Evaluation Capacity Building and Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

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National Juvenile Justice Evaluation Center
A Project of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA)
National Juvenile Justice Evaluation Center (NJJEC)

- A project of JRSA funded by 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

http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/
Goals for Today:

• Explore the relationship among performance measurement, evaluation, and evidence-based practices in juvenile justice

• Discuss NJJEC Needs Assessment of OJJDP grantees
Purposes of Measuring 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 a program is accomplishing its objectives
Purposes of Measuring Performance (continued)

• FACILITATE agency planning and budgeting
• ADHERE to federal requirements
• CONTRIBUTE to knowledge about what works
• SHOW that program activities follow an evidence-based program plan
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
Key Terms in Performance Measurement

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

• **Outcome Measures**: address program accomplishments; directly tied to *objectives*
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
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?
After Data Collection:

• All results should be used and shared internally and externally
  – Grantors, sponsors, legislators, stakeholders
• Share good *and bad*: what has been accomplished, and how can you improve?
• Use process measures to assess whether program plan has been followed
Logic Models
Using Logic Models in Program Planning

• Logic model explains program theory
  – Specifies relationship between goals, objectives, and activities
  – Keeps program activities consistent with plan
  – Prevents mission creep

• Demonstrate that a proposed program is evidence-based
Goals, Objectives, Activities

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

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

- **Activities** are very specific tasks that will be pursued during the program’s operation.
Example Logic Model

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<th>GOAL:</th>
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<td>OBJECTIVES</td>
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Differentiating Objectives and Activities

• Plan to do = Activity
• Want to do because... = Objective

• Collect data for both objectives and activities
Making Performance Measurement Work for You

• Was the program implemented as intended?
  – What adjustments were made?
  – Why? What was the result?

• Demonstrate to granting agencies:
  – What went *right*
  – What went *wrong* and how this information will be used to improve the program in the future
Making Performance Measurement Work for You

• Reasons to collect supplemental performance measures
  – Program-specific
  – Audience-specific

• How do I develop my own performance measures?
Developing Performance Measures
Defining and Selecting Measures

- Different sources may produce different outcomes
  - E.g. self-report v. official data
- Clarity on how terms are defined is important
  - E.g. what does program completion really mean?
- Specificity on how an output (process) or outcome will be measured is important
  - E.g. will drug use be reported as any drug use (yes/no) OR number of times used drugs (0,1,2,3)?
Is This A Good Measure?

- Objective indicator of success
- Relevant - Directly related to objective (outcome measured) 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 (i.e. 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?
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
Performance Measurement, Evaluation, and Evidence-Based Practices
Defining Evidence-Based: JRSA Perspective

- **Exemplary, Best, Model:** clear evidence of effectiveness with multiple, rigorous evaluations
- **Promising:** some evidence of success; many questions remain
- **Innovative:** derived from evidence-based programs; no evaluation yet
- **Ineffective:** clear evidence program/policy/practice is not successful with multiple rigorous evaluations

- **Non evidence-based:** not yet demonstrated effective by research and evaluation
Evidence-Based Practices Resources

- OJJDP’s Model Programs Guide
- CrimeSolutions.gov
- Blueprints for Violence Prevention
  [http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA)’s National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
Performance Measurement and EBPs

• For exemplary, best, and model programs, primary concerns are:
  – Does the program plan replicate an evidence-based program?
  – Are you following the program plan?
    • Process measures
Implementation

- **Fidelity**— Adherence to original program plan
- **Innovation**— purposeful changes to an existing EBP grounded in theory or research
- **Deviation**—
  - Unintended changes in program implementation
  - Intended change to program plan without support from theory or research
NJJEC Needs Assessment

- Purpose: To identify evaluation needs of the juvenile justice community
  - OJJDP state, local, and tribal grantees
- Use results to inform NJJEC project activities
Needs Assessment

• Sent in Summer of 2011
• Survey population: All OJJDP grantees and sub-grantees except research grants
  – (N=approximately 2,200)
• 962 respondents to state/local survey
• 31 respondents to tribal survey
Needs Assessment: Questions

• General activities of agency/organization
• Agency/organization activities related to evaluation and performance measurement
• Evaluation training/technical assistance needs
Performance Measurement

- 2/3 of respondents have worked directly with DCTAT
  - 56.7% reported they also collect performance measures beyond those required by DCTAT
Evaluation Activities

- 58% of state/local agencies making grant awards have an individual or group responsible for conducting program evaluation
  - Of these, more than half (52%) are outside the agency
Needs Assessment: Top 5 Training/Technical Assistance Needs

1. Sustaining evidence-based programs/practices
2. Cost-benefit analysis
3. Developing performance measures
4. Collecting and interpreting research on EBP
5. Establishing baseline data
Questions?