Manager's VIEWPOINT

SPRING 2013 • Volume 11

Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs

IN THIS ISSUE

Measuring Our Success

Evaluation for Sexual Assault Programs

WCSAP
Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs

Letter from the Editor

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WCSAP

Right now, attached inside my clothing, I am wearing a monitor. It's a little device that measures my movement and activity, and it can be connected to a computer to download this information. After a week of obtaining baseline data, the software associated with this monitor set a series of fitness goals for me, aimed at increasing my activity bit by bit.

Why did I decide to monitor and measure my activity? I've talked to other people who have participated in this process, and they told me that having data about their level of movement and setting specific goals has inspired them to be more active. I also know that my Inner Couch Potato may not give me a precise accounting of my actual activity level, and that I don't really have any way to estimate how much informal exercise I rack up in the course of a day. So my hope is that by identifying what I am actually doing, setting realistic objectives, and receiving feedback on my progress, I will move toward my ultimate goal, which is to increase my level of fitness.

Are you beginning to sense the purpose of this tale? I'm confiding in you because I believe my activity monitoring experience is a lovely little metaphor for program evaluation. Just the term "program evaluation" is enough to scare some managers out of their sneakers. In truth, however, it is mostly just a matter of finding the right tools (like my monitor) to help you identify what you are doing, comparing that to your goals and objectives, and measuring progress. Most of you are already doing this, in formal and informal ways. However, it is a challenge to measure program effectiveness in our field, so this issue of *Manager's Viewpoint* is designed to bolster your confidence, increase your knowledge and understanding, and provide you with valuable tools.

Kris Bein of the national Resource Sharing Project was gracious enough to share her wonderful article, *Program Evaluation: Knowing is Half the Battle.* Kris demystifies the evaluation process and gives you practical tips on how to proceed. As always, in addition to gaining knowledge from national experts like Kris, we wanted to hear what is actually happening in our programs here in Washington State. As I interviewed two exceptional managers for our "Voices from the Field" articles, I enjoyed hearing about their creative use of evaluation strategies. Debbie Medeiros of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Pathways to Healing Program, with headquarters in Vancouver, Washington, uses traditional evaluation methods such as client satisfaction surveys along with innovative procedures such as quarterly off-site staff meetings to identify progress and brainstorm solutions to obstacles. Nancy Foll of Family Support Center in Colville, Washington describes her methods for evaluating program effectiveness and community needs, and shares thoughts about outcome surveys and other crucial information she uses to keep her finger on the pulse of her program.

Trisha Smith and Nicky Gleason from the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy identified the "Top 3 InfoNet Reports" for sexual assault program managers to review progress, and clarified how you can get the most out of the data you are already entering into the InfoNet system. WCSAP has developed an Evaluation Planning Tool and a Data Collection Checklist so that you can identify your current evaluation activities and perhaps add a few more to your repertoire. Finally, we give you a wealth of resources to help you feel knowledgeable and inspired in your evaluation efforts.

With respect,

Jennifer

SPRING 2013
Volume 11

Manager's VIEWPOINT

WCSAP is a membership agency comprised of individuals and organizations dedicated to ending sexual assault in their communities. WCSAP's mission is to unite agencies engaged in the elimination of sexual violence through education, advocacy, victim services, and social change.

The Manger's Viewpoint is a publication designed to support WCSAP's efforts to provide technical assistance regarding nonprofit management and organizational development to WCSAP member programs, other allied organizations, and statewide sexual assault coalitions across the nation.

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Program Evaluation: Knowing is Half the Battle

Kris Bein
Resource Sharing Project

We gather, assess, and use information in our decisions every day, mostly in an informal or even unconscious manner. Deliberate and systematic data collection and use turns everyday fact collecting into productive program evaluation. Program evaluation is an essential component to every rape crisis center, dual/multi-service agency, and coalition. With the right ingredients, it can be a powerful tool for success and growth. Evaluation is "the capacity to judge what the agency does; how it does it; and the consequences, outcomes, and effectiveness of its programs, procedures, and products. Effectiveness is measured against criteria formed by the principal values of the organization" (Moxley & Manela, 2000, p. 317).

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Program evaluation in sexual assault services can take many different forms, and a multifaceted approach is the most likely to yield rich data (Moxley & Manela, 2000). As a practice, it can encompass evaluation of an entire agency or evaluation of single projects in the agency, including client outcome evaluation, client satisfaction, and evaluation of prevention outcomes.

> We believe our sexual assault work is good and useful; evaluation is how we know it is good and useful.

Evaluation lets us measure what we are doing right and figure out how to do more of the right stuff. Evaluation proves our success and worth to funders and community leaders. Evaluation shows progress and change to employees, who often feel like they are moving a mountain with a teaspoon. Evaluation paves the way for successful organizational or personal change. Most importantly, evaluation gives survivors and community members a voice in our empowerment-based agencies. We cannot know if services are working for survivors unless we ask. We cannot know if we are in step with community goals unless we listen. We cannot be certain we are living our mission every day unless we evaluate.

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In these pages, we will discuss the benefits and creative possibilities of program evaluation. We will look at evaluation that is practical, respectful, and innovative. At the end of the publication, you will find resources for starting your own program evaluation.

Actionable Measurement Fuels Improvement of Our Work

Track our Progress	Inform our Strategies	Contribute to the Field
We hold ourselves accountable for what we do and how we do it by measuring inputs, activities, and outputs of our own work and that of our investments.	We test our assumptions and track our achievements by measuring outputs, outcomes, and impact, as well as understanding how and they we have succeeded or failed.	We contribute to accomplishing shared goals by measuring outcomes and impact, sharing our results, and collaborating with partners to understand what works and why in the populations we serve.

How We Use Measurement

The collection, analysis, and synthesis of data and experience are critical first steps toward informed action and decision making. But these alone are not sufficient for action. Organizational process also needs to allow time for teams to reflect and develop insight, as well as to support a willingness and ability to change and adapt. Together, these elements provide the basis for Actionable Measurement, leading to informed decisions and actions.

What is the value of program evaluation?

Creating our own program evaluation based on our unique programs is important. Program evaluation builds "a knowledge base of effective indigenous agency practices that support successful services, ongoing improvement, and ultimately, effective transformation" (Moxley & Manela, 2000, p. 318). When it comes from within, we can be sure of alignment to our goals, mission, and values.

