

Evaluation Guidebook

Demonstration Partnership Program Projects

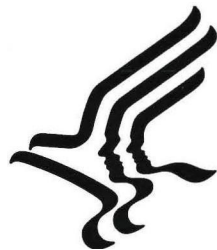


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services

Evaluation Guidebook

Demonstration Partnership Program Projects

Contract Number: HHS-233-91-0003



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I. Introduction

By way of introduction, this section provides a brief overview of the Demonstration Partnership Program, discusses the purpose of this guidebook, and suggests how this guidebook can best be used by organizations applying for DPP grants and grantees.

A. The Demonstration Partnership Program

The Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services administers the Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP).

The Demonstration Partnership Program under Section 408 of the Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1986, as amended, authorizes a demonstration program to operate in conjunction with the Community Services Block Grant program with the unique purpose of developing and implementing new and innovative approaches in dealing with the particularly critical needs of the poor common to a number of communities. All of the demonstration projects focus on developing new ways of promoting individual and family self-sufficiency. The objectives of the program are to:

- Stimulate eligible entities (mainly Community Action Agencies) to develop new approaches to provide for greater self-sufficiency of the poor;
- Test and evaluate the new approaches;
- Disseminate project results and evaluation findings so that the new approaches can be replicated; and
- Strengthen the ability of eligible entities to integrate, coordinate and redirect activities to promote maximum self-sufficiency among the poor.

The DPP represents the first appearance of a formal research and development component in the community services block grant Federal guidelines require that the projects include a strong third-party evaluation component. Thus, it should be possible to make a scientifically valid determination of what works and is worthy of replication and what does not work.

Demonstration Partnership grants are made for projects which are:

- Innovative and can be coordinated with a grantee's ongoing program;
- Involve significant new combinations of resources including partnerships with other community agencies;
- Potentially replicable; and
- Evaluated by a third party, the results of which are disseminated to appropriate entities.

B. The Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of the guide is to assist grant applicants and grantees in understanding the role of the evaluation component in the process of obtaining their grant, in selecting and working with their third party evaluator, and in preparing the required evaluation reports.

Two of the stated purposes of the Demonstration Partnership Program are to test and evaluate new approaches to provide for greater self-sufficiency of the poor, and to disseminate project results and evaluation findings so that new approaches can be replicated. In order for a grantee to meet these requirements, program staff must carefully describe their program; continually document the process of program development; collect data on both program participants and non-participant control group members; analyze these data; draw conclusions from these analyses; and prepare full and summary reports of findings.

C. How to Use This Guide

We have organized this guide into seven sections which will assist the user throughout the grant process, from applying for the grant to preparation of the final report.

Section II, Selecting Your Evaluator, focuses upon the qualifications for which Program Directors should be looking when selecting their third party evaluator, federal requirements for a competitive process when selecting an evaluator, and how to work with the evaluator once he or she has been selected. This section may be used during the grant application process or immediately after award of the grant. It is important to have the third party evaluator on board as soon as possible.

Section III, Developing a Program Framework, will also be useful to grant applicants as it focuses upon developing clear definitions of the program goals and objectives, target population, interventions, and self-sufficiency. It then describes the process of developing hypotheses. Not only does this relate directly to review criteria points for the grant application, it forms the underpinning of the program and ties the program into the evaluation process.

Section IV, Finalizing Your Evaluation Plan, describes the process of developing the evaluation plan. Beginning with the initial evaluation plan, it describes the role of the technical assistance contractor and the steps involved in finalizing the plan. New grantees will find this section useful as it clarifies expectations and details what will be required of program staff and third party evaluators during the first few months of their grant.

Section V, The Evaluation Process, describes the evaluation process and the relationship between the program design, program implementation, and evaluation. It describes the roles and responsibilities of the grantee and those of the third party evaluator *vis a vis* process and outcome data collection and analyses. This section is useful at the beginning of the grant as well as throughout the program implementation period.

Section VI, The Interim Evaluation Report and Analysis, focuses upon the operational period of the program while services are being provided and data is being collected on a regular basis. It deals with interim feedback to the program from the evaluator identifying and resolving data collection problems, and making adjustments to the program based on this feedback.

Section VII, Final Reporting Requirements, describes agency expectations regarding both the final report of findings and the summary report of findings as well as the requirement to make a presentation at an outcome workshop at the end of the grant. This section is not only important at the end of the grant period, it should be read initially to give the grantee an idea of the sort of final documentation that their evaluation plan will be working toward. Further, grantees hoping to get a continuation grant must be able to document their success in terms of their evaluation findings and to justify their request for continued funding.

II Selecting Your Evaluator

Selecting a program evaluator is an important management task. A good evaluator can help your program by providing timely information that can be used to refine the program and to help keep it on track. In addition, a good evaluator will accurately document your program's experiences and effectiveness. This information is very useful in efforts to "sell" your program to constituents and funding agencies.

This chapter provides some practical suggestions on how to select a program evaluator. A checklist of ten indicators of a good evaluator has been developed for your use in the selection process. The Federal requirements for the competitive procurement of a third-party evaluator are outlined. Finally, the roles of the evaluator and program manager are distinguished to help clarify how to work with your evaluator.

A. Checklist for Selecting an Evaluator

There is no fool-proof method for selecting an evaluator who will be a good match for your program. However, there are some simple indicators you can use to identify good candidates. In addition, there are some helpful questions you can ask of job applicants.

Indicators of a Good Evaluator

Speaks your language. A good evaluator will *not* talk to you in esoteric terms; he or she will use a language you can understand. If the candidate uses terms you are not familiar with, ask for an explanation. A person who cannot explain in layman's terms how to design and conduct your program evaluation is probably not a good candidate. If you don't understand the person now, you won't understand him or her later.

Makes an effort to understand your program. An experienced evaluator will make every effort to understand what your program is trying to accomplish. A good candidate should take time to ask you questions about your program, and to get to know your program before he or she begins to suggest evaluation approaches.

Has experience evaluating local programs. Some evaluators have experience in assessing national or regional programs but little or no experience in working with local programs. A good candidate will have evaluated local programs. An ideal candidate will have evaluated programs that are similar to your program.

Has experience with the target population. A good candidate will be knowledgeable of your program's target population. This experience is important because the evaluation design must take into account important characteristics of that population.

Has experience in using statistical methods. A good evaluator must be able to use appropriate statistical methods to determine the effectiveness of your program. Someone who is inexperienced in statistics may use methods that are not sensitive to changes produced by your program, or he or she may use methods that suggest that changes took place that have not. If the evaluator you select cannot perform statistical analyses, it will be important that he or she receive assistance from an experienced statistician.

Has experience in developing data collection forms. Experience in developing data collection forms is very important. Without good data collection forms, the chances of obtaining useful information about your program will diminish. Good candidates will be able to provide you with examples of data collection forms they developed for the evaluation of other programs.

Exhibit 11-1
Evaluator Selection Checklist

Ten Indicators of a Good Evaluator	
<i>CHECKLIST</i>	
✓	Speaks your language
✓	Makes an effort to understand your program
✓	Has experience evaluating local programs
✓	Has experience with the target population
✓	Has experience in using statistical methods
✓	Has developed data collection forms
✓	Willing to test only your program hypotheses
✓	Willing to develop a flexible evaluation design
✓	Willing to spend time at your program
✓	Willing initially to spend time with key staff

Willing to test only your program hypotheses. A good evaluator will not try to test his or her pet hypotheses. The *only* hypotheses that should be tested by the program evaluation are those related to the goals of your program. Your program's evaluation resources are too limited to support someone else's research interests.

Willing to develop a flexible evaluation design. Program evaluation designs should not be rigid. Most social programs change as they become implemented, and the evaluation design needs to change with the program. The evaluation should not control the direction of the program. Rather, the direction of the program should determine the evaluation design.

Willing to spend time at the program. A good program evaluator does not show up at the beginning of the program and then disappear until the program is over. It is important for the evaluator to spend time with your staff to understand how the program is implemented and to observe changes in the program over time. The evaluator will not be able to make the necessary adjustments in the evaluation design if he or she does not spend time at the program.

Willing initially to spend time with key program staff. A good evaluator will initially take time to spend with your key staff to discuss the overall program framework in the context of the evaluation process. Both the evaluator and program staff should be involved in this effort. Evaluators who are willing to participate in these types of brainstorming and clarification sessions are more likely to gain a better understanding of your program and to develop a suitable evaluation approach for your program. Additional information on this technique is presented in the following chapter.

Questions to Ask

The following questions will be helpful when interviewing prospective evaluator applicants. How these questions are answered will help you to complete the above checklist.

- **Do you consider yourself a researcher, evaluator, or statistician?**

Although all three professions use many of the same techniques and skills, there are important differences in the way they go about their work. Evaluators are program focused and will use research and statistical methods to answer questions about your program. The information an evaluator collects and analyzes is likely to be useful to you in program management. Researchers are likely to focus on theoretical issues of interest to them and use your program to help test hypotheses with which they are concerned. They may or may not provide you with a good program evaluation. Statisticians are trained to manipulate data. Their focus is likely to be on data characteristics, not on the usefulness of data for understanding your program. A good candidate for your evaluation should clearly think of himself or herself as an evaluator.

- **What is the difference between evaluation and scientific or basic research?**

Evaluation research is action oriented. Evaluation research aims at collecting and using information to answer questions about your program. It is a way of generating more information about the program than was available before. It asks and answers the questions “What happened,” and “What difference did it make?” Scientific or basic research aims at explaining or predicting events and incorporating findings into a formal body of theory. A person who does not understand the difference between evaluation and basic research is probably not a good candidate.

- **What is the difference between process evaluation and outcome evaluation?**

Both types of evaluation are important for your program. Process evaluation will document how your program is implemented, who gets which services and how much they receive, the factors that contribute to your program’s success, the barriers you encounter, resources necessary for program operations, how program partnerships and linkages, function, etc. Outcome evaluation will measure how effective your program is in achieving the intended program goals. A person who cannot tell you the difference between these two types of evaluation is not a good candidate.

