



SURE-FIRE MEETINGS TRANSFER OF LEARNING

A Post-Performance
Assessment On Use of
Dialogue Education™

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Created by: Global Learning Partners, Inc.

As part of a larger initiative to reduce recidivism as supported with Juvenile Accountability Block Grant funds obtained and managed through the Vermont Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division.

Table of Contents

I. Overview.....	3
II. Methodology.....	4
Transfer Sheets	4
Follow-Up Survey	5
III. Results.....	6
Transfer Sheets	6
Follow-Up Survey	7
IV. Appendices.....	13
Scholarship Application	13
Instrument: Transfer Sheet	13
Instrument: Follow-Up Survey	13
Transfer Sheet Responses	13
Follow-Up Survey Responses	13

Table of Figures

1: Contract Outcomes, Deliverables and Outputs	3
2: Workshop Participant Commitments	4
3: Transfer Sheet Responses	6
4: Percentage of Participants Who Used Skills/Ideas Learned	7
5: When Participants First Used Skills/Ideas Learned	8
6: Where Participants Applied Skills/Ideas	8
7: Who Participants Used Skills/Ideas With.....	9

Transfer – The use of the newly learned material in a new context, after the learning event. Indicators of transfer are behavioral evidence that cognitive, affective, or psychomotor learning has taken place.

I. Overview

Global Learning Partners, Inc. (GLP) was contracted by the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) to offer Dialogue Education to support evidence-based programs and effective stakeholder collaboration to specific audiences in Vermont who seek to establish and maintain accountability-based programs to reduce juvenile recidivism. For the 2013 calendar year, Global Learning Partners provided two trainings:

- SURE-Fire Meetings on October 7-8, 2013 in Stowe, VT
- Effective Stakeholder Collaboration November 4-5, 2013 in Berlin, VT

Participants completed an application and were selected to attend based a variety of factors including target audience represented, organizational support, and individual readiness factors. To ensure the highest levels of efficacy, relevance and transfer of learning of these learning events, GLP consultants collaborated with key stakeholders and partners throughout the planning, design and follow-up process.

This report details transfer of learning for participants who attended the SURE-Fire Meetings workshop; a second report for Effective Stakeholder Collaboration is forthcoming. This training and post-performance assessment is only one piece of the entire contracting period (which is scheduled to go through October 2014). Desired outcomes, deliverables and outputs for the entire program has been excerpted from the contract and is included below.

1: Contract Outcomes, Deliverables and Outputs

Outcomes: The outcome for the training and follow-up skill reinforcement in Dialogue Education in Support of Evidence-based Programs and Dialogue Education in Support of Effective Stakeholder Collaboration is that more staff and providers will use principles and practices of effective teaching for social change (immediacy, relevance, safety, engagement, respect) to effectively impact juveniles with evidence-based and accountability-based programs and interventions to reduce recidivism. Measured outcomes will be obtained by a post-performance assessment to assess the use Dialogue Education principles and practices in the design and delivery of evidence-based programs and interventions and collaboration by participants and the impact of their use on juveniles in Vermont to reduce recidivism.

Deliverables and Outputs: Contractor will provide tailored Introductory and Advanced Trainings to Support Effective Stakeholder Collaboration and Effective Meetings designed to build more effective community based and state level performance capacity within the Youth Justice field across Vermont. These trainings are based on research and field application of principles and practices of Dialogue Education™ and SURE-Fire™ Meetings. Participants will maximize their learning of the most relevant key principles and practices during each event and prepare them to transfer specific learning immediately into their work setting.

II. Methodology

As part of the scholarship application process all participants signed an agreement outlining their commitments (included below).

2: Workshop Participant Commitments

As a scholarship recipient you are expected to commit to the following:

- Participate in a short survey in advance of the training session(s) to help us best meet your learning needs
- Attend both full days of the training session(s)
- Apply new learning to your evidence-based work designed to reduce juvenile recidivism
- Participate in a short survey six weeks following the training session(s) to share your transfer of learning

In order to maximize the impact of the learning opportunities and assure the greatest levels of transfer, participants were encouraged to attend with one or more of their colleagues or community partners.

