



Evaluation Bootcamp Resources

Centre for Youth and Society

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Evaluation Ice Breakers:

Creative methods guide early discussion

Jump start your program evaluation with these creative and easy to use tools! Making time for these important conversations beforehand can provide insights and ideas into what your evaluation process will look like, what areas your organization should focus on, and how to prepare for issues that may arise.

You can begin this process by asking the right question. Here is an inspiring article that explores the art of asking powerful questions in evaluative research:

<http://www.theworldcafe.com>

Another great tool is Iceberg. This simple yet effective activity illustrates how one word can have multiple meanings, which catalyzes discussion on how these different views affect your program or research.

"Iceberg" is a simple exercise that brings awareness and insights into the complexity of just one word.

It is a method modeled on the premise that only the tip of an iceberg is visible, while 90% of the volume is below the surface.

This parallels the complexity of language, as one word can have deeper meanings and interpretations that "lurk" beneath the surface. Use this tool with a word or words that are related to your youth or family program and discover how different conceptualizations of one word represent various values and beliefs. With this comes powerful insights into what your program may mean for others and facilitate clear conversations.

To facilitate your own Iceberg discussion, follow these simple steps:

1) *Start by drawing an iceberg*, and at the tip write down a word that is important to your program or research.

Example: "Parenting"

2) *Discuss with your group what that word means.*

Explore what it means to you, what it may mean for those in your program, and what it can mean to society. Write these words and phrases on the submerged part of the iceberg.

Example: Parenting means emotional and financial support, Parenting means sacrifice.



3) *Notice the values and core beliefs associated with these meanings.* From the contributions, themes can be discovered, and new insights into a simple word can be gained.

Example: Many people discuss how important physical and mental health of the parents is vital to a healthy relationship.

Example: "Parents" may also include aunties, uncles, grandmothers, etc.

What would an evaluation be without a few dilemmas? With some discussion and planning, however, your team can tackle sticky situations with insight. Visit Dilemmas in Evaluation - What would YOU do? to explore some issues that may arise.

Dilemmas in evaluation can and certainly do arise. However, group discussion about specific dilemmas before the evaluation process begins can help your team come up with ideas on how to deal with sticky situations. Using the 6 dilemmas below created by Karen Potts is a great way to get your group involved by asking:

"What Would YOU Do?"

Dilemma 1: Selective Targeting

In the non-profit agency where you work, your manager has asked you to carry out a "client satisfaction survey." She has told you that your agency's funding is in jeopardy and she needs some "hard data" to demonstrate the good work that the agency is doing. She specifically suggests that you be sure to contact Client X and Client Y to participate, because they have had very good experiences with your agency and are doing very well. What would you do?

Dilemma 2: Hearing From the People for Whom the Program Didn't Work

You've just finished facilitating an 8 week parenting program. The 10 participants who are graduating from the program have loved it. However, the program started with 14 people. If you only complete the evaluation with the 10 who graduated you know you'll get a lot of positive feedback. However, information from the 4 for whom the program didn't work for might actually provide insight into how the program needs to change to. How do you reach these 4 participants and include their information?

Dilemma 3: Incentive or Coercion?

Your executive director is hot on new technologies for evaluation. She encourages you to use Survey Monkey to get program evaluation data from participants. She also suggests offering a cash prize for those who fill out the evaluation in order to get a larger response. Do you offer an incentive in exchange for program evaluation data?

Dilemma 4: Balancing Anonymity and Accountability

You run a program for "involuntary clients," clients who are obligated to attend due to a probation order. They know you report to their probation officers. When you ask for feedback personally, the participants say everything is fine. When you do anonymous evaluation surveys, the responses can be quite nasty. Neither method gives you a particularly useful data. What do you do?

Dilemma 5: Getting Results Acted On

Every time you run your program, you get great feedback from participants about how things could be organized differently and work better. You always send your evaluation results to your executive director, and she takes them to the Board. But, the Board just thanks you for your good work. None of the more difficult, critical suggestions get acted on. What do you do?

Dilemma 6: The Purpose of the Evaluation, for Change or for Funding?

You are a service provider in an after school program, you would really like to know how you could improve your program. You would like to encourage kids and parents to give you serious, critical feedback about what you can do differently. However, all your evaluations go to your funder. You know your funder needs to make some budget cuts and is looking to cut some of their less successful programs. What do you do?