- **What is your motivation for evaluating our program?**

The person should indicate a professional interest in conducting local program evaluations. Be careful with candidates who come to your program with hypotheses of personal interest that they want to add to the evaluation design that have little or nothing to do with your program. Likewise, individuals who plan to evaluate your program as part of a thesis or dissertation are not good candidates. These individuals are obligated to follow the directions of a university committee, which may impose research requirements that are not appropriate for your program.

- **Have you ever developed data collection forms for a local program evaluation?**

Experienced evaluators will have developed data collection forms for other program evaluations they have conducted. Ask to see forms they have developed. Do the forms look as if they would be easy to fill out? Are they neat? Do the forms seem to make sense to you?

- **Are you willing to make adjustments in the evaluation design after the program is fully implemented?**

Most social programs are not implemented as planned. Although your evaluation plan should be developed at the same time the program is being planned, the evaluation plan should be flexible. A good evaluator will understand the need to modify the evaluation plan after the program is fully implemented. Be careful of evaluators who insist that a good evaluation plan should not change. Good research designs usually do not change, but good evaluation plans must be flexible.

- **How much experience do you have in using statistical methods?**

A good program evaluator should be comfortable with quantitative data and have knowledge of a wide range of statistical methods. In addition to having experience with statistics, a good evaluator will be able to explain statistical concepts to you so that you can understand them. It is not necessary for a program evaluator to be a statistician, or even to have taken course work in advanced statistics. More important are the person's resources for getting help with statistical issues that may develop. Does the person indicate where he or she would turn to get help from a statistician?

- **Who will write the evaluation report(s)?**

Your evaluator should be the person who writes the program's evaluation report(s). Be careful of evaluators who plan to assign the writing to a colleague or student with whom they work. Ask for samples of their report writing. Do not accept copies of journal articles. These are not good writing examples because journal articles are often written by more than one person. In addition, they are professionally edited. Ask to see copies of other evaluation reports they have written. Are the writing samples clearly written? Can you understand what is written? Is the grammar and spelling correct? Are the documents presentable?

- **Are you willing to produce periodic reports on your findings?**

Periodic reports on evaluation findings are often very helpful and necessary to program management in that they give you feedback on how well the program is doing. These reports are not difficult to produce. Good evaluators will be willing to glean their findings and report them to you on a semi-annual basis.

B. The Competitive Process

The Office of Community Services (OCS) encourages maximum free and open competition for all services procured with Federal grant funds. You can find general guidance on grantee recipient procurement standards in OMB Circulars A-102 (grants to State and local governments) and A-110 (grants to institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations). For grantee costs to be found allowable, OCS requires that grant recipients procure services under transactions conducted in a manner providing, to the maximum extent practical, for open and free competition. The services of your third-party evaluator are to be procured in a competitive manner that meets this requirement.

Some important ways you can foster maximum competition include the following:

- Provide clear and accurate descriptions of the technical requirements for the materials, services, and products to be procured by the evaluator;
- Avoid restrictive specifications or evaluation criteria that could limit competition;
- Solicit offers from as many responsible, qualified sources as possible;

- Advertise the contract opportunity as widely as feasible and allow adequate time for presentation of offers;
- Perform price and cost analysis on offers received to determine reasonableness, allowability, and allocability of proposed costs.

While the contract for a third-party evaluator may be competitively bid after the receipt of a grant award, you can choose to conduct an open competition prior to submitting your grant application. If you decide to conduct a competition prior to submitting an application, the cost of the competition is *not* chargeable to a grant, should one be awarded.

If the competition process results in only one qualified bidder, or if there is clear evidence that only one qualified bidder exists in your service area, a sole source procurement may be justified. You should be cautioned that OCS approval is required for sole source procurements expected to exceed \$5,000.

Should you believe that you have a legitimate sole source procurement that requires prior Federal approval, the OCS review of a sole source request within an application will be based solely upon the material submitted in your original application. No further material will be requested or considered. If the material is found adequate, the sole source approval will be noted on the grant award documents.

Any grant recipient without a third-party evaluator competitively selected prior to application, or without specific Federal approval for a sole source contract, is expected to follow competitive procurement procedures to expeditiously secure an evaluator.

C. Working With Your Evaluator

A successful working relationship with your evaluator is important for both your program and the evaluation. Such a relationship will not only allow the evaluator to better understand your program, it will also guide him or her in providing you with more helpful information about your program. Good working relationships are fostered by a clear understanding of roles.

The Evaluator's Role

Although the evaluator is usually not someone who is a member of your program staff, he or she should be considered as an important member of your program team. As a team member, the evaluator should be actively involved with the program.

Attend program meetings. One of the best ways for the evaluator to get to understand your program is for him or her periodically to attend staff and other program meetings. This involvement will allow the evaluator to stay current with changes in the program. The interaction will also encourage communication on evaluation activity issues, such as data collection, and give the evaluator the opportunity to provide your staff with feedback on his or her observations.

Help design the evaluation. The evaluator has a major responsibility in the design of the evaluation. However, this activity should not be left entirely to the evaluator. Program management and staff need to be actively involved in developing the evaluation plan. The evaluator should offer optional approaches to the evaluation and explain the strengths and limitations of each approach. In the end, evaluation design decisions should be mutual actions on the part of program management and the evaluator. As your program reaches full implementation, it is often necessary to revise the evaluation plan to ensure it will assess your actual program.

Design the data collection forms. In collaboration with you and your staff, the evaluator is responsible for the design and development of the data collection forms. The forms must collect necessary and sufficient data for the evaluation, but they also need to be user friendly for your staff.

Help design the data collection plan. Your evaluator should work with you to help develop a clear data collection plan that your staff will be able to follow. This plan must ensure that complete and accurate evaluation data will be collected and turned over to the evaluator.

Manage the database. This is a responsibility that is sometimes negotiated. Usually, the data are collected by program staff and given to the evaluator to be entered into a database, which is managed by the evaluator.

Analyze the data. A data analysis plan should be part of the evaluation design. The evaluator is responsible for analyzing the data according to this agreed upon plan. The evaluator's statistical skills are applied during this task. It is the evaluator's obligation to seek and obtain help from a statistician if he or she does not have the necessary skills to analyze the data appropriately.

Write the evaluation reports. Although the evaluator is the person who will write the evaluation reports, this activity should not occur in a vacuum. The evaluator should negotiate the outline of the reports with you. Often evaluation reports are written after the full evaluation is completed. However, a good evaluator will be willing to provide you with interim reports that can give you feedback on your program. These interim reports usually focus on process findings that will help you gain an understanding of how well the program is being implemented. With sufficient time, these reports can also include preliminary outcome findings that will indicate the effectiveness of the program. OCS requires an interim (12-month) evaluation report, a final evaluation report, and a summary evaluation report.

The Program Manager's Role

Program managers have important responsibilities related to their program's evaluation. The program manager is usually the point of contact for the third-party evaluator and must assist the evaluator in a number of ways.

Manage the evaluation contract. Ultimately, it is the manager's responsibility to ensure that the evaluation activities are carried out according to the contract. If the evaluator cannot meet the terms of the contract, the program manager must take appropriate actions.

Help design the evaluation. Without the active involvement of the program manager in the development of the evaluation design, there is a good chance the evaluation will not meet the needs of the program. It is often helpful to include other key program staff in the development of, and any revisions to, the evaluation design.

Supervise the data collection. In most cases, the program staff will collect the data for both the process and outcome evaluations. It is very important to have a clear data collection plan in which staff responsibilities are specified. The program manager is responsible for the chain of data collection activities, as well as the quality and completeness of the data.

Provide feedback on evaluation activities. Your feedback to the evaluator is extremely important. Also, the program manager should make sure that program staff provide the evaluator feedback on evaluation issues, especially the design and use of all data collection forms. The evaluator needs to know if you and your staff understand the evaluation design plan, if the data collection forms are working, if your staff is having any problems collecting evaluation data, what kinds of evaluation information you find helpful, how you plan to use the evaluation reports, and any other issues related to the evaluation. The more feedback you provide the evaluator, the more useful the evaluation will be for program management.

III. Developing a Program Framework

Your program framework is a clear and detailed description of the services that your program will offer and the characteristics of the population that will receive the services. It should answer the questions who? what? where? when? and how?. This section begins with developing a program framework. It then describes the link between the program framework and the evaluation plan, and concludes with a discussion of how to develop hypotheses.

A. Needs Assessment

The first step program staff will take to help shape the new program is a needs assessment. Ideally, a needs assessment occurs before the program is fully designed and implemented. Depending upon the information you have collected as part of the needs assessment process, data can serve as “baseline” information for subsequent program assessments.

A needs assessment encompasses two kinds of information: data on the problems or needs of the particular population your program will serve and data on resources. The term “resources” in this instance includes your organizational resources, that is, what the Community Action Agency (CAA) offers in the way of services or that can be added to the agency, and the resources available (or not available) external to the agency within the community.

Methods that can be used to conduct a needs assessment include conducting key informant surveys, community surveys, completing a demographic analysis, reviewing key indicators, and reviewing programmatic data. You may use one or several of these methods in preparing your needs assessment.

Below, a brief description of the needs assessment process is presented as it might be conducted at the CAA, client, and community level.

1. **Community Action Agency/Organizational Level Assessment.** At this level of assessment, you will conduct a brief review of what services are currently provided by the agency, who is served, and what the organizational relationships are within the agency and how service delivery is structured. For example, if you are interested in developing a micro-business development project, you would need to list those services offered by the agency that are required by the target population, review the demographic characteristics of who the agency serves to determine how those characteristics match up with this type of program, and review current staffing levels, skills, and client flow through the agency to determine where the program should be placed organizationally. It is also important to consider the compatibility between the proposed program and the mission of your agency. The purpose of the assessment at the organizational level is to determine if the proposed program is something that the CAA can and should be involved in. To illustrate, if the business development program were to target women, the client group served by the agency would need to be predominantly women, or, you will need to conduct outreach to bring in new clients for the program. If one division in the agency primarily serves women, the microbusiness project may be better suited organizationally to this division. On the other hand, if the agency has a division involved in economic development activities, the project may be better placed in this division. There is no right or wrong answer; the needs assessment pulls together many data sources and kinds of information to help you make key project decisions.

