HOW TO MAKE YOUR PROGRAM/ORGANIZATION COUNT:
THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF PROGRAM EVALUATION
Sara Anne Tompkins, Ph.D.
Madipen, LLC

OVERVIEW
- Basics of Evaluation
  - Evaluate Step by Step
    - Logic Models & Theory of Change
    - Linking indicators to outcomes
  - Instrumentation
    - Methods
    - Use of broad measures
    - Designing your own
    - Use of Evaluations
- Evaluation Resources & Tools

INTRODUCTION
MADIPEN EVALUATION SERVICES

Experience
- The Manaus Fund
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Can Do Multiple Sclerosis

Services
- Program planning
- Evaluation for existing programs
- Personalized attention
- Training

WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD EVALUATION?

EVALUATION MYTHS

Myth: Evaluation is a complex science. I don’t have time to learn it!

Myth: It’s an event to get over with and then move on!

Myth: There’s a “right” way to do outcomes evaluation. What if I don’t get it right?

Myth: I always know what my clients need – I don’t need outcomes evaluation to tell me if I’m really meeting the needs of my clients or not
WHAT IS EVALUATION?

- A program evaluation is necessary to assess impact on participants.
  - The primary purpose, in addition to gaining insight into the program being evaluated, is to enable reflection and assist in the identification of future change - Tufo (2002)

- Centers around outcomes to help:
  - Progress project
  - For future generations

"If you don’t know where you are going, how are you gonna’ know when you get there?" - Yogi Berra

A NEW WAY OF THINKING...

FROM:
- What are you doing?
- What activities do you deliver?
- Who participates? How many?

TO:
- So what?
- What difference are you making?
- What results were achieved?
- Who benefited? How?

ACTIVITIES ➔ OUTCOMES

WHY IS EVALUATION IMPORTANT?

- Program objectives achieved?
- What is working? What is not?
- Knowledge into practice?
- Reporting/Justify current program funding
- Dissemination & Sustainability
 BASICS OF EVALUATION

Evaluate Step-by-Step
- **Plan ahead:** what changes do you want to make and how will you create the experiences for changes to happen?
- **Focus:** (What) are you ready to evaluate & manage?
  - Design: What--and how--will you ask about changes?
- **Methods:** What's the most feasible, reliable feedback?
  - Data Collection: How will you get the data?
- **Analyze & Interpret:** How do you make sense of data?
- **Use/Report:** How can everyone interested find out about the benefits or problems related to the experiences?

PLAN AHEAD

- A “blueprint” or “roadmap”
  - Utility, feasibility, propriety, & accuracy
  - Theory of Change
- Thinking about your stakeholders – who is involved?
- **Human Subjects**
- Who will do the evaluation?

VSP Learning with Love FOI TOC

MODERATORS: Moms in major crisis (e.g. DV), severe trauma

INTERVENTION TARGETS
- **MOM**
  - Building trusting social & community relationships
    - Knowledge about child development
    - Knowledge about their role as child’s teacher
    - Responsive interactions & other concrete skills to promote child development
    - Cultural/system navigation
  - Executive functioning

UNDERLYING CAPACITIES
- Knowledge, skills etc.

OUTCOMES
- Ultimate goals

CAREGIVER
- Thriving Moms
- Increased self-esteem/parenting confidence
- Improved
depression
- Improved Health
- Hence
dependence
- Improved Health
- Continued engagement in child's education
- Enhanced engagement
- Awareness of resources
- Usage of resources
- Understanding and advocacy for themselves and family

CHILD
- Improved child development (ASQ)
- Academic success
FOCUS

Importance of a Logic Model
- Shows what a program will do and what it is to accomplish
- Series of “if-then” relationships that, if implemented as intended, lead to the desired outcome

Why Use a Logic Model?
- To maintain focus on data that will be most useful for telling the story of what you have accomplished
- To orient staff to what you want to accomplish and how you plan to do it
- To prevent “mission creep”

“Build the road and the road builds us.”
- Sri Lankan saying

USE A LOGIC MODEL TO DESCRIBE YOUR PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INPUTS</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program investments</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>External factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Long-term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent Education Program – Logic model

SITUATION: Local non-profit conducted a needs assessment and found majority of parents reported that they were having difficulty parenting and felt stressed as a result

INPUTS | OUTPUTS | OUTCOMES |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Design evidence-based program of 8 sessions</td>
<td>Parents increase knowledge of child development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Facilitate support groups</td>
<td>Parents better understand their own parenting style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Parents gain skills in new ways to parent</td>
<td>Parents use effective parenting practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Parents gain confidence in their abilities</td>
<td>Improved child-parent relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced stress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE FOR EVALUATING**

We are conducting an evaluation of __________ (name of program) because __________ in order to __________.