This report includes the use of two separate instruments; the methodology for each is detailed below. All 24 participants completing the two-day workshop were asked to participate in each. It is important to note here that of the 24 SURE-Fire Meetings participants, 12 went on to participate in the November workshop (Effective Stakeholder Collaboration) and thus received an additional dose of Dialogue Education. Additional tracking of these 12 participants' will be included in the Effective Stakeholder Collaboration report to determine what impact, if any, multiple doses of Dialogue Education had on their transfer of learning.

Transfer Sheets

- **Instrument**
Participants were asked to complete a transfer sheet to gauge achievement and usefulness of course content along with their predicted transfer of learning (what, when and with whom they will try out their learnings). The hard copy sheets were self-completed by hand and turned in to the facilitators at the conclusion of the workshop. The transfer sheet consists of a series of usefulness ratings for each piece of the course content as well as a series of open ended questions. A copy of the instrument is included in the appendix.
- **Timing**
Upon immediate completion of the course
- **N= 19/24**
Though there were 24 participants who completed the course, only 19 transfer

sheets were completed and turned in. Despite the commitment to attend for the duration of the workshop from 9am-4pm each day, it was necessary for five participants to leave just prior to worksheet completion time. As is evident in the results section, several of the 19 transfer sheets received were not fully completed.

- **Time Burden**
Estimated time to complete the worksheets was 10 minutes.

Follow-Up Survey

Instrument: A random number generator was used to assign each of the 24 course completers to either an electronic survey or a telephone survey. Though the instrument was the same for both methods of completion, those who took the telephone survey were prompted to offer more detail and elaborate on the open-ended question responses. The survey consisted of demographic information (responses were not anonymous), four multiple choice questions, and two open-ended questions. Of the six questions, five were required for completion and one was optional. A copy of the instrument is included in the appendix.

Electronic Survey

- **N= 13/15**
Non-responders received two follow-up emails and a follow-up phone call which mentioned the importance of the data, the collection deadline, and a reminder about the scholarship commitment.
- **Timing**
Participants were invited to complete the online survey six weeks after the course completion date. A link to the survey was sent out via email.
- **Time Burden**
Estimated time to complete the online survey was 10-15 minutes.

Telephone Survey

- **N= 6/9**
Non-responders received two follow-up emails and a follow-up phone call which mentioned the importance of the data, the collection deadline, and a reminder about the scholarship commitment.
- **Timing**
Six weeks after the course completion date participants were invited, via email, to schedule an interview time using an online scheduling tool.
- **Time Burden**
Estimated time to complete the telephone survey was 20-30 minutes.

III. Results

Transfer Sheets

The most highly scored workshop content in terms of usefulness to participants included:

- 1) **Wrote** achievements for meeting based on levels of decision-making.
- 2) **Explored** making meetings Safe, Useful, Respectful & Engaging.
- 3) **Practiced** using intentional framework to prepare a meeting.
- 4) **Distinguished** among 3 voices people may have at different points in a meeting.
- 5) **Described** ways to advance a meeting before it begins.

