

## Leadership Foundations adds compassionate, advanced mentor training to support mentors working with youth impacted by substance misuse



*I highly recommend the Substance of Change training to other national leaders who work in areas where substance use and misuse are major issues with the mentees that they serve.*

*Lisa Lampman  
Former Mentoring Youth Leadership Director  
at Leadership Foundations*

### The Challenge

Leadership Foundations is a national organization that works with local leaders to address the most pressing issues in their communities. A key component of Leadership Foundations is its youth mentoring program. Since 2015, Leadership Foundations has provided more than 10,000 youths with caring and consistent mentors in more than 30 cities in the United States and around the world.

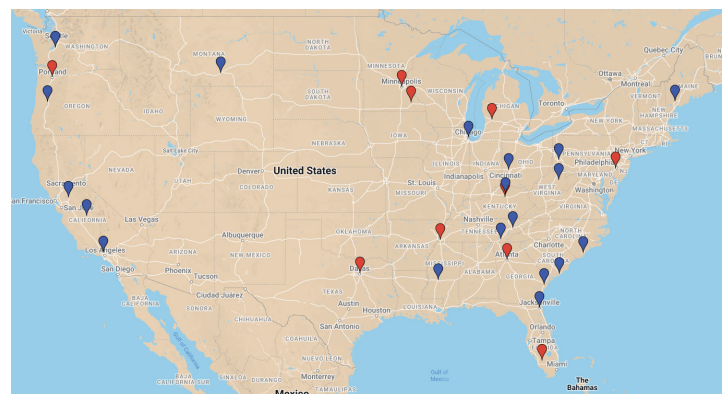
As a multi-state organization with a real diversity of capacity, Leadership Foundations had an immediate need for training mentors about opioids, specifically, and substance misuse, more generally. They wanted to provide mentors with an orientation to what opioids are and how people become addicted to them, the effect of opioids and substance misuse on the lives of youth, and specific strategies they may use to support their mentees who may be impacted by substance misuse. The training needed to be extensive, consistent, accessible, and obtainable at a reasonable cost.

Leadership Foundations required a solution that would satisfy the guidelines of their Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) grant. OJJDP has awarded grants to youth mentoring programs so they could target the issue more directly in communities, especially those hardest hit by the opioid epidemic.

### The Context

Leadership Foundations is a global network committed to using the power of relationships to drive real and lasting changes within communities. An important goal of the organization is to prepare youth as the next generation of leaders by connecting them with caring mentoring relationships that support youth and the challenges they may be facing in their lives. Leadership Foundations understands that every local community has its own unique challenges and that each site across the United States and around the world requires individualized levels of training and resources for mentors and staff.

#### Global Youth Initiative Network



When the need arose for specialized mentor training about opioids and other substance use prevention, Leadership Foundations recognized that many parts of

the United States have been severely impacted by the opioid epidemic, but that drug and alcohol addiction is a concern in every community. The ability to offer substance use and misuse training with robust resources to mentors could greatly improve the impact of its affiliated mentoring programs across the county.

## The Solution

Through its relationship with Mentoring Central, Leadership Foundations already required core pre- and early match training for all mentors. The need for advanced training on opioids and substance misuse, a service required by their new OJJDP grant prompted the organization to again turn to its partners at Mentoring Central for help. To meet this need, Mentoring Central developed and piloted the Substance of Change: Building Assets in Mentees Affected by Substance Misuse course.



### SUBSTANCE OF CHANGE: BUILDING ASSETS IN MENTEES AFFECTED BY SUBSTANCE MISUSE

The purpose of the course is to train mentors in how to support mentees who may have a family member or themselves be recovering from, misusing, or at-risk for misusing opioids or other drugs. The course offers research- and practitioner-informed content for training mentors about opioids, the effects of opioids on the lives of the mentees, and specific strategies they may use to support their mentees. The one-time voluntary training was implemented online, and taken by staff and mentors across the nation. Participants also had access to tip sheets containing reminders of key points taught in the lessons for mentors to download and keep.



*Mentoring Central developed a comprehensive response to address the opioid crisis through the mentoring relationship. The training was very well received by our field.*

**Noah Baskett**  
Director of Global Advancement at  
Leadership Foundations

## The Results, ROI, and Future Plans

The leadership team and affiliates were thrilled with the Substance of Change: Building Assets in Mentees Affected by Substance Misuse online training course because it was so responsive to the needs reported by mentors and mentoring programs in the field. In addition to focusing on opioids, the course to address other forms of substance use and misuse which are prevalent in all communities and impact the health and well-being of mentees.



*We knew that everyone from Washington state to Florida was going to get the same level of training because it was a standardized level of training for mentors and staff.*

**Kerri Feider**  
Director of Communications & Technical Resourcing at  
Leadership Foundations

Staff and mentors who completed the course said while they were aware of the opioid crisis, they really didn't know much about it; and found that the training provided a compassionate and informative view of addiction. Participants appreciated that the course was online, robust, interactive, organized, and easy to follow. They also liked that it included examples of how to ask and answer questions from mentees, and could be completed in sections, so they could stop and start the lessons as their schedules permitted.

After rolling out the pilot course in Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia – areas that have been deeply impacted by the opioid crisis – volunteer feedback was gathered to edit and improve the training.



[www.leadershipfoundations.org](http://www.leadershipfoundations.org)

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