

why?

Fact sheet 2

Why use the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes to monitor and evaluate?

What is monitoring?

Monitoring is about collecting information in order to keep track of what is happening in your organisation. You can monitor things like who does or does not come to sessions, reactions or comments from service users or any other information that helps you to track how your activity is doing. You can use the information you gather to report on your project and to help you evaluate.

So, what is evaluation?

Evaluation is about using monitoring and other collected information, including service user feedback, interviews or questionnaires, to make judgements about how a project is doing. This information can be used to promote and build on a project's success and to make changes and improvements where they are needed.

And what is an outcome?

Outcomes are all the changes and effects that actually happen as a result of your project, expected or unexpected, welcome or unwelcome. This is different from outputs, which are the products or services an organisation offers or provides to its users. For example, an output would be the number of people regularly attending a karate club, but an *outcome* would be young people becoming fitter.

But why evaluate in the first place?

- ~ It enhances practice and fosters change – what you learn can help you strengthen what is going well and change what is not.
- ~ For accountability to your users and funders – you can use evidence to show that you are getting the right results.
- ~ It helps staff develop, learn from what they are doing and take ownership of the project and its outcomes.
- ~ It provides new information, which can lead to more, deeper questions that will further improve the project's impact.

The five Every Child Matters outcomes are:

- ~ Be healthy
- ~ Stay safe
- ~ Enjoy and achieve
- ~ Make a positive contribution
- ~ Achieve economic well-being

But what does it mean to monitor and evaluate using the outcomes?

The five outcomes are universal ambitions for children and young people, whatever their backgrounds or circumstances, which provide a framework for measuring how circumstances are improving for them. Organisations involved with providing public services to children and young people, including the voluntary and community sector, will have to show how they are working towards ensuring that all children and young people achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

So, to monitor and evaluate using the five outcomes means that each outcome of a project should fit into the outcomes framework. In most cases, if your project aims to improve the lives of children and young people, your outcomes will fit into the Framework. For more information about the framework go to <http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00331-2008.pdf>

But why do it? (please turn over)

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But why do it?

Many grant streams came to an end in 2008 and certain services now will be funded through children's trusts arrangements. In order to secure funding from children's trusts voluntary and community organisations involved in delivering public services to children and young people will need to show that they have rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes and that their outcomes are aligned to the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

Should an organisation do it even if it is not planning on delivering public services?

The five Every Child Matters outcomes are mapped against the rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. You may find that the outcomes are a useful way of explaining what your project aims to do. For more information about the outcomes and the UNCRC go to www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/uncrc/

Examples

No one organisation can deliver the whole of the Every Child Matters agenda, but each individual project contributes to one or more of the five outcomes. Below are two examples that show how the aims of specific projects can fit into the Outcomes Framework.

Restorative Justice in schools

introduces and supports processes in schools whereby students take responsibility for wrongdoings, are accountable for actions and are supported in making amends to those harmed.

The outcomes of this project are:

Be healthy (includes mental and emotional health): Increased emotional intelligence, children and young people are listened to and have opportunity to talk, improved self-esteem

Stay safe: Children and young people feel safe in school, take responsibility for their behaviour and develop their own strategy for healing conflict

Enjoy and achieve: Children and young people feel included in the school environment and have opportunities to be involved

Withington Playgroup

is set in a small, rurally isolated Cotswold village and is run on a school site. The school has 'Healthy School status' and the children benefit from this.

The outcomes of this project are:

Be healthy: Children's bodies and minds are active with 'Wake and Shake' sessions, Children eat healthy cooked lunches

Achieve economic well-being: Flexible, full daycare provision that supports parents returning to work or education

Make a positive contribution: Children help make their snacks, clear the table and do the washing up

But what is it? (please turn over)