3: Transfer Sheet Responses

	Achieved?	How Useful for You? 1=low 4=high Average	How Useful for You? 1=low 4=high Mode
MEETING DESIGN			
Identified & practiced the 3 phases of organizing meetings.	Yes 16/No 0/Unsure 1	3.3	3
Practiced using intentional framework to prepare a meeting.	Yes 16/No 0/Unsure 1	3.5	4
Distinguished among 3 voices people may have at different points in a meeting.	Yes 16/No 0/Unsure 1	3.5	4
Wrote achievements for meeting based on levels of decision-making.	Yes 17/No 0/Unsure 0	3.7	4
Examined levels of decisions made in meetings and how to address these.	Yes 14/No 1/Unsure 2	2.9	3
Used a decision-tree to determine if meeting is best way to go.	Yes 7/No 5/Unsure 5	2.5	2
MEETING PROCESS			
Explored making meetings Safe, Useful, Respectful & Engaging.	Yes 16/No 0/Unsure 1	3.6	4
Described ways to advance a meeting before it begins.	Yes 13/No 1/Unsure 3	3.4	4
Assessed effectively holding different roles during a meeting.	Yes 16/No 0/Unsure 1	3.2	3
Named effective skills for group facilitation in the divergent and convergent zones of a meeting.	Yes 15/No 1/Unsure 1	3.1	3
Reflected upon current and new approaches to decision making.	Yes 13/No 0/Unsure 4	3.1	3
FEEDBACK & EVALUATION			
Created a plan to evaluate process & results of a meeting.	Yes 9/No 2/Unsure 4	3.2	3
Practiced methods to follow up on key aspects of meeting.	Yes 11/No 1/Unsure 3	3.3	4
Checked your achievements with the content and predicted what you will transfer into your organization.	Yes 10/No 2/Unsure 3	3.1	4

Most frequently cited responses for the following open-ended questions are listed below. All open-ended response data can be found in the appendix.

What will I use?

- Making meetings safe, useful, respectful and engaging
- Agendas with meeting achievements
- Three phases of organizing meetings
- Three voices
- Effective skills for group facilitation

When will I use it?

- Immediately
- Within the next month

With whom will I use it?

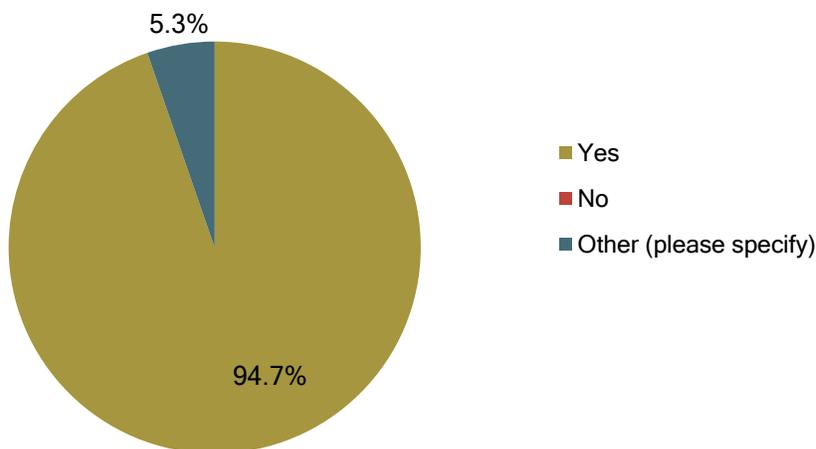
- Staff/team members
- Community partners
- Families

Follow-Up Survey

Charts are included below for each of the four multiple choice response questions.

4: Percentage of Participants Who Used Skills/Ideas Learned

Since taking the workshop, have you created or modified one or more events using the skills or ideas learned? (An “event” might include a meeting, workshop, forum, training, supervision or any other event in which you might use these skills or ideas.)

