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ABSTRACT

The handbook is intended to assist evaluators working with preschool model demonstration projects funded by the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP). Background on HCEEP is provided, and the function of evaluation within the network is emphasized. A section on planning evaluations deals with such aspects as focusing, planning specific evaluation strategies, considering evaluation methods, selecting instrumentation, and planning for reporting and implementing the evaluation. The roles of the Joint Dissemination Review Panel, designed to assess the effectiveness of federally funded programs, are considered with special emphasis on the relationship of HCEEP and the review panel. A final section presents suggestions on procedural and personal matters for evaluation consultants. (CL)

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AN EVALUATOR'S RESOURCE HANDBOOK

FOR THE HANDICAPPED CHILDREN'S EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM

by

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Office of Special Education
Project Officer to TADS
Dr. David Rostetter

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Thanks to one and all.

Pat Vandiviere
Tanya Suarez
August 1980

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook provides descriptive information, suggestions, and reference materials for internal evaluators, evaluation consultants, and external evaluators who work with preschool model demonstration projects funded by the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP). The purposes of the Handbook are:

1.) to provide a description of HCEEP demonstration projects and some basic information concerning the concept of and activities for the model development for which they are responsible;

2.) to describe evaluation needs and planning considerations for the projects;

3.) to provide information on the Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP) as it relates to HCEEP; and

4.) to describe consultation strategies and provide suggestions and hints for evaluation consultants when they are working with HCEEP projects.

It is important to specify here what the Handbook is not: it is not a textbook on program evaluation, nor a manual for total program evaluation design. It does not contain a complete guide to instrumentation for documenting child or parent change, nor does it provide data analysis guidelines. Each of those topics has been covered previously in many excellent manuals and books, and a list of selected references in each area is provided in the Appendix for interested readers.

The Handbook, instead, is intended to be used to help evaluation consultants understand the context of evaluation in HCEEP, to plan thorough yet realistic evaluations, to understand the purpose and function of JDRP as it relates to HCEEP projects, and to utilize their evaluation skills productively in their relationship with projects.

EVALUATION IN HCEEP - THE CONTEXT

EVALUATION IN HCEEP - THE CONTEXT

Introduction[1]

The Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP) began as a small program of 24 grants for demonstration projects in 1969. The program was designed to: a.) promote the development of locally-designed ways to serve handicapped young children and their families; b.) gather information on effective programs and techniques; and c.) distribute visible, replicable models for services to this population throughout the country.

Over the years the program has expanded to meet the emerging needs of this field. HCEEP is now comprised of approximately 200 projects in five component areas (Figure 1). As described in the figure, the technical assistance centers provide assistance to demonstration projects and state implementation grantees. Technical assistance in evaluation, the topic of this Handbook, is provided primarily to demonstration projects.

The Demonstration Projects

During 1979-80, the then Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (now the Office of Special Education [OSE] in the new U.S. Department of Education), funded 127 three year demonstration projects across the country. Of these 35 were in their first year, 39 were in their second and 53 were in their third year of operation. While varied in many ways, these and other demonstration projects that have been funded through HCEEP focus on

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[1]Portions of this introduction were taken from The 1979-80 Overview and Directory for the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program. Seattle, Wash. and Chapel Hill, N.C.: WESTAR and TADS, March, 1980.

Figure 1

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN'S EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM

PURPOSE: TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG HANDICAPPED CHILDREN (BIRTH TO EIGHT YEARS) AND THEIR FAMILIES

PROJECTS	DEMONSTRATION	OUTREACH	STATE IMPLEMENTATION	EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTES	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS
GOALS	DEVELOPMENT OF EXEMPLARY MODELS, DEMONSTRATION AND DISSEMINATION	STIMULATION OF INCREASED AND HIGH QUALITY SERVICES	IMPLEMENTATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD STATE PLANS	LONG TERM INVESTIGATION OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF EARLY EDUCATION FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS AND STATE IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS
ACTIVITIES	SERVICES TO CHILDREN SERVICES TO PARENTS STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EVALUATION DEMONSTRATION AND DISSEMINATION	BROAD DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION STIMULATING ADDITIONAL SERVICES TRAINING CONSULTATION STATE INVOLVEMENT AND COORDINATION	ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS TRAINING DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	RESEARCH INTO DIRECT APPLICATION OF EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN TYPICAL SETTINGS	ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS PROGRAM PLANNING EXPERT CONSULTATION EVALUATION
ELIGIBLE PARTIES	PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT AGENCIES	PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, NON PROFIT AGENCIES	STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES	PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT AGENCIES	PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, NON PROFIT AGENCIES
TYPE OF FUNDING	GRANT	GRANT	GRANT	CONTRACT	CONTRACT
FUNDING PERIOD	3 YEARS, ANNUAL RENEWAL	3 YEARS, ANNUAL RENEWAL	1 YEAR POTENTIAL 1 YEAR RENEWAL	5 YEARS POTENTIAL 5 YEAR RENEWAL	3 YEARS, ANNUAL RENEWAL