Keep up with change

Society is constantly changing and evolving, as are our agencies. "Agency based evaluation helps the organization meet changing environmental and internal expectations, standards, and requirements in an effective manner" (Moxley & Manela 2000, p. 318). The changing environment – be it external or internal – affects agencies in many ways. Sometimes, our fundamentals are strong, but we need to shore up or prove the program's performance. Other times, we lose our way or find our original mission no longer works: staff is restless or unhappy, program planning is aimless or off the mark (Moxley & Manela 2000). And occasionally, agencies find themselves in the middle of a societal "redistribution of power and resources, human-service agencies, along with other social institutions, must consider their survival…They may find themselves off balance and without a clear position within the new or emergent environment" (Moxley & Manela 2000, p. 320). Evaluation plays an important role in weathering these changes.

Revitalize your agency

When the agency structure is essentially sound, we can *revitalize* the agency by using evaluation to assess quality, realign to mission, improve productivity, or identify growth opportunities. When agencies have lost touch with the vision, evaluation can spark a *renaissance* by surfacing important questions about and challenges to the agency vision and structure. When the renaissance begins, evaluation helps us find new values, purpose, innovations, and practices. Finally, when there is a major shift in society, such as an economic decline or swing in local politics, evaluation can help us recover our footing by surfacing values and activities that match the new environment and by demonstrating the importance and success of the agency to the community. In any kind of change, evaluation is our touchstone to these ever-changing internal and external environments (Moxley & Manela 2000).

Demonstrate collaboration and empowerment

Many rape crisis centers, dual/multi-service agencies, and coalitions explicitly value collaboration and empowerment. Program evaluation can be an effective method for manifesting both, and thus an integral piece of the strategic plan. Many of us in the field believe it is critically important to ensure that the work we do is guided by the voices of survivors. This, we hold, both keeps us accountable to survivors and empowers them. What better way to celebrate their voices than to offer evaluation? However, many of us worry about giving survivors surveys at inappropriate times or overwhelming them with long and complicated instruments. As the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) found when its centers surveyed counseling clients,

> Rape crisis center staff members were initially worried that victims/survivors would be reluctant to complete a survey, but found the opposite to be true. Victims/survivors were generally happy to complete the survey and actually felt empowered through this process. Many victims/survivors are involved with multiple human services agencies and indicated that they seldom have the opportunity to evaluate those services (L. Carson, personal communication, September 30, 2011).

Invite survivors' participation with sensitivity

There are creative ways to do program evaluation with survivors that are simple, appropriate, and aligned with our values. One of the most important issues is the introduction or invitation to the instrument, especially if you will be surveying survivors. The Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs (KASAP) calls their service evaluation the "Healing Voices Project" to convey a sense of empowerment and value to survivors. The survey has a brief introduction that is reassuring and explains client rights in everyday language. KASAP also trained staff at centers to invite survivors to complete the survey in a sensitive and respectful manner.

Highlight the value of program evaluation

It is critical to identify the value of program evaluation to your agency and the survivors you serve. KASAP found "our work does help reduce trauma symptoms in our clients, as reported by those clients. We've also learned that the more help they receive, the more the symptoms decrease. This data set is very useful both in encouraging those who do the work and as evidence to provide to our funders" (E. Tamas, personal communication, September 21, 2011). Spend some time talking about evaluation's place in your agency, before you look at a single survey instrument or draft a procedure.

Spend some time talking about evaluation's place in your agency, before you look at a single survey instrument or draft a procedure.

Many programs are struggling to maintain funding in the current economic climate. Program evaluation can prove our efficacy and efficiency to local, state, and federal funders, and confirm that we are responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. PCAR found evaluation to be "helpful in demonstrating to funders that rape crisis centers are evaluating their services and being proactive in making necessary changes, when needed" (L. Carson, personal communication, September 30, 2011). Evaluation can also help us stay aligned with the mission, renew commitment to established practices, or support new program development.

> Different types of evaluation answer different questions. It is important that program staff identify what type of evaluation will best answer *their* questions.
> (Dr. Stephanie Townsend, personal communication, September 26, 2011)

Questions to ponder

Reflect on the following questions, as an individual exercise or in discussion with your board and staff.

- How does evaluation serve your mission statement and vision?
- What agency values and beliefs do you want to infuse in program evaluation?
- How could evaluation benefit…
  - The survivors you serve?
  - Your staff and volunteers?
  - Your board?
  - Your community?
  - The statewide network of centers?

What do we want to know? What is the goal?

Be specific

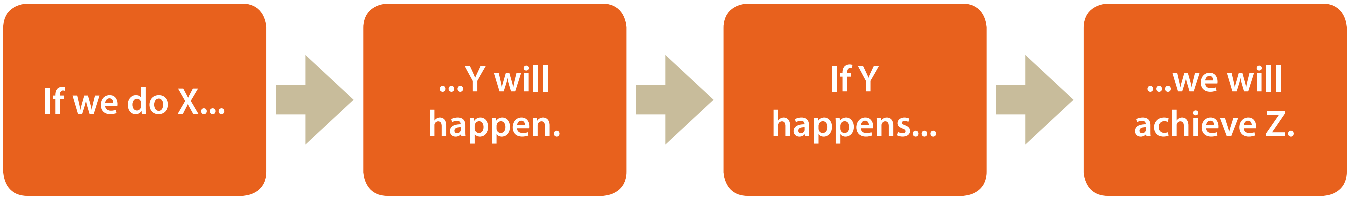
Evaluation is most effective when it responds to a specific question or goal. Collecting data for the sake of collecting data does not create knowledge. Likewise, trying to examine everything will generate very little usable data to turn into knowledge. If you're driving from New Hampshire to Oklahoma, you don't need to know about every highway in North America. Instead, you look at a map and learn about just the roads you'll travel. Focusing on specific questions or goals gives the best prospect for learning. For example, one of KASAP's tools investigates "[program] response and the response of other first responders to victims of sexual assault in the medical and legal setting" (E. Tamas, personal communication, September 21, 2011). The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) designed an evaluation of survivors' progress in recovery, using several proven measures of trauma symptoms, like nightmares, psychosomatic issues, and concentration (Collins, et al., 2008). Whatever question you choose to study, you may find multiple benefits of evaluation. PCAR found "written responses from clients are especially useful for providing positive reinforcement to staff and thanking them for their efforts" (L. Carson, personal communication, September 30, 2011).

Select Your Questions Or Goals

Select your questions or goals

To select a question or goal for evaluation, consider the following strategies:

- Look at your current strategic plan.
  - What objectives could be served or augmented by program evaluation?
  - How do you know when the agency has accomplished items in the strategic plan? Could program evaluation help you demonstrate progress? How?
- Assess the current needs and conditions in your community (which is a valuable evaluation exercise by itself).
  - What questions or issues does this assessment raise for you? What does the assessment tell you about your services?
  - How could program evaluation help you explore or answer those questions?
- Think about current obstacles or vulnerabilities.
  - How can program evaluation mitigate problems?
  - How can program evaluation reveal strengths?
  - Could program evaluation help you find new strategies? How?



