives often include state or tribal priorities such as a strategic plan, a systems change plan, or a program improvement plan. Examples of previous initiatives include: development and implementation of evidence-based practices, implementation of training programs for supervisors, development of infrastructure to support tribal ability to meet the needs of tribal children and families, and implementation of family team decision making and permanency roundtables. The selected Change Initiatives may be regionally or county based and should have the potential to impact system-wide change and improve child welfare outcomes.

Some states and tribes send a team of participants, each of whom plays a distinct leadership role in the same initiative for that jurisdiction. In these cases, each manager leads a portion of the Change Initiative or carries the change forward in a specific program area or division. Participants continue to develop their individual strategies and can then work together upon their return to assure model fidelity, continuity, and consistency across the implementation process.

3. *Online learning preparation*

Learners must prepare for LAMM in advance so they can enter the training (a) confident about all logistical arrangements and (b) conversant in the basic concepts of LAMM. Email and online preparation addresses these points and also includes a learner assessment related to the evaluation. Good preparation assures that learners are on a level playing field during the residential week.

- a. Logistical preparation. Participating middle managers receive detailed travel and lodging information in advance.
- b. Content preparation. Learners are expected to spend approximately 10 hours doing assigned pre-work, including an online leadership assessment and a web-based *Introductory Module*, which provides an overview of the curriculum content and offers the opportunity to reflect on the LAMM and its relationship to the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute.

4. *Coaching to support preparation*

Each participant receives one-on-one readiness coaching. Trainer/Coaches schedule up two calls with each of the middle managers before the residential training to confirm understanding of the Leadership Model and make sure the participant has a clear understanding of how they will incorporate their Change Initiative into the work ahead. Readiness coaching also engages participants in a positive relationship and diminishes distracting concerns regarding travel or accommodations; familiarizes participants with the training schedule and content; sets a tone for the training that emphasizes reflection and critical thinking; and communicates the importance of the leadership agenda.

B. Residential training delivery and coaching

1. Selection of trainers

LAMM has demonstrated success in providing a learning environment in which middle managers feel motivated and supported to take risks in pursuit of the technical and adaptive challenges of leading sustainable systems change.

It is important to select experienced trainers with a sophisticated understanding of child welfare and child welfare management. Credible LAMM trainers will have a working knowledge of the programs that address the needs of children, youth, and families, the workforce, stakeholders, funding, and political dynamics. They will have been in management or worked closely with managers. They will have been involved in systems change themselves and have an informed knowledge of the dynamics of systems change from a management perspective so that they can add examples from their own experience and listen sensitively to participants.

We recommend building a team of trainers with a variety of presentation styles. Selecting trainers who reflect the cultural range and different learning styles of participants enhances the learning environment. Effective LAMM trainers will understand adult learning preferences and be able to address and deliver training through the different modalities. Because this is a scripted curriculum, it will be important for trainers to be willing to follow a script and to bring it alive with their own experiences.

Trainers who also provide coaching before, during, and after the residential LAMM are often better able to provide continuity with the LAMM content and build on existing relationships with LAMM participants.

2. Use of multiple training modalities

To support a range of adult learning styles, trainers deliver the LAMM curriculum through multiple training modalities. LAMM includes lectures, large- and small-group dialogue and discussions, self-directed Learning Circles, activities focused both on a shared Change Initiative example and application to individual Change Initiatives, role plays and other opportunities for skill practice, a Learning and Action Plan Journal for daily review and reflection, and individual coaching. Each participant prepares for and delivers a presentation to a small group at the end of the week.

Specifically, these multiple delivery modalities include the following:

- Minimal lecture time, with built-in opportunities to contribute through large- and small-group discussions and feedback.
- Activities that provide opportunity for learning by doing, sharing, and practicing new tools and strategies.
- The Terry Jackson Fatherhood Change Initiative, a standardized case study used throughout the training as a template for learning, serves as the focus of one role play and several application exercises. The curriculum introduces the case study in the pre-work, and additional details are added throughout the training. Participants receive the full case study with the package of training materials.

- Learning Circles of six to eight participants created on the first day meet at the end of each day for 30-60 minutes. They are self-directed, and discussion questions are provided for groups that choose to use them (most circles follow their own line of inquiry and connection).
- Participants construct Learning and Action Plan Journals with a brief review of the day's content, providing for self-reflection and written observations. These journals are for participant use only.
- Participants receive coaching during the residential LAMM by trainers and other professionals who are present. Participants may choose to focus on any of the training content they would like to explore more deeply and/or use coaching for further development of their individual Change Initiative. Small-group coaching is also available, particularly for state or tribal groups focused on the same initiative.
- The Change Initiative presentation on the closing day is the “grand finale” of the training and offers skill practice in public speaking and engagement of stakeholders. Participants give a 10-minute briefing to fellow participants, followed by another 10 minutes for questions and strength-based feedback. Preparation of the presentation is an incremental process throughout the week and should reflect the impact of content on the development of the manager's thinking and implementation plan.
- Trainer fidelity to the curriculum allows for a consistent pace for learning, coverage, and integration of the content and effective evaluation.