**Example:** We are conducting an evaluation of the Early Literacy Program because we want to know to what extent youth who participate change attitudes about and increase time spent in early literacy behaviors in order to report program outcomes to our funder.

**WHO WANTS TO KNOW WHAT ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO?</th>
<th>WHAT do you/they want to know?</th>
<th>HOW will they use the info?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You – staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

- Clarify your evaluation questions
- Make them specific
- What do you need to know vs. what you would like to know
- Prioritize
- Check: Will answers to these questions provide important and useful information?
Possible evaluation questions...

- Assess parent ed programs
- Design & deliver evidence-based program of 8 sessions
- Facilitate support groups
- Parents:
  - Increased knowledge of child dev
  - Better understand their own parenting style
  - Use effective parenting practices
- Improved child-parent relations
- Research:
  - Facilitate support groups
  - Parents gain skills in effective parenting practices
  - Identify appropriate actions to take
  - Strong families
  - Parents of 3-10 year olds attend

To what extent is stress reduced? relations improved?
To what extent did behaviors change? For whom? Why? What else happened?
To what extent did knowledge and skills increase? For whom? Why? What else happened?
Did all parents participate as intended? Who did not? Did they attend all sessions? Level of satisfaction?
Were all sessions delivered? How well? Do support groups meet?
What amount of $ and time were invested? Did all parents participate as intended? Who did not? Did they attend all sessions? Level of satisfaction?

Outputs vs. Outcomes

Example:
Number of children who complete a early literacy program is an output. Percentage of completers who are capable of achieving independent reading skills is an outcome.

Not how many worms the bird feeds its young, but how well the fledgling flies
(United Way of America, 1999)

Outcomes & Indicators

Outcomes
- Benefits to clients from participation in the program
  - Enhanced learning (knowledge, perceptions/attitudes or skills) or conditions, e.g., increased literacy, self-reliance, etc.

Indicators
- What would it look like?
- How would I know it?
- If I were a visitor, what would I see, hear, read, that would tell me this “thing” exists?

If the outcome is achieved, how will you know it? What will it look like? What is the evidence?
Parent Education Example: Evaluation questions, indicators

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- Parents increase knowledge of child development
- Parents better understand their own parenting style
- Parents use effective parenting practices
- Improved child-parent relations

RESEARCH

- Facilitate support groups
- Parents gain skills in new ways to parent
- Parents identify appropriate actions to take

To what extent is stress reduced?
To what extent are relations improved?
To what extent did behaviors change? For whom? Why?
What else happened?
To what extent did knowledge and skills increase? For whom? Why?
What else happened?

Who/how many attended/did not attend? Did they attend all sessions? Were they satisfied – why/why not?
How many sessions were held? How effectively? #, quality of support groups?
What amount of $ and time were invested?

INDICATORS

- # Staff
- $ used
- # partners
- # Sessions held
- Quality criteria

- #,% attended per session
- Certificate of completion
- #,% demonstrating increased knowledge/skills

- Additional outcomes
- #,% demonstrating changes
- Types of changes

OUTCOME INDICATORS:

- Improved Parenting Skills
  - #,% who improve their parenting communication
  - #,% who increase parenting self-efficacy
  - #,% who have improved parenting behaviors

- Participating children improve school readiness
  - #,% who improve vocabulary
  - #,% who read every day for 30 min
  - #,% who improve attitudes toward reading
  - #,% who improve on observational assessments

- Participating families improve their family financial management
  - #,% with savings goal set
  - #,% with debt reduction goal set
  - #,% using spending plan
  - #,% maintaining emergency fund

HOW GOOD IS THE INDICATOR?