How will we measure it?

Creating measures is perhaps the most daunting part of program evaluation. There are so many logistical questions to sort out, like what method to use, how to time the instrument, or what to do if a survivor is in crisis, that we sometimes shy away from starting at all. However, it can be energizing and creative. There are many excellent resources to explain the entire process in detail and get you started (see the list at the end of this paper). Here, let us consider just the basic concepts of evaluation.

Choose the right type of evaluation

According to Townsend, there are five main types of evaluations.

- ***Needs assessments*** identify and prioritize needs and can help when making decisions about how to allocate scarce resources.
- ***Program theory*** clarifies the underlying ideas about why and how a program works and can be used to improve the clarity of the program and to articulate immediate and long-term effects.
- ***Process evaluation*** describes how a program is operating and can identify implementation problems and to make sure that there is consistency in how the service or program is delivered.
- ***Impact or outcomes evaluations*** determine if a program has achieved its intended effects and to what degree. This is useful when making decisions about continuing, expanding or modifying a program or service.
- Finally, ***efficiency evaluations*** compare the program costs to its outcomes and can be used to make larger scale decisions about funding allocations (personal communication, September 26, 2011).

Create a logical theory of change

> Every piece of the change model should be specific and measurable.

What you want to know determines what you will measure and how you will measure it. To figure out how to measure what you want to know, create a theory of change or hypothesis. This can be as simple or detailed as you like; the critical issue is that it must be logical. *Change* or *logic models* "link outcomes (both short- and long-term) with program activities/processes and the theoretical assumptions [and] principles of the program. This model provides a roadmap of your program" (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004, p. 35). Every piece of the change model should be specific and measurable. When all the pieces are measurable, we have many different questions we can ask and many ways to ask the question. In any theory or model, "the main question we are trying to answer with a logic model is, *how does change happen?* (Townsend, personal communication, September 26, 2011).

Keep goals specific and measurable

Contemplate your question or goal statement. Define your goal in specific, measurable terms, as in this goal statement from PCAR, "Clients will have increased knowledge and skills, and decreased symptoms due to the impact of their victimization" (Collins, et al., 2008, p. 3-2). With that goal, PCAR programs know what to measure: knowledge of options and trauma effects, coping skills, and level of trauma symptoms. The programs also know who to talk to and how often: clients are the source of information, so they are given a survey at carefully determined points in services.

Consider outputs and outcomes

Typically, when we measure change, we look at outputs and outcomes. Outputs are the activities of our work, like advocacy hours, prevention education sessions, or number of counseling clients. These measurements tell us what we have done in quantified terms and have an important purpose.

> An advocate, Marge, wants to manage and prevent vicarious trauma better. She might track how many survivors she sees in a month as a measure of her exposure to vicarious trauma. She can use this data to make well-timed vacation requests.

Measuring the amount of time staff spend doing outreach and seeing survivors in a particular county can tell you if it is time to open an office in that county or apply for new funding. However, measuring time in this way does *not* tell you if survivors are pleased with the service they receive or if the service is helpful. To measure survivor satisfaction, you need a satisfaction evaluation. To measure the helpfulness or efficacy of the service, you need to measure outcomes.

Outcomes evaluation measures the effects "the project [is] having on clients, its staff, its umbrella organization, and its community" and can "answer questions about what works, for whom, and in what circumstances, and how to improve program delivery and services" (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004, p. 28). For a lot of us, figuring out the outcomes is confusing. It can feel overwhelming or impossible to find the common denominators or consistent factors in our work; we know that each survivor is unique and requires specialized attention. However, there are commonalities across individualized services. Townsend tells us,

- ***Outcomes should focus on the most important parts of your services.*** It is easy to generate an overwhelming list or to be so broad the outcome cannot be measured.
- Try to gain consensus about the core changes you expect or hope to see. ***Outcomes should be easy to understand.*** Your outcomes should help you explain what you are doing to the public.
- You probably have multiple outcomes; do not lump them all together. ***Make sure each outcome contains only one core idea.*** This will make your evaluation more precise and help you determine which aspects of the services are working well and which may require a different approach.
- Above all else, ***be realistic about what can be achieved given the nature and intensity of your services.*** For example, if you are limited to providing only four sessions of counseling, it would be unrealistic to expect that someone suffering from PTSD would become free of all symptoms. However, there may be an alleviation of specific trauma symptoms (personal communication, September 26, 2011).

Outcomes

Focused	Easy to Understand	One Core Idea	Be Realistic

How will we implement program evaluation?

There are many ways to design your program evaluation instruments, from surveys and focus groups to observation and appreciative inquiry. We all do evaluation throughout the day, but we often don't recognize it. Consider the following case:

Maggie is an advocate in a college town. In the first six to eight weeks of the school year, her caseload usually doubles. During this time, it is 60-75% college freshmen. This year, however, she does not see a big increase of freshmen in her caseload. In fact, her September caseload was lower than July. She's checked with campus police, medical providers, and campus counseling services, and they've all seen the same drop. She raises her concern at a staff meeting, wondering what is going on at the college. Bart, the prevention educator, says that he usually presents at freshman orientation, but he wasn't asked to come this year. Maggie and Bart surmise that his orientation presentations are the main way freshmen hear about what do after sexual assault.

Maggie and Bart both have important information about Maggie's caseload drop, but they did not know it until they stopped to discuss it and compare measures. Simply having the conversation in staff meeting is a form of program evaluation. To strengthen this program evaluation, they can document it in some way. If they want to take the next step, they can evaluate data on Maggie's caseload and Bart's prevention work over the last few years and look for other patterns. If they wanted to take a big step and do a large, formal evaluation, they could collaborate with the college to assess first-year students' knowledge of sexual assault and sexual assault services and create a new marketing plan.

> We all do evaluation throughout the day, but we often don't recognize it.

The question should determine the method, not the other way around

From your question or goal, consider all the current and potential sources of data.

- Who might have insight on this issue?
- What kinds of data could prove or disprove your hypothesis?
- Are there alternate sources of data? Survivors are the only ones who can tell you about their satisfaction with your services. However, survivors are not necessarily the best source for evaluating the quality of medical care or criminal legal responses.

