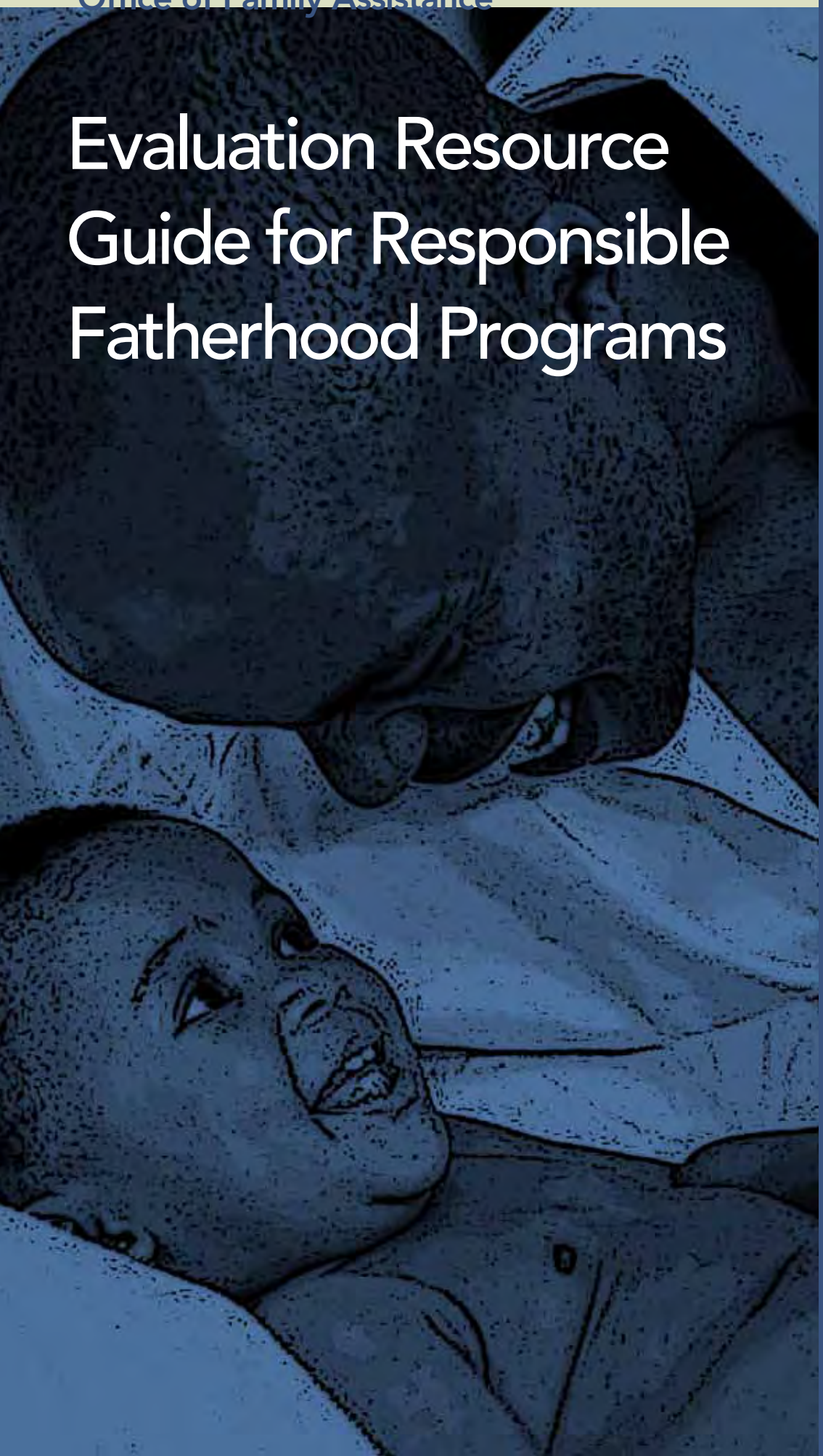
Office of Family Assistance

# Evaluation Resource Guide for Responsible Fatherhood Programs



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# Introduction

## Background

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 (PL 104-193) was a landmark law, both with respect to the changing relationship between the State and Federal levels of government, and in the history of public programs to help low-income families with children. The law specifically eliminated any individual entitlement to or guarantee of assistance and created the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); Job Opportunities and Basic Skill Training; and Emergency Assistance (EA) programs. It requires work in exchange for time-limited assistance. The four purposes of the TANF program, as described in Section 401 of the Social Security Act and 45 CFR 260.20 of the TANF regulations, are as follows:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish an annual numerical goal for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Since TANF's passage, states, tribes, and territories have the flexibility to implement creative and innovative programs that support the formation and maintenance of two-parent married families. When Congress enacted PRWORA and established the TANF program, states were given the authority to provide marriage support services as an acknowledgement that two-parent households are the most effective environment for raising children.

The TANF program was renewed in the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005 (S.1932), which was signed by President Bush into law in February 2006. The TANF and Related Programs section of the DRA (Section 7103) authorizes the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), through the direct administration of the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), to provide competitive funding for demonstration projects that promote healthy marriages and responsible fatherhood.

In September of 2006, the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) awarded demonstration grants to 226 organizations to promote the overall well-being of children and families. These grants were made in two areas: 1. Healthy Marriage programs designed to provide couples with marriage education services to help form and sustain healthy marriages, and 2. *Responsible Fatherhood* programs designed to promote responsible fatherhood through healthy marriage education, responsible parenting education, and fostering economic stability.

The Responsible Fatherhood program was designed to help fathers overcome barriers that impede them from becoming effective and nurturing parents—while helping them improve their relationships with their children. At the time the grants were introduced, fatherhood programs of this kind were relatively new and unstructured, so evaluation of fatherhood initiatives was also in its infancy. Resources and exemplars to guide in the planning and evaluation of these projects were rare or non-existent.

Through its provision of programmatic oversight and technical assistance OFA and its contractors have been in a position to observe the unfolding of these projects, as well as the challenges the grantees faced in planning, implementing, and evaluating their fatherhood programming thus far. The current document was developed in direct response to the emerging evaluation needs unique to the OFA's Responsible Fatherhood programming and its goals. The purpose is to help fill the need for resources and models to aid in the planning and evaluation of the Responsible Fatherhood projects.

Background information for this resource guide was gathered directly from OFA grantees at conference sessions, other meetings, and visits to the grantee sites. To develop the evaluation topics for the guide, we drew from similar handbooks—including the Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation, a publication developed for the Administration on Children, Youth and Families. We also utilized various existing evaluation resources such as the series of Evaluation Briefs sponsored by OFA and developed by its contractors. The authors have specifically focused on topics related to Responsible Fatherhood program grantees and this information should not be considered an adequate guide to evaluating non OFA sponsored fatherhood programming efforts.

Furthermore, it should be stressed that this evaluation resource does not represent an OFA's official required evaluation template. Nor is it intended to replace professional evaluators or their judgments. The information in this evaluation guide was developed primarily for the grantees, project directors, and project staff of the Responsible Fatherhood initiatives. While the target audience for this document is mainly the non-professional evaluator, professional evaluators might also find it beneficial, though basic in some elements. The purpose of the guide is quite simple: To provide information and tools to those responsible for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of individual Responsible Fatherhood projects—so that they can get the most out of their evaluations. Concepts presented here are reinforced by examples specific to Responsible Fatherhood grantees.

As this guide covers various subtopics relevant to evaluation of Responsible Fatherhood projects, some readers may want to read it from the beginning to end. Others may prefer to sample specific sections of particular relevance to them. The guide is organized along the following chapters:

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of program evaluation and presents the reasons for evaluating your project; what information you can expect to gain; and how to use evaluation information to inform your project.

Chapter 2 includes an overview of the OFA's Responsible Fatherhood initiative; introduction of the Responsible Fatherhood conceptual model; and a discussion on defining a program model for your specific project.

Chapter 3 describes the topic of program theory.

Chapter 4 includes a discussion of logic models and also provides tools for developing a logic model for your project.

Chapter 5 provides details to help you develop and review your evaluation questions.

Chapter 6 explains the core concepts of process evaluation and provides guidance in preparing for process evaluation of your project.

Chapter 7 focuses on outcome evaluation and provides a detailed discussion on planning your outcome evaluation within the context of the Responsible Fatherhood program. The chapter clarifies short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes and corresponding outcome indicators. Also included are tools for identifying indicators for your project's outcomes.

Chapter 8 presents more discussion on how to measure your project outcomes. The chapter explains the difference between descriptive and comparative evaluation designs, and offers an overview of common evaluation designs and data sources applicable to Responsible Fatherhood grantees.

Finally, chapter 9 provides information on selecting appropriate instruments for your project evaluation—as well offering tips for developing your own instruments.

CHAPTER 1

# Purpose of Evaluation

Organizations from all sectors use program evaluation to stay well informed about every aspect of a wide range of their programs. With funders increasing their demand for grantees to follow evidence-based practices, organizations providing social service programs are also moving toward more rigorous program evaluation.

Program evaluation is an essential component of the Responsible Fatherhood program, and of Responsible Fatherhood projects funded through the Office of Family Assistance. Evaluation involves the systematic collection, analysis, and use of information to answer basic questions regarding the overall effectiveness of a program or about specific services or activities conducted through the program. The term systematic refers to the structured and consistent manner of data collection and analysis that evaluation requires. Using a systematic process of collecting data can help you monitor your program's daily operations, as well as measure its overall effectiveness.

Program evaluation can provide you with crucial feedback that allows you to track how your project is working, identify areas for program improvement, as well as aid future planning. Program evaluation can also help stakeholders understand your project from various perspectives. As a program staff member, you strive to run an effective program. You experience the day-to-day tasks of operating the program. However, as someone who works on the front lines, it is often difficult to take a step back and look at how your program is running from a different point of view. For instance, a client or funder may not experience your program the same way that you do, as they are not able to witness the behind-the-scenes activity necessary to run the program. Program evaluation allows them to better understand what you and your staff experience each day—the successes as well as the challenges. Furthermore, program evaluation can also give you insight into the perspectives of your clients who are on the receiving end of social services. Their feedback can help to further improve the program.

## The Process of Program Evaluation

There is a common misconception that program evaluation is simply a one-step process at the end of the program that answers the question, *"Did the program make an impact?"* However, program evaluation is much more; it is a process that can be used to *create* and *sustain* effective programs. With increasing competition for funding and fewer available resources for needed social programs, there is little room for guesswork in program development. Program evaluation involves the sequential activities of needs assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. It can help organizations implement programs that have been shown to work rather than provide services simply because they "seem like they should work".

As a community grows, the needs of the population begin to change as well. Organizations providing social services must be aware of these changes in order to tailor their services to the populations they serve. Evaluation is a multi-step, ongoing process that can provide valuable information about a program's needs, progress, impact, and efficiency. Evaluation should begin long before your program has been implemented, and it should continue throughout every phase of the program.

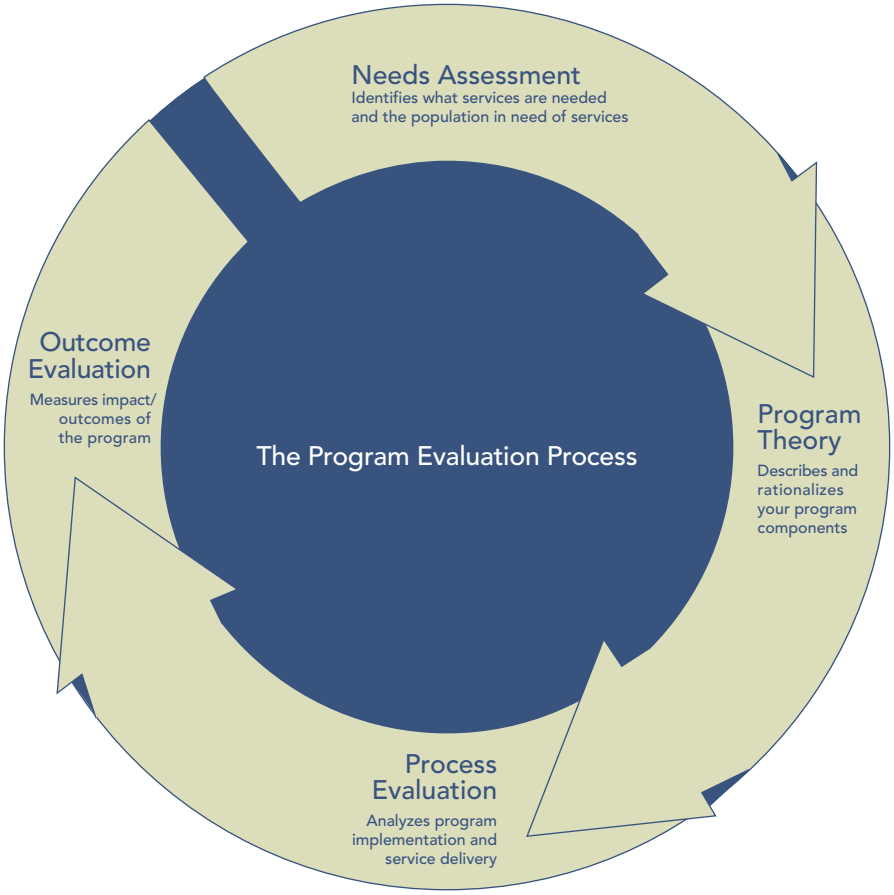
Program evaluation is an iterative and continual process of program improvement (see figure

1–1) where each of the four evaluation areas informs the next. The four areas inherent to program evaluation are:

1. *Needs Assessment:* Needs assessment determines what services are needed and the target population that these services will benefit. It is conducted before a program is designed and leads to the development of the ultimate goals for a (proposed) project, the goals based on community needs and priorities.
2. *Program Theory and Logic Model:* Thoroughly describes your program design (see Chapter 3: Program Theory, and Chapter 4: Logic Models).
3. *Process Evaluation:* Analyzes program implementation and service delivery; often used to monitor programs and for course correction (see Chapter 6: Process Evaluation).
4. *Outcome Evaluation:* Measures the impact and outcomes of the program on your target population (see Chapter 7: Outcome Evaluation).

While an important phase of program evaluation, needs assessment is not fully included here since we presume that the readers of this guide are already past this phase in their program development process.

Figure 1–1 The Program Evaluation Process




## Process evaluation

A process evaluation describes who participated in the program, the services they received, and how those services were provided. Process evaluation can provide early feedback as to whether program implementation proceeded as intended. It can also identify any barriers encountered and/or the possible need for changes to the original service delivery model. Perhaps most importantly, process evaluation can help to answer questions about why a program's intended outcomes were or were not achieved. Without a systematic process evaluation in place, problems that occur during program implementation may be overlooked.

Process evaluation data can be used to demonstrate if changes took place as a result of the intervention or due to other factors. These data can help explain why change did or did not happen. This capacity to shed light on program results is crucial in developing and maintaining effective social service programs.

**Sample Questions that Process Evaluation Can Answer**

1. Was the project implemented as planned at the staff level (e.g., staff received appropriate trainings; organization was able to hire a trainer on time)?
2. Was the project able to reach the estimated number of participants from the target population (e.g. the goal was to enroll 50 fathers in a budgeting workshop, but the program was only able to recruit 10 fathers and only 5 of these fathers completed the workshop series)?
3. Did the demographics of the target population shift (e.g., the project originally planned to only serve fathers but instead the project provided services to entire families)?

### Outcome evaluation

Outcome evaluation is used to measure the results (outcomes) of a program, in a way that determines whether the project produced the intended changes for individuals, families, or the community. Whereas process evaluation can address milestones such as the number of fathers who attend healthy parenting classes, it does not yield information about whether changes have occurred—including, for example, whether fathers' knowledge of healthy parenting has increased. Outcome evaluation speaks to this issue by assessing whether there have been changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes, skills, or behaviors. Outcomes include changes that are short-term, intermediate, and those that are achieved over the long-term.

## Further Reasons for Evaluating Your Project

- *Accountability.* Program evaluation can help ensure that your program is delivering its services and activities in the way that you proposed to deliver them. In cases where program services need to be modified, program evaluation can help explain why these changes were made.
- *Sharing knowledge.* By sharing your evaluation results with other organizations in your field, you can help others avoid re-inventing the wheel. You can also learn a great deal from others' evaluations about how to approach difficult situations or challenges.
- *Program improvement.* A well-designed program evaluation process will help monitor service delivery and service impact. The feedback from program evaluation can provide you ideas on how to improve, correct, or modify aspects of your program to enhance effectiveness.
- T*esting a theory.* Programs typically operate under the assumption that the services and activities they provide will lead to specific outcomes for their target population. However, without program evaluation (a systematic way to collect information about your program), it is impossible to show that these assumptions are correct.
- *Facilitating informed decisions.* In the face of budget cuts, it is often difficult to make the decision as to which aspects of a program to cut. Program evaluation can help facilitate the decision by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of a program. Evaluation can also elicit information that can be used to modify programs to become more cost and time efficient.
- *Sustainability.* The data collected through program evaluation can provide evidence that your program is achieving success, thereby offering you a solid basis for pursuing further funding or other support in order to continue providing services.
- *Community support.* As a community-based organization, it is in your best interest to gain support and buy-in from those living in your community. By sharing results of your program evaluation, you can gain credibility within the community and make your organization's practices more transparent to the public. This can help gain more support for fundraising events and help you obtain referrals to your program.