development and services in four major areas: 1.) services for children; 2.) services for parents; 3.) staff development; and 4.) demonstration/ dissemination.

Services for Children

Approximately 3,600 children were served by the projects during 1979-80. As in previous years services were developed and provided to children with a variety of handicapping conditions. Over 25% of the children served were multihandicapped. Most of the children served were between the ages of 0-5. Recent initiatives have expanded the number of programs serving the youngest (ages 0-2 years) and more severely handicapped children. Depending on the type of program they have, proposed projects may serve single age groups, e.g. infants, or multiaged groups. They may also serve children with the same handicapping condition or a variety of handicapping conditions.

The services provided to children also vary. The primary philosophical base for the services spans a continuum from child-centered (experiential) to teacher-directed (behavioral) learning. Approximately half of the projects describe their approach as "diagnostic-prescriptive." The focus of services is on child development in the area of language-communication, sensorimotor, social-emotional, cognitive-academic and self-help development. In keeping with Public Law 94-142, educational services for the children are individualized, and described in each child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Services are provided, again depending on the program, in the home, at centers, in public schools and hospital and health care centers.

Services for Parents

Each HCEEP demonstration project must provide services for the parents of the children that are served. The services may be designed to encourage

parents to become involved with the project in a number of ways, such as serving as volunteers, informing the public or other agencies of the needs of handicapped children, or attending parent group meetings. In other projects, the parents may be the target for direct project services, such as learning to be their child's teacher, or learning successful parenting techniques. Parents also are involved with the development of the IEP for their child, and frequently serve on project advisory councils.

Staff Development

A third program component which is included in most project plans is the professional development of the project staff. Recognizing that the varied demands of model program development may require many new skills, projects are encouraged to include professional development funds in their budgets, and to develop a plan for the professional growth of each staff member.

Demonstration and Dissemination

During the three years of federal funding, HCEEP projects are expected to develop a program model and to document its use. After the model is developed, projects demonstrate it to other interested professionals. Demonstration activities are frequently conducted at the project site, and involve showing and/or teaching others how to implement project activities.

In addition, projects are involved in disseminating information concerning the project. Dissemination activities may include the development of brochures and slide-tapes to be used for widespread dissemination of project information; personal, face to face communication; newspaper articles; speeches and presentations before professional and lay groups; and other similar activities. No matter what method is used, the purpose of

dissemination is to increase awareness of the project services and model, and to encourage others to consider replicating or adapting the model in order to increase services to young handicapped children.

The Concept of Model Development

The previous description of the origin and purposes of HCEEP and of typical project program components serves as background information for understanding the notion of model development--the basic purpose and goal of each demonstration project.

While three years may seem like a long time when the grant award notification is first received by the project, the fact is that there is much to be accomplished during this time. Model development is a complex and challenging task. It is important for evaluation consultants to be aware of the many and varied responsibilities and activities of the project staff in relation to model development and to assist them in designing an evaluation which will demonstrate the effectiveness of the specific, important characteristics of their particular model.

In order to assist project personnel and others to understand the model development process, TADS,[2] WESTAR,[3] and OSE[4] have collaborated to produce the Model Development Guide (Figure 2). The guide provides a task-by-time planning framework, outlining four stages of program development (Planning, Implementation, Evaluation/Modification and Maintenance). In

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[2] Technical Assistance Development System, a Division of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

[3] Western States Technical Assistance Resource, a Consortium of the University of Washington, Teaching Research and the National Association of Directors of Special Education.

[4] Office of Special Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Department of Education.

