

Program Design and Evaluation

A Training Series for Nonprofits Serving Boulder County



Session 3: Practical Evaluation Design, Developing a Plan (How to Get Started)

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Training Agenda

Key Concepts

- Ethical & Cultural Considerations
- Types of Evaluation

Focusing your evaluation

- Developing Research Questions
- Selecting an appropriate evaluation method

Evaluation Design

- Pre/ Post Test Design
- Retrospective Post Test Design

Creating an Evaluation Plan

Case study

- Boulder County Community Services, Self-Sufficiency Matrix



Learning Objectives for Session 3

- Understand how to focus your evaluation
- Define and prioritize your research questions
- Understand how to develop an evaluation plan



Part Three of Five Part Training Series:

Practical Evaluation Design, Developing a Plan

Completed:

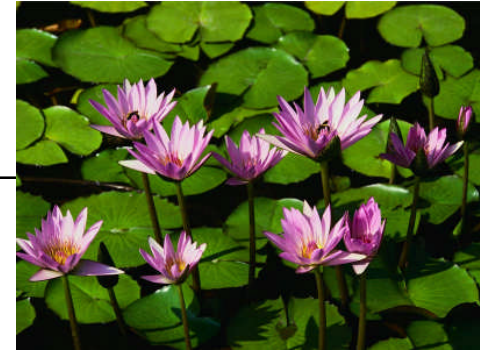
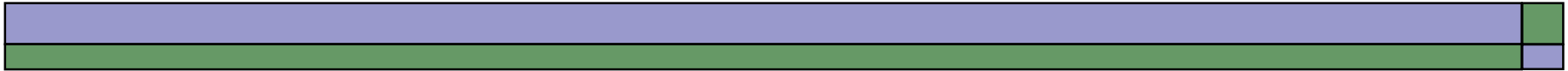
- Basics of Evaluation
- Logic Models
- Implementing with Fidelity
- Evidence-Based Approaches

Today's training:

- *Focusing evaluation questions*
- *Develop an Evaluation Plan*

Remaining:

- Data collection
- Analysis & Interpretation
- Utilizing & communicating evaluation results



*Ethical & Cultural
Considerations...*



Ethical Considerations in Evaluation

- ❑ Voluntary Participation
- ❑ Confidentiality
- ❑ Professional Competence
- ❑ Respect for People's Rights, Dignity, and Diversity
- ❑ Justice



Cultural Considerations in Evaluation

acknowledgement of cultural differences and steps taken to incorporate cultural considerations in evaluation models

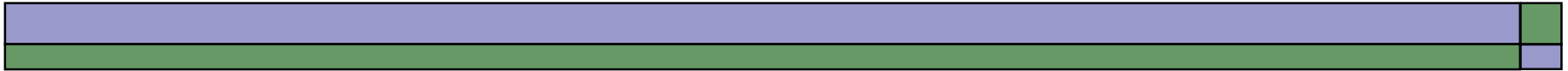
evaluations design and implementation are fundamentally shifted to honor and capitalize upon the diverse cultural contexts

awareness of diversity may exist, but not presumed a critical factor in evaluation design or implementation

diverse cultures are unacknowledged in evaluation

Match the words
(below) with their
correct description
(to the left)

- Cultural incompetence*
- Cultural blindness*
- Cultural sensitivity*
- Cultural proficiency*



Types of Evaluation



Major types of evaluation

- **Outcome Evaluation**

- Are you meeting client needs?

- **Implementation/Process Evaluation**

- Are you implementing with fidelity?
- How can service processes be improved?

- **Formative Evaluation (*Program Improvement Focus*)**

- Have to understand all of the above & tie together with action plans for data utilization



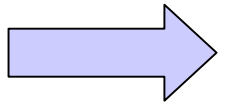
What is meant by “Outcome”

- The **changes** that you’d like to see in your clients *as a result of* your services (skills, attitudes, behaviors, etc.)
- *Client focused* outcomes = “a change in client functioning, status, or well-being”

*“Not how many worms the bird feeds it’s young,
but how well the fledgling flies”*

United Way, 1999

PROCESS
(or Implementation)