- *Reducing guesswork.* How did your organization decide which services to provide? At times social service providers base their decisions mainly on what they think would be helpful or needed. The problem with this approach, however, is that such decisions can be costly and not guaranteed to impact the target population. Rather than basing services on guesswork, effective program evaluation can help you determine community needs and how those needs should be addressed.

## How to Use Evaluation Information

Program evaluation yields important information that not only can help you identify actions needed to make corrections or adjustments to your program, but also provides information to aid future planning. Steps you take based on program evaluation findings can help you improve your program and increase its sustainability.

### Program Improvement

*How will you ensure that your program is addressing the ever-changing needs of the community?*

Once you have assessed the program's impact and client outcomes, the information gained from your evaluation efforts can be used to help you make informed decisions about how the program can be further improved to make an even stronger impact on the community in the future. For programs to succeed in the long run, they need to be designed to adapt to changes in the community. Changes that occur within the community (e.g., implementation of new laws, natural disasters, increased unemployment) will inevitably impact the needs of your target population. As a service provider, you must ensure that your evaluation process will yield the necessary feedback your program needs to adapt to the changes. Because social service programs are costly, it is important for your organization to focus on implementing effective services and forgo components that are repetitive, overly burdensome, or ineffective.

Evaluation makes it possible to identify which areas of your program should be modified. Your evaluation process should be designed to identify red flags and challenges that your program is facing in order for you to undertake course corrections. Evaluation takes most of the guesswork out of program improvement and is therefore more time- and cost-efficient for your organization.

### Sustainability

*Once your program's funding period has ended, how will you ensure continuation of the services that your Responsible Fatherhood project is currently providing?*

Developing the capacity to continue program services is an issue of sustainability, which ensures the long-term viability of your program. Sustainability moves a project from a pilot project to the necessary part of service delivery in the community. In building program sustainability, you endeavor to create a niche for your services and develop partnerships within the community to help support those services. Sustainability helps ensure that your program will have funding to support it long after the funding period for your Responsible Fatherhood project has come to an end.

With solid evaluation supporting the results of your program, you are more likely to gain buy-in from the community and obtain funding from diverse sources. Stakeholders want to see that programs operating in their community are making a difference in the lives of those who use the services. Thus, your program can gain credibility in the community and among funders by having the data to backup your program's success stories.

# What Program Evaluation Can Tell You

Generating specific questions about your program that you would like to examine through your program evaluation process is an important part of evaluation. Program evaluation can provide your organization with feedback to the following evaluation questions:

## Planning and designing

- Is there another organization that is providing or may provide the program or service you are considering?
- What is your target population and what is its demographic profile? (e.g., Are they single fathers? Fathers who have been incarcerated? What is their age range? Are you serving families on welfare?)
- How many people in the community are in need of your service?
- What are the specific needs of this group?
- Who are the important program stakeholders?
- What community resources are available to help support and supplement your program?

## Program monitoring

- Is the program reaching the intended target audience?
- Are participants satisfied with the services provided by the program?
- Are you doing what you originally set out to do, or have your services veered off the intended course?
- How could the program be improved?
- How well is the program working?
- Do service gaps exist in the program?
- Is the program functioning as intended?
- Are there program areas that are unnecessary, duplicative, or minimally effective?
- Are there ways in which services could be delivered in a more cost- and time-efficient manner?

## Determining program impact

- Does the program have an overall positive outcome?
- What is your program's impact on the clients you served?
- What have been the effects of your program on the community?
- Have the program's goals been reached?
- Do the program's goals need to be modified?

The subsequent chapters of this Evaluation Resource Guide contain many of the tools you need to help you answer the above questions.

CHAPTER 2

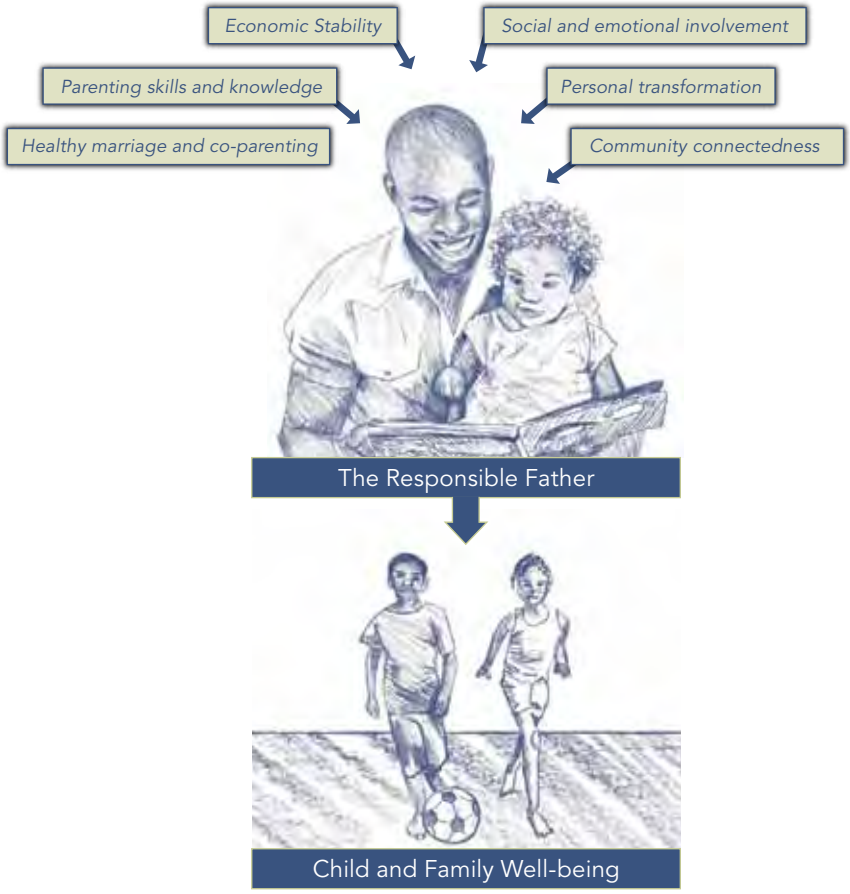
# Responsible Fatherhood Program Model Implemented by the Office of Family Assistance (OFA)

While the services provided by the OFA-implemented Responsible Fatherhood projects fall into one or more of the three authorized activity areas (1. healthy marriage; 2. responsible parenting; and 3. economic stability); the reality is that the services provided by these grantees are much more diverse. These services can best be described as fitting into one or more of the following six service categories: 1. Promoting and sustaining healthy marriage and co-parent relationships; 2. Developing parenting skills and knowledge; 3. Advancing economic stability; 4. Increasing fathers' level of involvement with their children; 5. Facilitating personal transformations in how men see themselves and their roles as fathers; and 6. Connecting fathers with their communities and available supports.

It is important to note that while the Responsible Fatherhood projects help fathers develop skills and improve their lives, the ultimate goal of these OFA-funded programs is to impact the academic, emotional, social, and economic well-being of children (Bronte-Tinkew et. al., 2007; Doherty et. al., 1996; Lewin Group, 1997). Significant social and psychological research has demonstrated that services and activities aimed at increasing responsible fatherhood positively impact child well-being (Martinson & Nightingale, 2008; NCOFF, 2002). Figure 2–1, below, presents the conceptual model that illustrates how the Responsible Fatherhood projects aim to positively impact the lives of men and their families.

In conducting this work, many of the Responsible Fatherhood projects take a holistic approach to serving fathers by providing services from more than one of the categories illustrated in The Responsible Fatherhood Conceptual Model. For example, parenting skills education is often paired with economic stability focused case management services to address unemployment or non-compliance with child support orders.

Figure 2–1 Responsible Fatherhood Conceptual Model




## Activities to Promote and Sustain Healthy Marriage and Co-Parent Relationships

Some Responsible Fatherhood programs aim to support the marital and co-parenting relationship because children benefit when parents are able to communicate and effectively resolve conflict (Belsky et al., 1995; Belsky & Fearon, 2004; Camara & Resnick, 1988). A conflictual co-parent relationship can be a barrier to the father's involvement, as mothers may sometimes limit the contact a father has with his child. Historically, there have been two approaches to improving the co-parent relationship. Both provide education to support the development of communication and conflict resolution skills between fathers and the mothers of their children. One of the approaches focuses on supporting marriages as a means to maintaining a stable family. The other approach provides services in support of communication and conflict resolution skills—but does not emphasize romantic relationships, commitment, or marriage.

### Examples of healthy marriage and co-parent relationship activities:

- Skill-based relationship education – Classes to provide group or individual instruction on relationship skills, either using an established curriculum or one designed for the specific service population. There may or may not be an emphasis on divorce reduction, or on the importance of marriage to children's well-being
- Premarital education – This may include formal marriage preparation programs, premarital counseling, and use of marital inventories to help prepare couples for healthy marriage and co-parenting relationships.

- Mentoring or informal modeling – To complement relationship skills education, co-parents may be matched with more experienced couples (or co-parents).
- Coaching – Group or one-on-one coaching to support increased communication and conflict resolution skills in the co-parent relationship and to remove psychological, social, or emotional barriers to a healthy co-parenting relationship.
- Advocacy for two-parent involvement with children – This may involve disseminating information about the benefits of healthy marriage or co-parenting relationships and two-parent involvement for children.

### Potential outcomes of healthy marriage and co-parent relationship activities include:

- Co-parents learn new communication skills.
- Co-parents improve their communication.
- Co-parents increase their ability to resolve conflict.
- Co-parents report fewer disagreements and conflicts.
- Co-parents increase their communication with each other about their children.
- Married co-parents report increased commitment to each other.
- Married co-parents report increased satisfaction with their marriage.

## Activities to Improve Parenting Skills and Knowledge

Effective parenting skills and knowledge are an important part of a healthy father-child relationship. Many fathers served by the Responsible Fatherhood projects lack basic parenting skills and may be negatively influenced by poor parenting that they experienced as children. Consequently, a cornerstone of many Responsible Fatherhood projects is providing fathers with comprehensive services to improve their parenting skills and knowledge. Furthermore, some projects emphasize child support and provide child support education or court advocacy. In addition to services that focus on increasing fathers' ability to pay formal child support, some projects also provide parenting education on the importance of informal and non-monetary support as a way for fathers to support their children and positively impact their well-being (Greene & Moore, 2000).

### Examples of parenting skills activities:

- Curriculum-based parenting education – Classes to provide group or individual instruction on parenting, either using an established curriculum or one designed specifically for the service population.
- Mentoring or informal modeling – To complement parenting skills education, fathers are matched with more experienced fathers.
- Coaching – Group or one-on-one coaching to foster emotional readiness and develop a skill set of positive parenting techniques.
- Promoting responsible parenting – Disseminating information about good parenting practices as well as the causes of domestic violence and child abuse.
- Education on the importance of responsible child support to children's well-being – This may include programs to promote fathers' paying child support and encouragement of informal and non-monetary support (such as buying diapers or groceries or providing childcare).

### Potential outcomes of parenting skills activities include:

- Fathers increase their understanding of responsible parenting. This could include having appropriate expectations of children and knowledge of and empathy towards children's needs.

- Fathers learn new parenting skills. This could include positive discipline techniques and cultivating a child's independence.
- Fathers utilize new parenting skills with their children.
- Fathers increase their understanding of child development.
- Fathers increase their consistency in providing formal, as well as informal and non-monetary support for their children.

## Activities to Improve Economic Stability

Improving economic stability has historically been a primary purpose of Responsible Fatherhood approaches. Responsible Fatherhood programming continues to focus on reducing the barriers to economic stability that low-income men experience by providing services such as job readiness training, job placement assistance, and vocational skills training. However, as many economic factors are complex and not easily controlled, improving the economic well-being of a large group of men can be difficult.

### Examples of economic stability activities:

- Job readiness training – Formal or informal education and information about appropriate workplace behavior, looking for work, writing resumes, and interviewing skills.
- Vocational training – Training or education to provide new work skills to fathers, such as computer skills training or education in other trades. This may include direct training or referrals to established employment training programs in the community.
- Job placement assistance – Direct support in finding appropriate employment.
- Financial literacy – Education to help fathers learn basic financial management skills to improve their economic situation, such as how to manage a household budget and reduce debt.
- Encouragement to provide financial resources for the benefit of the child – Support for utilizing available financial resources to pay formal child support as well as encouragement to provide informal child support.

### Potential outcomes of economic stability activities include:

- Fathers learn job seeking skills. This could include resume writing, interviewing, and job search strategies.
- Fathers learn new job skills. This could include gaining professional certifications.
- Fathers obtain or maintain employment.
- Fathers are prepared to succeed in a work environment. This could include learning about professionalism, being on time, and conflict resolution.
- Fathers increase their income.
- Fathers increase their ability to financially support their children.

## Activities to Increase Fathers' Level of Involvement with their Children

A significant number of research studies connect child well-being with the level of father involvement (Paul Amato 1998, Greene & Moore 2000, Paquette 2004). In response, Responsible Fatherhood projects help fathers "connect" with their children in a number of ways. Some projects assist young fathers in establishing paternity as a first step towards involvement in the child's life. Other programs help non-resident fathers establish visitation schedules, or increase telephone and written contact if visitation is not possible. Resident fathers can also benefit from programs that aim to increase father involvement. With all fathers, projects attempt to increase the quality of father-child interaction and the father's emotional investment in the child's upbringing.

### Examples of father-involvement activities:

- Support and advocacy for navigating the legal system – Education and encouragement to empower fathers. This may involve helping fathers establish paternity or negotiate visitation agreements.
- Support groups and assistance – Encouragement, education, and support to increase the frequency and quality of father-child interactions.
- Coaching – Group or one-on-one coaching to improve emotional ties and to remove individual barriers to the father-child relationship.
- Case management – Collaborative approach that tailors education, advice, and guidance around specific needs of each individual father in addressing barriers to the father-child relationship.

### Potential outcomes of father-involvement activities include:

- Fathers establish paternity.
- Fathers establish visitation with their children.
- Fathers spend more time with their children.
- Fathers spend more time interacting, reading to, talking with, and playing with their children.
- Fathers increase their involvement in their children's education.
- Fathers report greater emotional investment in their children's lives.

## Activities to Facilitate Personal Transformation

Many fathers experience multiple barriers to being a responsible father. For example, personal barriers may include substance abuse or a criminal background. Some programs attempt to address these personal barriers by linking fathers with appropriate services available in the community. Additionally, fathers who experienced poor parenting as children or never had a positive paternal role model must work to develop a positive image of fatherhood and themselves as fathers. Responsible Fatherhood projects provide services that seek to change how these men see themselves and their role in their families by addressing the underlying cultural, societal, and personal issues and experiences that impact fathers' perceptions of fatherhood.

### Examples of personal transformation activities:

- Case management services – Education, advice, and guidance tailored to address each individual father's specific social and emotional barriers to well-being.
- Curriculum-based responsible fatherhood education – Classes to provide group or individual instruction on fatherhood, including the roles and responsibilities of fathers and the benefits of fathering.
- Mentoring and informal modeling – Fathers are matched with more experienced fathers who serve as mentors and guide fathers in their personal transformation.
- Coaching – Group and one-on-one coaching to help remove individual psychological, social, or emotional barriers to father well-being and emotional stability.
- Support groups – Men are given the opportunity to share their experiences and support each other in developing a positive self-image as a father.
- Substance abuse prevention – Drug and alcohol education and individualized support to prevent and overcome substance abuse.
- Transition from prison – Individualized or group support and education for men transitioning out of the prison system.
- Linkages to existing services – Education on the services available to fathers and families and how to access these services.

### Potential outcomes of personal transformation activities include:

- Fathers report increased self-esteem.
- Fathers increase their understanding of responsible fatherhood and the role of a father.
- Fathers learn how to manage stress.
- Fathers reduce their drug use.
- Fathers increase their access to services through community service providers.
- Incarcerated fathers experience a successful transition to family life and are not reincarcerated.

## Activities to Improve Fathers' Level of Connectedness with their Community

Many fathers, particularly low-income and young fathers, may be unaware of—and disconnected from—the services available in their local community. This disconnect exists, in part, because many social service professionals have more experience working with women and children than they have with men. In addition, some men have had negative experiences with service providers who may see fathers as barriers to providing services to women and children rather than as the potential beneficiaries of services. In response, Responsible Fatherhood projects provide education and information to support fathers navigating the social service systems, particularly in the areas of visitation, child support, and child protective services. Some projects also provide outreach and education to increase the knowledge and skills of service professionals in their work with fathers.

### Examples of "community connectedness" activities:

- Linkages to existing services – Education on community services available to fathers and families and how to access these services.
- Advocacy – Individualized assistance in the navigation of social service systems on issues such as child support or child welfare.
- Trainings for community service providers about the needs of fathers – Information and training provided to community service providers to increase their staff's awareness of the needs of low-income fathers and the importance of culturally appropriate, "father-friendly" services.

