Tier Two: Accountability

The purpose of Tier Two is to gather process data to demonstrate program accountability. Your evaluation team will gather information that documents:

- Stakeholders of the program and the evaluation;
- Who and how many are receiving services;
- Services received; and
- Process of program delivery.

You need to show that your program serves those it was intended to in the manner proposed in Tier One.

Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders are those who are "directly or indirectly affected by the implementation and results of social programs" (Rossi & Freeman, 1993). Below are some questions to help identify the stakeholders of your program and evaluation.

1) Who is the population targeted for services?

2) Who are the people involved in developing and running the program?

3) Who are the major decision makers?

4) Who operates the program?

5) Who are the key community players?

6) Who are the funders?

7) What other community groups might be affected by the program (e.g., teachers, other service providers)?

8) Who else, not previously mentioned, might be interested in the results of the program (e.g., anyone in the local or state government)?

For more information on including stakeholders, go to:
http://www.wkkf.org/Publications/evalhdbk/chapter5.htm

Program Participants

In Tier One, you considered what groups of people the program would serve. In Tier Two, you will examine who the program actually serves to show stakeholders that it serves those it was intended to serve.

First, document demographic characteristics of participants, such as age, gender, ethnicity, SES, marital status, etc.

Second, document participant characteristics that might influence the effectiveness of the program (e.g., whether there are books in the home, whether parents regularly read with children).

Third, document how many have been served by your program.

The Program Participants Worksheet at the end of Tier Two provides items to facilitate the discussion of whether participants are those intended for services.

The program was designed to target elementary school children who were experiencing reading problems (grades below "B-"). At the onset, teen volunteers were used as tutors; however, once implementation problems were resolved, teens at risk for high school drop-out were to be trained as tutors.

The intake form for children participants (completed by parents) requested basic demographic information, such as ethnicity, age, and gender of the child, SES and marital status of parents, number of children in the home, etc. It also asked whether participants had ever received additional help in reading, whether they were currently receiving additional help in reading, and how often the parent, or someone in the home, read with the child.

The team found that the program was serving a diverse population in terms of gender, ethnicity, parents' marital status, and how often someone read with participants. In addition, it was discovered that some participants did not meet the "B-" criteria.

The teens filled out a similar basic demographic form, but answered additional questions regarding other volunteer activities, personal hobbies, and life dreams and goals.

The background information collected on teen tutors revealed that tutors in the pilot program had always done well in school, were ethnically diverse, and varied in age and gender.

At the time, records indicated that the program had served 20 children and had trained eight teen tutors.

Program Activities

In addition to documenting whom the program served, it is important to document services provided and the amount of service each participant received. A program may be designed to provide specific services, but unanticipated events may prevent this from occurring. This problem can be easily overlooked if the program manages to produce positive outcomes even when failing to function at 100%. The Program Activities Worksheet provides discussion items to document program activities. For a description of ways of collecting process evaluation data, go to http://www.nnfr.org/eval/pareval/pareval_eval.html

In the initial stages of program implementation, the pilot reading program produced only modest results. Observational data collected by the team, coupled with teens' written reports, revealed that tutors were spending an average of 15 minutes per session on actual reading assignments. Too much time was spent dealing with discipline problems. The team also noted that some children attended more regularly than others.

Process of Program Delivery

The final task of Tier Two is to document the process of program delivery. This information will be critical to your process evaluation. The team will discuss the process of participant recruitment and service delivery to identify program strengths and weaknesses. The Program Delivery Worksheet will facilitate this discussion. For more information on documenting program delivery, or implementation evaluation, go to http://www.wkkf.org/publications/evalhdbk/chapter4.htm. Then scroll down to a gray box entitled "Implementation Evaluation: Understanding How the Project was Implemented."

Upon examination of participant recruitment procedures, it came to light that a few of the first children referred to the program were those that caused trouble during lunch time. As a result, teen tutors spent the majority of their time trying to get these children under control and very little time tutoring. Another issue that came to light was also unexpected. As parents learned about the reading program, some became overly enthusiastic and went to great lengths to see that their child was admitted to the program even though the child's grades did not meet the criteria.

Several challenges relative to the teen tutor recruitment process were anticipated. It was expected that initial volunteers would, more than likely, be teens who did well in school. Now however, effective recruitment and training procedures of at-risk teens needed to be developed.