



LISTEN4GOOD / DALLAS FORT WORTH LEARNING COMMUNITY REPORT

August 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

P2 Listen4Good
Overview

P4 Learning
Community

P5 Cohort
Overview

P7 Participant Case
Study: Housing
Crisis Center

P9 Participant Case
Study: Pathfinders

P11 Meeting Their
Goals

LISTEN4GOOD OVERVIEW

Introduction to the Listen4Good Dallas Fort Worth Learning Community

Charles Schwab Bank partnered with Communities Foundation of Texas and United Way of Tarrant County to sponsor a cohort of five human services nonprofits in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area to participate with Listen4Good. Each nonprofit participated in Listen4Good’s capacity building program while also joining a Listen4Good-led learning community. This approach fosters a shared environment where nonprofits can learn from each other, exchange best practices, and collaboratively solve problems.

Introduction to this Report

This report celebrates the learnings that developed through the Listen4Good Dallas Fort Worth Learning Community. Participating in Listen4Good means building high-quality listening and equity-driven feedback practices that serve communities across the country, and we’ve learned so much from this group of participants in ways that will continue to serve Listen4Good, peer service organizations, the feedback field, and ultimately, the social sector as a whole – and for that, we want to say thank you to the DFW participating nonprofit leaders and sponsoring funders!

This report provides a summary of learnings from participating organizations as they near completion of the Listen4Good program.



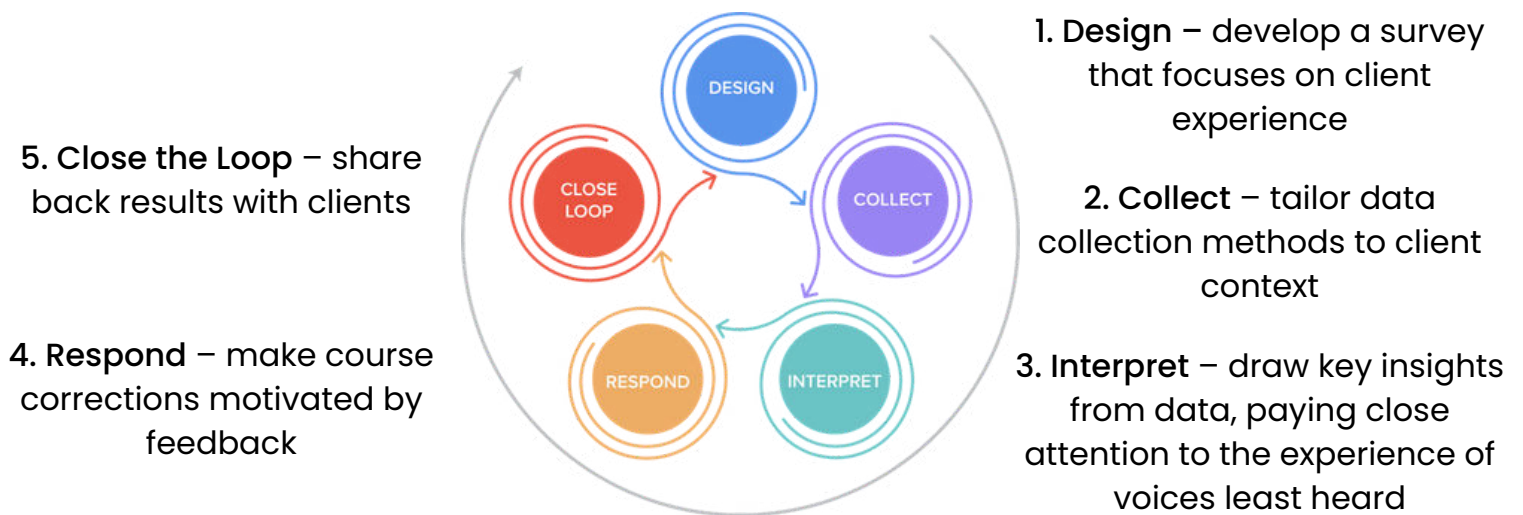
credit: [u/Intelligent_Cup_4291](#)

LISTEN4GOOD OVERVIEW

Listen4Good Overview

Our aim at Listen4Good (L4G) is to give organizations the tools to listen and respond to their clients' needs and experiences through high-quality, sustainable feedback loops. We also believe that high-quality feedback practices can provide an effective vehicle for centering equity within an organization's work.

As a reminder of L4G's approach: organizations go through five steps, which are implemented with an eye towards equity and inclusion.



Listen4Good's Premium program includes three pillars of support that assist nonprofits as they move through the feedback cycle. Those supports are:



Coaching: Listen4Good's team of feedback coaches serve as guides, collaborators, and partners. They work arm-in-arm with our nonprofits, helping design and customize their feedback process to meet the unique needs of each organization.



