



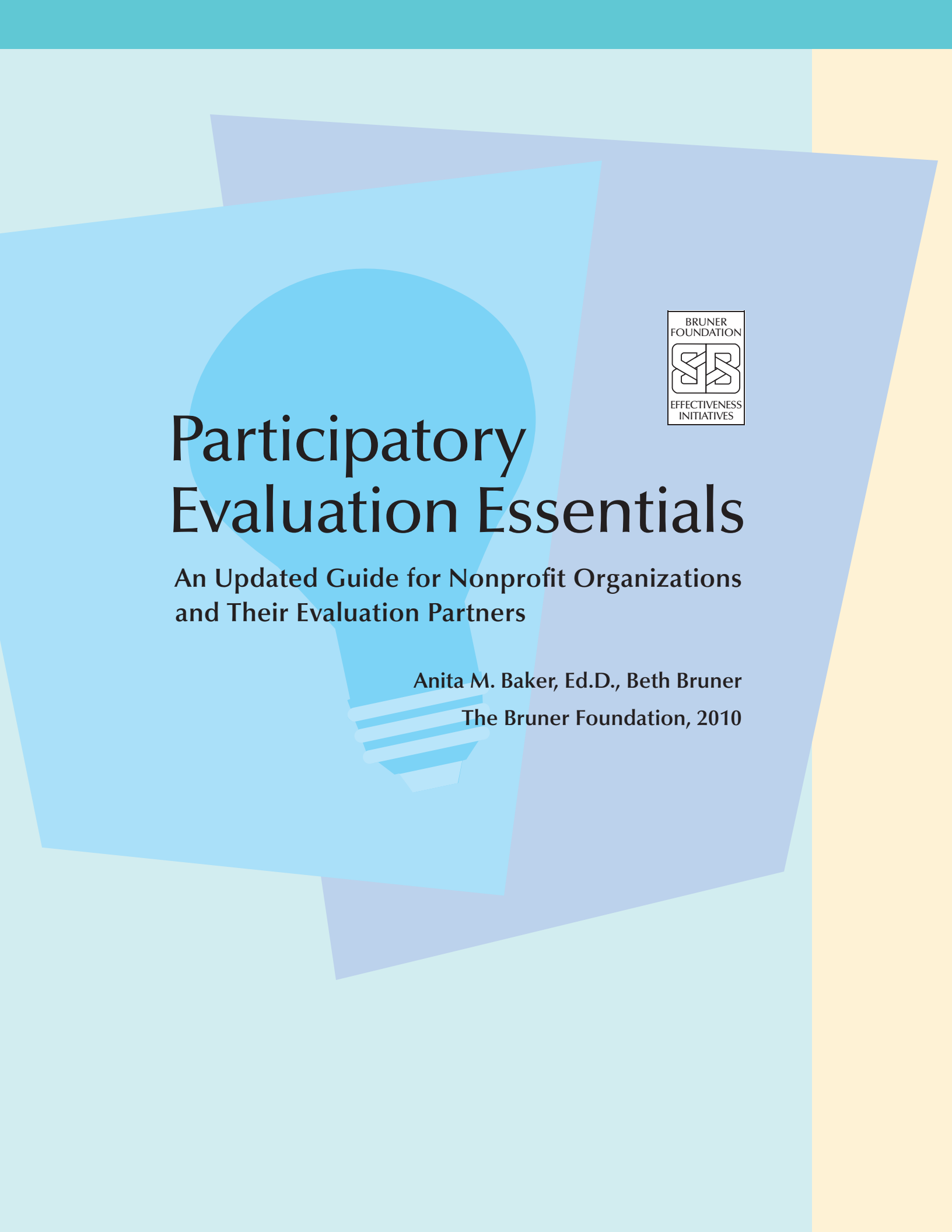
Participatory Evaluation Essentials

An Updated Guide for Nonprofit Organizations
and Their Evaluation Partners

Anita M. Baker, Ed.D., Beth Bruner

The Bruner Foundation, 2010





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Acknowledgments

This guidebook was originally developed by Anita Baker, Ed.D., with Kim Sabo Ph.D., between 1997 and 2003 as the basis for providing evaluation training to Executive Directors and Staff involved in the Rochester Effectiveness Partnership (REP).^{*} Its contents, which were revised throughout the years of the REP initiative, were strongly influenced by the work of Michael Quinn Patton of the Union Institute Graduate School, the United Way of America, the Kellogg Foundation, Jane Reisman of the Evaluation Forum, and many others who thoughtfully added to the evaluation literature.

Since its original release in 2004, this guide has been further influenced by other related projects. The continuing work by eleven former REP partners, the Evaluative Thinking in Organizations Study (ETHOS),^{**} between 2003 and 2004, helped clarify and refine the relationship between program evaluation and broader institutional use of evaluation. A follow-up series of “Evaluative Thinking Bulletins” providing examples of concrete applications was developed by Anita Baker in 2005. The Building Evaluation Capacity (BEC) initiative at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving’s Nonprofit Support Program, begun in 2006, relied on material from the original guidebook as well as the Evaluative Thinking Assessment Tool^{***} and Evaluative Thinking Bulletins and became an inspiration for many of the new activities.



This 2010 edition of the guidebook includes updated examples and activities which nonprofit providers and their evaluation partners can use to help build evaluation skills. It contains a new section on Evaluative Thinking and an updated reference section.

To the hundreds of trainees whose experience, candor and insight have helped make this manual stronger and even more relevant; to all of the evaluation professionals and grant-makers who continue to grapple with how to make evaluation a living, breathing, timely and useful component of organizational work; to all who have contributed to this endeavor in the spirit of learning and partnership: *Thank you.*

Here’s to the power of the group brain and to finding talented thought partners willing to tackle difficult issues.

Beth and Anita

^{*} The Rochester Effectiveness Partnership was founded on the belief that participatory evaluation is a practical management tool that can help organizations evaluate and make timely decisions about their programs based on meaningful information. The partnership included funders, nonprofit service providers and evaluation professionals working together as equal partners, benefiting from each other’s knowledge, skills and experience. The unique training model included comprehensive, intensive, hands-on training about how to plan for and conduct program evaluations, combined with an organization-specific, year-long coached evaluation project. It also provided ongoing opportunities for trainees to be involved in coached evaluation projects and advanced training, a peer-support network, and an active voice in the community. See the Bruner website, www.brunerfoundation.org-EffectivenessInitiatives, for more information about REP and other related efforts sponsored by the Bruner Foundation.

^{**} Evaluative Thinking as defined by the participants is a type of reflective practice that incorporates use of systematically collected data to inform organizational decisions and other actions. In other words, evaluative thinking was broader than program evaluation in that it could be applied to many organizational functions (e.g., mission, human resources, fund development). The key components of evaluative thinking are: asking questions of substance, determining what data are needed to address the questions, gathering appropriate data in systematic ways, analyzing data and sharing results, and developing strategies to act on evaluation findings.

^{***} The Evaluative Thinking Assessment tool is an electronic instrument designed to help organizations identify evaluative thinking strengths and needs.

Foreword

Beth Bruner, 2010

Why, one might ask, is an entire training manual devoted to participatory program evaluation* and evaluative thinking** relevant in 2010? It is more than a decade since the establishment of the American Evaluation Association, United Way of America published “Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach,” Kellogg Foundation published its own Evaluation Manual, and the release of Michael Quinn Patton’s 3rd edition of “Utilization-Focused Evaluation—The New Century Text.”

And yet, evaluation continues to be underused, misunderstood and even marginalized: sequestered in isolated departments, outsourced to experts, seen as cumbersome and lacking timeliness and relevance in our fast-paced world, done for the purposes of reporting and accountability, replaced by “real time learning” and “dashboards.” Despite the efforts of many in our field, evaluation seems not to have recognized its potential for planning, improvement, learning, decision making.

Clearly, the ability to conduct or commission an evaluation requires at a minimum, familiarity with, and ideally, mastery of, a set of skills. Knowing how to frame questions that are important and answerable, knowing how to gather and analyze data systematically, knowing how to synthesize findings and make recommendations—these are fundamental skills which can be learned. They are a necessary, critical first step for organizations that want to deliver on their missions.

But they are not sufficient. For evaluation to claim its central place, these skills need to become second nature, embedded in the culture and practice of the organization. They need to be applied to all operations, not just “the program.” Organizations that “think evaluatively” know how to get data they need, know how to translate it into knowledge and action, know how to communicate, to manage, to plan, to improve.

This manual is meant for those willing to tackle learning about evaluation—those who believe that informed decisions lead to improved practice and that systematic data gathering is fundamental to informed decision making. And it is meant for those willing to move evaluation out of the sole purview of the program arena, into organization-wide evaluative thinking.

* Participatory Program Evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of programs for use by specific people, to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness and make decisions regarding those programs—involving trained evaluation personnel and practice-based decision makers working in partnership to design, conduct and use the results (adapted from Patton 1982 and Cousins 1988).

** Evaluative Thinking is a type of reflective practice that incorporates the use of systematically collected data to inform decisions and actions in many organizational functions (e.g., mission development/revision, human services, fund development) in addition to program development and service delivery (adapted from Baker and Bruner 2006).

How to Use This Guide

The Bruner Foundation is making these materials available to advance the use of evaluation and evaluative thinking skills in the non-profit sector. They are designed for use by program managers and CEOs to build skills that allow them to become active participants in the evaluation process—to build the capacity to conduct participatory evaluations and use the findings to make programmatic decisions; to become well-informed commissioners and consumers of evaluation; to use evaluative thinking beyond the program level. We suggest using the materials sequentially as a unit, but, depending on individual position and expertise, it may be useful to pull out certain sections and/or activities.



This guidebook is presented in five sections. It includes information about **program evaluation basics, evaluative thinking and evaluation planning; logic models; collecting and using evaluation data; projecting levels of effort, timelines and budgets; and evaluation reporting**. Following this “How-To” summary is a detailed table of contents for each section. At the end of the guide there are suggestions about extending—“rippling”—this training throughout an organization, an evaluation quiz and an updated evaluation bibliography. Also included with this guide are supplementary materials which can be pulled out and used for easy references, as well as to review brief presentations of other special topics not covered in the main sections of the guide. Following the table of contents is a full list of all appendices. In addition, a supplementary guide to Integrate Evaluative Thinking into Organizational Practice is available exclusively in downloadable format on the Bruner Foundation website (www.brunerfoundation.org). PowerPoint presentation slides to augment use of the Participatory Evaluation Essentials Guide are also available on the website in the “Effectiveness Initiatives” section.

This guidebook is organized to help an evaluation trainee walk through the process of designing an evaluation, collecting and analyzing evaluation data, and even writing an evaluation report. In each section of the guidebook there are activities (“boxed” for easy identification, e.g., see page 5) that provide practice opportunities about the topics. Activities in Section 3 will help trainees practice data collection methods and will inform their choices about data collection for their designs. An evaluation planning summary activity at the end of Section 4 refers back to several of the activities from previous sections; it can be used to help trainees fully design an evaluation to implement in their own programs. In Section 5 an evaluation report outline and tips about evaluation report writing can be used to help trainees plan for and later fully complete an evaluation report using information that was collected by implementing their designs.

Each section includes supplementary materials (formerly in the appendix) that can also be used for training activities. In addition, the appendix includes sample completed logic models, an example of a Theory of Change; sample completed interviews and an observation protocol which can be used for training activities. Also new in this edition are ideas other nonprofit provider organizations have used to extend or ripple training.

For those who just want to learn more about one of the specific topics, the guidebook can be used as an evaluation reference source. There is also a short glossary of commonly used terms about evaluation and an evaluation bibliography with many updated text and on-line references.

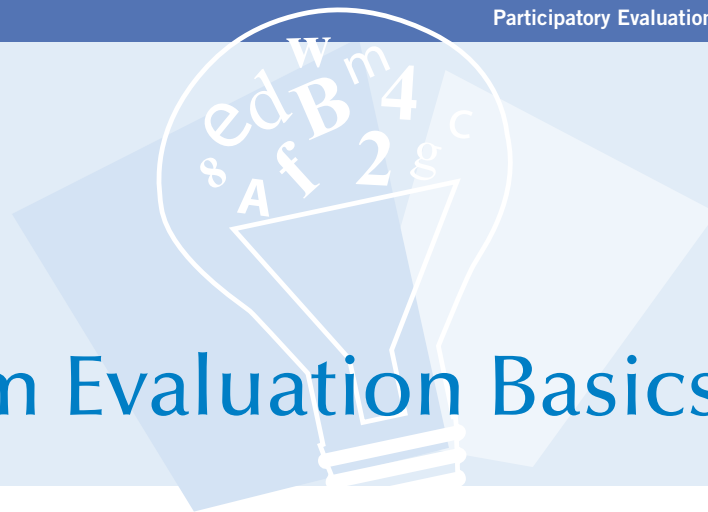
For the REP project, and subsequent work in New York City (2001–2004) and Hartford, Connecticut (2006–2010), trainees worked through all the information up front, in a series of 10 comprehensive 3–4 hour sessions. Each session included a short presentation of information, hands-on activities about the session topic, opportunities for discussion and questions, and homework for trainees to try on their own. By the end of the 10 training sessions, trainees had developed their own evaluation designs which they later implemented as part of REP or the training projects in New York City or Hartford. Each of the training projects then provided an additional 10 months of evaluation coaching and review while trainees actually conducted the evaluations they had designed. At the end of the training, trainees from nonprofit organizations summarized and presented the findings from the evaluations they had designed and conducted to their colleagues and other community stakeholders. Hartford trainees agreed that the up-front training helped prepare them to do solid evaluation work in addition to providing opportunities for them to increase participation in evaluation within their organizations. *We recommend this in-depth approach for those who are interested in systematically building evaluation capacity.* But whether you are a trainee or a trainer, using the guide to fully prepare for and conduct evaluation or just to look up specific information about evaluation-related topics, we hope the materials provided here will support your efforts.

These materials are for the benefit of any 501(c)(3) organization and may be used in whole or part provided that credit be given to the Bruner Foundation. They may NOT be sold or redistributed in whole or part for a profit.

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1. Program Evaluation Basics

Important Definitions

Evaluation is a science with a relatively short history. It became a distinctive field of professional social science practice in the late 1960s (Patton 1982). There are many types and classifications of evaluation, and there are many terms associated with the practice (see Glossary in the Appendix). This guidebook is focused on **participatory program evaluation**. The following are key definitions and points of clarification necessary to orient the remaining sections of this manual.

Working Definition of Program Evaluation. The practice of evaluation involves the thoughtful, systematic collection and analysis of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of programs, for use by specific people, to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions regarding those programs (adapted from Patton 1982).

Working Definition of Participatory Evaluation. Participatory Evaluation involves trained evaluation personnel and practice-based decision makers (i.e., organizational members with program responsibility—service providers) working in partnership. It brings together seasoned evaluators with seasoned program staff to provide training, and then design, conduct, and use results of a program evaluation (Cousins 1998).

There is additional information in the supplemental materials for this section about participatory evaluation and about how to commission external evaluation or evaluation consultation.

Clarifications About Evaluation Strategies

Many years of participatory evaluation practice show that program providers, funders and evaluators can all be meaningfully engaged in program evaluation. It is important to recognize the following.

- All evaluations are partly social (because they involve human beings), partly political (because knowledge is power), and only partly technical (Herman, Morris, Fitz-Gibbons 1996).
- Evaluation data can be collected using **qualitative** methods (e.g., observations, interviews) and/or **quantitative** methods (e.g., surveys, statistical analyses of practical assessments). Although there has been much debate about which strategies and types of data are best, current thinking indicates that **both are valuable and both can be collected and analyzed rigorously**.
- There are multiple ways to address most evaluation needs. Different evaluation needs call for different designs, types of data and data collection strategies.

This guidebook provides a framework for planning evaluations, as well as information about specific strategies to collect and analyze data and how to summarize evaluation findings.

Collecting Background Information About a Program of Interest

This guidebook addresses program evaluation. The strategies and suggestions contained here are intended to be focused on a program of interest. To initiate program evaluation, it is critical to collect background information about the subject program. At a minimum, each of the following ten questions about the program (or program component) should be answered. Where possible, this information should be obtained by observing the program directly or talking with staff or stakeholders about it rather than from written summaries (or proposals).

- (1) What is the purpose(s) of the program?
- (2) At what stage is the program (new, developing, mature, phasing out)?
- (3) Who are the program clients?
- (4) Who are the key program staff (and where applicable, in which department is the program)?
- (5) What specific strategies are used to deliver program services?
- (6) What outcomes are program participants expected to achieve (i.e., what happens to participants as a result of participating)?
- (7) Are there any other evaluation studies currently being conducted regarding this program? (If so, obtain a brief description.)
- (8) Who are the funders of the program?
- (9) What is the total program budget?
- (10) Why has this program been selected for evaluation?

Purpose of Evaluation

Program evaluations can be conducted from an accountability perspective and/or from a developmental perspective and/or from a knowledge/academic

values perspective. They are typically conducted to accomplish one, two or all of the following:

- Render Judgments
- Facilitate Improvements
- Generate Knowledge

It is critical to carefully specify what program (or program component) is to be evaluated and to clearly establish why evaluation is being conducted. This should be done at the earliest stages of evaluation planning and with the input of multiple stakeholders (see following to learn more about stakeholders).

Evaluation Questions

Once the basic purpose for the evaluation has been established, evaluation questions must be clearly specified. These questions should ideally be determined by the service providers together with the evaluator, in accordance with the purpose of the evaluation (see also the supplemental materials at the end of this section for examples of questions by purpose).

Evaluation questions . . .

- Focus and drive the evaluation (they clarify what will and will not be evaluated).
- Should be carefully specified (and agreed upon) in advance of other evaluation design work.
- Generally represent a critical subset of information that is desired about a program to address the purpose of the evaluation.

It is important to keep the number of evaluation questions manageable. The exact number of evaluation questions depends on the purpose of the evaluation and resources available to conduct the evaluation, but limiting the evaluation to address between two and five questions is strongly advised.

The following are criteria of good evaluation questions (adapted from Patton 1997):

- It is possible to obtain data to address the questions. (This addresses access and to a lesser extent, measurability. The strategies in this guide will help evaluators and service providers devise approaches for data collection. The data must be available for use, though, to those undertaking evaluation.)
- There is more than one possible answer to the question, (i.e., the findings are not predetermined by the phrasing of the question).
- Those conducting the evaluation want and need information to help them address the questions, and know how it will be used internally and, where appropriate, externally.
- The questions are aimed at changeable aspects of programmatic activity (i.e., they should focus on those things that can be modified where findings warrant change).

Identifying and Working With Evaluation Stakeholders

Evaluation stakeholders are people who have a stake—a vested interest—in evaluation findings (Patton 1997, 41).

- Stakeholders include anyone who makes decisions about a program, desires information about a program, and/or is involved directly or indirectly with a program.
- Most programs have multiple stakeholders.
- Stakeholders typically have diverse and often competing interests.

In program evaluation, stakeholders typically include organizational officials (e.g., Executive Director), program staff, program clients or their caregivers, and program funders. Sometimes community members or other organizations are also stakeholders. It is critical for providers and evaluators to involve key stakeholders in the evaluation process, especially planning. There are also usually important roles for

stakeholders in data collection, analysis and reporting. See the supplemental materials at the end of this section for additional suggestions for involving stakeholders in evaluation.

Evaluation Designs

An evaluation design is a way of helping think about and structure an evaluation. It communicates evaluation plans to evaluators, program officials, and other stakeholders. A good design should include the following:

- summary information about the selected program and why it is to be evaluated;
- the questions to be addressed by the evaluation;
- the data collection strategies that will be used;
- the individuals who will collect and analyze the data and manage the evaluation;
- when data collection and other key evaluation activities will be conducted;
- the products of the evaluation, who will receive them, when, and how they will be used;
- the projected timeline for the evaluation;
- the projected cost for doing the evaluation (where appropriate).

Choosing data collection strategies (e.g., surveys, observations, practical assessments) depends upon the purpose of the evaluation, the evaluation questions, the time frame, and the available resources. If you work through each of the sections of this guide, you should be able to fully design an evaluation which can be conducted by your organization with a participatory evaluation coach (or with the specific services of evaluation professionals). Working through this guide and the supplemental materials at the end of this section will also help you assess evaluation designs that are developed by evaluation professionals to meet the needs of your organization and your stakeholders.

Evaluative Thinking

Evaluative Thinking is a type of reflective practice that incorporates use of systematically collected data to inform organizational actions. Key components include:

- Asking questions of substance and determining what data are needed to address the questions
- Gathering appropriate data in systematic ways
- Analyzing data and sharing results
- Developing strategies to act on evaluation findings

The rest of the materials in this manual are designed to help your organization build evaluation capacity, promote effective use of evaluation and inspire evaluative thinking.

As defined by Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO), organizational effectiveness is the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission through a blend of sound management, strong governance, and a persistent rededication to achieving results. Evaluative thinking contributes to all three and allows organizations to determine the soundness of their management, the strength of their governance and their capacity regarding achievement of results.

Evaluative thinking can be applied to many organizational functions and is not specific to the program or evaluation areas. In fact, Evaluative Thinking should permeate all organizational functions (see the box in the next column).

Select Organizational Capacity Areas Enhanced by Evaluative Thinking

- Mission
- Strategic Planning
- Governance
- Finance
- Leadership
- Fund Development
- Evaluation
- Program Development
- Client Relationships
- Communication & Marketing
- Technology Acquisition & Training
- Staff Development
- Human Resources
- Business Venture Development
- Alliances and Collaborations

Note these are the organizational capacity areas for which enhanced evaluative thinking strategies have been identified through previous Bruner Foundation projects. For more information on how to assess and strengthen evaluative thinking using the automated Evaluative Thinking Assessment Tool, visit the Bruner Foundation website at www.brunerfoundation.org.

Getting Started

Collect the following information by visiting the selected program, reviewing any written summaries, and talking to key staff and clients about the program.

Preliminary Design Planning	
Agency/Organization Name	
Selected Program or Program Component	
Provider: Key Contact	
Evaluator (if applicable)	

1. The purpose(s) of the program is/are to:
2. The funders of the program include:
3. The total program budget is:
4. What stage is the program in (new, developing, mature, phasing out)?
5. Why was this program selected for evaluation?
6. Are there any other evaluation studies currently being conducted regarding this program?

Getting Started (cont.)

7. Who are the program clients?
8. Who are the key staff and administrators for this program?
9. What specific strategies are used to deliver program services?
10. What outcomes are project participants expected to achieve (i.e., what happens to participants as a result of participating)?
11. Identify the primary stakeholders for this project (categories and names of individuals). Begin talking with them about what questions they think are important to ask. Find out what else they know about the program.
12. Using the information in Section 1 of this manual, and any stakeholder input, jot down some probable evaluation questions for this program. Using the criteria described in Section 1, have a colleague test to be sure they meet the evaluation question criteria.

Planning Stakeholder Meetings

1. What are the goals of the meeting?
2. What are the questions you need to ask in order to meet your goals?
3. Who will attend your meeting?
4. How long will the meeting last?
5. How will you obtain information from your stakeholders? What is your strategy for doing so?
6. How will you document this information?
7. What else do you need from your stakeholders?
8. How will you provide feedback after the stakeholder meeting?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Participatory Evaluation

A Strategy to Help Nonprofit Organizations Measure Success

Participatory Evaluation: A Working Definition

Key program stakeholders such as program staff and managers, funders, maybe even clients working together with evaluators to design, conduct and use results of evaluation.

Importance of Evaluation: A Mind-Set

- Evaluation is a leadership function.
- Evaluation cuts across many aspects of organizational work.
- Evaluation has both internal and external uses.

Unique Features of Participatory Evaluation (PE)

- The process is always empowering.
- PE has an unambiguous value orientation.
- Assessment of a program's value and worth is not the end point.
- PE supports a process of reflection and continued evaluation.
- PE is involved, practical, inclusive.

Important Steps to Getting Participatory Evaluation Done

- Establish an environment conducive to collaborative work.
- Select the evaluators and program staff.
- Identify the program where evaluation is wanted or needed.
- Provide/allow for training and technical assistance for the project.
- Work together to design the evaluation, collect and analyze data. USE THE RESULTS.

Why Do Participatory Evaluations: Service Provider Perspective

- There are questions of consequence to address.
- There are both internal and external needs to systematically collect and analyze data.
- There is a need to maximize usefulness of evaluation findings.
- There are not enough trained staff members to conduct meaningful evaluation.
- There is a need to de-mystify the process of evaluation and to get help undertaking it.

Why Do Participatory Evaluations: Evaluator Perspective

- Practitioners have a lot of knowledge about the participants and programs.
- Practitioners have experienced outcomes firsthand.
- Practitioners have access to participants and programs.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Agency/Program Readiness for Participatory Evaluation

- Administrators and staff must value evaluation.
- Administrators must provide time and resources.
- Selected staff must be motivated, connected and accessible.
- Selected staff must be willing and able to learn about evaluation planning and methodologies.

