



Evaluation Basics for the Impact Eager, Resource Meager

Presenters:

Sara Beggs, Association of Small Foundations
Catherine Gura, Children's Guild Foundation

GEO Learning Conference, June 3, 2013

1



- Understanding of the many benefits of evaluation and its critical role in your foundation's impact.
- Familiarity with the 5 simple steps of an evaluation process;
- Inspiration to learn more so that you can start on the pathway to incorporating evaluation into your foundation's work.

2

Evaluation for Small Staff Philanthropists

Systematic process of
asking questions,
collecting related information, and
learning from the findings
in order to
improve your foundation's effectiveness and
often **tell** the story of change

3

Setting the record straight on evaluation...

- Evaluation is about **improving** not proving.
- Evaluation is about **learning** not judging.
- Evaluation **need not be exhaustive or expensive to be effective.**
- Evaluation is **for all foundations that want to improve their work.**
- Evaluation can be **right-sized, even benefitting grantees.**

4

Benefits of evaluation



Ingredients for successful evaluation

- Board buy-in
- Strong relationships with key grantees
- Clarity about grantmaking goals and strategies

6



Our Mission:

We seek to affect change, provide opportunities and promote inclusion and diversity for children with special needs and their families, by advocating for and funding organizations in Western New York that provide programs and services for these children in the areas of healthcare, research, education, and therapeutic recreation...