Quilt Stories:

Using quilting squares as a way of gathering stories in evaluation research

Quilt Stories: Quilting As Data Collection

The construction of quilts can provide a creative, non-verbal form of gathering data in evaluative research. Making individual quilt squares and sewing a collective 'story' provides a means of individual and collective expression for those who may not otherwise have the confidence or literacy to do so.

The act of quilting together and creating folk art to answer a particular question, or address a specific aspect of one's life, can provide a safe and accessible space to talk about potentially challenging or difficult issues. Participants start the conversation with by quilting a square.

In qualitative research, quilting can provide information about progress in a program participant's experience, or show where significant changes might have occurred: " In what way has your life changed because of this program?"

"Valuation"

Using Appreciative Inquiry to build an asset based approach to your evaluation design

The Appreciative Inquiry model is an assets-based approach to doing research that

Using the World Café model for evaluating program impacts

Watch a short video in which people from around the world speak to what is possible with this innovative research tool. For Guidelines, Checklists and Graphics, check out the World Cafe Website!



Knowledge Mobilization:
Innovative ways to share your evaluation findings

Conducting a program evaluation is only part of the work. How can we ensure that evaluative findings are acted upon?

One step, certainly, is getting the information discovered through the evaluation into the hands of people who can act upon it. Knowledge mobilization, in part, means making the evaluation accessible. The development of new knowledge is important, but making sure it inspires action requires you to disseminate in ways that look beyond writing formal reports.

A number of different stakeholders may be interested in the evaluation findings: staff, board, funding partners, researchers, parents, families, and the youth themselves. Assuming that not everyone has time to read a long report – what other vehicles can we use to communicate our evaluation findings?

At CFYS we use a number of youth-friendly instruments and the best among these are often designed by the youth themselves. As you report on your evaluation – consider using creative methods of dissemination, including posters, graphic novels, board games (that you could play at a staff meeting), infographics, etc.

Here are a few examples:

Evaluation Research Poster - The art of making a clear and informative evaluation poster.

Creating a research poster:

A large-format research poster is a document that can communicate your research at a conference, boardroom or community event. Formats vary, but posters are generally composed of a short title, an introduction to the evaluative research question, an overview of your approach, key results, some discussion and next steps, as well as a list of stakeholders.

Example posters:

[“Poster Sessions”](#) is a group on Flickr, where users have contributed 100s of photographs of research posters at meetings and conferences.

You can also check out the photo galleries of research posters from UVic and Vancouver Island Psychology students at the PSOVIPS poster fair in 2009, 2010 or 2011.

Animate your ideas- See how graphic facilitation can be used to illustrate a lecture and make ideas more accessible, such as Sir Ken Robinson's talk on [Changing Education Paradigms](#). Other videos by [RSAnimate](#) include such diverse topics as brain structure and function, the role of internet in society, capitalism and economy, and empathy.

Infographics- These visual representations of information can successfully communicate research or evaluation findings, on anything from [incarceration in the United States](#), to [youth cell phone use](#), to [education](#). See more on the [Infographics Showcase](#), a collection of some of the best on the web.

Graphic novels- Check out an example page from a graphic novel that CFYS is creating on literacy of youth in detention.

Participatory Photography:

Photography gives youth a voice and a can illustrate changes they wish to see

Photovoice is an effective form of participatory action research that uses photography as a creative approach to explore different human experiences and to work for social and personal change. The photographs become the basis for group discussion of community issues and concerns. Images and words then become tools for understanding an individual's experience, which is useful in evaluating program effectiveness and is often used in working towards social change.

Click here to visit a leading [Photovoice website](#) - Participatory Photovoice for Social Change.

Manuals and Toolkits:

[\(PDF\) Photovoice Manual](#): a comprehensive photovoice manual developed by Prairie Women's Health Centre.

[See it Our Way](#): Participatory photography as a tool for advocacy. This resource is designed to introduce organizations and individuals who advocate on behalf of marginalized communities to an effective tool for involving their beneficiaries in the development and implementation of effective advocacy campaigns.



Example photovoice projects:

[\(PDF\) A photovoice participatory evaluation](#) of a school gardening program through the eyes of youth.

[The Photovoice Hamilton Youth Project](#). This is a brief, inspiring video documentary of a youth engaged photovoice project in Hamilton Ontario.

