

LEARNING CIRCLES

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Introduction to Learning Circles

- *Learning Circles* are groups that engage in a process of learning through collective inquiry.
- Facilitated by a group leader.
- Group members are accountable to one another.
- Goal: improve outcomes by improving how things are done (our system) and what we are doing (our practice).



In Learning Circles....

**The Process is as
Important as the
Product**



Learning Circle Approach

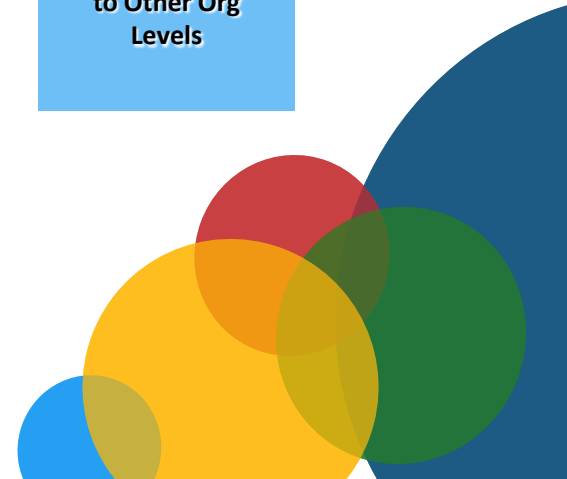
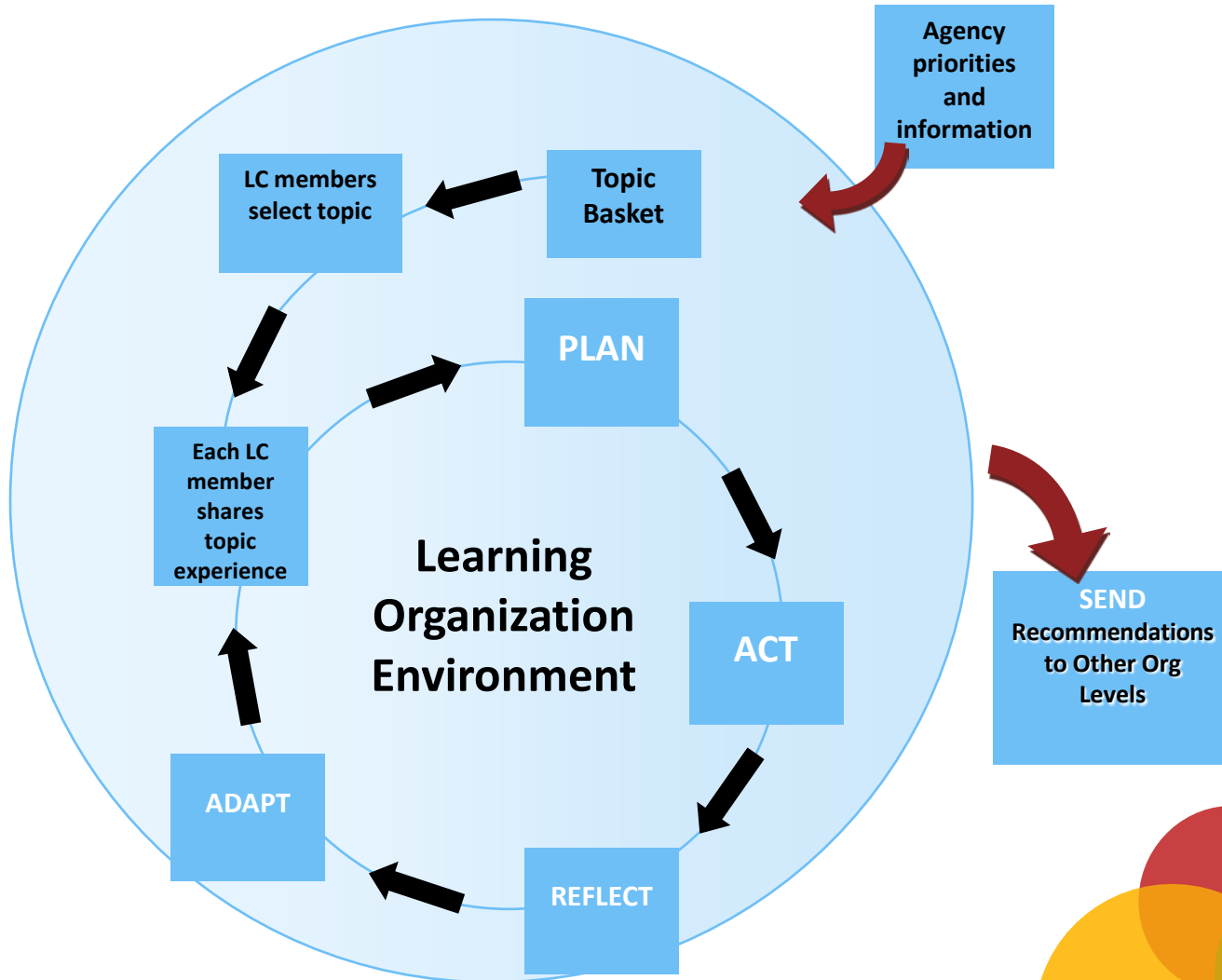
- **Membership**

