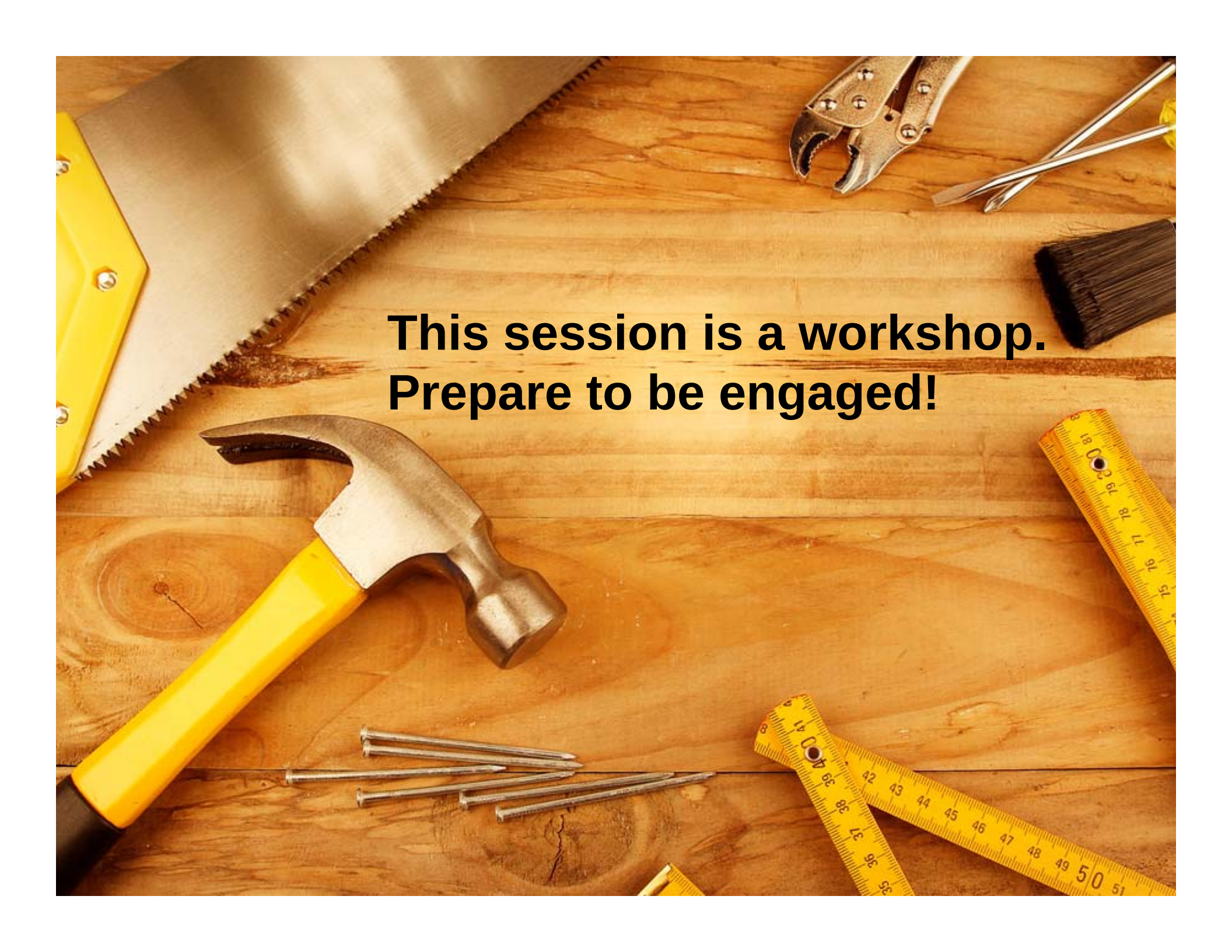


Key Considerations in Implementing a Successful Program Evaluation Strategy in Out-of-School Time

Samantha Sniegowski
Researcher

Objectives

- Understand key concepts and considerations underpinning evaluation design.
- Receive access to useful resources to support program evaluation.
- Discuss and brainstorm next steps in devising/revising your evaluation strategy.

