

Follow-up Training Evaluation: “Conflict Resolution”

FOCUS GROUP/INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Four trainings on conflict resolution were held in February and March of 2006. Follow-up interviews were conducted in July 2006. Below is a summary of responses for the four questions presented to the participants.

What skills and knowledge did you gain from the training?

- No new skills but refinement of old skills, how to approach things from a different perspective.
- Learning to look at both sides of the conflict and to be able to point those out to the other side.
- Learning to ask the right questions.
- Learned that it takes a lot of training and advanced skills to do well with conflict mediation.

How have you applied the training in your work?

- Conflict resolution skills are used every day.
- As a supervisor, it has really helped with staff in helping them see both sides and come to a middle ground.
- Yes, in working with families. Showing respect but making sure everyone in the family has a voice.

What was useful and not useful about the training?

The comments were all “useful”:

- Always good to have a refresher.
- Learning to see all sides and come to a middle ground.
- Opportunity to watch a professional mediator after the training.
- Smaller group was a good size for training.

What would be more useful for you in the future—format? Handouts? Content? Other?

- More situational.
- More examples, maybe with some videos.
- “One of the most useful trainings.”
- “It was an excellent training.”

SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Eight telephone interviews with supervisors in Cluster 1 – 4 were conducted during June 2006. Attempts to contact five other supervisors were made but were unsuccessful (2-5 attempts were made in each case). Below is a summary of responses for the questions presented to the supervisors.

How familiar are you with the MTP project?

Five of the eight supervisors interviewed were being interviewed for the second time. Therefore, this question was only asked of the three supervisors who the evaluators were speaking to for the first time. Those three were “somewhat” or “quite familiar” with the MTP project.

Did you attend the MTP training on conflict resolution?

Three of eight supervisors interviewed had attended the conflict resolution training.

Did your workers attend this training?

Four of eight supervisors interviewed had sent workers to the conflict resolution training; one had not. Three supervisors were not sure if their workers had attended or not.

Are your workers using the information they learned in the training?

- Yes.
- Not sure of the specifics of how they are using the training but heard a lot of positive feedback about it.
- The only worker I know for sure who went to the training is no longer working at CD.
- The workers are using it somewhat but I am not.

How are they using the information in their work with clients?

- Family support meetings.
- “I am fortunate to have experienced workers who already had the conflict resolution skills. I would question the ‘added value’ of the program. Many are skills that workers either have or don’t have (people skills).”

Have there been any formal changes to policy or procedure due to the training that was provided?

No supervisor responded ‘yes’ to this question.

Have workers’ feelings or attitudes changed as a result of the training?

Again, no supervisor responded ‘yes’ to this question.

In general, concerning all of the trainings that have been provided, what have you heard about the quality of the trainings or the effect that training has had on worker behavior or attitude?

- It is hard now (because of short staff, high workload, vacations) to get workers to training. I am sure workers will go to training in the future.
- Right now we are so understaffed that we are just putting out fires. Staff turnover is so high. Turnover, once it begins, spreads as workers know that their caseloads will increase. The State cannot match the offers in the private sector.
- Trainings have been helpful and beneficial. In the beginning, they were more apt to cover ground that had already been covered. The more recent trainings have been better and have provided more new information.
- I have heard positive comments. The workers have said they always learn something new, as opposed to some trainings that just cover the same ground.
- I have heard positive feedback. The only problem is that the trainings are scheduled at the convenience of the trainers, not the attendees. There have been several cases where I or my workers have been unable to attend because of conflicts such as court.
- Our county is small. If one worker goes to training, another must stay. Some specific days are not good: Thursday is our court day. Tuesday is meeting day for Family Support Teams. Wednesdays are better for trainings.
- A few workers who attended the training may pursue advanced training to supplement their income. They had expressed that interest. Benefits would be outside of their roles as CD workers. My workers are investigators, crisis intervention, etc. Therefore, they have many of the skills already.