

PROGRAM OUTCOME EVALUATIONS

For United Way of Winnipeg
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Prepared by Patricia Hodgert

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Program Outcome Evaluations

Every day, non-profit organizations apply resources and skills to make life better for individuals, families, and communities. Some work to ensure that the basic necessities of life are accessible; some work to ease transitions in life, be it an arrival in a new country, securing a job or a home, or coping with a personal crisis. Some seek to ensure a safe and engaging place to live, with rich opportunities for all ages. Whatever the mission of your organization, believing that you and your colleagues are making a difference is what draws you together and keeps you moving. (1)

Program Outcome Evaluations (answer these three questions:)

- Are we making a difference?
- Did it work?
- Did we achieve what we hoped to achieve?

Indeed, **Program Outcome Evaluations** do much more than measure the effectiveness of programs and services. Over the last year, United Way of Winnipeg has surveyed a variety of agencies in order to identify both the benefits and the challenges of Program Outcome Frameworks.

The benefits of program outcomes are many. Agency representatives noted that outcomes:

- are a key component of future program planning,
- assist with goal clarification (realistic program goal setting),
- assist in the identification of barriers to programs and services,
- improve the allocation of resources (financial and human),
- increase staff motivation and morale,
- facilitate staff recruitment,
- create opportunities for staff growth and skill development,
- ensure program/service consistency,
- provide stories that are easily understood by general public and by funders, and
- increase management confidence.

Agency representatives also identified some of the challenges and pitfalls of program outcomes:

- the perceived magnitude of program outcome evaluations,
- terminology can be confusing and varies from agency to agency,
- staff time and financial resources required,
- staff may feel threatened,
- it is difficult to prove that something negative didn't happen when evaluating preventive programs/services,
- some clients impossible to track or monitor due to transience, etc,
- process can become IT driven,
- focus may shift from program goals to "measuring" program outcomes, and
- requirements differ from funder to funder.

(1) Taken from *A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models*, United Way of Greater Toronto



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I. Program Logic Models

...are extremely useful tools for all types of evaluations. Basically, a logic model is a systematic and **visual** way to present your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan, and the changes and results you hope to achieve. In a logic model, all of the components of a program are identified – the **inputs** (resources), **activities**, **outputs** and **outcomes** – in a way that makes clear how they combine to stimulate and support the desired changes.

(2)

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Volunteers • Financial resources • Materials • Research • Equipment • Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct workshops • Facilitate meetings • Deliver services • Provide counselling • Train • Develop resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of clients • Participants • Customers • Number of Products Produced • Hours of program/ service provision • Numbers of different services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learnings • Behaviour • Conditions

(2) Taken from *A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models*, United Way of Greater Toronto

II. Outcomes

...are the expected benefits or changes for participants (or communities) occurring as a result of their involvement with a program or service.

An **outcome** answers the questions:

What are we hoping to achieve?

What is the desired impact of our program/service on the individual, group, or community with whom we are working?

Outcomes can easily be divided into three categories: (3)

Learnings	Behaviour	Conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awareness• Knowledge• Attitudes• Skills• Opinions• Aspirations• Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice• Decision-making• Policies• Social action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social• Economic• Civic• Environmental

(3) Taken from University of Wisconsin, Cooperative Extension, *Program Development and Evaluation*, www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/

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Some sample outcomes:

A Homework Club:

- Outcome #1: Students will improve academically and develop an increased commitment to learning.
- Outcome #2: Students' social skills will improve.

A Youth Employment Mentorship Program:

- Outcome #1: Youth will have a positive work experience and be better prepared to find and keep employment.
- Outcome #2: Youth will understand and be comfortable with "workplace culture", employer expectations, and teamwork.

A Neighbourhood Youth Leadership Program:

- Outcome #1: Youth acquire strong leadership skills and a "can do" approach to neighbourhood capacity building.
- Outcome #2: Youth are successfully engaged in their communities and are able to engage others.