A top-down view of a wooden workbench with various carpentry tools. In the upper left, a hand saw with a yellow handle and a large metal blade is partially visible. Below it, a claw hammer with a yellow handle and a metal head lies diagonally. To the right of the hammer, a pair of pliers and a screwdriver are positioned. Further right, a dark brush with a wooden handle is visible. In the bottom right corner, a yellow measuring tape is extended. Several nails are scattered on the workbench near the hammer. The text "This session is a workshop. Prepare to be engaged!" is centered in the middle of the image.

**This session is a workshop.
Prepare to be engaged!**

Agenda

- Brief Introductions
- Defining Evaluation
- The Purpose of Evaluation
- The Basic Steps of Evaluation
- Closing and Final Thoughts

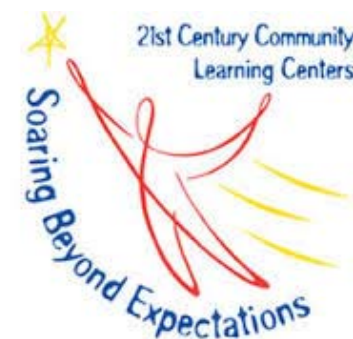
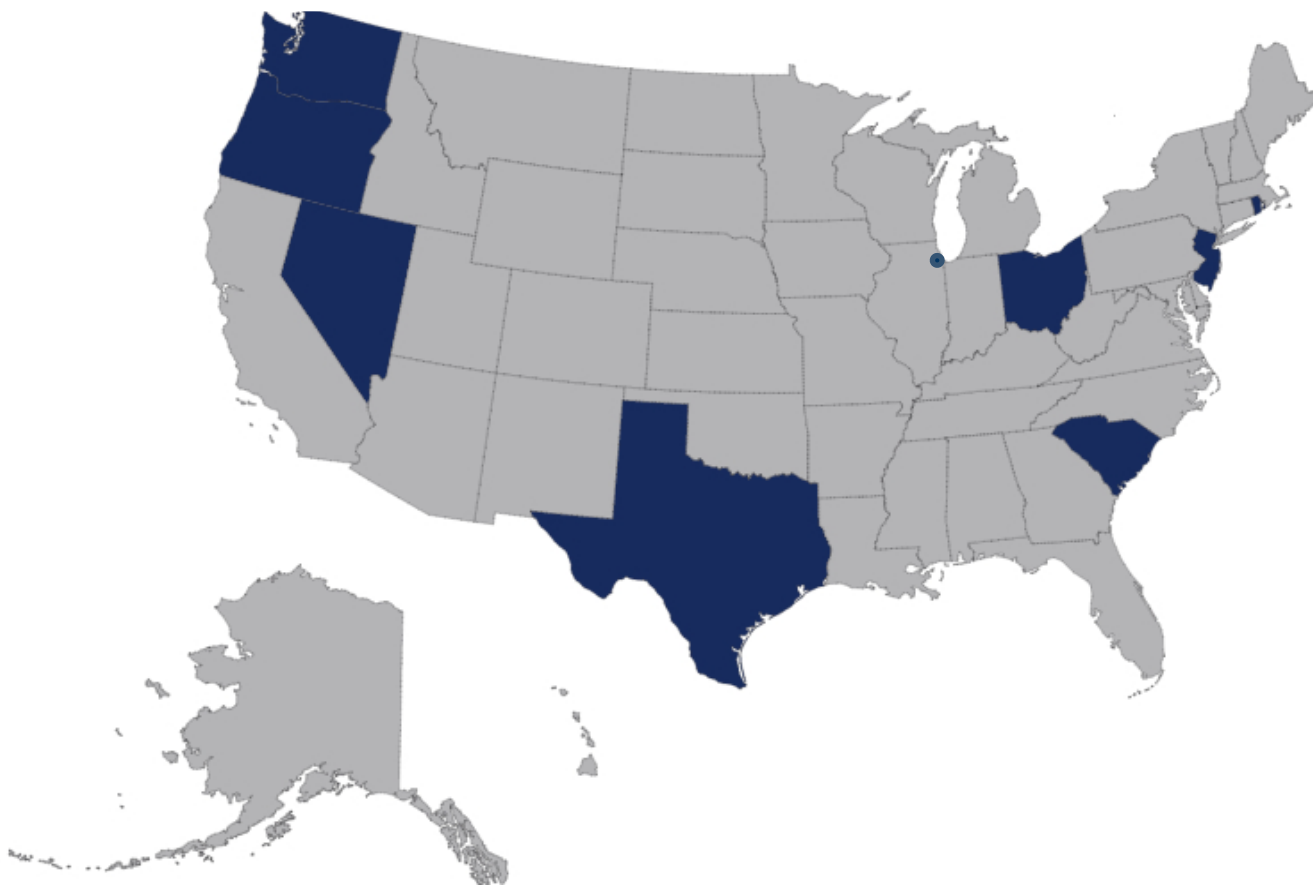
Who is in the room?