In KASAP's investigation of systems' response to survivors, they realized that survivors know only their unique experience in the emergency department or with law enforcement. In addition, even in the best of circumstances, seeking medical care or reporting to law enforcement after a sexual assault is traumatic and upsetting. Advocates, by contrast, could compare each unique experience to others and to benchmarks from a more emotionally removed place. KASAP, therefore, designed an assessment of the systems' response that is completed by advocates, not survivors. They created a separate instrument for survivors to evaluate their satisfaction with the rape crisis program. In this way, they obtain data from the best sources, as determined by the goal.

Search your filing cabinet (or InfoNet)

Sometimes, the best source of data is your filing cabinet. Many, if not most programs collect data on survivors, such as demographics, service usage, and type of victimization. [Editor's Note: In Washington State, InfoNet data can serve this purpose – see "Top 3 InfoNet Reports."] This information can be organized to produce new knowledge and new questions. For instance, comparing demographics of the survivors you serve to the demographics of the community can show what groups do or do not seek services at your agency. Do you see many teenagers? Does the local immigrant community come to you? These data will tell you what services are happening for whom and when, which can lead you to new questions and logic models.

Make it as easy and seamless as possible

> "Data are useful and are ultimately used when the information is a part of practice and not seen as an add-on to practice and the delivery of service."
> (Cherin, 2004, p. 241)

If data collection takes too much time or effort, staff will resent and potentially undermine the evaluation effort. Making program evaluation a collaborative effort takes more time in the beginning, but it will save significant time and stress in the end. Staff will have ideas about how to integrate evaluation seamlessly, or at least comfortably, into current services. Workers (and agencies) may fear what will happen if they receive bad scores on satisfaction measures, or do not meet outcome goals. Coming to agreement about the value and purpose of program evaluation will go a long way towards calming those fears, as will discussing the consequences of doing or not doing evaluation.

Don't underestimate the cost of avoiding evaluation

It is helpful to recognize the costs of avoiding evaluation, such as limiting organizational learning and losing opportunities to build upon our strengths, alongside a discussion of our fears of doing evaluation. In addition, many programs worry about the logistics and feasibility of program evaluation. You may find it helpful to do some pilot testing of the instrument before adopting its widespread use. Pilot testing will show any gaps or issues in evaluation and give you an opportunity to make changes on a more manageable scale. Making changes to the instrument after adoption is difficult, because it affects your ability to synthesize data. PCAR recommends convening "a users group of rape crisis center staff to ensure the project continues with fidelity at the local level. The users group can also identify new evaluation needs, identify issues or problems with implementation, and offer suggestions for improving the project" (L. Carson, personal communication, September 30, 2011).

How will we use the data?

This brings us back to our original question: what is the value of program evaluation? If we believe that program evaluation is of value to survivors, staff, the agency, and the community, we will want to use the data in some way. Program evaluation data can shed light on necessary program changes by shedding light on strengths and gaps. We can also use the data to examine community changes. KASAP's examination of medical and criminal legal systems' response to survivors, for example, is useful for local communities and the state. Individual programs can look at the data on police service to survivors to design new police training programs, or new advocate training programs on interacting with police. KASAP can use the same data to advocate with statewide entities or to propose new legislation.

Program evaluation is very helpful in strategic planning and other agency planning efforts. Data can show program strengths and challenges, as well as trends and opportunities, to address in strategic planning. Data can also highlight smaller issues for change initiatives.

Program evaluation, when it is thoughtful and well planned, can be one of our most potent and incisive tools for change.

Critical Take-Aways from "Program Evaluation: Knowing is Half the Battle"

- Program evaluation can help us to improve our programs and show others that our efforts are worth supporting.
- Select a specific question for evaluation by looking at your mission, plans, community needs, or obstacles.
- Use a change or logic model to come up with a specific, measureable goal.
- Match your evaluation method to the type of question you are asking.
- Look for existing sources of data that might help answer your question.
- Incorporate collaboration (with staff, survivors, and/or community partners) throughout the process.
- Share the results of your evaluation in a clear, effective, and intentional manner.

Taking the Next Step

Many books, websites, and articles can give you detailed instruction on designing program evaluation for your agency. There are also evaluation experts and consultants that you may hire to help with your program evaluation. Keep in mind that evaluation will be best when you have a strong voice in its creation. The resources listed at the end of this publication or an evaluation consultant can guide your process or work out the details, but only your agency can decide what you want to measure and how.

One of the great strengths of the anti-violence field is our ability to deconstruct and make sense of horrific acts and complicated responses. We, as a field, are skilled at seeking knowledge and turning that knowledge into powerful tools. Program evaluation, when it is thoughtful and well planned, can be one of our most potent and incisive tools for change.