### Potential outcomes of "community connectedness" activities include:

- Fathers increase their understanding of services available to them in the community.
- Fathers increase their understanding of services available to their child in the community.
- Fathers and their families report increased access to services.
- Fathers and their families increase their utilization of services.
- Fathers increase their understanding of how to navigate complex social services systems.
- Community service providers' staff members increase their knowledge of the needs of fathers and the potential barriers fathers encounter when seeking services.

## Defining Your Program Model

To succeed, every program and every project needs a solid foundation. One of the crucial tasks at the project-planning phase is determining the conceptual framework within which your project fits.

How will your project promote responsible fatherhood and ultimately enhance child and family well-being?


The purpose of the Responsible Fatherhood Program is to promote responsible fatherhood by funding programs that will ultimately enable fathers to improve their relationships and reconnect with their children. As discussed previously, the services provided by the Responsible Fatherhood projects generally fall into one or more of the six service categories: healthy marriage and co-parenting relationships; parenting skills and knowledge; economic stability; social and emotional involvement; personal transformation; and community connectedness.

| Which services does your Responsible Fatherhood project aim to support? | |
|---|---|
| **Service categories** | **Yes/No** |
| 1. Healthy marriage and co-parenting relationships | |
| 2. Parenting skills and knowledge | |
| 3. Economic stability | |
| 4. Social and emotional involvement | |
| 5. Personal transformation | |
| 6. Community connectedness | |
| 7. Other: | |

Your program model succinctly describes what you plan to do (i.e., how your Responsible Fatherhood project will aim to impact the lives of men and their families), and illustrates why you expect your project activities to affect your eventual outcomes. Once the program model underlying your project is defined it will provide the foundation for your program theory (see chapter 3) and your logic model (see chapter 4). Your logic model will in turn form the basis for your evaluation. Both program models and logic models can help facilitate understanding of the theory behind your project as well as your project's characteristics and objectives.

CHAPTER 3

# Program Theory

A program theory is a description of what the intended outcomes of your program are; how the program will help achieve these outcomes; and why you believe the services your program provides can help bring about these outcomes. This description, or program theory, explains the services and activities your organization will implement in order to help your target population achieve identified outcomes. It also helps explain why you believe these services will lead to intended outcomes—as well as where and when you will collect data to check whether these outcomes have been met. Essentially, your program theory serves as a roadmap of your program. A program theory is often represented graphically in a logic model (see chapter 4).

Before proceeding with design and implementation, it is imperative to understand the basic constructs or dimensions of program theory. Think of the development of program theory as a 4-step process with basic questions to answer at each step:

## Step 1: Determine your program inputs:

Your program inputs, the resources you have available, constitute the "raw materials" you will need to perform your program activities and offer your services. Therefore, the first step is to determine which resources are available for the project you wish to undertake. These resources are called the program inputs.

### Questions to ask in Step One:

- Which resources are available for implementing your program?
- What are your financial resources (current and/or upcoming funding sources)? Are the financial resources sufficient to undertake your project activities?
- What office space, buildings, equipment, etc. are available for the project?
- What experience and training do you need to implement the program? Do you currently have the necessary experience and training?

## Step 2. Identify your program activities:

It is important to identify as explicitly as possible specific services, activities, or interventions that constitute your program. The more precise the definition of each service or activity, the easier it will be to formulate a corresponding measure that is discrete and meaningful. Once specific services or activities have been articulated, try to quantify how often you plan on providing your services or activities. Your quantification of each of these activities is called an output.

### Questions to ask in Step Two:

- What services, activities, or interventions will you provide?
- Who will receive these services? Provide descriptive statistics such as race, gender, age, marital status, education, employment status, income, and number of children.
- How often will you provide these services?
- What models or effective practices will your services be based on?

## Step 3. Address the impact of your activities:

Once you have identified specific program activities, address how these services will impact your target population. Briefly state the result or consequence of each activity. This part serves as an important conceptual bridge between discrete program activities and your assumptions about how participants will be impacted by these activities.

### Questions to ask in Step Three:

- What type of impact does the program expect to have?
- What are some short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes you expect your program to achieve?
- What changes do you expect to see at the organizational, individual, or community level because of your services?

## Step 4. Explain your programmatic decisions:

With an increasing demand for programs to follow "best practices," funders want to see evidence that supports your decision to implement these activities and services. Utilize data from previous research conducted in the topic area and other statistics to help justify your decision.

### Questions to ask in Step 4:

- Of all the different services you could have provided, why did you choose to provide these specific services?
- How will these services lead to your intended outcomes?
- What makes these services effective?
- How are your services going to better the community?

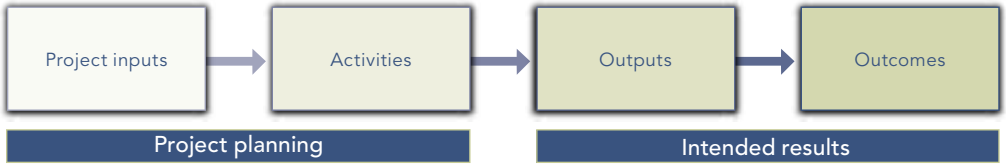
CHAPTER 4

# Developing a Logic Model

## What is a Logic Model?

A logic model is a visual representation of the project from inputs to outcomes (see figure 4–1). It provides a way to systematically and logically portray a sequence of events, beginning with the project activities and their immediate effects, and then progressing towards the intended intermediate and longer-term outcomes.

Figure 4–1 Logic Model: A Visual Representation of Your Project




A logic model is an effective planning and evaluation tool that can be used by project directors and evaluators to describe their programs and the effect of their programs. The logic model is a visual representation of how a project or program works, as well as the theory and the assumptions that underlie the project. The model illustrates a sequence of cause-and-effect relationships linking outcomes with a project's activities and the theoretical assumptions of the project.

## Why Develop a Logic Model?

Building the logic model is a critical step in developing your program evaluation, as the logic model will function as the "roadmap" that guides your evaluation. Furthermore, developing a logic model can promote consensus among project staff and others about the project's focus, activities, and desired outcomes. Spending the time and effort to collaboratively develop a thoughtful logic model can also prove helpful in a number of other ways (see figure 4–2). For example, you may gain a deeper understanding of your project and its ultimate goals as the result of negotiating what should be the key areas represented by your logic

model. The process can also help clarify the project's strengths and weaknesses, thereby creating opportunities for fine-tuning project activities or improving the overall project design in order to help ensure the likelihood of successfully obtaining project goals. Lastly, the logic model itself can act as an anchor to keep the project on track over time.

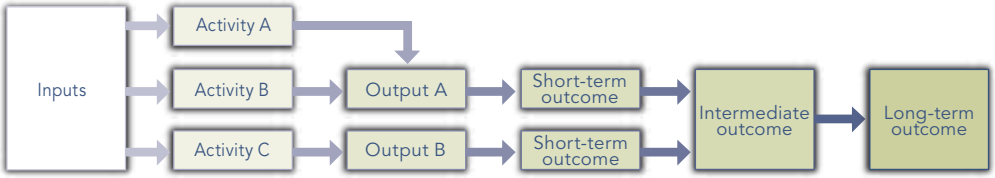
### Figure 4–2 Seven Reasons to Develop a Logic Model

1. A logic model helps structure an evaluation by providing a "roadmap" of key program activities and services and of the outcomes expected as a result of these activities and services. A logic model helps ensure that there is a clear understanding of what services are being implemented, what goals program staff members hope to achieve, and how the program's success will be measured.
2. A logic model helps build consensus among grantees, evaluators, funders, and other stakeholders regarding the evaluation. Specifically, stakeholders can reach agreement on the intended goals of the program and the appropriate and meaningful program outcomes. A logic model provides an opportunity for stakeholders to jointly assess the feasibility and practicality of measuring change in selected program outcomes.
3. A logic model offers a concise, easy-to-understand visual summary of the program, which can serve as a handy reference that outlines key program features and expected outcomes. A logic model can be disseminated to interested third parties to provide a synopsis of program goals and activities.
4. A logic model can be used to identify gaps and inconsistencies in a program's design and evaluation. A logic model can help identify areas in which planned services or interventions need to be articulated or clarified. It can be used to identify logical "gaps" or inconsistencies between program activities and expected outcomes.
5. A logic model can serve as a "reference point" for proposed program modifications by comparing proposed changes with the original logic model to determine if changes are being made to core elements of the program. A logic model will allow you to assess whether the proposed changes affect linkages to anticipated program outcomes.
6. A logic model can serve as a program monitoring tool and help you identify key questions and answers: Have key program components been implemented? What are the program's outputs to date? Are relevant data being collected? What outcomes have been achieved to date? Are relevant data being collected?
7. Logic models can facilitate comparisons across programs by identifying similarities and differences in program interventions. Logic models can identify common outcomes of interest as well as common indicators, measurement tools, and data sources.

## Components of a Logic Model

The first step in developing a logic model for your project is to identify the components or elements of your project (see figure 4–3). A typical basic model depicts four types of project components that are connected by unidirectional arrows: 1) inputs; 2) activities or interventions; 3) outputs; and 4) outcomes.

Figure 4–3 Basic Components of a Logic Model




1. ***Inputs*** are the financial, material, and personnel resources needed to accomplish your project activities. Examples of common inputs include funding sources, office space, staff and their required qualifications, as well as computers and other office equipment. Identifying your project resources (i.e., inputs) is an important first step as it helps determine a) what resources are necessary and available; b) whether these resources are adequate to ensure successful program implementation; and c) whether the expected outcomes are realistic and achievable in light of the available resources.

2. ***Activities or interventions*** are the services, activities, policies, practices, or procedures that you plan to implement in response to identified problems or needs within your target population. For example, activities and interventions termed *direct service* activities, that serve program participants directly, could include case management services, parenting workshops, job-skills training, support groups, and advocacy on behalf of fathers in the court system.

   However, project activities do not merely include interventions that focus directly on participants. For example, Responsible Fatherhood projects engage in a variety of activities including those aimed to effect *systems-change* and *knowledge development*. Systems-change here refers to efforts made toward improving the services that are available to fathers, and improving the capacity of various systems (legal, social services, child welfare) to serve fathers. Examples of systems change efforts include developing new policies and procedures that embrace the role of fathers, providing training to child welfare workers to more effectively engage fathers, or increasing collaboration between agencies that serve fathers.

   Program activities aimed toward impacting knowledge development focus on developing new understanding of issues related to fatherhood, such as conducting a needs assessment to identify services that are needed in your community or analyzing program data to develop a profile of fathers in your community. Such program activities can also include the development of products and materials such as new training or educational curricula or videos to educate the public about the challenges faced by fathers.

   Implementing Responsible Fatherhood programming can involve countless activities, some more crucial than others to your project's success. However, your logic model should spotlight those activities that are key to producing the desired outcomes. While activities such as recruiting staff, regular staff meetings, and staff trainings are important, they are not considered key activities.

3. ***Outputs*** are the immediate, concrete result(s) of providing a service or activity (e.g., fathers receive outreach materials, attend parenting skills training, or participate in vocational training). Success in achieving outputs can be measured through *process* or *output* measures, which indicate numbers served, types of services provided, frequency of service, duration of service, etc. It is important to identify outputs because they help

**Evaluation Tip**

Keep in mind that your logic model audience includes your funders and community partners, whose interests center on your program's key activities and the outcomes they are intended to produce.

conceptually link your project activities to the outcomes you expect to achieve.

4. ***Outcomes*** are the *changes* you expect to occur as a result of the services and activities. Behavior change is ultimately what initiatives such as the Responsible Fatherhood program endeavor to achieve. Furthermore, behavior change can occur at the client, staff, program, organizational, or community level (i.e., systemic change).

   Project outcomes may be short-term, intermediate, or long-term. However, depending on the nature of your project, your logic model may not always have all three types of outcomes. *Short-term outcomes* are changes in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, or skills (e.g., fathers increase their knowledge of child development and effective parenting); *intermediate outcomes* refer to changes in actions and behavior (e.g., fathers use age-appropriate parenting techniques with their children); and *long-term outcomes* refer to the positive results or impacts for participants (e.g., fathers have healthy relationships with their children).

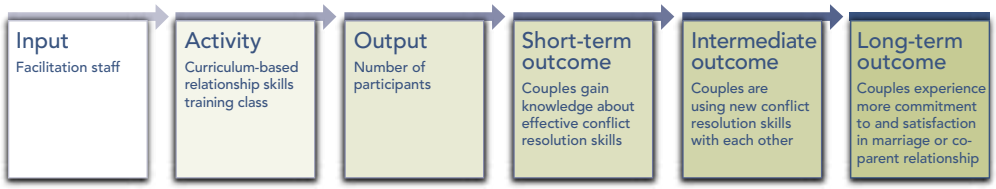
**Evaluation Tip**

The process of developing appropriate short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes should be completed for each key activity your project is implementing. Keep in mind that each project activity may have more than one set of associated outcomes. In addition, some of your key activities may lead to similar outcomes.

## Developing Your Own Logic Model

First, let's take a look at the following simple illustration (figure 4–4) of a hypothetical Responsible Fatherhood project. In this example, the project aims to impact child well-being by conducting activities that promote healthy marriage and co-parent relationships. The project has chosen to use its available resources *(input)* to offer skill-based relationship classes that follow an established curriculum *(activity)*. The concrete result *(output)* of the classes would be the number of fathers enrolling and participating in the training. One *short-term outcome* of the relationship skills training class could be participant knowledge gain about how to effectively resolve conflict with their spouse or co-parent. The couples may then begin to use their newly acquired conflict resolution skills with each other in their day-to-day lives *(intermediate outcome)*. Over time, consistent practice of healthy relationship skills may contribute to increased commitment to and satisfaction in the relationship *(long-term outcome)*.

Figure 4–4 Sample Logic Model Elements for a Responsible Fatherhood Project



## Activity

***Keeping in mind the example above and the previously presented descriptions of logic model components, you can begin to develop a logic model for your project. Completing the following steps may help you in this process:***

***Inputs***
Think about the organizational resources that you need, and have available to implement your project. The resources might include funding, staff, materials, and facilities.

***List the resources that will be required:***

_____

_____

_____

_____

## Project activities

When you defined the program model of your project (see chapter 2), you articulated the service categories your project would emphasize. Within those service categories, establish the activities or interventions the project could reasonably undertake.

*Example 1: Public awareness campaign on the importance of fathers for children's well-being.*

*Example 2: A series of parenting workshops.*

***List your planned activities:***

1. _____ 5. _____

2. _____ 6. _____

3. _____ 7. _____

4. _____ 8. _____

***Outputs***
What are the outputs that demonstrate each of your activities and provide the evidence that you are doing what you intended to do? For example, an output of a public outreach activity could be outreach materials; and an output of a fatherhood support group could be the fathers who were recruited or who attended the support group.

Determine how to *quantify* each output. Outputs are generally expressed in numbers, characteristics, or proportion, such as the number of outreach materials disseminated, or the number (or the proportion) of people in the target group that were recruited or who attended the support group.

*Example 1: Public awareness campaign ⟶ Number of billboard advertised on during a given period.*

*Example 2: Parenting workshops ⟶ Number of fathers recruited, served, and completing the workshops.*

***List the output(s) for each of your project's key activities:***

Activity 1: _____ → Output(s): _____

Activity 2: _____ → Output(s): _____

Activity 3: _____ → Output(s): _____

Activity 4: _____ → Output(s): _____

### *Outcomes*

To clarify the outcomes of your project activities, think about what would be the expected changes, the real impact, for the participants. In other words, what do you reasonably expect will happen as the result of your project activities and their outputs?

*Example 1: Community members receive campaign messages and become better informed.*

*Example 2: Fathers gain new parenting skills and report using more effective parenting skills with their children.*

***List the outcome(s) for each key activity and its output:***

For Activity 1: _____

For Activity 2: _____

For Activity 3: _____

For Activity 4: _____

If some of your project activities will likely result in several outcomes, you should determine in which order those changes would occur. Remember that outcomes may be short-term, such as changes in awareness, knowledge, or skills; intermediate, such as changes in behavior or actions; or long-term changes in status or condition.

Use arrows to show the connections between your project inputs and your activities, between your activities and outputs, and between your outputs and each sequence of outcomes (see example in figure 4–5). Remember that one activity could lead to multiple outcomes, or that multiple activities could lead to a single outcome.

The resulting logic model for your project may be quite simple or complex, depending on the nature of your project. However, the model should reflect your entire project as accurately as possible. Lastly, keep reviewing your logic model throughout the program planning and evaluation phases, and revise when needed.