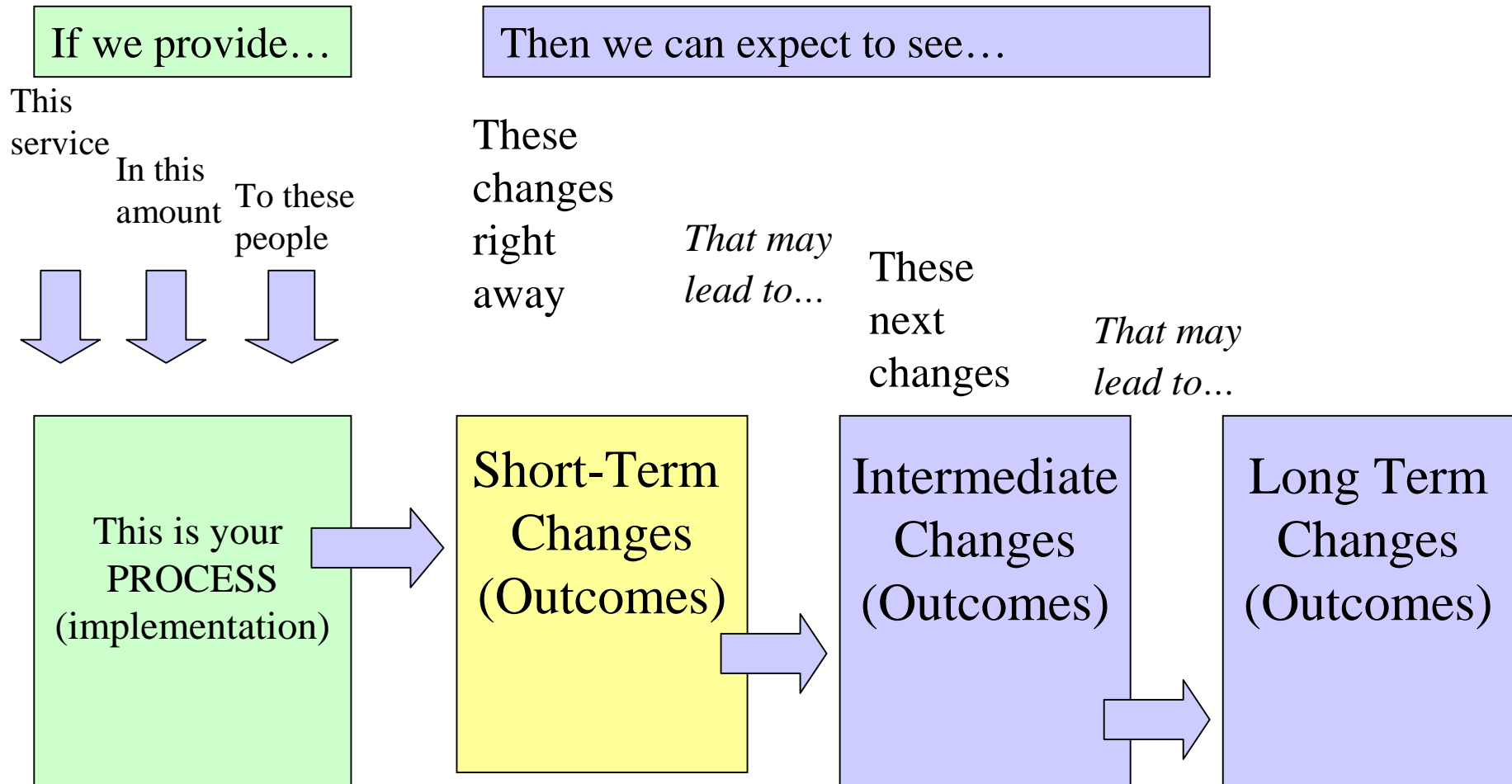


OUTCOMES

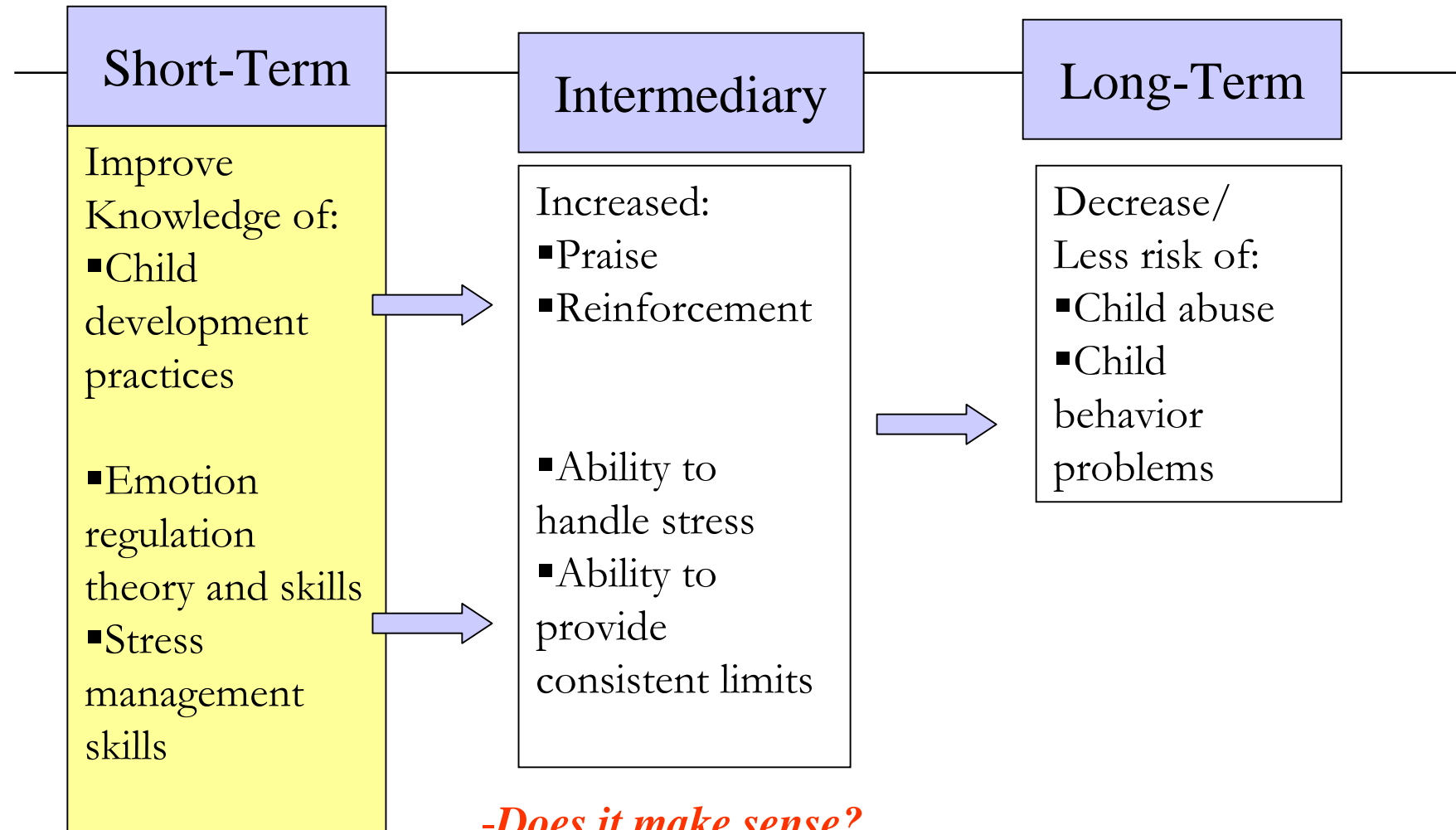
Formative Evaluation

What RESOURCES are dedicated to this program?	What SERVICES are provided?	What AMOUNTS OF SERVICE are provided?	What are the BENEFITS TO PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS?		
			Short-term	Intermediate	Long-term
Types of resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Money ➤ Staff ➤ Volunteers ➤ Staff time ➤ Volunteer time ➤ Supplies ➤ Facilities 	Types of services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Curriculum that is implemented ➤ Training that is available to participants ➤ Activities implemented in community ➤ Education materials that are created and disseminated 	Types of amounts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of participants that attend the program ➤ # of hours of community forums ➤ # of brochures distributed ➤ # of monthly newsletters sent 	Types of Short-term benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased knowledge ➤ Increased skills ➤ Changed Attitude 	Types of Intermediate benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased knowledge ➤ Increased skills ➤ Altered Behaviors 	Types of Long-term benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Altered Behaviors ➤ Changed Attitudes ➤ Change in Policies ➤ Altered systems or organizational changes

Putting it all together: Theory of Change

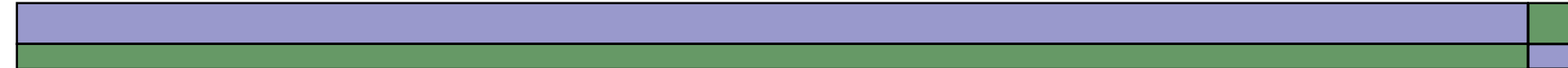


Sequencing/Linked Outcomes



-Does it make sense?

