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Beginning with the End in Mind

(aka the latest and greatest on AmeriCorps performance measurement)

2011 NY Project Director Training – New Rochelle
October 26, 2011

Susan Hyatt – JBS International
sue@suehyatt.com @Susan_Hyatt



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Session Agenda

- Why Measurement Matters
- CNCS Requirements for Performance Measurement
- Theory of Change for AmeriCorps Program Interventions
- Evidence-basis for Interventions
- The “Must Haves” - Performance Measurement and Evaluation (similarities and differences)
- How to Review PMs for Alignment

MISSION STATEMENT

Improve lives, strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

GOAL 1

Increase the impact of national service on community needs in communities served by CNCS-supported programs

GOAL 2

Strengthen national service so that participants engaged in CNCS-supported programs consistently find satisfaction, meaning and opportunity

SERVE AMERICA ACT FOCUS AREAS

Disaster Services
Economic Opportunity
Education
Environmental Stewardship
Healthy Futures
Veterans and Military Families

CNCS PROGRAMS

GOAL 3

Maximize the value we add to grantees, partners and participants

GOAL 4

Fortify management operations and sustain a capable, responsive and accountable organization





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AmeriCorps GARP Tiers

- **Tier 1:** Programs that select Priority Measures in Education, Veterans and Military Families, and Disaster Services
- **Tier 2:** Programs that select Priority Measures in Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures and Capacity Building.
- **Tier 3:** Programs that select Pilot Measures.
- **Tier 4:** Programs in the Focus Areas with self--nominated measures.
- **Tier 5:** Programs outside the Focus Areas with self--nominated measures.



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Why Measurement Matters Touch Points During Year

- Strategy Development
 - Strategic planning of program
- Program Implementation
 - Annual program year launch
 - Site monitoring and data validation
 - Site T/TA provision
 - Continuous improvement
- Using Results/Data and Reporting
 - Quarterly/mid-year/end of year reporting
 - Stakeholder reporting/promotion - Telling the Story
 - Review of annual achievements/performance outcomes
 - Celebrate success!!



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What is a “Theory of Change”?

A theory of change looks at *cause and effect* relationships and identifies specific interventions to achieve the desired result

If the INTERVENTION (X) is delivered at a certain dosage, then the expected OUTCOME (Y) will happen.

$$X \rightarrow Y$$



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Theory of Change: Components

- **PROBLEM:** The identified community need
- **INTERVENTION:** The National Service participant (and community volunteer) activities delivered (what is done, with whom, and at what dosage)
- **OUTCOME:** The change that happens because of the intervention

EVIDENCE: *Why you believe a certain set of actions (the intervention) will lead to the intended outcome*



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An Example From Everyday Life

- I have strep throat (PROBLEM).
- I want to kill the germs (GOAL)
- If I take antibiotics (INTERVENTION)...
- Which antibiotics fight strep the best (Evidence)
- then I will get better (OUTCOME).

Antibiotics \rightarrow I get better.

$X \rightarrow Y$



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Is This Always True?

- If I take penicillin, I will get better.
- If I take a different antibiotic, will I get better?
- Some interventions (antibiotics) work better than others. Some don't work at all.



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How Do I Know?

- How do I know which antibiotic is best?
- I look at the evidence. There is research that shows which antibiotic is likely to get the best result.
- I consider constraints that may preclude the ideal intervention. (Penicillin may be too expensive.)
- If I can't have the most promising intervention, I need to understand the tradeoffs.



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Reflection: Theory of Change

What is your program's theory of change?



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What “Evidence” Do We Need?

Two types of evidence are required:

1. Data that documents the *community need*; and
2. Data that documents why you think your education-related *intervention* (using National Service participants and community volunteers) will achieve the intended outcome.



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What is “Evidence”?

Data that demonstrates that the proposed intervention is likely to solve the identified problem.

For example:

Evidence says that x hours of tutoring leads to academic outcomes ... so ...

the chosen intervention features x hours of tutoring a 3rd grader so that the 3rd grader will meet grade level standards.



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Evidence Basis for An Intervention

- It is NOT enough to just say that the intervention is likely to be successful.
- The evidence basis for an intervention may include:
 - Past performance measurement data;
 - Results from a program evaluation;
 - Research studies that document the outcomes of similar programs; and
 - Evaluations that document outcomes of similar programs.



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Evidence Basis for An Intervention

1. Past performance measurement data:

- What does your past PM data tell you?
- Do you have multiple years of data you can aggregate?
- Are you getting the most mileage from how you present your past PM data?



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Evidence Basis for An Intervention

2. Results from a program evaluation:

- Have you done an impact evaluation (as opposed to a process evaluation)?
- Were the results positive? Does it clearly show that your intervention is what created/caused the change?



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Evidence Basis for An Intervention

3. Research studies that document the outcomes of similar programs; and
4. Evaluations that document outcomes of similar programs.



