Fanning the Fatherhood FIRE:
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T1
Evaluation: Learning More in Order to Do More

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Why Do an Evaluation?

• An evaluation can answer important questions and provide information for continual program improvement
• It contributes to larger public policy and connects you to larger service and policy communities
• It can be a tool for sustainability
• Evaluations are sometimes required with the receipt of funding
What Can You Expect from a Process Evaluation?

• Answers to “how” questions
• Answers to “how many” questions
• Answers to “how well” questions
Examples of Process Evaluation Measures

• Characteristics of program participants or staff
• Frequency, length, and duration of services
• How clients participated (dosage)
• Fidelity to the program model
• Participant satisfaction
What Can You Expect from an Outcome Evaluation?

• Answers to “how much more” questions
• Answers to “how much less” questions
• Answers to “is it more than” questions
• Answers to “is it less than” questions
Examples of Measures that an Outcome Evaluation Can Address

- Improved parent-child relations
- Decreased reports of homelessness in fathers who attended
- Increased knowledge and use of positive parenting practices
- Increased months of employment
- Increased time spent with child
How do I Decide on the Research Question?

• Is the answer of interest to my program/funders/policy community?
• Does my logic model suggest it can be answered by my program?
• Will the data be available to answer the question?
• Will I have the resources to answer the question?
• Will I have the sample needed to answer the question?
• Will I have the time needed to answer the question?
What is a Logic Model?

- Inputs: project resources
- Activities or interventions: response to target population’s needs
- Outputs: immediate results that can be measured through process/output measures
- Outcomes: short-term, intermediate, or long-term changes
Why Develop a Logic Model?

- Provides a “roadmap”
- Builds consensus
- Offers a visual summary
- Identifies issues with your program’s design and evaluation
- Useful as a “reference point”
- Monitors your program
- Facilitates comparisons across programs
Logic Model Example

Goal: How program elements drive mediators/outcomes

**What students receive in ALAP**
- FINANCIAL AID: Disbursement of aid every two weeks as it is earned
- COMMUNICATION: Messages about aid and financial management

**How it changes their college experience**
- Have money regularly when they need financial support
- Feel financial incentive to continue in classes
- Develop better budgeting and money management skills
- Learn how to balance their time working and studying

**How these experiences lead to outcomes**

- ACADeMIC
  - Better performance in classes
  - Successful completion of courses
  - Increased persistence
  - More credits earned over time
  - Increased rate of college completion or transfer

- FINANCIAL
  - Less financial stress
  - Lower likelihood of withdrawal before 60% semester benchmark
  - Reduced amount of aid owed to college due to lower withdrawal
  - Reduced borrowing
  - Reduced debt
  - Increased net financial aid
What are the Key Pillars of a Winning Evaluation Design?

• Rigor of the design
• Feasibility of the design
• Research question
Stay in touch with us!

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For more information please visit
Evaluation Resource Guide for Responsible Fatherhood Programs
Common Framework for Research and Evaluation
Implementation Research Incubator