- Stand up if....
 - You are an afterschool network or intermediary leader
 - You are a program director or site coordinator
 - You are a direct service staff worker
 - You are a local evaluator
 - Who else?
- Stand up if....
 - You have a new program
 - You have a developing program
 - You have a mature program



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AIR's Recent Work - 21st CCLC Evaluation



- Chicago Public Schools
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- Texas
- Washington

AIR's Recent Work – Other Relevant Projects



Program Evaluation

What is it? What is the purpose?

EVALUATION

Asking and answering important questions you may have about your program and the young people you serve. It is through the process of analyzing information (data) to assess what works and what does not work in achieving program goals and outcomes.



Three Evaluation Pillars

Support
Learning



Monitor &
Refine



Assess
Impact



The Continuous Improvement Process

Develop programs using sound processes

Implement those programs by employing quality practices

Evaluate the implementation of the program

Use the data from the evaluation activities to continually **improve** the program.



Two Evaluation Approaches

Formative



“When the cook tastes the soup”

Summative



“When the customer tastes the soup”

~Paul Black

Formative Versus Summative Evaluation

	Formative	Summative
What do I want to learn?	How I can improve the program or activity while it's in progress	Whether the program or activity was effective and produced the desired result
What type of data do I have?	Data collected during program planning and implementation	Data collected at or after the end of the program or activity
What type of data should I collect?	Data that will let me know whether or how to improve the program before it ends (e.g., data on participant satisfaction and program quality)	Data that will indicate whether youth achieved the desired outcomes (e.g., improved skills or beliefs, grades, test scores, attendance, and engagement)
What type of evaluation does my funder require?	An evaluation that allows for continuous improvement while the program is ongoing	An evaluation that provides evidence that the program was effective in achieving desired program or youth outcomes
Am I conducting an internal evaluation or contracting with an external evaluator?	If you are conducting an internal evaluation, a formative evaluation is likely to be more feasible.	If a summative evaluation is required or desired, it may be best to hire an experienced evaluator to collect and analyze program and outcome data.

Note: Formative and summative evaluations are not mutually exclusive. If your answer falls into both columns, you may be conducting an evaluation with both formative and summative components.

Basic Evaluation Steps

Basic Evaluation Steps

1. Determining the purpose of your evaluation
2. Developing evaluation questions
3. Deciding who will do the evaluation
4. Developing a data collection system
5. Exploring and making sense of data





Determining My Evaluation Purpose



EXERCISE!

- At your tables:
 - Read your evaluation scenario **OR** have a group member describe their own real-life scenario
 - Reflect on your program structure and vision
 - Determine your evaluation purpose
 - Fill out boxes on page 3 of Tool 83

Developing Evaluation Questions



Once you know the purpose, developing evaluation questions are the next important step

- Important Considerations
 - What are your program's goals and objectives?
 - » Think beyond youth outcomes to what your program is accomplishing
 - Develop evaluation questions in a team setting
 - Think about the milestones and benchmarks to be reached along the way
 - Revisit your evaluation purpose
 - Consider funder and stakeholder interests

Program Goals



EXERCISE!