Kids with special needs



Autism

7



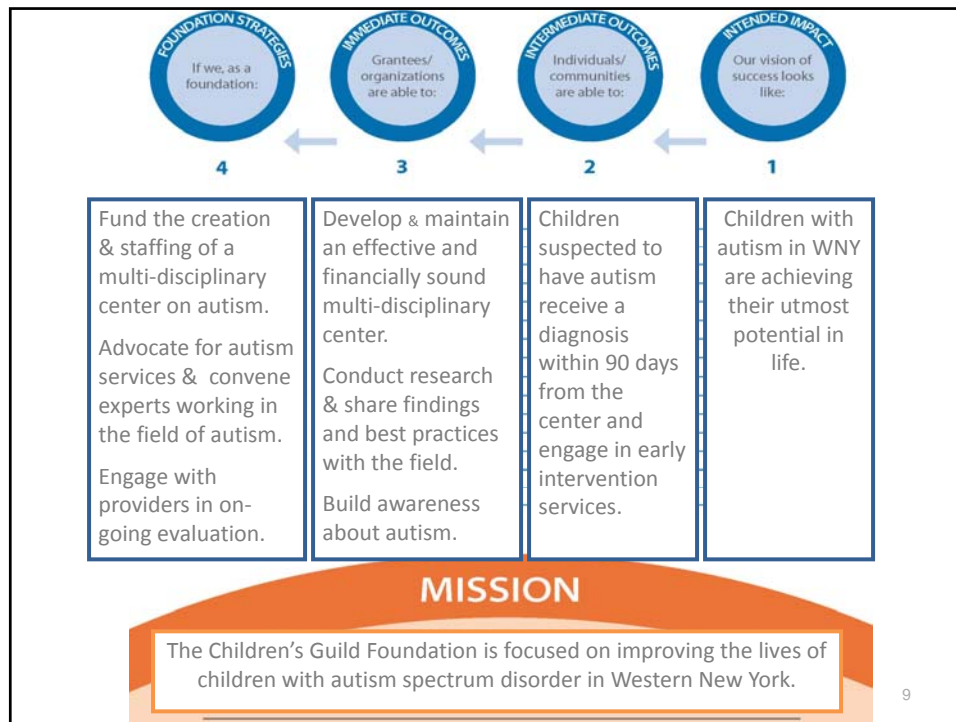
Foundation resources

- Money
- Ability to convene
- Visionary board
- Risk Tolerant

Community Needs

- Make early intervention happen

8



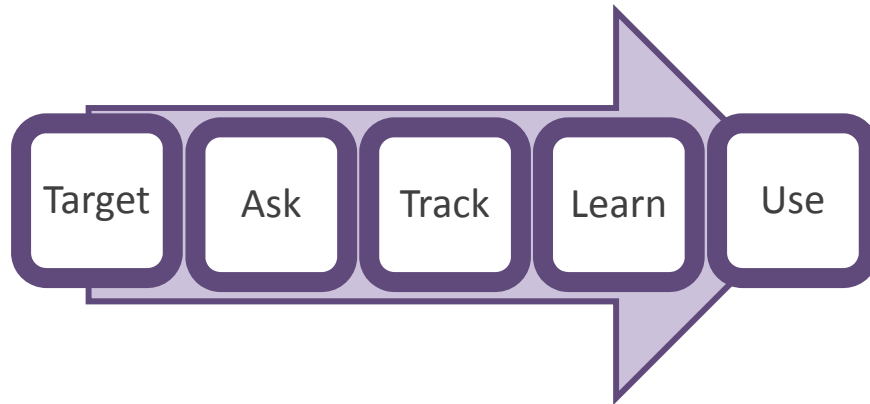
Ingredients for successful evaluation

- Board buy-in
- Strong relationships with key grantees
- Clarity about grantmaking goals and strategies
- A plan for evaluation before you make the related grants

And most importantly...

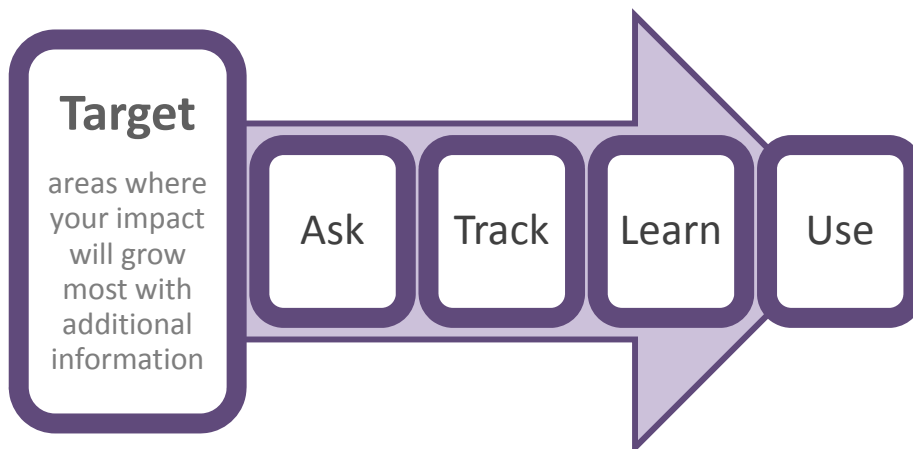
- Desire to learn and improve

A simple evaluation process or plan consists of:

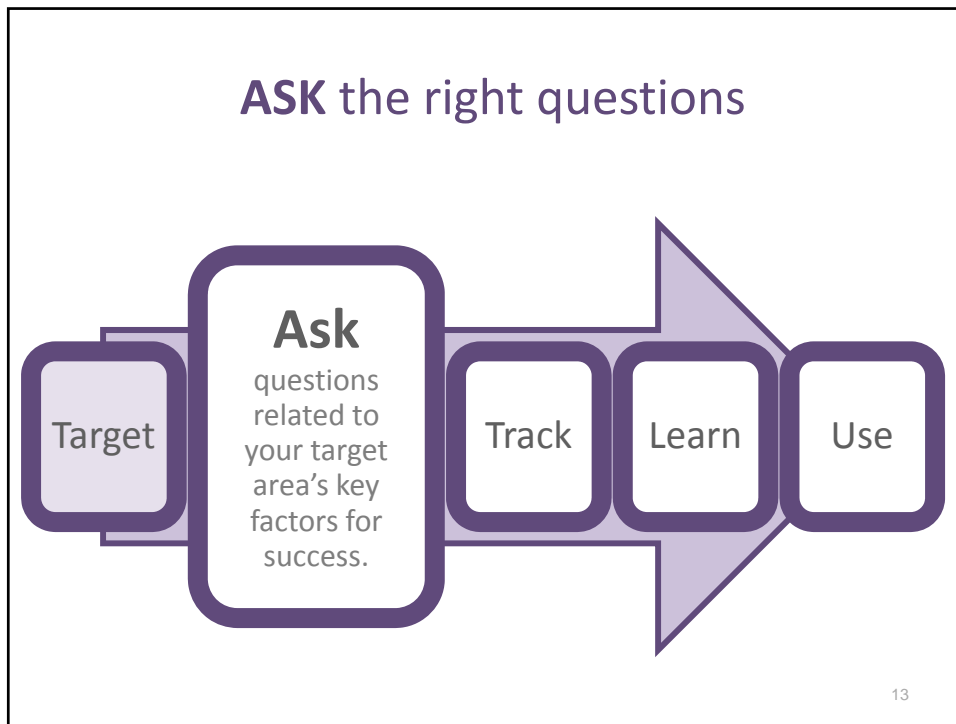


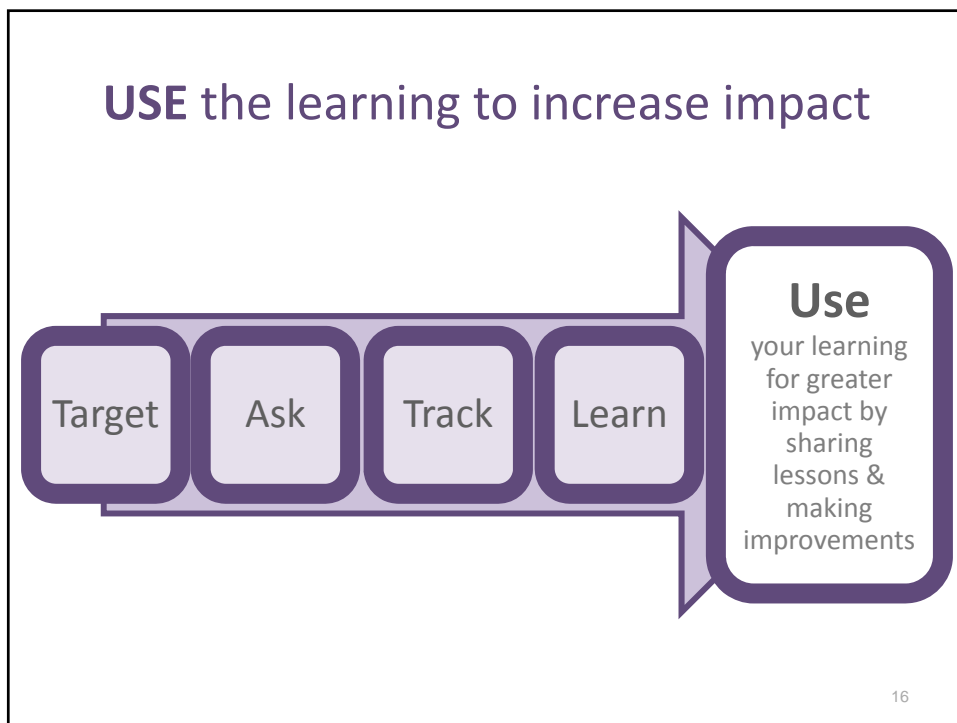
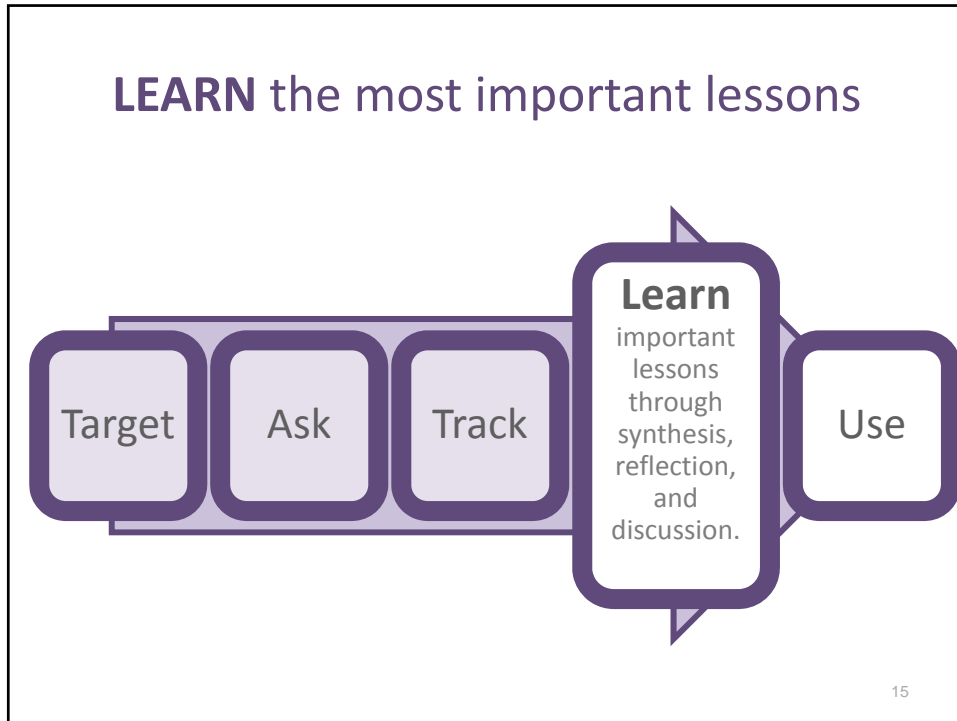
11