Evaluator Requirements for Participatory Evaluation: PE Evaluators Should . . .

- Have ample knowledge of and expertise with evaluation.
- Be accessible to collaborators.
- Have access to resources.
- Have experience with adult education/strong teaching or training skills.
- Be motivated to participate.
- Have significant tolerance for imperfection.

Participatory Evaluation Roles for Program Staff and Evaluators

Program Staff	Evaluators
Participate in training and make use of TA.	Provide training in evaluation planning and methodologies.
Thoughtfully design and conduct data collection.	Provide TA for evaluation planning and data collection.
Thoughtfully analyze data and present findings.	Provide TA for analysis and reporting.
Use findings of evaluation.	Support efforts to develop action steps for findings.
Encourage continued use and extension of evaluation training.	Stimulate and support continued use and extension.

Data Collection Strategies* that Work with Participatory Evaluation

- Record Reviews, quantitative assessments
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Observations

**Must be routine, easy to manage and sustainable.*

What Do You Get When You Use Participatory Evaluation?

- Knowledge about planning and evaluation
- Evaluation skills
- Usable, systematically collected data to inform decisions
- Evaluation challenges
- Lasting staff development
- *Increased Organizational Capacity*

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Evaluation Stakeholders and Stakeholder Meetings

Evaluation stakeholders are people who have a stake—a vested interest—in evaluation findings (Patton 1997). Stakeholders include anyone who makes decisions or desires information about a program. For any evaluation there are multiple possible stakeholders, and they often have diverse and sometimes competing interests.

Who Are Evaluation Stakeholders?

As stated above, stakeholders are anyone who has a stake in the program, including (but not limited to):

- Staff
- Clients or service users, and/or their family members or caretakers (where applicable)
- Funders
- Members of the community

Benefits of Engaging Stakeholders in Planning for and Conducting Evaluation

- Increases quality of evaluation.
- Provides opportunities for stakeholders to be heard and to hear others.
- Increases likelihood that findings will be used.
- Facilitates the development of a more participatory program.
- Reduces fears and suspicions about evaluation if an environment of openness is established.
- Participants in the process become sensitized to the multiple perspectives that exist around any program.
- New ideas often emerge out of the dynamics of group interaction.
- A sense of shared responsibility for the evaluation can be engendered that is often greater than the responsibility felt by isolated individuals.
- An open forum composed of various stakeholders makes it difficult to suppress tough questions or negative findings.
- The evaluator has an opportunity to observe firsthand the interactions among various stakeholders and assess their interpersonal relationships.
- Momentum can be built through group processes in order to help reduce delays or counter roadblocks resulting from attitudes or actions of one person.
- The evaluators(s) and stakeholders in a group process will often gel so that it's not the evaluator against the world.
- The group may continue to function after the evaluation is completed.
- Groups, acting in concert, have more power than individuals.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Evaluation Stakeholders and Stakeholder Meetings (cont.)

The Members of a Selected Stakeholder Group Should:

- Represent the various constituencies that have an interest and stake in the evaluation findings and their use.
- Be people who have authority and power to use evaluation findings in decision making.
- Believe that the evaluation is worth doing and care how the results are used.
- Be willing to make a firm commitment of time.

Things to Think About Before You Bring Stakeholders Together

- How big should your stakeholder group be?
- Who must be included (e.g., Key Funders, Executive Director and/or Key Staff, Clients)?
- What will you need from them (e.g., approvals, input, assistance, support)?

Roles for Stakeholders**EVALUATION PROJECT INITIATION**

1. *Focusing/conceptualizing evaluation*—present or develop evaluation designs including the purpose, evaluation questions, introduction of logic model, data collection strategies, timelines, products (see also numbers 1a and 1b below).
- 1a. *Addressing methods and measurement options*—refine logic models, including outcomes clarification, indicator identification and making data collection and measurement decisions. NOTE: Logic model refinement can be conducted as a separate session or can be used to initiate important conversations about outcomes, indicators, data collection and measurement.
- 1b. *Reviewing the Design and Instruments, Administration Plans.*
2. *Preparing for Data Analysis*—set outcome targets, develop analysis plans and report outlines.

EVALUATION MID COURSE

3. *Keeping Stakeholders Informed, Getting Help*—evaluation status reports or progress updates are presented.

EVALUATION COMPLETION ACTIVITIES

6. *Interpreting Data and Developing Action Steps*—presentations of summarized findings, discussion/interpretation of data, development of recommended actions.
7. *Developing Communication Plans*—specifying products, developing report outlines, determining who should get which types of reports and in what format.

Meeting topics can be combined as appropriate for your evaluation project. You should determine a good minimum number of stakeholder meetings required for your project; a good rule of thumb is to hold at least four two-hour meetings spread over the course of the evaluation. Determine who should be in your stakeholder group while the evaluation is being conceived. Develop a stakeholder meeting plan that is in alignment with your evaluation timeline. Be sure the plan clarifies which types of meetings you will hold and when, including optimal and minimum required involvement.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Different Evaluation Purposes Require Different Evaluation Questions

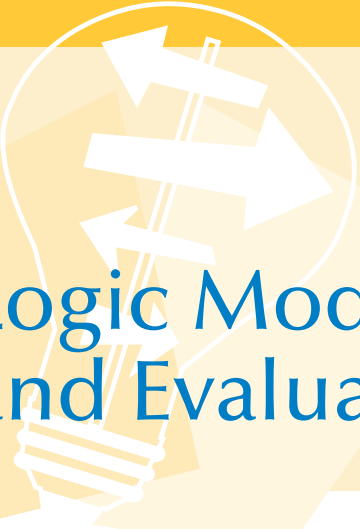
Purpose	Questions
Rendering Judgments [Some need met, some goal attained, some standard achieved. Must specify criteria for judgment in advance.]	To what extent did the program work? To what extent did the program attain its goals? Should the program be continued/ended? Was implementation in compliance? Were funds used appropriately and for intended purposes? To what extent were desired client outcomes achieved?
Facilitating Improvements [Using information to monitor program efforts and outcomes regularly over time in order to provide feedback to improve implementation, to fine-tune strategies and to make sure that participants are progressing toward desired outcomes.]	What are the program's strengths and weaknesses? How and to what extent are participants progressing toward desired outcomes? Which types of participants are making good progress and which aren't? What kinds of implementation problems have emerged and how are they addressed? What's happening that wasn't expected? What are staff and participant perceptions of the program? Where can efficiencies be realized? What new ideas are emerging that can be tested?
Generating Knowledge [Conceptual rather than instrumental use of findings.]	How is the program model actually working? What types of interventions are being used? What types of outcomes can be expected and how do you measure them? What are the lessons learned? What policy options are suggested by the findings?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Distinguishing Between Evaluation and Research

Program evaluation and research are similar, but they have different objectives and data standards. They are also different in size and scope. The following table shows important differences between them.

	Evaluation	Research
Objectives	Change and action oriented, aimed at determining impact	Aimed at causality, testing theory
Data	Evidentiary data	Very precise measurements
Numbers of Subjects	Program target groups or samples of target groups (sometimes very small)	Usually study of samples from fairly large populations
Standards	Usefulness, practicality, accuracy, ethicalness	Truth, causality, generalizability, theory
Costs	Range from minimal to fairly substantial	Usually, high costs
Stakes/Scope	Fairly low stakes, fairly narrow scope (the program)	Very high stakes (e.g., human life or health)
Focus	Whether something is being done well, not necessarily better. Should focus on outcomes of participants (not broad community indicators)	Determining the best treatments, solutions, etc. Can include community indicators where appropriate.
Use	Should not be conducted unless there is real opportunity to use the results	Sometimes conducted when the use is uncertain.



2. Logic Models as Planning and Evaluation Tools

Program Logic Model Basics

A program logic model is a simple description of how a program is understood to work to achieve outcomes for participants. It is a process that helps you to identify the rationale behind your program and how your program will work. It is a useful tool for program planning, fund development and evaluation. While there are many strategies and approaches to developing logic models, minimally it is necessary to describe the following about your selected program:

Inputs (resources, money, staff/time, volunteers, facilities, etc.);

Activities (how program uses inputs to fulfill mission, strategies, service delivery);

Outcomes (changes to individuals or populations during or after participation).

Summarizing a Program Logic Model Helps to:

- Create a snapshot of program operations that addresses what is needed, how services are delivered and what is expected for participants.
- Identify key program components to track.
- Think through the steps of participant progress and develop a *realistic* picture of what can be accomplished, including in more comprehensive versions, clear identification of indicators and targets (see following for more details).

Developing a logic model is a good way to bring together a variety of people involved in program planning in order to build consensus on the program's design and operations.

The following shows a format for a simple logic model. (Full-sized forms for reproduction, as well as those with a more comprehensive design, are included in the supplemental materials at the end of this section.)

Inputs	Activities	Outcomes
		<p>You can choose to . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Embed targets. * Distinguish between initial, intermediate and longer term. Mark which will be tracked or measured.

(Adapted from the United Way of America)

Is There a Difference between Logic Models and Theory of Change?

Since the United Way of America first published its basic Logic Model format in 1996, many scholars and practitioners have developed different ways to help nonprofit organizations think logically about the work they do. Additionally, there has been great emphasis on helping organizations identify their assumptions and explain why they do what they do, specifically to clarify their *theory of change*.

The Theory of Change (TOC) is a framework that helps to depict, in a straightforward and usually graphic format, how programs and strategies are expected to align with intended outcomes. Theory of change models are designed to link outcomes and activities to explain **How** and **Why** desired change is expected to come about (Anderson 2005). A theory of change:

- Is designed to capture complex efforts and, as such, is generally more useful for a whole organization or collection of program/strategies in a department (or initiative).
- Is a causal model that shows underlying assumptions and clarifies necessary pre-conditions that must be achieved before long-term outcomes can be reached.
- Often includes components to describe the internal context (e.g., values, guiding principles, operating assumptions) as well as the external context.

The Logic Model graphically presents more specific details about an individual program's inputs, activities and outcomes. As stated previously, developing a logic model helps identify the important elements of a program and how it is expected to work. It is a widely-used tool that can inform program planning, fund development and evaluation (for good examples of the latest thinking on logic models be sure to see the *Logic Model Guidebook: Better Strategies for Great Results*, Knowlton and Phillips, 2009, and the other website references in the Evaluation Bibliography section at the end of this guide).

Important Differences between Logic Models and Theories of Change

Because the terms logic model and theory of change have been used interchangeably by funders and nonprofit organizations alike, we present some clarifying information below. (The following was adapted from an American Evaluation Association conference session by Helene Clark, ActKnowledge and Andrea Anderson, Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, 2004.)

- Logic models require identifying program components so you can see at a glance if outcomes are out of sync with inputs and activities, but unlike theories of change that also show inputs, activities and outcomes, they don't show WHY activities are expected to produce outcomes.
- In addition to showing proposed activities and outcomes, theories of change also require justifications at each step. Articulation of hypotheses about WHY something will cause something else is required.
- While logic models do not always include indicators (see following pages for definitions of indicators and how to use them), theories of change require identifying indicators so there is clarity regarding how well a precondition needs to be met in order to achieve an outcome.
- Where logic models are descriptive showing important components and expectations of a program, theories of change are explanatory illustrating expected pathways of change and the critical thinking underlying programs, collections of programs or initiatives.

Essentially, logic models clarify *what* you are doing, theories of change clarify *why* you are doing it. They can and should be used differently.

Use Logic Models when you need to . . .	Use Theories of Change when you need to . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a quick representation of something that can be understood in a simple display. • Demonstrate the basic inputs, activities and outcomes of your work and guide evaluation accordingly. • Summarize a more complex undertaking into basic categories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a complex initiative with a rigorous plan for success. • Evaluate appropriate outcomes at the right time and in the right sequence. • Explain more precisely why an initiative worked or did not work.
<i>Be careful, Logic Models can sometimes be too simplistic to be helpful.</i>	<i>Be careful, clarifying a Theory of Change can be a lot of work and take a lot of time.</i>

(Adapted from Clarke and Anderson 2004)

So, a well-organized nonprofit organization or department within an organization might have an overall theory of change as well as individual logic models for each program linking the programs to the department or organization and showing how the programs are expected to contribute to overall change. The overarching theory of change would include specific attention to what has to happen in order for outcomes to be achieved and assumptions about why specific activities will cause or contribute to those outcomes. Each of the logic models would provide additional details summarizing components of programs developed in response to the underlying theory.

A note of caution: Like so much about evaluation-related terminology, the terms and processes related to theory of change and logic model development are overlapping and sometimes ambiguous. There are many resources available online and in print to assist organizations interested in effectively using logic models and summarizing theory of change. Evaluative thinking is logical and facilitates these processes. We have included this brief introduction to logic models because good logic models and a clearly expressed theory of change contribute to good evaluation design.

Important Things to Remember About Logic Models

- Not all programs lend themselves easily to summarization in this format. Logic models are best used in conjunction with other descriptive information or as part of a conversation. It is advisable to have one or two key project officials summarize the logic model and then to have multiple stakeholders review it and agree upon what is included.
- When used for program planning, it is advisable to start with outcomes and then determine what activities will be appropriate and what inputs are needed.
- There are several different approaches and formats for logic models. The example in the supplemental materials, page 26, is one-dimensional and limited to the three program features (inputs, activities, outcomes). It is also common to see logic models represented as cycles, or in three-dimensional formats. Logic models regularly include more information about the context, objectives, problem statement, assumptions, etc. (See additional examples of logic models in the Appendix to this manual.)
- The relationships between inputs, activities and outcomes are not one-to-one, therefore there are no arrows. The model is supposed to illustrate how the **set** of inputs could support the **set** of activities that contribute to the **set** of outcomes identified. Levels of service delivery or “outputs” are included with the activities.

Outcomes Planning Missteps and Cautions

Clarifying which outcomes are expected for your program, and which should be evaluated is some of the hardest work of evaluation (see also the chart that distinguishes between outcomes, indicators and

targets in the supplemental materials at the end of this section). Keep the following in mind as you plan for outcomes evaluation:

- Outcomes, especially long-term outcomes, should not go beyond the program’s purpose (e.g., don’t project educational outcomes for an employment and training program).
- Outcomes should not go beyond the scope of the target audience (e.g., don’t project change throughout the county if you are only serving a small proportion of residents in a particular neighborhood).
- To make judgments about a program (or facilitate improvement), you do not have to measure all indicators for all participants. Sampling and snapshots for key indicators can provide ample data for decision making.
- Avoid holding a program accountable for outcomes that are tracked and influenced largely by another system, unless there is meaningful interaction with that system regarding outcome change (e.g., don’t hold an afterschool program accountable for the outcomes of students at school, unless the afterschool and day school programs are integrated).
- Do not assume that all subpopulations will have similar outcomes (e.g., outcomes may be very different for boys than for girls). Be sure to adjust targets accordingly.
- Be sure to measure outcomes on a timetable that corresponds to logical projections of when they will be accomplished (e.g., don’t measure annual progress toward care management goals two-thirds of the way through the year).
- Set targets in advance, based on: best professional hunches, external standards (when they are available), and past performance (when baseline or initial data are available—*sometimes it’s advisable to wait until it is*). Do not agree to targets that are unrealistically high or embarrassingly low.

Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

Different terms are used to describe the results of programs, what is expected, and how you know if meaningful results are achieved. We have found the following lexicon, adapted from the United Way of America, to be the most useful. (This is also available in a single-page format in the supplemental materials at the end of this section.)

Outcomes are changes in behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, condition or status. Outcomes are related to the core business of the program, are realistic and attainable, within the program's sphere of influence, and appropriate. Outcomes are what a program is held accountable for.

Indicators are specific, measurable characteristics or changes that represent achievement of an outcome. Indicators are directly related to the outcome and help define it. Indicators are specific, measurable, observable, can be seen, heard or read, and make sense in relation to the outcome whose achievement they signal.

Targets specify the amount or level of outcome attainment that is expected, hoped for or required. Targets or levels of outcome attainment can be determined relative to external standards (when they are available) OR internal agreement (based on best professional hunches, past performance, or similar programs). But they should be set *prior* to gathering data. Note that some of the sample logic models in the appendix have embedded targets (pp. 109–112).

Outcomes, Indicators and Targets: Issues and Cautions

Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes are very time-sensitive. When you measure influences what you get. • The more immediate an outcome, the more influence a program generally has on its achievement. • The type and magnitude of outcomes are closely related to program design. There is usually more than one way to get an outcome. Similarly, changes in program design often lead to changes in outcomes. • Positive outcomes are not always improvements. Sometimes they are the absence of something negative; sometimes they are achievement of a standard or milestone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators may not capture all aspects of an outcome. • Indicators should not be excluded because they seem too simple. • Many outcomes have more than one indicator. Identify the set that you believe (or have agreed) adequately and accurately signals achievement of an outcome. Acquire agreement from key stakeholders, in advance, regarding the set of indicators and the “level” required to indicate positive outcomes. • If you are trying to measure prevention of negative events, consider identifying meaningful segments of time to follow up and determine whether the event happened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance targets should be specified in advance (i.e., with program and evaluation design). The specification process must define what is highly effective, adequate, not adequate. Be sure there is buy-in regarding what constitutes a positive outcome. • Lacking data on past performance, it may be advisable to wait for data before setting targets. • Be especially cautious about wording numerical targets so they are not overambitious or underambitious and so they make sense to key stakeholders or information users. • If the target statement indicates change in magnitude (i.e., increases or decreases), be sure to specify the initial levels and what is considered positive. • Be sure target statements are in sync with meaningful program time frames.

Logic Model Assessments

To determine whether your logic model makes sense, answer the following important questions. If possible, involve stakeholders in the process of reviewing and assessing your logic model.

1. Does the logic model:

- clearly distinguish between activities and outcomes and where appropriate, between initial and longer-term outcomes?
- clearly communicate what is to be done and how it is expected to help participants?
- seem logical?
- include all the inputs, activities and outcomes that are important?
- suggest appropriate connections between inputs, activities and outcomes?

2a. Are the outcomes identified:

- those for which the program should be held accountable?
- representing meaningful change for participants?
- useful to program managers in identifying program strengths and weaknesses?
- likely to be accepted as valid outcomes of the program by program managers and other stakeholders?

2b. Is it reasonable to expect that the program can influence the outcomes in a nontrivial way? Do the targets seem realistic?

3a. Are the activities:

- sufficient in number, duration and intensity to contribute significantly to the outcomes?
- doable given project inputs?

3b. Are there activities that seem unrelated to the outcomes, or does it seem likely that some important activities are missing?

4. Do the inputs seem sufficient (in both quantity and quality) to support all activities?

Logic Model Training Activities

1. The Logic Model Scramble

Preparation. Take any sample logic model (use those in the appendix or one that has been developed by a service provider) and separate each input, activity and outcome onto individual Post-it™ notes as shown on the following page. Scramble the individual components/Post-it™ notes and affix the scrambled set onto a piece of cardboard or card stock for distribution to trainees. In addition to the “pieces” of the logic model, make three large easel pages (we use the 3M™ Cling Sheets)—one each for inputs, activities and outcomes. Hang the “blank logic model” easel pages on the wall.

Conducting the Unscrambling Activity. Distribute the scrambled logic model pieces to the trainees and have them re-assemble the logic model (i.e., place components that look like inputs onto the INPUT easel page, place outcome components onto the OUTCOME page, etc.) In our example, the finished product should look something like the diagram on the following page.

Assessing the Logic Model. Once the logic model has been re-assembled, distribute the sample version for trainees to review and compare to the one they have created on the wall. Facilitate a discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the logic model based on the assessment criteria on page 20.

2. Logic Models and Stakeholders

Display a completed logic model (using easel pages and Post-it™ notes or hand-written inputs, activities and outcomes). Have stakeholders (e.g., program staff, development staff, board members) rate how important each input, activity and outcome is using a symbol, numeric rating or colored sticky dot. Also have them rate how good a job has been done with each activity and each outcome. Then facilitate a discussion about strengths and challenges. This provides an opportunity for multiple stakeholders to see and talk about what should be happening in a program.

INPUTS		ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	
Part-time MSW program manager.	Nationally certified education manuals (2 for instructors), videos, and other teaching tools (games, manuals etc.)	All participants register (1 time) and undergo brief weekly health checks which are overseen by MSW program manager and RN.	At least 25 teens maintain their blood pressure, weight and healthy diets throughout final trimester of pregnancy.	All participating teen mothers are knowledgeable about self-sufficiency.
Part-time RN instructor.		Two groups of 15 females attend and participate in parenting classes on prenatal health and delivery for 3 months prior to delivery. Classes delivered for 1 hour twice a week at the agency (total 24 hours of instruction). Classes lead by RN instructor.	All teens who have maintained adequate prenatal care (and do not experience other complications) give birth to healthy, full-term babies.	All babies of participating teen mothers achieve appropriate 12 month milestones for physical, motor, verbal and social development.
Agency and all collaborating high schools identify 30 pregnant teens to participate in program.	Classroom available on dedicated basis for afternoon parenting classes.	All participating females attend 1.5 hour support group 1 day/week at the agency. Support group addresses mothers' developmental needs. Group facilitated by MSW program manager (total 18 hours of participation).	All participating teen mothers demonstrate ability to properly care for, feed and interact with their infants.	
Video equipment.	Copies of written materials for 50 participants.	Two groups of 12+ females and their babies attend and participate in parenting classes on infant nutrition, development, safety, and caretaking delivered at the agency twice a week for 1 hour, for 12 months postdelivery (total 96 hours of instruction). Classes lead by RN instructor.	All participating teen mothers avoid neglect and abuse of infants.	

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Purposes of a Logic Model

As stated by Innovation Network in their Logic Model Workbook (available on the web, see resources below), the logic model is a versatile tool that can support many management activities. This includes:

- **Program Planning.** The logic model is a valuable tool for program planning and development. The logic model structure helps you think through your program strategy—to help clarify where you are and where you want to be.
- **Program Management.** Because it “connects the dots” between resources, activities, and outcomes, a logic model can be the basis for developing a more detailed management plan. Using data collection and an evaluation plan, the logic model helps you track and monitor operations to better manage results. It can serve as the foundation for creating budgets and work plans.
- **Communication.** A well-built logic model is a powerful communications tool. It can show stakeholders at a glance what a program is doing (activities) and what it is achieving (outcomes), emphasizing the link between the two.
- **Consensus-Building.** Developing a logic model builds common understanding and promotes buy-in among both internal and external stakeholders about what a program is, how it works, and what it is trying to achieve.
- **Fundraising.** A sound logic model demonstrates to funders that you have purposefully identified what your program will do, what it hopes to achieve, and what resources you will need to accomplish your work. It can also help structure and streamline grant writing.

Logic Model Resources

Innovation Network, www.innonet.org

Harvard Family Research Project, www.hfrp.org

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, www.wkkf.org

Solve the Outcomes/Indicators/Targets Puzzle

Try to fit the following pieces onto the Outcomes/Indicators and Targets Table (see next page).

The number of months clients stay in transitional housing	Increased Financial Skills	Case Management for 6 Months
70% of clients will retain a job for 6 months that pays \$8/hr.	Hold Financial Workshops	Increased ability to problem solve on one's own
Employment and Training Services	Clients open bank accounts.	55% of adults will report that they are no longer in crisis.
Increased Income Levels	Provide 100 Nights of Shelter	60% of clients will remain in transitional housing for at least 6 months.
Client Confidence Levels	Employment Retention Rates for 6 Months	50% of clients will increase their TOEFL test score by one level.
ESL Classes	Clients achieve independence and stability.	Improved TOEFL Test Scores
Increased Knowledge of English		80% of clients will have bank accounts.

(See the answer key on page 100.)

Outcomes/Indicators/Targets Puzzle			
Activities	Outcomes	Indicators	Targets

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Program Logic Model: As a Planning Tool

Program: _____ Mission: _____

Inputs	Activities	Outcomes

(Adapted from the United Way of America)

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Extended Program Logic Model

Program: _____ Mission: _____

Outcomes	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources

(Adapted from the United Way of America)

3. Collecting and Using Evaluation Data



There are four primary types of evaluation methodologies/data collection strategies which can (and should) be combined to address evaluation questions and allow for multiple sources of data. All have both benefits and limitations and require preparation on the front end.

- **RECORD REVIEW**
- **SURVEYS**
- **INTERVIEWS** (Including Focus Groups)
- **OBSERVATIONS**

The table on page 30 provides a brief summary of evaluation data collection methodologies. It will help you select strategies and prepare for their use. Additional details about how to plan for and use each evaluation data collection method and examples of summarized data are clarified in the following sections. See also the supplemental materials in the appendix regarding data collection decisions.