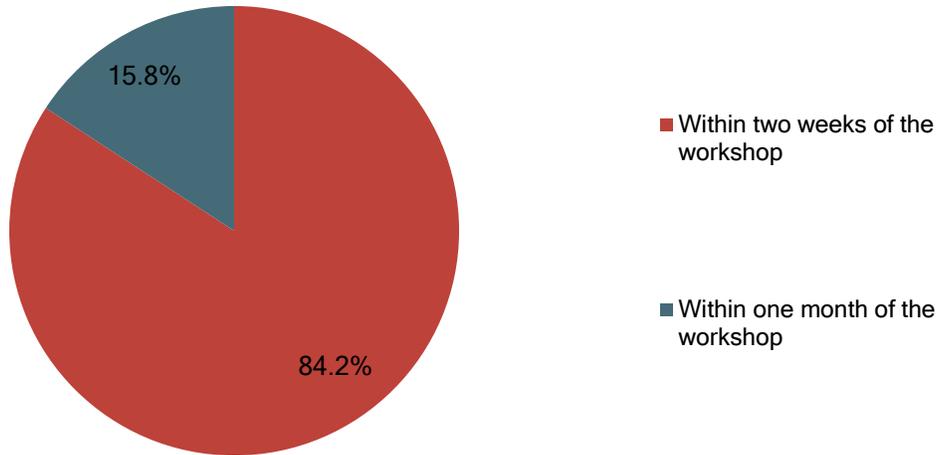


All but one participant reported already having used what they learned in an event. The other response stated: *Have raised the question of making a more meaningful agenda for a*

monthly meeting which frequently gets cancelled- want the group to decide together to clarify the purpose of the meeting, etc.

5: When Participants First Used Skills/Ideas Learned

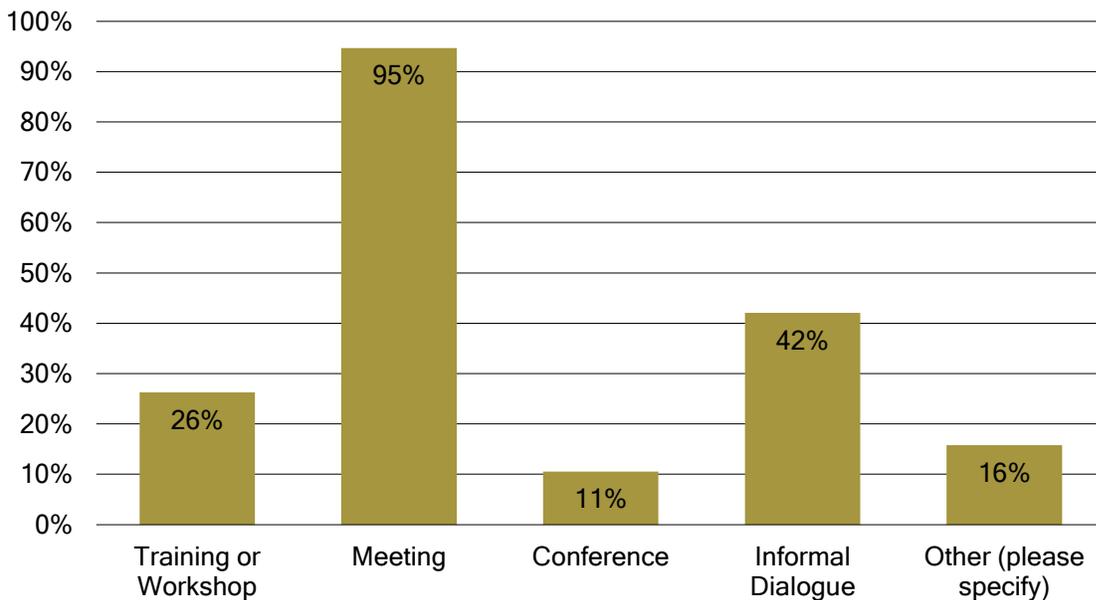
If you used one or more skills or ideas learned from this workshop, when did you first use them?



The majority of participants applied their learning within two weeks of the workshop, and all respondents applied their learning within four weeks' time.

