



New York
21st Century Community Learning Centers
SOARING BEYOND EXPECTATIONS



Statewide Evaluation Networking Meeting –

Evaluators Track Session II: Participatory Evaluation

Tuesday, January 9, 2018; 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

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Session Objectives:

- (1) Why participatory evaluation?** Motivation for facilitating this discussion
- (2) Overview of PE required for 21st CCLC programs**
- (3) Summary of benefits and challenges** as cited in the literature
- (4) Highlights of best practices** for participatory evaluation established in the literature
- (5) Discussion** of local evaluators' perspectives on whether/how it is happening and how it can benefit.
- (6) Suggestions for other topics** for the Network to explore.

Why participatory evaluation?

- Offers significant potential benefits to better support program improvement
- Strongly aligned with the collaborative spirit of CCLCs
- Explicitly required for several program tasks and objectives that effectively define the evaluator as a program partner...

Overview of Required PE Activities

Federal Performance Indicators include “**Community Involvement**” (partnerships for community collaboration in planning, implementing and sustaining programs).

RFP, Evaluation Manual, QSA:

- Evaluation of the needs and resources of the community (including families).
- Evaluators should “include relevant perspectives and interests of the full range of stakeholders.”
- Collaborate with program management on evaluability assessment (logic model, advisory meetings, seeking TA support from RCs, etc.) “Embeds evaluation in the management process.”
- Implementation Evaluation, including assessing fidelity.
- “Internal method[s] for assessment”

Benefits

- Empowers stakeholders as meaningful partners, provide better data
- Customize evaluation to community needs, priorities and cultures.
- Help identify locally relevant evaluation questions, appropriate instruments
- Program stakeholders contribute insights into how and why activities are effective or not.
- Strong collaboration facilitates more relevant, actionable recommendations, stakeholders are more likely to consider

Challenges

- Additional time and effort from stakeholders (vs. “paying for the service”)
- Additional time and effort from evaluator
- Evaluator’s sense of ownership in evaluation
- Differences of opinion on approach to evaluation
- Facilitation skills needed to achieve consensus, select representatives, obtain participation
- Clear communication about purpose of participation
- Agreement on locus of authority – methodological vs. content vs. management of PE process
- Maintaining objectivity

Best Practices in Participatory Evaluation

- Involve ***all stakeholder*** groups. **AEA Guiding Principles:**
 - supporting public welfare
 - “empowering all stakeholders by collecting data from them and engaging them in the evaluation process.”
- Assess level of commitment of stakeholder groups/individuals – not coercion
- Gain buy-in: clarify & consensus on value of the approach
 - What purpose will stakeholder participation serve?
 - Whose participation matters, when, and why?
- Be realistic about what stages of evaluation when participation is feasible

Best Practices in Participatory Evaluation (continued)

- Ensure consensus: Open process for identifying stakeholders to participate in each activity
- Come to consensus to define expectations, roles, and responsibilities ('locus of authority')
- Integrate the external evaluation into the design and planning of program activities

Best Practices in Participatory Evaluation (continued)

- Use ToC/LM to achieve & codify consensus on assumptions about program interventions/outcomes (improves objectivity)
- Agree on process to monitor/document stakeholder participation and completion of tasks
- Provide strategies for consistent, open, and productive communication

Local Evaluators' Perspectives on Participatory Evaluation

- Is it happening?
- What is working?
- What challenges have you encountered? How were they/might they be overcome?
- Are there additional ways that PE can benefit the program?*
- How can you involve program staff?

**Other Concerns or
Topics of Interest for Future
Networking Sessions?**

Closing
Questions & Comments

References

(will be posted on nys21ccllc.org)

Participatory Approaches. (n.d.). Unicef, RMIT, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, Better Evaluation. Retrieved from

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How to Perform Evaluations: Participatory Evaluations. (n.d.). Canadian International Development Agency. Retrieved from

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NYS 21st CCLC Statewide Evaluation



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