Remember, mixed methodologies and multiple sources of data/respondents, collected at multiple points in time, increase evaluation rigor and usefulness of findings.

Remember, data do not have to be collected for all participants in every program cycle. Evaluating findings from samples (subgroups) of participants or point-in-time (snapshot) estimates can be a useful approach.

Record Reviews

Data that are collected for administrative and other purposes, such as attendance data, are often useful for evaluation. Once a participatory evaluator has determined what is available and how access can be achieved, reviews of existing program and/or participant data can be conducted. These data can be obtained from internal or external sources (see list below). Comparison data and needs assessment data can also be obtained for some indicators of interest. Additionally, specific evaluation questions can sometimes be added to standard record-keeping strategies, and responses can be collected as part of a record review (e.g., a question for parents about program value can be added to an intake form).

Available Administrative Data Sources for Programs/Participants

- Intake Forms
- Attendance Rosters
- Program Logs (e.g., daily activity descriptions)
- Existing Evaluation Forms (e.g., customer satisfaction surveys, session assessments)
- Case Files or Case Management Data (these may include both internal data—such as progress toward internally established goals, and external data—such as reports about a participant's living arrangements, employment or childbearing status)
- Exit or Follow-up Data

Data Collection Methods Summary

Method	Description	Examples of Uses
RECORD REVIEW Internal External	<p>Record review is a catch-all category that involves accessing existing information or information that was collected for other purposes. Evaluation data is obtained from other types of program records—including those used by other agencies (e.g., the report card grades of students might be a source of data for evaluation of an after-school program; data collected as part of a drug screening might be used as part of the evaluation of a prevention program).</p> <p>Instruments are called protocols.</p>	<p>To collect some behavioral reports.</p> <p>To test knowledge.</p> <p>To verify self-reported data.</p> <p>To determine changes over time.</p>
SURVEYS Mail Phone Captive	<p>Surveys have a series of questions (items) with pre-determined response choices. They can include all independent items or groups of items (scales) that can be summarized. Surveys can also include open-ended items for write-in or clarification. Surveys can be completed by respondents or surveyors.</p> <p>Instruments are called questionnaires, surveys, assessment forms.</p>	<p>To study attitudes and perceptions.</p> <p>To collect self-reported assessment of changes in response to program.</p> <p>To collect program assessments.</p> <p>To collect behavioral reports.</p> <p>To test knowledge.</p> <p>To determine changes over time.</p>
INTERVIEWS Structured Semi-structured Intercept Group Interviews Focus Groups Phone, Face-to-Face	<p>An interview is a one-sided conversation between an interviewer and a respondent. Questions are mostly predetermined, but open-ended. Respondents are expected to answer using their own terms.</p> <p>Instruments are called protocols or interview schedules or guides.</p>	<p>To study attitudes and perceptions using respondent's own language.</p> <p>To collect self-reported assessment of changes in response to program.</p> <p>To collect program assessments.</p> <p>To document program implementation.</p> <p>To determine changes over time.</p>
OBSERVATIONS Program Participant	<p>Observations are conducted to view and hear actual program activities. They can be focused on programs overall or on participants in programs.</p> <p>Instruments are called protocols or guides, sometimes checklists.</p>	<p>To document program implementation.</p> <p>To witness levels of skill/ability, program practices, behaviors.</p> <p>To determine changes over time.</p>

Additional information about making data collection decisions is provided in the supplemental materials at the end of this section.

- Assessments (these may also include both internal data—such as culminating knowledge measurements at the end of a cycle, and external data such as test scores, report card grades, scale scores on a behavioral scale, medical or substance use test results)

Other Extant Data for Needs Assessment or Comparisons

- Census Data—available on the internet, in libraries or by demand from marketing firms.
- Vital Statistics—also available on the internet, in libraries and from local health departments.
- Topical Outcome Data—e.g., crime statistics, birth outcomes, juvenile arrest data.
- KIDS COUNT child well-being indicators.
- National Survey Data—e.g., National Education Longitudinal Survey (NELS), Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS).
- Community Profile Data.
- UI (unemployment insurance) Data.

Summarizing Record Review Data

Findings from record review data are usually determined through secondary analysis. In other words,

when we use administrative data for evaluation purposes, we are using data that was collected and analyzed for other purposes. (For example, attendance data may be regularly collected for a program to inform routine, daily program operations. That same data may be summarized on a quarterly or annual basis to inform other stakeholders such as funders about program use. A participatory evaluator may take attendance data and combine them with other evaluation data to determine relationships between attendance and other outcomes.)

Record review data are typically arrayed in tables or summarized in profiles or bullet lists as frequencies, proportions, or averages (see following tables). They can be both descriptive (e.g., summarizing the demographics of the actual target population) and/or evaluative (e.g., summarizing the number and percent of training program graduates who got and held jobs or summarizing the mean score for the target population on an aptitude or physical test). For additional references about how to summarize record review data, see the citations list at the end of this manual under Quantitative Data Analysis (page 105).

Examples of Summarized Data from Record Reviews

1. Participant Profiles

Table X: Demographics of Participants, 2008-2009

	Site 1 N = 95	Site 2 N = 139	Site 3 N = 160	Site 4 N = 106	Total N = 500
GENDER					
Female	51%	64%	49%	55%	55%
Male	49%	36%	50%	45%	45%
RACE/ETHNICITY					
African American	83%	59%	89%	89%	79%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8%	8%	4%	2%	5%
Hispanic/Latino	7%	32%	7%	10%	15%
Other	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%
GRADE					
K-2	37%	47%	22%	38%	35%
3rd-5th	54%	46%	54%	50%	51%
6th-9th	9%	7%	25%	13%	13%

Note: This profile represents an estimate based on data reported from the sites. It does not reflect all shifts in population over the year, as not all sites fully reported enrollment and termination data.

2. Program Outcomes

Table XX: Average Number of Goals Achieved by Session Intensity

Goal Area*	Participants with Low Intensity 1-9 Sessions**	Participants with Mid Intensity 10-18 Sessions	Participants with High Intensity 19 or More Sessions**
READING	3.7	5.3	7.1
LANGUAGE	3.8	6.1	7.5
MATH	2.6	4.4	4.7
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	1.6	1.7	2.1
TOTAL	7.5	11.8	14.8

* Desired goal achievement is 3 for reading, 3 for math, 3 for language, 1 for personal development, 10 total.

** Note that differences between those with low intensity and mid/high intensity were statistically significant.

Example of a Record Review Protocol: Neighborhood Community Service Centers Data Collection Plan

Data Category/Form	Data Elements	Collected By	When	Plans for Use
Registration Form	Contact information, demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity) *Includes signature of parent/guardian	Site	At enrollment	FOR SITE USE ONLY
Family Fact Sheet	Language, race/ethnicity, school, household composition, lunch eligibility, sibling participation, special needs, insurance, interests	Site (copies submitted to evaluator)	At enrollment	Profile of participating youth Target population assessment
Participant List	Identification numbers	Site (copies submitted to evaluator)	Quarterly	Update files
Attendance/Activity Summary	Daily attendance by staff member and activity summary by category	Staff members at site (copies submitted to evaluator)	Daily by staff, quarterly submission to evaluator	Determine mean attendance by grade and gender Calculate program intensity
Outcome Report—Participants (random sample)	Staff report of activity, ratings of interest, behavior, interaction with youth, interaction with adults, literacy skills, study habits	Staff (results submitted to evaluator)	Quarterly	Baseline profile of participants on outcome measures Assessment of change on outcome measures
Quarterly Report—Site	Service delivery—events, workshops, counseling, school relationship ratings	Staff (copies submitted to evaluator)	Quarterly	Service delivery and contextual data

Record Review Activities

1. Summarize one finding from Table X below.

Hint: Try to answer one of these questions.

- Did the sites reach either their enrollment or training completion goals?
- Did either site do better at reaching its placement goals after 180 days?

Table X: Employment Training Participant Outcomes Compared to Goals, By Site

	NEW YORK		BOSTON		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Enrollment Goal	188		112		300	
Enrollment Actual	152	80.9	94	83.9	246	82.0
Training Completion Goal	97		48		145	
Completed Training Actual	87	89.7	39	81.3	126	86.9
Placement Goal	86		44		130	
Placed Grads Actual (30 days post-training)	41	47.7	26	59.1	67	51.5
Placed Grads Actual (180 days post-training)	83	96.5	37	84.1	120	92.3
Placed Grads in Field	77	92.8	36	97.3	113	94.2

2. List available record review data at your agency (or for your selected program).

3. Construct a table shell (or dummy table) for record review data you could use or you will use in an evaluation you conduct. Use the back of this sheet.

Record Review Protocol

Data Category/Form	Data Elements	Collected By	When	Uses (mark evaluation use with*)

Survey Design and Administration

Surveys have a series of questions (items) with pre-determined response choices. They can include independent items or groups of items (scales) that can be summarized. Surveys can also include some open-ended items for write-in or clarification. Those who answer surveys are known as respondents. Surveys can be completed by respondents or survey administrators. Instruments are called questionnaires, surveys, or assessment forms.

Surveys are most productive when they are: well targeted; used to obtain data that are otherwise difficult to get; used in conjunction with other strategies (e.g., before and after focus groups, interviews, or observations). Surveys can be used to collect data from many respondents, but optimally they only include a fairly narrow set of questions. Some survey data are qualitative (measures of opinions, attitudes, ratings), but surveys can also be used to test for content knowledge and to gather self-reported measures of events (such as how many times respondents have smoked cigarettes in the last month or in which risk behaviors they have engaged). Quantitative analyses are often used to summarize survey responses (e.g., x% of respondents answered yes to the question).

Benefits of Surveys

- Surveys can be used to explore ideas or questions about a program.
- Surveys provide information about a large number and a wide variety of respondents, including those with whom the evaluator has little or no contact (e.g., parents of students whose teachers received training through a program you are evaluating).
- Survey data can be analyzed using simple and straightforward routines. Though helpful, computers are not required.
- The results of surveys can be very compelling. They have broad appeal and are easy to present.

- Surveys can be administered and analyzed quickly, especially if pre-validated (previously tested) instruments are available, the topic is narrowly focused, and the numbers of respondents are small (fewer than 500).

Drawbacks of Surveys

- Designing surveys is complicated and time consuming.
- Broad questions and open-ended responses are difficult to summarize.
- Analyses and presentations can require a great deal of work.

Major Uses for Surveys

Surveys are frequently used in program evaluation, often not well. The following is a list of common ways that surveys are used for evaluation data collection.

- **Needs Assessments** uncover the current state of affairs: what is working well or not well, what participants want or need, etc.
- **Activity Assessments and Customer Satisfaction Surveys** provide participants, staff, program managers, and program developers opportunities to rate activities (e.g., workshop, training program) regarding usefulness, quality, etc. They also provide opportunities for stakeholders to rate a program overall, its program components, or staff.
- **Measures of Knowledge, Attitudes, or Self-Reported Behavior.** One-time measures are usually compared to a predetermined standard (like the number of correct answers or the responses of a comparative group). In order to assess a change in knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviors, participants are often surveyed more than once. In this way, baseline or initial measures can be compared to subsequent measures.

Survey Questionnaire Development

Good surveys are hard to develop. The following provides step-by-step suggestions for developing surveys. Items 2 through 4 should also be considered if you are assessing a survey instrument.

1. Identify the key issues you wish to explore or test via the survey. Review available literature, including proprietary sources, to determine if there are good surveys or items that already exist to measure the key issues.
2. Convert these key issues into questions and remember to:
 - State the question in very specific terms, using language that is appropriate for the target population.
 - Use multiple questions to sufficiently cover the topic.
 - Avoid double-negatives.
 - Avoid asking multiple questions in one item.
 - Be sure response categories match the question, are exhaustive and don't overlap. There is no definitive standard regarding the number of answer choices. It is preferable, however, to keep the number of answer choices limited. Use an even number of choices if you are concerned about "waffling to the middle."
3. Determine what other data are needed for analytical purposes (e.g., demographics, other background, contact information).
4. Determine how the questions will be ordered and formatted and be sure to include directions for responses.
5. Have survey instrument reviewed by others including representatives from the target group.

Types of Surveys

There are several different types of surveys. The type of survey a participatory evaluator administers depends on the type of information that is being gathered (especially how sensitive it is), how much access there is to the respondent population, and how much time is available for completing the administration. The following are the primary types of survey administration strategies:

- **Mail surveys**—distributed to respondents through the mail. Surveys must have correct addresses and return instructions, and you must conduct active tracking and follow-up. Response rates are typically low (even with incentives).
- **Electronic surveys**—posting of surveys and data collection via a website. Everyday technology is now available for this (some of it is free). You must be sure your respondents have access to the internet, you have a host site that is recognizable and used by desired respondents, and you have current email addresses.
- **Phone surveys**—conducted via telephone. Response rates are generally better than mail surveys, but they are labor-intensive and require that the target group have accessible phone numbers. Survey administrators must be trained.
- **Staged surveys**—distributed or conducted at some scheduled event with a captive target group. Response rates are typically much higher, but you must be cautious when collecting sensitive information. Surveys can be orally administered so respondents are not limited to written responses. For example, survey respondents can indicate their answers using dots, index cards, even pieces of candy (see also the activities in this section). Survey administrators must be trained.

Administration Plans: Things to Think About

- Who and where are your target group(s)? Do they require any special assistance to respond to the survey (e.g., translation, a reader)?
- Which type of survey will be best to use with your target group?
- How often will the surveys be administered (e.g., annually, once only)? Will the surveys be administered in a pre/post (before and after) design?
- Will the surveys be **anonymous** (no identifying information used) or **confidential** (identifying information is encoded)?
- How much time will be required to fill out the survey?
- What specific fielding strategy will be used—where will the surveys be administered, by whom, how and when? Will there be incentives for completing the surveys?
- How will you track who receives a survey and who completes it? How will you provide ample opportunities for all members of the survey target population to respond?
- Will you use active or passive consent? Whose consent is required/desired?
- How will you store and maintain the confidentiality of the information?

Notes on Sampling and Representativeness

Often, surveys are not administered to every participant in a group. Instead some members of the group are selected to respond. This selected group is known as a sample. If your participant group is large, sampling may be advisable, but you must be able to answer the following questions: How will you identify a sample of respondents? How many respondents are needed for valid results? How will you define and ensure representativeness of your sample?

The following are some necessary steps.

- Define the target population to be studied. The term population refers to all possible respondents or subjects of the survey. The population must be precisely specified.
- Decide whether you should try to include all members of the population (**census**) or use a sample.
- Select a small subset of a population that is representative of the whole population. Unless the population is very small (fewer than 200), sampling is almost always used.

Ways to Select a Sample

There are several ways to select a sample. The most common of these include: simple random sampling, stratified samples, convenience samples, and purposeful samples.

- **Simple Random Sampling** approximates drawing a sample out of a hat. The desired number of sample respondents is identified and selected arbitrarily from a randomly arranged list of the total population. Each individual on the list has the same chance for being selected to participate.
- **Stratified Samples** are used when some important characteristics of the population are known prior to data collection. This is also commonly done when participants represent multiple geographic areas or when there is disproportionate gender representation.
- **Convenience Samples** involve those respondents who can easily be contacted for participation in a survey. While their responses are often enlightening and can be summarized, they should not be generalized to the entire population.
- **Purposeful Samples** include information-rich cases. These can include extreme or deviant cases, maximum variation sampling, typical cases, critical cases (those that can make a point dramatically), and other variations.

Determining Sample Size: Some Rules of Thumb

- The larger the sample size (compared to the population size), the less error there is in generalizing responses to the whole population. (See the appendix for a table that will help you determine how big your sample size should be and to see relationships between sample sizes and sampling error.)
- When a sample is comparatively large, adding cases provides little additional precision.
- To determine the number of respondents needed, consult a probability table in any statistics text and select **probability samples** (see supplemental materials at the end of this section for an example of a probability table), or use the following standard formula to determine sample size for a 95% confidence interval with 5% sampling error:

$$n = 385 / (1 + (385/N))$$

Survey Analysis

Basic survey analysis can be conducted by hand, with commercially available spreadsheet software (like Excel) and by specialty software (such as SPSS). While some analyses can be quite complex, requiring substantial expertise in file management and statistics, many basic analyses can be conducted by program staff and other evaluation stakeholders (including youth participants). The following is a valuable guide for basic survey analysis. (Refer also to the citations in the bibliography under Quantitative Data Analysis.)

1. Specify a Plan

Before fielding a survey, you must develop a plan or strategy for how the data will be analyzed and presented. It is also a good idea to determine the desired response rate. The analysis plan specifies:

- How survey or questionnaire items are related to evaluation questions.
- What analytical procedures will be conducted with the data.
- How the results will be summarized.

2. Calculate the Response Rate

The response rate is the proportion of all returned surveys. It is calculated by dividing the number of returned surveys by the total number of viable surveys administered. Desirable response rates should be determined in advance of analysis, and precautions should be taken to maximize response and minimize nonresponse bias. Non-response bias can severely limit your ability to interpret and use survey data. *Data from surveys with relatively low response rates can be used, as long as the analysts clarify that the data only represent a select group of respondents and do not generalize from the findings to others.*

3. Conduct Basic Survey Analyses

- Tabulate the results and determine the percentages of respondents who select each answer.
- Calculate averages or determine distributions (e.g., ranges, minimum/maximum values).
- Disaggregate data for subpopulations (e.g., males vs. females, younger vs. older).
- Summarize scale scores and calculate the average or distributions for a group.

Example: Student Survey Data

The following analyses of student survey data will be conducted.

- The percentages of students who have recently started smoking will be calculated.
- The percentage of boys who smoke will be compared to the percentage of girls who smoke.
- The average age of first alcohol use will be calculated from students' responses.
- Questions that ask students to rate smoking prevention efforts will only be analyzed for those students who report that they have never smoked.
- The distribution of scores on the *likelihood of addiction scale* will be determined.

Examples of Summarized Data from Surveys of Students and Their Parents

Table X: Youth and Parent Perceptions of Program Impact

Youth and Parent Respondents Who Indicated That The Program Definitely Helped Them . . .	Site 1 Youth N = 51	Site 1 Parents N = 58	Site 2 Youth N = 58	Site 2 Parents N = 61	Site 3 Youth N = 59	Site 3 Parents N = 48	Total Youth N = 168	Total Parents N = 167
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
BUILD ACADEMIC SKILLS								
Math	65	72	57	61	36	44	52	60
Writing	82	86	78	82	81	88	80	85
Concentration	94	93	86	89	85	94	88	92
Teamwork	73	NA	78	NA	79	NA	77	NA
Studying	53	64	57	69	76	77	62	70
LEARN NEW THINGS								
About music	94	93	93	97	92	94	93	95
About painting & drawing	88	93	86	97	92	94	89	95
About dramatic performance	94	93	86	97	92	94	91	95
DO BETTER AT SCHOOL								
Learning ways of self-expression	65	36	72	34	76	19	71	30
Getting better grades	53	78	72	79	56	77	61	78
Feeling more confident	88	94	86	97	85	94	86	95
PREVENT PROBLEMS								
Thinking about the future	82	57	72	74	71	44	75	59
Making better decisions	41	57	71	74	56	44	57	59
Avoiding risk situations	73	94	78	79	76	77	76	84

Note: Youth survey respondents were only drawn from the older groups at the sites and included only those in attendance on the day of the survey. Parent surveys were also conducted only with available respondents.

Survey Training Activities

1. Developing Alternative Surveys

Paper and pencil are not the only formats for surveys, especially if the respondent group is not able or available to complete written surveys. The following are examples of alternative ways to deliver surveys, using commonly available materials. There are many variations on these themes.

A. The Starburst Survey. On the starburst survey, respondents use pieces of candy to anonymously answer questions. To use this strategy, the survey must be short and relatively simple. The different pieces of candy represent different answer selections. For example:

Pink starburst = Excellent
 Yellow starburst = Very good
 Orange starburst = Okay
 Red starburst = Not good

Respondents are provided with whole rolls of candy for their responses. The survey questions and the answering codes are located near buckets or bowls where candy pieces can be dropped to indicate responses. Analysis is very simple—just count how many of each color are left for each question. The survey instrument might look something like the illustrations at right.

Starburst® works well because each roll has three sets of four colors, and they are always the same colors. Other candy can be used, but it must be individually wrapped and visually distinguishable. (Chocolate must be used cautiously since it melts.)

B. Sticky Dots. These surveys are similar to the starburst surveys, except the responses are indicated by colored sticky dots which are available at most office supply stores. These surveys are typically written on large easel pages or cling sheets, with room below each question for respondents to place their sticky dot responses. Again this allows

How would you rate the program overall?

Excellent	=	
Very good	=	
Okay	=	
Not so good	=	

How important was it to have access to a trained specialist each day?

Excellent	=	
Very good	=	
Okay	=	
Not so good	=	

respondents to visualize the analysis (i.e., how many respondents have answered each question with which responses) and to respond anonymously. Additionally, if there are questions where answers are very mixed (e.g., some favorable, some not) the trainer can call for a discussion of the differences. The sticky dot survey can also include some open-ended questions where respondents can write in answers.

C. Index Cards. Colored index cards can also be used for surveys. Again, the color of the index card

Survey Training Activities (cont.)

signifies the answer choice (e.g., a red card would equal a response of *excellent*, a yellow card would indicate a response of *good*, a blue card would indicate *okay or fair*, and a green card would equal a response of *poor*). Respondents can answer an oral survey by raising the cards in response to questions and having the survey administrator count the colors. This is not fully anonymous, as respondents can look to see how others are answering before selecting their own answer choice, but it does lend itself to quick and alternative feedback. Multiple questions can be asked, and the survey administrator can change the response categories for different questions as needed, as long as the responses and their relationship to the cards are clarified each time.

A variation on the index card survey is to ask a single question with a write-in option. For example, at the end of a training session, a trainer might want to ask the participants how worthwhile their attendance had been. If it was *very worthwhile*, they will be asked to leave the green card behind; if attendance was only *somewhat worthwhile*, they will be asked to leave the yellow card behind; and if it was *not at all worthwhile*, they will be asked to leave the red card behind. Respondents can also be asked to clarify their rating on the card or to bring up any other issues or questions by writing a note on the card before leaving it.

D. Human Surveys. Another form of alternative survey uses participants directly in response. In human surveys, respondents are asked to indicate their

answers by moving themselves to a particular location in a room (e.g., the right corner of the room is for those who found the program *very effective*, the left corner is for those who found it *somewhat effective*, and the center of the room is for those who did not find the program effective at all). Standing and sitting can also be used to indicate agreement with certain statements on a survey. These surveys are somewhat limited to respondents who do not have mobility challenges and to surveys that are fairly simple in design, but they provide an interesting option to the written survey, especially if respondents want opportunities to move around.

2. The Survey “Goof”

On the following page there is an example of a survey with many coding and formatting errors. Duplicate this survey and have trainees determine where the errors are. Use the survey construction guidelines in the previous section as a reminder about how surveys are best developed. This activity also invariably leads to a discussion of the importance of language. Many of the terms on this survey (e.g., the categories selected for racial/ethnic identification or indicators such as enthusiasm, confidence) require additional definition. The reading level and appropriateness of language can also be discussed using this example.

3. Phone Surveys and Electronic Surveys

The Appendix provides additional information about how to develop and conduct both phone surveys and electronic or web-based surveys.

SOAR Afterschool Arts Program: PARENT SURVEY

The following survey was adapted from a real program survey to illustrate some common survey flaws and to allow evaluation learners to assess survey design. Review/assess this survey and see if you can find the errors. Think about how you might have done a survey like this better. Think about other surveys in your agency and consider whether they have similar flaws.

Instructions: Please help us learn about the SOAR afterschool arts program by answering these questions. We need to know what you think. Thank you for your help.

Site: _____

Today's Date: _____

1. Which best describes you?

Black

☐ Hispanic

Asian

☐ White

Multi-racial/Mixed-race

2. Would you recommend this program to a friend or relative?

☐ No

☐ Maybe

☐ Yes Definitely

4a How enthusiastic is your son/daughter about what he/she learns in this program?

☐ enthusiastic

☐ Sort of enthusiastic

☐ not enthusiastic

4b Does your son/daughter ever try at home any of the techniques s/he learns in the program?

☐ Not really

☐ Sometimes

☐ Yes, often

5. How satisfied are you with: (Pick one for each)

	Poor	Adequate	Excellent
a. activities available for your child(ren)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. how your child(ren) are treated by staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. discipline at the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Do you think the activities at the SOAR afterschool arts program helps your child(ren)

	Definitely	Sort of	No	Don't Know
a. Concentrate better	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Work better with other youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Learn about drawing or painting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Learn about music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Learn about dramatic performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Learn new ways to express him/herself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Get better grades at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Feel more confident about themselves as a student	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Make friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Use art to relax and enjoy him/her self	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Please write below any suggestions you have for improving this program.