- Write down 2-3 program goals to support your program's vision.

Beyond
THE Bell

Tool 37

Goal Setting Worksheet



In Chapter 2, you learned about the importance of creating a strong program vision and a set of goals related to how you are going to accomplish that vision. Having a clear set of goals can be important for ensuring that everyone associated with your program is working toward the same purpose.

Directions: This worksheet can be used to record both goal areas and specific goals. First, write down the vision statement you created with your stakeholders. Do not attempt to create goals without first knowing your vision. Next, think about the areas in which you want to set goals. Record these in the column on the left. A few examples are provided to get you started. Then, in the middle

column, record your specific goals for each area. Make sure your goals support your vision. Use the third column to indicate a timeline for achieving each goal (e.g., this month, this program year, within two years, etc.). Finally, use the last column to make notes about your goals—for example, you might include specific staff members tasked with overseeing the goal or notes on partnerships or resources that can help you accomplish the goal.

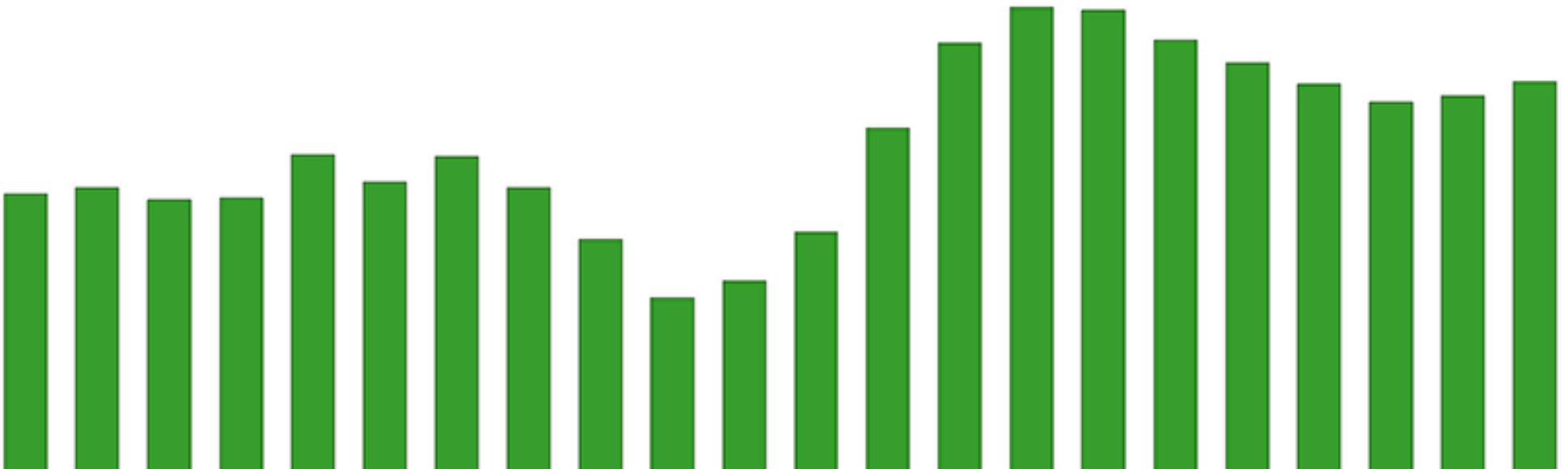
Goal Setting Worksheet – Example

Vision Statement

Goal Areas	Specific Goals	Timeline	Activities/Notes
Programming	Ensure programming integrates youth development principles.	This month	Conduct a review of activity plans to see whether youth development principles are represented.
Fundraising			
SMART Outcomes (See Tool 38)			
Community Participation			

Developing Indicators to Measure Program Goals

Indicators are quantified measurements that can be taken repeatedly over time to track progress. It is important that you identify specific indicators to use for tracking progress in meeting program goals and for answering evaluation questions.



Developing Indicators to Measure Program Goals



EXERCISE!