A Multicultural Women's Wellness Group:

- Outcome #1: Group members, both as a group and individually, will identify their needs and challenges and seek appropriate programs and services.
- Outcome #2: Group members will acquire improved coping skills and better manage their family/home lives.

A Program That Assists with the Acquisition of Government ID;

- Outcome #1: Participants, through the acquisition of official identification, will improve their living situations.
- Outcome #2: Participants will have improved access to social services/assistance, health services, training and educational programs, and housing.

A Smoking Cessation Class:

- Outcome #1: Participants understand both the physical and mental aspects of addiction, specifically to tobacco.
- Outcome #2: Participants quit smoking.

A Neighbourhood Association:

- Outcome #1: The quality of life within the neighbourhood has improved.
- Outcome #2: Community residents are involved in neighbourhood activities and planning.

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STEP UP! – PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	
			Short Term	Long Term
Staff Volunteers Money Equipment Facilities Training	<p>Activities to Nurture Career Awareness and Exploration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-assessment of personal interests and goals Field trips to various workshops Guest speakers from different professions Visiting local career fairs Job shadowing Access to labour market information <p>Activities for Developing Skills for Finding Employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application Writing Resume Writing Job Searching Interviewing <p>Activities for Developing Job Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service-learning experiences Activities to develop soft skills for work such as communication, teamwork, time management Individualized training in areas of interest Goal-setting and reflection activities <p>Activities for Academic Preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits to universities, colleges, training centres Research on school programs related to interests Learning about scholarships and bursaries Registering for school and courses <p>Activities Providing Extended Supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, respectful and friendly atmosphere Individualized support with personal issues One-to-one mentoring Professional referrals 	Number of youth attending program Activities youth took part in Levels of attendance Goal completion rates Number of volunteers and their hours Hours of community service Etc.	Increased: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of personal interests and skills Awareness of careers Understanding of the world or work Skills for finding work Social skills for working with others Work skills Positive Attitudes towards school Knowledge of education and training programs Self-discipline Job experience Achievement Goal setting Increased education experience Increased confidence 	Increased likelihood of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Graduation Employment Post-Secondary Studies Life-Long Learning Personal Success Reduced likelihood of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal Activity Substance Abuse Leaving School Early Suicide Relying on Social Assistance

Sample Logic Model: An Effective Parenting Program

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> marketing and intake staff 2 staff program facilitators direct program costs = \$160 handouts and manuals VCR and overheads space at local community centre 2 child minders toys and snacks for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 weekly classes of 2 hours each roundtable discussions on parenting topics provide referrals as required develop resources as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 parents 13 children 16 hours parenting topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased knowledge of child development and parenting styles increased knowledge of effective parenting techniques increased ability to identify appropriate actions to take use of effective parenting practices improved parent/child relationships strong families

While **outcomes** answer the question – what are we hoping to achieve, **indicators** answer the question – how will we know if we have achieved what we set out to?

III. Indicators

...track a program's achievement and the progress made toward the specified outcomes. **Indicators** describe observable, measurable characteristics or changes. They may be quantitative (numbers) or qualitative (narrative) or a combination of both. For most community agencies that deliver human services, a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators serves to give an accurate picture of a program's performance.

An indicator may not capture all aspects of an outcome, and some outcomes may require **more than one indicator**. (4)

Outcomes	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of child development and parenting styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are familiar with the child development continuum and are able to identify their child/children's progress along that continuum Parents play an active role as their child/children's "first teacher" Parents are aware that children model (copy) their parents' language, behaviour and values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge and use of effective parenting techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are aware of and use such techniques as "natural consequences," "I" messages, and reflective listening
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased ability to identify appropriate actions to take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are able to identify their anger "triggers" and stressors and take action to "chill out" Parents choose effective parenting techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved parent/child relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents consistently make time for "play" with their children, ask open-ended questions, and acknowledge feelings without judging or overreacting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and children speak and listen to one another with respect

