

Welcome to the APS Research to Practice Webinar Series!



This webinar is sponsored by the joint research committee of the National Adult Protective Services Association and the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, with support from the National Adult Protective Services Resource Center and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. Presenters generously donate their time and expertise. Points of view or opinions are those of the presenter(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or views of the sponsoring or supporting organizations/entities. None of the sponsoring or supporting organizations/entities, its agents, funders, or employees bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations of the presented research.



“Principles of effective evaluation and research capacity building in APS”

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Note: A copy of today's presentation slides will be available along with a recording of the webinar on NCCD's website within two weeks from today's presentation.

Research and Evaluation Capacity Building in Adult Protective Services

April 24, 2013

National Adult Protective Services Resource
Center and hosted by the National Council
on Crime & Delinquency

Presenters

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- Rebecca Berman, Ph.D., Senior Co-Investigator, Leonard Schanfield Research Institute, CJE SeniorLife, Chicago, IL
- Lisa Peters Beumer, Assistant Vice-President, Adult and Senior Services, Easter Seals

Focus of Today's Webinar

1. What is research and evaluation capacity building and why is it important?
2. What is a learning organization?
3. What are the foundational principles of research and evaluation capacity building?
4. What is required for effective capacity building?
5. ASSERT: A research and evaluation capacity building program for social and human service organizations
6. Easter Seals: Case example of how one organization has used this model
7. What are the challenges to developing an effective capacity building strategy for your organization?

Audience Poll

During your work with APS, have you (or others at your agency/organization) participated in a research or evaluation study (i.e., data collection, pulling files, providing quantitative information about cases, etc.)?

How helpful were the results?

- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not very helpful
- Not at all helpful
- Didn't see the results

What is Research and Evaluation Capacity Building?

Research and evaluation capacity building is a **process** in which an organization seeks to achieve a state where members can engage in successful inquiry in an on-going, routine manner

Why Is Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Important?

- Meet increasing demands for demonstrating results and outcomes of APS interventions
- Clarify APS organizational priorities and purposes, and identify potential conflicts in goals
- Provide information in order to improve efficiency and efficacy of programs/operations
- Proactively adjust service priorities to accommodate changing demographics, political climate, etc.
- Forecast potential changes in service utilization patterns and need for different model of client/service mix

Audience Feedback

What are other examples of why research and evaluation capacity building is important, within the context of your own setting?

(Submit comments to Kathy Parks)



What Will Engagement in Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Do For You?

- Improve your ability to:
 - Engage in the “thinking” behind relevant, useful research
 - Identify research problems and frame appropriate questions for investigation
 - Choose appropriate methodologies, such as surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, case studies
- Make you a more educated consumer of APS-related research
- Foster communication and collaboration between agencies and professional researchers or evaluators

The Idea of “Organizational Learning”

Research and evaluation capacity
building also effects change at the
organizational level



What is Organizational Learning?

- Organizations and groups can learn *collectively*
- *Organizational learning* involves acquiring, sharing, and using new knowledge across an organization
- Organizational learning is "...a continuous process of growth and improvement that (a) is integrated with work activities; (b) invokes the alignment of values, attitudes, and perceptions of organizational members; and (c) uses information or feedback about both processes and outcomes to make changes" (Preskill and Torres, 1999:p.9)
- Organizational learning necessitates ongoing inquiry through dialogue, reflection, asking questions, and clarifying values, beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge (Preskill & Torres, 1999)

Realigning Values to Foster Organizational Learning

minimal competence	—————>	continual improvement
fear of failure	—————>	risk-taking
individual performance	—————>	group performance
competition	—————>	cooperation & collaboration
appraisal & criticism	—————>	coaching, support, feedback
one “right” answer	—————>	discovery of possibilities
abstract, logical, reasoning	—————>	intuition, relationships & contexts
outcomes	—————>	process

Examples of Capacity Building Strategies

1. Asset identification and asset mapping
2. Appreciative Inquiry
3. Technical assistance and development
4. Communities of Practice
5. Mentoring
6. Apprenticeships
7. Technology
8. Written materials

Audience Poll

Does your organization currently support or sponsor any organizational learning opportunities?

Yes or No

If Yes, what are some examples?
(Submit to Kathy Parks)



Two Foundational Principles of Research and Evaluation Capacity Building

When organizations systematically gather information in an ongoing and routine manner they can use that information to understand and improve program processes and outcomes.

When agency leaders and stakeholders participate in and actively promote research, they are more likely to encourage use of research findings and facilitate organizational learning.

What is Required for Successful Research and Evaluation Capacity Building?

- Shared desire to find ways to create greater understanding
- Opportunities for learning at the individual, team, and organizational level
- Willingness to examine how organizational processes affect the ability to measure program outcomes
- Opportunities for practitioners to examine programs and processes and identify factors that affect programmatic success or failure
- Opportunities for staff to reflect on what they do, why they do it, and to share their thoughts



Questions for Micki

ASSERT: A Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Program



- ASSERT (Assistance, Services and Support for Evaluation Research Training) is an innovative, collaborative model for building research and evaluation capacity in social service and community organizations and agencies using a participatory action research approach
- Program has been tested with over 20 aging and human services organizations (total of more than 75 individual participants)

The development of ASSERT was funded by the Retirement Research Foundation and the Michael Reese Health Trust.

The ASSERT Model

- Initial planning meeting with agency/organizational staff
- Half day workshops
- Participation by a team from each organization
- Completion of an evaluation project in conjunction with workshops
- Technical assistance and consultations provided to each organization



Questions for Rebecca

Case Study

Lisa Peters Beumer
Assistant Vice-President
Adult and Senior Services
Easter Seals

Case Study: Easter Seals

- The importance of engagement in research and evaluation capacity building for Easter Seals
- Challenges
- Positive outcomes
- Sustainability
- Lessons Learned

Questions for Lisa

Challenges to Research and Evaluation Capacity Building

- Time constraints
- Anxiety about evaluation
- Mistrust of evaluators and researchers
- Change in leadership
- Lack of clear vision of potential benefits
- Internal organizational obstacles:
operational and infrastructure
- Tendency for executives to delegate
- Lack of funding for evaluation activities,²⁴
especially capacity building

To Be Successful:

- Continually assess ability to follow through on capacity building tasks
- Adjust expectations
- Involve of key stakeholders
- Dedicate time and people to the research or evaluation process
- Encourage researchers to listen and learn the language of practice
- Promote the rewards of conducting research in a practice setting

For More Information

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