Office of Special Education
August 1979

HCEEP Model Development Guide

YEAR ONE - JULY THROUGH DECEMBER FIRST MID YEAR REPORT

MANAGEMENT FUNCTION	MODEL COMPONENTS							
	CONCEPTUALIZATION	TARGET POPULATION	INTERVENTION	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	SERVICES TO PARENTS	EVALUATION	DEMONSTRATION	DISSEMINATION
PROGRAM PLANNING	Review of philosophical approach after funding	Written specifications for target population and referral procedures	Select appropriate curriculum, assessment procedures	Write and review position description and compare with other components	Write parent programming procedures	Evaluation design: draft written; data collection begun on staff development	Identify various professional and parent groups as potential interested parties	Inform papers, TV, news media, of project. Alert agency officials
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	Implications for other activities			Hire staff and begin staff development process				
PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION	Adaptation and changes in approach							
PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION	Begin process of making others aware of approach							

YEAR ONE - JANUARY THROUGH JUNE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

MANAGEMENT FUNCTION	MODEL COMPONENTS							
	CONCEPTUALIZATION	TARGET POPULATION	INTERVENTION	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	SERVICE TO PARENTS	EVALUATION	DEMONSTRATION	DISSEMINATION
PROGRAM PLANNING							Planning continues with target audience selection	
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION		Selection of children begun, beginning of January	In place and children being served by January. Assessment and teaching begun	Staff development continues	Selection of procedures for parental involvement - timelines, etc.	Data collection begun on all program components	Demonstration to parents, community members	Printing of brochures and target audiences selected
PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION		Review in terms of appropriateness and relevance	Initial weekly assessments of appropriateness of intervention	Develop schedule and timelines for staff development				
PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION	Conceptualization should be firm at this point but subject to adaptation	Established and firm by close of year	Major content of intervention strategies reviewed and in place by end of first year				Look to internal targets to institutionalize procedures	Begin to systematically look for continuation funds
PROGRAM EXPANSION							Identify sites and groups for demonstration	Look for external target for possible replication

▲▲ YEAR TWO - JULY THROUGH DECEMBER SECOND MID YR REPORT ▲▲

MANAGEMENT FUNCTION	MODEL COMPONENTS							
	CONCEPTUALIZATION	TARGET POPULATION	INTERVENTION	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	SERVICES TO PARENTS	EVALUATION	DEMONSTRATION	DISSEMINATION
PROGRAM PLANNING						Plan draft evaluation reports for external audiences		Begin planning of final products
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	ALL	COMPONENTS	IMPLEMENTED					
PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION	Reassessment with minor adaptations	Some possible redefinitions and improvement of referral system	Final decions on intervention strategies	Continues with addition of new staff and possible changes	Continues with improved parent involvement	Data collection process with final adaptations	Demo activities increase with emphasis on visitations	Final plans for dissemination
PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION							Increased project activities and liaison with community	Emphasis on external development
PROGRAM EXPANSION							Exploration of possible new demo sites	

▲▲ YEAR TWO - JANUARY THROUGH JUNE SECOND ANNUAL REPORT ▲▲

MANAGEMENT FUNCTION	MODEL COMPONENTS							
	CONCEPTUALIZATION	TARGET POPULATION	INTERVENTION	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	SERVICES TO PARENTS	EVALUATION	DEMONSTRATION	DISSEMINATION
PROGRAM PLANNING								Planning of final products completed
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	ALL MODEL	COMPONENTS FULLY	IMPLEMENTED			Data collection on all program components fully operational		Drafts of products completed
PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION	ALL MODEL	COMPONENTS	PERIODICALLY	REVIEWED		Review of finalize draft evaluations reporting formats	Demonstration to all interested audience reviewed systematically	Review of drafts by TA personnel, BEH Staff, others
PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION	ALL MODEL COMPONENTS FINALIZED AND INTERNAL AUDIENCES ARE PROVIDED WITH INFORMATION							Review by internal audiences
PROGRAM EXPANSION	Preliminary considerations of adaptations	Consideration of changes which can lead to increased target population						Identification and formal contact with potential replication