**Evaluation Tip**

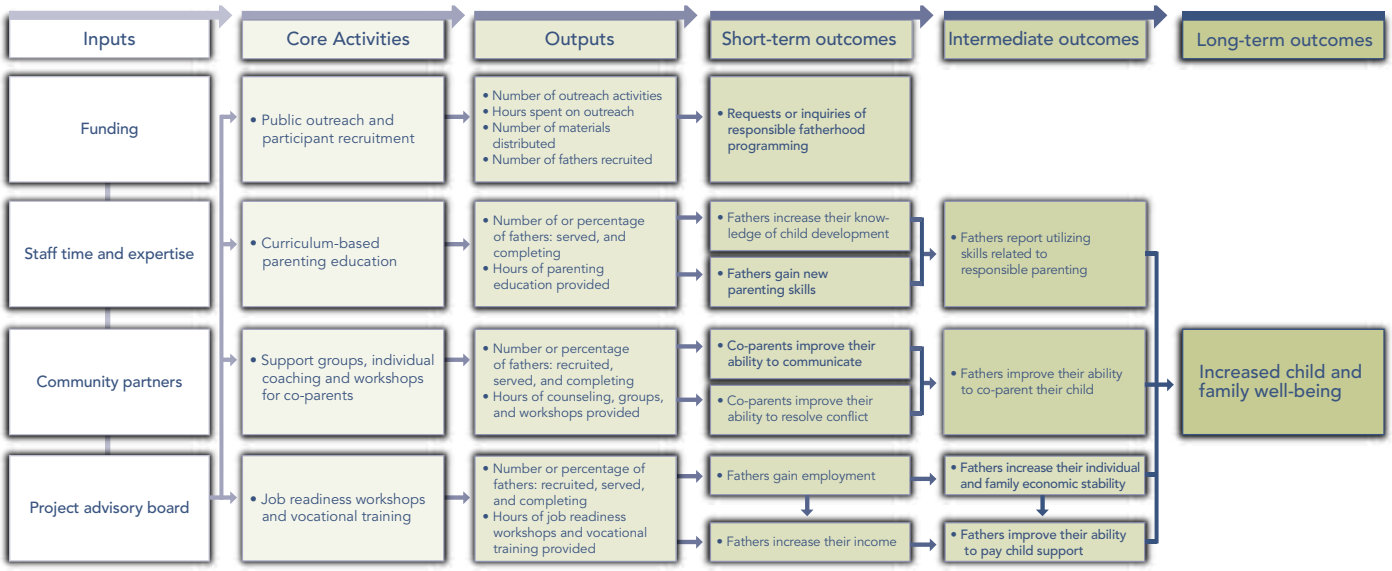
Throughout the development of your logic model, focus on the process of developing the model, not just the product. As previously mentioned, the process itself is a valuable exercise for clarifying project goals, ways to achieve those goals, and for building consensus.

## Questions to ask when revisiting your logic model

When reviewing your logic model, keep in mind the intended activities and the goals of your project. Ask yourself:

- Is the connection between each activity area and its outcomes logical?
- Did I identify outcomes that are clearly the expected results of these activities?
- Are all the crucial project activities included in the model?
- Are the connections between the inputs, activities, outputs, and various levels of outcomes clear and logical?
- Are the components and the progression represented by your logic model reasonable based on existing evidence or theory?
- Do the outcomes represent changes that are important to your project and to the participants?

Figure 4–5 An Example of a Logic Model for a Responsible Fatherhood Project



CHAPTER 5

# Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions are a set of questions that explain in clear terms what you want to know as the result of your program evaluation. As program evaluation is implemented at various phases of the program, it is best to develop specific evaluation questions that are relevant and appropriate for each key phase. Evaluation questions should also encompass multiple potential perspectives, such as the priorities of clients, funders, staff, community members, partnering programs, etc. Evaluation questions should be detailed, focused, targeted, and specific because they will guide the evaluation process.

Evaluation questions should address measurable aspects of the program. Questions that are difficult to measure will only complicate your program evaluation design and process. Furthermore, it is important that addressing your evaluation questions is within your project's evaluation capabilities. The goal of evaluation is to generate useful information that will help you enhance your program; therefore, your evaluation questions should be relevant to this goal.

## *Activity: Drafting your evaluation questions*

Try to develop some questions that you would like to answer with your program evaluation. Include staff and any stakeholders in this activity to ensure that you have incorporated the perspective of several different stakeholders. As this activity is a brainstorming session, include as many ideas as possible.

### *Questions for the program monitoring phase*

Think ahead to the time when you have already began implementing your Responsible Fatherhood project: what will you want to know about how the program is operating; how services are being delivered; challenges that may have been encountered; and stakeholder reactions to the project and its services.

Formulate questions about program implementation and stakeholder satisfaction that would help you obtain relevant information on how to improve or modify existing services and practices.

*Example 1: How many fathers are our support groups serving?*

*Example 2: Is staff implementing the Domestic Violence Prevention curriculum the way it was intended to be implemented, or have they deviated from the protocol?*

***Now draft your own questions:***

### *Questions for the program impact phase*

At certain points in your program, you may want to evaluate whether the services you have been providing are making a difference for your target population. You may also want to know whether your program has fulfilled its intended goals. Think about what you would like to know about the impact you have made on your clients or on the community in general.

Review the short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals of your program and develop questions to help guide the direction of your evaluation.

*Example 1: Has the program helped reduce the incidence of domestic violence reports in the community?*

*Example 2: Are fathers who graduate from the program more engaged in their children's lives than they were before they started the program?*

*Example 3: Did the job skills program help fathers obtain employment?*

### *Now draft your own questions:*

_____

_____

_____

_____

## *Activity: Determining measurability*

After you have developed a list of evaluation questions, go through the list and determine the possible ways in which each question could be assessed. Think of data collection techniques—including the use of intake forms, public databases, surveys, interviews, focus groups, community forums, or town hall discussions. If a particular evaluation question proves overly challenging, consider re-wording the question or making the question more specific. Also, think of the key informants (such as clients, staff, funders, community members, etc.) that could provide the necessary information.

| Evaluation question | Ways this could be measured | Key informants |
|---|---|---|
| **Example 1**<br><br>Is staff implementing the Domestic Violence Prevention curriculum the way it was intended to be implemented, or have they deviated from the protocol? | Observations, interviews, surveys | Staff |
| **Example 2**<br><br>Has the program helped reduce the incidence of domestic violence reports in the community? | Public records, police reports | Domestic violence shelters, Police departments |

| Evaluation question | Ways this could be measured | Key informants |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

## *Activity: Narrowing your list of evaluation questions*

Now it is time to carefully review each question you listed above. While some questions may be interesting to you, they may not be relevant to the Responsible Fatherhood initiative or the actual goals of your project. Take the time to prioritize your questions and select the ones that are most relevant and informative to use for program evaluation. Use the template on the next page to help you choose which evaluation questions to keep. Take into consideration how feasible it would be to collect and analyze the data related to each of the questions. Also, evaluate each question's importance to the project and its stakeholders.

***Directions:***
For each of the evaluation questions you used in the preceding activity think about the following sets of questions regarding the impact or importance of each of your evaluation questions as well as the feasibility of implementing data collection and analysis for each.

***Impact:***

- Will answering this question help me better understand the program's impact?
- Will answering this question help me better understand how the program works?
- Will this question be of interest to Responsible Fatherhood stakeholders?
- Is this question related to the goals of my Responsible Fatherhood project?

Answering *No* to a majority of these impact questions indicates that the evaluation question you are considering may have minimal importance or little payoff for your organization or your Responsible Fatherhood project. Multiple Yes responses to these impact questions, on the other hand, indicate that this evaluation question could yield a big payoff for your organization.

***Implementation:***

- Do you have access to the key informants who would be able to answer this question?
- Do you have access to surveys, public databases, discussion guides, and other data collection sources necessary to obtain this information?
- Will these questions take a minimal amount of time, effort, or organizational resources to collect and analyze?
- Is there a way to reduce or avoid bias in answering this question? For example, surveying men about their drug and alcohol usage may yield biased answers.

Answering *No* to a majority of these implementation questions indicates that the evaluation question you are considering may be too difficult or burdensome to measure. Multiple Yes responses to these implementation questions, on the other hand, indicate that this evaluation question would be relatively easy to assess and thus of manageable cost to your organization.

## *Your evaluation questions*

***List your final evaluation questions below:***

_____

_____

_____

_____

You now have a list of questions that are focused, relevant, informative, and feasible to implement. The rest of your evaluation design will be focused around these questions.

CHAPTER 6

# Process Evaluation

Once you have developed your program theory and logic model, the next step in program evaluation is to design your process evaluation. While your program theory can be thought of as your program's roadmap, a process evaluation is like your program's progress review. Responsible Fatherhood projects were funded with an expectation that a specified number of participants would be served and that specific services would be implemented by the Responsible Fatherhood projects. To provide useful data about grantees' success in meeting these expectations, organizations typically conduct a process evaluation, which describes who received the services, what services they received, where the services were provided, as well as how much and what type of services were provided. Once a program has been implemented, a process evaluation is conducted on a regular basis to monitor and describe whether and how the services are delivered; thereby enabling the grantees to demonstrate whether they were able to provide the services that they were funded to provide.

## Core Concepts in Process Evaluation

In designing a process evaluation, you should carefully consider which dimensions of your program theory are most helpful in answering key questions regarding the implementation of your program. Once you have identified these important dimensions, you need to define them in measurable terms as process indicators (or outputs). Outputs are quantitative indicators that measure how well you have implemented the services or activities that you intended to provide.

### Examples of Outputs Used in Process Evaluation

- **Characteristics of program participants**
  Provides a detailed description of the population using your program's services

  *Example 1: Number & proportion of participants who are married at program entry*
  *Example 2: Average household income of enrolled fathers or families.*

- **Characteristics of staff providing services**
  Provides a detailed description of the staff providing services to your target population

  *Example 1: Number and proportion of staff who have an undergraduate degree or higher.*
  *Example 2: Average number of years of employment with your organization.*

- **Frequency of service delivery**
  Tracks how often a particular unit of service is provided

  *Example 1. Total number of classes offered.*
  *Example 2. Total number of referrals made.*

- **Duration of service**
  Measures of how long a particular service episode lasts

  *Example 1. Total hours of classroom instructional time.*
  *Example 2. Average duration of face-to-face contacts.*

- **Scope of service**
  A count of the number of venues or locations in which the service is offered

  *Example 1. Number of different venues or locations in which a given class is offered.*
  *Example 2. Number of communities served.*

- **Service dosage**
  Measures how many clients completed a given activity or service, and how much time clients participated in a planned activity

  *Example 1. Average class attendance.*
  *Example 2. Number and proportion of participants who complete all curriculum modules.*
  *Example 3. Number and proportion of planned face-to-face contacts that are completed.*

- **Fidelity to service model**
  Indicates how closely actual services correspond to the original service mode

  *Example 1. Estimated number of program participants versus actual number of participants.*
  *Example 2. Estimated or projected classroom attendance versus actual classroom attendance.*

- **Client satisfaction**
  Documents participants' perceptions of the responsiveness of the program to individual needs or of the quality and effectiveness of services

  *Example 1. Number and proportion of participants who indicate that they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the help and support they received from the program staff.*
  *Example 2. Proportion of participants who "agree" or "strongly agree" that they would recommend this program to a friend.*

## Planning Your Process Evaluation

When implementing a new program, it is common to assume that the services and activities will be implemented as originally intended. In hindsight, many project managers and front-line staff discover that their programs were not implemented as planned; for example, they may not have enrolled as many participants as expected, or services may not have been delivered with the intensity, frequency, or duration originally envisioned. Changes in the implementation process in turn affect project outcomes. The following steps for planning your process evaluation can help monitor your program and ensure that problems are identified in a timely manner.

### Step 1. Identify specific program activities and services:

The first step in your process evaluation should be to consult your logic model and identify as explicitly as possible the specific activities, services, or interventions that constitute your program and are in your logic model. The more specific and precise the definition of each service or activity, the easier it will be to formulate a corresponding measure that is discrete and meaningful.

## Step 2. Articulate outputs:

After identifying specific program activities, briefly state the immediate result or consequence of each activity. This step serves as an important conceptual bridge between your program activities and your assumptions about what program participants will do in response to these activities. In other words, you are stating what needs to happen in order for the activity to be implemented. For example, if your program offers job training classes for fathers, your assumption is that fathers will attend these classes. Therefore, the output of the activity could be articulated using a simple statement, such as "fathers attend job training classes."

## Step 3. Determine how to measure outputs:

Once outputs have been identified, determine how achievement of these immediate results will be measured. Outputs should be quantified in the most concrete terms possible. Examples of how to measure outputs might include "average weekly training attendance" or "the number and proportion of enrolled fathers who attend every class of the job training course."

## Step 4. Identify data sources:

Clear definitions of service outputs will be of little use without knowing where the information that feeds these measures will come from. Identify the initial source of data for each output early to allow time for refining or identifying alternative data sources before data collection begins. In the case of the output of job training attendance, a relevant data source might be a daily class attendance log. In some instances, it may be necessary to develop customized data collection templates, forms, or logs.

## Step 5. Specify measurement intervals:

Process data are generally collected at consistent intervals during the course of the evaluation. Clearly stated measurement intervals (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, yearly) help ensure standardization of your data collection across your service population. For example, in the case of the job training classes, you may want to collect attendance data weekly (or as often as the classes are scheduled) on an ongoing basis throughout the program. In all cases, measurement intervals should be frequent enough to provide regular and useful information but not so frequent as to cause undue burden for your staff or clients.

## Step 6. Identify performance targets:

Identify performance targets: Depending on the nature and the goals of your program, it may be appropriate to articulate performance targets for certain services or activities. A performance target serves as a standard or a "yardstick" against which program success is measured. It is generally expressed in numerical terms (e.g., "75 percent of fathers will attend all 12 classes in the job training curriculum") and is sometimes referenced against a known historical benchmark or statistic. For example, the attendance rate for other training courses that your organization has held may have averaged 70 percent, in which case setting a somewhat higher performance goal (e.g., 75 or 80 percent) may be appropriate. When identifying a performance target, it is important to set a goal that is realistic and attainable. Returning to the example of job training courses, an average attendance target of 95 percent may not be appropriate if historical attendance rates for similar courses have hovered around 50 percent.

Take a minute to review the following questions with your evaluation team. This will help ensure that you have addressed the major steps involved in developing a process evaluation:

### Process Evaluation Checklist

- ❒ Have your program's activities or services been articulated?
- ❒ Have outputs for each activity been specified?
- ❒ Are there ways to measure each of your program's outputs?
- ❒ Have data sources been identified for each output measure?
- ❒ Have measurement intervals for data collection been discussed?
- ❒ Are your performance targets for each output reasonable?

## Process Evaluation Case Study: Lessons Learned From the Youth Works Mentoring Program

**Responsible Fatherhood project title:** Youth WORKS Mentoring Program
**Grantee organization:** The Bill Wilson Center
**Website:** www.billwilsoncenter.org

### Project overview

The Youth WORKS Mentoring Program serves the high-risk population of homeless young men who are new or expectant fathers in Santa Clara, California. The program empowers youth to make successful transitions to independence in adulthood, through an innovative mentoring program that integrates employment at Bill Wilson Center and essential support services prior and during that employment. Through mentoring relationships with other employees of the Bill Wilson Center the program ensures the participants have all the necessary resources to succeed in all the important "life domains" of identity formation, community connections and supportive relationships, physical and mental health, life skills, education, employment, recreation and housing. All participants are involved in: 1) case management and mentoring; 2) parenting workshops; and 3) job skills development workshops. The workshops are provided as a critical component of an overall agency "holistic" approach.

### Evaluation design

The evaluation activities conducted for the Youth WORKS project are conducted entirely by internal staff at the Bill Wilson Center. Client level data is collected by front line staff working with the youth and facilitating the educational workshops, and is reviewed and analyzed by project administration staff on a weekly basis. A pre – post evaluation design is used comparing baseline data collected in each service area with post workshop data collected when each curriculum is completed. In addition, mid program data is collected during the parenting workshop. Six and 12 month follow-up data collection is conducted by the Case Managers to assess the long term impact of the program. The weekly review of client level data by program administration has allowed the data to be used as a supervision and program monitoring tool that allows immediate corrective action when needed.

### Challenges

During the first year it was difficult to create buy-in from project staff and the clients being served. There was concern that an extensive data collection would be a burden

on a highly transient and fragile target group. Based on the experiences and feedback from staff and clients the evaluation was designed to make survey instruments short and easily understood by clients. It was also necessary to spend significant effort to train staff on data collection to ensure the reliability and consistency of the data collection process.

### Benefits of the process evaluation

The project's extensive process evaluation resulted in several program improvements and assurances that the program was being implemented as intended. Program managers have been able to make immediate corrective action when enrollment numbers and program demographics began to change. When it was noticed that the program was recruiting a much higher percentage of white males and fewer minorities than anticipated program staff were able to examine subtle changes that had unknowingly occurred in the recruitment. As a result the recruitment was refocused on the desired high-risk target populations. In addition, ongoing reviews of program outcome data helped program mangers to realize that one of the curriculums being used was not having the benefits indented with the target population. Further discussions with staff and clients help program mangers realize the curriculum, which was not developed for this population, was not being as effective as hoped. As such, program management replaced the curriculum in the second year with another that was more suited to the target population and skills that were trying to be taught.

### Lessons learned

Although not formally trained in evaluation, having program administration review evaluation data on a frequent and ongoing basis allowed the data to become an important component of individual supervision, and program monitoring. Significant changes were made to the program and the evaluation based on lessons learned from process evaluation activities resulting in better outcomes for clients in the long term.