2. **Target population.** Although you may have a pretty good sense of the characteristics of the group you plan to target, it is important to clearly state their needs and characteristics. The first place to start in identifying your project's target population is with current agency files and staff. Division directors, project directors, and others should be able to describe the individuals the agency currently serves. Past grant applications may have information about current clients. In addition, other community agencies serving the same or similar clients may also have information. Obtaining the information you need about your potential client group may require the use of surveys, informal interviews, focus groups, or other methods.

Other than basic demographic characteristics, such as age, race, sex, educational level, number of children or family size, you may also find it helpful to determine the primary problems the target population is facing. For example, your potential client group may feel their biggest problem is stable housing; yet your original thinking about services may not have included housing assistance or the housing authority as a partner. Mental health, medical, alcohol, drug and criminal problems among potential clients also can seriously effect program design.

3. **Services.** A needs assessment of services tries to determine the services that are available in the community as well as those that are needed but not yet in place. Techniques used to complete this phase of your assessment include surveys, key informant surveys, focus groups, planning committees, and use of other local needs assessment information. For example, if your program plans to target women, it may be important to include a program component that offers a support group for women who have experienced family violence. If such a group is already available through your CAA or another agency, you will need to incorporate the sponsoring agency into your program design. In contrast, if there are no existing support groups, you may need to sponsor one yourself or link with another agency to begin one.

The services component of the needs assessment helps to identify the resources that are available to participating clients and those that may be needed but do not currently exist in the community.

B. Defining Program Goals and Objectives

While the formulation of goals and objectives may appear to be an onerous task, goals and objectives are simply a clarification of the client changes, client progress, and differences that the program hopes to achieve. A project may have multiple goals; however, not all goals are equally important nor will they all be included as part of the evaluation process. Many evaluators suggest that goals and objectives should be clear, specific, and measurable. While these are good guides for developing goals, some evaluators believe it is possible to develop appropriate program goals without prolonged debate over "measurement" issues. A brief description of what constitutes goals and objectives follows below.

1. **Goals.** Goals should be clearly stated; they encompass both program operations and program outcomes. Each goal should contain only one idea and should be readily understood by all staff and the general public. Rather than developing goals for all aspects of your program, goals should focus on only the important program elements. Goals do not include information on how they will be attained, nor do they contain measurement criteria. They are brief and to the point. To illustrate, a

program goal was developed following the above criteria. The goal is to offer 200 women non-traditional career employment training or entrepreneurial training and assistance. Conciseness is important. A vague or too broad a goal will say nothing; goals need to convey the desired program state (or absence of it).

2. **Objectives.** Objectives are more narrow and specific than goals and generally state what will be different or changed as a result of program activities. In contrast, goals relate more to broader program concepts while objectives focus on specific program components. The only distinction between the two is the relative specificity of each. Using our above goal example, a possible objective under this goal is to recruit low-income women for the program who receive services from the local county health department clinics. Other objectives may also be developed for this goal.

C. Defining the Target Population

Based on your needs assessment, it should be relatively easy to define your target population. Specifying key demographic characteristics, needed services, projected barriers to service, and other factors will allow you to anticipate possible project stumbling blocks, the need for additional resources, and areas where clients may resist participation. Of course, one rarely knows everything about the population one serves; there are unanticipated problems and issues that will need to be resolved as the program evolves. By conducting your needs assessment, however, you will have a better sense of what your intended target population's service needs are and what services they are most likely to use.

D. Defining your Interventions

In most instances, the “services” or program elements you plan to offer to the individuals your DPP project will serve are your interventions. The important distinction between services and interventions, however, is that interventions—from an evaluation perspective—should be clearly stated and defined. For example, your program may offer housing assistance. From you and your staff's perspective, the meaning is quite clear. Outside your agency and community, however, it may have very different meanings. Stating what housing assistance is and who provides it, and at what frequency it is offered defines your intervention. To illustrate, let's assume that housing assistance includes four program elements. Clients may receive all or none of the elements, but your project is prepared to offer all four. These elements include the following:

- Comprehensive housing assessment and referral to a housing partner
- Provision of a Section 8 certificate or voucher
- Assistance locating housing (may or may not include housing that accepts a certificate/voucher)
- Counseling regarding homeownership, tenant responsibilities, etc.

Now that the elements are defined, it will be important to specify who provides these services and at what frequency. A table may help you define the housing assistance intervention. Please see the sample table below.

Exhibit 111-1 Sample Intervention Table

Program Element	Who Provides Element	Frequency of Provision
Comprehensive assessment and referral	Community Services Agency Intake staff	At entry
	Case managers	Initial assessment; as needed
Section 8 Certificate or voucher	Housing Authority staff	Once
Assistance locating housing	Community Service case managers	As needed
	Housing Authority staff	As needed
Counseling	Community Service case managers	Initially, and then as needed
	Housing Authority Staff	Initially, and then as needed

In defining your interventions, you are specifying important information needed for the evaluation. In addition, you will have useful information that can be used to train staff, develop a policy and procedures manual, develop brochures, etc.

E. Defining Self-Sufficiency

The notice of funds and request for application under the Demonstration Partnership Program provides a general definition of self-sufficiency. This definition is: a condition where an individual or family does not need and is not eligible for public assistance. The grant announcement also requires that programs develop a “measurable definition of self-sufficiency.” Project definitions must be consistent with the broad OCS definition of self-sufficiency and permit the measurement of incremental movement of individuals and families from dependency toward self-sufficiency. For example, some populations served by DPP projects experience multiple barriers that preclude immediate or short-term resolution. Therefore, project staff have conceived of the notion of self-sufficiency as a continuum of steps toward eventual self-sufficiency. A stepwise progression from dependency to self-sufficiency may include: receiving education or training; acquiring basic job and job search skills along with work experience; and receiving key support services, such as child care, so that the individual may accept employment. Depending on the population targeted through the DPP, it may be more appropriate to suggest that increased self-sufficiency at the end of the project period is completion of education/training, acquired job and job search skills, completed some work experience, support services are in place, and obtained employment. In other instances, participants may be farther along the continuum to where self-sufficiency could realistically be the absence of public assistance.

Defining self-sufficiency for your project requires an understanding of your target population's current level of functioning, their experience in the world of work, and the services you and your partners plan to provide. It also requires some assessment by your agency and the partners as to what a realistic time period is for this population to become independent of support services and income transfer payments. Your definition should be developed in this context. There are no right or wrong definitions. Much like your goal/objective development process, it is important to be clear and precise as to what is meant by self-sufficiency. As your evaluator will tell you, it is also important that your self-sufficiency definition be "measurable" in a quantitative or qualitative fashion.

F. Your Expectations for Change

Your expectations for change are primarily derived from who it is you plan to serve, what services you plan to provide, and what you think the likely outcome will be. For some populations, such as homeless families, a simple goal of stabilizing housing is a realistic expectation. For other groups, completing employment training and 6 months of employment may be more appropriate.

It is important to specify change expectations—they drive the hypothesis you will test as part of the outcome evaluation.

G. The Link Between Your Program Framework and the Evaluation Process

It is important that you and key program staff spend time discussing your project with the evaluator. A round table discussion to work through program and evaluation design and data collection issues is very important. Previous DPP grantees have stated such an approach was quite useful. As you work with your evaluator, several tools will help you take basic program information and adapt it to an evaluation design.

One tool that is useful in diagramming the project is a logic model. Sample forms of a logic model are attached as Appendix A. They identify project assumptions, activities, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and final goals. By listing these items, it is also possible to visualize the relationships—both vertical and horizontal—of the various elements to each other. As you and your evaluator work together on the logic model, the most important program aspects will surface, unrelated services to the eventual outcome may surface, and a framework for a logical sequence of program events will be established. DPP grantees who have used this logic model process with their evaluators have found it very useful in establishing a common ground for evaluation and program discussions.

A second tool that will help link the program with the evaluation is providing a forum for a frank and open discussion about what information needs each group (i.e., program staff and the evaluation team) sees as important or useful. Many an evaluation has started down the wrong track because program staff and evaluators were not in agreement about what was most important to study. Because the DPP requires both outcome and process evaluations, you have a wonderful opportunity to learn about the program overall and learn if it works. Both are important in the DPP evaluation framework. A discussion with the evaluator about the issues that program staff believe are key is crucial.

These tools are presented as sample tools. You may find them useful. Other approaches can also be used. Whatever your method or approach, you and your evaluator should understand each other's views.

Once these initial steps have been completed, project and evaluation staff can jointly develop the study questions and complete a design matrix.

H. The Study Questions and Study Design Matrix

The study questions you develop will be used to guide the overall evaluation process. Questions should be of both a *process* and *outcome* nature. Much like the goal and objective setting process, you will be developing broad, general questions first, and then developing more specific questions within the context of the broader questions. You will most likely have three or four broad study questions, and multiple sub-questions. For example, if you have the broad study question of “was the project implemented as planned?”, you would have sub-questions about the partnerships you have established for the process evaluation. These sub-questions may be similar to the following:

- Did all original partners participate throughout the duration of the project?
- Were new partnership linkages forged?
- What were the difficulties in executing the partnerships as originally planned?

Once you've specified your study questions, they can be placed in the context of a study design matrix, where the questions are linked to the data collected (data elements), the sources of data, and data collection approach. To illustrate, Exhibit III-2 uses the above hypothetical partnership study questions to determine data elements, suggests data collection approaches, and sources of data.

Exhibit 111-2 Study Design Matrix

Study Question	Data Elements	Sources of Data	Data Collection Approach
Did all original partners participate throughout the duration of the project?	Number of panners Name of partners Duration of partnerships	Project files Project staff Project steering committee	Review of project files Staff interviews Partner interviews Observation of steering committee meeting
Were new partnership linkages forged?	Number of partners planned and actual Partners at project start up and end date	Project files Project staff Project steering committee	Review of project files Staff interviews Partner interviews Observation of steering committee meeting minutes
What were the difficulties in executing the partnerships as originally planned?	Identification of obstacles or problem areas	Project steering committee meetings Project/partner staff Project files	Review of project files Staff interviews Partner interviews

I. Developing Hypotheses

As a final step to planning your DPP project, you will develop a hypothesis or research statement for testing. Hypotheses help researchers infer things about a population or population sample. To test a hypothesis, two or more groups are compared to determine if a difference exists between them. The factor that researchers or evaluators believe have contributed to the difference is included as part of the hypothesis.