▲▲▲ YEAR THREE - JULY THROUGH DECEMBER - THIRD MID YEAR REPORT ▲▲▲

MANAGEMENT FUNCTION	MODEL COMPONENTS							
	CONCEPTUALIZATION	TARGET POPULATION	INTERVENTION	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	SERVICES TO PARENTS	EVALUATION	DEMONSTRATION	DISSEMINATION
PROGRAM PLANNING								Plan for dissemination in year(s) after grant
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	ALL MODEL COMPONENTS FULLY IMPLEMENTED							Full implementation of dissemination with products ready for printing or production
PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION		FINAL MINOR ADAPTATIONS BEFORE FINAL DEVELOPMENT						Final Modifications
PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION						Data Collection for all external audiences completed	Commitment for continuation secured; full demonstration activities	Dissemination to target audiences on plans for continuation and indicators of success
PROGRAM EXPANSION							Plans for increasing demonstration efforts with new funding sources	Replication activities in place and implemented

▲▲▲ YEAR THREE - JANUARY THROUGH JUNE - FINAL REPORT ▲▲▲

MANAGEMENT FUNCTION	MODEL COMPONENTS							
PROGRAM PLANNING	CONCEPTUALIZATION	TARGET POPULATION	INTERVENTION	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	SERVICES TO PARENTS	EVALUATION	DEMONSTRATION	DISSEMINATION
PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	ALL MODEL COMPONENTS IMPLEMENTED							
PROGRAM EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION	EVALUATION DATA AND DOCUMENTATION ANALYZED FOR FINAL REPORT				COMPILED AND			Final Report with all Data
PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION	FUNDS FOR CONTINUATION SECURED							And products provided to O.S.E (90 days after June 30)
PROGRAM EXPANSION	REPLICATION SITE(S) AND ACTIVITIES IN FULL OPERATION							

addition eight management tasks which are thought to be essential to the model development process are described.

Use of the Guide assists projects in 1.) identifying and defining the basic elements of their model; 2.) documenting and evaluating the effects of their efforts; and 3.) planning and initiating demonstration and replication activities. Evaluators will find the Model Development Guide useful as a resource when assisting projects to develop useful and complete program evaluation plans.

In summary, the HCEEP demonstration projects are funded to develop and demonstrate innovative and effective models of service for young handicapped children and their families. In order to do so, project staff must be able to describe their program and demonstrate its value. For these reasons, evaluation has been and remains a very important aspect of program development. The remainder of this Handbook addresses topics specifically related to the evaluation concerns of the projects and the ways in which evaluation consultants can best be of assistance to project staffs as they plan and conduct evaluations of their programs.

PLANNING EVALUATIONS IN HCEEP

PLANNING EVALUATIONS IN HCEEP

Introduction[5]

Perhaps the most common task which is asked of an evaluation consultant to HCEEP projects is that of assisting project staff members in the development of an evaluation plan. Evaluations for HCEEP projects are conducted most often by the project staff or by the project staff with part time assistance of an evaluation consultant. The evaluations are, therefore, usually internal rather than external in nature.

In order for the project staff to conduct or supervise an evaluation, it is our opinion that they must know: a.) what they intend the evaluation to accomplish; b.) what specific evaluation strategies they will employ; c.) how they will report and use evaluation results; and d.) how they will implement and manage the evaluation.

To assist projects in planning in these areas, A Planning Guide for the Evaluation of Educational Programs for Young Children and Their Families (Suarez, 1980b) has been developed (Figure 4, located at the end of this section of the Handbook.) The Planning Guide poses a series of questions to be answered in the four previously mentioned areas. They are labeled in the Guide as: a.) focusing the evaluation; b.) determining the specific evaluation design; c.) communicating and using evaluation results; and d.) implementing the evaluation. (For additional information concerning specific

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[5] Portions of this section were taken from Suarez, T.M. A Planning Guide for the Evaluation of Education Programs for Young Children and Their Families. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Technical Assistance Development System, 1980a (mimeo) and Suarez, T.M. Evaluating Educational Programs for Preschool Handicapped Children. A paper presented to the annual American Educational Research Association Meeting, Boston, April, 1980b.

documentation guidelines, refer to Suarez and Vandiviere, 1978.)

We encourage project staff members to be able to answer the questions posed in the Guide. We do not, however, suggest that the Guide is the format to be used for their plan. We, instead, encourage the use of formats that are clear and useful to the staff and consultant with whom they are working.

As can be seen in the instructions for using the Guide, we hope that it can be used for a variety of purposes. As the roles and tasks of consultants are clarified, we hope that the Guide as a whole or in part may also be useful in providing assistance to projects.

