EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT 101: AN INTRODUCTION TO KEY CONCEPTS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN’S ORGANIZATIONS CONFERENCE
National Juvenile Justice Evaluation Center (NJJEC)

- A project of JRSA funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
- Improve the ability of states, tribes, and local communities to evaluate their juvenile justice programs
- Facilitate the use of evidence-based practices in juvenile justice
Goals for Today:

- Understand the value of program monitoring and evaluation in program sustainability

- Gain a working, useable knowledge of basics regarding performance measurement and evaluation
What do you hope to learn today?
Why Measure Program Performance?

- **COMPETE** for grant funding, sponsorship, donations
- **TRACK** program implementation in an objective, systematic way
- **MODIFY** program design and implementation to improve outcomes
- **DEMONSTRATE** that the program is accomplishing its objectives
- **FACILITATE** agency planning and budgeting
- **ADHERE** to federal requirements
- **CONTRIBUTE** to knowledge about what works
OJJDP and Performance Measurement

- Per federal legislation, all grantees must provide data that measures the results of their work
- OJJDP has developed measures for each funding stream
- Quarterly data are submitted online

EXAMPLE: Child Protection Division Fellowship Program on Children’s Exposure to Violence

- Number of people trained
- Number of trainings held
- Number of program policies changed, improved, or rescinded

See www.ojjdp.gov for more examples
Today’s Topics

- Performance measurement v. Evaluation
- Key terms in performance measurement
- Logic models
- How to write performance measures
- Working with an evaluator
- Next steps
Performance Measurement v. Evaluation
Performance Measurement

- Concerned with collecting information to determine whether a program is achieving its objectives
- Focus on performance measures (program implementation and/or outcome measures) and reporting program outcomes
- Information is used to improve program operation and/or design
Evaluation

- Assesses the effectiveness of a program in achieving its objectives
- Determines whether program outcome(s) can be attributed to the program or other factors
- Aims at program improvement through modification of program operation and/or design
Use Performance Measurement and Evaluation…

- INTERNALLY, to improve program effectiveness and implementation
- EXTERNALLY, to advocate for continued or additional funding and support and contribute to knowledge in your field
Performance Measurement Answers:
- Are we serving our target population?
- Are activities being implemented as planned?
- Are we accomplishing our objectives?

Evaluation Answers:
- The same questions as performance measurement
  AND….
- Can outcomes be attributed to program activities?
- Did one intervention have a greater impact on outcomes than another intervention?
How are Performance Measurement and Evaluation Similar?

- Focus on performance
- Information can be used for monitoring and improvement
- There are many ways to design performance measurements and evaluations
- For both approaches, some designs are stronger than others
- Performance measurement generates evaluative information
How are Performance Measurement and Evaluation Different?

- Evaluation uses means to determine whether the outcomes of the program can be attributed to the program or other factors
  - For example:
    - Comparison or control groups
    - Random assignment to treatment
- Evaluation provides more information regarding program performance
Key Terms in Performance Measurement
Performance Measures

- **Process (a.k.a. Output) Measures**: address program implementation; directly tied to *activities*

- **Outcome Measures**: address program accomplishments; directly tied to *objectives*

**Example:**
- Internet safety video is shown to 50 children [PROCESS]
- 45/50 children pass internet safety test after watching video [OUTCOME]
Examples of Process Measures

- Number of participants who completed an classroom-based internet safety program during the school year
- Number of fliers distributed with information regarding missing children in the past year
- Number of Child ID cards created during a one-month period
Examples of Outcome Measures

- Changes in internet safety knowledge among parents, children, and teens
- Changes in child behavior related to personal safety
- Speed of community responses to reports of missing children
- Number of missing children recovered safely

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Definitions of Goals, Objectives, Activities

- **Goals** speak to the overarching mission of a program and are generally limited to one. May not be reached during program operation.

- **Objectives** are measurable, identify the target population, offer a timeframe for completion, and expected direction of change.

- **Activities** are very specific tasks that will be pursued during the program’s operation.
Example of an **unclear goal:**
- To reduce internet victimization of youth

Example of a **clear goal:**
- To reduce internet-related victimization of middle and high school students nationwide through education and empowerment programming

Example of an **unclear objective:**
- To increase youth awareness about internet victimization

Example of a **clear objective:**
- To increase middle and high school students’ internet safety awareness during the 2011-2012 school year
Example of an **unclear activity:**
- Hold internet safety programs for youth

Example of a **clear activity:**
- Hold classroom-based age-appropriate internet safety programs for middle and high school students once a month during the 2011-2012 school year
Differentiating Objectives and Activities

- Plan to do = Activity
- Want to do because... = Objective
Writing Objectives and Activities

Objectives

- To improve the ability of law enforcement to respond to missing child reports
- Provide counseling services to all teenagers in the county who report experiencing dating violence

Activities

- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- Provide counseling services to all teenagers in the county who report experiencing dating violence
Logic Models
Logic Model

- Connect elements of program: goals, objectives, activities, performance measures
Program Theory: Internet Safety

- Specifies the logical relationships between the program's goal(s), objectives, and activities.