Hypotheses may be stated in the null, meaning no difference is expected between groups, or in the positive wherein a difference is expected between your program group and the comparison group who did not receive your program services. As you work with your evaluator, you may wish to explore whether or not you use a null or an alternative positive hypothesis.

The hypothesis predicts client outcomes and the change or changes that will result from participating in your demonstration program. While the overall research design will determine whether or not actual changes can be attributed solely to your project interventions, it is important to clearly state what changes are expected. For example, the hypothesis “DPP program participants who receive comprehensive case management coupled with job training and support services will have a higher average number of hours worked per week at the 6-month interval after completing job training than matched JTPA participants who do not receive comprehensive case management and support services” clearly states what is expected to change, the change agent (intervention[s]), when, and compared to whom.

IV Finalizing Your Evaluation Plan

One of the criteria for review and assessment of the grant application is the Third Party Evaluation—the focus of which is the evaluation plan. The program announcement lists a number of elements which must be included in the evaluation plan in order to maximize the review score. These are also important and necessary in order to properly evaluate the program should a grant be awarded. This section discusses the requirements for the initial evaluation plan, the technical assistance you will receive, and the process of finalizing the evaluation plan.

A. The Initial Plan

An evaluation plan is required in the grant application. Generally, this plan should include the following elements:

1. A working definition of “self-sufficiency” that permits measurement of incremental movement from dependency toward self-sufficiency.
2. A process evaluation that assesses:
 - partnerships
 - staffing
 - policies and procedures
 - client outreach
 - services
 -
 - process for provision of services
 - applicant and community linkages
 - other community resources
 - changes from the original plan
 - critical elements of program implementation
 - implementation summary
3. An outcome evaluation that clearly specifies:
 - hypothesis
 - design
 - sample size
 - subject selection
 - interventions
 - outcomes
 - measurement instruments
 - number and timing of measurements
 - data collection procedures
 - statistical procedures

4. An adequate sample size in both participant and comparison groups and rationale for their selection.

The OCS understands that the program personnel applying for DPP grants are not evaluators, researchers, or statisticians. We began this guide with the section on Selecting Your Evaluator because it would be to your advantage to identify and select an evaluator during the grant preparation period and involve the evaluator in the preparation of the initial evaluation plan for the grant application. However, if this is not possible, the post award activities have built-in technical assistance, review and revision stages that will result in a final evaluation plan that reflects the program's goals, objectives, interventions, target population, and operationalized definition of self-sufficiency.

B. The Role of the Technical Assistance Contractor

The DPP has under contract a management consulting firm whose role it is to:

- Provide technical assistance to grantees on the development of their evaluation designs, and
- Assist in the dissemination of project results.

In performing the technical assistance function, the contractor reviews the grant applications and initial evaluation plans, develops project summaries, and performs critical analyses of the evaluation plans. Further, they convey these comments to the grantees and assist them through correspondences, teleconferences, and an evaluation workshop to improve their initial evaluation plans.

In assisting OCS to disseminate project results, the technical assistance contractor is responsible for producing a series of fact sheets on program highlights, assisting OCS and the grantees with a draft and final version of the monograph *Summary of Final Evaluation Findings from FY -- Demonstration Partnership Program Projects*, assisting with the annual outcome workshop, and cluster learning conferences.

C. Post Award Activities

Beginning in the first quarter of each grant cycle, the technical assistance contractor conducts a review of the grant applications and initial evaluation plans of the new DPP grantees. This review results in a completed OCS grant application review form that serves to summarize the grant for the DPP, and a series of comments and questions to be raised with the grantees. A copy of this review form appears as Appendix B to this guide.

Within the first month, the comments and questions are sent to the grantees and along with a suggested time for a teleconference, which includes the grant program director, the third-party evaluator, the contractor's evaluation specialist who reviewed the grant, and the OCS/DPP grant monitor.

Teleconferences are held during the last week of that month. They typically last 1 to 2 hours and allow the parties to discuss the technical assistance contractor's questions and comments. Following the teleconference, the technical assistance contractor summarizes the discussions and the agreements reached and sends this summary to the grantee. During the first three weeks of the second month, the grantees revise their initial evaluation plan based upon the questions and comments and discussions in the teleconference.

The grantees bring this revised evaluation plan to an evaluation workshop that is held during the last week of that month in Washington, DC. At a minimum, the Program Director and the third party evaluator are required to attend this workshop, which lasts 2 - 2½ days. The purpose of the evaluation workshop is to review the issues raised by this guidebook, to have work groups on the use of logic models and to allow individual consultations with grantees on their revised evaluation plan.

Following the workshop the grantees have two weeks to make any final adjustments to their plans as a result of the evaluation workshop consultations and to submit their final evaluation plan. The final evaluation plans are reviewed by the technical assistance contractor who prepares final recommendations for OCS/DPP. The OCS/DPP then issues letters to the grantees permitting them to proceed with their final evaluation plans. In some cases, OCS has required grantees to make additional modifications to their evaluation plans before proceeding.

V. The Evaluation Process

In this section the evaluation process is explored. Evaluation research is often thought of as occurring outside of, or on top of programs. In this guide, evaluation research is advanced as an integral pan of any program that must depend for its resources on a demonstration of effectiveness, implied or explicit. Three forms of evaluation research are introduced. They are:

- Formative evaluation,
- Process evaluation, and
- Outcome evaluation.

Each of these evaluation models carries with it a different set of requirements for resources and analytical/statistical understanding. The first two approaches are the most effective for assessing program implementation and the quality of service delivery. Outcome evaluations measure the impact of the program on the client and attempt to answer the question of whether the program makes a difference. While formative evaluations are not required by OCS, the concept is introduced because a number of agencies have carried them out as a part of their effort to monitor the implementation process.

A. The Relationship Between Program Design, Program Implementation, and Evaluation

Good evaluation research can enhance program design and implementation. However, good evaluation research is not easy. It requires careful planning and execution, attention to detail, and considerable effort. The reward is that it enriches the program planner's understanding of what needs to be done and points the way to adjustments that will increase program effectiveness.

It also requires organizational commitment. You will find that in order to carry out a successful program evaluation, you will have to create a capacity to collect and aggregate data. Consistency and precision in the collection of data is critical. The design and implementation of complex social service programs is not an easy task. The ability to carry out formative and process evaluations can assist in assuring quality and cost effective service delivery programs.

Finally, many valuable program concepts fail not because of theoretical flaws, but because practical issues and problems are not identified until too late. Program designers may have assumed too much or too little education on the part of the target client population. Implementation issues may arise that were not thought of during the project planning process. It may be found that specially trained case and social workers are needed to deal with mental health issues. In other words, it is not unusual for adjustments to be made in the way that services are delivered during the early stages of project implementation.

A solid, internal capacity to carry out evaluation research enhances the likelihood that the need for adjustments will be discovered early in the implementation process. As such, evaluation research capabilities are a powerful tool in the hands of program managers to assure effectiveness and minimum diversion of resources.

Positive results from a well designed evaluation can also bolster arguments for the continuation of funding. During a time of tight budgets, this is not a trivial point. However, there is a cost to building an internal evaluation capacity. Staff must be trained and they must commit a minimal amount of time to the process. Creating an internal evaluation capacity has the potential for supporting future program activities. In building an evaluation capacity, the project will have to balance the costs against the benefits. You will have to engage the project staff and convince them that evaluation is consistent with their mission. Their primary goal, after all, is to deliver services, not to evaluate them. Evaluation research must never become the goal in-and-of itself. It must be seen as a tool that supports the delivery of more and better services to the client.

B. Formative Evaluation

A formative evaluation can be one of the most useful program tools that a planner has. It is also the easiest of the evaluation tools to implement. A well designed formative evaluation acts like a feed-back loop sending critical data back to program personnel about the effectiveness of the program in reaching intended objectives. Formative evaluation studies also force clear planning.

It is quite difficult to design and implement a formative evaluation unless the program objectives have been clearly spelled out, and each one of the steps leading to an objective have been mapped out. As you engage in the evaluation process you will find that it will push you to clarify and strengthen program goals and objects. For example, a project may have as an objective to recruit and place 100 eligible persons in a job training program. The steps leading to recruitment and placement will need to be identified and listed. They may involve the identification of a list of potential clients and the establishment of an outreach strategy. Intake and assessment interviews will have to be planned and selection criteria put into place. An estimate of the ratio of actual to potential recruits will have to be made and a guess concerning the time that it will take to complete the recruitment process will also have to be made.

As the recruitment process is mapped out, points will be identified where snap-shots can be taken that will allow project planners to determine how the process is progressing. For example, if only one out of ten potential candidates are expected to become actual recruits, at least 1,000 individuals will need to be on the list of potential clients. A good formative question would be: Has a pool of 1,000 potential candidates been identified? If fewer individuals exist than expected, either the eligibility criteria will need to be changed to expand the list, or the conversion ratio will need to be improved.

Another issue that often comes up is the gap between expectations and assumptions about the client and the reality when he or she walks through the door. Clients may have greater alcohol and drug involvement than expected; may be in greater need of health care (mental or physical) than suspected; may be less or better educated than originally thought; or, may have greater levels of criminal involvement than assumed. A number of DPP programs have been surprised by the complex patterns of drug abuse, violence and criminal involvement that exist among clients. Similarly, many individuals may bring far stronger education and/or job skills than planned for by the program. Training individuals may not be the problem; obtaining access to health care and job opportunities may be the issue.

A formative evaluation plan that is sensitive to the need to capture and turn around data on client characteristics rapidly and frequently may be called for under the above circumstances. Such an evaluation will identify biases and incorrect assumptions that were incorporated into the initial program design and permit early adjustments. Of course the question is how do you get to this formative evaluation plan?

As a first step, you should develop a project GANTT, or Time and Task Chart. GANTT charts list the key project tasks and map out the expected start and end point for each one. Each task start and end date represents a potentially useful measurement point. Questions that can be asked at these points include:

- Did the task start on time?
- Was the task ended on time?
- If a task neither started or ended on time, why not?
- What barriers to task start-up and completion were encountered?
- Were resources adequate to the task?
- Were the right types of resources available?