Components of Evaluation Planning

The remainder of this chapter provides discussions of each of the major areas of the Guide. They are intended to explain each question and provide consultants with information that can be used in assisting project staff members in planning their evaluations.

Focusing the Evaluation

One of the more difficult tasks in planning an evaluation is to determine its focus. It demands the best diagnostic and process consultation skills of the evaluation consultant and a great deal of thinking, planning and decision making by the project staff. It requires consideration of a variety of aspects of the program, e.g., its philosophy, and the skills and values of those most closely associated with it.

Evaluations have a focus when a.) the purposes for evaluation; b.) evaluation audiences and their needs; and c.) major aspects of the program to be evaluated are known.

Project staff members know that one purpose of their evaluation is to report the effectiveness of their work to the Office of Special Education

(OSE). Beyond this purpose, intents for evaluations are not always specified.

Consultants can aid projects in better understanding their evaluations by assisting them in thinking about and specifying the purpose(s) for their evaluation. This clarification can aid a project staff in expanding their uses for evaluation, e.g. in conducting evaluations to improve their program as well as meet federal accountability requirements, and to lay the groundwork for determining the content and type of evaluation that is needed for their particular program.

Consultants can be equally helpful to projects in helping the staffs expand their thinking about the audiences for their evaluation efforts. Common audiences for program evaluation for HCEEP projects are the funding agency (OSE), sources which might be considered for continuation funding, project staff and parents. Helping the staff to identify specific audiences and their needs early in the planning process will assist in ensuring that they have the documentation and data that will be requested of them later. Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this is the instance in which a principal audience for evaluation is the Joint Dissemination and Review Panel (JRDP). Information which is required for this particular audience is specified in publications such as the JDRP Ideabook (Tallmadge, 1977). Failure to consider this audience and its particular needs in advance may lead to an evaluation which will not allow the project to be considered for JDRP review.

A final consideration in focusing the evaluation is developing a clear picture of the project itself. This includes such activities as assisting the staff in identifying or clarifying the project's theoretical base, describing the key components or particular characteristics of the services to be provided, and delineating the project's intent or goals, i.e.

describing the project's model. Both the evaluators and project personnel must have a clear understanding of what the program is and what it is trying to do before an appropriate evaluation can be designed.

If a good job is done in focusing the evaluation, the evaluator and program personnel will have a clear idea of the direction in which the design of the evaluation should go. Both the evaluator and the program staff will be able to state in concise terms the reasons for conducting the evaluation, what it is they hope to get from the evaluation, and to whom they will provide the information.

Planning Specific Evaluation Strategies

This is the part of the evaluation planning that is most familiar to project staff and evaluation consultants. It consists of determining the evaluation questions, specifying the approach or design to be used in the evaluation, determining data collection and analysis procedures and establishing criteria for judging the adequacy of the evaluation results. Discussions of these planning areas are presented here to point out some of the particular needs and concerns of HCEEP demonstration projects.

In assisting staff members in this part of their evaluation plans, consultants should encourage the selection of procedures which are: a.) conceptually valid, i.e. they are appropriate for the content and procedures to which they are addressed; b.) logically consistent, i.e. provide information relevant to evaluation intents and questions; c.) methodologically sound, i.e. use acceptable, established and/or logical procedures; and d.) feasible, i.e. do-able within the constraints of time, resources and expertise available for the task.

Evaluation Questions. Evaluation consultants, with their experience and expertise in evaluation practice and methodology, can be especially helpful to project staffs in the specification of clear and concise questions to be addressed. They can help the staff relate the questions to be answered to the focus of the evaluation. They can also help in the development of questions which address the most important aspects of the program and prevent the development of too many or trivial questions.

Evaluation Methods. The most common evaluation methods used by projects are the pre and post tests to determine change and the survey to describe knowledge, attitudes and opinions regarding a program. Evaluation consultants can be helpful to project staffs by considering and explaining other methods which may be equally or more appropriate.

There are a variety of ways in which evaluation methods, designs or models can be classified. As shown in Figure 3, one type of classification system of designs suitable for HCEEP projects is to divide them into those that are 1.) experimental, 2.) objective based, 3.) systems models, and 4.) naturalistic.