- A group of supervisors and his/her unit OR
- A group of supervisors and/or managers
- Designated facilitator and coach

- Learning Circles use the PARA approach --
Plan-Act-Reflect-Adapt

- Encourages building a learning culture through acquiring and building knowledge.

Learning Circle Process



Learning Circle Principles

- Create organizational change and improved outcomes through a focus on best practice.
- Inspire a learning organization committed to improved practices, functioning, and outcomes.
- Address challenges or practice issues relevant to and actionable by the Learning Circle members.
- Connect practice change to the agency's mission, values, and practice model.
- Employ interventions and activities based upon evidenced-based approaches.

Learning Circle Principles

- Empower circle members to improve practice for more positive organizational climate and client outcomes.
- Use strengths-focused interventions.
- Embody a culturally responsive approach.
- Use comprehensive, incremental interventions for long-term sustainability.

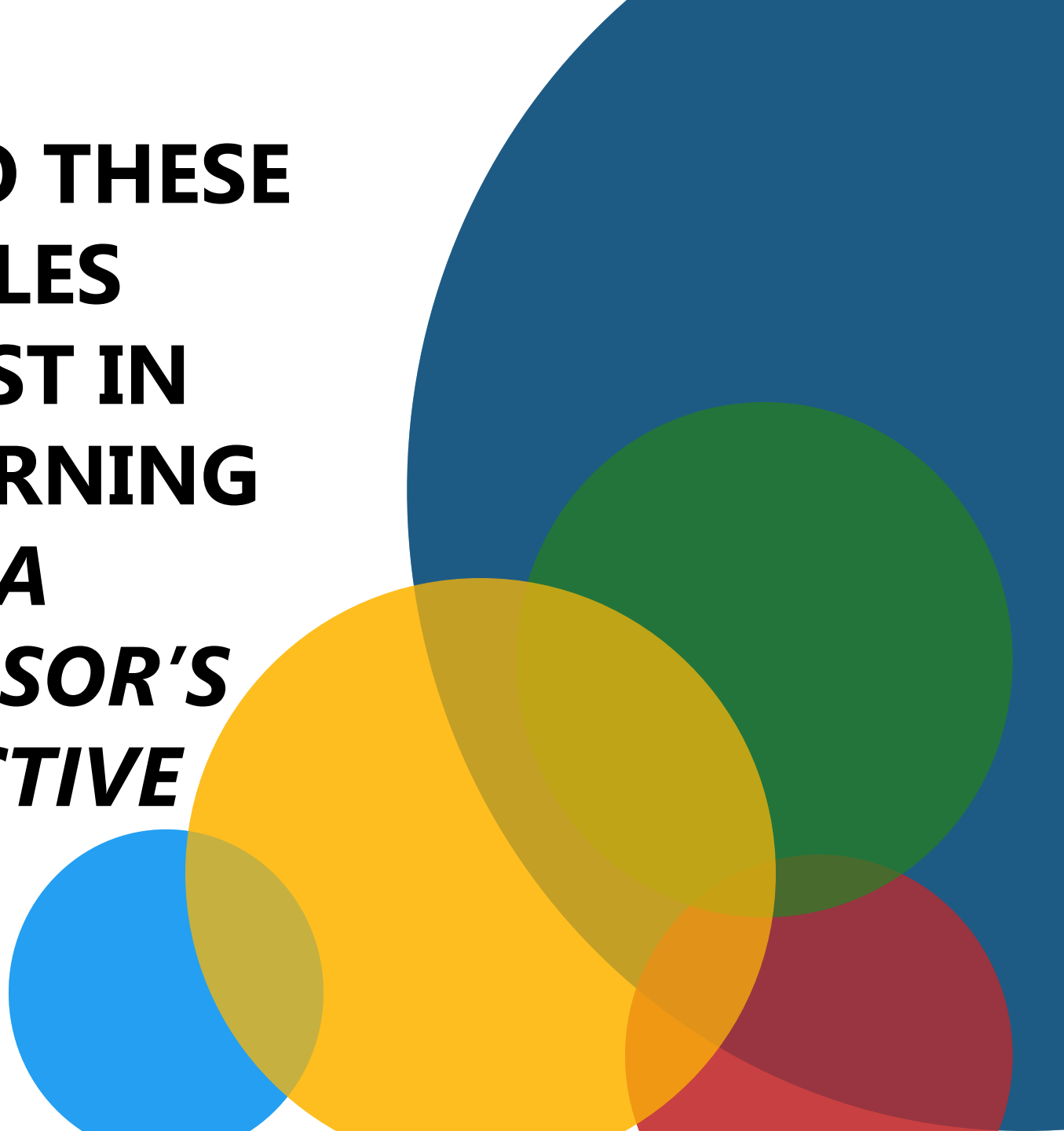


Learning Circle Principles

- Expect full, open, and unbiased participation that encourages communication by all members of the circle.
- Empower circle members to engage in collaborative, balanced, and supportive behavior.
- Emphasize ongoing evaluation to improve effectiveness and achieve desired outcomes.



**HOW DO THESE
PRINCIPLES
MANIFEST IN
THE LEARNING
CIRCLE? A
*SUPERVISOR'S
PERSPECTIVE***



Learning Circle Process

- Step 1: Convene the meeting. Make sure members “check” their baggage at the door.