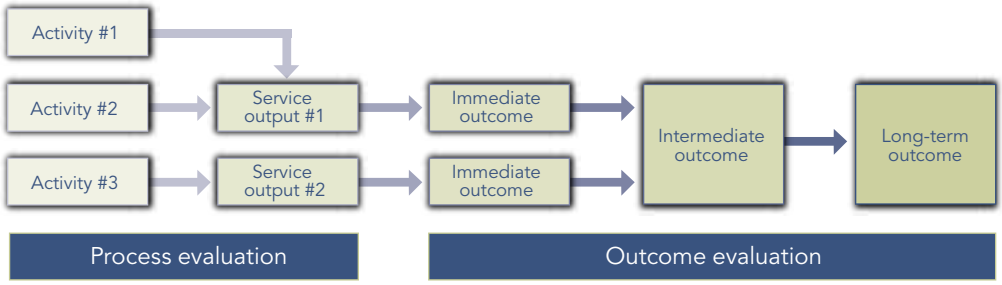
CHAPTER 7

# Outcome Evaluation

Outcome evaluation is used to measure a program's results, or outcomes, in a way that determines whether the program produced the changes in individuals, families, and systems that the program intended to achieve. The model in figure 7–1 illustrates the conceptual relationship between the process and outcome components of an evaluation by delineating the hypothetical linkages between specific program activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Figure 7–1

Process and Outcome Evaluation in the Key Phases of the Evaluation Process




*Source: Kaye, E. (2005). Using a Theory of Change to Guide an Evaluation and Strengthen the Presentation of Findings. Presentation at the Children's Bureau Grantees' Meeting. May 2005. Washington, D.C.*

## Planning Your Outcome Evaluation

### The focal point of project outcomes: fathers, families, children, and communities

The Responsible Fatherhood projects are intended to provide activities that promote or sustain marriage, promote responsible parenting, and foster economic stability. While the services provided by these projects tend to focus on helping fathers improve their life situations, the ultimate goal of the Responsible Fatherhood programming is to impact the well-being of children and families.

To appropriately address the Responsible Fatherhood program's goals, project activities can be expected to lead to outcomes that reflect the projects' contributions to positive changes for fathers, families, and children. However, the specifics of each project's expected outcomes are likely to vary depending on which of the six service areas of the Responsible Fatherhood program model each project has chosen to focus on. Although individual projects may address varied topics and use diverse delivery methods, the main goal of these projects is to facilitate the well-being of children and families by supporting fathers to become involved and engaged in the lives of their children and families. For example, many of the Responsible Fatherhood projects have chosen to attend to the individualized goals of fathers such as alleviating homelessness, controlling destructive behaviors (e.g., violent or criminal acts), or the transition to life outside the prison.

In outcome evaluation it is necessary to specify exactly how each outcome will be measured. Outcomes are generally stated in a quantitative format, so as to clearly reflect that a change is being measured and that some comparison is being made to determine whether a condition has "increased," "improved," or is "greater" after the intervention. Outcomes can also measure whether a condition has "decreased" or is "fewer" (i.e., decreased relationship conflict, or lower recidivism rate).

Examples of outcome measures of Responsible Fatherhood projects could include:

- *Increased* knowledge and use of positive parenting practices
- *Improved* parent-child relations
- *Decreased* occurrence of child maltreatment
- *Improved* housing situation among fathers in the program
- *Improved* employment stability among fathers in the program
- *Decrease* in the length of time that families receive public assistance
- *Reduction* in the percentage of positive drug tests
- *Decreased* number of children entering or re-entering out-of-home placements
- *Fewer* substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect
- *Reduced* court involvement with the families

### Evaluation Tip

Your project's outcomes should reflect the overall focus of the Responsible Fatherhood program, as well as the specific purposes of your individual project. Thus, your evaluation should produce evidence (indicators) of your project's progress toward these goals.

## Outcome Evaluation Case Study: Lessons Learned From the Jefferson County Fatherhood Initiative

**Responsible Fatherhood project title:** The Jefferson County Fatherhood Initiative
**Grantee organization:** The Council on Prevention Education: Substances, Inc. (COPES)
**Website:** www.copes.org

### Project overview

The Jefferson County Fatherhood Initiative in Louisville, Kentucky provides social services to one of the highest-risk populations in the community. The project emphasizes substance abuse recovery and serves males from re-entry populations following their release from prison. During their 20-week Creating Lasting Family Connections program, fathers or expectant fathers who are interested in developing closer relationships with their spouses and children learn skills in four main areas: 1) alcohol and drug issues; 2) family communication; 3) family management; and 4) sexual health and intimacy awareness.

### Evaluation design

In planning the project's evaluation process, the Executive Director wanted to design a process that would ensure scientifically valid results. Thus, he chose an evaluation method that used matched comparison groups (i.e., they compared similar groups of men who attended the program to those who did not), as well as longitudinal data collection (i.e., collecting data from program participants at baseline, 6 weeks, 12 weeks, 20 weeks, and 3-6 months after program completion). Additionally, through the strong community partnerships the organization had established, they were able to gain access to public databases containing criminal records and recidivism rates. Having access to these data enabled the project staff to compare participant results to statewide statistics.

### Challenges

The most difficult step in the evaluation process was creating buy-in from project staff and community partners for implementing the envisioned evaluation design. Stakeholders did not believe such an intensive evaluation design was necessary,

or even feasible. Project partners and program staff members expected that the re-entry population would have a high attrition rate. They were worried about the burden of collecting data at multiple points in time. Additionally, the community partners did not see the need for comparison groups, which meant some men would not be able to receive the program services. However, recognizing the benefits of a good evaluation design, the director helped the stakeholders overcome their fears and doubts about program evaluation and to think about the program's success and how to go about proving that it is successful.

### Results

The project's rigorous evaluation design paid off. Preliminary findings showed that the participants had a 75-80 percent program completion rate, much higher than was expected of a prison re-entry population. Further, the recidivism rate for the Jefferson County Fatherhood Initiative stood at 10 percent after three years, much lower than the 35-40 percent statewide recidivism rates. Additionally, program participants showed a range of 60-80 percent positive individual outcomes after participants completed the 20-week program.

### Benefits

As a result of the program evaluation, the Jefferson County Fatherhood Initiative is able to provide evidence that their program yields positive benefits. This has led to additional funding opportunities and national recognition for the organization, and has increased the organization's credibility in the community and across multiple fields. Not only has the organization itself benefited from program evaluation, but the evaluation process has also impacted all stakeholders involved in the project. Learning the skills needed to implement the evaluation activities along with the program components has helped staff members build professionalism, teamwork, and cultural competence skills. Consequently, having a professional staff that works hard to show program impact has also helped the organization gain the trust of their client population. Sharing evaluation results has also motivated community partners to increase their attendance at the organization's monthly meetings, and caused them to be more focused on finding ways to continue improving their services as well.

### Lessons learned

Though the project's evaluation design was initially met with skepticism, it was well worth the challenge to implement a solid evaluation process. It helped the program document its success and has provided feedback to the community on the achievements of the organization and the program participants. The director and the staff found that a sensible and rigorous evaluation design ensured capturing important outcomes.

## The Difference Between Short-Term, Intermediate, and Long-Term Outcomes

The first step toward conducting an outcome evaluation is choosing which outcomes to assess. You may want to refer to your program theory or logic model to review your program's intended outcomes.

The expected outcomes of your Responsible Fatherhood project are likely to include a variety of potential benefits for the participants, their families, and the community. Some of the benefits may emerge in the short-term (short-term outcomes), additional benefits may surface within an intermediate timeframe (intermediate outcomes), and the program impacts (long-term outcomes) may not be evident for a few years or more.

### Short-term outcomes

What types of outcomes do you expect to see as participants receive services from your program or immediately after they stop participating in services? What types of changes do you

expect to see at the individual level? What types of new knowledge or skills do you expect for your target population in the short term (0-6 months)?

As the timeframe for short-term outcomes is typically not long enough to see behavior-level changes, the outcomes you might expect to see in Responsible Fatherhood programming on short-term are typically related to increased knowledge, new awareness or attitude, or even new skills for your target population. Depending on the focus of your project activities, the short-term benefits for the fathers, as they participate in your project activities or immediately after completing the activities, might include:

- Increased knowledge of family budgeting;
- Expanded views of career options;
- Increased awareness about ramifications of personal substance abuse;
- New understanding of effective parenting skills; or
- Altered views toward fathers' roles in their children's lives.

### Intermediate outcomes

When developing a list of your project's intermediate outcomes, ask yourself the following questions: What types of changes do you expect to see in the intermediate term (around 6-12 months)? What types of individual-level changes do you expect to see? Are there any family-level changes that you would expect to see? What types of new actions or behavioral changes do you expect at this point in time?

On the intermediate term, your Responsible Fatherhood project may contribute to somewhat more noticeable changes in your target population. Within this timeframe, you may see the previously changed attitudes or new skills and abilities translate into actions and behaviors. You may also start to see some family-level benefits. Intermediate benefits of Responsible Fatherhood programming could include:

- Fathers use their budgeting skills to put money aside in a savings account;
- Fathers gain confidence in their ability to obtain employment;
- Fathers use newly learned parenting techniques at home;
- Fathers use conflict resolution skills with their partners; or
- Fathers spend increased amounts of time with their children.

### Long-term outcomes

As you develop a list of your project's long-term outcomes, ask yourself the following questions: What changes do you expect to see years down the line (around 2-5 years)? What types of positive results in the form of changed status or condition do you expect to see in your target population? What types of community-level and systems-level changes do you expect your program to impact?

The long-term outcomes of your program often are not in evidence until long after the project activities that contributed to the impacts have concluded. These program impacts may become known in a few years or even further into the future. As the Responsible Fatherhood programming aims to ultimately impact the well-being of children and families, the desired long-term outcomes of the Responsible Fatherhood projects can be assumed to aim at changed conditions or new values that enhance child and family well-being. The program impacts within the long-range timeframe may also expand to the community- and systems-level.

## Outcome Indicators

In order to measure your project's outcomes, each one needs to be stated in measurable terms (typically numerically or quantitatively). This measure is called an outcome indicator. Outcome indicators tell you how your project is progressing. Effective indicators are credible, practical, useful for program improvement, and clear about what they measure. Outcome indicators should be:

- Defined in precise terms
- Measuring real changes
- Directly measuring the corresponding outcome

When selecting outcome indicators for your project, try to answer the following questions:

- What type of progress or change do you expect to be evident in the target population?
- From whom will you collect data for each outcome?
- What types of things would you see, hear, or read about clients or the community that show that progress has been made toward the outcome?
- By when will each outcome be attained?

For example, if one of your project's outcomes is for fathers to learn healthy stress management techniques, an appropriate outcome indicator could be: Participating fathers will report reduction in stress-related symptoms by the end of the program.

### Sample outcomes and corresponding indicators

| Outcomes | Indicators |
|---|---|
| Healthier communication between fathers and the mothers of their children. | Percent of fathers who report less conflict with the mothers of their children after four months of individual mentoring on conflict resolution. |
| Fathers use new parenting skills with their children. | Percent of fathers who report using positive parenting techniques with their children after six months of receiving individual coaching on parenting skills. |
| Fathers improve their economic stability. | Number and percent of fathers who obtain employment within nine months of receiving job placement assistance. |

## Potential Outcomes and Indicators for Responsible Fatherhood Projects for Each of the Six Program Model Service Areas

**Six service categories from the Responsible Fatherhood Conceptual Model (see chapter 2)**

1. Promoting and sustaining healthy marriage and co-parent relationships;
2. Developing parenting skills and knowledge;
3. Advancing economic stability;
4. Increasing fathers' level of involvement with their children;
5. Facilitating personal transformations in how men see themselves and their roles as fathers; and
6. Connecting fathers with their communities and available supports.

The following list offers a review of some examples of potential outcomes of Responsible Fatherhood projects, per each activity area.

## Outcomes of activities to promote healthy marriage and co-parent relationships may include:

- Co-parents learn new communication skills or improve their communication.
- Un-married co-parents increase their ability to resolve conflict or increase their communication with each other about their children.
- Married co-parents report increased commitment to each other or increased satisfaction with their marriage.

## Outcomes of project activities to improve parenting skills and knowledge may include:

- Fathers increase their understanding of responsible parenting, such as having appropriate expectations of children and knowledge of and empathy towards children's needs.
- Fathers learn new parenting skills, such as positive discipline techniques and cultivating a child's independence.
- Fathers utilize new parenting skills with their children; increase their understanding of child development; or increase their consistency in providing formal, as well as informal and non-monetary support for their children.

## Outcomes of activities aimed to improve fathers' economic stability may include:

- Fathers learn job search skills, such as resume writing, interviewing, and job search strategies.
- Fathers learn new job skills, such as gaining professional certifications.
- Fathers obtain or maintain employment.
- Fathers increase their income or their ability to financially support their children.

## Outcomes of project activities to increase fathers' level of involvement with their children may include:

- Fathers establish paternity, or regularly visit their children.
- Fathers spend more time with their children.
- Fathers increase their involvement in their children's education.
- Fathers report greater emotional investment in their children's lives.

## Outcomes of activities aimed to facilitate personal transformation may include:

- Fathers report increased self-esteem, or increased understanding of responsible fatherhood and the role of a father.
- Fathers learn how to manage stress, or to reduce their drug use.
- Fathers increase their use of services of community service providers.
- Incarcerated fathers experience a successful transition to family life and are not reincarcerated.

## Outcomes of activities to improve fathers' level of connectedness with their community:

- Fathers increase their understanding of the services available to them in the community, or of services available to their child in the community.
- Fathers and their families report increased access to services, or increased utilization of services.

- Community service providers' staff members increase their knowledge of the needs of fathers and the potential barriers fathers encounter when seeking services.

Indicators of successful Responsible Fatherhood projects might include increased knowledge, attitudes toward parenting, level of fathers' involvement with their children, and changed parenting behaviors. As previously discussed, outcome indicators should be clear, detailed, and specific rather than broad general statements. A good indicator is one that is directly relevant to your project, is feasible to collect, easy to interpret, and enables tracking of change over time.

Figure 7–2 illustrates examples of potential outcome indicators of Responsible Fatherhood projects and includes the performance targets (i.e., how much progress you would expect) for each. Naturally, the actual sets of outcomes and outcome indicators that you will use in your project evaluation will depend upon the goals of your project, the activities you provide, and the specific circumstances of your project.

Figure 7–2 Sample Outcome Indicators for the Responsible Fatherhood Projects

| Responsible Fatherhood projects' service area | Examples of potential outcome indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Promote healthy marriage and co-parent relationships | • 60 percent of co-parents report separately that the frequency of their conflict with the other parent decreased after completion of a relationship workshop series on conflict resolution skills.<br>• After five months of being mentored by more experienced couples, 80 percent of co-parents report increased communication about parental and non-parental issues.<br>• Upon their completion of relationship education classes, 60 percent of married co-parents report increased commitment to each other. |
| 2. Improve parenting skills and knowledge | • At the conclusion of a series of group coaching sessions on positive parenting techniques, 65 percent of fathers are observed using these techniques with their children.<br>• Three months after an intensive public education campaign on the causes of domestic violence and child abuse, community-wide reports of abuse show a 10 percent decrease over the previous year.<br>• Immediately after parenting education classes, 95 percent of the participating fathers score higher on a child development questionnaire than they did prior to attending the classes. |

| Responsible Fatherhood projects' service area | Examples of potential outcome indicators |
|---|---|
| 3. Improve fathers' economic stability | • At the conclusion of job readiness classes, 80 percent of the unemployed fathers have written a resume and formally applied for jobs.<br>• 50 percent of fathers who participate in vocational training and job placement services obtain employment within twelve months.<br>• 65 percent of fathers who receive financial management training report living within their budget for three months after the training. |
| 4. Increase fathers' level of involvement with their children | • 50 percent of the participating non-resident fathers establish paternity while using the project's support services.<br>• Participants of a support group for fathers increase the frequency of their child-related activities by 40 percent over the course of the group.<br>• After receiving one-on-one coaching to improve the father-child relationship, 80 percent of the fathers report increased positive interactions with their children. |
| 5. Facilitate personal transformation | • 80 percent of fathers report increased self-esteem after actively participating in a 6-month long men's support group.<br>• At the conclusion of a stress management class, 70 percent of participants increase their knowledge of effective stress reduction techniques.<br>• 75 percent of participants in a Transition from Prison program experience a successful transition to family and community life. |

| Responsible Fatherhood projects' service area | Examples of potential outcome indicators |
|---|---|
| 6. Improve fathers' level of connectedness with their community | • Immediately after an education campaign on community services that are available to fathers and families, service organizations report a 40 percent increase in the number of fathers accessing their services or activities.<br>• At the conclusion of community service provider training on the needs of low-income fathers, 90 percent of participants report increased understanding of those needs.<br>• Of the fathers who receive individualized assistance in navigating the community's social service systems, 90 percent successfully access the services they need. |

## *Activity*

Identify at least one indicator for each of your project's intended outcomes.

***Short-term outcome indicators***

Remember that short-term outcomes describe how participants will change over the short-term as the result of experiencing the project activities. These changes typically are changes in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, or skills. What are the indicators (i.e., how will each outcome be measured) you need in order to see that your project is making progress toward its intended short-term outcomes?

