



# BPC/NCWIT K-12 Outreach Evaluation Workshop

Presented by  
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# Our Goal This Morning

- To think about & discuss what constitutes good (and bad) program evaluation
- Possible Topics:
  - Logic models, Surveys, Interviews, Focus groups, Observation, Authentic assessments, Key considerations



What does  
**EVALUATION**  
mean to you?





# A Common Understanding of Evaluation

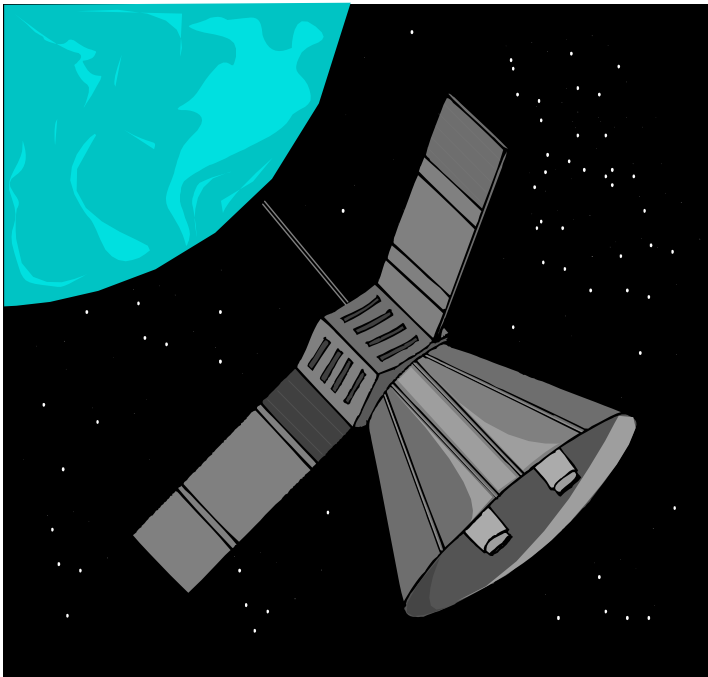
“Evaluation is the systematic way that data are assembled into a picture of

- (1) how well an organization is delivering its services and
- (2) the impact of those services on the target population.”

Rossi and Freeman, 1993



# Exploring Outputs and Outcomes





# Outputs

- Number of youth served by after-school science program
- Number of hours youth participated in program
- Number of youth participating in science fairs
- Number of participants' projects receiving award
- Percentage of class credits toward graduation achieved by participants



# Outcomes



- Outcomes = the change in your participants that you hope to achieve with your programs

*Are you hitting your mark?*



# Types of Outcomes

- Outcomes can be changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, skills, quality of life, etc.

knowledge

attitude

behavior

skills

quality of life



## Benefits of Program Evaluation

- Fulfill funder requirements
- Demonstrate program effectiveness
- Improve program
- Give clients a voice
- Share what works and what doesn't work
- Create new funding opportunities
- Organization & program sustainability
- Others?

