

## **Outcome Based Evaluation (Katie's Speaking Notes)**

Outcome based evaluation is as much about planning programs as it is evaluating them. In fact, some people actually call it outcome based planning and evaluation.

Outcome based evaluation asks the question "How did my library program change the skills, behaviors, attitudes, or knowledge of the people who participated in it?" and answers it with evidence that shows how many participants changed as a result.

1. Identify a community problem that your program can help improve, such as the summer learning slide.
2. Identify a target audience and how they need to change to eliminate the problem. Youth in K-12<sup>th</sup> grade maintain or improve their reading skills during the summer. This is your outcome.
3. Think about what research or evidence from past experiences show helps your audience make this specific change. What does research show youth need to do to maintain or improve their reading skills? In my past experiences, what have I seen that helped kids maintain or improve their reading skills?
  - Research shows that youth who read 5-10 books over the summer maintain their reading skills.
  - Research shows that youth who have a regular reading habit maintain or improve their reading skills.
  - Research shows that youth who read an average of 20 minutes a day have better vocabulary skills, thus maintain or improve their reading skills over the summer.
  - Youth who associate books, stories, and learning with fun are intrinsically motivated to read.
  - Youth who get to choose what and when they read enjoy reading more.
  - Research indicates the number of books in a child's home is one of the predictors of later academic success.
  - Parents are the first and most important teacher of their children and teens.
  - Youth who see their parents reading are more likely to become readers themselves.
  - Youth develop reading comprehension through conversation about what they reading, especially when conversing with adults.

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4. Plan program activities specifically designed to help children make those changes.
  - The reading component of your program which includes reading logs and prizes is designed to keep kids reading over the summer and lets kids choose when and what they read.
  - Fun programs like Mad Science, scavenger hunts, book release parties, puppet shows, etc. provide opportunities for kids to fall in love with stories, reading and/or learning.
  - Family reading records with family prizes, allowing adults to count time spent reading to their children on the adult summer reading record, family read-aloud kits, and other activities are designed to get parents engaged in literacy activities with their kids.
  
5. Collect and report data or evidence that shows whether or not children are making that change by participating in your program.
  - Reading records given away during sign-up –vs- completed reading records turned in show you the number and percent of summer reading participants who continued to read during the summer.
  - Photos at programs show you whether or not kids had fun and survey results show you the number and percent of summer reading participants who had fun.
  - Family reading records, adult reading records on which the adult can note how much time was spent reading to children, and survey results show you the number and percent of participating parents engaging in literacy with their kids.
  - Survey results show you the number and percent of kids and/or parents who believe reading skills were maintained or improved over the summer.
  
6. Share your results with your city council, library board, and other key stakeholders. In the past, you were able to tell your city council how many kids signed-up, how many kids completed the summer reading program, and how many attended big programs. How might your city council/library board respond if you told them:
  - 96% of parents of participating children reported their child maintained their reading level as a result.
  - 98% parents of participating children reported their child develop a habit of reading on a regular basis.
  - 78% parents of participating children reported their child increased the number of days per week they read.
  - 95% parents of participating children reported the SRP helped their child with their reading skills.
  - 97% participating teen reported they maintained their reading level.
  - 84% participating teens reported they developed a regular reading habit.
  - 72% participating teens reported they increased the number of days per week spent reading.
  - 68% participating teens reported that SRP helped them with their reading skills.

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### Brainstorming:

- Outcome: Youth will increase their reading/listening comprehension and ability to effectively communicate their understanding of and opinions about what they are reading/listening
- Audience: Kids 4-12 year olds
- What changes do I want to see summer reading participants make?
  - More kids talking about books in a thoughtful way.
  - More kids recommending or not recommending books to other kids and explaining their reason.
  - More kids able to tell me what they like and don't like to read about so I can provide them with better readers advisory.
- What do I know from research and past experience that helps kids develop reading comprehension and improve their ability to communicate about what they are reading?
  - Research shows dialogic reading helps young children develop vocabulary and other early literacy skills related to reading comprehension.
  - An article by a researcher outlined the ABCs of improved reading to be:
    - Access to books
    - Books that match a child's interests and reading level
    - Conversations with adults about the books they are reading, specifically conversations that include open-ended questions and allowing time for kids to think before they answer.
  - From experience, I've seen and heard kids talking about books thoughtfully and making recommendations to other kids when a book is popular like Harry Potter and Diary of a Wimpy Kid.
  - From experience, I've seen and heard kids participating in OBOB talking thoughtfully about books.
- What can I do to help the kids participating in my summer reading program make these changes?
  - Going about my daily business, make sure I ask kids open-ended questions about what they're reading instead of my typical "Did you like that book?" and coach other staff to do the same.
  - Use dialogic reading during storytimes.
  - Create book displays with added information so kids can more easily identify whether or not it's a book they'd be interested in read—see the book display email I sent out on kids-lib March 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Learn how to tell whether or not a book is at the right reading level for a good and apply what I learn when helping kids select books.
  - Host a summer reading book club to facilitate conversation with kids about books.
  - Provide parents/caregivers of summer reading participants information about how to talk with their kids about reading to build comprehension.
  - Have a couple book parties to celebrate popular books and include trivia and other activities to encourage critical thinking and thoughtful conversations about books.
- What can I do to find out whether or not summer reading participants changed?
  - End of summer reading survey
  - Observation checklist to tally how many thoughtful conversations about books I hear compared to less thoughtful conversations.
  - During the weekly summer reading activity have a conversation with a couple adults to find out if they think their child's ability to talk more thoughtfully about books is improving this summer as a result of summer reading and write down what I learn later.