

## Illinois After-school Partnership

---

### Outcomes Work Group Minutes: December 14, 2005

#### Attendees

Erica Harris, CPS, Carole Franke, I-KAN ROE, Ernie Hill, CPRD, Kristin Allen, Springfield Boys and Girls Clubs, Greta Columbi, United Way  
Staff: Jennifer Becker Mouhcine

#### Input from Full Partnership meeting

The work group discussed the input sessions from the Full Partnership meeting. There was a lot of overlap between the two breakout groups, and definite themes emerged, especially the need for T.A, readability of the chart/summaries, assessment section/guide, and funder requirements and involvement.

#### ▪ **Key input from Provider Group:**

- Size and complexity of the table was too hard to navigate
- Linking real world questions and experiences to table would be good
- On line links
- Icons instead of words in the grid
- Real world examples of a problem and how to use the resource to solve it
- Have a FAQ section
- Expand utilization section and making use of existing data
- Incorporating training on the tool by funders
- Should have a new section about who is responsible for evaluation, roles of all levels of staff that demonstrate that everyone is a part of the process

#### ▪ **Key Input from Funders Group**

##### Review/Comment on Tool

- User's guide piece on importance of evaluation should include the ultimate reason, which is to provide quality services to kids and families. This is the big WHY of evaluation.
- Chapin Hall may have resources to consider for the handbook
- Importance of valuing/understanding evaluation from line staff through board level-reference this up front
- Acknowledge the barriers that exist to evaluation up front, to discuss overcoming fear of evaluation and fear of showing negative outcomes, DISPELLING MYTHS sections
- Up-front easy checklist on basic readiness areas to help folks think about if they are ready to and how to get started. More in depth information on knowledge of areas is helpful, but folks have to get to that point. A checklist could help define level of reader (newcomer, expert, etc.) since folks may not even know where they fall.
- Add in real stories on how people got started in evaluation, overcame their fears, what capacity their staff had and needed, etc.
- Perhaps a glossary of terms that will be encountered in document
- Color code resources or areas to help guide based on level of reader to which areas or resources to approach first. Use visuals to help guide reader to right sections.
- Too much detail for resources summaries, coding and layout may help readability.

##### Using Tool to Support Evaluation

- Need for general TA for navigation through the guide, a hotline number or something like that. Some of this could be web based.
- Funders often need to gain more expertise around evaluation as well in order to know what level of evaluation is appropriate and should be expected of their grantees. This tool could have a corollary guide for funders.

- Have concrete links between funders' expectations and where to turn in this document for specific tools and resources. For example, if funders require a logic model, they could reference a specific tool/resource in the logic model section of this guide.
- This tool can be used with funders to help shape evaluation expectations
- A focused discussion with additional funders will help move this along.

Support, technical assistance, training etc. needed to help programs conduct evaluation activities?

- Peer evaluation mentors
- Expand system of technical assistance providers (building on work of ERI, United Way and other evaluation trainers.
- There needs to be very basic capacity building around simple data collection, program management systems and support needed for capturing basic program information such as attendance. If programs are struggling with this first step, evaluation is a long way off.
- Having information on appropriate data sources
- Have user friendly data collection systems, hopefully common reporting requirements across funders
- Legislative support for evaluation and program accountability supports—this infrastructure needs funding

**Next Steps for Development of Tool**

- Narrative Pieces
  - Greta, Kristin and Ernie will work on developing sets of assessment questions to guide readers on their level of knowledge and readiness for the rest of the group.
  - A section on myths will be drafted
  - A section on various roles and responsibilities in evaluation will be drafted
  - A section about funders current requirements on evaluation will be drafted
  - Real world examples need to be collected.
- Resource Tables
  - The main chart will be revised with icons etc. to be more user friendly. This chart will be viewed as a one-step process rather than using it in conjunction with the longer resource summaries. Those summaries will be added as appendices for folks who want and are ready for that level of detail.
- Additional Review
  - Jennifer will work to find someone who can do the review of the remaining materials for inclusion in the chart. There may be other pieces that need group approval as well.
- Funder/Provider conversations
  - Jennifer will work on gathering information from funders