



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance

Evaluation: Tips and Tools to Document and Impact Your Work with Fathers

March 31, 2009

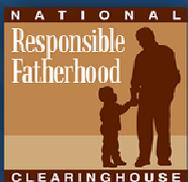
2pm – 3:30pm EST

Moderator:

Nigel Vann: NRFC Director of Training & Technical Assistance

Presenters:

Susan Racine Passmore, James Bell and Associates
Irene Luckey, South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families





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Strengthening Program Evaluation, Analysis and Reporting

Susan Racine Passmore, PhD
Evaluation Consultant
James Bell Associates





Goals of Presentation

Ideas to:

- Strengthen Program Evaluation
- Approach Data Analysis
- Present Data
- Use Findings



I. Strengthening: How is the evaluation working?

Reviewing procedures/tools/personnel:

- Review logic model. Does evaluation still reflect project goals?
- Initiate informal discussions/observations regarding the evaluation
- Hold focus groups/interviews with staff and participants to discover their views
- Keep in touch with external evaluators



I. Strengthening: Improving the power of data

- Adding Follow-up Data Collection
 - Feasible? Realistic?
- Increasing Response Rates
 - Get Tracking Information early on
 - Tailored Approach – who is the population?
 - Consider methods (mail vs. internet)
 - Non-response follow-up – phone, in-person, email?
 - Incentives – monetary or not?



I. Strengthening: Improving the power of data

Adding a Mixed Methods Approach

- Qualitative data collection
 - Process – staff/participant views of project implementation
 - Outcome – Views, observations about change (ex: spouses)
- Some qualitative methods to consider:
 - Focus Groups
 - Interviews
 - Observations
 - Case notes review



I. Strengthening: When to seek technical assistance?

- Tool(s) are not appropriate or working right
- Procedures not producing results
 - Ex: Low response rates
- Unsure how to implement/change data collection
- Unsure of “next steps” of analysis and reporting
- Unsure of your relationship with the external evaluator



II. Analysis

- Implementation objective data and analysis
 - Describe what you did (ex: who was served?) and compare to original objectives
 - Barriers / Facilitating Factors encountered
 - Qualitative methods?
- Outcome objective data and analysis
 - What *CHANGE* (behavior, knowledge, skills, attitudes) occurred in participants?
 - Did some change more than others? Why?



II. Analysis: Types of Data

Quantitative Data Analysis

- Descriptive vs. Statistical Analysis
 - Sample size, capacity, need
- Develop hypotheses about findings and explore
 - i.e. what are the factors that might have influenced results. Time period? Segment of the population?



II. Analysis: Types of Data

Qualitative Data Analysis

- Analysis vs. listing
 - Ex: focus groups with spouses
- Using software tools
 - Evaluate capacity and need



II. Analysis: Discussion of findings/interpretation

- Were implementation objectives attained?
 - Why? Why not?
- What does the *CHANGE* (or lack) mean?
 - Don't just present data or statistical tests
- Report:
 - All data and analysis
 - Influential factors in the population, staff, agency, or community
 - Differences in the target population
 - Any other factors on data



III. Presentation

- Why?
 - The value of telling your story – successes and “failures”
- How?
 - Use clear language
 - Describe the project and the evaluation methodology thoroughly
 - Use tables and charts effectively (and sparingly)
 - Does it add to the reader’s understanding?
 - Integrate Qualitative Data



IV. Uses of Evaluation Findings

- Improving fatherhood program services
 - Present and Future
- Dissemination
 - Press releases, newsletters, community presentations, or online
 - Presentations at professional meetings or journal articles



Resources:

The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation. An Evaluation Series from the Administration on Children and Families

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other_resrch/pm_guide_eval/reports/pmguide/pmguide_toc.html

The 2002 User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation. The National Science Foundation. Directorate for Education and Human Resources. Division of Research, Evaluation and Communication.

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf02057/nsf02057.pdf>

Measuring Outcomes. Intermediary Development Series. Compassion Capital Fund National Resource Center.

http://acf.ccfgrantees.org/resources/gbk_pdf/om_gbk.pdf

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

Dillman, Don (2007) Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method. Wiley



For more specific guidance on finding conducting an
outcome evaluation
contact your Federal Program Officer or
James Bell Associates for assistance.



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Evaluation: Lessons Learned

Irene Luckey, PhD
Research Associate Professor
Institute for Families in Society – University of South Carolina





Overarching comment about Evaluation

Make evaluation an integral part of the overall program operations.

- Include staff from the start and throughout the evaluation process



Importance of Staff in Evaluation Process

- Staff buy-in is essential to the evaluation process.
- Program staff has direct contact and relationship with program participants therefore the staff's outlook and attitude toward data collection and documentation may influence participants' attitude toward the same.
- Program staff will likely administer pre/post tests for group sessions which mean they are in a position to influence how the tests are actually administered.

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Importance of Staff in Evaluation Process

- Program staff plays a major role in ensuring the accuracy of data collected and submitted for analysis.
- Program staff may be helpful with interpreting the data.
- Program staff is in a good position to detect some data collection problems.



Ways to Address Program Evaluation Challenges

- Make sure the staff see the big picture of how data they are asked to collect will help program participants and the program as a whole.
- Ensure that staff know why each question is asked.

Continue....



Ways to Address Program Evaluation Challenges

- Show how the data can be used to help staff
 - improve service delivery
 - assess progress toward goals
 - improve outcomes
- Let program participants know the important contribution they make by carefully completing forms and providing accurate information.

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Ways to Address Program Evaluation Challenges

- Be sure all requested data is written or verbally asked at a level appropriate to participants' level of reading and comprehension.
 - Literacy level may require questions to be read to participants.
- Use closed-ended questions as much as possible for written responses.
- Software used for data entry must be user-friendly.

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Ways to Address Program Evaluation Challenges

- Make sure the staff knows how to use the software to correctly enter data.
- Only gather data that is necessary.
 - Limit the number of questions as much as possible
 - Be sure that the questions are direct and precise
 - Make sure that staff is clear as to why each question is required to be asked.

Continue...



Ways to Address Program Evaluation Challenges

- Be sure to look at the participant satisfaction responses and address areas where adjustments are needed.
- Continuously monitor the data to detect potential problems that may be occurring with data input and or data collection.
- With fatherhood programs particularly, it is very likely that follow-up will need to be achieved through “leg work” efforts rather than mailings and phone calls.



Final Comments

- Generally, data collection, documentation and evaluation are not areas of expertise for staff at the programs. Thus, patience, encouragement and repetition of instructions and directions are needed in order to get desired results.
- Focus on how the data can help in service delivery and sustainability rather than using it just for reports required by funding agencies.

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Final Comments

- Evaluation needs to be seen as an integral part of your program that can be helpful throughout the tenure of your program and not just a product produced at the end of specified reporting periods.
- Evaluation is an ongoing process.



Thank you for participating!

If you have other comments or suggested topics
for future Webinars:

Email:

info@fatherhood.gov

Or Call:

1-877-4DAD411

Or provide your feedback to your Federal Project Officer.