Survey Administration Plan Activity: Things to Think About

1. Who and where are your target group(s)? Do they require any special assistance to respond to the survey (e.g., translation, a reader)?
2. Which type of survey will be best to use with your target group?
3. How often will the survey be administered? Annually, once only? Will the survey be administered in a pre/post (before and after) design?
4. Will the survey be **anonymous** (no identifying information used) or **confidential** (identifying information is coded)?
5. How much time will be required to complete the survey?
6. What specific fielding strategy will be used—where will the surveys be administered, by whom, how and when? Will there be incentives for completing the surveys?
7. How will you track who receives a survey and who completes it? How will you provide ample opportunities for all members of the survey target population to respond?
8. Will you use active or passive consent? Whose consent is required/desired?
9. How will you store and maintain the confidentiality of the information?

See also the survey administration plan in the supplemental materials at the end of this section.

How Many and Which Types of Surveys Do You Need?

Scenario 1: You need to contact a sample of former clients who have participated in your training programs over the years. In total there were 327 participants and they all still live nearby. How many surveys should you administer and which types of surveys do you need? What else might you need to pay attention to when sampling?

Scenario 2: You want to know how prepared the participants in your transitional housing program are for life in non-subsidized housing. There are only 29 participants in your program. You need to ask them questions about their families of origin, plans they have made, counseling services and needs, health and sexuality, and educational progress. How many surveys should you administer and which type do you need?

Scenario 3: You have just done a home-buying seminar for 120 neighborhood residents, and you want to know if they learned enough about mortgage qualifications, how to avoid foreclosure, and how to stay away from exploitative lenders. How many surveys should you administer and what type do you need?

See answer key on page 101.

Interviews

An interview is a one-sided conversation between an interviewer and a respondent. Questions are mostly predetermined, but open-ended. Respondents are expected to answer using their own terms.

The purpose of conducting interviews is to enter into another's perspective and therefore to obtain meaning and elaboration about observations or about things which can not be observed. This allows the interviewer to obtain information about feelings, thoughts, intentions and behaviors that took place at some previous point in time (or to project into the future), and to learn about how people organize and attach meanings to their experiences.

Methodological Decisions

Participatory evaluators must make the following methodological decisions before initiating data collection through interviews:

1. What type of interview should you conduct?
 - **Unstructured** (informal interviews): questions emerge from the immediate context; there is no pre-determination of question topics, wording, or order.
 - **Semi-structured**: topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance in outline form; interviewer decides sequence and wording as interview proceeds.
 - **Structured** (standardized open-ended interview): the exact wording and sequence of the questions are determined in advance; all respondents are asked same questions in same order.
 - **Intercept interviews** (structured or unstructured): very short interviews (1–5 questions) asked of participants who are coming or going to events of interest.
2. What should you ask? How will you word and sequence the questions? What time frame will you use (past, present, future, mixed)?

3. How much detail will you seek and how long will the interviews be?
4. Who will be your respondents? How many interviews will you conduct, on what schedule?
5. Will the interviews be conducted face to face, on- or off-site, by phone?

How to Conduct and Record Your Interviews

1. Before the Interview:
 - Clarify the purpose for conducting the interviews.
 - Specify the methodological decisions.
 - Select the potential respondents—sampling is generally purposeful, not random (see page 38).
 - Collect background information about your respondents (if possible).
 - Develop a specific protocol to guide your interview (except for the informal interview).
2. During the Interview (see also Suggestions for Effective Interviewing on next page):
 - Use the protocol (guide) to record the responses (audio record if appropriate and feasible).
 - Ask singular questions.
 - Ask clear and truly open-ended questions.
 - Use probes and follow-up questions as necessary to solicit depth and detail.
3. After the Interview:
 - Review interview responses and clarify notes where necessary (transcribe if feasible).
 - Record observations about the interview (where possible), evaluate how the observation went and determine need for follow-up. (For example, the interviewer may note that a respondent seemed hesitant to complete the interview or that the interview was rushed, interrupted, or very thorough.)

Suggestions for Effective Interviewing

(adapted from Patton 1987)

1. Select the type of interview (or combination of types) that is most appropriate to the purposes of the evaluation. Communicate clearly what information is desired, why that information is important, and let the respondent know how the interview is progressing.
2. Remember to ask single questions and to use clear and appropriate language. Check (or summarize) occasionally to be sure you are hearing and recording the respondent's responses accurately. Avoid leading questions.
3. Listen attentively and respond appropriately to let the person know he or she is being heard.
4. Understand the difference between a depth interview and an interrogation. Qualitative evaluators conduct depth interviews; police investigators and tax auditors conduct interrogations.
5. Recognize when the respondent is not clearly answering the question and press for a full response.
6. Maintain neutrality toward the specific content of response. (You are there to collect information, not to make judgments about that person.)
7. Observe while interviewing. Be aware of, and sensitive to, how the person is affected by, and responds to, different questions.
8. Maintain control of the interview.

9. Treat the person being interviewed with respect. Keep in mind that it is a privilege and responsibility to peer into another person's experience.
10. Practice interviewing. Develop your skills.
11. An interview is not a conversation. You should not interrupt the respondent (unless you need to regain control or move the interview along), and you should not share your opinions about the questions or the person's response. You need to cover all the questions on your protocol, and you need to deliver them in an order that makes sense.

Analyzing Interview Data and Reporting Findings

Like survey analysis, analysis of interview data requires time and forethought. At a minimum, the following steps should guide efforts to summarize findings from interviews:

1. Read/review completed sets of interviews. Record general summaries—e.g., most respondents were positive about the program, most were negative, there were mixed responses, etc.
2. Where appropriate, encode responses (e.g., this answer is an example of desired behavior post-program exposure, or respondent identifies as _____ type of worker).
3. Summarize coded data (e.g., most interview respondents indicated that . . . , or there was little agreement among respondents).
4. Pull direct quotes to illustrate key findings.

Examples of Interview Summaries

The following were excerpted from an evaluation project that used interviews as a key data collection strategy. Results are bulleted lists of findings with examples.

Structured interviews were conducted with all eight board members. Protocols are available upon request.

- **All interview respondents were able to identify multiple strengths of the Professional Association, including commitment to member satisfaction, quality programming, accurate and timely information and connections to the community, and providing a neutral and nurturing space for members to convene.** Individual board members also reported the following as Professional Association strengths:
 - diversity of members, but equality of voice
 - deep understanding of nonprofit members
 - assistance for those who are isolated in their jobs
- **Board members also identified three major weaknesses: lack of programming for senior members; tension regarding the role of the Professional Association (i.e., whether it should be only a member service organization or whether it could also play an advocacy role in the community); and potential financial instability due to the current dues structure and the potential loss of corporate members.** There were clearly differences of opinions about Professional Association weaknesses, especially regarding direction: a few board members described the current focus as too broad and others indicated it was too conservative. Additionally there were some concerns that were raised by individual members:
 - there is a lingering perception of exclusivity among the membership
 - part-time staff force a lot of priority juggling
 - the organization appears very grass-roots, nonprofessional, especially regarding communications which also need to be streamlined
 - there is too much focus on process
- **There is consensus among board members that the current Executive Director is a good manager, and the board and especially the chair are knowledgeable and active.** Specific comments included the following:
 - (The Executive Director) *is a good leader. I don't always agree with her ideas, but she has pushed us to think about goals.*
 - *The board is the anchor, the conscience of the organization.*
 - (The board) *is representative of diversity of philanthropy in the community. The chair is a very dynamic, strong leader who has an agenda and will take the organization somewhere.*
- **A few board members had concerns, however, that the board was not diverse enough** (inclusive of communities of color), that they have not fully coalesced, and that they have been used in a consultative fashion.
- **Most of the board members agreed that the level of member involvement was about right given the community, but most could also identify some important absences.** Specifically they mentioned that they were missing (specific types of organizations are named here)..... **Overall, however, the board members indicated that efforts to get and keep members had been effective.**
- **Board members described the Professional Association as good at recruiting (specific type of organizational members) but acknowledged the current difficulty connected with recruiting (other types of organizational members).** Individual members suggested that improved publications would help and that it might be valuable to increase membership among the smaller (types of organizations). **Most board members also indicated that the Professional Association had been effective at retaining members and were especially positive regarding recent efforts to maintain members, but they also acknowledged the need to develop specialized programming for senior members.**

Note these results came from an Impact study of a Professional Association (1999). The assessment was conducted using four core data collection strategies: surveys of members and nonmembers, interviews with all board members and a sample of other key informants (media and representatives from public and private funding organizations and nonprofit organizations).

Evaluation Focus Groups: A Special Type of Interview

Focus groups have been borrowed by evaluators from marketing professionals. For evaluation purposes, focus groups are usually conducted with a semi-structured protocol or list of topics (focuses). The respondents are asked to discuss the topics while the interviewer facilitates, records and later analyzes the discussion. (Often two participatory evaluators are required to facilitate and record results from focus groups.) The following are suggested guidelines for effective focus group data collection.

1. Carefully recruit focus group participants. This will require:
 - Systematic recruitment procedures
 - Selection of 5 to 10 people per group
 - Selection of similar types of people (e.g., teens involved in a specific youth program), but not close friends
 - Conducting 3 to 4 groups per topic
2. Provide a proper meeting environment which includes:
 - Neutral setting, circle seating
 - Materials for recording responses (such as multiple easel pages so respondents can review facilitator's records, and/or tape recorders to store actual response data). Note that if focus groups are taped, PERMISSION MUST BE GRANTED BY RESPONDENTS.
3. Use a skillful moderator. The following are qualifications for skillful moderators:
 - Is trained, has adequate knowledge of the topic, connects enough with participants to ensure response
 - Has a smooth and snappy introduction that includes a welcome, overview and ground rules
 - Uses predetermined questions, pauses and probes (such as "please explain further")
 - Uses an assistant moderator to handle logistics and take notes
 - Establishes a permissive environment, controls verbal and nonverbal reactions to participants
 - Uses subtle group control (manages experts, dominant talkers, shy participants, rambles)
 - Uses 3-step conclusion—summarizes with confirmation, reviews purpose and asks for missing data, thanks participants
4. Conduct appropriate data analysis, and report findings accurately.
 - Use systematic analysis similar to that conducted with interview data.
 - Summarize trends identified by focus group respondents and clarify where there was agreement and disagreement among participants. Where necessary, encode the discussions ensuing from each focus, and then summarize encoded findings.
 - Use excerpts (quotes) from focus group discussions to clarify summary statements and provide examples.

Additional references about focus groups are available in the Appendix.

Interview Activity

If appropriate, use the following protocol to have trainees practice systematic collection of interview data. (If your trainee group is not composed of program directors, change the wording of the questions as needed.) Identify one set of trainees who will serve first as interviewers. The others are respondents. After they have conducted the interview and used the protocol to record responses, the trainees can: (1) switch positions so that the respondents are now interviewers; (2) develop their own short interview protocols and try the activity again; (3) summarize the findings from the interview activity.

1. Tell me something about yourself and your background. How did you end up as a Program Director at _____ (Probe for: relevant experience, credentials, tenure)
2. Who are your different funders and what requirements/demands does your agency have from them regarding evaluation? (Probe for: reporting requirements, evaluation planning/approval, outcome or indicator identification)
3. What types of challenges has your agency faced with funders regarding evaluation?

In addition to this activity, trainees should develop their own interview protocols and practice interviewing multiple types of respondents using the protocol they have developed. For example: Have trainees interview a program manager, a line staff member and a participant from the same program about some aspect of its effectiveness or about some barriers that are occurring.

Observations

Observations are conducted to view and hear actual program activities (see also Patton 1980). They can be focused on programs overall or on participants in programs. The purpose of conducting observations is to describe the program thoroughly and carefully and in sufficient detail so that users of the observation report will know what has occurred and how it has occurred. Observations involve **looking and listening**. A particular strength of observations is that data are collected in the field, where the action is, as it happens. Other advantages include the following:

- The trained observer is better able to understand program context.
- The trained observer gets firsthand experience with a program, allowing him/her to see things firsthand rather than piecing things together from other descriptions, responses, etc.
- The trained observer has the opportunity to see things that may routinely escape conscious awareness among participants in the program and learn about things that the program participants may be unwilling or unable to talk about in an interview.
- Observations permit the observer to move beyond the selective perceptions of others and to present multiple perspectives.
- The impressions and feelings of the observer become part of the observation data; and the observer's knowledge and direct experience can be used as resources to aid in assessing the subject program. **(Note: observer's reactions must be kept separate.)**

Unfortunately, the process of observing, like all other types of data collection, often affects regular program operations. The participatory evaluator must be able to monitor the effects and take them into consideration when analyzing data.

Methodological Decisions

Participatory evaluators must make the following methodological decisions before initiating data collection via observations:

1. What should be observed and how will you structure your protocol? Specifically, what will the observation focus on, an individual or an event or setting?
2. How will you choose what to see (i.e., what is your sampling strategy)?
3. Will you ask for a performance by the subject, just attend a regular session, or both?
4. Will your presence be known or unannounced? Who should know? How much will you disclose about the purpose of your observation?
5. How much detail will you seek (can a checklist observation do the job)?
6. How long and how often will the observations be?

How to Conduct and Record Your Observations

1. Before the Observation
 - Clarify the purpose for conducting the observation.
 - Specify the methodological decisions.
 - Collect background information about the subject (if possible/necessary).
 - Develop a specific protocol to guide the observation. (See following page for example; see also supplemental materials at the end of this section for example of an observation checklist.)
2. During the Observation
 - Use the protocol to guide your observation and recording of observation data
 - BE DESCRIPTIVE (keep observer impressions separate from descriptions of actual events)
 - Inquire about the typicalness of the session observed

3. After the Observation

- Review observation notes and make clarifications where necessary. Be sure to clarify any abbreviations you have used in your notes and to elaborate on details if necessary. (Transcribe if feasible or appropriate.)
- Evaluate the results of the observation (e.g., observer's opinion about whether the session went well, whether the focus was covered, or if there were any barriers to observation), then determine need for follow-up.

Example of a Program/Session Observation Protocol

Program Name: _____	Observer's Name: _____
Date: _____	Time Observation Began: _____ Time Ended: _____

Before the observation begins, briefly describe in #1 below what you expect to be observing and why you have selected it.

1. **Subject of the Observation.**
At the very beginning of the observation, describe the setting. Be sure to note any changes in setting as the observation proceeds.
2. Describe the **program setting** (color, size, shape, number of desks/tables, number of windows, furniture or equipment in the space or room, temperature, noise level).
3. Describe **how the session begins** (who is present, what exactly is said to initiate).
4. Describe the **chronology of events** in regular intervals (e.g., every 15 minutes for 1 hour session).
5. Describe the **interactions that take place during the observation.** (Be particularly aware of interactions that involve the main focus of the evaluation—i.e., who or what you are observing).
- 5a. Who is interacting? Consider predetermining some codes for this section, such as these.

Youth with Adults	Youth with Youth	Adults with Adults
Girls with Girls	Boys with Girls	Boys with Boys
Youth of different racial/ethnic backgrounds		
- 5b. How do they interact? Describe examples.
- 5c. Are there any **changes in patterns** during the observations?
6. Describe how **decisions** are made during the observation period.
- 6a. Who makes **decisions**? (Again use predetermined codes like the following where applicable.)

Only Adults	Mostly Adults	Only Youth
Youth and Adults	Mostly Youth	
- 6b. How are decisions communicated (e.g., written, verbal)?
- 6c. Document examples of decisions that are made during the observation. (Be sure to record who is making the decision.)
7. Describe **nonverbal communication.** (How do participants get attention? How much do they fidget, move around? How do participants: dress, express affection, physically place themselves in the setting?)
8. Describe **program activities and participant behaviors** (8A Youth and 8B Adults).
9. How did participants respond or react to what was happening in the program during the observation? **Roughly what proportion (some, most, all) are actively engaged?**
10. **How does the program end?** (What are the signals that the activity is ending? Who is present, what is said, how do participants react, how is the completion of this activity related to other activities?)

Reporting Observation Data

Summarizing observation data is challenging but very valuable. If it is done well, the results can help stakeholders know more about what actually happens in the program being evaluated. The following steps are necessary for simple observation analysis:

1. Make summary statements about trends in your observations (e.g., *every time we visited the program, the majority of children were involved in a literacy development activity such as reading, illustrating a story they had read or written, practicing reading aloud*).
2. Include snippets or excerpts directly from field notes to illustrate summary points.

Examples of Observation Notes

Vague and Over-generalized Notes	Detailed and Concrete Notes
<p>The new client was uneasy waiting for her intake interview. She fidgeted a lot and seemed nervous.</p>	<p>The client sat very stiffly on the chair next to the receptionist's desk. She picked up a magazine and let the pages flutter through her fingers very quickly without really looking at any of the pages. Then she set the magazine down, looked at her watch, pulled her skirt down, and picked up the magazine again. This time she didn't look at the magazine. She set it down, took out a cigarette and began smoking. She watched the receptionist out of the corner of her eye, and then looked down at the magazine, and back up at the two or three other people waiting in the room. Her eyes moved from people to the magazine to the cigarette to the people to the magazine in rapid succession. She avoided eye contact. When her name was called, she jumped like she was startled.</p>
<p>The client was quite hostile toward the staff person. She seemed very angry about the situation, yelled at the staff member and left abruptly.</p>	<p>When the staff member told her that she could not do what she wanted to do, the client began to yell at the staff member, telling her that she (the staff member) "can't control (her) life," that she (the staff member) is "nothing but on a power trip." Then she yelled that she would like to "beat the crap out of her." She shook her fist in the staff member's face and stomped out of the room, leaving the staff member standing there with her mouth open, looking amazed.</p>
<p>The youth was very excited and relieved about figuring out how to handle a family issue that had been bothering him and keeping him from fully participating in the group. He applied the good decision making skills that the group has been working on and made sure that everybody who was important to him knew all about it.</p>	<p>Tony came running into the program today. He was on time and smiling for the first time in a while. He sat with a group of his friends and had a quick conversation with them before the activities started. A couple of the guys gave him a high five and slapped him playfully on the back. He continued to smile throughout the opening exercises and during group sharing time; he volunteered to go first. He told the group about the letter he wrote to his father's ex-girlfriend, and then he read part of it out loud for everyone to hear. [The letter explained why he hadn't returned her calls, out of respect for his dad, and also said that he was sad that they had broken up. It also said that he still wanted to be able to talk to her, and that he had decided that he could be her friend even if his dad had ended their relationship.] Several group members said they thought he handled it well and hoped that he heard from her soon. In response, Tony said that it had been very hard for him to write the letter, but that he was glad he had done it and that he felt better already. When the group leader told him how proud she was of him and how important it was to maintain positive relationships and to make decisions for himself, Tony beamed. Throughout the rest of the group sharing session, he smiled, tapped his foot slightly, offered encouragement or feedback, and stared intently at each presenter. Every so often he checked his back pocket to make sure the letter was still there.</p>

Observation Quiz

TRUE/FALSE (Circle T or F)		
1. Observations involve looking and listening.	T	F
2. When conducting an observation, it is unnecessary to take notes.	T	F
3. The focus of an observation should be selected after the observation has begun and after the trained observer has familiarized her/himself with the subject.	T	F
4. The perceptions and feelings of the trained observer should be included in the observation notes.	T	F
5. The subjects of observation should be warned in advance of the observation plans and where possible, should conduct a special session just for the purposes of observation.	T	F
MULTIPLE CHOICE (Mark all that apply)		
<p>6. What can you focus on during an observation?</p> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> the setting <input type="checkbox"/> specific participants in programs or events <input type="checkbox"/> interactions between participants <input type="checkbox"/> decisionmaking <input type="checkbox"/> service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> best/promising practices <input type="checkbox"/> everything that is happening </div> <p>7. Trained observers organize and record their observations using a..... (Mark all that apply)</p> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> checklist <input type="checkbox"/> instrument <input type="checkbox"/> guide <input type="checkbox"/> protocol </div> <p>8. Which of the following are common uses of observation? (Mark all that apply)</p> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> to document program implementation <input type="checkbox"/> to witness levels of skill/ability <input type="checkbox"/> to witness program practices or behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> to determine changes over time <input type="checkbox"/> to determine self-reported attitudinal change <input type="checkbox"/> to test knowledge </div> <p>9. Which of the following are challenges to conducting good observations?</p> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> cultural differences in behavior may be misinterpreted <input type="checkbox"/> different observers may record observations of the same person/place/event very differently <input type="checkbox"/> observations must be repeated multiple times for them to provide valid data <input type="checkbox"/> observation findings are hard to summarize <input type="checkbox"/> access to subjects </div> <p>10. What is the most important reason to conduct an observation?</p> <div style="margin-left: 20px; height: 40px;"></div>		

Observation Scenarios

1. A Community Child Well-Being Task Force will meet monthly during 2005.

The Task Force had 23 members including community members, social service providers, medical service providers, local and state government officials. There are three subcommittees of the full Task Force—an executive committee with two representatives from

each member category, a fund development committee and a member recruitment committee.

Guiding Question:

How and to what extent does the community Task Force solicit and use diverse input from the community?

What to observe (Pick 3)	Why observe this? (Fill in)	When observe this (Pick 3)	Why this schedule? (Fill in)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices • Two community members on the board • Interaction between community members and others • Behavior of board leaders • Proceedings of board meeting • Chronology of events at board meetings • Formal and informal decision making by board members • Boardroom settings • Nonverbal communication • Response to meeting • Conflict resolution/management 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At every full board meeting • At about half of all full board meetings • At one full board meeting each quarter • At selected full board meetings • At all or selected executive committee meetings • At all or selected fund development committee meetings • At all or selected recruitment committee meetings 	

Observation Scenarios (cont.)

2. Throughout the first quarter of the new fiscal year, a Community Council is selecting grant recipients to award its share of public funds earmarked for community afterschool programs.

The Community Council has 15 members including community representatives, social service providers, educational service providers from public primary and secondary education and higher education, local and state government officials. There is an executive

committee of the Council that prepares summaries of grant proposals for consideration.

Guiding Questions:

1. How fair and effective is the Community Council at selecting promising grantees to run programs?
2. How effective have efforts to reduce controversy over grantmaking been?

What to observe (Pick 3)	Why observe this? (Fill in)	When observe this (Pick 3)	Why this schedule? (Fill in)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected council members • Interaction between different council members • Behavior of council leaders • Proceedings of council meetings • Chronology of events at council meetings • Formal and informal decision making by council members • Meeting room settings • Nonverbal communication • Conflict resolution/management 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At every council meeting • At about half of all council meetings • At one council meeting • At selected council meetings • At all executive committee meetings • At selected executive committee meetings 	

Observation Activity

Staged Observation. Develop or identify a scenario to demonstrate features of the subject program. These features can be strengths or challenges or a combination of both.

- (1) Have staff or selected trainees learn about the scenario and the observation exercise and prepare to role play the scenario for observers. If using a real scenario, visit the program in advance to inform stakeholders about the observation activity.
- (2) Have observers develop a brief observation protocol/guide or distribute one that has been constructed in advance.
- (3) Conduct the role play or visit the identified program so that observations can be completed using the protocol.

- (4) Summarize findings from the observation.

- (5) Have trainees share their findings and develop or add to the list of observation strategies to undertake before, during and after observations.

To better understand how evaluation observations work, have trainees also do the following:

- (1) Develop a protocol for observation of an upcoming staff meeting or program session.
- (2) Conduct multiple (e.g., three) observations of program-related activities (such as staff meetings, program sessions, etc.).

Making Methodological Choices: Additional Exercises

(Refer to all topics in section 3 or pages 72 and 73 as necessary.)

1. Indicate, by placing a check mark in the proper column, when you can use the following data collection methods.

	Surveys	Interviews	Observations	Record Reviews
To collect behavioral reports				
To document program implementation				
To test knowledge				
To collect self-reported assessment of changes in response to a program				
To verify self-reported data				
To study attitudes and perceptions				
To witness levels of skill/ability, program practices, behaviors				
To collect program assessments				
To determine changes over time				
To study attitudes and perceptions using respondents' own language				
To document participant characteristics				

2. When should you NOT use each data collection strategy? Fill in at least one exclusion for each.

Surveys	Interviews
Observations	Record Reviews

Collecting Record Review Data

Your local evaluator is planning to collect data about the 35 participants in your early childhood obesity prevention program. Which of the following do you think would make good sources and what type of information might you collect?

	YES or NO	What data elements could you collect?
Participant emergency contact file		
Participant enrollment form		
Participant medical release		
Participant health form (entry)		
Participant health form (follow-up)		
Weekly weigh-in log + BMI test		
Weekly activity log		
Dietary journal		
Case notes		

Using Surveys and Interviews

For each of the following, indicate by circling the appropriate strategy whether you *should* use an interview or a survey. If it would be equally as good to use either, circle them both.

