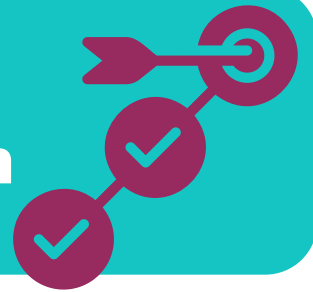


Frontline Leadership Training Improves Service Quality & Engagement Across the IDD System

July 2026 Research Brief



For the Data Nerds

Methodology Summary

This research brief is based on data collected in the LEAD Annual Survey collected through June 2026 and focus groups with executives and past LEAD participants on June 25th, 2026. The aim of the annual survey and focus groups was to better understand the system-wide impact of the LEAD program from the perspectives of past LEAD participants and executives who send frontline employees to LEAD. The survey included 16 multiple choice questions, 5 short response questions, and three ranking questions. The web-based survey was distributed through the RedCap research platform. Three focus groups were held on June 25th, two in Newark, DE, and one in Dover, DE. Four open-ended questions were asked in two groups of past LEAD graduates (one in Newark and one in Dover) and one group of executives who have sent employees to LEAD (in Newark). Each focus group lasted about one hour. Thematic qualitative analysis was used to understand trends in perceived impact of LEAD.

In addition to the focus groups, the quantitative survey analysis included responses from 25 of the 87 LEAD graduates (28.7% return rate) from nine cohorts of LEAD from 2023-2025. Participants worked in a range of organizational roles, including DSPs, supervisors, managers, and other frontline specialists.

Descriptive statistics were used to find the average participant agreement with the following statements related to systemic impact in the annual survey:

- *“I regularly apply skills learned from the LEAD training in my current role.” [Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree]*
- *“Attending the LEAD training improved the quality of services I provide.” [Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree]*
- *“The connections I made with my cohort and presenters at the LEAD training have been or will be good resources to me in the future.” [Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree]*
- *“Please rate your level of motivation to do your work before and after the LEAD training and now: Before the LEAD training, Immediately after the LEAD training, Now” [rate from 1, Not motivated at all, to 10, Extremely motivated]*