-Do we have evidence to support these linkages?

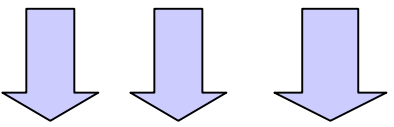


Let's fill in the blanks together...

If we provide...

Then we can expect to see...

This service
In this amount
To these people

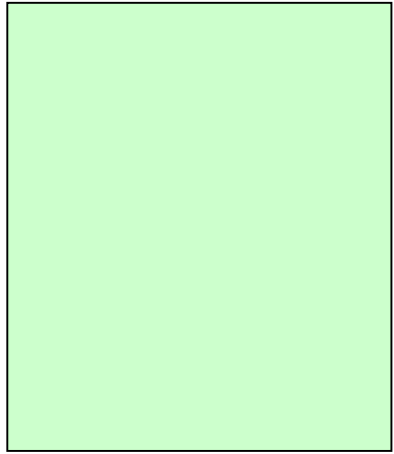


These changes right away

That may lead to...

These next changes

That may lead to...

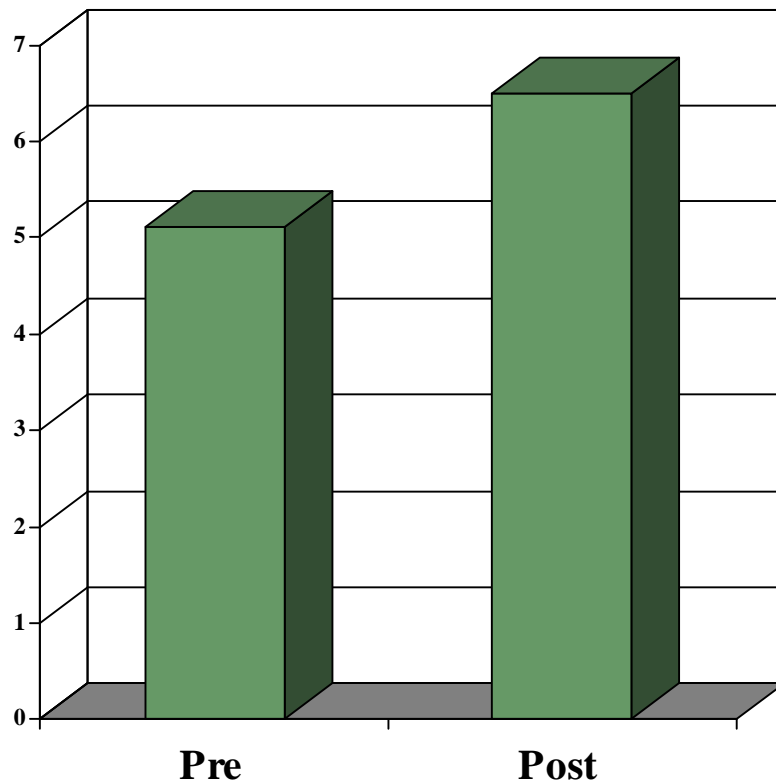


Short-Term Changes

Intermediate Changes

Long Term Changes

Example: Outcome Evaluation



Service = Nurturing
Parenting Program

Measure = Adult
Adolescent Parenting
Inventory

Findings from outcome
evaluation = There was a
significant change from
pre to post test in parents'
report of skills

Example: Implementation/Process Evaluation

Number of Sessions

broken into 4 groups:

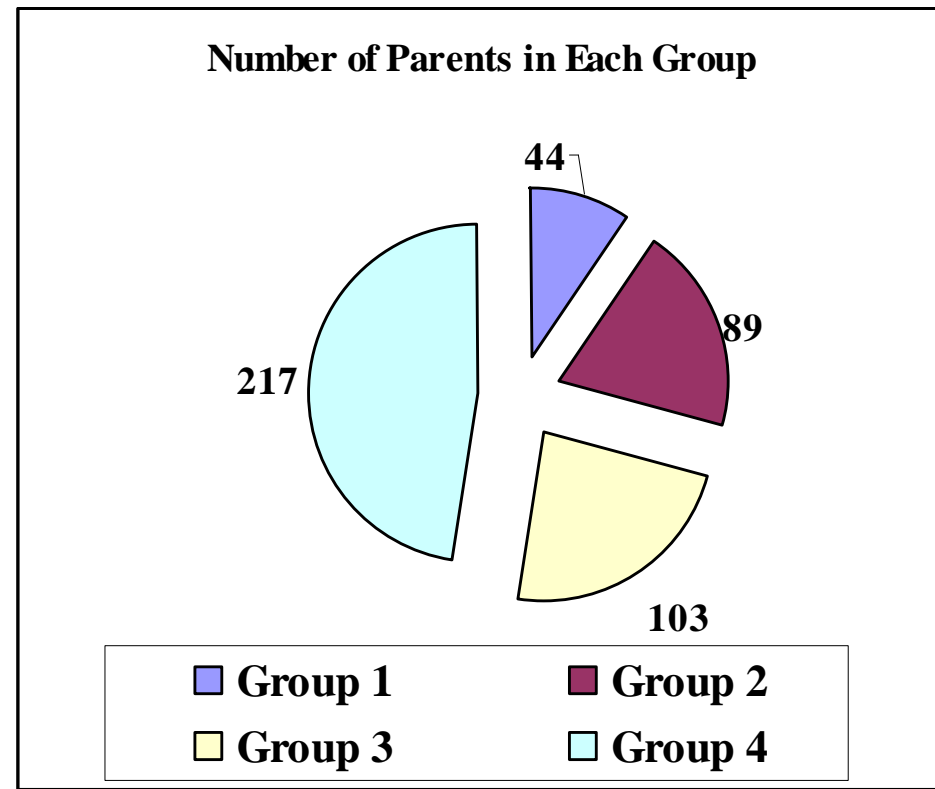
Group 1 = 8 or less sessions (9%)

Group 2 = 9 – 12 sessions (19%)

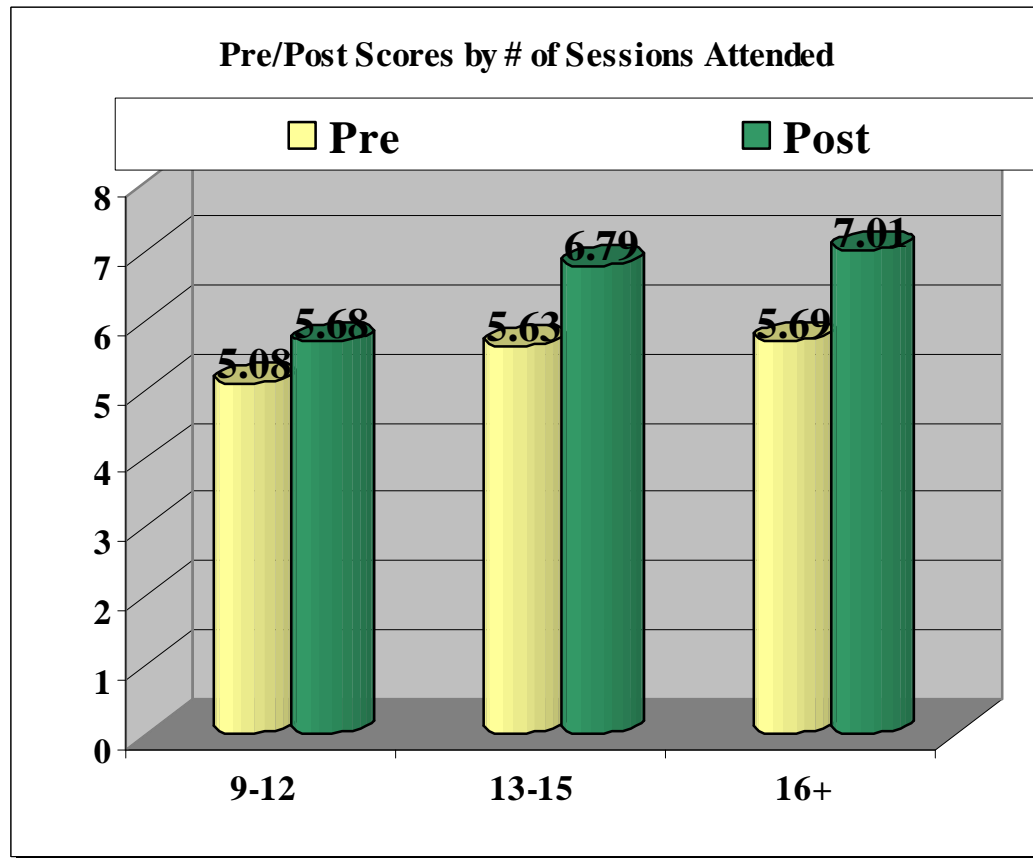
Group 3 = 13-15 sessions (22%)

Group 4 = 16+ sessions (47%)

Although the program's goal was to have at least 75% of parents attending 13 or more sessions; they had 69%.