(4) Taken from *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*, United Way of America

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Choosing **indicators** can be a challenge and may require a lot of thought. On the other hand, an indicator shouldn't be excluded because it is too simple. Some indicators will be straightforward; some will not be. When identifying indicators, consider the following criteria:

- clear and unambiguous
- observable and measurable
- relevant
- reliable and practical (5)

(5) Taken from *A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement; Building on Logic Models*, United Way of Greater Toronto



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Sample Outcomes and Outcome Indicators for Various Programs

The following are **illustrative examples only**. (6) Programs need to identify their own outcomes and indicators, matched to and based on their own experiences and missions and the input of their staff, volunteers, participants, and others.

Type of Program	Outcome	Indicator(s)
Smoking cessation class	Participants stop smoking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percent of participants who report that they have quit smoking by the end of the course • Number and percent of participants who have not relapsed six months after program completion
Information and referral program	Callers access services to which they are referred or about which they are given information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percent of community agencies that report an increase in new participants who came to their agency as a result of a call to the information and referral hotline • Number and percent of community agencies that indicate these referrals are appropriate
Tutorial program for 6 th grade students	Students' academic performance improves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percent of participants who earn better grades in the grading period following completion of the program than in the grading period immediately preceding enrollment in the program
English-as-a-second-language instruction	Participants become proficient in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percent of participants who demonstrate increase in ability to read, write, and speak English by the end of the course

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Counselling for parents identified as at risk for child abuse or neglect	Risk factors decrease. No confirmed incidents of child abuse or neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of participating families for whom Child Protective Service records report no confirmed child abuse or neglect during 12 months following program completion
Employee assistance program	Employees with drug and/or alcohol problems are rehabilitated and do not lose their jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of program participants who are gainfully employed at same company 6 months after intake
Homemaking services	<p>The home environment is healthy, clean, and safe</p> <p>Participants stay in their own home and are not referred to a nursing home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of participants whose home environment is rated clean and safe by a trained observer Number of local nursing homes who report that applications from younger and healthier citizens are declining (indicating that persons who in the past would have been referred to a nursing home, now stay at home longer)
Prenatal care program	Pregnant women follow the advice of the nutritionist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of women who take recommended vitamin supplements and consume recommended amounts of calcium
Shelter and counselling for runaway youth	Family is reunified whenever possible; otherwise, youths are in stable alternative housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of youth who return home Number and percent of youth placed in alternative living arrangements who are in that arrangement 6 months later unless they have been reunified or emancipated
Camping	Children expand skills in areas of interest to them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percent of campers that identify two or more skills they have learned at camp

Family planning for teen mothers	Teen mothers have no second pregnancies until they have completed high school and have the personal, family, and financial resources to support a second child	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number and percent of teen mothers who comply with family planning visits• Number and percent of teen mothers using a recommended form of birth control• Number and percent of teen mothers who do not have repeat pregnancies prior to graduation• Number and percent of teen mothers who, at the time of next pregnancy, are high school graduates, are married, and do not need public assistance to provide for their children
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(6) Taken from *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*, United Way of America



IV: Measurement Tools

...refer to the methods, instruments, or procedures used to collect individual data. Choosing the appropriate tool to measure outcomes, that is, to collect data for each indicator may depend on all or some of the following factors:

- Credibility –is the tool subject to bias or manipulation?
- Validity –does it measure what it is supposed to measure?
- Reliability –is the measurement accurate and consistent?
- Transparency –can your stakeholders and the public understand the tool and the data?
- Cost –how expensive is this method?
- Feasibility –how realistic is this method? (7)

(7) Taken from *A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models*, United Way of Greater Toronto

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The following table provides an overview of some common measurement tools:

Methods/ Tools	Overall Purpose	Strengths	Limitations
Questionnaires, Surveys, Checklists	To obtain information quickly, easily and in a non-threatening way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce accurate data • can be completed quickly and are relatively low cost • good for collecting data from large groups • sample questionnaires already exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to be brief and ask relatively simple questions • wording and order can have a major effect on answers • interpretation may vary between respondents • may not get the full story
Interviews/Summary Forms	To provide a fuller understanding of someone's impressions or experiences and to learn more about responses to questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permits clarification and elaboration of responses • process builds trust • process does not require a high literacy level • greater completion rate than paper surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time consuming • difficult to analyze and compare • can be costly • requires skilled interviewers
Direct Observation Form	To gather information and identify change from one perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides a snapshot view • facilitates comparison • tracks change over time • provides a counterpoint to staff assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpreting and categorizing behaviours can be difficult

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<p>Focus Groups/ Group Summary</p>	<p>To explore a topic in depth through group discussion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inexpensive • can identify unanticipated issues • helps explain quantitative findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responses need to be analyzed • requires a good facilitator • can be difficult to get group together • group perspective may distort individual views
<p>Case Studies and Testimonials</p>	<p>To provide a comprehensive examination of a client's experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides "rich" information on specific cases • can answer cause and effect questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time consuming to collect, organize, and describe • reflects only one individual's experience
<p>Staff Round-tables</p>	<p>To provide a forum for staff to evaluate programs/services as a group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involves staff in measurement process • broad-based and comprehensive • provides first hand information and a counterpoint to participant views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a staff perspective only • group perspective may distort individual views • staff have a vested interest

Canadian Mental Health Association – Metro

Let's discuss It! Multicultural Wellness Group

Current date: _____

Date started group: _____

Group location: _____

Your feedback is important to us as it will help us make sure that the services we provide are meeting your needs.

Please circle the number that is closest to how you feel.

		Strongly Strongly Agree Disagree				
1.	I cope better with family members	1	2	3	4	
2.	I manage things better at home	1	2	3	4	
3.	I feel better about myself	1	2	3	4	
4.	I feel I have more support from other people	1	2	3	4	
5.	I know what is available to me	1	2	3	4	
6.	Being able to talk with other women has been helpful	1	2	3	4	
7.	Overall, I feel much better	1	2	3	4	
8.	I would recommend these groups to other women like myself	1	2	3	4	
9.	I understand more about the Canadian way of life	1	2	3	4	

Please complete the following sentences:

In the past year, the topics of most interest to me were:	
What I like most about groups is:	
What I think would make these groups better:	

Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)

My Time At the Club...

Your Club: _____ Your Age: _____

A. Please circle the answer that describes how you feel.

1. Club activities are fun.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

2. I feel safe in the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

3. I get along with other kids in the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

4. I made new friends at the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

5. We are expected to follow the rules at the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

6. I feel comfortable talking to Club staff.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

7. Club staff take time to help me.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

8. Club staff ask my advice about activities to do at the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

9. I learn a lot about being a better person when I'm at the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

10. I learn a lot about my culture and other people's culture at the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

11. Club staff ask us to try new things and new activities.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

12. I learn about new things at the Club.



Disagree



Sometimes



Agree



Strongly Agree

HOW WAS THE WORKSHOP?

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to help us measure the impact our service has. Please answer each item as carefully and as honestly as you can.

There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
The workshop has given me new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being with other families has helped me feel more connected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being around other families has given me more hope	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please help us plan for future workshops, by answering the following questions:

What did we do that you liked?	
What could we do differently?	
Any other comments?	

(Provided by CNIB, Manitoba and Saskatchewan Division)

Outcome Questionnaire
How to Talk So Kids Will Listen

Please read the following statements and circle the appropriate response, that is, your level of agreement from "a lot" to "a little". Please feel free to add additional comments on the back of the questionnaire.