Experimental Designs. Among the more common evaluation designs which project staffs use are those which are experimental and quasi-experimental. Reference to the criteria of validity, logic, soundness of methodology and feasibility often reveals limitations in the use of these designs. For example, in order to maintain the methodological soundness of designs one would not wish to use those which are considered to be uninterpretable (Cook and Campbell, 1979), i.e., the one group post-test only design, the one group pre-test post-test design, and the post-test only design with non-equivalent groups. Other more appropriate designs are often not feasible

Figure 3

Evaluation Designs for Programs for Preschool Handicapped Children[6]

Type of Design	Purpose	Examples
Experimental	To determine the cause of observed outcomes	Developmental designs (Porges, 1979) Experimental designs (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) Quasi-experimental designs (Cook & Campbell, 1979) Single-subject designs (Kratochwill, 1978)
Objective Based	To determine if stated objective were achieved	(Popham, 1972) Program planning and evaluation model (Gallagher, Surles & Hayes, 1972) Goal-attainment scaling (Kiresuk & Lund, 1976; Carr, 1979)
Systems	To determine outcomes with the inclusion of data regarding the relationship among outcomes, inputs and processes	CIPP Evaluation Model (Stufflebeam, et al., 1971) Countenance Model (Stake, 1967) Discrepancy Model (Provus, 1971)
Naturalistic	To describe the program and its impacts	Case study (Stake, 1978; Kennedy, 1978) Naturalistic inquiry (Guba, 1978; Wolf, 1979) Qualitative Evaluation (Willis, 1977) Ethnography (Wilson, 1977)

[6] From Suarez, T.M. Evaluating educational programs for preschool handicapped children. A paper presented to the American Educational Research Association, April, 1980.

due to very small sample sizes, the inability to consider the children in the program as a homogeneous group, the lack of adequate control groups and the often dramatic changes in treatment.

In cases in which traditional experimental and quasi-experimental designs cannot meet these criteria and the purpose of the evaluation is to determine the cause of observed outcomes, the consultant might encourage the program to consider developmental designs (Porges, 1979) or single-subject designs (Kratochwill, 1978; MacLeod, Andrews & Grove, 1980).

Objective-based Designs. With the inclusion of IEP's in programs for preschool handicapped children, the importance of objective-based evaluation could increase dramatically. It appears logical and forthright to determine the success of the program by assessing the accomplishment of children in relationship to the goals and objectives stated in their IEPs. Caution should be given in suggesting the use of this approach, however, to include procedures that would demonstrate that the IEP objectives themselves are appropriate and valid, and that adequate data are available to determine if the objectives have been achieved.

Systems Models. There are few examples of the use of systems models for evaluation in programs for preschool handicapped children. The reasons for this could include lack of information concerning these models by both evaluators and program staff, or the very comprehensive and therefore seemingly unfeasible task of implementing such a design. Lack of use, however, does not indicate that these designs or portions of them would not be useful to HCEEP projects. For evaluations which are decision-oriented or require a thorough description of the program as it was implemented, a systems design might be useful. Aspects of models such as

the process evaluation portion of Stufflebeam's CIPP model might be particularly useful to staffs that wish to obtain evaluation information regarding their procedures.

Naturalistic Designs. Quite a few projects would describe their evaluation methodology as that of the case study or naturalistic type. In most cases, what is provided is a description of what occurred during the program with special emphasis on the outcomes for individual children. Evaluators can assist program personnel in developing naturalistic designs which are methodologically sound. This would require a stricter adherence to procedures for conducting case or naturalistic studies. It would also require the development of schema which would allow for the interpretation of the progress of children or impact of the program from lengthy descriptions. The evaluator can be particularly helpful in refining and streamlining strategies to make this approach feasible.

Instrumentation. Perhaps the question most often asked of the evaluation consultant in planning evaluations is "What instrument should we use to measure this?" A variety of resources which identify and review standardized and criterion-referenced instruments are listed in Appendix A. Other instrumentation sources are those programs and projects in which more informal instruments have been developed (Cox, Patten & Trohanis, 1978).

In assisting projects to select instruments it would seem important to encourage the use of criteria such as a.) appropriateness for the individuals who will be assessed; b.) appropriateness for measuring the effect of the intervention; c.) characteristics of the program; d.) the evaluation questions posed in the evaluation design; e.) the information

needed; and f.) skills of the staff in administering the instrument.