***List the major short-term outcomes of your project and the corresponding indicators:***

Short-term outcome 1.

Corresponding indicator(s):

Short-term outcome 2.

Corresponding indicator(s):

***Intermediate outcome indicators***

Intermediate outcomes describe how participants' actions or behaviors will change as the result of the project activities. What are the indicators (evidence) you need to see that your project is progressing toward its intended intermediate outcomes?

***List the major intermediate outcomes of your project and the corresponding indicators:***

Intermediate outcome 1:

Corresponding indicator(s):

Intermediate outcome 2:.

Corresponding indicator(s):

### Evaluation Tip

Include specifics, such as numbers and percentages (performance targets) regarding the changes in participants. Your target numbers and percentages indicate how much confidence you have that your project will manage to impact your target population. It is important to set reasonable and practical targets that are within the scope and capability of your project.

### Long-term outcome indicators

Long-term outcomes are the changes that might not be evident until some time after the project activities and describe how your project activities will contribute to participants' status, values, or condition in the long-term. For example, which improved conditions would you expect to see in the participants in the future (maybe years from now)? What are the indicators (evidence) you need to see that your project is making progress toward its intended long-term outcomes?

***List the major long-term outcomes of your project and the corresponding indicators:***

Long-term outcome 1:.

Corresponding indicator(s):

Long-term outcome 2:

Corresponding indicator(s):

To render your outcome indicators usable in your evaluation, a few more explicit steps are necessary (see examples in figure 7–3 below and its accompanying worksheet):

1. Identify the data source(s) for each indicator. Be specific in your descriptions of the data sources.
2. Determine the measurement interval for data collection. Your evaluation needs to collect comparable data periodically in order to measure progress. Depending on the indicator, you might choose to collect data bi-annually, annually, quarterly, monthly, or even more frequently.
3. Establish your project's targets (or benchmarks). Outcome indicators detail what you are measuring, but targets specify the results you expect within the context of your project and participant population. Targets or benchmarks should be set based on reasonable expectations as demonstrated by existing projects or literature. Appropriate targets are highly dependent on the particular program, setting, and its population.
4. The responsibility for data collection should be clearly assigned to a specific person or entity. The responsible staff should possess adequate knowledge, training, and experience to carry out the data collection functions.

**Evaluation Tip**

If you notice that an outcome requires more than three indicators, consider whether that outcome needs to be re-defined or separated into several, more distinct outcomes.

Figure 7–3 Details of Outcome Indicators – Examples from Fatherhood Activities

| Outcome | Indicator | Data source | Measurement interval | Target | Person responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short-term outcomes** | | | | | |
| Fathers gain knowledge about personal responsibility | Average change in score on standardized assessment tool | Fatherhood Responsibility Scale | Program entry, immediately after completing the program, and 3 months after completing the program | 80 percent of the fathers gain knowledge about personal responsibility after participating in the program | Class instructor |
| **Intermediate outcomes** | | | | | |
| Fathers maintain sobriety | Average change in score on standardized assessment tool | Addiction Severity Index (ASI) | Program entry, 6 and 12 months following completion of treatment | 75 percent of fathers receive an average composite score of X on the drug section of the ASI 12 mos. after treatment | Substance abuse counselor |
| **Long-term outcomes** | | | | | |
| Children are at reduced risk of maltreatment | Percentage of families with a subsequent maltreatment referral within 12 months of program discharge | Child welfare database | Ongoing, within 12 months of program discharge | 75 Percent of families will have no maltreatment referrals within 12 months of discharge | Evaluation consultant |

## *Worksheet: Define your project's outcome indicators*

| Outcome | Indicator | Data Source | Measurement Interval | Target | Person Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short-term outcomes | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Intermediate outcomes | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Long-term outcomes | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

## Review your outcome indicators

For each indicator you listed, ask yourself the following questions to determine if your indicators are clear and realistic:

- Is it reasonable in terms of data collection timing, frequency, and costs?
- Does it represent a clear and unbiased definition?
- Is the statement clear about what is being measured and the specific data to be collected?

CHAPTER 8

# How Do We Measure Change?

## The Difference Between Descriptive and Comparative Evaluation Designs

### Descriptive evaluation design

Used in process evaluation, descriptive evaluation design describes the services and activities that the project implemented. Each Responsible Fatherhood project is funded with the expectation that a specified number of participants would be served and that specific services would be implemented under the authorized activity areas. Descriptive designs address who received the services, what they received, and the extent to which the services were provided. Therefore, descriptive evaluation generally tracks the number, type, and duration of services. These data should be collected on an ongoing basis over the course of the project to track how well the project goals are being met.

Descriptive evaluation design also involves the collection of participant demographic characteristics, such as age, race, marital status, education, employment, and number of children. This information can be used to help determine whether the program is reaching its intended target population. These data can also help explain who benefits most from the services as well as to interpret findings after the evaluation has been conducted. A descriptive evaluation may also include descriptive outcomes. These are not based on changes in an outcome variable over time, but describe the status or condition of participants after they participate in the program. For example, descriptive design can address the employment status of participating fathers, however, it does not have the capacity to explain whether participants' employment status has improved.

### Comparative evaluation design

Comparative evaluation design is used to measure outcomes and can address whether or not changes have taken place. Comparisons can be accomplished by 1) making a comparison between conditions after participation in a program and conditions prior to participation; 2) comparing participants with similar individuals who did not participate; or 3) a combination of both. A comparison group is to reassure that the project activities, not something else, caused the observed outcomes. It is the best way to determine the impact of your project activities on participants.

The comparison group's characteristics must be similar to the program group, but the group itself can be identified before, during, or after the beginning of a project activity. Furthermore, the group can be at the client level (i.e., participants are directly matched and compared with comparison individuals) or at the aggregate level (i.e., outcomes for the participant group as a whole are compared with outcomes for the comparison group as a whole). Generally, demographic characteristics and other key variables are used to determine the comparability of comparison groups. If you plan to use a comparison group, you

must make sure that this group will be available for data collection during your evaluation. Your evaluation plan will need to specify how you plan to recruit and ensure the comparison group members' availability.

In cases where it is not possible to use a group comparable to the participants, existing or historical data is often used as a standard for comparisons. Furthermore, using more than one source of comparison data can help strengthen the evaluation findings. For example, a project aiming to build community awareness around the topic of domestic violence might determine that everyone in the community will be exposed to the message in some form. In this case, the project might rely on community-wide domestic violence statistics prior to the public awareness campaign and compare community awareness prior to and after the intervention.

The use of comparisons is important in project evaluation as it permits you to decipher if the participants demonstrated changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, or awareness; and whether the observed changes were related to your project activities. Without the use of a comparison group, it is difficult to demonstrate that any changes in your participants took place as a result of your intervention. The observed changes might be a result of some other reason such as changed contextual factors or simply the passage of time. For example, if your project implemented parenting classes and you showed that your participants' parenting skills improved over time, it could be argued that parenting skills increased simply due to parenting for a longer time and thus having more practice. But, if a comparison group did not show similar changes, you could then say with greater confidence that your parenting classes had an impact.

**Evaluation Tip**

Keep in mind that the key factors in selecting the evaluation design are your resources, your project objectives; the specific variables you are tracking; the circumstances of your specific project; and the participant population. While solid evaluation design generally involves the use of a comparison group or other point of reference that allows you to attribute the changes or improvements to your project activities, such designs require considerable evaluation skills to implement. Therefore, it is best to use a skilled evaluation professional to implement designs that utilize comparison groups.

## Overview of Evaluation Designs

An evaluation design is your overall approach to data collection. It describes the process of measuring as well as when and how the data are collected. Part of the evaluation design is the evaluation methods and the data collection procedures themselves (such as interviews, surveys, observations, and document reviews). The following presents an overview of the main features of evaluation designs typically utilized in project evaluation.

### Quantitative and qualitative data

Evaluation methods are typically classified as quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative methods provide for structured responses that can be standardized and more easily aggregated. They typically include surveys, tests, and checklists. Qualitative methods provide for greater detail and generation of new ideas. They typically include interviews, observations, and case studies. Which method type is appropriate for your evaluation depends on what you want to know, the type of data you need, and your resources. Sometimes both types of methods are appropriate. Using both often provides a more complete understanding of the program and its impact.

Although a chosen evaluation design often involves both qualitative and quantitative research methods, some of the same conditions and constraints that affect the choice of a research design also influence the selection of appropriate and practical research methods.

## Examples of common research methods

| Quantitative | Qualitative |
|---|---|
| • Standardized assessment instruments and tests<br>• Surveys/questionnaires<br>• Analysis of existing administrative/IMS data<br>• Case record review (e.g., data on program attendance and service receipt)<br>• Structured observation (e.g., using numeric rating scales) | • Open-ended and semi-structured interviews<br>• Focus groups<br>• Document review (e.g., workers' case notes)<br>• Observation (e.g., taking detailed field notes or making journal entries) |

*Source: James Bell Associates Evaluation Brief: Selecting an Evaluation Approach*

## Post-only design

In the post-only design, outcome data are collected from the participants after they have completed program services. For example, upon completing a parenting workshop for fathers, the participants are given a questionnaire about their attitudes toward parenting and fatherhood. This questionnaire is called a post-test because it is administered *after* an activity that was designed to create changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behavior. While post-only is a common design, it is unreliable because it does not produce data for determining if changes or improvements have taken place.

## Pre-post design

Two very commonly used evaluation designs are the pre-post assessment, and pre-post assessment with a comparison or control group.

The pre-post design involves only the program participants. The information is collected twice, once before participants begin the project activities (pre-test) and the second time from the same participants after they have completed the project activity (post test or follow-up assessment). The outcome data may be collected more frequently but you must collect information before participation has an impact on the outcomes being examined. These pre-participation data constitute the baseline information to which the follow-up data are compared to in order to identify whether participants changed or improved on the outcome measure. However, many other things could also have happened outside of the project activity that may affect the observed changes.

The pre-post design is often used for evaluating immediate changes in participants' knowledge and attitudes, as you can assess the knowledge and attitudes prior to training and immediately after training with some assurance that changes were related to the training the participants received. For example, participants may take both pre- and post-tests or have their behaviors observed before and after the program. Therefore, the pre-post design can offer a suitable alternative when evaluating short-term change, such as for training programs as well as when the project resources and technical evaluation expertise are limited.

However, if you want to assess longer-term outcomes, such as changes in participants' behavior or status, the pre-post design by itself is not the most suitable design because it lacks an external comparison group that functions as a reference point for observed changes. Collecting information only on the participants does not allow you to directly address potential participant changes as the result of the program services. To be able to attribute participant changes to your program's activities, it is best to use a pre-post design that incorporates a comparison or control group. In this design, two groups of individuals are included in your evaluation: the participants (the treatment group), and individuals who are similar to the participants but who do not receive the same services (the no-treatment group).

**Evaluation Tip**

Adding a comparison of one or more groups, individuals, or sites can strengthen all of the one-group designs.

### Retrospective pre-post design

As its name implies, in the retrospective pre-post (also commonly referred to as the retrospective post) design, participants are asked to recall their situation, knowledge, attitude, behavior, etc., as it was prior to program participation. The design is commonly used in a variety of programs and often utilizes a questionnaire. This method allows for collecting comparative (pre and post intervention) information without the need to collect data twice or to administer two separate questionnaires. Thus, the convenience of the design is one of the main advantages.

Another often-cited advantage of the retrospective pre-post design is that it reduces potential response shifts since no time passes between the pre and post data collection. Response shift refers to the phenomenon of people changing simply with the passage of time, thus their perceptions, opinions, and judgments may also change. However, despite its advantages, the major disadvantage of the design is its reliance on the accuracy of participants' recall of past events.

### Case study design

A case study design uses multiple sources of information and multiple methods to provide comprehensive, in-depth information about a program. Different from other designs that often study a wide range of project activities and outcomes, a case study is generally limited to a single unit or system. This design allows you to obtain a complete picture of your project, a specific component of your project, or the experience of one participating person, family, or community. Its major strengths are its comprehensiveness and exploration of reasons for the outcomes.

Due to their nature, case studies are generally time-consuming and expensive to conduct and can be used to supplement an existing evaluation or to form the basis for the evaluation. Case studies most frequently involve qualitative research methods although quantitative methods can be used as well. Regardless of the methods used, case studies focus on obtaining a rich and in-depth understanding not only of the subject(s) being studied, but of the contextual factors as well. As a general rule, all good case studies require expertise in qualitative research methods, such as interviews, moderating focus groups, and coding and interpreting qualitative data.

### Experimental design

The most rigorous type of comparative evaluation design is the experimental design with random assignment of individuals to a treatment group (receives the service or intervention) and a control group (does not receive the service or intervention). This evaluation design is an experiment that is used to determine the extent to which a program causes changes in the outcomes of interest beyond what would have been expected in the absence of the program. A less rigorous comparative evaluation can assess whether change has occurred in a participant group relative to the past or to a comparison group, but it generally cannot determine whether, or to what extent, the observed changes are attributable to the program or intervention of interest. An experimental design, by contrast, applies more rigorous standards of research design, data collection, and analysis. This allows an evaluator to conclude, with a greater degree of confidence, that observed impacts are a function of the intervention itself—and are not a result of other factors. Analyses typically involve the comparison of outcomes for program participants to those of a systematically and carefully defined comparison group. In other words, an evaluator would examine whether the changes or improvements in the participant group were greater, or more favorable, than the changes in a comparable group of individuals that did not receive the intervention.

## Data Sources – Overview of Data Collection Methods

The primary data collection strategies generally utilized in project evaluation include self-reporting (i.e., surveys, interviews, focus groups), document reviews, and observations. Each of the data sources has its advantages as well as limitations (see figure 8–1).

Figure 8–1 Summary of Commonly Used Data Sources

| Data source | Uses | Main advantages | Main disadvantages |
|---|---|---|---|
| Surveys, questionnaires | For obtaining data from a large number of participants<br>Inexpensive | Inexpensive<br>Easy to administer, compare, and analyze | Hard to obtain in-depth or comprehensive information |
| Interviews | For obtaining in-depth information or clarification of issues | Flexibility in administering<br>Can yield rich and comprehensive information | More costly and time-consuming<br>Difficult to compare and analyze |
| Focus Groups | For exploratory data gathering, deeper understanding, or clarification of issues | Relatively fast way to obtain a range of rich information | Requires a skilled moderator<br>Can be difficult to analyze |
| Observations | For obtaining information about a process or a situation as it occurs.<br>Particularly relevant for behaviors and human interactions | More objective than self-reports<br>Allows for first-hand data collection and does not rely on participants' ability to provide accurate information | Can be expensive<br>Limited to what can be seen or heard (does not provide information on reasons for behaviors) |
| Document Reviews | A variety of uses, from tracking program data to comparison purposes | May be free or inexpensive to obtain as information already exists | Information may be inflexible or incomplete for particular evaluation purposes |

## Surveys

The most widely used data collection method is the survey. It uses questionnaires to generate quantitative data. Surveys may be mailed, completed on-site, or administered through interviews conducted face-to-face, by telephone, or online. Surveys can yield data on what is working well, what participants want, participants' satisfaction with the services, etc. As previously discussed, they are also useful as pre-post measures to assess changes in knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, or behaviors. As compared to interviews or focus groups, surveys also allow for an option to collect data anonymously on sensitive topics.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| • Relatively inexpensive<br>• Useful for a wide variety of topics<br>• Effective for collecting descriptive data<br>• Can be used with large numbers of participants<br>• Relatively easy to analyze<br>• Data can be collected anonymously | • May be biased due to its reliance on self-reporting<br>• Data may lack detail and depth |

## Interviews

The interview method of data collection involves the collection of information by talking with and listening to people. Interviews can be designed as structured (the same wording and sequence of questions are used with every interviewee); semi-structured (the same topics are used with every interviewee, but the wording and sequence can vary); or unstructured (i.e., informal interviews).

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| • Face-to-face contact can help yield more details and richer data<br>• Allows the interviewer to prompt for more in-depth information or clarifications<br>• Allows the interviewer to see respondents' body language<br>• Allows the interviewer to be flexible in administering the interview | • Expensive and time-consuming<br>• Requires well-trained and skilled interviewers<br>• The interviewees may be reluctant to divulge sensitive information in a face-to-face setting |

## Focus groups

A focus group is a type of group interview in which the interactions between the moderator and the participants, as well as amongst the participants, help to draw out information. A focus group moderator's effective use of carefully designed questions and prompts can often elicit more in-depth, meaningful, and honest responses than surveys or even individual interviews.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| • Relatively fast method of data collection<br>• The group dynamics can result in more in-depth and unbiased information<br>• Effective for obtaining a deeper understanding of a particular issue<br>• Often used in conjunction with surveys to obtain further details | • Does not yield data on individual participants<br>• Participants may be overly influenced by the group opinion<br>• Data analysis can be time-consuming |

## Observations

Observation is a less common, but useful method of collecting data. Observations are generally used in order to obtain a more objective view of project activities, events, or participants than self-reporting (surveys, interviews, focus groups) could yield. The purpose of observations is to obtain detailed, unbiased information about the project or the participants by "seeing and listening" and recording the activities and behaviors as they occur within their natural context.