6: Where Participants Applied Skills/Ideas

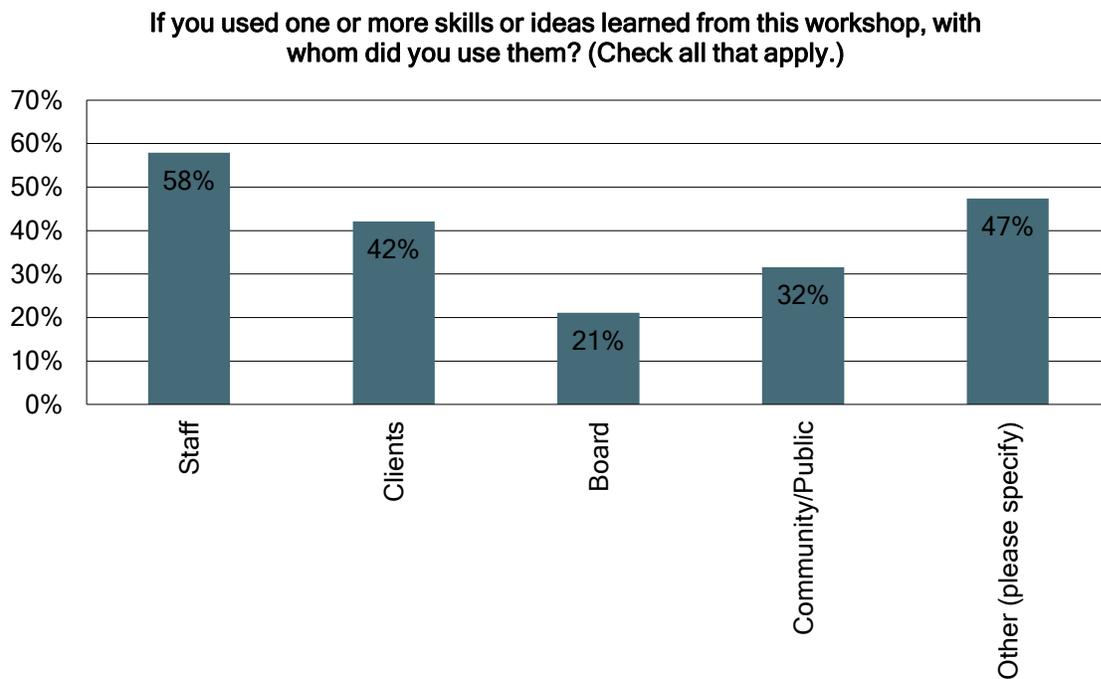
If you used one or more skills or ideas learned from this workshop, at what types of events were they used? (Select all that apply.)



Nearly all participants reported applying their learning in meetings. “Other” responses included a multi-agency change meeting, family group conferencing, and two respondents who reported additional details about a positive experience (highlights included below).

- *Going into the training my plan was to use these skills and ideas in my work within my juvenile justice team and this is where I used them...I was looking for anything and everything I could apply to get our team back on track: in terms of energy, direction, and effectiveness. This workshop helped a ton with this!*
- *For me the big takeaway was taking the full ownership off of myself for effective meetings and putting it back on the group. This happened through dialogue. Also I cannot own the success of the group. It's only going to get better by this collective ownership. Our team had some great dialogue around focus, agenda development. Three phases was the thing that stuck out the most for me as well as identification of achievements...We sent out the agenda last week and people were blown away by it! The feedback was positive in advance of the meeting and at the meeting. In the meeting I learned that the agenda was far more packed then we had time for. We recognized that we don't we need to do all the objectives at once and can break them down even smaller. In terms of achievements, we only had three but they were really rich achievements and we couldn't get to them all in an hour and a half meeting. For facilitation I have learned to have a scribe and time keeper to help people look forward to attending the meeting.*

7: Who Participants Used Skills/Ideas With



Staff and clients were the most commonly selected audiences benefiting from participants’ application of new learnings. “Other” responses generally fell into the previously

system...As a result of participation, I think that it has overall created an increased level of commitment and energy around coming together and planning. The difference that I have seen ranges from very basic level to higher levels of attendance than in the past, to people walking away with concrete tasks that they were committed to following up on, to a better sense of planning for what we want next and where we want to go with this. This is all a very great start.