You will find the answers to these questions valuable when you work on your process evaluation.

Next you will want to expand on the GANTT chart and review the linkages between tasks. The development of PERT or Critical Path charts is useful in identifying junctions where problems in one task may spill over into another. They will help you to understand dynamic inter-relationships between tasks. The formative evaluation plan can then be targeted to collect data in advance of these points, providing the project with an early warning system. It is far more difficult to carry out post hoc program fixes than well thought through and timed adjustments. Specifically, the following early implementation questions can be addressed by a formative evaluation plan:

- Have all intake procedures been developed prior to initiation of client recruitment and selection?
- Have all tracking and data collection instruments been developed and distributed?
- Have all needed staff members been recruited?
- Have all staff been trained in project procedures, including data collection?
- Have all tasks been completed on the prior critical path?
- If previous task completion has fallen behind, will it prevent initiation of the next task?

Finally, a well designed formative evaluation plan can be invaluable in identifying discrepancies between expected client characteristics and actual characteristics. For example, college bound programs don't work if the entrants either lack a high school diploma or have a college degree. Job development programs are not likely to be successful in the face of severe physical and mental health problems, or high levels of drug abuse. Issues of domestic violence and criminal involvement may prevent a client from completing a program. Formative evaluations can assess the extent of these issues and focus attention on them. It is reasonable to probe the following:

- Do client profiles match expected profiles?
- What problems were encountered during client intake?
- Were problems encountered in the recruitment of clients to the program?
- Are there characteristics of the clients that require immediate program modification?
- Are attrition rates higher than expected, and what are the implications for the validity and reliability of the outcome or impact evaluation?

The role of the third-party evaluator in the formative evaluation does not need to be extensive. The benefits that are derived from the formative evaluation are primarily programmatic. The data that are collected will be garnered by program staff, often while carrying out their primary tasks. The goals and objectives of the evaluation will be set by project managers and staff.

There are two areas, however, where input from the third-party evaluator can be quite useful. During the early planning stages of a formative evaluation, an experienced evaluator can help you to identify data collection tools and points. The evaluator should also be able to assist you in the design of an analytical output process that generates well organized and timely data for your review. It makes little sense to collect data unless it results in timely and useful outputs.

C. Process Evaluations: Mapping the Treatment

Process evaluations serve the purpose of documenting the operations of a program. They provide data on client characteristics, the number of clients served, the types of services used, staff loads and characteristics, the cost of service delivery, and fluctuations in service demand. They also provide structural and organizational information on partner interactions, staff training and education, organizational interactions, resource allocations, and formal and informal patterns of communication. When an outside group wishes to replicate the program, it is to the process evaluation that they will turn. They will want to know what happened, what resources were used, what the mixture of resources was, and what needs to be done.

Process evaluations also provide the evaluator with the necessary baseline data to judge the intensity and reliability with which services were delivered to the treatment and control groups. The evaluator will not be able to assess program outcomes without this information. The interpretation of statistical findings will very much depend on whether there was a difference in the amount of services received by the experimental group as compared to the control group.

Process evaluations rely on what is commonly referred to as management data. These data are generally captured routinely by organizational staff in carrying out their daily tasks. The data includes information on clients, number of hours spent with clients, number of referrals made, number of home visits made, time spent filling out forms, time spent in meetings, etc. However, the completeness and reliability of the data are not always certain. The process evaluation plan should specify the types of data that should be collected, the frequency with which they are to be collected, and the circumstances under which they should be collected.

A process evaluation plan should establish routines for capturing and managing the following types of data:

- Client demographic,
- Client contacts,
- Client services (What was provided to Whom),
- Referrals,
- Client outcomes,
- Staff characteristics,
- Program activities, including data on:
 - Staff meetings,
 - Special events,
 - Task completion,
 - Partnership meetings,
 - Advocacy activities, and
 - Intrusive external events;
- Staff diaries and memos; and
- Organizational financial and process.

On the surface, the types of data that will be tracked for a process evaluation would not appear to be very difficult to capture and process. There are some hidden issues that will need to be kept in mind. First, many types of demographic data are more useful when recorded in one form than another. For example, it is better to know the year in which a person was born, rather than his or her chronological age. Best

of all is if you have their exact birth date. You can calculate chronological age from a birth date, and it may be useful as an identifier later in the program. Second, clients will be more reluctant to give you some kinds of information than others.

Although it surprises some people, individuals are often more willing to depart with sensitive personal information than income data. Since self-sufficiency studies invariably require that income data be collected, consideration must be given to multiple measurement procedures to insure the accuracy of the data collected.

Third, methods for cross-linking contact, service, referral and outcome data will need to be developed and put in place. Clients who use numerous services are quite different from those that use only one or two. The intensity of usage is also an important matter that may differentiate clients. The only way that these dimensions can be accurately measured is if tracking systems exist that identify individual clients. Not all Community Action Agencies have such tracking systems in place.

Fourth, routine methods will need to be put in place to accumulate, abstract and code program data that may be scattered in multiple places and files. It is rare that one person goes to every project related meeting. However, if key implementation and partnership issues are to be tracked and their effect evaluated, a central file where a copy of every meeting agenda is kept needs to be maintained. A standardized method for keeping meeting notes must also be developed, and copies of the notes must be routinely deposited in the central files. It will be too difficult for the evaluator to attempt to track meeting notes and agendas at the end of the project.

Finally, if staff diaries and project financial data are to be used, an abstract and coding methodology must be developed for both. The method must protect the privacy of individuals while ensuring that useful, programmatic data are made available for analysis.

The process evaluation plan should be developed by the third-party evaluator with extensive input by project managers and staff. As noted, it should specify the data to be collected and the schedule for data collection. It should clearly outline the coding rules for transferring data from client records to coding sheets. It should make clear the rules that govern the management of the data, including privacy protections. It should identify the format for recording events in a diary or other narrative documents. It should describe a data management system that insures the integrity and accurate processing of the data.

The fact that the third-party evaluator will have major responsibility for the plan does not mean that project management personnel can abdicate responsibility for review. The plan should not be developed in a vacuum. It will be project staff who will have to implement data collection. If they have not been consulted on the process, they may balk at implementing the plan or do so with little enthusiasm. It takes some organization and commitment to routinely collect, abstract and code data. If diaries are to be kept, self-discipline will be needed. To be effective, program diaries must be kept up daily and must contain detailed information. Completing them takes time and focus. Staff that have been kept out of the

planning process and that feel no ownership are unlikely to provide a good product. The more that you and your evaluator collaborate in the design of the process evaluation plan, the more likely that it will be executed with finesse and attention. The more that your staff is a part of the planning process, the more they will commit to the evaluation.

D. Outcome Evaluations: Did You Make a Difference?

Ultimately, the most important question that you can answer is whether your program made a difference to the clients. Did it make them more self-sufficient? Did it improve the quality of their lives? Did it open up opportunities for them? Did it motivate them to seek more education and better jobs? It is the purpose of an outcome evaluation to ask and answer these questions.

Outcome evaluations are usually the most statistically oriented of the three evaluation types that are explored in this guideline. Knowledge and experience are needed to set up and carry out outcome evaluations. The analytical models and statistical techniques that are used are not always easy to grasp and the results that are produced can often be counter-intuitive. As a consequence, there is a strong tendency for program staff to back away and leave the whole problem to the third-party evaluator.

Staff discomfort is often abetted by the jargon and technical terms common to evaluation specialists and statisticians. While jargon and technical terms may have precise meaning to professionals, to the lay person they are confusing and produce suspicion. Further, some techniques that are used by evaluators to assess program effectiveness in-and-of-themselves raise problems for social service staff and programs. The concept of service denial associated with control groups is particularly difficult for line personnel to accept. Their standing mission is to provide service and benefits, not to deny them.

There is great irony in these concerns. Outcome evaluation studies promise the greatest program benefits. A well conceived evaluation study is often a powerful tool for fund raising and budget enhancement. Incontrovertible proof that a program works is hard to beat. Outcome studies also make the greatest demands on the program staff for cooperation and involvement. Of the three evaluation approaches, it requires the most precision. Data collection, abstracting and coding must be done systematically, carefully and precisely. In most cases, it is program staff that must carry out this data collection.

E. The Data Collection Plan

The importance of having a well articulated data collection plan can not be overestimated. It will guide the daily activities of staff who are part of the data collection effort. The data collection plan should be developed in collaboration with the third-party evaluator and should receive input from operational staff. Remember, it is your operational staff that will carry out most of the data collection.

A strong data collection design is characterized by clarity, simplicity, redundancy of procedures and administrative control. Above all other factors, clarity is key. Project staff must understand why they are collecting data on each item and how each item will be used to analyze project outcomes. The data

collection design must clearly articulate purpose and all classification rules. Without purpose, there will be little motive to comply; without clearly defined classification rules, coding will be imprecise and may effectively make it impossible to interpret the data.

Simplicity is also necessary to achieve reliable compliance. The more complicated a design, the less likely that the data will be collected consistently and accurately. Complicated data collection procedures often burden staff with difficult paperwork. Complex decision rules can lead to unreliable coding and staff frustration. It is generally understood that the more complicated a coding scheme, the less likely that an item will be completed, or if completed, correctly completed. Complicated schemes also take more time to complete and administer. They increase the response burden associated with each item and reduce the number of coding events that can occur in a unit time.

Redundancy is closely associated with precision and accuracy. Redundancy in data entry is a common practice. It is not unusual for key-entry operators to double punch and verify data to insure accuracy. Redundancy in other areas is also useful. For example, multiple measurements of income are useful to ensure relative accuracy. Drug abuse often will remain a hidden problem unless probed from different angles.

Administrative control is essential. Project personnel will need to be reminded of upcoming data collection events, will have to be periodically trained or retrained in data collection activities, and will need a point to refer to when coding issues arise. It is not reasonable to expect that the third-party evaluator will always be able to be on site. An administrative control plan provides the basis for managing the data collection process on site and structuring the relationship between the evaluator and the staff.