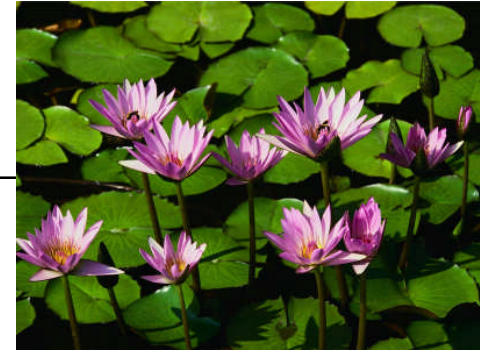
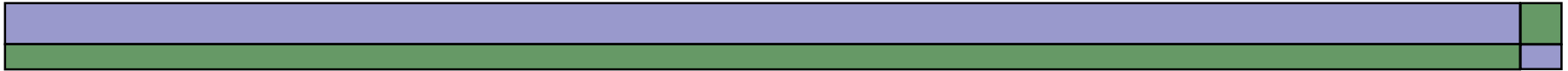


Example: Formative Evaluation



Parents who attended more than 13 sessions **improved more** than those attending 9-12 sessions. And, parents who attended the full curriculum improved the most.

Action taken: Leaders started offering more classes to ensure that parents made at least 16 sessions.



Focus, focus, focus...



Focusing your evaluation





Focusing your evaluation; creating research questions

- Who will use the evaluation
 - Internal or external stakeholders?

- What do they want to know
 - Are services meeting client needs? Are outcomes achieved? Are there certain clients for whom services didn't work?

- How will the information be used
 - Are there ways to improve services to get better outcomes?



Prioritizing Research Questions

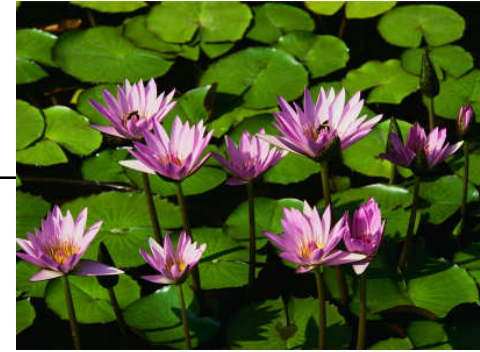
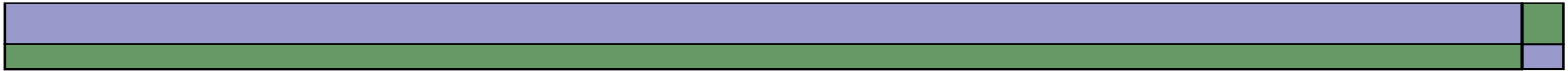
- ❑ Does it address a need or problem that you encounter as a practitioner?
- ❑ Can this question be answered; are you able to collect evidence?
- ❑ Is it truly important; will it provide information that is not already known?
- ❑ Can it be answered given your time and resources?
- ❑ It can't be answered with a simple "yes/no"?
- ❑ Is it a priority?



Focus on Outcomes:

Refining your outcome question

- If the outcome is achieved, how will you know it? What will have changed? What will it look like?
- Is your outcome tied to your services? Does it make sense? It is measurable?
- Fill in the blanks: “We do _____ so that _____ will change.” *Or* “If we do _____, then _____ will happen.”



*Your focused question guides your
selection of research method...*



Quantitative and Qualitative Data

“Quantitative measures strive for precision by focusing on things that can be counted”

“A qualitative approach seeks to capture what a program experience means to participants in their own words”

- Michael Quinn Patton, “Utilization Focused Evaluation”

- Qualitative is *not* less rigorous than quantitative data. It answers different questions. The most rigorous designs couple qualitative and quantitative data.