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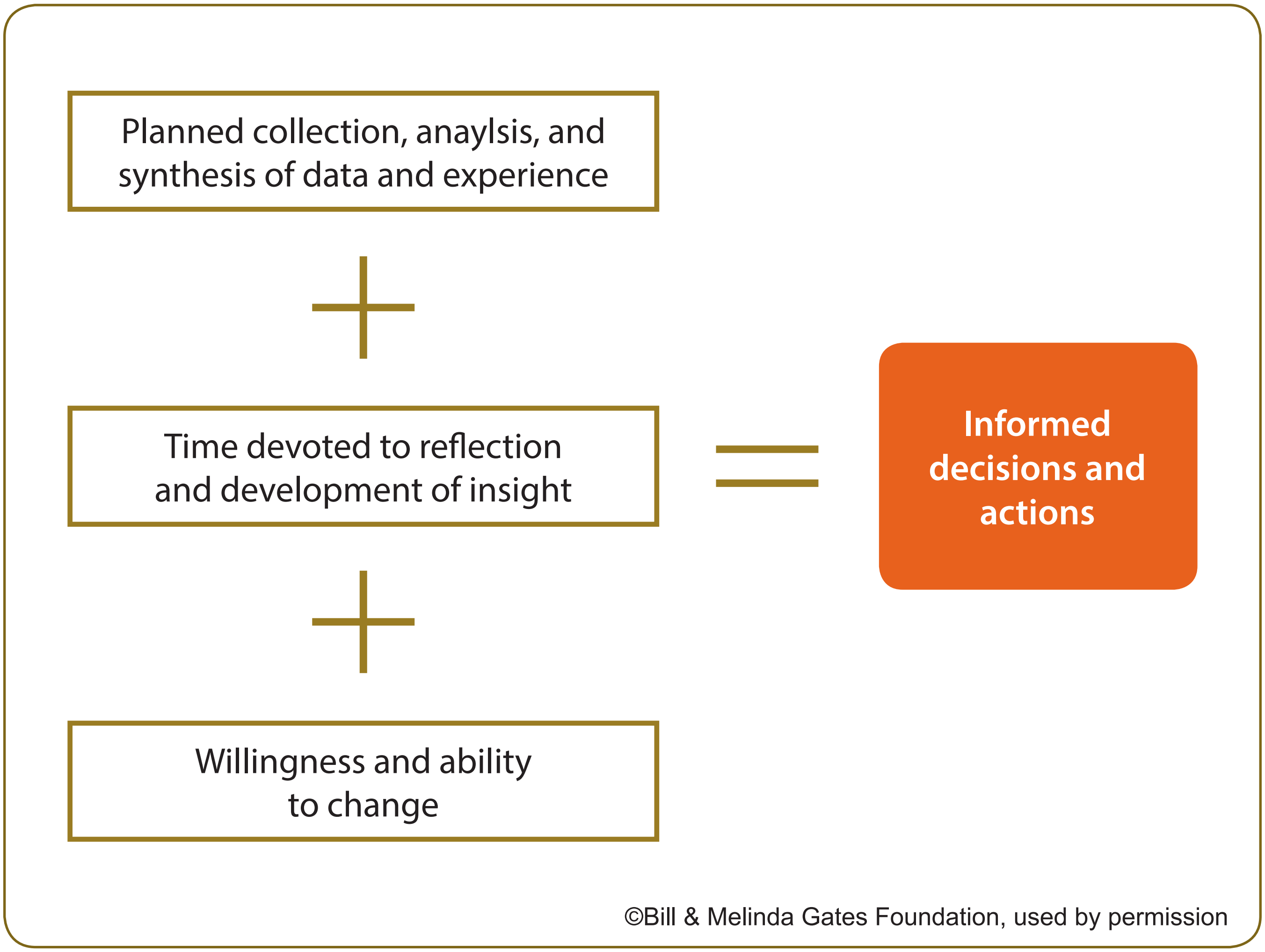
Three Elements for Actionable Measurement



Using data to inform our decisions and actions is a process that involves planning what information to use, allowing enough time to process the information in a meaningful way, and then moving forward on the basis of our information and analysis. We are indebted to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for permission to reprint *Three Elements for Actionable Measurement*.

Voices
From the Field

An Interview with Debbie Medeiros, Pathways to Healing Program Manager
Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Vancouver, Washington

Debbie Medeiros is the Program Manager of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's Pathways to Healing Program, which serves both domestic violence and sexual assault survivors. Debbie began her reflection on their program evaluation efforts by saying, "It's hard to measure the effectiveness of victim services." She says that the many variables involved in serving survivors make evaluation complex. For example, they may see a client once or just a few times, and it is unrealistic to expect huge outcome effects after a brief interaction, even if it is very helpful to the survivor.

Evaluation in Conjunction with the Health Clinic

Pathways to Healing is part of the Tribe's Health and Human Services department, which does have a quality improvement team. Being involved with health care services has offered some unique data collection opportunities. Every person who utilizes medical or mental health clinic services is asked to fill out an anonymous survey that asks about experiences of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and witnessing violence within the last six months, between six and twelve months ago, and "ever." Approximately 350 to 400 surveys are collected each year. The survey serves an additional purpose: it contains the message, "Violence is Not Traditional! Your Body is Sacred!" and offers information and contact numbers for the Pathways to Healing Program.

The patient survey is one aspect of data collection, and Debbie's program also receives data about whether medical staff are actually making referrals to the Pathways to Healing Program (without confidential patient information). Learning about the experiences of those who utilize Tribal clinic services helps Pathways to Healing tailor its resources to community needs. For example, when there was an upsurge in the number of patients who disclosed they had been stalked, Pathways to Healing offered training to medical providers about stalking issues, sent providers stalking information, created a stalking awareness display with take-away information in the clinic, and set up resource information in exam rooms, where survivors are more likely to have the privacy and safety to select relevant brochures or safety cards.

Client Satisfaction Survey

Debbie looks at a variety of factors to see how sexual assault services are faring. For example, they have developed a Client Satisfaction Survey that is given every six months to all clients. The goal is to capture every unique client's responses. The survey asks clients questions such as, "Do you always feel welcome when you arrive for an appointment?" A five-point scale is used to measure agreement with statements such as "Your advocate is knowledgeable, resourceful and understanding." As with any good program evaluation tool, this survey is aligned with the mission of the program, so it asks whether services were provided in a culturally sensitive manner. Survey questions also ask about barriers and accessibility, and clients are asked whether they would be interested in other services offered by the program or department, such as Parenting Education Classes. As with the clinic survey, simply asking certain questions is a way to raise awareness of available services, along with collecting data. For example, asking whether a client is interested in attending a support group will alert the client to the existence of support groups and perhaps spark interest in attending.

Program Evaluation with Staff

One of the most valuable program evaluation tools, Debbie says, is the program's quarterly off-site, all-day work meeting for program planning. At that meeting, staff are asked to discuss issues such as these:

- What do we want to accomplish in the coming months?
- What are we seeing as trends?
- What training is needed, or what issues are we identifying more accurately because of training we have received (for example, sibling incest cases)?
- How do we make sure our services meet the trends in community needs?
- Have we met our grant deliverables, and if not, do they still make sense in light of additional information (for example, do we just need to fine-tune our grant deliverables, or do we need to go back to the funder to renegotiate because of unanticipated circumstances)?
- What have our expenditures been compared to budget forecasts? This financial review promotes transparency and staff engagement in effective management of resources.

Collecting data gives you ways to acknowledge what you are doing.

The most important big-picture evaluation question for staff to consider is "Are we doing what we need to be doing, and if not, how do we get there?" Specific program objectives are reviewed, and progress toward completing the objectives is noted. While some of these objectives are grant deliverables, they may include other priorities developed by the program. Careful attention is paid to indicating progress on specific action steps. If any completion dates have been missed or no longer seem realistic, extenuating circumstances are noted, if applicable. This evaluation process allows for staff input, flexible planning, clear accountability, and a sense of shared purpose. It keeps objectives and action steps in the forefront every three months or so, rather than leaving them on a shelf to be dusted off during an annual retreat or performance evaluation.

Evaluating Individual Staff Needs

In addition to this group evaluation process, Debbie includes questions about professional development and capacity building needs in employees' annual performance reviews. She works with the staff member to identify any gaps in knowledge that might affect the agency goal of providing culturally sensitive assistance to Tribal members, and together they develop measurable goals that are regularly reviewed.