F. Comparison Groups

One of the most difficult issues in evaluation research is the comparison group. The construction of comparison groups often requires the consideration of relatively complex problems in methodology and statistics. For individuals doing research on self-sufficiency, additional unique issues arise, including the ethics of service denial and attrition rates. However, before the techniques of comparison group construction are examined, it is useful to describe the logic and role of comparison groups in experimental and quasi-experimental research.

A comparison or control group is called for when critical elements of the “experiment” are not under the control of the researcher. For example, ordinarily a CAA will not be able to influence local unemployment rates or economic activity. Therefore, assuming that unemployment rates go down within an experimental population, how are the data to be interpreted? Is it because of the program or because the local labor market has expanded? Without a comparison group consisting of individuals who have not participated in the program, it is impossible to tell. A comparison group serves as a “check” against external factors that might equally well explain changes in the experimental population.

Obviously, the two groups need to be as similar as possible. The fewer the differences, the fewer the number of competing hypotheses that can be developed to explain outcomes. For example, if the educational level of one group is significantly higher than the other, this can seriously impair judgements about program impact. Individuals with high levels of education are more likely to obtain a job than those without.

The easiest method for creating comparable groups is to draw individuals from a single pool or population and randomly assign them to a treatment or control group. Randomized assignment of this kind is a hallmark of true experimental designs. There are two serious difficulties with this approach that need to be kept in mind when designing a program.

First, it is difficult to cushion the impact on an individual of random assignment to a control group. The individual who finds himself or herself in the control group is painfully aware that they have been “denied” an opportunity. In other words, there may be subtle assignment effects that produce group differences on post-test unrelated to the intervention. These individuals may not be willing to be reinterviewed at the end of the project. As there is little incentive for these individuals to maintain contact with program, they may also be very difficult to locate at the end of the project. In addition, the formation of a control group may produce the awkward effect of making the program look like it is denying services. This can have a demoralizing effect on the staff.

A second problem that can afflict random assignment is the size of the eligible population. In some areas, particularly less populated ones, the number of individuals that can be recruited to the program may not be sufficient to fill both an experimental and a control group. Usually the control group suffers. Even with only modest attrition rates, the size of the control group may fall below statistically reliable levels. Given the fact that control group members usually have few incentives to stay in touch with the program, it is more likely that attrition will be high rather than low.

As a consequence of these factors, most evaluation plans rely on non-equivalent control group designs. A non-equivalent control group is usually composed of randomly selected individuals that are demographically similar, but located in another area or participating in another program. The use of nonequivalent control groups also introduces practical and theoretical problems.

It is exceedingly difficult to control for the impact of external events on a non-equivalent control group. Almost by definition, it will be subject to different experiences and display different characteristics than those of the experimental group. A number of analytical techniques exist that can be used to introduce statistical controls for these differences. They include analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and multiple analysis of covariance (MANCOVA). As with most statistical techniques, ANCOVA and MANCOVA designs make assumptions about the data and require minimal sample sizes. If the sample size becomes too small, these techniques lose power, that is the ability to detect significant differences between groups.

The complex trade-offs that exist between the use of different types of control groups suggests that you discuss the matter thoroughly with your third-party evaluator. In particular, you will need to determine what sample sizes you will need in order to measure effect. The sample size will have to factor in attrition rates from both the experimental and the control group. For example, if you need to have at least 50 people in your control group at the end of a one-year project and you expect an attrition rate of 50% per annum, you will need to recruit 100 control group members. This has cost implications that might be quite serious.

In order to estimate attrition rates from the control group, you might look at attrition rates from other programs that serve the same population or a similar population. It is also better to overestimate attrition and over-recruit than to underestimate. A control group that is too small in size makes it impossible to carry out comparative analysis and to judge the worth of your program.

Finally, no matter whether you select to use a randomized or non-equivalent control group design, selection to the experimental and the control group should be by a random method. The use of a nonrandom sample selection technique may weaken the statistical validity of your conclusions. However, difficulty in ensuring that selection is by a random method should not lead you to abandon the use of the comparison group.

G. Statistical Analysis

There is a general tendency to regard statistics with suspicion. It is something that many people believe should be left to the “experts.” Although statistical analysis in the formal sense usually requires minimal levels of training and experience, useful results can be achieved through examining counts, percents and averages. Simple accumulative tables can be used to follow project developments and to identify operational issues. The implications of discovering that twenty percent of one’s clients are drug abusers as opposed to a planned one percent is significant. Similarly, different mixes of educational attainment and family arrangements can have implications for the channeling of project resources into remedial education efforts, child care needs, and housing placement.

The planning and construction of simple tables has another salutary effect. It forces a consideration of the factors that can influence program implementation and success. For example, a number of DPP programs have identified domestic violence as a critical risk factor impacting on women. The evidence indicates that abused women are far less likely to achieve self-sufficiency than non-abused women unless given strong psychological support. If a program wishes to track the problem they will have to develop:

- A data collection instrument that accurately and reliably captures domestic violence information;
- A database (manual or electronic) that organizes and accumulates the information; and,
- A reporting mechanism that periodically—and in a timely fashion—presents the data to program managers and decision makers.

The variables for which data will be collected and the reporting cycle should be determined by program personnel in consultation with the third-party evaluator. The third-party evaluator should have primary responsibility for identifying and/or designing the appropriate data collection instruments, the data collection procedures and the process for transforming raw data into comprehensible tables. The table shells for reporting the data should be a collaborative process. Table design should not be left solely to the evaluator. Program personnel have to be able to readily interpret and use the data. Program staff must be able to understand how the tables were constructed as well as the implications of the data. If they are not involved in the design, they will have difficulty in interpreting the data and using it.

In designing the table, simplicity and clarity should be kept in mind. The table title or header should state precisely what data are being presented. The use of jargon and acronyms should be avoided. Column headers should be short, clear and pithy. If lengthy explanations are needed, they should be placed in footnotes at the bottom of the table. A description of the method that was used to construct the table should be placed below the table. It is particularly important that issues of duplicate counts be clarified. For example, tables that present data on service usage need to specify the number of clients that produced the demand. There is a considerable difference between 100 clients and 20 clients accounting for 80 service contact hours. Finally, the use of elaborate graphics should be avoided. Graphics can hide as much as they reveal.

It is likely that your outcome evaluation will call for the use of more advanced statistical techniques than counts and percents. Presumptively, it will be the task of the evaluator to carry out the analysis and he or she will have the responsibility for generating the statistical output. This does not mean that the resulting tables and interpretations of the statistics need be complicated. Three problems are likely to arise in the process. The first concerns the problem of trivial or non-significant findings. The second relates to issues of translation. The third centers on presentation.

There is always a likelihood that your project will not produce significant changes in your clients. In fact, it is probably likely that you will not be able to demonstrate significant program driven change. It is as important to report negative findings as positive findings. First, while a single negative finding may not be conclusive, an accumulation of negative findings suggests that a particular service delivery approach does not produce the desired effect. Second, reporting negative findings from a well conducted demonstration project helps others to modify the approach to see if adjustments produce the expected outcome. Third, while the negative finding may apply to the experimental group as a whole, distinctive subgroups may have reacted positively. Finally, powerful ancillary lessons may have been learned that can be of assistance to other programs in managing and establishing social service delivery systems in the field of self-sufficiency. For example, your project may develop and implement a new case management technique that reduces cost while holding contact hours constant. If you allow yourself to be stopped by the discovery that your intervention either had no effect or only a weak effect, you may not explore ancillary findings.

Obviously positive findings should receive wide distribution. However, as with negative findings, important problems of translation can occur. It is not enough to be able to produce statistics that say your program has had an effect. It is also critical to be able to explain the logic and consequences of the effect. Statistics need to be translated into policy implications. This means that you must develop a bridge to lay people. Individuals who are not trained in evaluation methodologies tend to be very suspicious of statistics. You should not underestimate the difficulty of the translation task.

As a first step in the translation process, the project director should read and assess the outcome evaluation report. Is it clear? Is it logical? Is it understandable? Are the findings well documented? Are significant findings counter-intuitive; and if so, are they well supported by the data? Are the research methodologies and statistical procedures clearly explained? Are the data tables easy to understand? During this initial review process, the evaluator should be readily available for discussion. After the project director and possibly other senior program managers have read the report, consideration should be given for review by a wider audience.

A first audience should be the program staff. If the evaluator cannot make them understand what has occurred, then it is unlikely that lay outsiders will understand the implications of the findings. If possible, a group meeting to go over the findings should be arranged. Program staff should be well prepared for the meeting in that they should have had time to read and should have read the draft evaluation report. The agenda should be well structured. Expect fur to fly. As long as the meeting does not drop to a personal level, it will be productive and helpful. It is also likely to be interactive, enjoyable, and insightful.

A second audience should be other evaluation specialists. The underlying methodology must be able to withstand professional scrutiny. The statistical techniques that were used should be deemed appropriate to the data. If controversial techniques are used, they should be well buttressed by other approaches. Technical readers should be well versed in both the methodologies of evaluation research and the content of the field. They will be able to tell you whether the study can stand up to deep scrutiny.

A third set of reviewers should be kindred policy makers or their staff. Distribution to a few lay persons with strong writing skills and a policy interest is useful. They can tell you whether the policy implications make sense and whether the logic of the analysis is clear.

A final issue is the preparation of statistical tables. Not all evaluators are skilled at the construction and presentation of data tables. In preparing statistical tables for presentation, it is important to keep in mind your audience. Statisticians and evaluators can be presumed to be able to grasp fairly sophisticated statistical tables. You cannot presume the same about policy makers or other CAA personnel. Their professions do not necessarily demand a knowledge of statistics. Terms such as CHI SQUARE, t-tests, z-scores, etc. may not mean very much to them. Percents are preferable to decimals. Table footnotes should be used liberally. Your touchstone for readability should be yourself. If you don't understand it, others are not likely to either.

When you report the results of a significance test, you should report the technique that was used to derive it and the acceptance level that you applied. You will need to discuss the matter of statistical significance with your third-party evaluator. Under some circumstances, p-values of 0.10 are acceptable. While you may be inclined to leave the final decisions up to your evaluator, be sure that the decisions are well defended. You will also need to be sure of the assumptions that underlie various analytical techniques. For example, t-tests and ANOVA designs assume that any changes are due to the experimental treatment or intervention. The techniques can only be used without reservation if good experimental control was achieved throughout the life of the project. Control of that kind is difficult to attain in the behavioral sciences.