Tangible – be able to “touch/know” the information in some way
- see (observable)
- read (in newspaper, survey, client record)
- hear (from individual, others)

○ Direct
○ Specific and clearly defined
○ Useful
○ Practical
○ Culturally appropriate
○ Adequate
Indicators are often expressed as numbers or percentages (number of..., percent of..., ratio of..., incidence of..., proportion of...). However.....

"Not everything that counts can be counted."

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**DESIGN**

- **"When" and "how" of your data collection plan**
  - Match your conclusions to your methods

- **Project Implementation Rigor**
  - Create standardized program materials
  - Quarterly facilitator feedback report

- **Data Protocol Plan**
  - Clearly lays out data collection, management, analysis and interpretation

- **Gives you confidence in your findings**

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**EVALUATION DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

- **Who to ask?**
  - Often Convenience Sampling

- **When to collect your data?**
  - Post survey
  - Retrospective post survey
  - Pre/post survey
  - Pre/post with longer-term follow-up (e.g., 1-month)

- **Type of information you need.**
  - Numbers, percent, comparisons, stories, examples, etc.
### Methods of Data Collection

#### Sources of Information
- Existing data
  - Program records, attendance logs, etc
  - Pictures, charts, maps, pictorial records
- Program participants
- Others: key informants, nonparticipants, proponents, critics, staff, collaborators, funders, etc.

#### Data Collection Methods
- Survey
- Interview
- Test
- Observation
- Group techniques
- Case study
- Photography
- Document review
- Expert or peer review

### Ask Yourself...
- Is your method cultural appropriate?
- What resources do you have available?
- Will the information appear as credible to decision makers?
- Do you use program theory to link activities to results and describe what the program did?
- How will your data be analyzed?
  - Colorado Nonprofit Association

### What Questions to Ask!?
- Importance of Outcomes
- Mixed model’s recommended
  - Specific outcomes (e.g., knowledge and skills)
  - Broad outcomes (e.g., stress)
  - Process outcomes (e.g., satisfaction)
- Example: Early Learning Program
  - Standardized Measures (e.g., New Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – III)
  - Preschool reading attitude scale
  - Play-based observational assessment
  - In-depth interviews or open ended questions with parents/caregivers
PROGRAM SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Beliefs — attitudes, opinions
- Behaviors — what people do or what they intended to do
- Attributes/Demographics — background

Example:
How do you feel about sharing a book with a friend?

EXAMPLES OF SOME PROGRAM SPECIFIC SURVEY QUESTIONS

2. As a result of your participating in the program, have you or do you plan to make any changes in your life (e.g., increase exercise, better nutrition, better medication adherence, stop smoking, etc.)?
   ○ Yes  ○ No  ○ Undecided

2a. If yes, what behaviors did you or do you intend to change? (Check all that apply)
   - Increase my amount of exercise/physical activity
   - Make a healthy change to my diet
   - Modify my use of alcohol
   - Improve my taking of my medications as prescribed
   - Make an effort to stop smoking
   - Learn more about mindfulness
   - Learn more about managing stress
   - Explore ways to integrate intellectually stimulating activities into my life
   - Talk to my doctor about a lifestyle or unconventional therapy (e.g., acupuncture)
   - Other

2b. If no, please tell us why you did not make a change or plan to do so and how the program could have helped to encourage you to make wellness-focused changes:

EXAMPLES OF SOME PROGRAM SPECIFIC SURVEY QUESTIONS

4. Would you recommend the program to others?
   ○ Yes  ○ Maybe  ○ No  ○ Undecided

5. As a result of the program, have you or do you plan to get more involved with the MS Society?
   ○ Yes  ○ No  ○ Undecided

5a. In what ways do you plan to get more involved? (Check all that apply):
   - Register for, attend or use another Society program or service
   - Sign up to receive email alerts about advocacy
   - Register to receive email alerts about fundraising events (e.g., Walk MS, Bike MS, etc.)
   - Volunteer for the Society
   - Visit www.nationalMSsociety.org for information
   - Call MS Navigator at 1-800-344-4867 for information, resources, or support
   - Attend a self-help group meeting
   - Connect with others living with MS via www.msconnection.org
   - Other (please specify)