Debbie makes the important point that these group and individual evaluations take time, and that the program must also allocate time to follow up on the identified needs and goals. This is time well spent, she says, in pursuit of providing the best quality advocacy services possible.

Data-Driven Service Provision

Debbie also makes an effort to collect and capture data that may determine decisions about service provision. For example, because the program serves clients in three venues (Vancouver, Longview, and Toledo), Debbie reviews the number of clients seen at different locations, including those seen off-site, the quantity of advocacy services required at each location, and the time duration of the advocate's service provision at each site. This information helps to determine staffing patterns at the various locations.

Another service change that was developed in response to client feedback was the implementation of a 24-hour access line for current or former clients. While Pathways to Healing does not operate a crisis line that is available to the public, it became clear that clients might need to contact program staff after hours, and so the access line was instituted.

Identifying Program Strengths

Collecting demographic information has led to identification of some interesting characteristics of the Pathways to Healing Program. The program originally had more male than female clients, a highly unusual pattern for domestic violence or sexual assault programs. This was largely because of the "amazing relationship" of the program with the Tribal drug and alcohol treatment program and the mental health program, as well as the number of men within the tribe who had been sexually assaulted while incarcerated. Thus, examining the nature of their clientele reveals the strength of the Pathways to

> "Being able to step back and say, wow, we really do this every day in some fashion. If it [program evaluation] wasn't scary, people would realize they are doing it all the time."

Healing Program in serving male survivors. Because of the nature of Tribal culture, Debbie says, "men confide in each other that Pathways to Healing is a safe and welcoming place for them as well as for female survivors."

Asking Important Questions

Debbie has framed additional evaluation questions that are important for her program, such as,

- How do other service providers in our community perceive our services?
- How much time do we spend with people who are not clients, but who access our services anonymously or for information only?
- What are we doing well? How do we know?
- What fact sheets or other readily accessible topic-focused information do we need to meet client or community needs?

Realizing Robust Program Evaluation is Underway

An unexpected consequence of participating in this interview, Debbie said, was that she realized how much ongoing evaluation is occurring within her program. While the concept of "program evaluation" can seem daunting and intimidating, her natural leadership style and desire to make good use of program resources has led her to create or maintain a variety of evaluation processes that yield rich data to improve program effectiveness.

Wish List for the Future

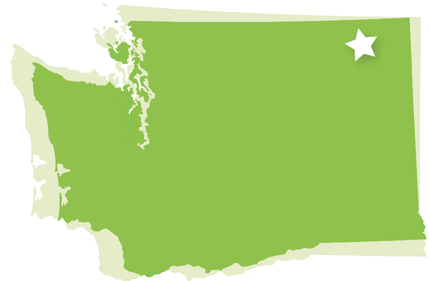
Debbie would like some creative ways to come up with outcomes for sexual assault services, and examples of outcomes. She would like more information on "how to effectively write down how we are doing." She wishes the statewide InfoNet service would collect more detailed and nuanced information about service provision for Native American contractors. She also specifically requested tools for capturing ongoing current data collection and evaluation efforts by her program.

Debbie did express a sense of satisfaction in realizing that program evaluation is often simply the common-sense process of identifying a concern or question, determining the most important information for addressing the problem, collecting that information, and then making sense of what is discovered. The results of that process lead to program improvement action steps. Pathways to Healing is certainly engaging in that process on a regular basis.

About Pathways to Healing Program

The mission of the Cowlitz Tribal Pathways to Healing Program is to honor traditional values and beliefs that promote safety and well being for Native American/ Alaska Native families by providing a holistic approach to inform, educate and heal our communities affected by violence.

Voices
From the Field



An Interview with Nancy Foll
Family Support Center and Kids First Children's Advocacy Center, Colville, WA

Nancy Foll, Director of Family Support Center and Kids First Children's Advocacy Center, described a number of evaluation methods she uses to keep her finger on the pulse of the sexual assault services her organizations provide. Family Support Center is one of many programs offered by Rural Resources Community Action in Colville, located in northeastern Washington State.

Outcome Surveys

Family Support Center has continued to use an outcome survey that the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) first required programs to administer several years ago. Based on research from Washington State University, it was determined that the best way to get results was to mail the survey a total of three times (unless it was completed sooner), at defined intervals. Naturally, advocates ask clients whether they were willing to have the surveys mailed to them and if it would be safe to do so. Nancy stated that the overwhelming majority of responses from clients about the value of advocacy services are positive. If there are any concerns on the survey, she discusses them with relevant staff.

Feedback from MDT

Another measure of the effectiveness of services and client needs is feedback from the local multidisciplinary team (MDT) for the Children's Advocacy Center. Nancy's program also surveys MDT members to see what is working and what is not working.

Examining Teen Services

While the close affiliation with the Children's Advocacy Center means that this agency serves a large number of children and nonoffending caregivers, the program gets fewer teen clients. This leads Nancy to believe that they should be investigating ways to connect with teens via technology, since that seems to be the predominant path for connection to adolescent populations.

Using Data to Evaluate Services

Nancy convenes conversations with advocates to get a sense of changing community and client needs. She reviews various data to help shape services. For example, she and her team look at the changing demographics of their community to decide what language access needs may exist. She also evaluates efficient use of resources. For example, Nancy would like funders to consider alternative models of 24/7 crisis response based on the cost of running a helpline as compared to the number of calls received after hours.

It is important to note that effective evaluation can identify program strengths as well as gaps in services. Nancy tracks the number of volunteers her agency engages over time; currently, there are 30 direct service volunteers, demonstrating that volunteer recruitment and retention are strengths of this Community Sexual Assault Program.

Nancy also monitors efficient use of staff and volunteer time and makes adjustments in duties as the data warrants.

Data Capture Concern

One client data issue that this program shares with many others is the possible underreporting of the number of intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV) survivors served, since they are normally served through the domestic violence program and the primary advocacy services they receive are focused on domestic violence concerns. Nancy is interested in discussing with other managers more effective ways to capture the true number of IPSV cases.

About Family Support Center

Rural Resources Family Support Center serves more than 350 new victims of crime each year in Stevens County, helping them and their families find the support they need to recover and move forward.

the Top 3

Sexual Assault Program Report

Client Service Summary

Staff Service Report

Top 3 InfoNet Reports

for Sexual Assault Program Managers

Thanks to Trisha Smith and Nicky Gleason of the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) for identifying these reports and providing descriptions for their use. Nicky makes the generous offer, "If you have any questions about this stuff, contact Nicky via email at nicky.gleason@commerce.wa.gov."