Finally, keep in mind that evaluation research is fun. It may be challenging and intense, but there is nothing more exciting than discovering that you have made a difference. Your attention has been directed to some complex issues in this section that you need to be aware of when planning your evaluation. This has been done deliberately, but don't let it discourage you.

VI. The Ongoing Evaluation Process and Interim Evaluation Report

A. What Steps in the Evaluation Process Occur During the First Year of Program Operations?

1. Finalizing the Evaluation Plan

As described in Chapter IV, you will have opportunity to revise your original evaluation plan shortly after you are awarded your DPP grant. When approved, this plan becomes the official evaluation blueprint you should follow. You may find, however, that as your program begins operating and data/information are collected, it may be desirable to modify your original evaluation plan. It is important to remember that such plans are fluid and adaptable. If you and your evaluator experience any unforeseen data collection problems, it may be particularly important that you revise your final evaluation plan.

Any major modifications to your evaluation plan must be submitted to OCS for review and approval.

2. Documenting Program Implementation

The start-up of your program is an exciting time. Recruiting and hiring staff, setting up a project office and/or space, holding meetings with other CAA staff and partnership agencies, developing brochures about the program or planning a kickoff meeting are just a few of the details you may be involved in. Typically, staff are enthusiastic and if something doesn't quite work the way you'd planned, you're able to quickly shift gears and try an alternative approach.

Within the context of the DPP and required evaluation, however, all aspects of your program implementation are important to document and analyze. Therefore, all modifications to your program may be critical information for the evaluation. To illustrate, if a program plans to offer case management services and assumes a staff/participant ratio of 1:20, a specified number of case managers will need to be hired. If there are difficulties recruiting, and later retaining, staff for these positions, this will impact what services are actually offered. The project director may decide it would be easier to hire case management assistants at a paraprofessional level. From a program standpoint this alternative approach to staffing the project is fine. From an evaluation perspective, this change may alter the hypothesis testing or study questions, which may greatly impact analysis and conclusions. Therefore, it is important that these kinds of issues be considered as part of your *process evaluation*.

Depending upon your evaluation plan and method of collecting data, changes may be noted for the evaluation in one of several ways. Your evaluator may rely on observation of meetings where staff give a report on project progress, or he or she may review minutes from meetings. Other methods such as interviewing staff may also be used. What is important for your purposes, however, is that you develop a simple yet effective system for noting program changes as they occur. Some project staff have found that a project journal, dairy, or log is effective; others find it more useful to do narrative chronological files on their computers. Yet another approach is to use your timeline or implementation matrix, that includes accountabilities for activities, dates for implementing program components, etc., to note any deviations from what was originally planned. It is also important that you discuss these changes with your evaluator on a regular basis. An early discussion with the evaluator about program changes will allow everyone to make adjustments to the evaluation and still realize a strong design that captures useful data.

3. Monitoring Program Implementation

Monitoring occurs in the context of the evaluation; good programs also monitor their activities even if an evaluation is not underway. In any event, monitoring occurs periodically and is used to check program progress. Initially, your monitoring activities will examine whether or not certain project elements are implemented and whether they are implemented as planned. As the program matures, monitoring will serve as a progress check and confirm whether the program is on track.

The monitoring function may be performed by yourself, a designated staff member, or a member of the evaluation team. It should be performed on a regular basis by the same individual.

4. Developing Policies and Procedures Manual

OCS requires that a policies and procedures manual be developed for each DPP grant program. Your manual should include a description of how a client flows through the program, copies of the forms used to document client progress in files and/or for data collection, client selection criteria, staff job descriptions, protocols that are followed, and other information that directly relates to how the program operates. A good rule of thumb to keep in mind is that the policies and procedures manual should allow someone unfamiliar with your program to review the manual, and, based on the information in the manual, be able to implement and run your program. In other words, all the information required to *replicate* your program should be included.

5. Collecting Outcome Data

In most demonstration projects, program staff play an important role in collecting outcome evaluation data. It is usually program staff who complete the data collection forms and then send those forms to the third-party evaluator for entry into the outcome evaluation database.

One of the first data collection activities is typically pilot testing the data collection methods. Even though the data collected during pilot testing are usually not included in the final analysis of program effects, these data are crucial for assuring that the procedures and instruments will produce the information necessary to determine the effectiveness of your program. Pilot testing also gives the opportunity to train your program staff in the use of the data collection forms. For these reasons, it is helpful to involve as many of your staff as possible in the pilot testing activities. Your third-party evaluator will want to debrief your staff on any problems they encountered in using the data collection procedures and forms.

Actual data collection for the outcome evaluation usually begins once the grant program is fully implemented. It is critical that all data collection activities follow the agreed upon data collection plan. Should your staff find it difficult to follow this plan, it is important to discuss any problems with your third-party evaluator. Data collection issues need to be resolved as early as possible to guarantee the reliability and validity of the outcome data. It is recommended that one person on your staff be assigned the responsibility of assembling all data collection forms and transmitting those forms to the third-party evaluator. Having one person routinely carrying out these activities helps to ensure that all data will reach the evaluator for entry into the database.

Most often it is the evaluator's responsibility for developing and maintaining the outcome evaluation database. However, the grantee sometimes agrees to carry out this function. In such cases, it is recommended that one staff person be assigned to be the database manager and conduct data entry. The likelihood of data entry errors dramatically increases when multiple individuals enter data into the database. Also, clear data entry procedures should be developed and tested by the database manager. Here, the pilot test data can be used to test these data entry procedures.

6. Resolving Data Collection Problems

Data collection problems arise even in the best of programs and program evaluations. Through close monitoring and an open, honest relationship between project staff and your evaluator(s) most problems can be resolved to everyone's satisfaction and still provide the kind of information needed for a meaningful evaluation.

For example, many programs have initially envisioned that data would be recorded on and subsequently abstracted from forms designed specifically for the evaluation. This approach is particularly problematic when forms are collected from partnership agencies, such as JTPA or the State IV-A agency. Some projects have found they were unable to "compare" their project participants to other, similar populations because promised data were not available.

The key to resolving data collection problems is to work from your original matrix of study questions. In other words, review what it is you want to know about your program and determine if there is an alternative method of collecting data that will answer your questions. For example, if you planned to review the frequency with which program participants were referred to certain key partner programs, several methods of collecting data could be used. If original plans were to collect data through monthly progress forms submitted by each key partner and this option was difficult to implement, similar information could be obtained through several alternative methods including a record review of client files to check for notations of referrals, interviews with staff about referral patterns, or interviews with program participants or referral agencies. Working closely with your evaluator, you should be able to determine the best strategy for your evaluation that will provide needed information without imposing an undue burden on any individual(s) or organization to collect the data.

B. How do These Steps Relate to the Interim Evaluation Report?

OCS requires an interim evaluation report and written policies and procedures which result from the process evaluation.

1. Monitoring/Data Collection and the Interim Report

Analysis can be completed on program implementation (qualitative) data and client demographics in time to be included in the interim report. Much of the *process evaluation* data are collected during the first program year. Your process evaluation will encompass the project implementation phase. Information collected through the monitoring process and other data items will be included. Program changes and refinements, staff recruitment, any unforeseen delays, and other issues will be discussed. Generally, the report will include *narrative descriptions* about your program. In some instances tables will be necessary.

For example, it may be useful to present the client intake process, by month, in tabular format depending on your program's approach to client selection and enrollment. Other program information may also lend itself to presentation in a tabular format.

After the first year of operation, client demographics should be readily available and presented in the interim report. For some populations, it may be necessary to examine the demographic information you've collected on the group you are serving and compare it to characteristics that were expected. Any variances between the two should be discussed. The implications these variances may have on the overall program design should also be considered. Depending on the group you've targeted, client characteristics may be very important. For example, the initial group of DPP projects serving minority males found that the population they served in their programs had different characteristics than what they had originally assumed. This impacted the range of services planned and what was ultimately provided.

The interim evaluation should also incorporate a discussion about your evaluation data collection instruments and how they are working. As we present in a later section of this chapter, your interim evaluation report should include a brief discussion of your data collection instruments, the data collection process, and report on any modifications that were made to the data collection plan. If you have preliminary outcome evaluation findings, these may also be reported.

2. Policies and Procedures Manual

OCS grant requirements include submitting the policies and procedures manual with the interim evaluation report. This document will supplement the evaluation information you submit. The manual, however, describes the policies and implementation procedures of the program at the first {twelve} month period; it does not indicate how it changed or evolved. These issues should be addressed in the interim evaluation report.

3. Data Collection Problems Resolution

Any data collection problems and their resolution should be described in the interim evaluation report. A section of the report should be set aside for this purpose. The problems encountered during the first year should be listed accompanied by a discussion of each issue that includes the following points:

- Was the data collection problem resolved, and if so, how?
- Are there still outstanding, unresolved data collection issues?
- What are the options and alternatives?
- What is the impact of data collection problems and their resolution on the evaluation design?

It is important to know that major data collection changes need to be cleared through OCS before you officially make changes. OCS requires notification as changes sometimes modify the approved evaluation plan, which in turn modifies your grant terms.

C. What is Required In the Interim Evaluation Report and When Is It Due?

A suggested table of contents for the interim evaluation is presented below. It is due at the OCS offices in Washington, DC, 30 days after the first 12 months of the project period.

Suggested Interim Evaluation Outline

I. Overview of Project

A brief description of the project.

- A. Purpose of the Demonstration
- B. Target Population
- C. Project Structure and Services
- D. Expected Project Outcomes

II. Characteristics of Project Participants

This should include all demographic data (descriptive) about participants that were collected through the first 12 months of the project.

- A. Project Participants
- B. Comparison Between Project Participants and Target Population

III. Description of Project Implementation and Start-Up

This section should include information on partnerships/community linkages, project staff, interventions, participant recruitment, and organizational (CAA) issues at a minimum.