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| • Allows the evaluator to enter into and understand specific situations or contexts<br>• Yields direct information about behavior<br>• Helpful in identifying unanticipated outcomes<br>• Natural, unstructured, and flexible setting | • Expensive and time-consuming<br>• Observation may affect participants' behavior<br>• Observer characteristics or biases may distort data |

## Document review and accessing existing data sources

Additional data sources for your project evaluation may be the project's administrative and program records. In fact, measuring your project's outcomes does not necessarily require new data collection efforts as your project may already track and compile data that can reflect the outcomes. These secondary data are less costly to use in your project evaluation and access to them generally does not require obtaining participant consent. A *document review* is the data collection method that systematically examines pre-existing data sources utilizing such materials as intake forms, case management files, attendance records, meeting minutes, reports, budgets, etc.

A variety of sources exist for obtaining national or local level data for use as part of the needs assessment, baseline assessment, or for comparison purposes. Examples of such data include:

- The U.S. Census (http://www.census.gov/)
- Youth Risk Behavior System (YRBS) (http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/)
- National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) includes various datasets with data such as labor markets, earnings, training, jobs, etc. (http://www.bls.gov/nls/)
- National Center for Education Statistics (http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/)

## *Activity*

For each outcome indicator that you have selected for your project activities, identify what information you will need to collect and measure to assess that indicator.

What to consider when planning your data collection:

1. **Practicality.** When thinking about data collection, it is important to think about how realistic it is to collect this information. Ask yourself:
   - What will it cost to collect this data?
   - Who will collect this information?
   - Is there enough time to retrieve it?
   - Do you expect this data collection to require low, medium, or high effort?
2. **Measurement Intervals.** Depending on your indicators, you may want to collect data at several different points in time. For others, you may only need to collect data once. It is important to plan the details during this stage of outcome evaluation.
   - Map out the different points in time when the data should be collected for each indicator
   - Data collection points to consider: Before and after the program, 1 month into the program, midway through the program, 6 months after, 12 months after
3. **Data collection sources.** Consider the following sources of obtaining data to measure your indicators:
   - Staff observations
   - Surveys
   - Questionnaires
   - Focus groups
   - Interviews
   - Current program records (e.g., intake forms)
   - Public databases (e.g., court documents, school records, census)

***Once you have answered the above questions, write up a brief procedure to specify the details of your data collection methods. Include the following in your write-up:***

- What data are being collected?
- How will the data be used?
- Who will collect the data?
- How will these data be collected?
- When will the data be collected?
- Where will the data be stored?

### *Piloting and testing*

No matter how well thought-out your data collection plan is, there is no guarantee that you will not run into challenges and barriers that you did not anticipate. It is always a good idea to pilot test your data collection methods and tools before using them in your evaluation. Pilot testing the data collection methods will ensure that they are appropriate for your target population and time- and cost-efficient. Below are some suggestions for pilot testing your data collection methods:

1. Have a few staff members quickly answer the questionnaires or surveys to ensure the questions are understandable, culturally appropriate, easy to complete, etc.
2. Test your questionnaires or surveys with individuals that are similar to your target population, such as clients of another related program or agency.
3. The first year of your program can be used to test out your data collection process. During this first year, if you notice any challenges or barriers (e.g., difficulty in contacting program graduates, low response rate), make sure that these are documented in your evaluation plan. Also, record any suggestions to improve the plan.

### *Reviewing your data collection plan*

Prior to conducting an evaluation, it is important to review your data collection plan to insure that the needed data can be obtained and analyzed. A data collection plan will also help you summarize and review your evaluation process.

Designing and implementing a program evaluation requires careful up-front planning, the allocation of adequate technical and personnel resources, and a commitment to collect data in a systematic and consistent manner. It is often helpful to outline each of these steps in a written data collection plan (see figure 8–2).

Figure 8–2 Basic Components of a Data Collection Plan

| Output/ outcome | Measure/ indicator | Data source | Measurement interval | Target/ benchmark | Person responsible |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Outputs:** the immediate, concrete result(s) of providing a service or activity (e.g., clients participate in workshops).<br><br>**Outcomes:** the changes expected to occur as a result of program services and activities.<br><br>For each program output and outcome, a data collection plan should identify a measure, data source, measurement interval, target and person responsible for data collection. | A concrete statement that shows how an output or outcome will be systematically measured.<br><br>Often expressed numerically (e.g., total numbers, averages, proportions).<br><br>**Output/process measures:** generally expressed in terms of quantity of outputs (e.g., number of fliers distributed, avg. number of training sessions attended per client).<br><br>**Outcome measures:** generally expressed with reference to a normative variable or construct (e.g., proportion of clients who relapse following treatment, number of clients with a repeat maltreatment report following program discharge). | The tool or method used to collect information on a given indicator.<br><br>**May include:** Standardized instruments (e.g., Parenting Stress Index, the Addiction Severity Index) or non-standardized instruments (e.g., client satisfaction survey).<br><br>Written documents or records (e.g., meeting notes, client case files).<br><br>Qualitative research methods (e.g., focus groups, semi-structured interviews). | The frequency at which data on a given indicator will be collected.<br><br>Generally expressed using a calendar term (e.g., days, weeks, months, years).<br><br>Some standardized instruments specify the recommended data collection intervals (e.g., the PSI is administered every 6 months).<br><br>A standard and consistent time interval is preferable for making valid comparisons across clients (e.g., measure change every 6 months for all clients instead of "pre" and "post" program).<br><br>Sometimes an interval is based on completion of specific service modules or activities (e.g., entry into substance abuse treatment and completion of each treatment module). | A standard or "yardstick" of achievement against which program success is measured.<br><br>Generally expressed in numeric terms (e.g., 60 percent of clients will successfully complete a substance abuse treatment program within 12 months of enrollment).<br><br>Is sometimes referenced against a known geographic or historical statistic (e.g., a national rate of substance abuse relapse, a 5-year average countywide child maltreatment rate). | Specify who will have responsibility for collecting data on each output or outcome.<br><br>Data collection may be the responsibility of program staff (e.g., caseworkers, administrative support workers) or of evaluators.<br><br>Make sure the data collector has the education, skills, and experience to do the job (e.g., your administrative assistant should not implement a complex observation instrument usually administered by a trained psychologist).<br><br>Minimize risk of bias in data collection (e.g., the program director should not conduct focus groups with program clients). |

## Evaluation Tip: Data analysis

Remember to consider attrition, response rate, and sample size when developing your analysis plan.

*Sample size:* Your sample size is the total number of individuals that you intend to track in order to collect data about the effectiveness of your program.

*Attrition:* During the course of your program, it is natural that some participants may discontinue services for a variety of reasons. This is called attrition, and should be documented in your analysis. The number of people who have left (either voluntarily or not) before completing the program. This is also often referred to as the dropout rate. For information on how to deal with attrition at the data collection phase as well as at the analysis phase, please consult an evaluation expert.

*Response rate:* This is the percentage of people in the sample who successfully completed surveys/questionnaires/interviews or attended focus groups. For instance, if you sent out invitations to 50 clients to attend a focus group on responsible fatherhood and only 12 actually showed up for the focus group, your response rate would be 24 percent.

*Reviewing the following questions with your evaluation team can help ensure that you have addressed the major steps involved in developing your outcome evaluation.*

## Outcome Evaluation Checklist

- ❒ Have short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes been identified?
- ❒ Do your outcome indicator statements answer the key questions of:
  - How much
  - Who
  - What
  - By when
- ❒ Are there ways to measure each of your program's outcome indicators?
- ❒ Have data sources been identified for each outcome?
- ❒ Are your data collection methods practical?
- ❒ Have measurement intervals for data collection been discussed?
- ❒ Have data sources been identified for each outcome measure?
- ❒ Have you consulted with an evaluation expert to review your evaluation plan?
- ❒ Have you consulted with an evaluation expert to determine how you will analyze the data?
- ❒ Have you identified the audience(s) for the evaluation?

### Evaluation Tip: Reporting the results

Before sharing your results with the public or other external stakeholders, be sure to share the findings with program staff, and have them review and discuss the report. They may be able to add valuable insight or additional details to the report.

CHAPTER 9

# Selecting Your Evaluation Instruments

The tools that are appropriate for your project may include participant satisfaction surveys, tools for measuring participants' knowledge of and access to various types of social services, pre-post measurement tools of marital status, employment status, stability, satisfaction, etc. In addition to tracking the project's milestones (number of fathers who obtained jobs, number of couples served, number of events hosted, number of newsletters sent, number of staff trained, etc.), participant surveys are often considered a main tool for obtaining information on a variety of conditions and situations of program participants as well as participant satisfaction with the services they received.

This chapter offers guidance in selecting measurement tools that align with the indicators of program success in Responsible Fatherhood programs. Also included are tips on developing your own tools and examples of instruments you may use or modify for your project evaluation.

## Assessing Outcome Measures – What to Consider When Selecting an Instrument

There are several issues to consider when selecting or developing an instrument for Responsible Fatherhood initiatives. Before proceeding to select the most appropriate and practical data collection measures for your project evaluation, you should be very clear about what data are necessary for evaluating your project's progress. The data you collect should be directly related to your project's key outcomes, and therefore inextricably linked to the project activities.

To conserve project resources, it is important to review which essential data you may already have (e.g., information that already exists in project case files or within a participant tracking system). You will also need to determine who are the most appropriate respondents for your instruments. For example, when collecting data on some of the more complex outcomes of Responsible Fatherhood projects, sometimes the ideal respondents include the spouses or co-parents, or even children, of the participating fathers. Additionally, in selecting appropriate instruments to document the progress on your project's outcomes, you should consider, and aim to minimize, the data collection burden on participants and project staff while striving to obtain the data that are essential to your program evaluation.

Selecting a standardized instrument can seem complicated as countless standardized instruments have been developed and tested in a range of human service fields and a variety of topics, including substance abuse, parenting skills, and child maltreatment risks. Choosing a tool that works best for measuring improvements in the specific areas your program is designed to address may require a real investment of time, experience, and professional knowledge. Furthermore, although some standardized tools are in the public domain, many are copyrighted and must be purchased, sometimes at significant cost. Some standardized tools also require specialized education or training to administer properly or to interpret the results.

However, standardized instruments have many advantages, as they have already been developed and validated and are therefore ready for immediate use. Furthermore, many evaluation resources recommend using such instruments or specific tested items from the instruments. Standardized instruments generally include surveys, questionnaires, and tests that have a uniform set of questions, require the use of standardized administration procedures, and have

been rigorously tested for validity (i.e., do they measure what they are supposed to measure) and reliability (i.e., are the results consistent across a variety of testing circumstances).

## Outcome Measures Appropriate for the Responsible Fatherhood Program Models

Thus far, Responsible Fatherhood projects have used various kinds of measurement tools (including standardized instruments and instruments developed specifically for each project) to measure a range of desired project outcomes. Figure 9–1 presents examples of the types of measurement tools used, aligned with project outcomes. The examples were gleaned from Responsible Fatherhood grantees' experiences defining and measuring their project outcomes. The table includes: 1) the projects' focus areas; 2) the outcomes indicating program success; 3) the indicators the projects used to assess each outcome; and 4) the types of measurement tools used in the assessment.

Figure 9–1 Types of Measurement Tools Used by Responsible Fatherhood Projects

| 1<br>Focus area | 2<br>Evidence of program success | 3<br>Indicators used to assess each focus area | 4<br>Types of measurement tools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Service area: Promoting healthy marriage and co-parent relationships | | | |
| Relationship skills | Knowledge and skills regarding communication and conflict resolution | Fathers self-report relationship skills<br>Co-parents report relationship skills of fathers<br>Actual communication | Curriculum based pre-post survey<br>Locally developed pre-post survey<br>Standardized survey<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers or co-parents |
| Attitudes about the relationship | Value placed on the relationship with the co-parent<br>Commitment to having a stable co-parenting relationship | Fathers self-report attitudes and commitment<br>Co-parents report attitudes and commitment of fathers<br>Monthly reports of parent/co-parent interaction | Curriculum based pre-post survey<br>Locally developed pre-post survey<br>Standardized survey<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers or co-parents |

### Evaluation Tip

Some of the key factors to consider when selecting an instrument include:

1. the appropriateness for measuring your particular project's outcomes;
2. suitability for use with your target population; and
3. costs associated with obtaining the instrument versus benefits for your project evaluation.

| 1<br>Focus area | 2<br>Evidence of program success | 3<br>Indicators used to assess each focus area | 4<br>Types of measurement tools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Quality of the relationship | Fathers experience less conflict in their relationships with co-parents<br><br>Intensified commitment with co-parents (marriage?) | Fathers self-report conflict and resolution<br><br>Co-parents report conflict and resolution<br><br>Marriage or commitment rate among participants served | Diaries maintained by fathers<br><br>Locally developed pre-post survey<br><br>Standardized survey<br><br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers or co-parents<br><br>Case notes |
| Service area: Improving parenting skills and knowledge | | | |
| Fathers' parenting skills | Have knowledge to support positive parenting on topics such as child development, safety, and the value routines<br><br>Adoption of positive and nurturing parenting styles | Fathers self-report increases in parenting skills<br><br>Fathers demonstrate increases in interaction skills with child | Curriculum based pre-post survey<br><br>Locally developed pre-post survey<br><br>Standardized survey<br><br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers<br><br>Direct observation |
| Fathers' attitudes toward parenting | Understanding of the importance of fathers in the lives of their children<br><br>Fathers feel confident in their ability to parent | Fathers self-report positive attitudes toward parenting | Curriculum based pre-post survey<br><br>Locally developed pre-post survey<br><br>Standardized survey<br><br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |
| Service area: Improving father's economic stability | | | |
| Fathers' income and financial resources | Improved income or access to financial resources<br><br>Improved individual employment situation | Fathers self-report employment and economic situation<br><br>Staff members note progress of fathers regarding individualized economic goals<br><br>Basic needs for stability (housing, violence/gang involvement, immigration status) | Locally developed pre-post survey items<br><br>Case notes<br><br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |
| Job readiness | Have knowledge and skills about how to pursue employment or educational goals<br><br>Fathers demonstrate job readiness skills (obtaining interviews, finding appropriate jobs for which to apply)<br><br>Progress in fathers' educational goals (GED, college or vocational training) | Fathers self-report job readiness skills<br><br>Staff members note progress of fathers regarding job readiness, and of progress on individual goals | Locally developed pre-post survey items<br><br>Case notes<br><br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |
| Formal child support compliance | Willingness or intention to pay child support<br><br>Current with child support payments<br><br>Have knowledge about the child support system (why the current agreement was reached, what appeals are possible) | Fathers self-report attitudes toward child support, payments, intention and/or ability to pay<br><br>Child support payment patterns<br><br>Fathers self-report skills to navigate child support system | Locally developed pre-post survey items<br><br>Records of payments<br><br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |

| 1<br>Focus area | 2<br>Evidence of program success | 3<br>Indicators used to assess each focus area | 4<br>Types of measurement tools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Informal financial support | Provide any type of money or things to support child (diapers, groceries, etc) | Fathers self-report informal support for families | Diaries of support provided<br>Locally developed pre-post survey items<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |
| Access to community resources | Knowledge of the community resources that are available to fathers and their families<br>Have the skills to access community resources<br>Access community resources | Fathers self-report skills and knowledge regarding community resources<br>Observations or staff knowledge about fathers seeking help through community resources | Locally developed pre-post survey items<br>Case notes<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |
| Service area: Increasing fathers' level of involvement with their children | | | |
| Father/child involvement | Have intention to increase interaction with children<br>Alter visitations positively or seek visitation agreements<br>Regular specific activities with their children (i.e., reading, homework, playing)<br>Increased amount of time spent with children<br>Increased quality of interaction (closeness of relationship, social support) | Fathers self-report time and activities with children<br>Fathers self-report attitudes toward father/child interaction<br>Fathers self-report increased quality of relationship<br>Changes in visitation arrangements<br>Child/adolescent perceptions of interaction<br>Expectant fathers' engagement with co-parent<br>Program tracking of interaction | Time diaries maintained by fathers<br>Locally developed pre-post survey<br>Standardized survey<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers<br>Case notes |
| Service area: Facilitating personal transformation | | | |
| "Father-concept" and self-identity | Understanding the importance of fatherhood to child well-being<br>Understanding of "fatherhood" as central to "manhood"<br>Fathers view themselves as good fathers (or potentially good fathers) | Fathers self-report changes in self-identity (primary) and perceptions of masculine identities<br>Honest self-assessment, self-efficacy and social connected ness, self-esteem and social support, confidence<br>Individual stability (housing, mental health, individual personal growth, healthcare) | Locally developed pre-post survey<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers<br>Standardized instrument (self-esteem) |
| Adoption of "leadership" self-concept | Fathers see themselves as having the knowledge and skills to take control of their own lives and to help other men in their community<br>Fathers take on behaviors of a "leader" | Fathers self-report changes in knowledge and behavior that reflect taking on a leadership role | Locally developed pre-post survey<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers |
| Connecting father behavior to child well-being | Fathers understand that self-destructive behavior impacts their children<br>Fathers take steps to correct behavior (therapy, rehabilitation programs) | Fathers self-report changes in knowledge and beliefs (and attitudes) regarding negative behaviors<br>Fathers seek help for destructive behavior<br>Domestic violence incidence rates<br>Anger management or other individual goals | Locally developed pre-post survey<br>Interviews or focus groups with fathers<br>Case notes |

| 1<br>Focus area | 2<br>Evidence of program success | 3<br>Indicators used to assess each focus area | 4<br>Types of measurement tools |
|---|---|---|---|
| Service area: Improving fathers' level of connectedness with their community | | | |
| No examples available | | | |