	I agree..(Please circle one)
1. I have learned how the way I talk to my child/ren affects my child/ren.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all
2. I speak and listen to my child/ren with more respect.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all
3. My child/ren speak to me in a more respectful way.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all
4. My child/ren listen to me with more respect.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all
5. I set logical consequences for misbehaviour and follow through with those consequences.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all
6. I use encouraging language when speaking to my child/ren.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all
7. I am able to use the knowledge I obtained during the course of my everyday life.	A lot Somewhat A little Not at all

(Provided by South Winnipeg Family Information Centre)



SELF-HELP GROUP SURVEY

I belong to the following group(s):

- CHuMS Caregivers Faces of MS Female
 Parents Caregivers MS Friends Male

Please check one category per question.

As a result of my participation in a self-help group...	All the Time	Most of the Time	Some of the Time	Rarely	Not at All
I attend group regularly.					
I provide emotional support to group members.					
I receive emotional support from group members.					
I feel comfortable giving information.					
I receive information from group members.					
I feel comfortable sharing my problems.					
I have heard problems expressed by group members.					
I feel comfortable sharing my successes.					
I have heard successes from group members.					
I have increased levels of self-confidence.					
I am satisfied with group meeting times.					
I am satisfied with group meeting locations.					
I am satisfied with topics planned by the group.					

I have been a group member for ____years.

The things I like best about the group are:

Overall, I would rate my group as (please circle one):

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

Suggestions/Comments:

(Provided by Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada - Winnipeg Chapter).



Canadian National Institute for the Blind

**Evaluation of Early Intervention Program/Key Informant
Interview Guides-- Parents**

Service Delivery:

1. Could you please tell us how and when you were first introduced to the CNIB's early intervention program?
2. Were you given sufficient information about the program's services?
3. Please describe the key services and information you received from the early Intervention Program (probe for: referrals; diagnosis and explanation; counseling; assessment of readiness for school; specialized services; support groups, workshops; community resources; books, tapes, etc.; access to CNIB services and library; public funding).
4. What services or information from this program were most useful to you? Are there services or information that were not useful? Please explain.
5. How responsive is this program to your needs and those of your child? Please explain:
6. How satisfied are you with the quality of the services and information provided by this program?
7. How satisfied are you with the timeliness of referrals and services provided by this program?

Results:

8. What are the challenges you encountered as the parent of a blind or visually impaired child? In what way did the program help you overcome these challenges?
9. To what extent do you feel better informed of existing services and of this program?
10. To what extent did this program increase your capacity to advocate in favour of your child? Please explain.
11. To what extent did this program provide you with access to the support of peers and other parents?
12. In what way has the program facilitated your child's development and integration?

Evaluation of Early Intervention Program/Key Informant Interview Guides-- Parents

(continued)

13. In what has the program contributed to your child's future integration in the public school system?
14. In your opinion, how successful is the program in transferring knowledge to the community on how to work with blind and visually impaired children?
15. Does this program have other impacts?

Best Practices

16. Do you have any suggestions to improve this program?

Relevance

17. How relevant is this program to your needs and those of your child? Please explain.
18. What other services could you use as an alternative to this program? How does this program compare to other services?

(Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR RESIDENTS/FAMILIES

1. Do you feel that you have enough knowledge and information about multiple sclerosis disease process, symptoms and symptom management, treatment, progression of the disease, resources available and so on?
2. What is your understanding of the MS Society of Canada (what we do, programs and services offered, how to contact)?
2. What are the most difficult aspects of living in a personal care home (age-related issues, social isolation, independence issues, privacy, boredom, having your needs met)?
4. How do you deal with physical changes (symptom management, disease progression, mobility issues, eating, personal care)?
5. How do you deal with emotional issues (depression, mood swings, loneliness, anger, frustration, boredom)?
6. How do you deal with cognitive issue (memory problems, reduced concentration, slow thinking, communication Do you feel that you have sufficient supports in relation to living with MS?
7. What kinds of education/programs/support services would be helpful?