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Where to Look for Evidence? A Scavenger Hunt...???!!



homework help programs

Search

About 9,410,000 results (0.16 seconds)



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evaluation of their 21st CCLC programs. ECC staff have also provided The **program evaluation** was conducted by UCLA's Center for Study of Evaluation ...

[Jiskha Homework Help - Search: Program planning and evaluation](#)  

www.jiskha.com/.../index.cgi?...Program%20planning%20and%20e... - Cached

Identify where the program planning and evaluation process can provide opportunities for program improvement. Explain the how **program evaluation** can ...

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by C George - 2009 - [Related articles](#)



Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation

Tools for Action

- NWREL is a well known research organization working with education programs
- Has been involved with National Service and CNCS
- It is an evaluation
- Gives “tools for action”



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Articles (include patents) Legal opinions and journals

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[Does homework help? A review of research](#)

A Goldstein - *The Elementary School Journal*, 1960 - JSTOR

... As stated in a publica- tion of the National Education As- sociation (17), "**research**, dealing spe- cifically with **homework** and directed study, is ... The much more important ques- tion is: How can the school **program** be revised so that good results can be ... DOES HOMEWORK HELP? ...

[Cited by 50](#) - [Related articles](#) - [All 2 versions](#)

[A Therapist-Assisted Internet Self-Help Program for Traumatic Stress.](#)

BT Litz, L Williams, J Wang, R Bryant... - ... *Psychology: Research* ..., 2004 - [psycnet.apa.org](#)

... view, the therapist-assisted Internet approach will foster greater follow-through with **homework**, which is ... we have not determined the specific costs associated with the therapist-assisted SIT **program**. ... or benefit of various degrees of therapist involvement in the self-**help** process. ...

[Cited by 41](#) - [Related articles](#) - [All 6 versions](#)

[What exactly is a youth development program? Answers from research and practice](#)

JL Roth... - *Applied Developmental Science*, 2003 - Taylor & Francis

... Instead, the most common literacy activity was **homework** time ... The three characteristics are (a) **program** goals, (b) **program** atmosphere, and (c) **program** activi- ties (Roth ... Youth development programs **help** youth navigate adolescence in healthy ways and pre- pare them for their ...

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Advanced Scholar Research

Google scholar

Homework help program research

Search

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Articles excluding patents

2005

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at least summaries



[Create email alert](#)

[More than just being there: Balancing the participation equation](#)

HB Weiss, P Little... - [New Directions for Youth ...](#), 2005 - [Wiley Online Library](#)

... Although **research** does not have the answer yet, we do know that the thresholds set need to be based on the pro-gram goals. For example, a **program** that intentionally seeks to improve academic performance through **homework help** will need to have consistently high levels ...

[Cited by 36](#) - [Related articles](#) - [All 3 versions](#)

[Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987–2003](#)

H Cooper, JC Robinson... - [... of educational research](#), 2006 - [rer.sagepub.com](#)

... Policies and practices that are consistent with a trustworthy synthesis of **research** will (a) **help** students to obtain the optimum education benefit from **homework**, and (b) **help** parents to find ways to integrate **homework** into a healthy and well-rounded family life. ...

[Cited by 200](#) - [Related articles](#) - [BL Direct](#) - [All 12 versions](#)



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What to Look For?

- University or research organizations (National or local)
- Names of Known Professionals/Thought Leaders
- Similar sounding programs/descriptions
- Meta-articles that review multiple studies

When Homework is not Home Work: After-School Programs for Homework Assistance

Merith Cosden, Gale Morrison, Ann Leslie Albanese, and Sandra Macias

*Department of Education
University of California, Santa Barbara*

Homework does not always occur at home. With the perceived demand for higher academic performance has come an increase in the amount and complexity of assigned homework. Given the number of parents who work outside the home, and the need for safe and structured after-school activities, after-school programs have become a venue for helping students with their homework. This article examines the potential of after-school homework-assistance programs within the larger context of after-school programs in general. There is limited data on the outcomes associated with programs that offer homework assistance. The data suggest that after-school homework-assistance programs can serve a protective function for children at-risk for school failure, particularly those who do not have other structured after-school activities or those whose parents do not speak English at home. In general, the availability of homework assistance at home, the quality of the after-school homework program and the nature of the homework assigned will mediate the effect of these programs. Questions for future implementation and evaluation efforts are raised.