- Step 2: Acknowledge the LC Recorder for the meeting.
- Step 3: Remind team members of the LC Principles—to create a learning culture.
- Step 4: Facilitate a dialogue about the designated topic, remembering PARA.



Learning Circle Process

- *Step 5:* Discuss what has been learned from the day's Learning Circle and review the plan.
- *Step 6:* Set the next meeting date. Adjourn the meeting.
- *Step 7:* Complete the **LC Meeting Journal** and post as planned.

Evaluation Plan

- To what extent are learning circles implemented with fidelity to the model?
- What are the strengths and limitations of using PARA as a process for learning circles?
- What topics, best practices, and goals do supervisors address in learning circles?
- To what degree do agency managers and unit members perceive changes in supervisory practice as a result of learning circles?

A SUPERVISOR'S PERSPECTIVE





Topics covered in Learning Circles.....

- Staff Retention
- Community Partners
- Use of data and research
- Time Management
- Foster care issues related to DJJ
- Training for new staff
- Resource development
- Family Team meetings



Topics covered in Learning Circles.....

- Case staffing
- Transferring cases
- Secondary trauma
- Team Building
- Supervision and nurturing
- Dealing with difficult issues
- Change
- Managing upwards



Developing a Learning Circle Project

1. Convene a committee
2. Determine structure of program
3. Develop supporting materials
4. Recruit/identify learning circles
5. Train learning circle facilitators/coaches
6. Commence learning circles
7. Support learning circles
8. Conduct ongoing evaluation



QUESTIONS?