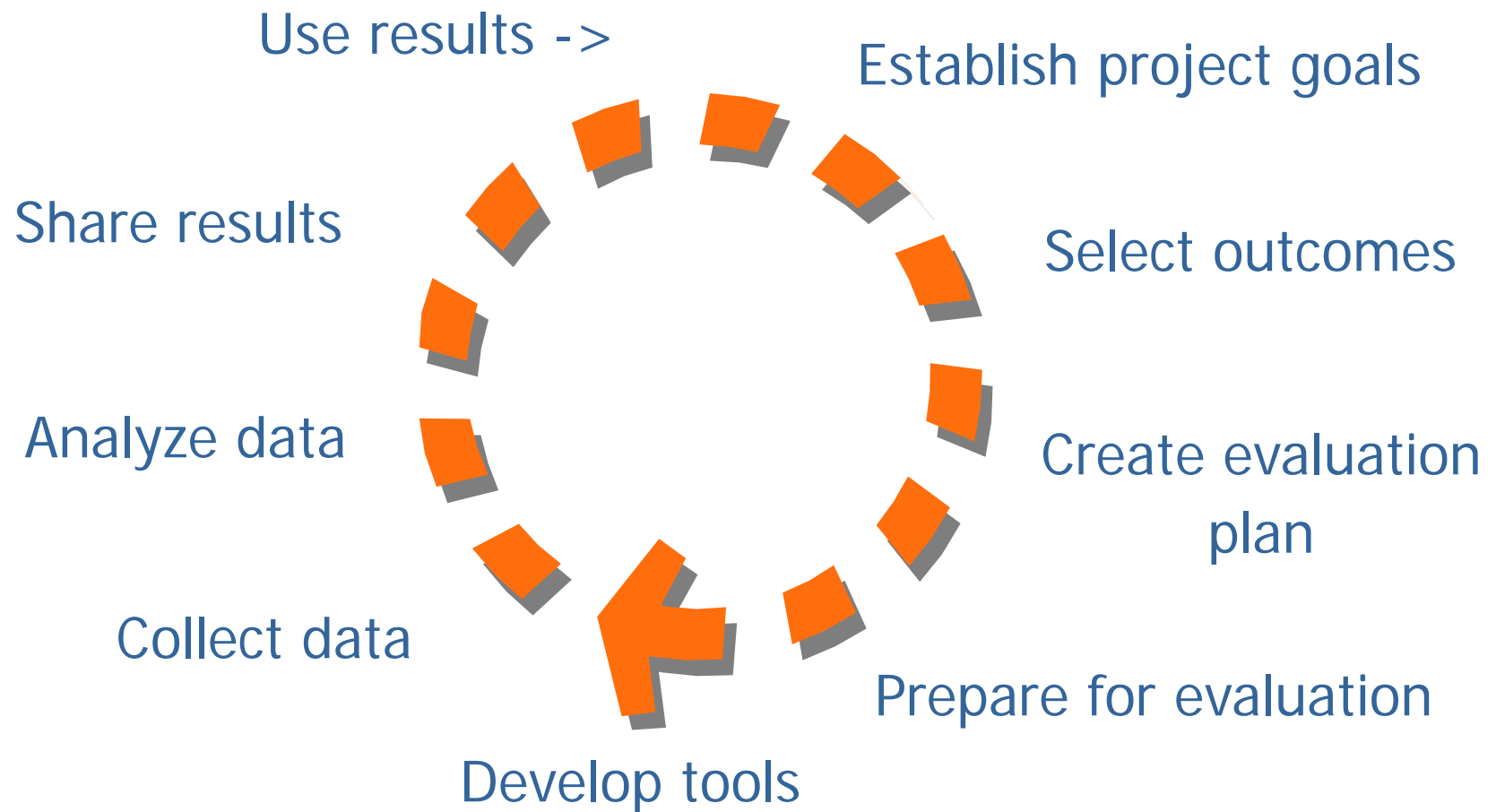


## What evaluation have you done, or do you plan to do?

- Needs assessments?
- Attendance reports?
- Program satisfaction surveys?
- Implementation evaluations?
- Outcome evaluations?
- All of the above
- None of the above



# The Evaluation Process



“If we are successful in what we are doing, what change in youth can we expect to achieve and detect? In what ways will they be different than before?”

Cite: Donobedian, A. QRB, Nov 1992, 356-360.



# Logic Models

Critical to have thought through  
before evaluation

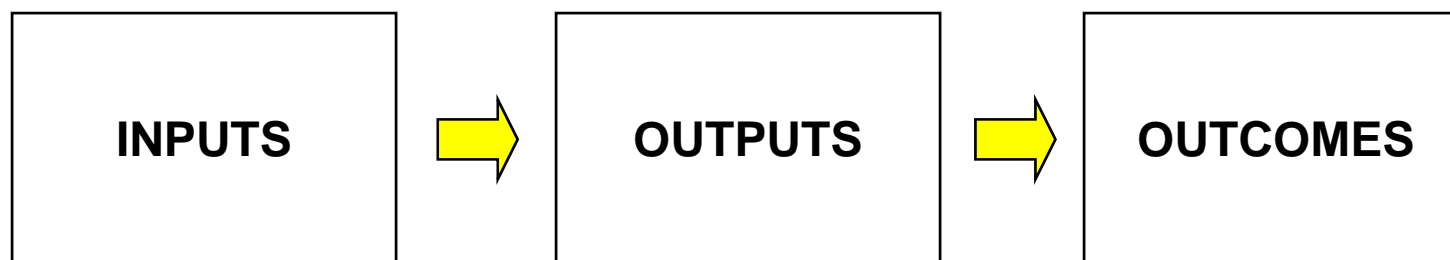


## A logic model is...

- A depiction of a program showing what the program will do, how it will do it, and what it will accomplish.
- A series of “if-then” relationships that, if implemented as intended, lead to the desired outcomes.