(Provided by Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Winnipeg Chapter)

Family Day Care Services

**Home Child Care Programs
 Coordinator/Caregiver Home Visit Report**

Caregiver's Name:			Date:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Reason for Visit: <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled <input type="checkbox"/> Unscheduled					
Name of Child	Placed by Family Day Care	Age	In Care	In School	Absent - Reason

Observations and Discussions During Visit:

Follow-up:

Caregiver's Signature		Coordinator's Signature	
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(Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)



Canadian National Institute for the Blind**Evaluation of Early Intervention Program
Focus Group Guide/Parents****Introduction**

- Who I am
- Reason for the focus group
- Reason for evaluation
- Evaluation and methodology
- Why and how they were chosen for the focus group
- Breaks, washrooms, etc.
- Confidentiality
- Invitation to speak freely, in both official languages
- Questions

1. Let's start by finding out a little about you. I'd like to ask each of you to introduce yourselves and tell us how many children you have and how old they are. (5 min.)
2. Could you please tell us how and when you were first introduced to CNIB's Early Intervention Program? (5 min.)
3. Could you please tell us about the challenges you encountered as a parent of a blind or visually impaired child? (15 min.)
4. How has the program helped you overcome these challenges? (Probe for: better informed of existing resources; increased capacity to advocate, access to peer support; access to specialize services.) (15 min.)
5. Of all the services and information you received from the program, which ones did you find the most useful and why? (10 min.)
6. How has the program contributed to the development and integration of your child? Please provide specific examples. (15 min.)
7. I would now like to ask you about your satisfaction with the way the program is administered. (Probe for: communications, responsiveness, timeliness.) (10 min.)
8. How could the program improve its services to best meet your needs? (10 min.)
9. Summary and wrap up by facilitator. (5 min.)

Total Length: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

(Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)



Sample Focus Group Moderator's Guide

Introduction

We are here today to discuss the Community Leaders Project. The project has been operating for a year. Now, we need to hear from you, the volunteer facilitators, who bring with you your wisdom and experience with the project. We need your views and your honest opinions about what difference the project has made for you.

Ground Rules

- Today's session will last about 90 minutes. We will be finished on time at 4:30
- I have asked (name of person) to take notes during the session to help me remember what is said. However, in my report, I will not identify anyone by name. What you say here will be kept confidential
- I'd like to hear from everyone, but you don't have to answer every question
- Please discuss each question I ask among yourselves. There is no need to address your comments to me.
- Please avoid side conversations with your neighbour
- This is an open session. Please state your opinions and view honestly. Try not to be swayed by the group. There are no right or wrong answers
- Please take a minute now to check that your cell phones and pagers are turned off
- Before we begin, please take a few minutes to help yourself to coffee, tea, or a soft drink and a snack. If you need to use the restrooms, they are located in the corridor to the right.

Warm-Up Questions:

"In your own words, discuss what the project means to you."

General Question #1

"In an overall sense, how satisfied are you with the outcomes of the project?"

Specific Questions #1

After the group addresses the general questions, the moderator asks specific questions:

"In what way has the project increased your access to social and health services?"

"Please give examples of how the Project has increased your contact with women of your own culture and other cultures?"

"Has the project been able to give you more social and emotional supports?"

General Question #2

"What do you think are the skills needed to be an effective community leader?"

Specific Questions #2

"What are some concrete examples of personal skills you have developed as a result of the project?"

"What are some concrete examples of professional skills you have developed as a result of the Project?"

"Please give examples of how you have been able to initiate group activities outside the group."

Ending the Focus Group

- Thank everyone for their contributions to the group.
- State that you found the comments very interesting and helpful.
- Distribute a small gift to show your gratitude for participating in the focus group.

(Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)

Jewish Family and Child Services

Excerpts from Executive summary – Early Intervention (EI) Study March 2003

Background:

Jewish Family and Child Service in 2001 undertook an evaluation of the EI Program. The EI Study was to augment the extensive literature search and limited file study of its predecessor by reviewing a larger number of randomly chosen files and by interviewing their subjects.