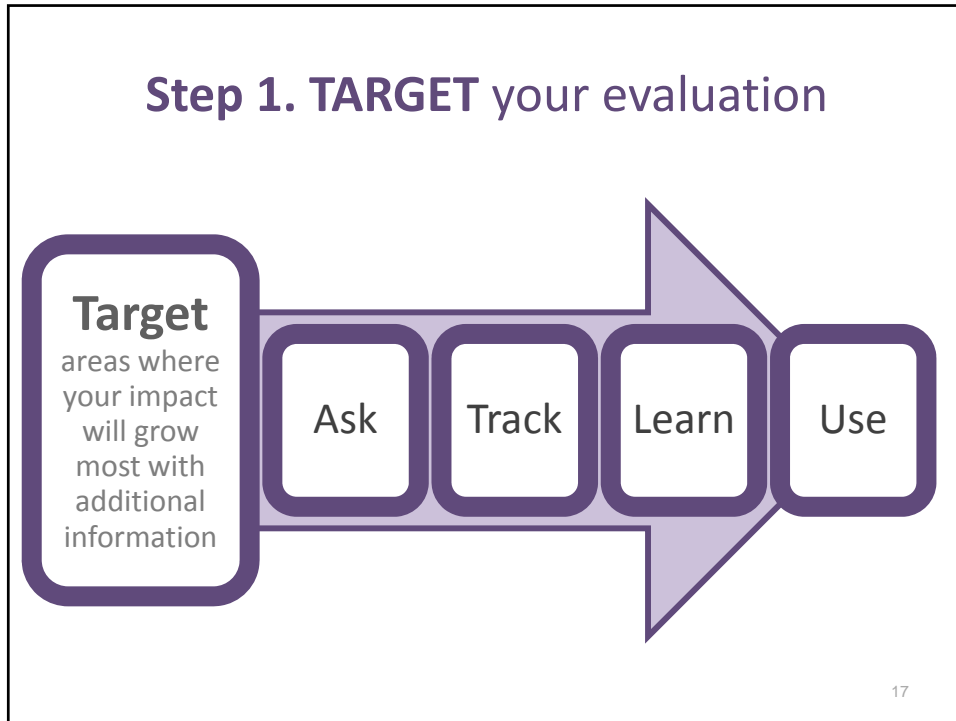
TARGET your evaluation



12







TARGET

Prioritize: ↑ information → greatest ↑ of impact.

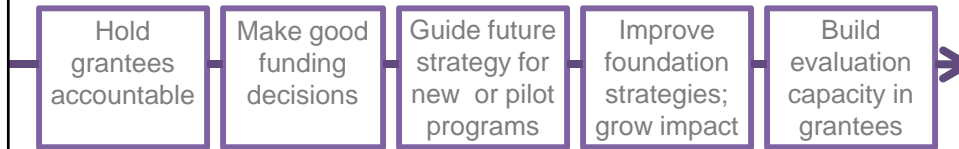
- New funding area?
- A significant % of total funding?

Examples:

- Effectiveness of capacity building grants
- Impact of PRI grants
- Effects of funder collaborative on grantees & field

18

TARGET: Lens of Motivation



Tips:

Choose ONE major program area to evaluate;
Make more specific if possible.