Listen4Good Web App & Survey: Listen4Good's interactive web app guides nonprofits through all five steps and provides resources anytime, anywhere. The web app includes resources such as survey templates, a custom question database, translation support and integration with SurveyMonkey.



Group Learning: Because we know people learn well in groups, Listen4Good provides live, interactive webinars led by expert instructors and peer roundtables with fellow practitioners to share learnings and challenges

LEARNING COMMUNITY

In addition to participating in Listen4Good's Premium program, this group of organizations took part in a Learning Community of Dallas-based nonprofits. In partnership with Jewish Community Services, Listen4Good facilitated 5 virtual convenings over the course of the eighteen month program. When participating in a learning community, organizations not only develop their own skills around feedback, but also begin working in collaboration with other nonprofits to build a network of support around feedback and community voice. Through the facilitated spaces, participants identify best practices & gaps in their own feedback systems, gain an understanding of broader patterns in data, deepen program learnings through peer sharing, and develop networks that last beyond Listen4Good.

Nonprofits Collaboratively Build their Listening Skills

The goals of this learning community were to:

- Create a space for organizations participating in Listen4Good to share best practices for gathering and utilizing client experience data.
- Support participating organizations to overcome challenges in order to increase commitment to a sustained feedback practice.
- Create a unified evaluation tool in the Net Promoter Score, other core Listen4Good feedback questions, and additional co-created survey items.

"I'm hearing a lot of people say that they need more housing resources. Are you hearing that?"

-DFW Learning Community Participant

Members of the community in Dallas do not live in a vacuum and may interact with any number of service organizations as they get the assistance they need. Through their collaborative efforts, participating organizations strengthen the network of organizations dedicated to listening to community voices.

For example, during one Learning Community session, a participant asked, "I'm hearing a lot of people say that they need more housing resources. Are you hearing that?" This question led to a collaborative discussion of nonprofit leaders brainstorming ways they could meet the needs in their community, including: referring clients with overlapping needs to other organizations, contributing expertise amongst their programs, and coordinating a collaborative grant writing effort.

COHORT OVERVIEW

Survey Issue Areas:

Targeted population support (refugees)
Financial services
Basic and emergency aid
Shelter and residential care
Vocational education
Family services
Community improvement

856

of survey responses

Alongside the learning community, each nonprofit worked with their Listen4Good coach and resources to develop their feedback systems and processes.



Catholic Charities Dallas

- CCD surveyed their Refugee Services programs through two surveys, totaling over 300 responses.
- Staff created a multi-pronged approach to survey collection including a paper survey available when clients picked up their checks, a QR code so they could take it on their phones in person, and having the case managers share the survey via phone and email. The latter approach was particularly helpful for communities that tended not to answer email and was important from an equity perspective.
- The survey was distributed in 11 languages!

COHORT OVERVIEW



Community Council of Greater Dallas

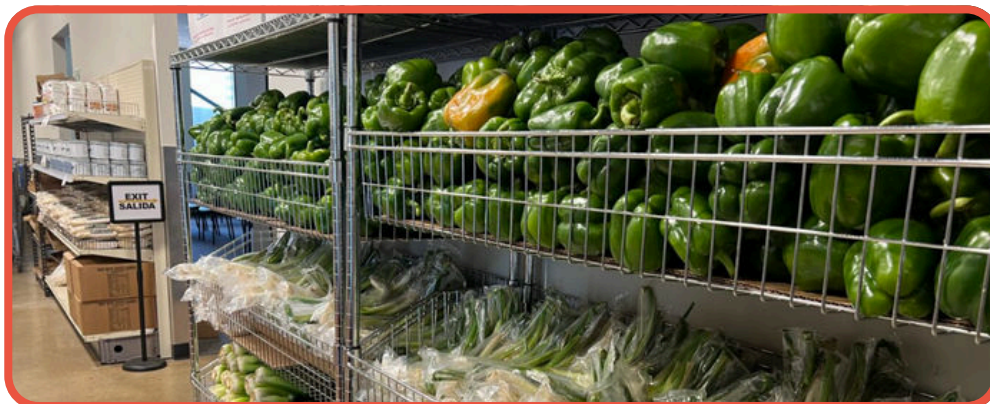
- CCGD surveyed their emergency response program and their cancer care program.
- Clients shared in the survey that they had a hard time getting a hold of a live person. In response, CCGD carved out a budget for a staff person who could follow up with clients' emails and calls.
- They conducted a community needs assessment concurrently with their feedback surveys.
- As a next step, CCGD will conduct a town hall to “close the loop” with their community on all of their learnings.



**Jewish Family Service
of Greater Dallas**
An open door to all in need

Jewish Family Services of Dallas

- JFS launched an organization-wide survey to collect feedback from clients on all of the available programs.
- The survey collected a lot of positive feedback and also identified areas for education. One area they identified for client education was the food bank so that clients could develop an understanding of how the food bank works and how partnerships impact the available options.
- As a result, staff are working to come up with engaging and creative ways for their clients to learn more about how JFS works and how they can play a role in improving programming.