[An Urban Native Youth Association](#) photo-voice project. In this project, four youth learned photography techniques and actively engaged in exploring what they believed needed to be voiced about their local community.

[Youth in Focus](#) is an afterschool program that uses intensive photography training as a tool to help disadvantaged teens develop personal voice, positive identity, social skills and artistic skills.

[Kids with Cameras](#) is a non-profit organization that teaches the art of photography to marginalized children in communities around the world.

Collage and Drawing as Data:

Moving beyond words and developing 'data' through the collective use of images

Arts-based methods for gathering data offers a medium to express thoughts and feelings that may not have been as easy to express with words. Using arts and crafts provides a safe and creative environment for which participants can have the freedom to use a variety of tools like photos, markers, paint, etc, to find images that symbolize what they are going through and what they would like to have change.



Collage As Data: Use this method to get participants engaged in discussion on relevant topics for your program or research. We recommend providing a variety of photos or images and blank paper as a canvas. Ask a question important to your evaluation, for example "What would you like to different in your life after completing our program?" Notice themes and anomalies that emerge, which provide insights into how effective your program is.

Drawing is also an important tool in gathering data, especially when working with children. For example, many therapists and art-therapists use drawing activities to establish a relationship with their child clients.

Engagement Through Film:

Using videos made by youth to explore salient issues

Engaging youth through film is an exciting way to give those involved a voice and a unique medium to express themselves. Using this method also teaches youth the skills and techniques of film making.

InsightShare, a leader in participatory video, explains the method as:

"a set of techniques to involve a group or community in shaping and creating their own film. The idea behind this is that making a video is easy and accessible, and is a great way of bringing people together to explore issues, voice concerns or simply to be creative and tell stories."

"This process can be very empowering, enabling a group or community to take action to solve their own problems and also to communicate their needs and ideas to decision-makers and/or other groups and communities. "

"As such, participatory video can be a highly effective tool to engage and mobilize marginalized people and to help gather their stories in ways that build individual and collective capital".

For more information, visit their website here: [Insight Share](#)

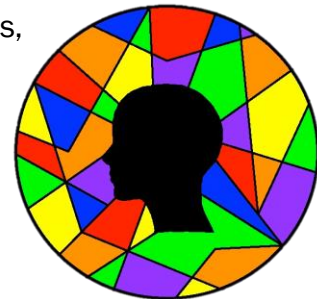
[Insights into Participatory Video: A Handbook for the Field](#), by Nick and Chris Lunch from Insight Share

Possible Selves Mapping Process (PSMP):

A culturally sensitive tool for career and life exploration and decision-making

A way of exploring and understanding participants' goals, hopes, fears, and expectations, right now and in the future.

Everyone thinks about their goals and hopes, even their fears, for their present and future lives - for example, what subjects they might like to study, what kind of work they would like to do, where and how they would like to live, and also what things they don't want to have happen to them.



The PSMP is a particular way of exploring and understanding people's goals, hopes, fears, and expectations right now and in the future.

Here is a clip from the possible selves DVD:

CFYS Director Anne Marshall and Student Affiliate Francis Guenette have just published a manual and DVD of the Possible Selves process. For more information please contact us at cys@uvic.ca.

Participative Evaluation:

Engaging youth in the evaluation process

Youth participatory evaluation is an approach that engages young people in evaluating the programs, organizations, and systems designed to serve them. Young people conduct research on issues and experiences that affect their lives, often developing knowledge about their community that can be shared and put to use. There are different models of this type of collaborative research; some are completely driven by youth, while others are conducted in partnership with adults.

[Summary of Youth Participation Evaluation](#) from ACT (Assets Coming Together) for Youth Center of Excellence based out of the University of Cornell in New York.

Toolkits for conducting youth engaged participative evaluation:

- [\(PDF\) Reflect and Improve](#) This tool kit is produced as a result of a four-year joint initiative of the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development and the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University. The kit provides resources to engage young people and adults in the evaluation of community-building initiatives from a participatory, empowerment-oriented perspective.
- [\(PDF\) Participatory Evaluation with Young People](#)
- [\(PDF\) Facilitators Guide to Participatory Evaluation with Young People](#) These guides were created by the Michigan Youth and Community Program based out of the University of Michigan. Both documents offer practical tools and learning activities to use in your community program.





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