Gathering Information: Methods

- ❑ Questionnaires/Surveys
- ❑ Interviews
- ❑ Review of existing data (archival data from outside sources, or internal documents)

{ Approach can be either Quantitative OR
Qualitative OR a combination of both }



Advantages and Disadvantages to Questionnaires and Surveys

Advantages

- ❑ Provides an inexpensive way to gather information from wide range of participants
- ❑ Easy to compare and analyze
- ❑ Easy to protect confidentiality

Disadvantages

- ❑ Difficult to get comprehensive, in-depth information
- ❑ Can be biased depending on the questions asked



Advantages and Disadvantages to Interviews

Advantages

- ❑ Can obtain detailed and in-depth information
- ❑ Can collect a wide variety of information
- ❑ Builds relationship with client/interviewee
- ❑ Can supplement other data collection

Disadvantages

- ❑ Can be time consuming and expensive
- ❑ Can be difficult to analyze and compare
- ❑ Can be difficult to protect confidentiality
- ❑ May not provide data from enough participants



Advantages and Disadvantages to Using Existing Data

Advantages

- Information already exists (no new data collection)
- Can be more comprehensive and less open to bias

Disadvantages

- Can be difficult to access
- May not be organized in a way that suits the evaluation
- Information may not adequately answer the evaluation question
- May be difficult to analyze and interpret



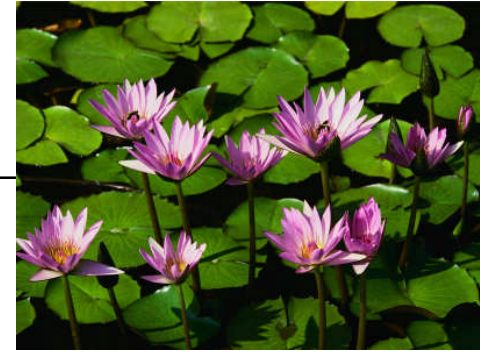
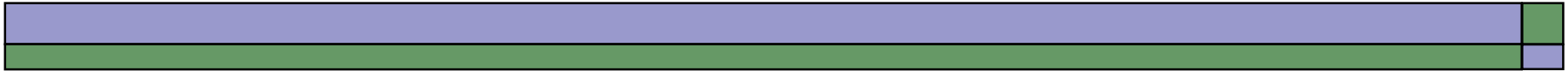
When choosing a method, consider:

- ❑ **The purpose** of your evaluation – Will the method allow you to gather information that can be analyzed and presented in a way that will be credible and useful to you & others?
- ❑ **The respondents** – what is the most appropriate method, considering how clients might best respond, literacy, cultural considerations, etc.?



Key points about choosing a method:

- ❑ There is no one right method of collecting data
- ❑ Each method has a purpose, advantages, and challenges
- ❑ The goal is to obtain trustworthy & credible evidence
- ❑ Often, a mix of methods is preferable



*Form follows function;
a few words about evaluation design...*



Design is tied to your question

- Are you looking to assess change?
 - Pre-Post
 - Retrospective Post-then-Pre
- Are you looking to assess thoughts/feelings at a “point in time”?
 - Client satisfaction survey
 - Post-Only



Pre/ Post Test Design

Timing is key

- Strive to measure BEFORE services are delivered and AFTER ALL services have been delivered
- Allow enough time between pre and post
- Use research to determine the time interval that you can expect to see change