1. You want to allow your respondent to answer using his/her own words.	Interview	Survey
2. You have a large group and want to hear from many respondents.	Interview	Survey
3. You want to collect data about attitudinal change.	Interview	Survey
4. You need details about very personal information.	Interview	Survey
5. You want to collect data about changes to former participants over time.	Interview	Survey

6. Describe one situation in which you would have to use a survey rather than an interview.

7. Describe one situation where it would be better to use an interview rather than a survey.

Documenting Service Delivery/Assessing Implementation

Defining and Assessing Implementation/Service Delivery

Implementation involves following a design to deliver planned strategies. To assess implementation and/or program delivery, you must be able to accurately describe what a program looks like in operation. You may also want to determine if the description matches the intended program design. For outcomes evaluation, it is important to document program strategies and/or assess program implementation so that you can address the relationship between program outcomes and program services.

Collecting Implementation Data/Documenting Program Strategies

Assessment of implementation involves use of all the evaluation data collection strategies described in this guide. Specifically, the following should be undertaken to accurately describe program implementation/service delivery:

- Review documents (program descriptions, proposals)
- Conduct Observations (to determine fidelity and quality)

- Collect self-reported data (construct surveys or activity reports, collect or inspect logs, participation records)
- Conduct Interviews (ask about the features described in the following list)

Focus on the following when collecting implementation data/documenting program strategies:

- Background and Contextual Information about the program
 - Origin of the program
 - Nature of the program sites (demographic characteristics, breadth of participation)
 - How need for the program was determined
 - Historical background of the program
 - Background, qualifications and activities of program personnel
 - Administrative features (including finances where appropriate)
- Critical Features of the program
 - Target group
 - Activities, schedule, organization
 - Frequency/duration
- Barriers or Problems associated with implementation

DOCUMENTING SERVICE DELIVERY: Part II, Reporting Back

Organization Name: _____ Date: _____

Program Name: _____

Notes:

1. What program documents did you review? (Attach relevant documents here.)
2. What program observations did you conduct? (Be sure to specify how many and when observations were conducted.)
3. Who did you talk to about service delivery? (Specify names and titles.)
4. How are participants recruited for this program? Are there any problems or concerns?
5. How is program retention defined? Are there any challenges?
6. Who are the target participants? Who are the actual participants? If applicable, why are there differences?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Survey Administration Plan

1a. Who will be surveyed? (On the back of this page, describe your sampling strategy.)

Name	Title	Location
*** TOTAL ***		

1b. How many total surveys will you administer? _____

1c. How many do you expect to (or plan to work to) receive back? _____

1d. What is your expected/desired response rate? _____

1e. What will you do to ensure that you meet your expected rate? What will you do if you do not reach it?

2. Who will produce the surveys?

3. Where and in what format is the contact information?

4. Who will distribute the surveys?

5. How will surveys be delivered? ☐ Interoffice mail ☐ Email ☐ Fax ☐ US mail ☐ Phone

Other:

6. When will data collection happen?

Surveys out by: _____ Surveys back by: _____

7. How will surveys be retrieved?

8. What follow-up measures will be taken?

For more on analyzing data see section 5.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

How Big Should Your Sample Be?

The number of program participants will determine whether to include everyone in the evaluation or select a sample (i.e., a smaller group who can represent everyone else and from whom we can **generalize**).

- The sample should be as large as a program can afford in terms of time and money. The larger the sample size (compared to the population size), the less error there is in generalizing responses to the whole population (i.e., to all cases or clients in a program).
- As clarified by numerous sampling experts, the **First rule of thumb**: If the population is less than 100, include them all (and strive to get an 80% response rate); if the population is bigger than 100 select a **probability sample**. (See page 38 for sampling strategies.)
- Probability samples allow you to calculate the likely extent of the deviation of sample characteristics from population characteristics. **Sampling Error** is the term used to refer to the difference between the results obtained from the sample and the results obtained if data had been collected from the entire population.
- The objective when drawing samples is to decrease sampling error and to assure confidence that the results are reliable. The **Second rule of thumb**: To achieve 95% confidence with a sampling error of $\pm 5\%$. In English, that means you believe that 95% of the time, the results from your sample would be off by no more than 5% as compared to the results you would have gotten if you had collected data from everyone.
- *It is the absolute size of the sample rather than the ratio of sample size to population size that affects the sampling error* (Comer and Welch 1988, 192). Sample sizes for varying population sizes and differing sampling error rates have been calculated (see following page). If you wish for more precision, use the following calculation (for 95% confidence, 5% error).

$$n = 385 \div ((1 + (385/N)))$$

Example: If your population is known to have 472 members, then a sample of 212 would be necessary to ensure 95% confidence with no more than 5% error. $385 \div ((1 + (385/472))) = 212$

For more on analyzing data see section 5.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Relationship Between Sample Sizes and Sampling Error

Sample Sizes (n) at 95% Confidence, with ± 3 , 5 and 10% Sampling Errors

Population Size (N)	Sampling Error		
	$\pm 3\%$	$\pm 5\%$	$\pm 10\%$
100	92	80 (80%)	49
250	203	152 (61%)	70
500	341	217 (43%)	81
750	441	254 (34%)	85
1,000	516	278 (28%)	88
2,500	748	333 (13%)	93
5,000	880	357 (7%)	94
10,000	964	370 (4%)	95
25,000	1,023	378 (2%)	96
50,000	1,045	381 (<1%)	96
100,000	1,056	383 (<1%)	96
1,000,000	1,066	384 (<1%)	96
100,000,000	1,067	384 (<1%)	96

(Adapted from Reisman, 2000, A Field Guide to Outcome-Based Program Evaluation)

- As shown above, when a sample is comparatively large, adding cases provides little additional precision.
- As population sizes increase, the total size of the sample becomes proportionately smaller without affecting error.
- When the population size is small, relatively large proportions are required to produce reasonable error rates.
- A standard proportion (e.g., 33%) will not work as a sampling strategy for varying population sizes.
- **Third rule of thumb:** You must always draw a larger sample than what is planned for because of refusal. To do this, you need to estimate the refusal rate and then factor that into your calculation. $\text{Desired sample size} \div (1 - \text{refusal rate}) = \text{TOTAL SAMPLE}$.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Phone Surveys

Things to Think About When Conducting a Phone Survey	Steps to Conducting a Phone Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the overall evaluation questions? How does the phone survey fit into the overall evaluation design? • Who and where are the respondents? What is the status of contact information? • Is translation needed to accommodate respondent answers? • Is branching needed to accommodate respondent answers? • Who will conduct the survey and what training needs do they have? How will recruitment be handled? • Where will the phones be located? How will costs be covered? • Who will develop the survey instruments and scripting (if needed)? • How will data regarding contact efforts be recorded? • How will responses be recorded? • How will results and contact effort data be managed and stored? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine sampling strategy (if applicable) and develop a contact database. • Develop phone logs (see Phone Survey: Phone Log). • Develop survey protocols (with scripts and loops as needed). • Develop an analysis plan. • Train phone survey administrators and clarify instruments, loops, logs, deliverables. • Administer phone survey—develop database to manage survey response data. • Enter data and calculate response rates (determine need for follow-up). • Analyze data according to plan. • Summarize key findings and incorporate into evaluation results.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Phone Survey: Phone Log

Respondent Name (Last name, first name)	Other	Other	Phone Number	Attempt 1*	Attempt 2*	Attempt 3*	Notes

* Enter the date and result codes (1 = no answer, 2 = wrong number, 3 = person left this number, 4 = contact couldn't talk, 5 = contact refused survey, 6 = contact scheduled alternate time—list in notes; 7 = survey conducted).

Sample Script for Phone Survey

Hello, my name is _____ from ABLCO. NPCL has hired us to conduct follow-up interviews with people who participated in the Fatherhood Development Training Workshops facilitated by P. Wilson and/or N. Vann.

The purpose of this follow-up interview is to learn how useful the Fatherhood Workshops were to the participants; to hear the actual voices and perspectives of those who attended, like yourself. I will be asking questions regarding your use of the Fatherhood Curriculum developed by NPCL. The interview will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes of your time. Is this a good time for you? (If not, schedule a more convenient time for you and the respondent.)

Before we get started, let me assure you that your answers will be kept strictly confidential. Your answers will not be described or known to anyone except the evaluation team at ABLCO. Your answers will be combined with the answers of all our respondents. ABLCO will present only these combined findings when reporting the results of this interview.

Your participation in the interview is completely voluntary. If you do not want to participate, it will not affect your participation in future NPCL workshops and activities. You can also choose not to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. If there are any questions you do not want to answer, just say the word “pass” and I will proceed to the next question. The choice is completely up to you. Do you have any questions?

Great, let's get started.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Afterschool Literacy Development Project: Observation Summary Example

Site: _____ Location: _____ Date: _____

Observer: _____ Purpose for Visit: _____

Activity Description:

PROGRAM FACILITIES/EQUIPMENT

In the space below, provide a brief description of the site including size of the space (square footage, number of rooms), arrangement of furniture, distinguishing features:

Is the program site accessible to all potential participants?..... ☐ No ☐ Yes

Does the site have an area where participants can casually interact (hang out)? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Is participant work displayed at the site? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Are there any unmet maintenance needs? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Please rate the following features of the physical environment at the site.

Poor Fair Good Excellent NA

Attractiveness of physical facility (freshly painted, good lighting, etc.)..... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Condition, appropriateness, and quantity of furniture..... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Ability to accommodate both large and small group activities at same time ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Availability of independent study areas..... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Availability of reading areas with comfortable seating..... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Availability of computers for participant use ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Participant access to the internet..... ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Availability of books or other reading materials ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Availability of art supplies for participant projects ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Attractiveness to children ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Overall facility rating ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Engagement in Effective Practice

Practice	# of Participants (circle one)				Description/Examples
Independent Reading	None	Some	Most	NA	
Paired Reading/Discussion Groups	None	Some	Most	NA	
Dramatic Interpretation	None	Some	Most	NA	
Independent Writing	None	Some	Most	NA	
Reading Instruction	None	Some	Most	NA	
Theme-Based Project	None	Some	Most	NA	
Other: _____	None	Some	Most	NA	

Overall session rating (circle one): Poor Fair Good Excellent

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Making Data Collection Decisions

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Decisions
SURVEYS (Several commercially available, or unique instruments can be developed)	Easy to quantify and summarize results; quickest and cheapest way to gather new data rigorously; useful for large samples, repeated measures, comparisons between units and to norms/targets. Good for studying attitudes and perceptions—can also collect some behavioral reports.	Hard to obtain data on behavior, context shaping behavior (attribution); not suited for subtle, sensitive issues; impersonal and difficult to construct; must address language and administration challenges; must avoid nonresponse, biased or invalid answers; danger of overinterpretation with small samples.	Who gets surveyed (sampling)? How will confidentiality be maintained? Validity of self-assessment? What are standards of desirability? Need for repeated measures—what intervals?
INTERVIEWS (Structured, semi-structured, intercept)	Readily cover many topics and features; can be modified before or during interview; can convey empathy, build trust; rich data; provides understanding of respondents' viewpoints and interpretations. Good for studying attitudes and perceptions—can also collect some behavioral reports.	Expensive, sampling problems in large programs; respondent and interviewer bias; noncomparable responses; time-consuming to analyze and interpret responses to open-ended questions; training and protocols required to conduct.	Who gets interviewed (sampling)? How will confidentiality be maintained? Validity of self-assessment? What are standards of desirability? Need for repeated measures—what intervals?
OBSERVATIONS (Participants during program sessions, participants in other settings)	Rich data on hard-to-measure topics (e.g., actual practices, behaviors); behavioral data independent of self-descriptions, feelings, opinions; data on situational, contextual effects. Good for studying program implementation and some behavioral changes.	Constraints on access (timing, distance, objections to intrusion, confidentiality, safety); costly, time-consuming; observer bias, low inter-observer reliability; may affect behavior of people observed; hard to analyze, interpret, report data; may seem unscientific, training and protocols required to conduct.	What subjects will be observed? How many at which levels? Need for repeated measures—what intervals?
RECORD REVIEW (E.g., program records, school records, case management records)	Nonreactive; often quantifiable; repeated measures show change; credibility of familiar or standardized measures (e.g., birthweight, arrest incidents, drug test results, staff or parent assessment results); often cheaper and faster than gathering new data; can include data from other independent sources. Good for determining (behavioral) status.	Access, retrieval, analysis problems can raise costs and time requirements; validity, credibility of sources and measures can be low; definitions must be determined prior to use, are often externally determined and cannot be customized; need to analyze data in context; limited data on many topics.	Which documents? How can access be obtained? Need for repeated measures—what intervals?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Making Data Collection Decisions—Other Considerations

Method	Validity	Reliability	Available Resources	Cultural Appropriateness
SURVEYS	<p>LOW</p> <p>No opportunity for clarification</p> <p>Participants often choose responses other than those provided</p> <p>Participants may not want to report private behavior</p> <p>Participants may not be aware of their own actions, behaviors or attitudes</p>	<p>HIGH</p> <p>Administration is consistent from one individual to next</p> <p>Standard response choices provide consistent range of responses</p> <p>Little opportunity for data collector to influence results</p>	<p>ECONOMICAL</p> <p>Mass distribution</p> <p>Costs based on number of mailings, use of phone or mail, incentives</p>	<p>VARIED</p> <p>Best for literate, middle-class American-born populations. Particularly bad for immigrants and refugees</p>
INTERVIEWS	<p>HIGH</p> <p>Can clarify questions and probe for more in-depth responses</p> <p>Personal interaction can establish rapport for open discussion</p> <p>Focus groups can foster discussion and sharing</p> <p>Focus groups can clarify individual viewpoints through dialog with others</p>	<p>LOW</p> <p>Interviews are unique based on comments of respondents; different questions and probes likely to be used</p>	<p>MODERATE</p> <p>Individual interviews: moderate expense</p> <p>Focus group: low to moderate expense</p>	<p>STRONG</p> <p>Individualized interviews work well when paper formats are threatening or invasive and when behavior or attitudes pose a problem</p> <p>Focus groups work well when the group opinion is the cultural norm</p>
OBSERVATIONS	<p>HIGH</p> <p>Observers can directly observe behavior which may not be accurately reported otherwise</p> <p>Observers can directly observe behaviors which have standards developed by professionals or institutions</p>	<p>MODERATE</p> <p>Observers need structured protocols for coding their observations (less structured reduce reliability because different observers may reach different conclusions)</p>	<p>MODERATE–EXPENSIVE</p> <p>Time is required in order to observe behaviors. This can be mitigated by using “natural observers”</p>	<p>MODERATE</p> <p>Cultural differences in behavior may be misinterpreted</p>
RECORD REVIEW	<p>LOW–MODERATE</p> <p>Designed to document/record; must use caution when using to measure outcomes</p>	<p>LOW–HIGH</p> <p>Depends on whether there are standards for record keeping</p>	<p>ECONOMICAL</p> <p>Data are part of the service delivery process and usually already exist. (Use requires up front planning.) Some issues of access, confidentiality</p>	<p>VARIED</p> <p>Depends on service delivery, appropriateness of program. May over- or under-represent certain groups due to bias</p>



4. Projecting Levels of Effort, Timelines and Budgets

To effectively plan for and develop evaluation designs, participatory evaluators must be able to project how long it will take to conduct evaluations, when data collection and analysis tasks and any necessary preparation will occur, who will be involved in evaluation, and what it will cost. This section of the guide provides straightforward lists to accomplish these tasks, as well as an example of a task-specific budget and timeline for a hypothetical evaluation project.

Projecting Level of Effort (LOE)

Level of effort (LOE) projections are often summarized in a table or spreadsheet. To estimate how much labor and time will be needed for an evaluation project:

- List all evaluation tasks
- Determine who will conduct each task (will you need help from a colleague, or program staff?—if so, what are their levels of training and availability)

Use the following list to estimate time required to complete each task in day or half-day increments.

Time Estimates

- A day of data collection requires a day of data analysis.
- Site visits require preparation time that is roughly equivalent to half the projected time on-site, especially for first visits.
- Writing is one of the most time-consuming activities, so if you have a lot of written deliverables, be sure to include substantial amounts of time for analyzing data and preparing written summaries.
- Since participatory evaluation requires review by primary information users/key stakeholders, and probably some training of staff, be sure to account for that, specifically identifying time required for protocol and proposal review, as well as for draft reporting and sharing of preliminary and final findings.
- Plan to develop multiple products where necessary (executive summaries, briefings, presentation notes) and multiple copies for all primary information users and key stakeholders.
- Be sure to build some flex time (1 or 2 days) into the level of effort projections for general project management and unintended events; plan to be available for consultations and general interactions with primary information users/key stakeholders—they will want and need your services.

If your level of effort estimates are too high, remove whole tasks and associated days from the plan, don't just lop off days and assume you will make up the difference somewhere. Be frugal but reasonable, you will have to live with the projections over time.

Steps to Project Timelines

1. Assign dates to your level of effort, working backwards from overall timeline requirements.
2. Be sure that the number of days required for a task and when it must be completed are in sync and feasible.
3. Check to make sure your calendar is in alignment with the program calendar—i.e., don't plan to do a lot of data collecting or meeting around program holidays, don't expect to conduct interviews or observations only between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., as many programs operate on different schedules.

Steps to Project Budgets

(Consider this when commissioning external evaluation.)

1. Determine rates for all staff to the project; (note in solo evaluation management, there are no fringe benefit or overhead projections, the daily rate includes those costs; if you are using participatory staff or other colleagues, however, some of those costs may be required, or may be provided in-kind; be sure to clarify).
2. Calculate the total labor costs by multiplying LOE totals by staff rates.
3. Estimate other direct costs (ODC) such as copying, mail/delivery costs, telephone use, and facilities use (again, some consultants prefer to include these costs in their daily rate and not itemize).
4. Estimate any travel costs (subways, taxis, any ground or air travel to get to the data collection site or meetings).
5. Calculate the subtotal of direct costs including labor, fringe where appropriate, ODC, and travel.
6. Estimate additional indirect (overhead) costs, where appropriate, as a percentage applied to the direct costs.
7. Apply any other fees (profit) where appropriate.
8. Sum all cost projections to determine the total cost of the project.

NOTE: If the cost projections exceed the available budget, do not reduce costs without also reducing associated tasks.

9. Establish a payment schedule, billing system and deliverables (be sure there is clear understanding about how and when payments will be made).

Evaluation Timeline/Level of Effort/Budget Example

Proposed Workplan and Budget for Evaluation of the Beehives Project, Phase I Submitted to: One Economy • Submitted by: Evaluation Inc. • October, 2009		Staff/Assistance				
October 23, 2009	Timeline	Project Director	Project Staff	Admin. Asst.	Client Assistance	TOTAL
Discuss sampling and other administration strategies*	by 10/24	0.5				
Locate Host for E-Surveys	by 10/29	0.5				
Design Draft Survey Instrument						
Develop draft with questions for Beehive, Money and Jobs users	by 10/27	1				
Review with T. Burns/E. Banfield	by 10/27	see above				
Review with One Economy staff person	by 10/27					
Conference regarding revisions/piloting	by 10/27					
Address Incentives						
Meeting/Call with OE stakeholders, others re incentive choices	by 10/31	0.25			✓	
Devise incentives options plan, send to OE	by 10/31	0.25				
Conduct Mock Survey Launch						
Conduct meeting with Chris Willey via phone re: strategy	by 10/27	0.5			✓	
Convert paper survey to electronic format	by 10/28		1			
Review and annotate mock e-survey	by 10/29	0.5				
Launch mock survey and obtain feedback	10/29 –11/5	1	0.5		✓	
Revise and Pilot Survey Instrument						
Review and finalize electronic format	by 11/4	0.5				
Acquire pilot respondent list	by 11/5	0.5				
Launch pilot	by 11/6	0.5	0.5			
Close out pilot, produce summary report including suggested revisions	by 11/14	1	0.5			

Evaluation Timeline/Level of Effort/Budget Example (cont.)

Proposed Workplan and Budget for Evaluation of the Beehives Project, Phase I		Staff/Assistance				
October 23, 2009	Timeline	Project Director	Project Staff	Admin. Asst.	Client Assistance	TOTAL
Launch Survey for 30 Days						
Make final revisions to survey text, launch	by 11/17		1		✓	
Develop analysis plan, obtain approvals	by 11/17	0.25				
Determine follow-up strategy	by 11/21	0.25			✓	
Survey site management	as needed	0.5	2		✓	
Conduct follow-up activities	on 12/1	1.5	1		✓	
Develop Survey Results Summary						
Draw down e-survey data	by 12/17		1			
Convert data as necessary	by 12/18	0.5	0.5			
Analyze data according to plan	by 12/22	1	1			
Produce results summary	by 12/23	2			✓	
Develop Survey Report & Executive Summary	separate budget					
Team Meetings/Management	ongoing	2		2		
Total Personnel		15	9	2		
Daily Rates		\$650	\$400	\$120		
TOTAL PERSONNEL \$		\$9,750	\$3,600	\$240		\$13,590
Travel (2 trips to Philly, 1 trip to DC)						\$250
Other Direct Costs (duplication, postage, phone, computers \$100/mo)						\$300
Vendor Costs (survey service, web hosting)						\$750
Incentives						\$2000
SUBTOTAL OTP**						\$3300
TOTAL						\$16,890

* All figures are based on a census sampling strategy, with 3000 names.

** = Other Than Personnel

Evaluation Design: Planning guide

1. What is the subject of your evaluation and why have you chosen it? (insert from program description)

2. How are key services delivered for your selected program (or program component)?

3. What are your evaluation questions? (Remember between 2 and 5 questions—more than 5 is unmanageable.)

4. What strategies will be used to collect data? (Complete the attached chart and data collection management plan.)

5. When will evaluation data collection and other activities take place, and who will conduct evaluation activities? (Complete a level of effort and timeline chart here.)

6. What would your evaluation cost? (Optional—budget)

7. What are the proposed products of your evaluation (e.g., evaluation report, executive summary, charts, action steps, presentation, etc.)? Who will receive them? How will they be used?

Evaluation Design Activity Continued: Complete This Table of Proposed Data Collection Strategies

	EQ#	Who?	What is the focus?	When?
Surveys				
Interviews				
Observations				
Record Reviews <i>Be sure to note where the records are located, how you will access them, and what specific data elements you will collect.</i>				
Other				

What Is Your Data Collection Management Plan?

1. Do you have instruments to develop?

Surveys:

Interviews:

Observations:

Record Review:

2. Do you have to obtain approvals? If yes, clarify what you need approval for.

3. Clarify (if necessary) how you will handle any of the following:

Data collection training

Obtaining approvals

Data storage/confidentiality

Data entry

Getting data analysis assistance

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Assessing a Program Evaluation Plan

PLAN COMPONENT/CONTENTS	WHAT TO LOOK FOR OR ASK ABOUT
<p>DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED PROGRAM</p> <p>Paragraph or bulleted list describing how the program operates including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic service delivery strategies • who gets served, when and for how long • how long the program has been operational (new or mature) • how it was developed (new or replication) • which staff are involved (names and/or titles) • what the program is designed to accomplish (i.e., program and participant outcomes). <p><i>Optional</i></p> <p>Cost Information Embedded Logic Model(s) Rationale for selection Historical information regarding program development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the design of the program make sense (i.e., do the service delivery strategies make sense, are they offered in sufficient doses)? If you have no idea whether the program design seems reasonable, just check to see whether it seems too complex or simple, and whether it seems like a relatively strong intervention. If not, ask for clarification. • Does the selected program need to be evaluated? Is the evaluation for internal or external purposes or both? • Are the outcomes claimed by the program the right ones—those you care about and think are impacted by the program. • Have there been implementation problems with the program?
<p>KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS</p> <p>Sometimes shown as key questions and subquestions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there more than two or three key questions? (Are they asked in such a way that answers will not be forgone conclusions?) • Will there be data available to address the questions? • Are these the questions that key stakeholders want addressed? • Can the organization change the elements of the program that are being evaluated if findings suggest that it should? • Can stakeholders influence which questions get asked?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Assessing a Program Evaluation Plan (cont.)

