Research and Evaluation Interest Group

Evaluation Consultation Request Form

The Research and Evaluation Interest Group (REIG) is pleased to offer evaluation consultation to our partners looking to begin or improve their evaluation efforts. The REIG includes expert professionals in the field of evaluation as well as individuals sharing their lessons learned from running their own child-serving programs. Programs should have some relationship to childhood obesity prevention, through that doesn’t need to be the primary focus. Consultations are an hour and are tailored to the specific needs of the organization. Discussion will revolve around answering specific evaluation questions, concerns or problems an organization has. The REIG will provide suggestions, guidance, lessons learned, as well as discuss potential resources available to strengthen the organizations evaluation or to address identified issues of concern. Examples of evaluation questions/issues addressed in the past can be found are included for your reference.

If you are interested in having an evaluation consultation with the REIG, please complete this form and send to Sarah Welch at swelch@luriechildrens.org.

Please provide a brief organization/program description. Make sure to indicate if this is a new program or an existing one as well as any timeline for when you want to implement your (updated) evaluation.

What pieces of your evaluation would you like assistance with? (Choose all that apply).

Creating surveys

Collecting information through surveys/interviews/focus groups etc.

Analyzing data

Stakeholder support/by-in

Logic Model

Evaluation design

Communicating findings

Determining/deciding on appropriate outcomes to measure

Other:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What evaluation questions do you have for the group?

**Examples of past evaluation consultation questions and suggestions**

Example 1: Nutrition Education Program for children 3-5 years

Evaluation Issues: Age specific suggestions regarding pre/post surveys, survey content, strategies for child attention span issues, teachers try to help students get the right answer and length of the survey.

Suggestions:

* Develop training for teachers
	+ Give them a facilitator guide so there is no confusion when administering surveys
		- Include how to ask questions
		- Share the purpose of the evaluation
* Involve the parents/family system
	+ Ask parents if students have exposure to concepts at home
	+ Give parents pamphlet on goals of this program
	+ Encourage parents/teachers to work on colors
* Create different lesson/evaluation/goals for younger group (3 year olds)
	+ Focus on experimentation, familiarity so they will recognize these objects when they're older
	+ Focus on how receptive they seem to be to new foods, not necessarily get answers right
		- For ex. ask "Do you like...?"
	+ Might not know about colors at this age
* Take students aside one on one at another time
* Use flash cards
* Make assessment a game (e.g. if they think the answer is blue run to this side of the room, if they think its red run to the other side)
* Ask questions before and after whole unit, more reinforcement of concepts throughout, more repetition
* Translate lessons and evaluation into Spanish and make culturally relevant
* Be careful of leading questions
* Disproportionate number of questions about color, make sure emphasis of lessons and evaluation match
* Shorter lessons
* Incorporate Head Start nutrition requirements into lessons, creating less work for teachers
* Written surveys do not seem to be as effective, stick with oral
* Make sure questions only have one correct answer (e.g., grapes can be red, green or purple)
* Coordinate between teachers, health coordinator, and kitchen staff so everyone is on board, reinforcing these concepts
	+ Incorporate lesson into snack time
		- Are they trying new foods?
		- Are they eating healthy foods?
	+ Ask teachers if they have lesson plan ideas

Example 2: Youth and community engagement and development program

Evaluation challenges/questions:

1. How can we show change in actual and perception change of spaces? How can we evaluate physical, mental and emotional impact of this change? How can we evaluate the progression of becoming a community stakeholder?
2. How do you evaluate the “what if” factor? How do you measure what was likely to happen based on immediate family lifestyles and choices and connect that with impact of the program?

Themes discussed
Perception vs. objective data. The group discussed the need to collect data regarding perception vs. objective data re: crime. For example, it may be that crime has declined, but if community residents do not perceive declines in crime, their behaviors in spaces would not change.

Retrospective vs. prospective data. The group noted that it will be necessary to track data retrospectively

Suggestions offered:

Concepts to explore

* Efficacy -efficacy is the feeling that you are able to do something about a problem or situation -that you are empowered. Many studies use efficacy to measure how people feel about/perceive their community.
* Adding a matched comparison group to be able to compare the program context to other similar contexts without the program. For example: identify a school similar to one served by the program in terms of student characteristics and community environment and compare student outcomes between the two. Or find a space that has not been reclaimed and compare that to a space that has been reclaimed.