- *This training was among the most concrete and relevant training I have ever attended. I walked away with specific ideas and strategies for strengthening my ability to plan, prepare, and facilitate meetings. Among the most helpful concepts was re-framing agenda setting around achievements. Use of this approach has already increased the efficiency and effectiveness of statewide meetings for runaway & homeless youth programs, supporting our networks ability to serve high-risk youth.*
- *The skills I obtained from this training I have put to use during my team meetings. I find being prepared for treatment team meetings has kept meetings on track so youth, families and service providers are able to discuss the needed issues. Delegating tasks has made meeting easier and things go more smoothly. Having a written agenda ahead of time keeps meetings on track and everyone is able to focus on difficult issues, what youth's need to be successful and what is working.*
- *Using the meeting agenda format has increased the sharing of information with clear, detailed, written follow-up. Follow-up leads to better tracking and more cohesive programs for offenders. My students complete more educational requirements due to the increased communication and wrap-around services from multiple providers involved in their individualized programs. Earning credits leads to graduation and a high school diploma (HSD). Earning a HSD leads to a reduction in recidivism according to data shared on the State of Vermont website.*
- *The skills gain from the SURE-Fire meeting training supported our work with juveniles/youth by keeping in mind the collaboration partnerships we have with other agencies and how we can effectively examine our meeting approaches and the purposes of meetings...I have also utilized in my work with clients directly the purpose of our meetings and when engaging with them in conversation establishing a safe environment to build rapport. I have found this has made them feel open to sharing information and know what the expectations are.*
- *Our board received a better training on Motivational Interviewing as a result of this training. Due to this the board has better skills to work with juveniles to help reduce recidivism.*
- *In the family group conference (which was not a restorative conference) the plans were to reunify a mother and her 18 month old baby. I used the skills and ideas by using a really clear agenda and keeping the three voices in mind--my role as a facilitator and speaking with the large family group that was attending, prepping the social worker for what his bottom lines were and what he wanted out of the meeting. It was helpful to keep those voices in back of my head and keep the verbs*

in mind throughout the meeting and knowing about decisive voice and that I was looking for the social worker's final approval. It helped me to ask what steps did the family need to take in order to meet that approval. I think that following the three phases of the meeting was helpful and restorative conferences operate like this in terms of being clear about objectives, follow-up, and a final plan. I look forward to using this format within restorative conferences

- *Participants from our community partners love it! We've gotten stuff done and really stayed on task which has been helpful. Our meetings have been to collect better data and to support some of the goals we have including around youth going out of the community. Having this time to put data together is huge from my perspective. The planning tools gives us time and affords us the luxury to do this.*
- *I use these skills to help make clients feel more safe and able to dialogue with me as well as using ways to get information so they feel like their voice is being heard and their opinion really does matter. I try to make sure that they feel like a large part of the discussion and that they have as big of a voice as they would like to have. I really appreciate the alternative ranking strategies and plan to go over them again and in-cooperate them in the future. Making youth aware of hard topics ahead of time as well as offering ground rules so they know that at any point they can step out and take some time has really helped calm and make meetings run more smoothly.*

(Optional) What else would you like us to share with us about the impact of this workshop on your work?

The image below provides a pictorial overview of the most frequently cited words in participants' responses.



Several highlights from the responses are shared below, and full responses can be found in the appendix.

- *This workshop was great. It will help me to create more thoughtful and effective meetings where all are respected and valued.*

- *This this was the best training I have ever been to, absolutely. Because I left with tools, left with ideas, and I have stolen shamelessly the ideas from those there and used them.*
- *Ultimately my goal in any meeting is to maintain integrity of the process (like the restorative process). Having more tools helps me to help clients and volunteers, getting me closer to best possible practices which I really appreciate*
- *I feel meetings go smoother, I have more confidence, and I think youth, clients, and service providers appreciate the structure.*

IV. Appendices

Scholarship Application

Instrument: Transfer Sheet

Instrument: Follow-Up Survey

Transfer Sheet Responses

Follow-Up Survey Responses

Appendices have been removed from this version for the sake of privacy and redacted versions may be available upon request.