## Simplest form





# Sample Program Logic Model

## OUTCOMES

Increased self-esteem  
Improved math skills  
Increased problem solving abilities  
Transference of new skills to new situations

## OUTPUTS

16 hours of math classes  
10 youth served  
One final math project produced

## SERVICES

Math class delivered by teacher trained in specific techniques

## RESOURCES

13 board members, 6 staff, \$100K budget, at-risk youth, urban school setting



# Using a Survey to Measure Youth Outcomes

Most commonly used quantitative method



## Considerations in Survey Development

- Are self-report data from youth or from teachers meaningful?
- Questions must be age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and CLEAR
- Survey should be brief and easy to administer – will it be SAQ or in-person?
- Do you need all the data you are collecting?



# Possible Survey Components

- Program quality questions
- Program outcome questions
- Program exposure questions
- Skills acquisition
- Perspective shifts
- Demographics
- Background Experience



## Pre-Post vs. Post-only

Pre & Post Question:

*Yesterday, how much time did you spend painting?*

Post-only Question:

*Because I participated in this program, I now spend more time painting.*



## Considerations w/Pre-Post

- Attribution of change
- Posturing
- Knowledge
- Annoyance Factor
- Difficulty in Constructing
- Anonymity
- Attrition
- Sensitivity to Change



## Some Choose Post-Only

- Low burden on staff
- Youth surveyed only once
- Youth voice emphasized
- Preserves anonymity
- Gives youth perception of program influence



# Survey Administration

- WHEN: \*pre-program/near program end  
\*during classtime \*20-25 minutes max
- WHO: \*neutral staff or volunteer
- HOW: \*present throughout survey
- QUALS: \*speaks language(s) of youth;  
familiar with survey
- HAS: \*box or manila envelope \*extra  
pens/pencils -or- access to computers  
\*incentives



# Tips for Survey Administration

- Survey is to see if program had these impacts.
- Administration matters.
- Create setting conducive to honesty.
- Consider incentives.
- May have to repeat survey administrations.
- Preview awkward or hard vocabulary\*.
- Explain relevance of questions.
- Marking “Yes” does not mean they were flawed pre-program.



# Using Interviews to Measure Youth Outcomes

Good for sensitive subjects or when peer pressure might be an issue



# Interviews

- Neutral interviewer (not program staff or other adult invested in program)
- Can be a mix of open- and closed-ended questions
- 15-30 minutes
- In person or by phone
- Make clear to youth that all answers are “right”



# Using Focus Groups to Measure Youth Outcomes

Best with youth for non-sensitive subjects



## Focus Groups

- In-depth discussion of a few topics
- Open-ended exploratory questions
- With youth: 45-60 minutes long
- 5-10 kids, depending on age
- Provide quiet snack, incentives, private room
- Experienced facilitator



# Using Observation to Measure Youth Outcomes

Can help with formative feedback  
& to assess youth engagement



# Observations

- Neutral, trained observer who is clear on the evaluation questions
- Observation Form with closed- and open-ended prompts
- Permission from instructor (explain purpose to instructor)



# Using Authentic Assessment to Measure Youth Outcomes

For evaluation of skills & learning



# Authentic Assessment

- Assignment embedded into the “curriculum”
- Scored consistently by all instructors
- Reflects the learning outcomes you expect youth will achieve through your program in the time you have with them



# Other Considerations

Think about . . .



# Parental Consent Release, IRB Approval

- Guaranteed confidentiality or anonymity?
- Any foreseeable risks involved for youth?
- Evaluation activities voluntary?
- Part of regular activities of program?
- Intended for program improvement/reporting or publication?



# Cultural Sensitivity

- Which language should you use?
- Is the setting appropriate?
- Do your questions mean what you intend them to mean?
- Are you inadvertently being offensive?
- Do the kids' families understand the purpose of the evaluation activities?



# Which Program Participants will be Included?

- All of them, if you can
- If not everyone, then choose your sample carefully
- Beware of selection bias



## Timelines

- When do you report to funders or other stakeholders?
- What are opportune times for giving/getting program feedback?
- How often will you evaluate each year?
- How long do you need to process data?
- When do your evaluation instruments need to be finalized?



# Attributing Causation

- Difficult because ...
  - Insufficient resources devoted to evaluation
  - Near impossibility of locating control group
  - Program operates in larger context
- You get credible evidence by . . .
  - Careful, professional evaluation
    - Asking appropriate questions
    - Collecting relevant data
    - Analyzing & concluding credibly



# Wrapping Up

Questions, Concerns, Thoughts?

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# Plea for Recruits

## 4 Easy Ways!

1. Sign up now
2. Give me your business card
3. Call: 303.492.5462
4. Email: [wendy.dubow@colorado.edu](mailto:wendy.dubow@colorado.edu)