PARTICIPANT CASE STUDY: HOUSING CRISIS CENTER

HOUSING CRISIS CENTER



Mission

The mission of the Housing Crisis Center is to prevent homelessness, respond to the immediate needs of those facing crisis, and sustain their stability in safe, affordable, and permanent housing while empowering them to solve their housing problems in the future.

Listen4Good Project

- Housing Crisis Center's objective for their Listen4Good project was to create a true assessment of services provided, provide participants an opportunity to be heard, and build a model of continuous improvement
- HCC began with the Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HAPP), which unlike many of their programs, which are HUD funded, HAPP is a privately funded program which allows them more flexibility over the survey they give to their participants.
- The HAPP program provides financial assistance and an empowerment coach to support their participants.

PARTICIPANT CASE STUDY: HOUSING CRISIS CENTER

Highlights

- HCC staff worked with their Listen4Good coach to develop a process to survey participants at the six month mark. Because the program has a small number of participants, getting a high response rate was important and they achieved it.
- In order to ensure a high response rate, they sent a flyer explaining the survey via text message and email. Then they used the same communication strategies to administer the surveys. After one week, they sent a reminder to everyone who had not completed the survey. They also had an empowerment coach reach out and saw that made a difference in survey participation.
- One of the main tasks that has come out of the survey findings is re-thinking the importance of budgeting/re-framing budgeting and finding out about clients' relationship with money and their previous experiences before getting into budgeting.



Next Steps

- HCC will be creating surveys to gather feedback on their three permanent supportive housing programs.
- Staff felt that there doesn't need to be a lot of drastic changes but that they can better communicate what the program is all about, including:
 - Goals of the program and why it goes for six months max
 - The importance of a budget; framing it in ways clients would understand and make sure they aren't making assumptions about the relevance to clients
 - Meeting clients where they are at
 - Potential to make materials and talking points more client-friendly
- To continue to progress in their feedback journey, HCC is participating in Listen4Good's Advanced track called Amplifying Feedback Across Your Organization. The goal of continuing with Listen4Good's Advanced programming is to "create opportunities for the Board and others to be champions of feedback data."

PARTICIPANT CASE STUDY: PATHFINDERS



Mission

Pathfinders' mission is to eliminate poverty from our community by empowering individuals and families to find their path to social and financial wellbeing. Pathfinders envisions a thriving community where individuals have access and the opportunity to desired resources to achieve their potential.



Listen4Good Project

- Pathfinders surveyed clients participating in their financial coaching program - a six month program that goes through topics including budgeting, banking, borrowing, and credit.
- Financial Coaches helped develop the survey questions. Including coaches in the development process increased their buy-in in the feedback process. This was important because coaches may receive feedback informally from clients but the Listen4Good process allowed everyone to learn from clients and gain new insights.

PARTICIPANT CASE STUDY: HOUSING CRISIS CENTER

Highlights

- The survey asked participants about how helpful they have found their coaching sessions and what more they would like to learn about.
- Pathfinders “closed the loop”- shared back what they’ve learned- with their clients through an email. They provided the update in both English and Spanish and ensured that all participants were thanked for the time they took to complete the survey.
- Staff felt that the process moved more quickly than it had in the past and that they were ready to incorporate their new understanding of survey methods into new programs they’ve launched.



Next Steps

- This was their first big client survey - they have hired a new Data, Research and Evaluation Manager and have added the process of client surveys to their role.
- Because client responses indicated they wanted more information on retirement and 401ks, Pathfinders partnered with Charles Schwab Bank volunteers to create a new retirement workshop to provide this education to their clients. The new workshop will be offered later this year.
- By analyzing survey responses that were incomplete, staff will be adjusting future surveys by making them shorter and with less open ended questions to ensure that clients complete the survey. These adjustments are reflected in their new survey for clients in their Adult Mentoring program launching at the end of July.

MEETING THEIR GOALS

At the end of the learning community sessions, participants were asked to evaluate their experience. On a scale of 1-10, they rated the success of the convening goals and shared:

8

A deeper understanding of how to address community needs

8.5

Opportunity to share best practices

8

Opportunity for shared learning

8.3

Co-Creation of goals, content and system

What was most helpful about being a part of this learning community?

"The Listen4Good learning community offers local service providers a level of comfort and support felt between everyone in the cohort. It's great because it allows us to put down our shields and really open up to each other and get to the core of the issues ... It has really led to truthful and authentic conversations which is incredibly vital to enriching the lives of those whom we serve."

Gina Norman, Housing Crisis Center



"Working through questions and issues with orgs in a similar community, even if we serve different populations."

"My coach was encouraging and the fellow participants were courteous and their insights were very helpful."



"The opportunity to hear about the process of others. Knowing that others were having similar successes and challenges."



www.listen4good.org
X | Facebook | LinkedIn