Identifying Outcomes

Week 11

March 31, 2009

Sources of Outcome Data
(A Review)

- Anecdotes→ Patterns

- Surveys, evaluation instruments

- Observations

- Participant-related projects (gain the ability to do something)

- Records kept by the agency

- You may want to suggest ways for your agency to continue your work

HLLH Outcome Categories/Domains

- **Access:** Increase access to information, knowledge, culture
- **Savings:** Save people time, money, & energy
- **Place:** People found a safe, comfortable, accommodating, and nurturing environment
- **Attitudes:** Changed attitudes and perceptions about libraries, librarians, community, etc.
- **Personal Efficacy:** Personal efficacy gains (self esteem, confidence, etc.)
- **Problem-solving:** People progress toward a goal or solve a problem
- **Skills:** Increased skills (Internet, literacy, language, communication, social, coping, etc.)
- **Learning:** Learning or knowledge gains (including fostering active involvement in learning—"lifelong learning" "information literacy")
- **Connections:** People make connections (with ideas, people, to a larger world)
- **Engagement:** Community connectedness (increased social capital, become more informed or involved as a citizen)
- **Advancement:** Status changes (people prepare to get a job, become a citizen, decide to return to school)
- **Community:** Community building (civic problem-solving, partnerships, collaboration)

Making Connections: A Neighborhood Transformation Family Development Initiative

brought about by the Annie E. Casey Foundation

Outcome Domains
for a
Neighborhood
Development
Project
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Outcome Domains for a Neighborhood Development Project can be found at
http://tarc.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/mcid/domain_main.php.

Sample Candidate Outcomes

- In HLLH we suggested candidate outcomes that arise from an initial study, some of which may be adopted

- Agencies can then measure them on an ongoing basis

- HLLH identifies outcome domain areas and candidate outcomes from specific studies

- Rhea Rubin has identified scores of "candidate outcomes" that may help jog your own identification process

Outcome Indicators:

- The evidence; e.g., how we know the specific differences that particular program activities make

- Indicators reveal or demonstrate the change in knowledge, skill gains, etc;

- They are the first step toward measurement

- On an ongoing basis agencies who focus on outcomes will set targets & calculate the percentage of those achieving a particular outcome

Early indicators of 'outcomes' of PL services

- got ideas/understandings about something;
- accomplished something;
- decided what to do or when or how to do it;
- got rest and relaxation and a quiet retreat;
- got motivated to do something;
- felt good about myself, my decision, my circumstances;
- calmed down and eased my worries;
- felt like I belonged and was not alone;
- got pleasure, entertainment, and happiness

Dervin & Clark (1987)

Image of Dervin
& Clark's
"outcomes" from
previous slide
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This image can be found at
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/contentdelivery/servlet/
ERICServlet?accno=ED286519, p 29.

Dervin, B., & Clark, K. D. (1987-04). ASQ: Asking significant questions:
Alternative tools for information need and accountability assessments
by libraries. Sacramento, CA: California State Library (ERIC Document
Reproduction Service No. ED286519.)

Rhea Rubin's Outcomes Continuum removed

Rhea Rubin's Outcomes Continuum can be found in on page 17 of the Microsoft Word document at

http://mblc.state.ma.us/grants/lsta/manage/obe/rubinobemanual.doc.

Your Own Outcomes Continuum

- 623 outcome studies are generally **NOT** quantifiable because our aim is to provide the agency with "candidate" outcomes

- Most graphic representations of 623 outcomes, however, are designed as a continuum.

- Caution: Include both high-end and low-end outcomes; don't be afraid of identifying negative outcomes.

Short-Term & Long Range Outcomes

- This distinction is often made in outcome studies
- Short term outcomes may be more readily achieved;
- Long-range outcomes are likely to be more complex, even more meaningful-but a likely to require more exposure to the program OR time
- Radio Works: An Example

Radio Works Short Term Outcomes

1999-2000

- Improvement in competency in life skill areas

Before   After

40%   67%

- 45% reported increased time spent sharing books with their kids

2000-2001

- Improvement in competency in life skill areas

Before   After

49%   73%

- 59% reported increased participate in school conferences

- 36% enrolled in literacy program

Radio Works Long-Range Outcomes (4 Years Later)-72% response rate

- 100% had enrolled in a literacy program; all but one had increased scores on a standardized literacy test;

- 100% reported that the *Radio Works!* project had helped to improve their life skills.

- 70% say that the project helped them communicate with employers and coworkers.

- 100% reported that they attend school meetings.

- 85% do pre-literacy activities with their children.

- 70% attended library story times with their children.

- 95% check out library books for themselves.

- 48% demonstrated both increased skill and increased confidence by submitting writings for a student book.

Preparing Your Agency for Ongoing Outcome Assessment

- Provide "candidate" outcomes from which they can choose

- Provide them resources that can help them take the next steps toward
  - Identifying outcomes on an ongoing basis,
  - Determine indicators for each outcome
  - Set targets for their outcomes
  - Develop a data collection plan
  - Monitoring the outcomes they have chosen

Selected Outcome Resources
for Busy Practitioners

- Rhea Rubin. (2006) Demonstrating Results: Using Outcome Measurement in Your Library. Chicago: ALA Books.

- Harry P. Hatry, et al (2006) How Effective Are Your Community Services? Procedures for Performance Measurement, 3rd ed. ICMA.

- http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/index.htm IMLS

- Your recommended resources, given the context of your agency.

Image of the Logic Model from Shaping Outcomes removed

The image can be found at
http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/model/index.htm
or
http://web.archive.org/web/20070729051024/http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/model/index.htm

Outcomes Clinic