> Are you getting the most out of your InfoNet data?

Here are three easy-to-access reports that can be a gold mine of information as you evaluate your services.

Client Service Summary

Provides a quick, often one-page overview of all the direct services provided by an agency. This is an excellent report to review month-to-month or quarter-to-quarter to spot different trends in service demands, data entry omissions, or other ways the picture of your agency's services might be changing over time.

- These figures may be very useful for your Annual Report.
- Use Client Service Summary information as the basis for grant proposals.
- Bring a Client Service Summary report to Board meetings on a monthly or quarterly basis.
- Analyze this data to see whether there is a need to improve outreach to ensure that sexual assault survivors are receiving needed services in a multi-service agency.

Sexual Assault Program Report

Provides a more detailed report on the array of sexual assault services provided. This report includes both direct services and agency activities, such as prevention work and system coordination. This is the report that OCVA Sexual Assault Program Coordinators typically review for each agency, so it will help you get a good idea of the picture you are presenting to your OCVA funder. In addition, it offers you valuable information about your program's accomplishments.

- Review this report on a monthly or quarterly basis so you have your finger on what is happening within your program.
- Consider sharing this report at staff meetings on a quarterly basis, so everyone can have the "big picture" view of what is happening within your program.
- Check this data to be sure that it is accurate – if there is a large discrepancy with anticipated figures, there may be a data input problem.
- Use this information in your Community Planning Process.

Staff Services Report

Provides an excellent overview of all of the services and activities of each individual staff member. This report can help paint the picture of the work each person is doing and it is an effective way to identify any inaccuracies in staff data entry.

- Use this report to ensure that staff members' service activities match the balance of domestic violence, sexual assault, or crime victim advocacy work allocated to their positions, over time.
- This data may help you to balance advocate caseloads.
- Note: This report is available under "Administrative Utilities."

Other InfoNet Data Management Tools

InfoNet can be used for a myriad of purposes. You can track staff training participation, maintain data about various grants, and request specialized reports from OCVA to meet your data needs. For example, you may wish to request demographic information about your clients to use in conjunction with other data sets, to see whether the services you are providing match the types of clients who are seeking help.

Keep Up With Data Input

One adage that applies to any data analysis is "garbage in, garbage out." Your reports and data analysis are only valuable if the information entered into the system is accurate. Most programs find that they are able to capture information more accurately by prompt data entry, preferably on a weekly basis. If you are reviewing reports on a regular basis, you are more likely to catch any inaccuracies or data input problems.

Increase Your InfoNet Proficiency

If you still feel a little overwhelmed by InfoNet, don't forget that there are brief instructional videos on the InfoNet website. OCVA can also answer questions about InfoNet use, and new managers and directors can ask for individual orientation to InfoNet from their OCVA Program Coordinator.

Evaluation Planning Tool

Jennifer Y. Levy-Peck
Program Management Specialist, WCSAP

1

DEVELOP YOUR QUESTIONS

Strategic Plan Goals

- Review your strategic plan. If you have no strategic plan, review the results of your last major planning sessions, such as board or staff retreats.
- Consider how program evaluation might help you to meet your objectives.
- Develop questions to be answered through evaluation.
- Choose an evaluation method.
- Example: A strategic plan goal is to improve working relationships with system partners. One objective is to increase referrals from CPS and the local medical clinic. The questions are: "How many referrals do we receive from CPS and the local medical clinic per quarter, and how does this compare with referrals over the last two years?"

Current Needs and Conditions in Your Community

- Identify needs and conditions, for example, changes in your community's demographics, events such as a major employer leaving the area, or reductions in resources for low-income residents.
- Analyze how these needs and conditions may affect the need for your services.
- Develop questions to be answered through evaluation.
- Example: There has been an influx of Spanish-speaking immigrants to your community in the past several years. The question is, "Do we have a need for a full-time bilingual advocate?" What data would support this need? You may decide to keep track of requests for advocacy in Spanish, conduct a survey of your referral sources to see whether they believe this service is needed, and look at community demographic statistics.

Current Obstacles or Vulnerabilities

- Identify concerns or problems within the agency or in client services.
- Decide what information would help you to target solutions.
- Develop questions to be answered through evaluation.
- Example: You have been trying to start a nonoffending parent support group for the past three years, but it never seems to get off the ground. Although advocates identify potential participants, there are never enough participants to start the group. The question is, "What are the barriers to building a sustainable group?" You might develop a brief questionnaire for nonoffending parents who come in for services, asking if they would be interested in a group and checking to see if issues such as the time of day or the availability of child care might be barriers to participation.

2

MATCH THE MEASURE TO THE QUESTION

(see Resources for more information about specific measures)

We use the example of evaluating transportation needs for clients and measures to address this possible barrier to services.

Needs Assessment:

How should we allocate our resources?

- Example: Are sexual assault survivors having difficulty accessing our services because of transportation problems?

Program Theory/Logic Model

Is the work that we are doing actually addressing our stated goals?

- Example: Is our participation on a Public Transportation Committee for the county resulting in improved resources for sexual assault survivors?

Process Evaluation

How is the program or project working? Are we doing what we said we were going to do?

- Example: Have we actually provided the intended number of bus passes to clients? If not, what is interfering?

Impact or Outcomes Evaluation

Has the program or service met its goals? If so, to what extent?

- Example: Have our client numbers increased? What percentage of clients using our bus passes state that they would not have been able to access services without the passes?

Efficiency Evaluation

Are we spending our time and money as effectively as possible?

- Is it taking too much of advocates' time to fill out the paperwork and distribute bus passes? Is this something a volunteer could do?

data collection checklist

1. **Do our advocates respond in an effective manner?**
   - ❒ Do we use measures of consistency (client satisfaction question, system partner survey question)?
   - ❒ Do we use measures of timeliness (response time to hospital, average time from request to advocacy appointment)?

2. **Are our clients satisfied with our services?**
   - ❒ Are we using a client satisfaction survey, and if so, how often do we ask people to fill it out?
   - ❒ Are we documenting and following up on informal feedback relayed by advocates during staff meetings and supervisory sessions?

3. **Are our workshops and outreach education programs effective?**
   - ❒ Do we use and review workshop evaluation forms?
   - ❒ Do we have a systematic method for obtaining feedback from sponsoring agencies or programs (such as schools)?

4. **How do our system partners perceive our work?**
   [Note: An analysis of this issue should take into account the necessary conflicts that may occur when an advocacy agency holds system partners accountable to serving survivors well.]
   - ❒ Are we conducting surveys of system partners?
   - ❒ Do we have a written account of feedback at multidisciplinary meetings and do we have a process for discussing this feedback in more depth with our system partner?