PLAN COMPONENT/CONTENTS	WHAT TO LOOK FOR OR ASK ABOUT
<p>DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES & ANALYSIS PLANS</p> <p>List or description of selected methods, whom they will be used with and how often</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for why certain methods were chosen • Descriptions of specific instruments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the plan address the key evaluation questions? • Are there multiple methods? • Are data collected at multiple points in time and from multiple respondents/targets? • Do the selected strategies seem to make sense? • Do the proposed evaluation staff have the right skill sets to implement the proposed strategies? • Is there a backup plan in case there are access problems, scheduling problems or delays? • Is there a role for stakeholders in the collection and/or analysis of data? • Does the analysis plan address all the different data? Is it likely to produce findings that will answer the evaluation questions?
<p>TIMELINE & BUDGET</p> <p>Task-specific projections of evaluation project calendar and evaluation project costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disbursement strategy for the budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it seem like the proposed timeline is sufficient to accomplish all proposed data collection, analysis and reporting strategies? (If you're not sure, ask the evaluator or evaluation coach whether there will be sufficient time and how they arrived at the dates and amounts of time proposed.) • Are key staff assigned significant amounts of time to complete project tasks? • Does it seem like the proposed timeline is sufficient to accomplish all proposed data collection, analysis and reporting strategies? (If you're not sure, ask the evaluator or evaluation coach whether there will be sufficient time and how they arrived at the dates and amounts of time proposed.) • Are key staff assigned significant amounts of time to complete project tasks? • Does the proposed timeline fit with program scheduling? • Does the proposed timeline fit with stakeholder scheduling needs?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Assessing a Program Evaluation Plan (cont.)

PLAN COMPONENT/CONTENTS	WHAT TO LOOK FOR OR ASK ABOUT
TIMELINE & BUDGET (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the budget specify the relationship between tasks and costs? • Does the budget specify and distinguish labor costs, travel costs, other direct costs (including materials, postage, phone, computer, etc.), and indirect (overhead) costs? • Are labor rates clear and appropriate? Is there any flexibility in cost items? • Is the bottom line within the desired price range? • Are proposed costs sufficient to cover probable expenses related to the workplan and deliverables?
DELIVERABLES (Products and Plans for Their Use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the proposed products desired? Are they likely to be utilization-friendly? • Are there plans to have intermediate or preliminary products? • Are there plans for multiple versions of products? • Can products be available on a desirable calendar? • Is there a role for the funder in the development of products? • If appropriate, are there specific plans to use the products?
STAFFING PLAN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of who will be performing which tasks • Description of qualifications of key staff • Description of proposed evaluation project management (including “Officer in Charge” and other key contact people) <p>* Other organizational capacity statements are also often included here</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the identified staff have the right qualifications to do the work? • Are those with the right qualifications assigned to take on significant elements of the work? • Have the proposed staff done similar kinds of work before? Do they bring desirable expertise? • Is there ample supervision for more junior staff? • Is there a clear strategy described to manage the project? Are there plans for managing turnover or staffing changes?
ATTACHMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logic Model(s) • Resumes for key staff • Instruments 	

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Commissioning Evaluation

What to Look For in an Evaluator

- Basic knowledge of substantive area being evaluated
- Experience with program evaluation (especially with nonprofit organizations)
- Good references (from sources you trust)
- Personal style and approach fit (probably most important)

Before You Commission an Evaluation

- **Talk to a few trusted colleagues** about experiences they have had. If possible also talk to some grantees and a professional evaluator. Gather some basic advice and determine if it is relevant for your project.
- **Think about how you will identify evaluators.** Is sole sourcing an option for your project, or will a competitive process be more appropriate or advantageous? There are merits to either approach. If you want to or are required to use a competitive approach, determine how broad the competition should or must be. (Determine answers to these questions.)
 - Will an invitational approach work, or do you want unrestricted competition?
 - Are there any geographic limitations or advantages?
 - Are there tax or business requirements (for-profit/nonprofit, private firm, individual, university institute or department, etc.)
 - What sources will you use to inform evaluators about your project and attract bidders (e.g., RFPs posted on your website, in publications, through your RAG, through associations)
- **Determine the best strategy and requirements for proposals.** Can you go ahead with a letter proposal, a letter of interest (LOI), or an interview only process? Or is a Request for Quotes/Qualifications (RFQ) or a full Request for Proposal (RFP) best? Whatever you decide, be sure to make the request specific enough that you make your needs known, but not so detailed that the evaluator or other stakeholders have no real input into how to proceed.
- **Determine the timeline for finding evaluators.** If you do a full, competitive proposal process, you will need to determine your sequence for announcing your competition, releasing the actual request (RFP or RFQ), conducting a bidders conference or responding to clarification requests, collecting responses, making selections (including possible “best and final” competitions or invited interviews/presentations) and notification. Remember that good responses, especially those that are written or presented through a meeting, take some time to develop—be sure to give potential contractors adequate time.
- **Determine the format for response.** Do you need a written or oral response, or a combination? What categories of information are required, and what additional materials will help? (It is always helpful to provide specific questions of interest—see following—and parameters for response.)
- **Determine who will be involved in making the selection and how.** Do you need external reviewers? How will you manage multiple (conflicting) reviews? If you host an interview, who needs to participate? What role can/should program staff and leaders play?

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Commissioning Evaluation (cont.)

Questions to Ask Evaluators (in RFPs, RFQs or interviews)

- **What do you need to know to properly design an evaluation for this program/initiative?** (The evaluator should minimally need to know about the purpose for commissioning the work, as well as details about service delivery or other organizational structure, and scope of the project including timeframe, ballpark program budget and size of the target population. A smart evaluator will also request other background materials or perhaps even a preliminary visit.)
- **What evaluation questions would guide your effort?** (It may also be valuable to have a preliminary conversation about outcomes and indicators, or specify a whole task where the evaluator works together with program staff to clarify expected outcomes, timeframes, indicators, and important assumptions and contextual issues related to service delivery.)
- **What strategies would you use to address the evaluation questions?** (Be specific about how you would: collect and analyze data, involve agency staff, why this approach makes sense or is common, whether there are any standard instruments and why they were chosen.)
- **How will you handle common challenges?** (For example, how will your evaluation design be affected by poor project implementation, which outcome measures would be appropriate if the program is not well implemented? How will you communicate this to stakeholders? What will you do to insure necessary access to subjects and confidentiality of response?)
- **What timeline will the evaluation project operate on?** (Specify, in chart or calendar form, when key evaluation tasks will be completed.)
- **Who will conduct the work and what other relevant experiences do they have?** (Identify key staff and clarify their level of involvement—attach resumes and a capacity statement with descriptions of other similar projects. Be sure to get specific directions if web-site reviews are recommended. Ask about supervision if multiple evaluators are involved—who is ultimately responsible for collecting and analyzing data, verifying accuracy and reporting results? For multi-site initiatives, will any local evaluators be involved? How will they and any other staff be trained to conduct specific evaluation activities?)
- **How and when will the findings from the evaluation work be communicated?** (What products/deliverables will be developed? Look for multiple products where appropriate. Will the products of the evaluation have any greater usefulness? How are program managers expected to use the information obtained through the evaluation?)
- **How will evaluation resources be used to complete this work including professional time, travel, other direct costs, indirect costs?** (Be sure to ask for a task-specific budget.)

Evaluation Resources

- Independent technical assistance or evaluation consultants
- Evaluation consulting firms
- Universities with graduate programs that include training or projects in program evaluation

Remember, evaluation should not be viewed as competition with program resources. Evaluations can be funded as a component of a program (using program funds) or as a separate project (using ear-marked or additional funds). A common rule of thumb is to set aside 10–20% of the cost of the program for evaluation.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Commissioning Evaluation (cont.)

Things to Avoid When Working on Evaluation Projects

- Agreeing to commission a program evaluation design that you do not understand.
- Agreeing to commission a program evaluation where disbursement is not attached to deliverables.
- Commissioning a program evaluation on a timetable that is inappropriate for the program.
- Commissioning an overly complicated evaluation design, or one for which there was insufficient stakeholder involvement in the development.
- Using data collected for other purposes as substitutes for program evaluation.
- Assuming that you must ALWAYS measure outcomes.
- Forcing evaluation of outcomes that are inappropriate or beyond the scope of the program.

How Do You Stay Informed About Evaluation Status After You Agree to Support It?

Periodic or Mid-Point Reports

Request that the evaluator make status reports about:

- What evaluation activities have taken place;
- Any data collection or instrument development problems they have encountered;
- Any proposed changes to data collection timelines or strategies;
- Preliminary findings when appropriate.

These status reports should be on a regular schedule that matches with funder needs and the timeline of the evaluation. Compare each status report with proposed activities and timeline. Be prepared to request clarification if there have been challenges (e.g., timeline, access).

Note: Do not require evaluator grantees to complete status reports unless there is a real commitment to review them. Be aware that to produce them takes time and costs money.

Project Conclusion

Request a final status report or make it part of the final evaluation report. Compare what was actually done with what was proposed. Assume there will be some differences as not all tasks work as projected.

What Should Evaluation Cost?

The rule of thumb is program evaluation should cost somewhere between 10% and 20% of the cost of program operation. Most of the time the major cost elements of evaluation are labor, especially for senior evaluation practitioners, and overhead. Common daily rates for senior professionals range from about \$500 to \$1200 per day, depending on the types of tasks being undertaken.

There are two ways for an evaluator to determine costs:

- 1) Design an appropriate evaluation and then calculate the costs associated with the tasks. OR
- 2) Identify a ballpark sum and have the evaluator determine the best design for you based on available funds.



5. Evaluation Reporting

The final section in this basic guide to evaluation for nonprofit organizations and their evaluation partners includes a few general tips about data analysis and some specifics about writing evaluation reports. While other products such as Findings Briefs, Executive Summaries and PowerPoint presentations are often developed, the Evaluation Report remains the most common tool for communicating about evaluation findings.

Completing Data Analysis

Specific data analysis strategies for record reviews, surveys, interviews and observations were presented in Section 3: Collecting and Using Evaluation Data. The following reminders are not strategy specific.

The Most Important Things to Remember About Data Analysis

1. Develop a plan BEFORE you analyze data.
 - Specify how good is good enough (i.e., clarify targets and how you will decide whether outcomes are favorable/positive, negative, or neutral).
 - Specify what you will do with the findings from each data collection effort and with specific items or sections from protocol/surveys, including when you will combine categories and how you will present results (e.g., as numbers, percents or categories).
 - Clarify how you will handle missing data.
2. Develop dummy tables, lists and outlines for your analyzed data—share with others in advance.
3. Identify the most important findings from your data, summarize them, and then use the specific results (e.g., a table or list of data) to clarify the summarized findings. The most important findings are those that answer your evaluation questions. Like evaluation questions, the number of key findings should be limited/focused (i.e., usually between about 3 and 10 findings are key).
4. Present your analysis in an orderly, meaningful, straightforward way.

Things to Avoid When Analyzing Data

1. Including response rates and problems with your methodology as part of your findings.
2. Reporting both numbers and percents unless one is needed to make the other clear.
3. Listing in a sentence or a table all of the response choices for every question on a survey in the order they appear on the survey. (Don't do this with interview data either.)
4. Reporting your results with excessive precision—most of the time you can simply round to the nearest whole number when reporting percentages.
5. Feeling compelled to keep your results in the same order as they appeared on the survey or the interview protocol. It is the job of the analyst to order things in the best way to clarify the findings—you are NOT REQUIRED to present things in the order you asked them.
6. Including any action steps or conclusions that are not clearly developed from your findings.

Developing Evaluation Reports

(Begin the Process During Data Collection)

Getting started is the hardest part.

The following should be done to initiate the process of evaluation report writing.

1. Determine the needs, purposes and probable audiences for Evaluation Reporting. (Remember your key stakeholders here. How should you report to clients, staff, funders, others?)
2. Develop a report outline and be sure it includes the following:
 - a. Subject project description
 - b. Clear statement about the evaluation questions and the purpose of the evaluation
 - c. Description of actual data collection methods used
 - d. Summary of key findings (including tables, graphs, vignettes, quotes, etc.)
 - e. Discussion or explanation of the meaning and importance of the key findings
 - f. Suggested action steps
 - g. Next steps for the program and the evaluation
 - h. Issues for further consideration (loose ends)
3. Determine which reporting formats will be needed (written document, electronic document, written or electronic presentation materials, executive summaries, consumer reports, etc.) and develop a report production timeline with writing assignments and a dissemination plan.
4. Share the report outline, audience list and suggested reporting formats, proposed timeline, and dissemination plan with key stakeholders.
5. Revise the report outline and all other report plans to incorporate key stakeholder suggestions.

The only thing harder than getting started, is *completing the report*.

Do the following to get the work done.

(Note the items on this list may need to be repeated or duplicated depending on decisions regarding audiences and needs.)

1. Collect all sections and develop the first report draft.
2. Share the draft with appropriate stakeholders.
3. Make revisions as needed.
4. Finalize and present the report according to dissemination strategy.
5. Begin planning for future efforts as needed.

Important Things to Remember About Report Writing

- Follow the report writing outline described above. Feel free to be flexible with the order, but don't leave out whole sections (see also the Supplemental Materials at the end of this section.)
- Make your own internal outline including who is responsible for which sections. Be sure that you leave time for stakeholders to help you with editing/making revisions.
- Be economical in your decisions about what to include in your report. Remember: Shorter is better.
- Avoid excessive use of jargon.
- Read your work—if you can't understand it, chances are others won't be able to either. Think, in simple terms, about what you are trying to say, and then write that. Use complete sentences and standard English grammar conventions. You can rely some on bullets and be limited in your transitions, but be sure your reader can follow your logic.

- Formatting is your friend. Use headers and sections to help your reader know what is happening in your report. Be consistent about where and how they appear (centered, bold, underlined, side headings etc.). Number the pages. If you're generating a draft, think about double-spacing.
- Use tables and graphs to help illustrate findings. All tables and graphs must have titles, labels and legends or footnotes so that they stand alone (also see Appendix).
- Use quotes and vignettes or snippets from field notes to illustrate your findings. Remember, quotes should have quotation marks around them and be attributed to the speaker (or type of speaker—e.g., a participant) or writer. If you are presenting field notes, be sure they are clearly identified and in context.
- Be consistent in your use of language, capitalization, punctuation, etc. For the most part, evaluation reports should be written in the past tense—only report what you actually did and what you found. The Action Steps or Issues for Further Consideration sections can include references to future actions.
- Do not introduce new topics into your report in the final sections. Do not use the report to explain why you changed your design, what you didn't do, and what should be happening with a program regardless of the findings presented in the report.

Summarize . . . Summarize . . . Summarize . . .
Summarize . . . Summarize . . . Summarize . . .

A Note About Useful and Practical Recommendations/Recommended Action Steps

The final section of many evaluation reports is the recommended action steps. These should be carefully crafted by program officials and participatory evaluation partners. The following is a list of tips about useful and practical recommendations.

- The nature and content of the final report, including how recommendations are to be addressed, should be negotiated at the onset of the evaluation and reviewed periodically.
- Recommendations should clearly follow from and be supported by the evaluation findings.
- Distinguish recommendations about primary or central issues from those of lesser importance.
- Consider suggesting multiple options where applicable.
- Focus on actions within the control of intended users, and exercise political sensitivity.
- Be careful and deliberate in wording recommendations.
- Allow time for the target group to respond to the recommendations. Plan for follow-up.

A Final Note About Extending Evaluation Training Broadly in Organizations

Now that your team has completed its evaluation design and all the sections of this guide, don't forget about sharing—"rippling"—evaluation capacity with others in your organization. The following page provides a handy list of possible ripple strategies.

Planning for Ripple

Organization Name: _____

Current	Planned	Ripple Strategies	Notes
		Conducted/conducting an evaluation at your agency for projects other than the one you conducted during your evaluation training	
		Developed/developing/help develop an evaluation section for an RFP at your agency	
		Reviewed/reviewing evaluation materials or instruments for additional projects conducted at your agency	
		Conducted/conducting/planning to conduct some general evaluation session(s) for other staff at their agencies	
		Conducted/conducting/planning to conduct some specific evaluation session(s) for other staff at the agency	
		Involved/involving/will involve staff other than the participants in data collection (e.g., surveys, interviews, observations, record reviews) for the current evaluation training project	
		Involved/involving/will involve staff other than the participants in the design/planning (e.g., instrument development, scheduling) of current evaluation training project or other evaluation work	
		Involved/involving/will involve staff (or board members) other than the participants in review of findings of current evaluation training project or other evaluation work	
		Involved/involving/will involve staff other than the participants in development of action steps related to the current evaluation training project evaluation	

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Suggested Evaluation Report Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Introduction to agency and/or program (mission, goals, and main activities)
 - B. Purpose of study
 - C. Why evaluation is being conducted
- II. Evaluation Questions
 - A. Clear and concise questions that are in alignment with program mission and goals
 - B. If there are several evaluation questions, group them into categories (e.g., service delivery, staff outcomes, participant outcomes, programmatic impacts).
- III. Methods/Data Collection Strategies
 - A. Description of selected methods (in narrative or table form)—this describes what actually happened during data collection, not what the evaluator set out to or attempted to do
 - *B. Relationship between questions and data collection strategies (usually done as a table)
 - *C. Data collection rationale—explanation of why methods were chosen including clarification regarding use of participatory data collection
 - *D. Data collection respondents and missing data—description of the target populations for each data collection activity including why they were selected and whether there is any missing data
 - *E. Data collection challenges
 - *F. Description of targets for analysis (this can also be addressed in the findings section)

* Sections B–F can all be addressed as part of the description of selected methods.

- IV. Evaluation Findings
 - A. Summaries of the results of data collection and analysis
 - B. Response to evaluation questions (where feasible)
 - C. Comparison of findings to targets
- V. Conclusions
 - A. Summary of Key Findings
 - B. Final Analysis or Interpretation (relevance, strengths/weaknesses)
 - C. Action Steps/Recommendations—what will be done with the report, what could/or should be done with the program
 - D. Issues for Further Consideration (any outstanding issues raised by the evaluation)

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Thinking About Tables and Figures

I. Tables

- Tables are organized as a series of rows and columns. The first step to constructing a table is to determine how many rows and columns you need. The individual boxes (cells) of the table contain the information you wish to display.
- Tables must have a table number and a title (be consistent). Where possible, use the title to describe what is really in the table (e.g., Table 1).

Percent of Respondents Agreeing with Each Item in the Customer Satisfaction Scale)

- All rows and columns must have headings and it should be clear what data are displayed (N's, %'s). You don't have to show everything, but a reader should be able to independently calculate what you are displaying. Clarify contents with footnotes as needed.
- Use the lines and shading to further emphasize data displayed in a table.

II. Some Common Table Types

Table 2:

Use of Sites by FLS Agency Respondents

% of FLS Agency Respondents that . . .	N = 111
Conduct one family literacy program at one site	37%
Conduct one family literacy program at multiple sites	20%
Conduct multiple family literacy programs at one site	21%
Conduct multiple family literacy programs at multiple sites	21%

Table 3:

Geographic Distribution of FLS Site Respondents*

NYC Borough	% of FLS Respondents	% of Original Contacts
Bronx	28%	23%
Brooklyn	22%	25%
Manhattan	39%	32%
Queens	10%	17%
Staten Island	1%	3%
TOTAL	156 (100%)	605 (100%)

Table 4b:

% of FLS Respondents Offering Each Type of Service, by Borough

	Bronx (N = 28)	Brooklyn (N = 25)	Manhattan (N = 41)	Queens (N = 15)
Early Childhood Ed.	50%	54%	55%	33%
Parent Ed.	31%	34%	50%	13%
Adult Ed.	36%	69%	50%	47%
Parent/Child Activities	38%	46%	47%	27%
All Four Services	12%	26%	18%	0

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Thinking About Tables and Figures (cont.)

II. Some Common Table Types (cont.)

Table 2:
Key Findings Regarding Program Progress, 2002

SITE	A. DID THE SITES MEET THEIR 2002 OBJECTIVES?
Site 1	Site 1 met all its objectives for 2002. An Afterschool Program was opened at the Middle School and services were initiated Spring 2002. Additionally, a total of eight Forums (management capacity building training programs) were conducted reaching 50 different CBOs. The Steering Committee contributed to the development and operations of both the Lab and the training series.
Site 2	Site 2 (newest) met one of its objectives and made substantial progress regarding the other. Feedback was obtained and summarized from a total of 700 students, 60 teachers and approximately 65 parents from the two selected schools. The feedback, analyzed by 8th grade math students, showed both a distinct need for afterschool programming (especially at the Middle School site) and particular interests (arts, theater, sports). In addition to obtaining feedback from students, teachers and parents, key personnel from the site also participated in both on- and off-site introductory training. The RFP development process was somewhat delayed, however, so CBO selection was not accomplished. (RFPs were actually completed at the end of the Fall semester and distributed in January 2003.) As CBO selection was delayed, pilot programming and the open houses were not undertaken.
Site 3	The New York site (most mature) met all three of its implementation objectives for 2002. A total of six new and returning CBOs were identified; and they provided services to students and educational personnel from both the Middle School and the Elementary School operating at the site. Regarding its training goal, the site provided six Open House sessions where teachers, parents and artists learned about the Program and had the opportunity to observe groups involved in afterschool activities. Additionally a series of trainings for practitioners and teachers involved in the Lab were held.
Site 4	Site 4 met its objectives, but encountered serious barriers. A Coordinator was identified and she undertook the role throughout the spring 2002 semester. However, it later became clear that she was not well-suited for the job description, especially given the organizational challenges. Site preparations did not go smoothly, and the school, where three other afterschool programs were running as the Lab was initiated, turned out not to be an ideal site for the model. Despite these challenges, a comprehensive orientation training session was provided to CBO providers and teachers at the school, five different CBOs and some school personnel were selected to deliver services in eight different focus areas, and a limited (albeit poorly attended) pilot program was initiated.

Table 7a:
Responses of Male and Female Lawyers to the Gender Equity Scale Items, by Gender

EQUITY STATEMENTS % who Agreed with the following about their firms/offices* . . .	Female N = 212	Male N = 174	Differences S
e. Prospects for advancement are available equally for males and females	66%	88%	22
f. Opportunities to appear in court are equal for males and females.	89%	96%	7
g. High salaries are available equally for males and females.	65%	91%	26
h. Opportunities for direct client contact are available equally for males and females.	85%	97%	12
j. Access to senior partners is the same for males and females.	85%	96%	11
l. Opportunities to engage in activities out of the office, such as sports outings or social events, are equally available for males and females.	69%	96%	27

*All items but "e." apply mostly to those in private practice or in-house counsel settings.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Thinking About Tables and Figures (cont.)

II. Some Common Table Types (cont.)

Table 1b:

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS, BY WORK SETTING

DEMOGRAPHICS BY WORK SETTING	Private		In-house		Public		Judiciary	
	Females n = 117	Males n = 100	Females n = 59	Males n = 47	Females n = 134	Males n = 91	Females n = 37	Males n = 43
Oldest Group (54+)	4%	26%	2%	29%	10%	21%	32%	56%
Youngest Group (<35)	46%	18%	22%	13%	26%	18%	3%	2%
Minority Group Members*	20%	14%	11%	12%	17%	8%	15%	12%
Single	20%	9%	24%	6%	24%	16%	5%	7%
Married	62%	83%	64%	92%	60%	73%	76%	88%
Separated/Divorced	12%	5%	7%	2%	9%	8%	10%	5%
Living Together**	14%	6%	7%	0%	7%	4%	24%	2%
Disability Accommodations	1%	3%	2%	6%	5%	6%	0%	11%

* Includes African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and those identifying as “other”

** Includes those living with persons of the same or opposite sex. Living arrangements total more than 100% due to rounding errors and some dual reporting.

Table 1:

Partner Involvement 2001–2002

AGENCY	PROGRAMS							
	AFS	GT	KA	LS&S	SMART	PEER	TCB	WPWP
Agency 1	T, PD		PD	T, PD				
Agency 2	T, PD	T	T, PD		T, PD		PD	
Agency 3					T, PD			
Agency 4	T, PD		T		T, PD	T		T, PD
Agency 6	T, PD	T, PD	T, PD					
Agency 7	PD		PD	T				T

T = Participated in Training, PD = Program Delivery

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Thinking About Tables and Figures (cont.)