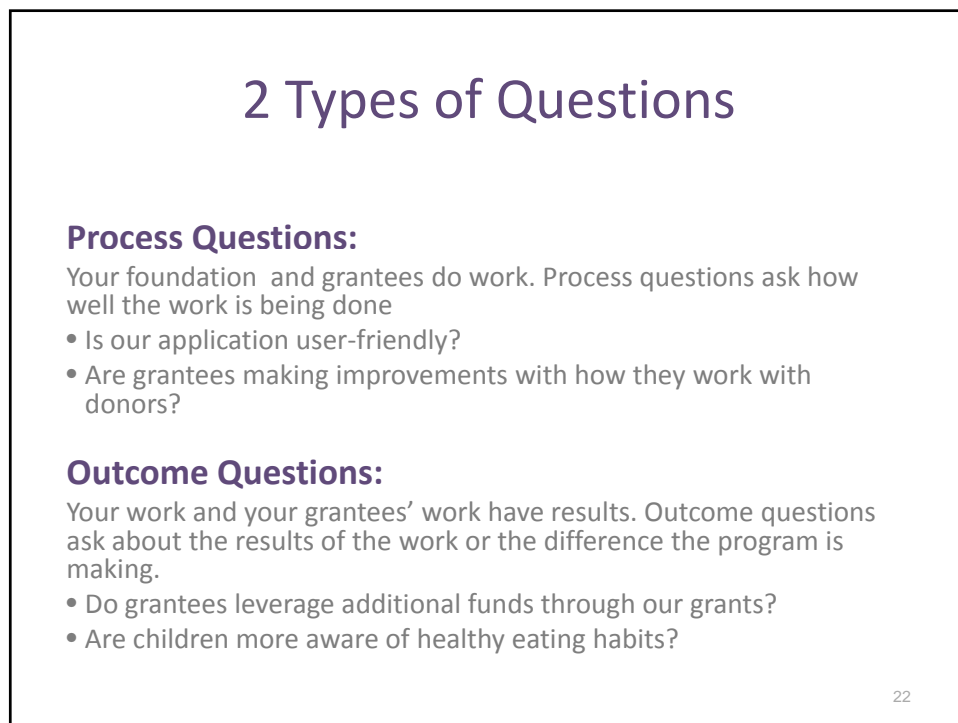
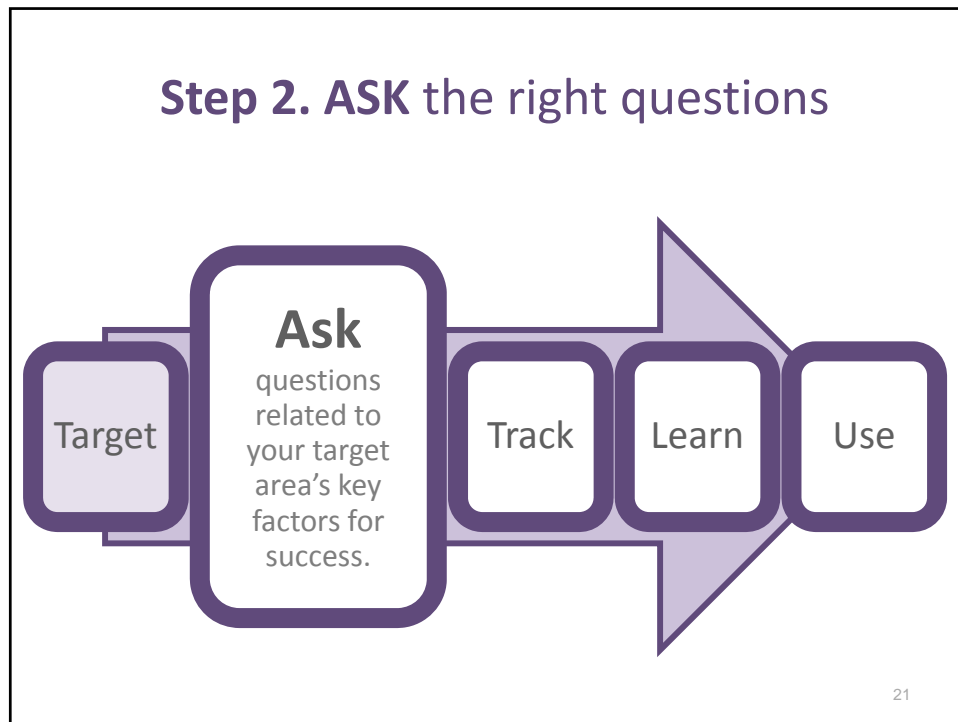
19



What did we TARGET?

Is the multi-disciplinary center on autism effective at helping kids with autism?

20



ASK

- What is key to success in your target area?
- Is the question as specific as possible?
- Is it in my area of influence?

23



What did we ASK?

Targets	Asks
Is the multi-disciplinary center on autism effective at helping kids with autism?	Are children properly diagnosed within 90 days?
	Is the multi-disciplinary center becoming financially stable?