C. Post-training coaching, peer networking, and distance learning opportunities

LAMM coaching is a structured process in which a coach uses specific strategies to help middle managers become more skilled and effective leaders and better able to implement sustained change through self-awareness, assessment, and practice. Following the residential training, post-training coaching supports the transfer of learning to the workplace. Post-training coaching is available to all LAMM participants. The participant establishes coaching goals and negotiates a schedule for calls with the coach. Typically, coaching is one hour a month by phone over a period of six months.

A manual describing the LAMM coaching approach is available separately.

Group and peer coaching are also available to all participants. Content webinars with extensive peer sharing and Q & A, and discussion-based coaching webinars for small groups of six to eight managers, provide ongoing peer support and sharing, as well as deeper exploration into LAMM content.

Webinar topics include: Cultural Humility, Adaptive Leadership, Collaboration, Leading for Results, Workforce Development, and others identified by participants. The LAMM team also has provided support for participants dealing with similar challenges or implementing similar initiatives.

It Works: Brief Overview of Evaluation Findings

Rigorous evaluation of the LAMM's competency-based training has confirmed that, when delivered as designed, the training produced results in terms of increased competencies and success with systems change initiatives. This was true particularly when post-training supports were in place through coaching and agency support.

The evaluation used a pre-post-follow-up design. In a survey completed before coming to the training, participants rated their skills on training competencies. At the conclusion of the residential LAMM, participants again rated their skills on the competencies. Follow-up surveys completed at three, six, and 12 months following the residential LAMM explored participants' ability to use the skills and implement Change Initiatives. All assessments also tracked agency support for transfer of learning.

LAMM has been successful in all aspects of the training. Participants report a high overall satisfaction with LAMM and significant overall competency gains. Middle managers who received coaching and communicated with LAMM peers reported significantly higher competency gains and were more likely to implement their Change Initiatives, compared with managers without coaching or peer support. Managers with peer and supervisory support in their workplace also reported greater success with implementation of Change Initiatives.

During LAMM, participants completed daily evaluations that then informed the training team of participants' comfort, interest, and concerns or questions, which trainers could address in turn during the training. Even if this kind of rigorous, competency-based evaluation is not available to a jurisdiction wishing to implement this curriculum, trainers should strongly consider administering some kind of daily evaluation to capture and address participant feedback. In this way, LAMM delivery reflects value for the results-oriented leadership and adaptive work that it teaches to middle managers.

Using the Curriculum

The components of the LAMM curriculum are available in the following online documents:

- Trainer modules
- Participant PowerPoint slides
- Handouts
- Resources
- Terry Jackson Fatherhood Change Initiative example
- LAMM Coaching Manual

At the LAMM training, participants use laptops to access and use the materials in the training room. Participants enter notes electronically on both PowerPoint slides and handouts. To enable the use of laptops, trainers must prepare materials such as participant PowerPoint slides, handouts, and resources in a flash drive or portal format for participants

to download onto their laptops before the first day. Technical assistance is available to help with this process.

Trainer modules lay out a pathway for trainers to follow each day or portion of a day and include information, scripts, and notes that support the training process. Only trainers receive these modules.

Trainers use **participant PowerPoint slides**, which also are available to participants. Often, participants write notes on the notes section of each slide for future reference. The group can toggle between slides, handouts, and other resources as the discussion moves back and forth between the documents.

Handouts contain learning materials for each day in sequence. Participants open the handout document and scroll down to find all handouts for Module One, then all handouts for Module Two, and so forth. Handouts are numbered by Module and Handout.

Resources include many documents to support the training. Some resources are specific tools to support the training process, and others are reference documents. Included in the resource file are: LAMM Schedule at a Glance, Curriculum Outline and Competencies, Acknowledgments, Curriculum References, NCWWI Leadership Model and Competencies, and the Learning and Action Plan Journal.

The **Terry Jackson Fatherhood Change Initiative** is a stand-alone document provided in the pre-work that participants use in activities throughout the training.

The **LAMM Coaching Manual** describes the LAMM Coaching Program in detail. It is a tool that supports effective Readiness Coaching, Residential Training Coaching, and Post-Training Coaching.

Technical Assistance for LAMM Implementation

The faithful delivery of the full LAMM program, as described above, requires a commitment of time, talent, and resources. The LAMM team at Portland State University is available to provide technical assistance for LAMM implementation. Please contact Deborah Reed, LAMM Project Manager, at Deborah.reed@pdx.edu for more information.

Documents and Appendices

- Trainer curriculum
- Handouts
- Participant PowerPoint slides
- Resources
- LAMM Coaching Manual
- Notification and readiness materials:
 - Example of a welcome letter, which includes detail of pre-work and links for access to training materials
 - Pre-work instructions for trainers

Note: Detailed information about readiness coaching is included in the LAMM Coaching Manual.