III. Using Graphs to Present Results

Pie Charts (show composition/breakdown)

Figure 1:
Composition of Fragile Families in Teen Parenting Program

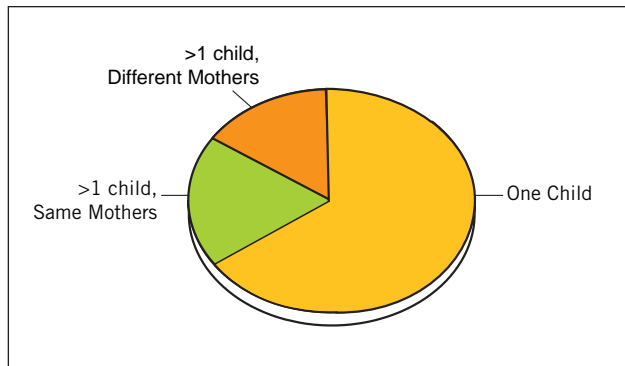
**Line Graphs** (show change over time)

Figure 2:
Proportion of Students Passing Proficiency Test

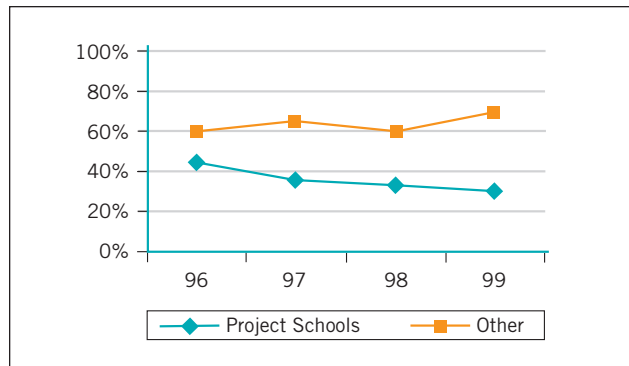
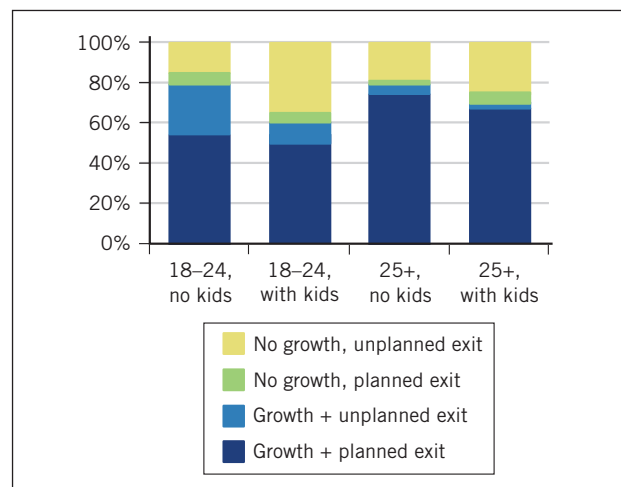
**Stacked Bars** (show distributions within subgroups)

Figure 3:
Exit Status of Domestic Violence Program Participants



Evaluation Quiz

For the following: select which vocabulary term is correct. (1 point each)

Outcomes	Indicators	Reliable measures
Targets	Benchmarks	Valid measures

1. Performance data used for comparison purposes. _____
2. Repeatable under similar conditions. _____
3. Observable, measurable characteristics of change that represent elements of an outcome. _____
4. Changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, condition or status that happen during and/or after programs. _____
5. Accurately measure what they are intended to measure. _____

FILL IN THE BLANKS

6. Name four primary strategies for collecting program evaluation data. (4 points) _____
7. Name three ways targets for outcome accomplishment can be set. (3 points)

8. Name four categories of program evaluation stakeholders. (4 points) _____
9. Name at least two criteria of evaluation questions. (2 points) _____
10. Why are logic models useful in program evaluation? (2 points) _____

TRUE/FALSE (2 points each)

- ___ 11. Surveys are best when you have small groups with whom you have regular contact.
- ___ 12. Funders are the primary stakeholders of evaluation work.
- ___ 13. Drawing a 30% sample is a good rule of thumb to ensure representativeness.
- ___ 14. Program evaluation often focuses on causality.
- ___ 15. Program evaluation can be used to facilitate program improvements.
- ___ 16. Conducting cross-tabulations of responses is a common strategy used when analyzing interview data.
- ___ 17. Stakeholders can be involved in multiple aspects of program evaluation projects.
- ___ 18. The evaluator must have a lot of substantive expertise to do an evaluation of a program.
- ___ 19. Quantitative data are always better than qualitative data.
- ___ 20. Multiple reports are often produced from a single evaluation project.

Evaluation Quiz Answer Key

For the following: select which vocabulary term is correct. (1 point each)

Outcomes	Indicators	Reliable measures
Targets	Benchmarks	Valid measures

1. Performance data used for comparison purposes.
2. Repeatable under similar conditions.
3. Observable, measurable characteristics of change that represent elements of an outcome.
4. Changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, condition or status that happen during and/or after programs.
5. Accurately measure what they are intended to measure.

Benchmarks

Reliable measures

Indicators

Outcomes

Valid Measures

FILL IN THE BLANKS

6. Name four primary strategies for collecting program evaluation data. (4 points) _____

Surveys, interviews, observation, record review

7. Name three ways targets for outcome accomplishment can be set. (3 points)

Past performance, best professional hunch, external standards where possible

8. Name four categories of program evaluation stakeholders. (4 points) _____

Staff, primary or secondary clients, funders, managers/executive director/CEO

9. Name at least two criteria of evaluation questions. (2 points) _____

Possible to obtain data to answer the question, more than one possible answer to question, answer is wanted or needed, aimed at changeable aspects of program

10. Why are logic models useful in program evaluation? (2 points) _____

They clarify service delivery (activities), what is expected to happen to programs and participants (outcomes) and they clarify indicators and targets

TRUE/FALSE (2 points each)

- F 11. Surveys are best when you have small groups with whom you have regular contact.
- F 12. Funders are the primary stakeholders of evaluation work.
- F 13. Drawing a 30% sample is a good rule of thumb to ensure representativeness.
- F 14. Program evaluation often focuses on causality.
- T 15. Program evaluation can be used to facilitate program improvements.
- F 16. Conducting cross-tabulations of responses is a common strategy used when analyzing interview data.
- T 17. Stakeholders can be involved in multiple aspects of program evaluation projects.
- F 18. The evaluator must have a lot of substantive expertise to do an evaluation of a program.
- F 19. Quantitative data are always better than qualitative data.
- T 20. Multiple reports are often produced from a single evaluation project.

Play the Outcomes/Indicators/Targets Puzzle Answer Key

Outcomes/Indicators/Targets Table			
Activities	Outcomes	Indicators	Targets
Hold Financial Workshops	Increased Financial Skills	Clients open bank accounts	80% of clients will have bank accounts
Provide 100 Nights of Shelter	Clients achieve independence and stability	The number of months clients stay in transitional housing	60% of clients will remain in transitional housing for at least 6 months
Case Management for 6 Months	Increased ability to problem solve on one's own	Client Confidence Levels	55% of adults will report that they are no longer in crisis
Employment and Training Services	Increased Income Levels	Employment Retention Rates for 6 Months	70% of clients will retain a job for 6 months that pays \$8 per hour
ESL Classes	Increased Knowledge of English	Improved TOEFL Test Scores	50% of clients will increase their TOEFL test score by one level

How Many and Which Types of Surveys Do You Need? (Answer Key)

Scenario 1: You need to contact a sample of former clients who have participated in your training programs over the years. In total there were 327 participants and they all still live nearby. How many surveys should you administer and which types of surveys do you need? What else might you need to pay attention to when sampling?

You need about 175 surveys ultimately, so you would need to send about 220 if you assumed a 20% refusal.

- **You could use E-surveys, mail surveys or a combination.**
- **Be sure to also think about respondents' year of participation.**

Scenario 2: You want to know how prepared the participants in your transitional housing program are for life in non-subsidized housing. There are only 29 participants in your program. You need to ask them questions about their families of origin, plans they have made, counseling services and needs, health and sexuality, and educational progress. How many surveys should you administer and which type do you need?

Survey all participants, if possible. Best strategies would be to use email or mail surveys sent to the participants while they are living in the transitional housing.

Scenario 3: You have just done a home-buying seminar for 120 neighborhood residents, and you want to know if they learned enough about mortgage qualifications, how to avoid foreclosure and how to stay away from exploitative lenders. How many surveys should you administer and what type do you need?

Try using a staged survey during the last class with a test embedded. All participants should be surveyed.

—OR—

You could mail (or email) the surveys after the program to about 80 randomly selected participants and aggressively follow them to get returns.

Glossary

Assessment—is a synonym for evaluation, but often used to refer to a technique (e.g., practical assessment) or a mini-study.

Benchmarks—performance data used for comparison purposes. They can be identified from your program's own prior data or relative to performance in the field.

Compliance/Monitoring—type of evaluation where evaluation questions are focused on adherence to prespecified procedures.

Comparison Groups—are nonparticipants who are identified as a reference for comparison (e.g., individuals at different sites).

Control Groups—are nonparticipants who are usually identified in the use of an experimental design, ideally on an oversubscribed program (i.e., where there are more participants than slots). The treatment or experimental group actually participates in the program and the control group, although eligible and similar, does not receive or participate in the program. Results of treatment and control group outcomes are then compared to determine program contribution to outcomes. (Warning: Comparisons must be conducted very carefully.)

Extrapolation—modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical conditions. Extrapolations are logical, thoughtful, and problem-oriented rather than purely empirical, statistical and probabilistic.

Formative Evaluations—focus on ways of improving and enhancing programs, and are conducted in the early or ongoing stages of a program.

Generalize—to assign qualities based upon group membership, or to make inferences about groups or programs based on the outcomes of a sample or subset of members.

Goals—are conditions (usually broad) that programs are working toward (e.g., to promote well-being).

Indicators—observable, measurable characteristics of changes that represent elements of an outcome (e.g., normal birth weight is an indicator of a healthy baby outcome).

Needs Assessments—determine whether existing services are meeting needs, where there are gaps in services and where there are available resources. These are often conducted prior to initiation of an evaluation or in response to evaluation findings.

Objectives—something that is worked for or strived for, which can be observed or measured.

Outcomes—results for participants, during and/or after participation in a program.

Outputs—products of a program's activity (e.g., # of sessions held, # of participants served).

Qualitative Data—consist of detailed description of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors; direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs and thoughts; and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records and case histories. Qualitative data collection methods permit the evaluator to study selected issues in depth and detail and typically produce a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases.

Quantitative Data—come from questionnaires, tests, standardized observation instruments, and program records. Quantitative data collection methods permit the complexities of the world to

be broken into parts and assigned numerical values. To obtain quantitative data it is necessary to be able to categorize the object of interest in ways that permit counting.

Random Assignment—a technique that allows program providers to randomly divide participants into treatment (those who get services) and control groups (those who don't).

Reliable Measures—those which can be repeated under similar conditions.

Research—in social science is also a systematic collection of information, but it is undertaken to discover new knowledge, test theories, establish universal truths and generalize across time and space.

Summative Evaluations—are aimed at determining the essential effectiveness of a program. They are especially important in making decisions about terminating, maintaining or extending a program.

Triangulation—multiple streams of information obtained by either collecting different kinds of data about the same subject, using different workers to complete the same tasks; using multiple methods to obtain data; using multiple perspectives to analyze information.

Valid Measures—those which accurately measure what they are intended to measure. (Warning: This is difficult to test. For most social and behavioral variables, no agreed upon testing standards exist.)

Evaluation References

Cousins, J. B., and Whitmore, E. (1998). "Conceptualizing participatory evaluation." In E. Whitmore (ed.). *Participatory Evaluation Approaches, New Directions in Evaluation*. No. 80. (pp. 5–23). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd Edition (Sage Publications)

Patton, M. Q. (2008) *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*: 4th Edition (Sage Publications)

General Evaluation Books

The following all provide good introductions to, and practical guides on, evaluation (books with an "*" are strongly recommended).

Community Impact Evaluation, by N. Litchfield (University College, London Press — UCL Press, 1996)

Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-assessment and Accountability, by D. M. Fetterman, S. Kaftarian, and A. Wandersman (Sage Publications, 1996)

Empowerment Evaluation: Principles in Practice, by D. M. Fetterman and A. Wandersman (Sage Publications, 2004)

Evaluation, 2nd Edition, by Carol H. Weiss (Prentice Hall, 1997)

Evaluation: A Systematic Approach, 7th Edition, by Peter Rossi and Howard Freeman (Sage Publications, 2004) (Textbook)

Evaluation for the 21st Century, by Eleanor Chelimsky and William R. Shadish (Sage Publications, 1997) (A reader)

Evaluation Strategies for Communicating and Reporting: Enhancing Learning in Organizations, by R. Torres, H. Preskill and M. Piontek (Sage Publications, 2004)

Evaluator's Handbook, by Joan L. Herman, L. L. Morris, and Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon (Sage Publications, 1987) (Very basic)

**Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, by Joseph S. Wholey, Harry P. Hatry, and Kathryn E. Newcomer, eds., 2nd Edition (Jossey-Bass, 2004) (A reader)

Impact Analysis for Program Evaluation, by Lawrence Mohr (Sage Publications, 1995)

**Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*, by B. R. Worthen, J. R. Sanders, and J. Fitzpatrick (Addison, Wesley, Longman, 2003) (Textbook)

Practical Guide to Program Evaluation Planning: Theory and Case Examples, by D. J. Holden, and M. A. Zimmerman (Sage Publications, 2009)

**Program Evaluation: Methods and Case Studies*, 7th Edition, by E. J. Posavac and R. G. Carey (Prentice Hall Humanities/Social Sciences, 2006)

The Logic Model Guidebook: Better Strategies for Great Results, L. Knowlton and C. Phillips (Sage Publications, 2009)

What Counts as Credible Evidence in Applied Research and Evaluation Practice? Donaldson, S. I., Christie, C. A., and Melvin, W. M., eds. (Sage Publications, 2009)

Evaluation Guidebooks

A Field Guide to Outcome-Based Program Evaluation, by Jane Reisman, 1994. The Evaluation Forum, 1932 First Avenue, Suite 403, Seattle, Washington 98101 (206) 269-0171

Assess for Success: Needs Assessment and Evaluation Guide, Girls Incorporated. 30 East 33rd Street, New York, NY 10016 (212) 689-3700

Evaluator's Handbook, by Joan L. Herman, L. L. Morris, and Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon (Sage Publications, 1987) (Very basic)

How to Manage and Analyze Data for Outcomes-Based Evaluation, by Marc Bolan, Kimberly Francis, and Jane Reisman, 2000. The Evaluation Forum, 1932 First Avenue, Suite 403, Seattle, Washington 98101

Key Steps in Outcomes Management, 2003. The Urban Institute Press, 2100 M Street, Washington, D.C., 20037

Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach (The United Way)

Outcomes for Success! 2000 Edition. The Evaluation Forum, 1932 First Avenue, Suite 403, Seattle, Washington 98101

Performance Measurement, by Harry Hatry, 1999. The Urban Institute Press, 2100 M Street, Washington, D.C., 20037

The Managers Guide to Program Evaluation by Paul Mattessich. (Wilder Research Center, 2003)

W.K. Kellogg Foundation: Evaluation Handbook. 1998. One Michigan Avenue East, Battle Creek, MI 49017-4058. (616) 968-1611

Focus Groups

Morgan, David L., ed., 1993, Successful Focus Groups: Advancing the State of the Art. Sage Focus Edition

Stewart, D. W., Shamdasani, P. N., and Rook, D. 2007. Focus Groups: Theory and Practice 2nd ed. Applied Social Research Methods Series, Volume 20

Quantitative Data Analysis

Fitz-Gibbon, C. T., and Morris, L. L. 1987. How to Analyze Data. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications

Morris, L. L., Fitz-Gibbon, C. T., and Lindheim, E. 1987. How to Measure Performance and Use Tests. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications

Welch, S., and Comer, J. 2006. Quantitative Methods for Public Administration: Techniques and Applications. Chicago: Dorsey Press

Wright, D. B. 1997. Understanding Statistics: An Introduction for the Social Sciences. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications

Evaluation Websites

The Internet is a great place to get information about evaluation. The following sites on the Internet offer a range of information and resources for evaluation. Many have links to other evaluation-related sites.

General Sites

<http://www.eval.org/>

The home page of the American Evaluation Association, an international professional association of evaluators devoted to the application and exploration of program evaluation, participatory evaluation, personnel evaluation, technology, and many other forms of evaluation. The Participatory evaluation page has links to several how-to guides.

<http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/site.cgi?s=1>

The Home Page of the Canadian Evaluation Society (la Société canadienne d'évaluation), which is dedicated to the advancement of evaluation for its members and the public (dévouée à l'avancement de l'évaluation pour le bien de ses membres et du public).

<http://www.civicpartnerships.org/>

The Center for Civic Partnerships' mission is to provide leadership and management support to build healthier communities and more effective nonprofit organizations. It is a support organization that strengthens individuals, nonprofits, and communities through facilitation and leadership development and by fostering community engagement. The site has an extensive resources section including many tools for identifying indicators and information about logic models and theories of change.

<http://www.cyfernet.org>

Practical, research-based information from leading universities. CYFERnet is designed to be used by anyone who needs comprehensive children, youth, or family information including: educators, researchers, parents, youth agency staff, community members, human services and health care providers, students, policy makers, youth, media. CYFERnet's Evaluation section includes practical tools that you can use to evaluate community-based programs; information on how community programs can be sustained; and assessments of organizational support for work in the areas of children, youth, and families.

<http://www.ericae.net>

A clearinghouse on assessment and evaluation listing many education-related links for assessment and evaluation.

<http://www.geofunders.org>

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations is a coalition of grantmakers committed to building strong and effective nonprofit organizations.

<http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange>

Harvard Family Research Project, The Evaluation Exchange. The Evaluation Exchange is a one-of-a-kind periodical that contains new lessons and emerging strategies for evaluating programs and policies, particularly those focused on children, families, and communities. Since it was launched in 1995 as a key resource on the HFRP website, The Evaluation Exchange has become a nationally known and significant force in helping to shape evaluation knowledge and practice.

<http://www.liveunited.org/outcomes/>

The United Way's Outcome Measurement Resource Network: A guide to resources for measuring program outcomes for health, human service, youth- and family-serving agencies. Order their manual, *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*, [here](#).

<http://www.innonet.org/>

Innovation Network (InnoNet) is an organization dedicated to helping small- to mid-sized nonprofit organizations successfully meet their missions. The purpose of their site is to provide the tools, instruction, and framework to create detailed program, evaluation and fund-raising plans.

<http://www.theoryofchange.org/>

The Theory of Change interactive website was developed and is administered by ActKnowledge. ActKnowledge is an action research organization dedicated to working with community organizations, not-for-profits, foundations and governmental agencies to transform traditional institutions and environments for social change. We work with these organizations as partners in a process aimed at creating transformative knowledge through the interplay of learning and action. Be sure to also check out www.theoryofchange.org/documents/TOCLayoutandprintingexamples.pdf

<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/>

The Evaluation Center, located at Western Michigan University, is a research and development unit that provides national and international leadership for advancing the theory and practice of evaluation, as applied to education and human services.

Appendix: Sample Logic Models

(Note: These are examples for training purposes, with strengths and limitations to be determined by trainees.)

Program Logic Model Example

Program: Teen Mother Parenting Education Program

Mission: To educate teen mothers in their 6th month of pregnancy so they will deliver healthy babies who will have healthy development.

Inputs	Activities	Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-Term
Part-time MSW program manager Part-time RN instructor Nationally certified education manuals (2 for instructors), videos, and other teaching tools (games, manuals etc.) Agency and all collaborating high schools identify 30 pregnant teens to participate in program Shared classroom available on dedicated basis for afternoon parenting classes Video equipment Copies of written materials for 50 participants	All participants register (1 time) and undergo brief weekly health checks. Overseen by MSW program manager and RN Two groups of 15 females attend and participate in parenting classes, for 3 months prior to delivery, on prenatal health and delivery. Classes delivered for 1 hour twice/week at the agency (total 24 hours of instruction). Classes lead by RN instructor All participating females attend 1.5 hour support group 1 day/week at the agency. Support group addresses mothers' developmental needs; facilitated by MSW program manager (total 18 hours of participation) Two groups of 12+ females and their babies attend and participate in parenting classes on infant nutrition, development, safety, and caretaking delivered at the agency twice a week for 1 hour, for 12 months post delivery (total 96 hours of instruction). Classes lead by RN instructor All participating females and their babies attend 1.5 hour support/play group 1 day/week at the agency. Support group facilitated by MSW program manager (total 72 hours of participation) RN and MSW program manager conduct 1, 1 hour home visit to each participating female once/month from month 1 to month 12. Suggestions for application of parenting skills are made as needed and baby and mother are monitored for health, safety and development	All 30 teens knowledgeable about prenatal nutrition, health and delivery All 30 teens demonstrate ability to express feelings and needs regarding impending motherhood All 30 teens identify at least 1 developmental goal for themselves (e.g., finishing HS, obtaining independent living, planning for postsecondary training) All participating teen mothers are knowledgeable about proper care, feeding and social interaction with infants All participating teen mothers report a sense of connectedness with babies and significant others (within and external to group)	At least 25 teens maintain their blood pressure, weight and healthy diets throughout final trimester of pregnancy All teens who have maintained adequate prenatal care (and do not experience other complications) give birth to healthy, full-term babies All participating teen mothers knowledgeable about self-sufficiency All participating teen mothers demonstrate ability to properly care for, feed and interact with their infants All participating teen mothers avoid neglect and abuse of infants	All babies of participating teen mothers achieve appropriate 12 month milestones for physical, motor, verbal and social development All participating mothers make progress on their own developmental goals (by 12th month of participation)

Note: Only 2 groups with girls of the same status (6 months pregnant) can be run at one time according to this model. Additional groups can be facilitated, but all would need the same inputs and activities. After start-up, girls can not enter an existing group.

Appendix: Sample Logic Models

(Note: These are examples for training purposes, with strengths and limitations to be determined by trainees.)

Program Logic Model Example

Fatherhood Development Program: 30 participants/cycle, 3 cycles/year

Goal: To strengthen Fragile Families by supporting positive fatherhood development

Inputs	Activities	Outcomes
Project Director (.25 FTE) 2 FT fatherhood development case managers (duties include co-facilitation of fatherhood development training sessions, peer support groups, weekly individual participant meetings) 1 PT employment specialist (staff or outsourced—.5 FTE) 1 PT family counselor (.5 FTE) Fatherhood Development Curriculum 3 instructor's guides and 100 participant workbooks Fatherhood development training for all staff (associates + project director) (1/cycle) \$150,000 for project costs (staff time, ODC, professional development, evaluation) \$180,000 stipends (optional)	Weekly fatherhood training sessions using fatherhood development curriculum, facilitated by fatherhood development trainer (1.5 hours/week, 16 weeks) Weekly peer support group meetings jointly facilitated by participant and fatherhood development trainer (1.5 hours/week, 16 weeks) Semi-monthly co-parenting sessions facilitated by family counselor (1 hour, every other week, 16 weeks—8 hours total) Monthly family social activities (3 hours/month, 4 months—12 hours total) Weekly case management sessions (up to 1 hour) for assessment, goal review, planning, development of child support plans (1 hour/week, 16 weeks) Daily independent employment or education training sessions on site or through referral (20 hours/week, 4–16 weeks as needed) Weekly meetings with employment specialist (job placement assistance, supervised placement as needed, 30 minutes/week 4–16 weeks) 1 group and 1 independent meeting with case manager and child support specialist (1.5 hours each) Semi-monthly case review/staff meetings with project director, case managers, employment specialist, family support counselor	Participants will become better fathers to their children Participants will establish paternity for all children Participants will achieve personal development milestones Participants will provide economically for themselves and their children Participants' families will be stabilized.

Appendix: Sample Logic Models | (Note: These are examples for training purposes, with strengths and limitations to be determined by trainees.)

Fatherhood Development Program—Indicators and Measures

Outcomes	Indicators/Targets	Measures/Sources
Participants will establish paternity for all children	Paternity will be established prior to meeting with the child support specialist	Participants will become better fathers, Document Review—Child Support MIS
Participants will become better fathers to their children	Participants will be knowledgeable regarding child development and fatherhood roles	Surveys, interviews, pre/post tests
	Participants will address barriers to visitation with their children	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS
	Participants will develop or maintain positive relationships with their children	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS
	Participants will develop or maintain positive relationships with the mother(s) of their children	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS
	Participants will increase participation in important decisions regarding their children	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS
Participants will achieve personal development milestones	Participants will identify and take first steps to address health issues	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS
	Participants will accomplish majority of case plan or treatment goals, and increase self-satisfaction with personal development	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS
Participants will provide economically for themselves and their children	Participants will develop a plan to make regular and reasonable child support payments, address child support arrearages and payment of other fines/fees, permanent and/or independent living arrangements	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS, plan review, document review—Child Support MIS
	Participants will initiate efforts to obtain or maintain FT employment at liveable wages	Surveys, interviews, document review—DOL UI/wage data
Participants' families will be stabilized	Participants will increase or maintain contributions to child support	Surveys, interviews, analysis of MIS, document review—Child Support MIS
	Participants will have no more out-of-wedlock births	Follow-up surveys, interviews

Appendix: Sample Logic Models

(Note: These are examples for training purposes, with strengths and limitations to be determined by trainees.)

Program Logic Model Example

Program: SOAR Afterschool Program

Mission: To provide 25 3–5th graders with tutoring and enrichment opportunities to enhance literacy skills.