24

Step 3. TRACK only what you need



25

TRACK: Understand indicators

An **indicator** is a **key** piece of information that will show if you are making **progress** toward your desired **outcomes**, or how you might increase that progress.



Indicators can be quantitative or qualitative.

- Percentage of arts grantees that retain key staff for 3 years or more.
- Reasons arts staff do not stay in senior positions.
- Number of students that successfully completed the college prep course.
- Perceived barriers to completing college prep courses.

27

Indicator example #1

Target: Are our capacity building grants in fundraising helping to increase the organizational sustainability of our grantees?

Question: Are grantee board members participating in fund development?

Indicators:

- % of board members giving personally?
- list of board fund development committee activities.
- ?

28

Indicator example #2

Target: Job training initiative for homeless people in which foundation partners with 15 organizations

Question:

Is the job training initiative leading to jobs?

Indicators:

- % of grantee's clientele that receive jobs after attending the skill building programs
- Barriers to attaining jobs reported by applicants
- ?

29

TRACK: Developing indicators

- Generate indicators & prioritize 1-3 per question;
- Build consensus on indicators with grantees by:
 - Remembering their mission.
 - Communicating your desire to learn, not judge.
 - Providing technical assistance to grantees.
 - Coming to consensus; be willing to make changes.
 - Doing a reality check to see if indicators are SMART (specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, time-bound)
- Finalize 1-3 indicators; only ask if you'll use it!
- Place indicators in a tracking work plan

30

TRACK: Create a tracking work plan

For each indicator:

- Goal
- Data Source
- Method of collection
- Person responsible
- Time frame for collection
- Date for review of data



Then, align grantmaking with evaluation!



What did we TRACK?

Asks	Tracks	Method	Discovers
Are children diagnosed within 90 days?	Source of referrals;	Hospital records	
	# of days between first call and first visit		
	% of kids receiving diagnosis at first visit;		



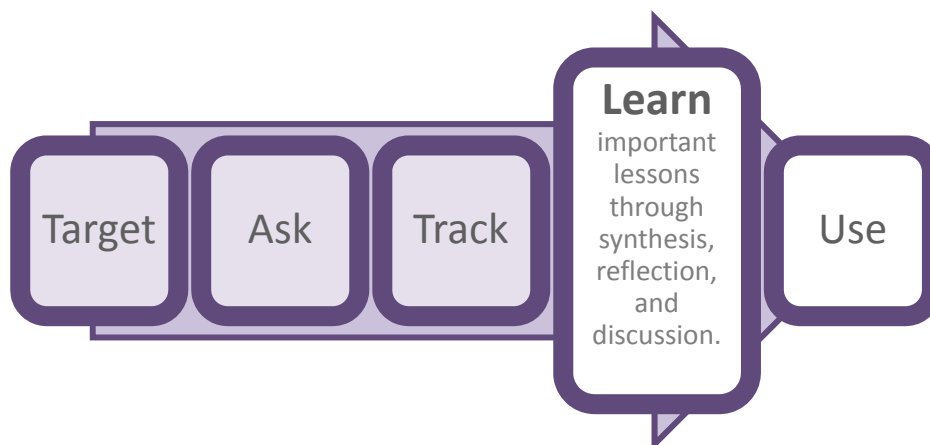
The Children's Guild
 FOUNDATION
Purpose and Passion for Children with Special Needs

What did we TRACK?

Asks	Tracks	Method	Discovers
Is the multi-disciplinary center becoming financially stable?	1. Cost savings per visit	Hospital billing dept.	
	2. % reimbursed by insurance companies		

35

Step 4. LEARN the most important lessons



36

You'll waste a lot of people's time
and money (including your own!)
if you neglect to engage in the
following 2 steps to
LEARN and **USE**.

37

Keys to LEARNING

- Have the right attitude
- Set aside sufficient time to:
 - Input and reflect on data
 - Create a report that people can understand and digest
 - Plan for a thoughtful discussion



