

LMS e-Learning Implementation Podcast Transcript #11 *Interview with Mary Lyles*

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Mary Kay Lofurno: Welcome to the next episode of the [SyberWorks LMS e-Learning Implementation Podcast Series](#); where we look at actual [learning management systems](#), implementations, and e-learning program roll-outs. [SyberWorks](#) specializes in custom e-learning solutions, learning management systems, and custom e-learning development for corporations, governments, and nonprofit institutions.

My name is Mary Kay Lofurno and I'm the Marketing Director here at [SyberWorks](#) and your host today. In this edition, we are [talking with Mary Lyles, the executive director of the Children's Grief Education Association](#), about their use of the [SyberWorks Hosted LMS solution](#) to provide grief education to bereaved children, their families and professionals in schools and community organizations through local, national, and international outreach and training.

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Mary Kay: And now let's talk with Mary Lyles, Executive Director for the Children's Grief Education Association.

Good afternoon, Mary. Thanks for coming to talk with us today.

Mary Lyles Thanks so much for having me.

Mary Kay: Mary, tell me about yourself and what you do for Children's Grief Education Association.

Mary: I am the Executive Director for CGEA and I also, in addition to management, work with children and families who have had a death loss or incarceration loss or a parent deployed in the military.

Mary Kay: Now, I understand that the Children's Grief Education Association provides resources for bereaved children, families, and professionals that work with children in this area. Can you tell me a little bit more about your organization and what it does? It sounds like it's pretty interesting.

Mary: Sure. We have several levels of assistance for families and professionals. First we have our [online learning course](#) that helps professionals learn more about how to help children in grief. We have a website that is very psycho-educational with lots of information and is actually used across the country, in Europe and if Africa.

Mary Kay: Oh really?

Mary: For people wanting to help children we have a clinic called the Lighthouse where children and families come for counseling after a traumatic loss, or if they're just having a hard time because someone is deployed in the military or incarcerated. We also do grief groups in schools so children that can't get to the Lighthouse because of family situations will go to groups, and we have interns — master's level mental health interns — who go in and run grief groups in the schools as well.

Mary Kay: Wow, that sounds like an awful lot you do in this area.

Mary: We're busy!

Mary Kay: That's a good thing. So that's great. What were some of the factors that led you and your team to evaluate [web-based learning management systems](#)? Normally agencies like yours wouldn't think of that.

Mary: Our beginning mission was to educate other people about how to help children. There are at least one and a half million children across our country who are living without one parent due to the parent dying. And that doesn't include children living with sibling death, friend's death, many other kinds of losses.

And we know that there was a real need for education among the professionals. We heard stories from children about how the schools might have responded, and realized that there was just a need for more information. And the target audience was way larger than our small organization could address from a one-on-one or even a seminar basis. So we decided that [web-based learning](#) would be the best way to reach the largest audience possible.

Mary Kay: OK, well that sounds good. Your organization eventually selected the [SyberWorks Hosted LMS solution](#). Who's using the system now?

Mary: We have chaplains across the country, social workers, licensed professional counselors, some community people who want to learn to run grief groups but don't have any kind of licensure but maybe through churches. Our interns take the course, and other people who are interested in learning more about children and grief.

Mary Kay: OK. Can you tell me about the [online courses](#) that you provide through the hosted [LMS](#)?

Mary: We have one right now; it is called Navigating Children's Grief. And it takes about six to seven hours to complete the audio-visual portion and ten total hours to complete homework assignments as well.

Mary Kay: OK. Can you tell me a little bit about the [instructional design](#) and planning process that you went through to develop this course?

Mary: Sure. It began with me thinking, "Oh, I'll create an online course!" but having no information about it and I called your company and you were so helpful in going, "Uh, well...I think you might need some help here". So we began by contacting someone who had some experience in multi-media design. He had quite a bit of experience and he helped us to actually put together the format. I had written a book about it first, and then we took the material from the book and converted it into [audio](#) and video lessons.

Mary Kay: Now I know you had somebody who was experienced with the [graphic](#) design and that part of it, but what course development tools, if you can tell me, did you use to construct your [online course](#)?

Mary: Are you asking me about like, if we used PowerPoint to begin?

Mary Kay: Yes.

Mary: We used PowerPoint, converted those to JPEG, we used QuickTime for our audio portion. I think those were the main technical tools. Then we actually hired a professional voice and rented an audio studio and recorded the voice there and also hired a professional person to do the video for us.

Mary Kay: Then you probably put all those things together in the [SyberWorks Author](#), didn't you?

Mary: Yes, we did.

Mary Kay: That's right. OK. Why did your organization select the [SyberWorks Hosted LMS solution](#) for your grief counseling training?

Mary: We looked at several different options and different organizations. And we found SyberWorks to be the most user friendly and the most affordable.

Mary Kay: Well, that's great. Can you tell me about your experience as a [SyberWorks](#) customer?

Mary: I am so happy with SyberWorks. You have all been so patient with me; coming in from not knowing anything about audio-visual material. I remember when one person said, “Are you going to use graphics?” And I said, “What are graphics?”

Mary Kay: [laughs] OK!

Mary: Your staff has just been wonderful in being supportive and helping me and walking me through problems. In addition, the problems that have all been of my creation, not of SyberWorks creation, we have had such a wonderful experience with [SyberWorks](#). No glitches that I can recall at all.

Mary Kay: Well thank you! As we wrap up, is there anything else you’d like to add?

Mary: Well, I’m just looking forward to adding more [courses](#) and continuing to use SyberWorks in the future.

Mary Kay: Well, that’s great. Mary, thanks. I know you have to go. I know you are a busy lady so thanks for joining us today.

Mary: Thank you.

Mary Kay: This is Mary Kay Lofurno, Marketing Director of [SyberWorks](#). I wish to thank you for listening to our [interview with Mary Lyles, Executive Director for the Children’s Grief Education Association](#) on our [SyberWorks LMS e-Learning Implementation Podcast Series](#). Talk with you next month!

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