Inputs	Activities	Initial/Intermediate Outcomes	Longer-Term Outcomes
<p>Two part-time afterschool staff members including one teacher/counselor with a background in education and an instructional assistant with arts-related skills</p> <p>.25 FTE of the agency's program director to coordinate/oversee activities and assist with fund development</p> <p>\$40,000 project budget</p> <p>2 computers with Internet access</p> <p>1 printer, 1 scanner</p> <p>Access to agency van for field trips</p> <p>Art supplies (paper, paint, clay, brushes, markers, crayons)</p> <p>Dedicated meeting space for afterschool sessions and presentations</p> <p>AV equipment for presentations</p>	<p>Snack time from 3:00–3:30</p> <p>Homework review from 3:30–4:30 (where students are expected to work on difficult assignments where they need help)—Daily</p> <p>Literacy-based theme projects from 4:30 to 6:00—Daily. Four literacy-based theme projects are completed each year. Topics are identified by the youth, and related reading, writing, and research activities (including use of the Internet) are assigned by the staff to teams of youth</p> <p>Field trips to area museums, parks or other facilities are scheduled to augment group-project activities—2 trips/quarter</p> <p>Presentations and demonstrations of products and learning are developed and delivered to parents at the end of each theme project—1/quarter</p>	<p>All participants* will increase their interest in reading, writing, and using information, and will increase their knowledge about the four themes</p> <p>At least 80% of participants* will demonstrate increased self-confidence regarding reading, writing, and finding information</p> <p>At least 80% of participants will develop/maintain good homework completion and other study skills</p> <p>All participants will demonstrate ability to synthesize information, organize information and present information by sharing outcomes of their group long-term project work with parents and other community members</p> <p>*Participants are defined as those that attend at least 95% of all sessions throughout the program year</p>	<p>At least 75% of participants in need of improvement will improve their reading achievement at school</p> <p>At least half of the participants will be able to effectively communicate ideas in writing</p> <p>All participants will be able to identify strategies to find, use and share information</p>

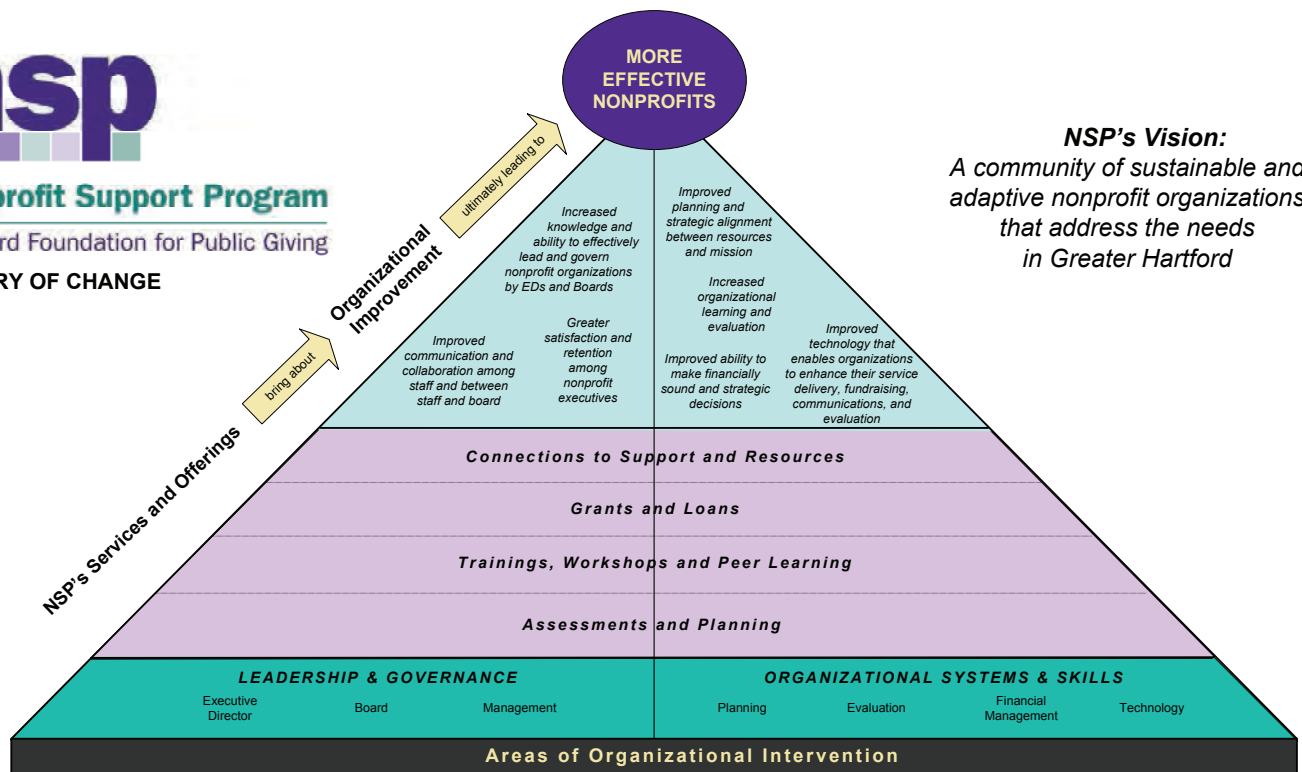
Appendix: Sample Theory of Change



Nonprofit Support Program

Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

THEORY OF CHANGE



Who NSP Helps

NSP focuses on organizations with the greatest need and readiness for capacity-building services. NSP has focused on building capacity in small to medium-sized organizations because they tend to have fewer resources for capacity building.

How NSP Approaches Capacity Building

Nonprofit capacity building is best achieved in partnership with nonprofit organizations through a multi-pronged approach that seeks change on both the individual and systemic levels. NSP does this by sequencing and combining different types of services to achieve deep and lasting impact.

What NSP Believes

NSP believes capacity building is a change process that is most effective when strong relationships are built among agency leaders, technical experts, and foundation staff, and when nonprofit organizations choose how and with whom they want to build capacity.

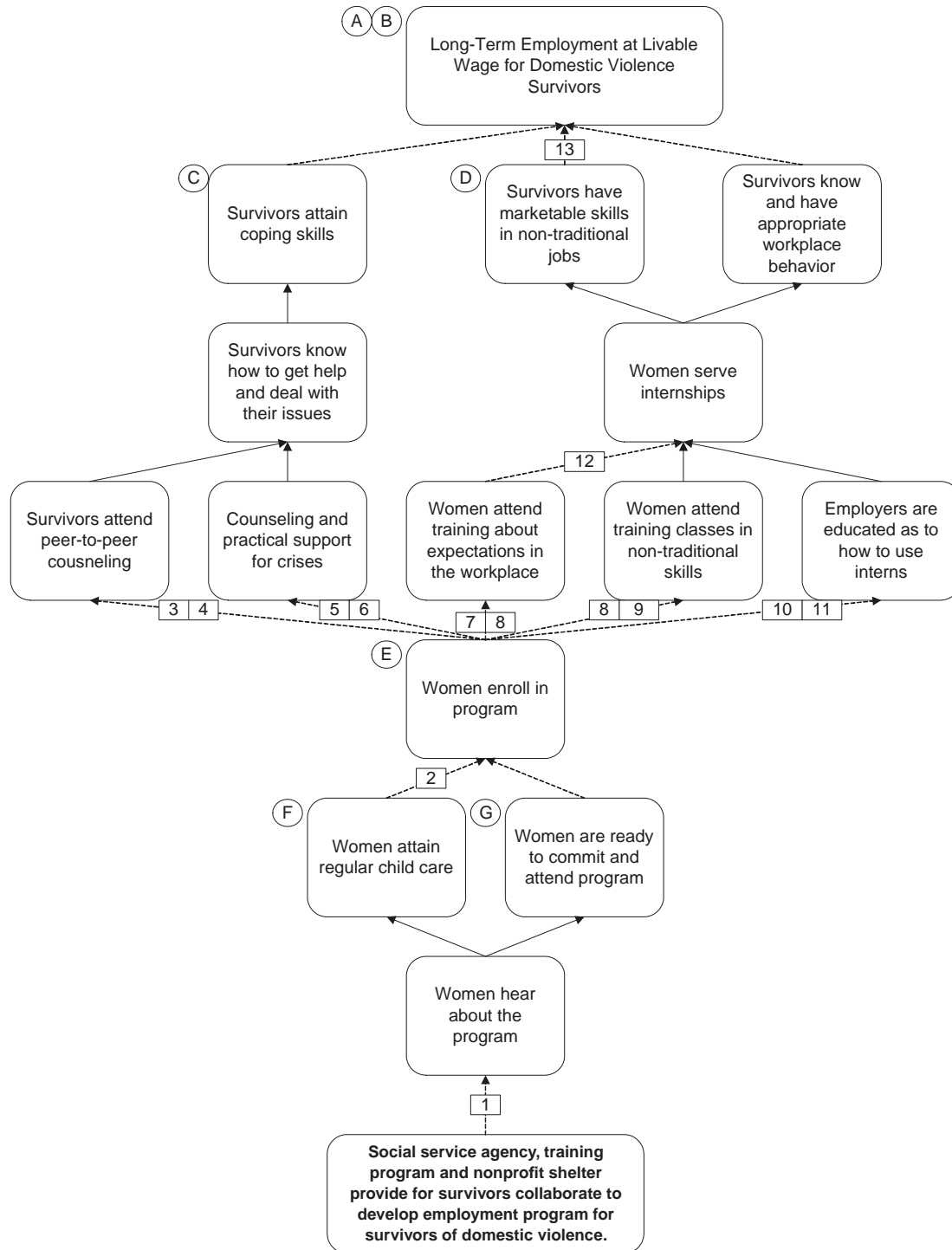
Prepared by LFA (LaFrance Associates, LLC), 2005

Appendix: Sample Theory of Change

Theory of Change

brought to you by ActKnowledge
and the Aspen Institute Roundtable on
Community Change

Project Superwoman Example



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Appendix: Sample Theory of Change

Theory of Change

brought to you by ActKnowledge
and the Aspen Institute Roundtable on
Community Change

Final Narrative: Project Superwoman

Project Superwomen was founded as a collaboration of a social service provider, a nonprofit employment-training center, and a non-profit shelter provider for female domestic violence victims. The group's goal was to help women obtain a type of employment that would keep them out of poverty, off public assistance while providing stability and upward mobility. The group chose jobs in electrical, plumbing, carpentry and building maintenance because they provided entry-level positions, possible union membership, and opportunities for advancement at livable wages.

Based on the assumptions that women can learn non-traditional skills and that employers could be identified that would hire them, the project's goal was to provide both the training and support needed by this population in order to enter and remain in the workforce. The group believed that most of the women they could train would be single mothers, coming from abusive situations and would need psycho-emotional counseling, especially regarding low self-esteem and impaired coping skills. They also recognized that even women whose lives are fairly stable might face crises from time to time requiring practical help or psychological support. For some of the women who had not worked before, the group included training in non-traditional skills, training in workplace expectations and intensive psychological supports.

Based on their resources, the group decided that they could provide assistance with some crises, such as housing evictions or court appearances, but could not be responsible for completely stabilizing the lives of their clients. This dictated their screening process ensuring that new women entering the program had already settled major issues, such as housing, substance abuse, or foster care.

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Appendix: Sample Completed Interviews | (Note: These are for use with the training activity in section 3, page 51.)

SOAR Afterschool Program Evaluation

Other School Staff Interview, Spring 2008			
Site: E	Date: 3/19/08	Interviewer: AB	Respondent Position: ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

5c. Describe the relationship between school staff and SOAR. How is the project perceived and used by staff?

The relationship is okay, could be better. There are several teachers who really rely on them, communicate what they are working on and ask the after-school staff to help reinforce what is going on in their classes. Then there are some who totally ignore them and a few who don't want them around because they don't want anyone else using their rooms.

6a. How are projects like SOAR valuable to the school?

It's a real opportunity for kids, our kids, to get enrichment and be in a safe place with friends. Parents like that and it makes them feel more comfortable about school, too.

6b. To the community overall?

Most of the families who live around here are working after school. They want a safe place for their kids, someone to help their kids with homework, etc. For the community, I guess, it makes us look good and sends a positive message that we're using afterschool hours in productive ways that keep our kids safe.

7a. What outcomes (both long-term and intermediate) do you think *SOAR* and especially the *literacy development and enrichment components* are designed to effect?

They're helping kids get their homework done, and they're helping them see the connections between

art and music and drama and literacy. They're helping kids feel less afraid about learning and giving them some specific skills that pay off in the classroom.

7b. How would you assess their progress? (Probe: what specific outcomes have participating youth accomplished—get examples.)

Their director is terrific, most of the staff are good and the curriculum developer is right on target. The director's got these kids working on some heavy-duty projects. They're having so much fun they don't even notice how much they're learning or when she sneaks in some drill and practice.

8. Do you think being in the program helps with school? If so, how; if not, how are they different? (Probe: are these activities seen as totally separate from school/formal education—get specific examples.)

Absolutely—for three reasons. First of all the kids really are getting chances to work on "school" skills from some different angles. The staff knows what kids are working on in classes so they reinforce it. Secondly the kids are having fun and developing good friendships, maybe with kids they wouldn't have hung out with otherwise. They look forward to coming to school to see their friends. And third, they all want to impress the director so bad they are trying harder to show her their A's, and they don't want to get in any trouble in case they might be excluded from something during afterschool.

Appendix: Sample Completed Interviews | (Note: These are for use with the training activity in section 3, page 51.)

SOAR Afterschool Program Evaluation

Other School Staff Interview, Spring 2008			
Site: E	Date: 3/19/08	Interviewer: AB	Respondent Position: TEACHER

5c. Describe the relationship between school staff and SOAR. How is the project perceived and used by staff?

Most of us think it's great that we have this program here. The director and her staff meet with us regularly so we can tell them what we're working on, and they can bounce ideas off us about projects they think would support our efforts or just be fun for the kids. If I ever have a behavior problem or when kids from the program need extra help, it's a resource to me to have the program here. I know there are a few teachers who complain about having them around, but they complain about everything anyway. They just don't want anybody moving their staplers and stuff. Most of us know the director wouldn't let anything bad happen and we're glad for others who can help our kids.

6a. How are projects like SOAR valuable to the school?

In the afterschool program, kids get to do a lot of fun stuff. They're more flexible because they're not trying to get through the mandated curriculum and they have smaller group sizes. Kids are excited to do stuff and they get to make friends. They think of school as a fun place. This helps us during the regular day. Also the program helps them get their homework done and it's giving them confidence and skills that make our jobs as teachers easier.

6b. To the community overall?

Having a safe place for kids in the afternoon is important. Kids who aren't in the program are hanging out on the streets or stuck inside their apartments. We have a lot of working parents and they are thrilled to have a safe place for their kids to go,

where they also get to develop their minds, artistic skills, etc.

7a. What outcomes (both long-term and intermediate) do you think *SOAR* and especially the *literacy development and enrichment components* are designed to effect?

The program is set up to help kids get their homework done and to apply some of what they learn to other disciplines. They are also working to develop kids' social skills.

7b. How would you assess their progress? (Probe: what specific outcomes have participating youth accomplished—get examples.)

I have kids who were afraid to open their mouths in the class, would never read out loud for instance. Since they've been going to SOAR they're much more confident and willing to ask questions. They see themselves as learners and SMART. I think the program is doing a really good job with all their kids, too.

8. Do you think being in the program helps with school? If so, how; if not, how are they different? (Probe: are these activities seen as totally separate from school/formal education—get specific examples.)

Definitely, the director and their curriculum director have a real handle on what we're trying to accomplish. Plus she's got them so connected they are always wanting to impress her and worried to embarrass her. You can tell the kids in the program from the other kids—they're more social, they try hard, they get it or figure they'll get help so they don't act out, and they can't wait to get to afterschool.

Appendix: Sample Completed Interviews | (Note: These are for use with the training activity in section 3, page 51.)

SOAR Afterschool Program Evaluation

Other School Staff Interview, Spring 2008			
Site: E	Date: 3/19/08	Interviewer: AB	Respondent Position: TEACHER

5c. Describe the relationship between school staff and SOAR. How is the project perceived and used by staff?

I don't really know what goes on in SOAR. They've invited me to meetings and sent me materials, but I haven't had time to make it. The Director comes around to talk to me, but I've been too busy to meet with her. My days are long and I've got young kids to hurry up and get home to, too. I know a lot of the other teachers think it's a good program. They have used my room a couple of times and left it neat as a pin.

6a. How are projects like SOAR valuable to the school?

I'm not sure. I guess it really helps for kids to get someone to help them with their homework and to watch them while their parents are working.

6b. To the community overall?

We have a lot of working parents here. Kids need a safe place to stay after school. And they need someone to help them with their homework, too. Most of their parents either don't care about homework or don't know how to help them. I guess that's why it's good to have the program here.

7a. What outcomes (both long-term and intermediate) do you think *SOAR* and especially the *literacy development and enrichment components* are designed to effect?

Again, I'm not really sure. I guess if they're helping kids get their homework done though, at least their homework grades are better.

7b. How would you assess their progress? (Probe: what specific outcomes have participating youth accomplished—get examples.)

I have a couple of kids in my class that go to the program. They really like it and I have to say they are very well behaved. They always get their homework done and they're doing really well. They pal around together, too and I never have any trouble out of them.

8. Do you think being in the program helps with school? If so, how; if not, how are they different? (Probe: are these activities seen as totally separate from school/formal education—get specific examples.)

As I said before, it helps them get their homework done. I guess it would be good if more kids could go.

Appendix: Sample Completed Interviews | (Note: These are for use with the training activity in section 3, page 51.)

SOAR Afterschool Program Evaluation

Other School Staff Interview, Spring 2008			
Site: E	Date: 3/19/08	Interviewer: AB	Respondent Position: TEACHER

5c. Describe the relationship between school staff and SOAR. How is the project perceived and used by staff?

Most of us are thrilled that this program is here. I'd put my own kids in the program if they were younger. I have to say that I was skeptical, too. We've had a lot of programs come and go here, and we have other afterschool programs that focus only on remediation. The Director made me a believer though. She sought me out since several of my kids are in the program. I think she does that with all the teachers. She has her staff meet with us regularly, and it's a very efficient and effective meeting. They also keep apprized of the curriculum and school events, holidays, etc. She has the whole year planned out and they are doing fabulous stuff. As far as other teachers go, a few kind of ignore it, but I don't hear any of the grumbling that we have gotten in the past about kids messing up the rooms or wasting their time, or the afterschool staff not being knowledgeable. She has a lot of community members and people from different disciplines—not traditionally educated always, but very smart. She also does a lot of staff development with them so they are up on the latest in literacy development and working with youth. Plus they're just nice people.

6a. How are projects like SOAR valuable to the school?

The main thing is that it reinforces what we are doing, and that it gives kids a very positive connection to the school. Plus the homework help. They're also making some really good friends down there and doing enriching things instead of hanging out watching TV. Happy productive kids make our jobs easier.

6b. To the community overall?

The program provides a safe space, and it can accommodate a number of children who wouldn't otherwise have adult supervision. It's something we can brag about that we use our school for more than just 9–3. Plus, I think they do some community service type activities, too.

7a. What outcomes (both long term and intermediate) do you think *SOAR* and especially the *literacy development and enrichment components* are designed to effect?

They are working to help kids develop academic confidence and good social skills for succeeding in any academic environment. They are also helping kids see how fun it can be to learn and be part of a group.

7b. How would you assess their progress? (Probe: what specific outcomes have participating youth accomplished—get examples.)

Again, I can't say it enough. The Director really knows what she is doing. The kids in my class who are also in the program are more confident, they are bonded with each other, and they are not afraid of hard work or new topics. They also try very hard and are eager to show the Director their work. They are proud of being Smart.

8. Do you think being in the program helps with school? If so, how; if not, how are they different? (Probe: are these activities seen as totally separate from school/formal education—get specific examples.)

Definitely, for all the reasons I've stated above. They have a lot of opportunities there that we can't do in the regular classroom. It's how I'd do things if I had more time.

Appendix: Consent Forms, Examples

PARENT ACTIVE CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent or Guardian:

_____ Agency is part of a larger project to assess outcomes for youth in youth programs. We are doing a short study of our programs to see what kinds of things young people like about them and whether they are [*interesting, challenging, useful and fun*]. We also want to know how the youth are changing as they mature and if and how things they do in the program contribute to those changes. We are especially interested in understanding more about [*communication skills (e.g., expressing yourself, listening to others, relaying information), decision-making and problem-solving skills (e.g., investigating options, understanding consequences), and how youth interact with other young people and adults (e.g., respecting differences, forming healthy friendships/relationships)*].

_____ has (volunteered) been selected to represent youth in this program and will be involved in [*a series of assessment groups with other youth. In addition we will be observing him/her in program activities and talking with him/her about program experiences*]. All of his/her individual responses and specific observation notes will be kept strictly confidential.

By signing below you are saying that _____ can participate in the study of this program.

_____ has my consent to take part in this study.

(Youth's Name)

(Your Name—please print)

(Your Signature)

(Today's Date)

What is your relationship to the youth named above? (Circle One)

Mother Father Legal Guardian Other: _____

When you have completed this form, please have your child take it back to the program and turn it in.

Thank you for your help!

Please contact _____ at the program if you have any questions or concerns.

(Program Director)

Appendix: Consent Forms, Examples

PARTICIPANT ACTIVE CONSENT FORM

Dear _____:

As you know, _____ Agency is part of a larger project to assess outcomes for youth in youth programs. We are doing the short study of our programs to see what kinds of things young people like about them and whether they are [*interesting, challenging, useful and fun*]. We also want to know how youth are changing as they mature and if and how things they do in the program contribute to those changes. We are especially interested in understanding more about [*communication skills (e.g., expressing yourself, listening to others, relaying information), decision-making and problem-solving skills (e.g., investigating options, understanding consequences), and how youth interact with other young people and adults (e.g., respecting differences, forming healthy friendships/relationships)*].

By signing below, I certify that I have agreed to represent youth in this program and that I know I will be involved in [*a series of assessment groups with other youth, as well as observations and interviews about my program experiences*]. I understand that all of my individual responses and specific observation notes will be kept strictly confidential.

(Your Name—please print)

(Your Signature)

(Today's Date)

When you have completed this form, please give it back to _____.

Thank you for your help!

Please contact _____ at the program if you have any questions or concerns.

Appendix: Consent Forms, Examples

PARENT PASSIVE CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent:

_____ is studying your child's afterschool program. This will help us understand the benefits of the program for students and families. The results of this study will also help improve the program and others like it.

During the study, we would like to review some school-related data for all students at your child's grade level. This includes rates of attendance, course completion, grades and standardized test scores.

We will also survey all participating students. We will ask them about their schooling, their health, and their experience with your program. Some questions will ask about sensitive personal behavior and feelings. Your child does not need to answer any questions that s/he does not want to.

Your child's answers are confidential. We will not share them with the school. We will not report them individually or by name.

Your child's participation is voluntary. However, we hope that you let him/her be part of this study. It will help us learn more about good services for youth.

If you want your child to participate in the survey, you do not need to do anything. If you **DO NOT WANT** your child to answer the survey, please sign this form. Return it to the program office as soon as possible. If we don't hear from you, we will assume that you consent to your child's participation in this study.

If you have questions about this study or this consent form, please call me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

Thank you for your help in this important work.

Sincerely,

Evaluator Name

If you **DO NOT WANT** your child to participate in the survey, please check the box below and return this form to your child's program within the next week. (If we don't hear from you, we will assume you are letting your child take part in the study.)

☐

I DO NOT WANT my child to take part in the study.

(Youth's Name—Please print)

(Date of Birth)

(Name of Parent/Guardian)

(Date)

Appendix: Consent Forms, Examples

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN EVALUATION/RESEARCH

Dear Parent or Guardian:

_____ Agency regularly evaluates the outcomes for youth in youth programs. While your child is enrolled, we are likely to be studying our programs to see what kinds of things young people like about them and how they affect participants. We also want to know how the youth are changing as they mature and if and how things they do in the program contribute to those changes. We are especially interested in understanding more about *[communication skills (e.g., expressing yourself, listening to others, relaying information), decision-making and problem-solving skills (e.g., investigating options, understanding consequences), and how youth interact with other young people and adults (e.g., respecting differences, forming healthy friendships/relationships)]*.

During our regular course of operations, your child's group may be the subject of some program observations and your child may be asked to respond to surveys or interviews. All of his/her individual responses and specific observation notes will be kept strictly confidential; and you are free to inquire more directly about any evaluation activities that become scheduled for your child's group. By signing below, you are saying that your child can participate in any standard evaluation activities or studies that are conducted during regular program operations.

(Youth's Name)

has my consent to take part in any standard evaluation of _____
(Program Name)

(Your Name—please print)

(Your Signature)

(Today's Date)

What is your relationship to the youth named above? (Circle One)

Mother Father Legal Guardian Other: _____

Please contact _____ at the program if you have any questions or concerns.

(Program Director)



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