Note: The original training uses an assessment developed by Gallup, called the StrengthsFinder®. LAMM provides each participant with a copy of the following book, which includes an access code for the individualized assessment:
Rath, T. & Conchie, B. (2008). *Strengths-based leadership*. New York: Gallup Press

Pre-Work and Readiness Coaching Outline

1. Welcome letter includes information on;

- Logistics (travel, the need to bring a laptop if available, etc.)
- Pre-work StrengthsFinder assessment (book enclosed)
- Change Initiative instructions (see attached instructions and example of group Change Initiative)
- Link to web-based Introductory Module
- Link to optional web-based data basics review module
- Information on welcome phone call and coaching phone call

2. Individual welcome phone call

Objectives: Participants will be able to

- Feel acknowledged, known, and respected as an adult learner.
- Understand the logistics of the training process, become clear about expectations of pre-work for training, and be empowered to participate effectively.

Talking points on the welcome call:

Welcome and congratulations. Ask if they are looking forward to the training. Tell them you'll be their coach and will be at the training, and you're looking forward to meeting them.

Timing and logistics:

- Review timing and logistics with the participant.
- Make sure they have received their letter and book.
- Review and address any logistical questions.

Pre-work:

Review and engage the participant in each element of the pre-work:

- Viewing the Introductory Module
 - Have they tried to log on yet?
 - It will take approximately 2 hours to complete.
 - It provides a good introduction to the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute and to LAMM.
- Taking the StrengthsFinder assessment
 - It will take about 20 minutes to complete.

- Have they given it a try yet?
- Perhaps share something you've gotten out of it yourself.
- Completing the Change Initiative outline prior to coaching call. Let them know that they don't have to have the initiative completely designed; that's what the week's training is for. Compliment them on, or acknowledge an aspect of, their Change Initiative. Tell them that the time to do this will vary depending on how much they have already done, but we estimate no more than 1 hour.
- Selecting one aspect of agency data for sharing at training. Again, the time estimate will be variable but should take no more than a few minutes.
- Viewing the optional University of Kansas modules on data basics. Explain that the Thursday session on Leading for Results assumes a basic familiarity with performance measures and data interpretation. It will take about 15-20 minutes to complete each of the modules.
- Reviewing the group Change Initiative for familiarity.
- Re-confirm that their agency leadership is supportive of their participation.

Coaching call:

- Schedule the coaching call for at least 45 minutes.
- Make sure they know that you will coach them on the next call and during the training.
- Let them know that you're looking forward to talking with them in a week or two to see what they've learned from the various introductory materials.

Close:

Close by reminding them of the possibilities generated from the Leadership Academy—that by participating in this training, they will be part of building a critical mass of leadership for child welfare systems transformation across the nation. They'll be creating lasting professional ties with colleagues in tribal and public child welfare across the country, and will receive valuable coaching on state-of-the-art leadership content from experienced child welfare leaders.

3. Web-Based Introductory Module

Objectives: Participants will be able to

- Describe major concepts and challenges in child welfare leadership.
- Apply concepts and challenges to their own agency and identify examples of changes.

This module, which has been revised specifically for the LAMM, includes reflection questions and a unit on implementation science. Directions for logging in are included in the pre-work packet.

4. [Optional] Web-Based Modules on Data Basics

Objectives: Participants will be able to

- Apply basic data tools for reading and interpreting data.
- Identify data source(s) and assess the strength and limitations of relevant data elements for measuring progress of a Change Initiative.

Participants will be directed to modules 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the Results Oriented Management web-based training of the University of Kansas (www.rom.ku.edu/). The Children's Bureau previously approved this material. Each module takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. Directions for logging into the site are included in the pre-work packet.

5. Individual Coaching Call

Objectives: Participants will be able to

- Feel related to, known and respected as an adult learner.
- Understand the logistics of the training process, have clear expectations of pre-work for training, and be empowered to participate effectively.
- Refine the Change Initiative.

Elements of the Coaching Call:

- Greet them and make sure the scheduled time frame still works for them.
- Ask how the pre-work is going. Check in on completion of other work (StrengthsFinder, Introductory Module, review of group Change Initiative). Let them share any insights they may have gotten and/or answer questions. If the person hasn't yet accessed online materials, do some coaching/troubleshooting with them to ensure they will have the work completed before they arrive at the training. Acknowledge the challenge of getting out of the office for a whole week, and reinforce them for making this commitment.
- Review the Change Initiative planning sheet with them and help them fill it in. Make sure they get at least one key point of value from this aspect of the call. This should be the largest portion of the call time.
- Ask if they have set particular goals for the training. Share one or two parts of the week that will have special applicability to these goals.
- Make sure that all has gone smoothly with their travel and lodging. If there are any issues, make sure they have the phone number and email of the logistics coordinator. [Note: The coach should not take responsibility for solving or even communicating logistical issues, but instead should refer the participant to the LAMM logistics team. However, the coach should make sure the LAMM logistics team knows issues have arisen. These checks assure excellent participant support and increase the availability to the learning experience.]
- Let them know you look forward to meeting them in person at the residential training.