IF age-appropriate internet safety resources and information are offered to parents of teenagers [activity] THEN the ability of parents to teach teens about internet safety will increase [objective]

And IF parents disseminate internet safety resources and information to teenagers [activity] THEN teens will be more aware of internet safety issues and take steps to protect themselves [objective].

THEN Internet victimization of teenagers will be reduced. [goal]
Child Abduction Prevention Program: Goal

- Prevent child abduction nationwide through school-based awareness programs.
Child Abduction Prevention Program: Objectives

During the 2011-2012 school year, increase the number of elementary school children who are aware of suspicious behaviors that may result in abduction.
Child Abduction Prevention Program: Activities

- Provide parents of elementary school children with facts, tips, and discussion starters on child abduction on a web site.
- Provide elementary school children in 100 schools with a training on how to respond during an attempted abduction.
- Disseminate age-appropriate information to elementary school children on a web site about “bad” adult behaviors that could be harmful to children.
Selecting Performance Measures

- Is this a good measure?
- Do I have enough measures?
- How do I define and select measures?
How to write performance measures
Defining and Selecting Measures

- Clear definition of terms and how they are measured
- How specific does the measure need to be?
  - Are you making comparisons across agencies?
  - To whom is the measure being reported?

Example:
- “Clients served”
  - Who are the clients?
    - Individuals or groups?
  - What is the time frame for service?
    - E.g., in the past year, in the past month
  - Does the type of service matter?
Is This a Good Measure?

- Objective indicator of success
- Relevant- Directly related to objective (outcome measure) or activity (process measure)
- Clear and specific
- Able to indicate gradations of success
- Reliable- If you use it multiple times will you get the same result?
- Valid- Does it actually elicit the intended information?
Is This a Good Measure?

- Will it produce findings that you will be able to analyze and understand?
- Practical (e.g., Is it too long, complex, or expensive?)
- Is it reasonable to expect that the program/intervention can affect the measure?
- Are other similar programs using this performance measure?
- Do you have measures to indicate positive and negative results?
Improving Your Measures

- Number of fliers distributed
- Number of missing child fliers distributed within 48 hours of missing child report
- Number of missing child fliers distributed in the past year within 48 hours of missing child report
Performance Measure: Process or Outcome?

- **Prevention programs**
  - Number of children attending sessions during the past year
  - Percent of attendees exhibiting improved subject knowledge after training

- **Child recovery programs**
  - Number of volunteers involved in physical searches for missing children during the past year
  - Percent of missing children safely recovered
Do I Have Enough Measures?

- Logic Model and Program Theory
- Process and Outcome
- Address Key Activities and Objectives
- Short and Long Term
- Multiple Process and Outcome Measures (3-5 each)
Exercise: Create A Logic Model

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL:</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PROCESS MEASURES</th>
<th>OUTCOME MEASURES</th>
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After data collection:

- Minimally, be able to present numbers by type of service, population served, time frame
- Educate grantors, sponsors, and legislators on what the program can reasonably accomplish
- All results should be used and shared internally and externally
- Share good and bad results to facilitate learning and improvement
Working with an Evaluator
Should I do an evaluation?

- Are you meeting objectives?
- Do you have capacity to participate in data collection?
- Well-defined logic model
- Do you have unanswered questions regarding cause-effect?
- Time to wait for evaluation
- Resources to expend on evaluation
- Seeking objective assessment of program
How do I work with an evaluator?

Seek:
- Graduate-level training
- Experience in program evaluation
- Philosophy match
  - Collaborative v. independent
- Communication skills

Develop:
- Timeline
- Task list
- Products
How do I work with an evaluator? (Cont.)

Find:
- Professional Organizations
  - American Evaluation Association,
    American Society of Criminology
- Colleges/ Universities
- State/ Local Agencies
- Federal Government
Next Steps

- What data are you currently collecting? Why?
- What questions do you want to answer about your program?
- Create or revise logic model(s)
- Make a plan for using the data you collect
Questions?