- In your table groups, select one goal from your worksheet (Tool 37) and copy it to Tool 84.
- Fill in the table on page 3

Who will perform the evaluation?

Internal Evaluation

- Typically more resource friendly
- Involves staff in the process
- Great for formative evaluation
- Program improvement

External Evaluation

- More rigorous methodologies
- Unbiased
- Summative evaluation
- Program impact

Goal of Evaluation

- ☐ Are you conducting a formative or summative evaluation?
- ☐ Is your goal to improve your program or to determine whether it has an impact on the young people it serves?

Staff Capacity

- ☐ Do you have staff members with the expertise or experience to lead an internal evaluation?
- ☐ Do your staff members have time to devote to leading or implementing an internal evaluation?

Budget

- ☐ Do you have funding to support staff members for tasks related to internal evaluation, including developing methodology and collecting or analyzing data?
- ☐ Do you have a sufficient budget to consider an external evaluator?

Funder Requirements

- ☐ What type of evaluation does your funder require, if any?
- ☐ Would your funder permit an internal evaluation, or is an external evaluation required?

Data

- ☐ What data do you already collect? How can you use them to answer your evaluation questions?
- ☐ What are you interested in learning in the future, and can you start collecting data that will help you find this out internally?

Resources

- ☐ What resources for internal and external evaluation do you have access to?
- ☐ Are you familiar with existing self-assessment tools or evaluation guides?

Developing a data collection system

Map data sources to your evaluation questions and indicators



Evaluation Question	Indicator	Data Source
Is our program more accessible and reaching more young people than it was previously?	Young people are attending programs in higher numbers than last year.	 Attendance data from web-based tracking system
What is the quality of our programs? Is our quality improvement system having an impact on program quality?	The quality of programs is higher than it was last year.	 A program observation tool  Youth surveys
Does our program help young people feel more connected to school?	Youth report feeling more connected to school.	 Youth surveys
Are we having an impact on homework completion?	Youth are submitting more accurate and timely homework than in the beginning of the year.	 Interviews or surveys of teachers
What impact are we having on achievement?	Mathematics grades have improved.	 Data from school or district on quarter 1 and quarter 4 math grades  Interviews with math teachers

Participant Tracking

- Consider a web-based electronic management system.



Participant Tracking

- Minimize the number of people responsible for tracking attendance and entering into a database.



Participant Tracking

- Be timely with data entry!



Program Quality

- Use an established and validated observation tool.



Program Quality

- Involve multiple points of view in the process.



Program Quality

- Assess program quality *regularly*.



School Data

- Identify a point of contact within the school district.



School Data

- Establish a data sharing agreement with the school district.



School Data

- Communicate program evaluation needs for data early.



Survey Data

- Consider data collection burden to respondents (and the evaluation!).



Survey Data

- Determine data collection logistics for each survey – what, how, when, why.



Other Data Collection Tips

- Take care of parent consent as a part of program enrollment.
- Collect only data you need to answer your evaluation questions.
- Know your student and parent population.
- Use participant ID numbers.
- Understand data security policies and laws regarding personally identifiable information (PII).



Developing a Data Collection System



EXERCISE!

- Return to Tool 83 and fill out pages 4 and 5

Exploring and making sense of your data

- Determining what data you have
 - What types of changes can you make with this information?
- Who should be involved in reviewing data and evaluation findings?
 - Don't forget to include youth!
- Creating a culture of data analysis and discussion
 - Set time aside to have these discussions.
 - Discuss frequently!
 - Create an action plan!

Creating an Action Plan



EXERCISE!

- Start drafting an action plan on how you will revise/devise your evaluation plan in your program using Tool 91 (step 4 only).

Reflection



References

McElvain, C. K., Moroney, D. A., Devaney, E. D., Singer, J. S., & Newman, J. Z. (2014). *Beyond the Bell: A toolkit for creating effective afterschool and expanded learning programs* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

Samantha Sniegowski
312-690-7371
ssniegowski@air.org

10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606-5500
General Information: 312-288-7600
www.air.org