Context Sensitivity in a Multi-site Process Evaluation

WMU Evaluation Center, Operation Frontline, FLIPANY

November, 2009
• Operation Frontline (OFL)
  – Overview of program
  – Purpose of the evaluation

• The Evaluation Center (TEC)
  – Interest in evaluation
  – Who was involved

• Florida Introduces Physical Activity and Nutrition to Youth (FLIPANY)
  – Overview of program
  – Perception of evaluation
Operation Frontline

- Share Our Strength’s Operation Frontline is a chef-led nutrition education program for families at risk of hunger.
Operation Frontline

- Chef volunteers team with nutrition educators to provide cooking-based classes that teach how to prepare healthy meals on a limited budget.
Operation Frontline

• Each participatory multi-session course features:
  – Hands-on meal preparation
  – Practical nutrition information
  – Food budgeting and shopping techniques
  – Groceries to take home to practice the recipes taught in class (for adult and most teen classes)
Operation Frontline

- 5 Nutrition Curricula
  - *Eating Right* for adults
  - *Side by Side* for parents and kids
  - *Kids Up Front* for children 8 to 12
  - *Power of Eating Right* for teens
  - *Step Up to Eating Right* for pregnant and parenting teens

- 1 Financial Literacy Curriculum
  - *Saving Smart, Spending Smart* on household money management
Operation Frontline

- Insert PSA
Share Our Strength partners with:

Local or regional nonprofits, which coordinate classes with:

Community-based agencies, which serve as class host sites and help recruit participants from the target population

PARTICIPANTS: 51,500 TO DATE

- Improved food choices and food safety practices
- Enhanced self-efficacy in cooking and food preparation
- Empowered to share knowledge and skill with families and friends
Operation Frontline: Growth

Current: 22 Programs in 17 states and DC
Planned: 30 programs in 24 states plus DC by 2011
Operation Frontline: Growth

• Goal is to reach 30 local programs by 2011.
• Goal is to increase average courses/program to 40 by 2011.
Operation Frontline: Growth

• More local programs and more courses per local programs means lots more courses!
Overview

Current Program Evaluation:

• Participant Outcome evaluation
• Monthly Reports gathered
• Site Visits
• Trimester Calls
• Annual Partner Survey

Purpose of Process Evaluation Project:

• to measure the current level of program implementation
• to inform a formalized monitoring system
Overview: The Evaluation Center

• Mission: To advance the theory, practice, and utilization of evaluation
• Vision: To pursue interdisciplinary evaluation opportunities on the local, national, and international levels
• Activities:
  – State-of-the-art evaluation
  – Development of innovative evaluation methodologies
  – Evaluation services to nonprofit agencies, government agencies, foundations, school districts, and colleges
  – Research and evaluation dissemination
  – Thought leadership
The Evaluation Center: Interest in OFL Evaluation

- Match with team interests
- Multisite evaluation
- OFL interest in evaluation
- Eclectic evaluation approach
Overview: FLIPANY

- Florida Introduces Physical Activity and Nutrition to Youth (FLIPANY)
  - Overview of program
  - Perception of evaluation
Planning the Evaluation: Contextual Considerations

• TEC
  – Site selection
  – Budget limitations
  – Timing
Planning the Evaluation: Contextual Considerations

- **OFL**
  - Relationships with Local Partners
  - Continuing to cultivate a positive evaluation culture
  - Serving the role of ‘matchmaker’

- **FLIPANY**
  - Internal preparation
  - Notification of volunteers, host sites, and participants
Implementation

- **TEC**
  - Site visits: 12 Classrooms
  - Validation of observation instrument
  - Interviews:
    - 9 OFL staff
    - 3 AmeriCorps volunteers
    - 9 chefs
    - 8 nutritionists
    - 3 other volunteers
    - 31 participants
  - Questionnaire to all partners
Implementation

- **OFL**
  - Feedback on tool development
  - Testing of the observation tool

- **FLIPANY**
  - Time burdens
  - Feedback from staff, volunteers, and sites
Findings and their use

- **TEC**
  - Summit
  - Report to OFL and 4 local partners

- **OFL**
  - Review of draft report
  - Current projects, tools, initiatives developed as a result
  - Future goals for evaluation use

- **FLIPANY**
  - Enhanced volunteer and coordinator trainings
Questions