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TABLE 1
Studies That Evaluate After-School Programs That Offer Academic Experiences and Homework Assistance

<i>Author</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Program Description</i>	<i>Research Design</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Beck (1999)	200 K–12 at-risk African American inner-city youth	Homework help and other academic and recreation activities	Qualitative analysis	Program provided safety, care, and cultural consistency
Bergin, Hudson, Chryst, & Resetar (1992)	24 K–3 at-risk youth	Small group literacy skill building and other activities	Quasi-experimental (participant and control)	Participants had higher reading scores
Cosden, Morrison, Albanese, Brown, & Macias (2001)	90 students followed from 4th–6th grades with mixed ability and English proficiency	Homework assistance with a credentialed teacher after school 3 to 4 days per week (no drop-in)	Experimental (stratified random assignment of 4th graders to treatment and control groups)	No differences between treatment and controls; dosage correlated with achievement; protective function for LEP students.
Halpern (1992)	500 inner-city 5–12-year-olds	Homework help and other activities	Qualitative analysis	Programs offered safety, structure, and predictability
Morris, Shaw, & Perney (1990)	20 low-achieving 2nd- and 3rd-grade students	Reading with specialist and volunteers	Quasi-experimental (participant and comparison groups)	Participants had better word recognition and spelling scores
Morrison, Robertson, Harding, Weissglass, & Dondero (2000)	350 students from low-income schools; 175 with at-risk status	Homework assistance, tutoring, and cultural enrichment	Quasi-experimental (participant and comparison groups)	Program served a protective function; dosage was important
Pedraza & Ayala (1996)	Ethnically diverse, low-income elementary school children (no <i>N</i> provided)	Academic and cultural activities	Qualitative analysis	Children showed increased academic motivation
Posner & Vandell (1994)	216 low-income 3rd-grade students, 34 in formal after-school care	Formal after-school programs that could include homework assistance	Quasi-experimental (formal after-school programs, self-care, maternal care, adult supervision)	Formal after-school programs associated with better work habits, adjustment, and peer relations
Ross, Saavedra, Shur, Winters, & Felner (1992)	Approximately 400 K–6th-grade African American latchkey children	Homework and other activities; self-esteem, and decision-making curriculum	Quasi-experimental participant and control groups	No differences in self-esteem or depression
Tucker et al. (1995)	148 low-achieving, low-income, African American students in 3rd and 9th grades	2-year program of academic tutoring and adaptive skills training	Quasi-experimental (experimental, enrichment, contrast groups)	Default control group had lower math GPA.

Note. K = kindergarten; LEP = limited English proficiency; GPA = grade point average.

middle-class values of from the beginning to the rd grades for all participants. This is despite the after-school program con- ideology endorsed by the op in grades to a lack of d to the fact that racism, society as a whole, was ructors. Although this is was only tested with mi- ther nonminority youth ram or not.

programs has been to assist skills. After-school pro- lows children to interact One of the key features nce of adult supervision n who attend formal af- ore time with adults than rams (Posner & Vandell, ective factor, correlating ted adult supervision is a ed likelihood of children

t after-school programs

grams that provide academic support or homework assistance. These programs are discussed next.

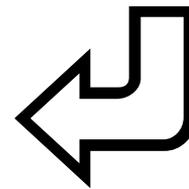
Programs That Offer Academic Support

Several programs have described the use of general academic support not associated with special school curricula. In each instance, these after-school programs have enhanced positive school adjustment for participants. For example, Bergin et al. (1992) documented the effects of an after-school academic program that served low-socioeconomic African American children. The children attended the after-school reading and instructional program 4 days a week from kindergarten through first grade. By the spring of first grade, children in the treatment group had higher achievement-test scores in reading, language, and math than did children in the control group. Moreover, the treatment children also received significantly higher report card grades in reading and reading effort than matched controls. Similarly, an after-school program that provided tutoring 4 days a week to second- and third-grade children who were delayed in their acquisition of reading, found improvements in the reading and spelling scores of participants compared to those in a matched control group (Morris, Shaw, & Perney, 1990).

longing, improvement of study skills and cognitive strategies, and motivation (Cooper et al., 1998; Pedraza & Ayala, 1996).

A study by Tucker et al. (1995) contributes to a more complex way of understanding the role that after-school academic assistance can play in student schooling outcomes. These authors evaluated an after-school program that included 1 hr of academic tutoring, along with adaptive skills training for 45 min for low-achieving and low-income African American students in elementary and high schools. The authors found that after 2 years there were no significant increases in grades for students in the treatment group; however, the control group showed a significant decrease in their math grades. This finding suggests that the after-school program served as a protective factor for children who participated; that is, the program arrested a negative trajectory of school performance for students who received the tutoring.

Considering program implementation as a form of “protection” or resilience enhancement reframes the thinking about appropriate outcomes for after-school intervention programs. That is, educators often consider improvement in outcomes (whether academic or personal–social) as their primary goal. The Tucker et al. (1995) study suggests that when working with at-risk populations, a preliminary step is to arrest the backsliding that students are likely to experience over their schooling career. As an example of this dynamic,





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What Did We Learn?

- Intervention specifics including dosage required for desired outcomes
- Are our output and outcome targets reasonable (given our population and dosage)?
- Do we need to tweak our intervention to make it more effective in creating our desired outcomes?
- Do we need to find go back to the drawing board and retool our intervention?