6. Please share any suggestions you have to improve the program:

7. Please share anything that you feel you might have gained from attending the program:
### Examples of Some Program Specific Survey Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learned more information about processing wellness and living with MS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can more clearly of MS resources available to me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel better able to cope with MS challenges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel like I have more support in coping with my MS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned new skills/strategies to improve my well-being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see the Society as an involved place for resources and programs to improve well-being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Broad Outcomes
- Outcomes that are broad in scope and impact
- Pre-existing valid & reliable
- Saves you time, money, effort
- Can be used in one area across multiple programs & multiple sites

#### Examples:
- Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (Harms et al., 2003)
- Social Skills Rating Scale (PsychCorp)
- Parenting Self-Efficacy (Dumka et al., 1996)
- Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, 1988)
- Psychological Well-Being (Blais, 1998)
- Self-esteem (Rosenberg et al., 1989)

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### Broad Measures
- Where can I find these?
  - Start with programs/organizations in your field
  - Google Scholar
  - Government websites (e.g., HHS, ACF)
  - Journal/Online library database to search for measures
    - Scifinder
    - PsychInfo Database
    - PubMed
    - Academic Search Premier
- Always want to make sure you have the most recent version & it has been used with a similar population
- Always make sure you get permission and give credit
EXAMPLE OF BROAD OUTCOMES: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Part 6 Instructions: Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feeling about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completely Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Completely Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. At times I think I am capable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel I have made it to be proud of.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I certainly feel useful at times.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I have respect for myself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a success.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHEN YOU HAVE TO CREATE YOUR OWN SURVEYS...

- You know what it is you want to know and are reasonably sure that you can ask standardized questions to get the information.

- Good Questionnaires are NOT EASY......
  - Developing a good questionnaire, takes time, time, and more time
  - Requires multiple drafts
  - Important to involve others
SURVEY DESIGN

- **Step 1 (Information):**
  - Be specific
  - Need to know vs. would like to know
  - Check to see if information exists elsewhere
  - What do you want to be able to say: counts, percentages, relationships, narratives

- **Step 2 (Sample):**
  - Who will complete the questionnaire?
  - What do you know about their preferences, abilities, and cultural characteristics that may affect the way they respond?
  - Ethics

- **Step 3 (Development):**
  - Make sure questions cover information needed
  - Word questions carefully
  - Consider cultural nuances
  - Sequence questions appropriately
  - Attend to formatting

- **Step 4 (Distribution):**
  - Distribution: when, where (paper or online e.g., survey monkey)
  - Return: when, where
  - Follow-up

- **Step 5 (Explanation):**
  - Purpose & Importance
  - Anonymous or confidential
  - Signature/sponsorship

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- How will returns be managed & analyzed?
- Pre-testing
- Culturally appropriate
- Reading level
- Avoid abbreviations & jargon
- Avoid leading & double barreled questions
- Anchor your responses clearly & logically

USE ME
Don't Litter

USE IT OR LOSE IT!
Use Infographics to visually display your evaluation outcomes

- Put graphs & quotes on your website or social media page
- Press Release
- Send to local government offices
- Create a poster to display in your office and for participants to see why you have them complete surveys
- Newsletter on a quarterly bases to Stakeholders
FINAL THOUGHTS....

- Usually the first 20% of effort will generate the first 80% of the plan, and this is far better than nothing.
- There is no "perfect" evaluation design.
- Work hard to include some interviews in your evaluation methods. Questionnaires don’t capture “the story,” and the story is usually the most powerful depiction of the benefits of your services.
- Don’t interview just the successes.
- Don’t throw away evaluation results once a report has been generated.

RESOURCES/HANDOUTS

Resources:
- American Evaluation Association
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- University of Wisconsin-Extension/Program Development and Evaluation
- Foundation Center
- Basic guide to outcomes-based evaluation for nonprofit organization with very limited resources, Carter McNamara
- Colorado Nonprofit Association

Handouts:
- Slides available online
- Resource List with my contact information

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!!!

References:
- Colorado Nonprofit Association, Effective Evaluation, 2010
- Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD, Authenticity Consulting, LLC. Adapted from the Field Guide to Nonprofit Program Design, Marketing and Evaluation

Questions or Need Evaluation Help:
Sara.anne.tompkins@hotmail.com