5. **Are we meeting our program goals?**
   - ❒ Do we have a strategic plan? Do we have measurable objectives developed from the strategic plan?
   - ❒ Are we making (and documenting) progress on action steps from the strategic plan and any other plans, such as our Cultural Competency Plan and our Diversity Plan?

6. **Are we making progress in preparing for the Accreditation process?**
   - ❒ Do we have a clear process for Accreditation preparation, with action steps, and are we documenting progress on those action steps?
   - ❒ What was our initial and final score on our last Accreditation review? Have we made sustainable changes to address any deficiencies?

7. Do we know the needs of the community?

- ❒ Do we review community demographics on a regular basis, and make recommendations based on any changes?
- ❒ Do we collect and analyze information from service providers and community members about unmet service needs that are within our mission statement?
- ❒ Do we document and review any unmet community needs that are identified during the Community Planning Process, whether or not specialized funding dollars are allocated to meet those needs?

8. Does each staff member have clear goals and accountability?

- ❒ Are performance and professional development goals clearly identified during annual performance evaluations?
- ❒ Is there a mechanism for reviewing progress toward those goals on a regular basis (at least quarterly)?
- ❒ Does the employee's supervisor use data such as the InfoNet Staff Services Report to identify activities and concerns?

9. Do we have a clear picture of the services we are providing?

- ❒ Do we use data such as the InfoNet Client Service Summary and the Sexual Assault Program Report on a regular basis?
- ❒ Are we accurately capturing activities such as System Coordination and Community Awareness?
- ❒ Is there any unexplained variation or discrepancy between expected and actual statistics that should be explored?

10. Are there procedures in place to ensure that all staff members have a voice in providing feedback and setting goals?

- ❒ Do we set aside sufficient time for all staff members to look at the "big picture" and discuss goals for the agency?
- ❒ Are staff at all levels provided with sufficient and appropriate data so that they can help monitor program effectiveness and conserve resources?

11. Do the people who are making budgetary decisions have the skills and tools necessary to do so effectively?

- ❒ Is data presented in a clear and informative manner (for example, do budget reports to the Board contain all appropriate information)?
- ❒ Are bookkeeping and accounting systems well organized and easily accessible to individuals who need to use this information?

12. Do we have a clear and systematic way of maintaining and presenting data required by funders?

- ❒ Do we keep the evaluation components of any grants or award clearly in view?
- ❒ Do we document progress on completing grant deliverables in a consistent manner?

13. Do we build evaluation activities into any new services and projects?

- ❒ Do we have an evaluation process for any support groups we run?
- ❒ Do we set clear objectives, identify evaluation questions, and map out a data collection process when we invest resources into a new venture?

Other evaluation needs and activities?

Resources for Effective Evaluation

Resources from Kris Bein

- Several state coalitions have done program evaluation projects, including KASAP, PCAR, and TAASA. Information on coalition program evaluation projects is available at www.resourcesharingproject.org.

- The W. K. Kellogg Foundation *Evaluation Handbook* explains many different types of evaluation for nonprofits in detail.

- If you want to research and study evaluation in more depth, check out *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* by Michael Quinn Patton (2001, Sage) and *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* by Peter Rossi, Mark Lipsey, and Howard Freeman (2003, Sage).

- The Free Management Library (http://managementhelp.org) has a large collection on evaluation for nonprofits.

- The American Evaluation Association (http://www.eval.org) is devoted to evaluation and has resources and referrals (though not all evaluation consultants are listed). Be sure to check out the *Tip-a-Day* at http://www.aea365.org/blog.

- *Mission-based Marketing: Positioning Your Not-for-Profit in an Increasingly Competitive World* by Peter Brinckerhoff (2010, Wiley) explains evaluation's place in overall agency marketing.

- *Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right* by Atul Gawande (2011, Picador) shows how simple checklists can keep us on track.

- For an introduction to online survey tools, take a look at TechSoup's article, *Use Online Surveys to Get the Feedback You Need to Succeed* at http://www.techsoupcanada.ca/learning_centre/articles/use_online_surveys_to_get_feedback

Additional Resources

- ***A Guide to Actionable Measurement***
  Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
  http://www.gatesfoundation.org/learning/Documents/guide-to-actionable-measurement.pdf
  This document was developed to help the Foundation measure its own work, but it provides nice clear explanations of measurement topics and some excellent information about the concepts underlying measurement and evaluation.

- ***Guide to Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation***
  Office of Victims of Crime – OVC's Technical Assistance Guides Series
  https://www.ovcttac.gov/taResources/OVCTAGuides/PerformanceMeasurement/aboutguide.html
  OVC provides a step-by-step guide to help you (in their words):
  1. **Develop an evaluation plan** for collecting data on performance measures
  2. **Establish measureable goals and objectives**
  3. **Design and conduct the program evaluation** to continuously assess your program's progress in achieving its established goals and objectives
  4. **Identify measures** to reflect the impact of your program's activities
  5. **Use the results** to refine and improve services

- ***Integrated Monitoring: A Practical Manual for Organizations That Want to Achieve Results***
  Sonia Herrero, inProgress (Germany)
  http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/demystifying-the-monitoring-process.pdf
  This manual does a great job of clarifying how to identify meaningful outcomes and develop a measurement system. It is easy to read and has cartoon illustrations, which makes the whole topic a bit more accessible.

- ***Outcome Evaluation Strategies for Sexual Assault Service Programs: A Practical Guide***
  Cris M. Sullivan & Suzanne Coats, Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
  http://www.mcadsv.org/shop/publications/Outcome_Evaluations_Guide.pdf
  This well-written guide offers evaluation strategies specific to the sexual assault field and clear advice on how to proceed.

- ***Outcome Measures for Sexual Assault Services in Texas – Final Report***
  University of Texas at Austin
  http://www.taasa.org/publications/Outcome_Measures.pdf
  This report contains logic models, standardized outcomes, and measurement tools for sexual assault agencies that can be customized to meet the needs of a particular program.

- ***Program Evaluation***
  Wikipedia
  http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Program_evaluation
  Sometimes Wikipedia provides a really great overview of a topic. Start with this article for a short course on the basics of program evaluation.

- ***ReCAPP BDI Logic Model Course***
  Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
  http://recapp.etr.org/recapp/documents/logicmodelcourse/index.htm
  This online course "for beginners" on behavior-determinant-intervention logic models allows participants to earn up to 20 continuing education hours. You can also skim through the course to gain a better understanding of how logic models work.

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