SI 623 - Outcome-Based Evaluation of Programs and Services, Winter 2009

Durrance, Joan C.

http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/64952
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

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)
This image can be found at

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: 40%  After: 67%
• 45% reported increased time spent sharing books with their kids

2000-2001
• Improvement in competency in life skill areas
  Before: 49%  After: 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

- http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/index.htm IMLS
- Your recommended resources, given the context of your agency.
The image can be found at
http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/model/index.htm
or
Outcomes Clinic