- A. Project elements implemented and discussion of time frame for implementation
- B. Elements not implemented or changed with a discussion as to why, how, and when changes were made
- C. Facilitators and barriers to project implementation

IV. Data Collection Issues

This section should include information on data collection as it relates to project evaluation.

- A. Current data collection process
- B. Presentation and discussion of any revisions to the data collection plan since the final evaluation plan was submitted
- C. Results of any instrument pretests, database development, etc.
- D. Revised instruments (data collection forms)

Attachment - Policies and Procedures Manual

VII Final Reporting Requirements

Grantees have three final reporting requirements:

- Final Report of Findings;
- Summary Report of Findings; and
- Oral presentation at the annual outcome workshop at the conclusion of their grant period.

This section discusses each of these requirements.

A. Final Report of Findings

The Final Report of Findings is due 90 days following the end of the grant. The format for this report is as follows:

Agency: (Name and Address)

Executive Director:

Evaluator

Contact Person: (Project Director)

Telephone:

Type of Project:

Model:

Project Period:

I. BACKGROUND

- A. Purpose of Program [including statement of hypothesis]
- B. Description of Program [including project goals]
- C. Target Population [include participant characteristics]
- D. Partnerships

II. STUDY APPROACH AND EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

- A. Operational Definitions of Outcome Measures
- B. Interventions

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

- A. General Discussion of Findings
 - 1. process
 - 2. outcome
- B. Operational issues
- C. Findings [include positive, negative, anticipated and unanticipated outcomes; include both qualitative and quantitative findings]
 - 1. impact on clients
 - 2. institutional impacts
 - a. community action agency
 - b. primary partners
 - c. state
 - d. other organizations
 - 3. discussion of expected versus actual outcomes
- D. Research Significance
- E. Replication Issues
- F. Final Recommendations

The Final Report of Findings should be a complete and detailed document with data tables and appendices containing data collection instruments, etc.

The Final Report of Findings must follow the most current version of the United States Government Printing Office Style Manual. Copies of this document are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, Stock Number 021-000-00120-1. Your attention is drawn particularly to Chapter 13, Tabular Work, which deals with the proper presentation of tables, and Chapter 12, Numerals.

A hard copy of the Final Report of Findings as well as an electronic copy in WordPerfect 5.1 is due to the technical assistance contractor at the same time that the report is submitted to DPP. Further, it should be indicated what type of statistical package (software) was used for the data analyses.

In preparing tables and other exhibits for this report, do not use the “figure” procedures in WordPerfect. Also, do not import graphics or tables from statistical packages or desktop publishing software into WordPerfect. Any charts or tables like this should be placed on a separate sheet. A camera-ready copy of these charts or tables should be sent to the technical assistance contractor. Do not number these pages. In the electronic copy of the report leave a page in the text for each hard copy page that must be inserted. Indicate on the holding sheet the table number and name of the table that is to be inserted.

B. Summary Report of Findings

The Summary Report of Findings is an abbreviated version of the Final Report of Findings and it serves several purposes. Each year the DPP publishes a monograph entitled *Summary of Final Evaluation Findings For FY -- Demonstration Partnership Program Projects*. Your Summary Report of Findings will be included in this document and disseminated widely among the CAAs and other organizations which may wish to replicate your project. Your Summary of Findings will also serve as the basis for your presentation at the outcome workshop.

The Summary Report of Findings should follow the same format as the Final Report of Findings, but is limited to **15 single spaced pages**, which include any tables that may be in the report. The Summary Report of Findings should not include any appendices. This report should highlight your process findings and growth in partnerships as well as your outcome data. The individuals who will be reading this document are also interested in things that did not work as well as your successes, so if you have negative findings these need to be reported as well. Also, remember to include findings that may have been completely unexpected. You may not have developed a hypothesis originally, but this should not prevent you from reporting unanticipated findings.

The Summary Report of Findings must also follow GPO style. A hard copy as well as an electronic copy in WordPerfect 5.1 is due to the technical assistance contractor at the same time that it is submitted to the DPP. As in the case of the Final Report of Findings you should indicate the type of statistical package that was used for the analyses. Similarly, the same procedures for sending camera-ready hard copies of any tables or graphics which cannot be produced in WordPerfect described above, should also be used for the summary report.

C. Oral Presentation at Annual Outcome Workshop

Each year in late January or early February, the Office of Community Services hosts a 2- to 3-day workshop, the purpose of which is to provide a forum for DPP grantees to share the findings and results of their demonstration grants with the goal of identifying replication and dissemination strategies.

Each grantee typically is given about 25 minutes to describe the operation of their program, to present evaluation methodologies, findings and conclusions, and to suggest dissemination and utilization strategies within the context of the larger community action program.

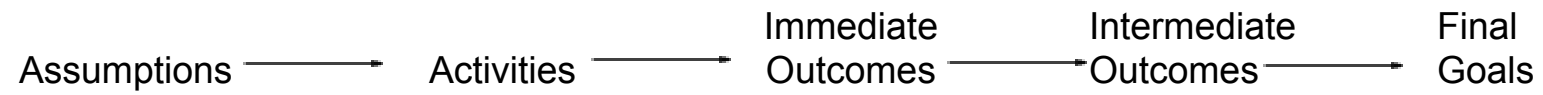
The allotted time is to be split between the Program Director and the third party evaluator. The agency also encourages a representative of the grantee's primary partnership to attend the workshop. Plenary sessions are also held on timely topics of general interest to CAAs and program evaluators. This presentation marks the end of the grant process for DPP grantees.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Logic Model

FLOW OF A LOGIC MODEL



DOCUMENTING YOUR PROGRAM

Youth at Risk “Classroom-Based” Model

ASSUMPTIONS	ACTIVITIES	IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	FINAL PROGRAM GOALS
- Youth at risk lack adequate educational skills for employment - Youth at risk lack vocational training and job skills to obtain employment - Target youth are at risk for alcohol and other drug use - Low self-esteem hinders educational and employment achievements - Youth at risk lack access to supportive services - Youth at risk need help in coordinating supportive services	Classroom Interventions: - Remedial reading and math skills courses - Vocational training curriculum - Substance abuse prevention curriculum - Self-esteem building course Case management: - Assessment - Case plan - Referral - Followup	- Improved reading skills - Improved math skills - Improved job skills - Increased knowledge of alcohol and other drug effects - Increased self-esteem - Increased access to supportive services - Improved coordination of supportive services	- High school or GED completion - Employment at \$5 per hour - Reduced alcohol and other drug use	Increased self-sufficiency

LOGIC MODEL

ASSUMPTIONS

ACTIVITIES

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

FINAL PROGRAM GOALS

[illegible]

APPENDIX B

Grant Review Form

Form

OCS GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW FORM

PART 1.0 GRANTEE INFORMATION

1.1 Grantee

1.1.1 Name of Grant _____

1.1.2 Name _____

1.1.3 Address _____

1.1.4 Telephone _____

() - _____ Fax () - _____

1.2 Key Personnel

1.2.1 Executive Director

Name _____ Telephone () - _____

1.2.2 Project Director

Name _____ Telephone () - _____

1.2.3 Evaluator

Name _____

Title _____

Telephone () _____

1.3 Funding Amount

1.3.1 Amount Funded \$ _____

1.3.2 Total Project Cost \$ _____

1.3.3 Evaluation Budget \$ _____

1.3.4 Evaluation Per Cent of Total Project Cost _____%

1.4 Funding Category

Continuation _____

High Risk Youth _____

General _____

A. Small Business Development _____

B. Family Development _____

1.5 Type of Model

1.6 Project Period

PART 1.0 OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

2.1 Project Goals

2.2 Target Population

2.3 Comparison Group

--

2.4 Project Description

--

2.5.1 Partnerships

[illegible]

2.5.2 Information Exchange (for Example, Partnership Evaluation or Shared Database)

2.5.3 Client Follow-up

PART 3.0 EVALUATION PLAN

3.1 Types of Evaluation

Formative _____

Process _____

Outcome _____

Case Study _____

3.2 Process Measures



3.3 Outcome Measures



3.4 Hypothese to be Tested

3.5 Intervention Factors

3.6 Measurement Instruments

3.6.1 *Developed By Project* _____

3.6.2 *Standardized (specify)*

3.7 Methodology

3.7.1 Type of Design

3.7.2 Size of Population (Participants)

3.7.3 Subject Screening/Selection/Eligibility Criteria/Limitations

3.7.4 Time and Frequency of Measurements

Formative

Process

Outcome

3.7.5 Data Collection Procedures

3.7.6 Data Collectors

3.7.7 Statistical Procedures

3.7.8 Statistical Significance

3.7.8.1 Tests Proposed

3.7.8.2 Level Proposed

3.7.8.3 Rationale

3.8 Other Significant Points

PART 4.0 REVIEWER CHECKLIST

	Yes	No
1. Does the project design match the target population?	—	—
2. Does the project design match the evaluation design?	—	—
3. Does the evaluation design make the best use of the dollars available for evaluation?	—	—
4. Is the evaluation design reasonable given the dollars available for evaluation?	—	—
5. Have the hypotheses been stated in measurable terms?	—	—
6. Have they conducted a needs assessment?	—	—
7. Are the intervention factors stated operationally?	—	—
8. Is the expectation of change reasonable given the type of treatment?	—	—
9. Is the expectation of change reasonable given the length of treatment?	—	—
10. Can the outcomes be measured by the proposed methodology?	—	—
11. Can the outcomes reasonably be attributed solely to the proposed interventions?	—	—
12. Have they operationalized “self-sufficiency”?	—	—
13. Are they developing their own measurement instrument(s)?	—	—
14. Are copies attached?	—	—
15. Are they using a standardized measurement instrument?	—	—
16. Is the instrument appropriate to use on the target population <u>vis a vis</u> the population on which it was validated?	—	—
17. Is the instrument appropriate to use on the target population <u>vis a vis</u> reading level and comprehension level?	—	—
18. Does the methodology take into account the problems caused by attrition?	—	—
19. Has an evaluability assessment been carried out?	—	—
20. Has a power analysis been carried out?	—	—
21. Is the target population clearly defined?	—	—
22. Is the intervention implementation schedule realistic?	—	—

PART 5.0 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

5.1 Comments

5.2 Questions to be Raised with Grantees