The study was designed to evaluate the success of the EI Program in fostering better outcomes for children whose families were receiving non-mandated services with JF&CS. For the purpose of this study, EI cases are those including a child below the age of 16 in the home, especially non-mandatory child protection cases.

Hypothesis: That a multi-service approach to helping families with children leads to successful outcomes for children.

Methods:

Outcomes were to be measured via: 1) Reading of 30 randomly chosen files (from amongst the categories outlined above); 2) Interviews with the same 30 clients to gather their understanding of how the Agency had been helpful to them.

File Study:

- A stratified random sample of 30 files was selected from among 248 non-mandated, i.e. EI, child cases in three categories.
- A protocol for the file study was designed and piloted. It was then employed in gathering the required data from the 30 study files.
- Sections of the protocol were incorporated into the interview protocol to facilitate comparison.

Interviews:

- Twenty-seven of the 30 randomly chosen clients were deemed by their social workers to be appropriate (on clinical grounds) for personal interviews, and 24 (90%) of those were actually interviewed.
- An independent consultant was employed to perform the interviews and to write a report on her findings.
- Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality in order to encourage candor on their part, and to enhance the validity of any findings from the interviews.
- Quantitative data was entered anonymously into a data file.

(Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)

Excerpts from Executive summary – Early Intervention (EI) Study (continued)

Discussion

Conclusions:

- Within the limitations of this study, both file study data and interview data indicate that clients' situations had improved over the course of their contact with JF&CS.
- Not only did clients' situations improve, they improved in ways that are known to correlate with positive outcomes for children.
- The validity of the above conclusions is bolstered by the random selection of the 30 cases, substantive congruence of file data with client data (thus mutually supporting each other), and direct testimony of clients via anonymous interviews with an outside consultant, especially their overwhelming perception that they were indeed helped by JF&CS.
- The EI Study supports JF&CS' Strategic Priority 1: To affirm the Agency's focus on prevention and wellness. It further affirms the Agency's present position in that direction, and opens possibilities for further studies in this area.
- The Study can also contribute to JF&CS' operational excellence. As pointed out above, the role of direct service volunteers is inadequately recorded in Agency clinical files. Since such volunteers have made, and still make, such an important contribution to the families served, their activities must be better chronicled in case recordings.

Clients in their Own Words:

Without JF&CS' help –

- There is a good chance [without JF&CS intervention] that I'd be a single parent and my child would have missed something amazing.....
-bad things would happen if JF&CS wasn't here..... my kids might be F students..... I walked in feeling I had insurmountable problems and JF&CS gave me another way/voice to look at it..... JF&CS keeps me anchored somehow and it's not just about the money.
- I was suicidal, so I don't know..... Not many things in my life are perfect, this agency is one of the perfect things in my life.

Excerpts from Executive summary – Early Intervention (EI) Study (continued)

The experience at JF&CS, how it helped –

- she [social worker] doesn't do magic tricks –it's just the talking...
- I feel better equipped to deal with problems, my worker has been a tremendous help.
- I've had cancer, I was alone before with a child and no one was helping me, and then I got a worker and she is so helpful.
- ...that I can talk about my financial situation and not feel like I'm groveling and to maintain my dignity as a human being is just amazing.

JF&CS as a Jewish agency –

- They understand the need to maintain A Jewish lifestyle – the need for Jewish education to keep Shabbat or to attend a Jewish camp, no one else would understand that.

(Taken from A Toolkit for Outcome Measurement: Building on Logic Models, United Way of Greater Toronto)

Program Outcome Website Resources

www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/outcomes

www.casenet.org/program-management/evaluation/guide

www.evaluationtools.org/files

www.national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/mdc/

www.iknow.org

www.nonprofit.about.com

www.vsi-isbc.ca/eng/funding/financial_guide