## Obtaining existing instruments that align with your project's outcomes

If your project plans to use a structured, self-administered questionnaire, you may find one that you can use as-is or with little modification from subject-specific published literature. Examples of such instruments include:

*Instruments that address the co-parenting relationship:*

- Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Straus, 1979)
- Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976)
- Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) (Locke & Wallace, 1959)
- Quality of Co-parent Communication scale and Content of Co-parental Interaction Scale (Ahrons, 1981)
- Family Functioning Style Scale (Dunst, et.al, 1988)

*Instruments that address parenting skills, behavior and interaction:*

- Inventory of Father Involvement (Hawkins et. al., 2002)
- Parental Childcare Scale (Hossain & Roopnarine, 1994)
- Role of the Father Questionnaire (ROFQ) (Palkovitz, 1984)
- Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI) (Bavolek, 1984)
- Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAP) (Milner, 1986)
- Paternal Responsibility Scale (PRS) (Mc Bride, 1990)
- Parenting Sense of Competence (PSOC) (Johnston and Mash, 1989)
- Sensitivity to Children Scale (Stollak 1975)
- Parent/Caregiver Involvement Scale (Farran et. al., 1986)
- Parental Locus of Control (PLOC) (Campis et. al., 1986)
- Porter Parental Acceptance Scale (PPAS) (Porter, 1954)
- Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI) (Dixson et. al., 2004)
- Embedded Developmental Study (EDS) Father Questionnaire (Angel et al. 2003)

*Measurement tools to assess participant satisfaction:*

- Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ-8) (Attkisson & Greenfield, 1994)
- Service Satisfaction Scale (SSS-30) (Attkisson & Greenfield, 1994)

Worth a mention also is a volume that reviews a wide variety of survey instruments designed to measure attitudes and personality, entitled *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes* (Robinson, et al. 1991). The book discusses 150 personality and attitude measurements, including self-esteem, subjective well-being, social anxiety and shyness, depression and loneliness, alienation, trust, values, authoritarianism, and sex roles.

The above measures are examples of tools used by fatherhood and family services projects. The list should not be read as an endorsement. Each project is unique, therefore, any data collection tool should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure its appropriateness with the target population and project objectives.

## Online resources

Your project might choose to take advantage of the multitude of online resources that are available. Many of the websites of the standardized instruments provide information regarding the tools' use and psychometric properties. The online resources can provide a fast and inexpensive way to review the features of a number of potential measuring tools and narrow the focus on those instruments that are best suited for your project evaluation. Examples of good online resources for selecting appropriate standardized instruments include:

- The Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc. (PAR) website contains detailed reviews of numerous assessment instruments on a wide range of topics (available at: http://www3.parinc.com/products/default.aspx);
- The National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention provides summaries of a large array of standardized instruments on topics related to children and families (available at: http://www.friendsnrc.org/outcome/toolkit/annotalpha.htm).

# Tips for Developing Your Own Survey

Despite the wide range of standardized tools available in many fields, an instrument may simply not exist that is relevant to the unique features of your program and that addresses the activities and changes in participants you wish to measure. An alternative to existing standardized tools is to develop your own tool whose content is tailored to the unique features of your program and is sensitive to the characteristics of your program's target population. In addition, the development of your own instrument can avoid some of the copyright, cost, and training issues that characterize standardized tools and can also foster a greater sense of ownership and buy-in to the evaluation among project staff. However, customized instruments can present their own unique challenges.

### 1. *Key questions to answer before developing your survey*

Before you begin the survey development process, ask yourself the following questions to help ensure that your data collection remains relevant and focused.

*What are some key areas that you would like to explore with your survey?*
Pinpoint the major topic areas you want your survey to address. For example:

- Program involvement
- Mentoring and counseling services provided by the agency
- Program impact

*What exactly would you like to know about each topic area?*
For each chosen topic area, identify your specific topic of interest. For example:

- Program involvement ⟶ Fathers' level of involvement in the employment program
- Mentoring and counseling services provided by the agency —> Parents' satisfaction with marital mentoring and counseling services
- Program impact ⟶ Impact of the domestic violence awareness program on fathers' knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors

*Who are the target population for the survey?*
Depending on whom you target with your survey (program staff, community partners, clients, funders, the community, etc.) you will need to tailor the survey questions accordingly. For instance, program staff may have a better understanding of the technical jargon related to the field while program participants or clients may not. Thus, you may need to explain the concepts more thoroughly, or just differently, for some target populations.

*How much time and effort will it take to collect the data?*
Overburdening survey respondents with a multitude of questions that are overly

**Evaluation Tip**

"It is easy to create a bad survey, but difficult to create a good one."

Creating a custom survey requires expertise in evaluation and survey design. The best approach to undertaking such a task may be to hire a project evaluator, or you might consult your project's Federal technical assistance (TA) provider. Additional sources of evaluation support may often be found through your local college or university.

detailed, repetitive, or on sensitive topics decreases your chances of obtaining valid information. Make sure that you narrow your survey topics and questions to those that are truly necessary for you to better understand the program and its impacts.

*Will the survey topics generate adequate information?*
It is important to collect information that will help you fulfill your responsibility of reporting the overall impact of your program. Ask yourself whether or not your survey topics will generate adequate information to help address the effectiveness of your program as well as the potential areas for program improvement. Determine also whether your survey topics will yield sufficient information for your stakeholders, and how they will be able to use the information obtained.

### *2. Tips on developing survey items*

When developing your survey, you might use a previously developed survey, use subscales from an existing survey, or create your own from the ground up. Here are some tips for developing your own survey:

*Adapt subscales from standardized instruments:* Selecting subscales or items from standardized or previously developed instruments are sometimes sufficient for measuring the constructs most relevant to your program; rather than attempting to administer an instrument in its entirety, these selected subscales can be adapted into a shorter instrument that results in more meaningful findings while reducing participant response burden. It is advisable, however, to contact the instrument's author(s) for permission to use selected instrument items and to ensure that the adapted items will maintain adequate validity and reliability.

*Designing your own survey items:* If you encounter obstacles in obtaining relevant surveys that have been previously developed and standardized, you may opt to create your own survey. The following basic guidelines can help you develop questions for your survey.

- *Likert scales:* Likert scales provide the respondent with a range of answers to measure their subjective opinion on a matter, such as the degree to which the respondents agree or disagree with a statement. Likert scales can also be used to measure frequency, level of satisfaction, etc.

*Example 1: How helpful was the personal empowerment class?*
❒ **Very helpful** ❒ **Somewhat helpful** ❒ **Not sure** ❒ **Somewhat not helpful** ❒ **Not very helpful**

*Example 2: I am confident of my ability to parent my child/children.*
❒ **Strongly agree** ❒ **Agree** ❒ **Not sure** ❒ **Disagree** ❒ **Strongly disagree**

- *Focus on actions and behaviors when appropriate:* Questions about actions or behaviors tend to be more valid than questions about feelings or opinions. For example, *"How many times did you read to your children last week?"* is generally better than *"Do you feel that it is important to read to your children?"*
- *Specify units of measure:* If you are interested in knowing how much time fathers spend conversing with their children, avoid simply asking, *"How much time do you spend in conversations with your children?"* Instead, guide the respondent's answer by indicating a unit of measure. For example, *"How many minutes per day did you spend in conversations with your children in the past week (7 days)?"*
- *Don't ask double-barreled questions:* Avoid embedding two questions in one, such as *"How satisfied were you with the length and amount of information covered during the responsible fatherhood workshop?"* Such questions are confusing for the respondent, and do not give them the opportunity to fully share their opinion on each aspect of the program. Instead, ask one question at a time: *"How satisfied were you with the length of the responsible fatherhood workshop?"* and *"How satisfied were you with the amount of information covered during the responsible fatherhood workshop?"*
- *Avoid jargon:* Avoid using acronyms in your survey; instead, spell out the name of the

program or instruments you are referring to. While you may understand that FAS is the acronym for the Family Assessment Scale, your survey respondents may not be aware of this.

- *Don't ask leading questions:* When you ask questions that are either positively or negatively biased, you may inadvertently influence the response of those taking your survey. Rather than asking biased questions, frame your questions in a way that remains neutral.

  For instance:

  Positively biased question: *"How much better is your life now that you have graduated from the job mentoring program?"*

  Better question: *"What effect, if any, has graduating from the job mentoring program had on your current living situation?"*

  Negatively biased question: *"In the past 30 days, have you violated your probation by using illegal drugs?"*

  Better question: *"In the past 30 days, have you used any drugs that were not prescribed to you by a physician?"*

### 3. Tips on survey design

*Include instructions:* If you plan to administer the survey in-person with your target population, you may want to read aloud a brief introduction to the set of questions along with detailed instructions before each major section in order to help the respondents understand how to respond. Providing instructions will help your survey respondents better understand the relevance of each question, and will ensure that they respond within the correct response range. For instance, prior to asking fathers a series of questions regarding their involvement in their children's lives, you may want to precede the questions with instructions such as:

*The next set of questions will focus on the day to day experiences that you and your children share. Please think about your daily interaction with your children. For each of the activities that I read to you, please respond with either Never (1); Hardly ever (2); Sometimes (3); Often (4); or Always (5).*

*Keep it short and simple:* Keep questionnaires and other data collection instruments simple, especially when beginning outcome measurement. You may be tempted to continually add data items to be collected, but doing so may reduce client response rates and overly tax the evaluator's ability to process and analyze the data.

*Flow and consistency:* Your survey should have a logical sequence and flow. Try to ensure that scale ranges remain consistent throughout the survey rather than jump from a 5-point agree-disagree scale to a 10-point ranking scale between questions. Also, group similar survey items together to help keep the respondent focused on a single topic at a time.

### 4. Tips on data collection

*Determine how you will administer the survey:* While a written survey remains the research method of choice, alternative administration formats should be considered if they improve data quality and quantity or reduce costs. For example, rather than investing the substantial time and resources necessary to design and administer a telephone survey among a random sample of participants, it might be more cost effective to survey an entire population using a paper mail-in or online survey without significantly compromising data quality. Similarly, a pre-post test targeted at a population with low literacy levels could be administered orally by trained program personnel, resulting in better response rates.

*Consider alternative data collection methods or formats:* A written instrument may not be the only or even the best method for collecting useful data about the effects of your program. For example, direct observation using checklists or videotaped interviews may provide more valid information regarding changes in participant behavior than self-report surveys.

Another way to obtain information is through focus groups. If you are interested in exploring how effective certain aspects of your program are, a focus group can help generate rich, in-depth information that can help you to better understand the program's impact on your clients. However, a trained, skilled facilitator is always necessary to conduct effective focus groups.

***5. Pilot test***

Whether you decide to use a standardized tool or to develop your own, pilot testing of any prospective instrument is strongly recommended. Pilot testing involves administering the tool to a small sample of program participants (or to people very similar to those who comprise your program's target population) to identify and correct problems with the content, wording, or format of the instrument itself, or with the test administration procedures, before it is widely administered to participants as a whole.

Although a pilot test is not a substitute for a full validation study, it will nonetheless detect the most serious problems with a prospective instrument and help eliminate those that are clearly inappropriate for your program or target population. For a little extra time and money, you can avoid implementing an unsuitable tool before you are too far along in the evaluation process and identify an alternative instrument that is a better fit.

### Ethical Treatment of Respondents

One of the considerations in conducting evaluation and research with human participants is the importance of not causing any harm (physical, emotional, or social). It is important that evaluation efforts respect the rights of the participants, and protect them from the potential harm that could be caused by collecting sensitive information or by the manner in which the information is handled.

Everyone involved in collecting evaluation information should be trained in data collection procedures, including the guidelines for ensuring ethical treatment of the participants. Prior to data collection, it is important to be aware of the factors associated with human subjects research, such as:

- Do you need to obtain informed consent?
- How will you handle confidentiality of personal and/or sensitive information?
- How will you handle respondents' questions regarding confidentiality?
- Will participation be anonymous, confidential, or do you need personal identifiers?
- How will the completed instruments be stored?
- Who will have access to the data?

## Sample Survey Items to Measure Common Outcomes of Responsible Fatherhood Activities

The following pages contain examples of survey questions that address some of the common outcomes of Responsible Fatherhood initiatives. Each set of questions aligns with one of the six program service areas:

1. Promoting and sustaining healthy marriage and co-parent relationships;
2. Improving parenting skills and knowledge;
3. Improving economic stability;
4. Increasing fathers' level of social and emotional involvement with their children;
5. Facilitate personal transformation; and
6. Improving fathers' level of connectedness with their community.

As an additional resource, the Responsible Fatherhood Project Follow-Up Interview (survey) might be useful as part of your program evaluation. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website, the Follow-up Interview was designed to "collect follow-up data (primarily related to outcomes) on each program participant. This survey could be administered either via telephone or in-person. It is recommended that sites using the follow-up survey conduct the survey at six months or one year after the date of enrollment of each participant in the program – though sites can elect to complete the survey at other times (e.g., at case closure, six months after closure)." The survey is available at: http://fatherhood.hhs.gov/Development/guidebook03/downloads/Follow-upInterview.pdf

## Pre/Post Example Survey
## Responsible Fatherhood Program

Program Name _____

Participant Name or ID _____

Today's Date _____ How many children do you have? _____

How many of your children live elsewhere, such as with their mother(s), grandparents, etc? _____

Please read carefully each of the following survey items and indicate your degree of agreement with each statement. Please choose the answer that best represents your feelings, thoughts, or actions.

### 1. Marriage and co-parent relationships

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M1 | In the last 30 days, how many days did you communicate with the mother(s) of your children? | ❒ 23 - 30 days | ❒ 16 - 22 days | ❒ 8 - 15 days | ❒ 1 - 7 days | ❒ None |
| M2 | I know how to communicate effectively with the mother(s) of my children. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |
| M3 | I am satisfied with the relationship between myself and the mother(s) of my children. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |
| M4 | The mother(s) of my children and I have major conflicts about issues related to raising our child(ren). | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |

### 2. Parent Education

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | There are a lot of things about being a good parent that I don't know. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |
| P2 | I understand the developmental stages my child(ren) go through. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |
| P3 | I know how to meet my child's (children's) needs. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |
| P4 | I would say that I have good parenting skills. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |

### 3. Economic Status

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E1 | In the last 30 days, how many days have you worked for pay? | ❒ 16 days | ❒ 11 - 15 days | ❒ 6 - 10 days | ❒ 1 - 5 days | ❒ None |
| E2 | In the last 30 days, how many days were you involved in some kind of job skills or educational training? | ❒ 16 days or more | ❒ 11 - 15 days | ❒ 6 - 10 days | ❒ 1 - 5 days | ❒ None |
| E3 | I have trouble managing my money. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |
| E4 | It is important that I provide financial support for my child(ren). | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly Disagree |

## Pre/Post Example Survey
## Responsible Fatherhood Program

### 4. Involvement with children

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I1 | In the last 30 days, how many days did you see your child(ren) face to face? | ❒ 23 - 30 days | ❒ 16 - 22 days | ❒ 8 - 15 days | ❒ 1 - 7 days | ❒ None |
| I2 | In the last 30 days, how many days did you talk to your child(ren) on the telephone? | ❒ 23 - 30 days | ❒ 16 - 22 days | ❒ 8 - 15 days | ❒ 1 - 7 days | ❒ None |
| I3 | It is not that important for me to be consistently involved in the life (lives) of my children. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |
| I4 | I am satisfied with the relationship that I have with my child(ren). | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |

### 5. Self

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | In the last 30 days, how many days did you use alcohol or any drugs not prescribed by a doctor? | ❒ 23 - 30 days | ❒ 16 - 22 days | ❒ 8 - 15 days | ❒ 1 - 7 days | ❒ None |
| S2 | I am uncomfortable with my role as a father. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |
| S3 | Overall I feel good about myself. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |
| S4 | I know the kind of man I want to be and the steps I need to take to accomplish that. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |

### 6. Community

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C1 | In the last 30 days, how many days have you met with a professional to get needed services for yourself or your child(ren)? | ❒ 4 days or more | ❒ 3 days | ❒ 2 days | ❒ 1 day | ❒ None |
| C2 | I know where to go for help that my child(ren) or I need. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |
| C3 | I am scared or uncomfortable talking to social service agencies because of experiences I have had in the past. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |
| C4 | I work with a social service professional who advocates for me and helps me get what I need and do the things I need to do to make my life better. | ❒ Strongly Agree | ❒ Agree | ❒ Not sure | ❒ Disagree | ❒ Strongly disagree |

Thank you for your participation!

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