38

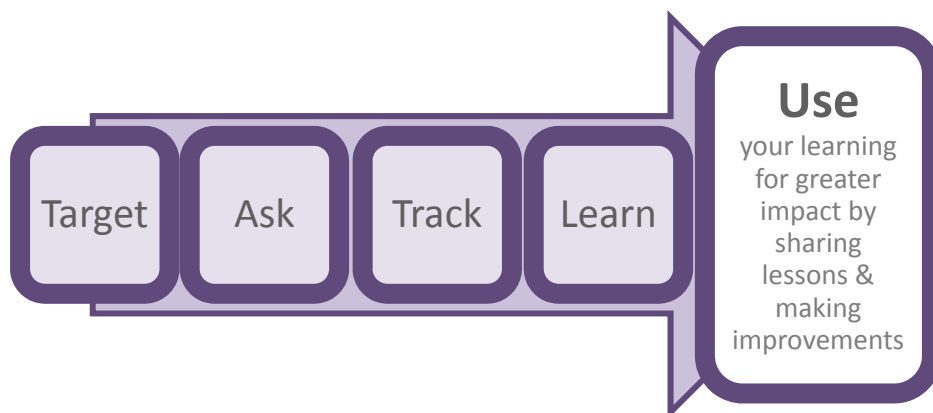


What did we LEARN?

- Referrals from only 12 of 583 physicians, suggesting minimal reach to physicians.
- Diagnosis time improved greatly, but could not be sustained without hiring more staff.
- Rapid diagnoses depended on highly trained staff, which are not available without significant and costly training.
- Reimbursement rates were unexpectedly low.
- Cost of visits produced huge cost savings for the hospital and insurance providers.

39

Step 5. USE the learning to increase impact



40

USE the learning to increase impact

- Your foundation
- Your grantees
- The field

41



What did we USE in our foundation?

- Referral data suggested that we need to add to the evaluation so we better understand why only 12 physicians referred children to the program;
- Data led us to change our application and review processes – to ask the right questions, ridding the processes of extraneous information.
- Data helped convince our foundation that we really could address systemic issues and see results.
- Data helped us prioritize training and hiring additional staff over marketing projects.

42



What did we USE with grantees?

- Share baseline knowledge with all grantees so they better understand the field;
- Advocate for hospital with insurance companies to increase reimbursement rates
- Data is used to show effectiveness of program, helping the hospital to earn title of one of the Top 10 Children's Hospitals in the country in 2010.

43



What did we USE with the field?

Held convenings and meetings with a broad range of individuals and organizations involved in the care of children with autism. These included:

- Health care professionals:
- Funders: Private, corporate, and community
- Government Offices: State and federal
- Political Leaders: State legislators, congress and senate.
- Health Insurers
- Educators: teachers and administrators
- Parent support groups and networks
- Media reporters: series of articles in daily papers
- Medical and behavioral researchers

44



The Results after 3 Years

- Diagnosis times have been reduced from 18 months to a median of 58 days.
- Clinic sees 250 new patients a year, for a total of more than 1200 patients per year.
- Referrals were made by 188 different physicians due to extensive marketing and education efforts.
- Family support groups have been created, starting with 2 year 1, expanding to 14 in year 3.
- Insurance reimbursement per visit increased from \$12 in year 1 to \$68 in year 3.
- Clinic has reached its goal of becoming a break-even facility.
- Formal collaboration with area researchers is in place.
- Hospital has been recognized nationally for its work in autism and the clinic model.

45

Evaluation can be a continuous cycle that allows you to **know** your impact and **increase** it as well.



46

ASF Resources

www.smallfoundations.org

Getting to Impact Discussion Series: Discussion guides to facilitate meaningful conversation with your board or community.

Getting to Impact Primer Series: Learn the basics of planning and evaluation.

Twenty Ways to Make a Difference Primer

Discussion list: Ask questions of fellow ASF members and share tips and good practices.

47

Resources

Four Essentials for Evaluation

www.geofunders.org

Developmental Evaluation Primer

www.mcconnellfoundation.ca

Evaluation Principles and Practices


www.hewlett.org

48


Thank you!

Sara Beggs
 202-580-6560
sara@smallfoundations.org

Catherine Gura
 716-362-9650
cgura@thechildrensguild.org



Hau'OLI MAU LOA
FOUNDATION



Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation conducted its first biennial survey of Partners (grantees) in December, 2011 to learn how satisfied its partners are and how it might improve in its role as a funding partner. The following is a summary of the findings which were shared with Foundation Board and summarized for Partners.

