

Grant Measurements and Evaluation

Measurement and evaluation of your grant project consists of monitoring **OUTPUTS** and **OUTCOMES**. These communicate your standards, your ability to deliver services, and the value that your efforts contribute to your clients and community. Understanding the difference between outputs and outcomes is essential to doing this well.

OUTPUTS are the tangible results from the actions you take.

OUTCOMES are the individual and community benefits associated with the those results.

For example: the number of teachers and care providers who successfully complete social-emotional curriculum training, and the reduced incidence (frequency) of preschoolers' acting out in school are outputs; the tangible result of training is teachers and children using positive new ways to interact. The measure of the benefit of this new interaction is the outcome: children's academic scores and social skills improve due to decreased classroom disruption and out-of-school suspensions; more preschool children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

STEPS IN AN EVALUATION PLAN

Motivation

Objective(s): This is the stated purpose(s) for your project, e.g. Increase the number of children demonstrating academic and social preparedness for success in kindergarten.

Project Design

Sources: **Who** has the information we'll need to collect? **What** are the measurable criteria and expectations for each objective? Have we considered both quantitative and qualitative measures? Do our expectations correlate to other related community initiatives/objectives?

Methods: **How** and **When** will the information be gathered? Who will gather the data? How frequently do measures occur? What will be the data documentation and storage process? What is our reporting frequency?

Data Collection

Sample: From whom will the data be collected? Will collection be from one large group or various sub-sections of a larger group?

Instruments: What research instruments will be used and why? Will we use a standardized, best-practice performance scale and/or a custom project-specific method? What variables will be relevant for us to consider when identifying or creating our tools – age, culture, language, geographic location, etc?

Analysis

Data analysis is the process of reviewing and modeling the information we collect to identify the useful ways it applies to the project – how it explains behaviors, informs conclusions and supports decision-making. Three standard steps include to evaluate, clean and summarize the information.

Interpretation

Interpretation is the process by which various data inputs are reviewed, aggregated, and discussed, in order that meaning can be assigned and conclusions can be drawn related to the project.

Communication

Your project results and conclusions have relevance beyond the final grant report narrative. Consider making a plan for sharing your new insights with various audiences via personal presentation, as a poster display or "one-pager" document, or by submitting to a peer-reviewed research publication.