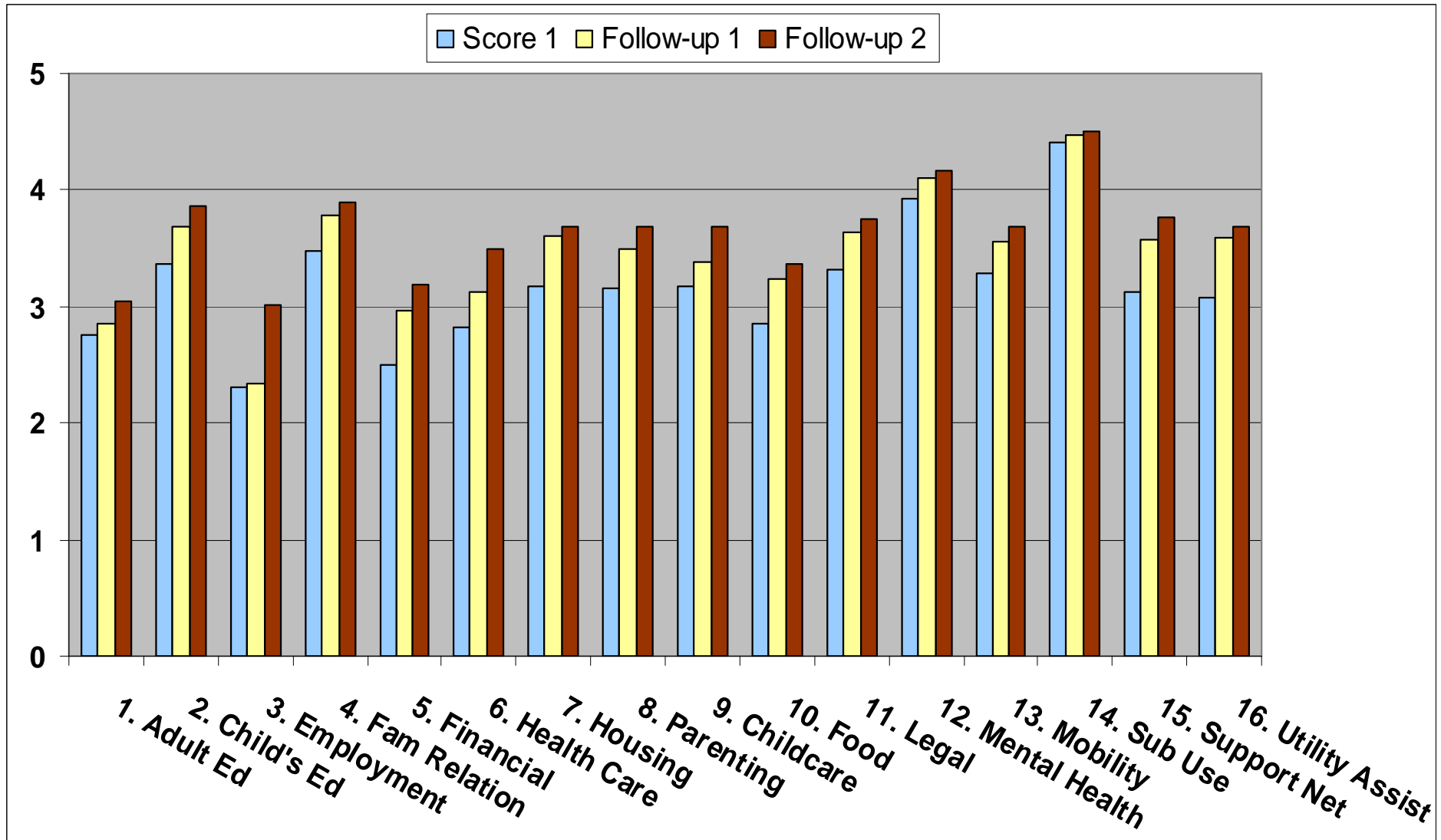
Retrospective Post-then-Pre Test Design

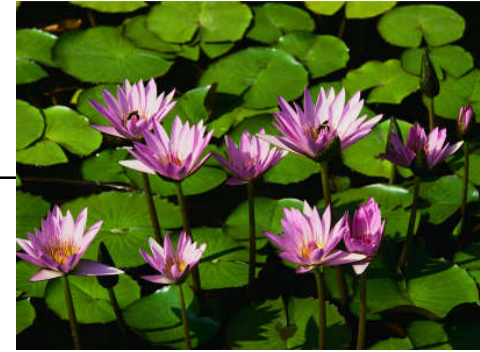
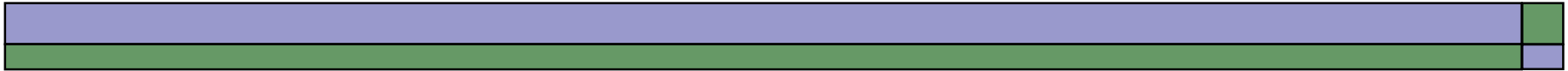
When to use:

- ❑ In order to reduce response-shift bias
- ❑ Measure learner's perception of change
- ❑ When you cannot obtain a pre-test

	Never	Seldom	Often	Always
1. I buy foods that are healthy for my children				
a) <i>After</i> the program	1	2	3	4
b) <i>Before</i> the program	1	2	3	4

Pre-Post (and another post) design





*Pulling it all together; developing
your evaluation plan...*



Developing an Evaluation Plan

- Write a statement defining the purpose of the evaluation (e.g., key question to answer)
- Define the target population
- Have a completed logic model
- Write down the data sources (e.g., clients, staff)
- Choose the methods (e.g., survey, observation)
- Create a schedule for data collection & system for data management



Evaluation Plan: Be SMART

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable/Achievable
- Relevant
- Time Bound

By December 31, 2009 (**Time Bound**) increase the percentage of African-Americans in Blueberry State who recognize all the signs and symptoms of heart attack and know to call 911 (**Specific & Relevant**) from 11% to 18% (**Measurable, Attainable**)



Case Study: Boulder County Community Services

Self-Sufficiency Matrix

Questionnaire: How Can I Help You?