Outcome Based Evaluation 101

Outcome Based Evaluation (OBE) is a systematic way to determine if a program has achieved the desired results by measuring results that credibly demonstrate changes in the program's target audience. OBE answers two questions, 1) how has your program made a difference, and 2) how have the lives of your program participants better as a result.

Outcomes are the desired change in attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, or skills of program participants. They must be measureable.

Programs are the activities and services that will produce the outcomes. They are designed to fulfill a community need or solve a community problem by changing program participants' attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, or skills. Programs usually have a definite beginning and end.

Resources are everything you need to implement and evaluate the program.

Data sources are the tools used to show what happened to participants in your program. Data sources may include, but aren't limited to interviews, observations, surveys, photographs, and logs.

Data intervals are the points in time when data is collected.

Outputs are measurable items or products. Outputs provide valuable information, but they do not show changes in program participants' attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, or skills

Outcome indicators are the measurable conditions or behaviors that show an outcome was achieved. They are observable numbers and percentages of the people participating in your program who achieve the desired outcome.

Goal/target is what success looks like in terms of the number and percent of program participants who achieve the desired outcome.

Logic model is a visual way to think about the relationships among the resources necessary to operate the program, the activities planning, and evaluating the anticipated changes in program participants' attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, or skills.

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Sample logic model

Outcomes	Program activities	Resources	Data sources	Data interval	Outputs	Outcome indicators	Goal/target
Children and teens will improve their reading comprehension	Summer reading participants will receive additional incentives for participating in comprehension building activities. The library will implement the following comprehension building activities: Beginning Readers Book Club and Battle of the Books Drill Team	Staff time for planning, implementing, and cleaning up. Incentives for comprehension activity participants. Promotional material. Beginning Readers Book Club: multiple copies of the books, meetings space, discussion questions. Battle of the Books Drill Team: multiple copies of the books, meetings space, lots of questions about each book, timers, bell	Survey and head counts	Once at the last Beginning Read Club meeting and Battle of the Books meeting	10 kids will participate in Beginning Readers Book Club. 15 kids will participate in Battle of the Books Drill Team	Percent and number of kids and teens participating in the comprehension activities who report they understand what they read better now than they did prior to participating in the program. Percent and number of parents with kids and teens who report seeing an improvement in their child's reading comprehension	50% of 25 kids and teens participating in the comprehension activities will report they understand what they read better after participating in the program. 50% of 25 parents with kids and teens will report seeing an improvement in their child's reading comprehension