Target	Ask	Track	Learn	Use
Effectiveness of the Foundation in serving its Partners	1. Is the Foundation knowledgeable about your organization and its work?	Implemented a 15 question anonymous Survey Monkey survey to grantees. Response rate was 85%. Survey included Likert scaled questions and open-ended questions.	Area for most improvement: 50% rated "very knowledgeable" about communities and fields; 50% rated foundation as "knowledgeable"	Committed to site visits with Partners we had not previously visited. Used summer intern to conduct research on two communities in which Partners are working.
	2. Can you come to the Foundation with a problem?		88% reported "very comfortable"; 12% "comfortable"	Continue to regularly engage Partners in discussion.
	3. How effectively does the Foundation communicate its goals?		69% reported "very effectively"; 31% "effectively"	Drafted and posted an additional paper about strategy.
	4. Is the amount of engagement from the Foundation enough?		100% reported amount of engagement was "just right"	Continue to monitor.
	5. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Foundation, compared to other funders you work with?		94% reported overall satisfaction is "significantly better than most"; 6% reported "better than most"	Survey will be administered again in 2013.

50

James Foundation

Makes capacity building grants to arts organizations for improved organizational health and convenes organizations to build better bridges between them.

51

James Foundation TARGETS

Test the effectiveness of their strategies of capacity building and convening in the arts community

52

James Foundation ASKS

- Have the capacity building grants led to stronger arts organizations?
- Have the convenings with other arts organizations resulted in productive collaboration?

53

James Foundation TRACKS

- Q1: Capacity building grants lead to stronger arts orgs?
- % of grantees that achieved 75% of their capacity building goals
- Q2. Did convenings lead to productive collaborations?
- % of grantees who could report a new positive collaborative experience with another local organization.
 - Specific experiences and key factors responsible for positive collaborative outcome.

54

James Foundation Evaluation Workplan

Focus #1: Test the effectiveness of their strategies of capacity building and convening in the arts community

Question	Indicators	Info Source	Method	Timeframe	Reviewed
#1 Have the capacity building grants led to stronger arts organizations?	% of grantees that achieved 75% of their capacity building goals.	Grantees	Grant application & report	3/30/13	Kate: 5/30/13 Board: 6/30/13
#2 Has convening with other arts organizations resulted in productive collaboration?	% of grantees who report a positive collaborative experience with a local organization.	Grantees and foundation	Grant application & report; foundation calls	3/30/13	Kate: 5/30/13 Board: 6/30/13
	Specific experience & key factors to positive collaborative outcome.		Grant report & interview	4/15/13	Kate: 5/30/13

55

James Foundation LEARNS

Question #1: Have the capacity building grants led to stronger arts organizations?

Indicator	Grantees %	Key Info	Overall %	Lessons Learned/Trends
% of grantees that achieved 75% of their capacity building goals	#1: 50%	High goals	50%	1. Grantees need help in setting reasonable goals – a capacity issue.
	#2: 100%	Low goals		
	#3: 25%	ED left w/o successor		2. Set expectation that grantees meet w/ foundation if crisis
	#4: 80%	Reasonable goals		

56

James Foundation LEARNS

Question #2: Has convening with other arts organizations resulted in productive collaboration?

Indicator	Grantees info	Key Info	Overall	Lessons Learned/Trends
Specific collaborative experience & key factors that resulted in positive outcome	#1: joint marketing	Led effort to collaborate with grantee #2 & #4. Amazing leader.		1. Not everyone could lead a collaboration. Has to be the right person. 2. Easiest when orgs complement each other rather than compete 3. Must be respect between all orgs involved. 4. Scarcity of resources makes collaboration an even scarier prospect.
	#2: joint marketing	Willing participant		
	#3: nothing	Did not attend convenings, due to missing ED		
	#4: joint marketing	Surprised by success of collaboration, but concerned it will impact their own funding		

57

James Foundation USES

Lesson Learned	How can you achieve a greater impact?	Priority/ Due Date?	Who Responsible?
1. Grantees need help in setting reasonable goals.	Have process to review/revise goals before giving the money.	1 month & quarterly	Jen & Kate
2. Set expectation that grantees meet w/ foundation if crisis.	Add note to grant agreement that nonprofit must contact foundation if crisis	1 month	Peter
3. Grants cannot be successful if lacking leadership.	Incorporate leadership into grantmaking decision matrix & develop process to assess status	1 month/ 12/31/10	Jen & Kate
4. Not everyone can lead a collaboration. Has to be the right person.	Consider giving training grants to those who show potential.	Consider in 2011	all
5. Scarcity of resources can discourage collaboration.	Talk with other funders – how resolve?	Keep in mind	all

58