



Incorporating Client Values in After-School Program Evaluations:

Results from Woodcraft Rangers' Nvision After-School Program
Quality Assessment and Student Outcomes Evaluation

Dr. Lisa Garbrecht, EVALCORP

Role of Valuing in Evaluation



Customized Approach to Evaluation

- Working with clients to assess and quantify what is most important to them
- Consulting on application of findings for highest use and value
- Valuing as a key component in Woodcraft Rangers After-School Program evaluation, guiding:
 - Evaluation design
 - Methods for data collection and analysis
 - How findings are ultimately put to use

Woodcraft Rangers



Woodcraft Rangers After-School Program

- At over 60 public schools across Los Angeles County
- Elementary, Middle and High Schools
- High quality program model includes structured segments with student-driven club activities
- Goal is to decrease risk factors impinging on children and youth and to increase their chances for success in school and in life
- Objectives:
 - Improved school attendance, attitudes toward school
 - Enhanced academic performance and language development
 - Strengthened social and leadership skills
 - Improved physical activity

Evaluation Design



- Phase I: Site Implementation Study (2008-2009)
 - Explored the quality of implementation of Woodcraft Rangers (WR) program model
- Phase II: Quality Assessment and Student Outcomes Evaluation (2009-2010)
 - Examined if and how program quality is associated with student outcomes
- Phase III: Application of Findings for Quality Assurance and Improvement (2010-Present)
 - Applied findings to further develop ways to monitor quality and develop improvement strategies

Quality Assessment Evaluation Methods



Secondary Data Analysis

- Site Coordinator Survey data collected in Site Implementation Study
 - Examined if WR model, vision and assumptions about implementation are supported by field experiences
 - Surveys completed at 57 sites
- WR Youth Baseline and Year-End Survey data
 - Collected between July 2006-June 2009
- Los Angeles Unified School District and Garvey School District data

Quality Assessment Analytic Approaches



Two approaches:

- Factor Analysis Approach
 - Factor analysis of Site Coordinator Survey to identify categories of quality
- Benchmark Approach
 - “Benchmark” of high quality site set by WR administrators was compared to Site Coordinator responses
 - Used to examine site scores and their relationships to youth outcomes and transform site scores into categories

Multiple regression analyses used to associate factors/benchmarks with student outcomes

- Performed separately for elementary and middle schools
- Controlled for school sociodemographic data and student program attendance

Findings on Quality Factors



Three key areas of site quality identified by factor analysis:

- Core elements (school collaboration, site schedule, student input)
- Cycle plans
- Value of ad hoc assistance
- Mixed ability of quality factors to predict youth outcomes
 - In elementary schools, ad hoc assistance was associated with 4 youth outcome areas and cycle plans with 3 outcome areas
 - In middle schools, core elements was associated with 7 outcome areas and cycle plans with 5 outcome areas

Quality Benchmarks



Quality Ratings

- Scores given for each “category” of implementation
 - Categories: cycle plans, time distribution, club activities, student engagement, club contributors, staff value, club selection, student involvement, parent involvement, school collaboration, facilities access, site coordinator qualities, and program staff qualities

Findings

- In most cases, the quality benchmark categories predicted positive student behavior

Desired Student Outcomes Associated with Quality Categories for Elementary School Programs



Desired Student Outcome	Significantly Associated Quality Categories
Increased CST Math scores	Club Activities & Access to Facilities
Increased school attendance	Club Contributors
Increased homework/learning skills	Value of Staff, Club Selection & Areas of Excellence
Increased pro-social skills	Time Distribution & Club Contributors
Increased use of academic skills	Student Engagement, Club Contributors , Student Involvement & Program Staff Qualities
Increased positive attitude toward school	Club Contributors
Increased positive attitude toward after-school experience	Value of Staff & Site Coordinator Qualities
Increased interest in after-school activities	Club Activities, Club Contributors , Student Involvement, School Collaboration & Program Staff Qualities
Decreased problem/risk behaviors	Club Contributors , Value of Staff, Club Selection, Access to Facilities & Site Coordinator Qualities

Desired Student Outcomes Associated with Quality Categories for Middle School Programs



Desired Student Outcomes	Significantly Associated Quality Categories
Increased CST ELA scores	Club Contributors, Club Selection, Student Involvement , Parent Involvement, School Collaboration, Access to Facilities, Site Coordinator Qualities, Program Staff Qualities & Overall Score
Increased CST Math scores	Student Involvement , School Collaboration
Increased school attendance	Access to Facilities, Site Coordinator Qualities & Program Staff Qualities
Increased homework/learning skills	Value of Staff, Student Involvement , School Collaboration, Access to Facilities & Site Coordinator Qualities
Increased use of academic skills	Cycle Plans, Time Distribution, Value of Staff, Access to Facilities & Site Coordinator Qualities
Increased positive attitudes toward school	Cycle Plans, Time Distribution, Value of Staff, Student Involvement , Access to Facilities & Overall Score
Increased positive attitude about after-school experience	Value of Staff, School Collaboration & Access to Facilities
Increased fitness	Cycle Plans, Student Involvement , School Collaboration, Access to Facilities & Site Coordinator Qualities
Decreased problem/risk behaviors	Cycle Plans, Value of Staff, Student Involvement , School Collaboration, Access to Facilities, Site Coordinator Qualities & Overall Score

Implications of Findings



Program quality is useful in predicting student outcomes, even when controlling for environmental factors and time student attends the program

- Evaluation of program quality may be key to understanding student outcomes, as some sites experience better outcomes than others
- Incorporate student outcomes as a measure of quality
- Examine relationships between student outcomes and key program areas instead of linking outcomes to the entire program
- Quality should be assessed differently based on school level

Usefulness of Findings to WR



- Lends credibility to the WR program model and its components
 - Not all aspects of the program are equal – some appear to be related to many outcomes while others are not
 - How sites implement the program is related to student outcomes
- Provides a framework for assessing quality in WR model
 - Subjective assessment of program quality is useful in predicting student outcomes
- Provides data on quality of program implementation at each site
 - Site level profiles of program quality and student outcomes

Application of Findings



- Process overall findings with staff in trainings, getting site staff input on findings and ways to improve quality of program implementation
 - Examine findings by school level to determine implementation needs in order to obtain desired student outcomes
- Review site level findings with specific sites, addressing areas for improvement
 - Staff of sites closest to benchmark were observed and serve as mentors to sites needing improvement

Application of Findings



- Develop a quality improvement plan to monitor fidelity of implementation to the WR model
- Identify staff competencies around areas linked to outcomes
 - Apply to staff hiring criteria and interview protocol
 - Assess and improve staff competencies
 - Customize staff training modules covering
- Disseminate findings for use in the field
- Continue to use student outcomes as a measure of program quality



For Additional Information:

Cathie Mostovoy

Chief Executive Officer

Woodcraft Rangers

cmostovoy@woodcraftrangers.org

www.woodcraftrangers.org

Kristen Donovan, Ph.D.

Principal Consultant

kdonovan@evalcorp.com

Lisa Garbrecht, Ph.D.

Research Associate

lgarbrecht@evalcorp.com

www.evalcorp.com