While project staff members should be encouraged to use the most valid and reliable instruments available to them, the consultant should be prepared to caution them regarding the limitations of existing instrumentation. Few instruments have been developed and validated for handicapped children and it is often difficult to find ones which match the goals of an innovative model program. Help should be given in selection of the most appropriate instruments, with concommitant assistance in identifying the limitations for use and interpretation of resulting data.

For those instruments which must of necessity be developed locally, consultants should assist in planning for refining and field testing the instruments. While a complete two-to-three year instrument development program may not be feasible or appropriate for a project, basic content and format reviews and field tests should be conducted so that the program will have an indication that the instrument is reasonably stable and reliable.

Data Analysis. Consultants should assist staff members in determining that the data analysis procedures match the types of data and the types of questions that are being asked. In addition, they should encourage the use of procedures that are feasible for the program staff to conduct (or have conducted for them) and be interpretable by them. This may require the consultant to ascertain such things as the statistical analysis expertise of the persons involved in the evaluation and the availability of computers, computer programmers, data coders, etc. For those programs in which statistical analysis expertise is not available, the consultant may need to suggest more descriptive than analytical data analysis techniques.

Criteria. It is necessary to establish criteria against which to interpret evaluation results. A comparison of criteria with evaluation results permits the evaluator and/or staff to judge the effectiveness of the project. Criteria are usually considered in two domains: statistical significance and programmatic significance (Tallmadge, 1977). Statistical significance is obtained by the use of statistical tests (Kerlinger, 1973). Programmatic significance is more difficult to specify, but of great importance in assessing the benefit of a project to children, parents, staff, etc. It may be necessary to advise the staff to go to several sources for establishing programmatic criteria. Among possible information sources are the general base of knowledge in the area, prior experience, expert opinion, and even "best guesses" in the case of very new endeavors.

Planning for Reporting and Using the Results of the Evaluations

Perhaps one of the most useful services an evaluation consultant can perform is to assist project staff in identifying ways in which they can use the results of their evaluation. This requires skills in the area of communication and staff development. It includes considering: a.) the purpose for reporting or using the results; b.) determining the audiences who will be receiving the results; c.) identifying which information or results will be used; and d.) determining the methods in which the results will be shared and used.

Much of the planning in this area will already be done if the evaluation has been adequately focused. Evaluators and program personnel will know, at least in a general way, how the results of the evaluations will be used and reported. Planning in this area, therefore, becomes a process of determining which specific results will be included and selecting the

particular methods for reporting or using these results.

It is at this point that planning schema such as that developed by Trohanis (Suarez and Vandiviere, 1978) are useful. A helpful service that evaluation consultants can provide to projects here is to point out the variety of ways in which evaluation results can be reported and used. An executive summary or brief abstract of the evaluation results is a very useful document to have at hand. Brochures, slidetape presentations, and graphic handouts at staff meetings could be suggested in addition to technical reports.

Planning for the Implementation of the Evaluation

Evaluators and program staff often believe that the task of planning an evaluation is complete when the design is determined, questions are identified, and data collections procedures are selected and planned. Project personnel left with only these portions of a plan often experience considerable difficulties in accomplishing the evaluation tasks. We believe that evaluation plans which do not include a plan for implementation are incomplete. Program staff need to know who will conduct the evaluation, what resources are available, when things need to be accomplished, and to have some ideas how all of the activities will be managed and monitored.

Usually, all staff members must pitch in and contribute to the process of evaluation. In order to insure that the tasks are accomplished and to eliminate confusion, it is very important to identify the roles and responsibilities of each staff member and to secure their commitment to the process. This would include the very important identification of the one person who will manage and coordinate the evaluation. It would also include identifying those within or external to the project who might be involved.

Evaluation is not a cost free endeavor (unless you consider it philosophically as does Scriven [1974]). Program staff may need assistance in identifying and targeting resources for such items as consultant assistance, purchasing instruments, copying costs, space to work, clerical support, supplies, data coding, computer time and other similar items.

The schedule for the accomplishment of the evaluation needs to be incorporated into the schedule for the overall program operation. Key dates need to be identified for evaluation tasks and should be incorporated into the overall project timeline.

While it may be inherent in both the identification of roles and responsibilities and in scheduling, it is important that the project director share in or take the responsibility for the ways in which the evaluation will be managed and monitored. For the consultant, this may include assisting in the development of contracts with outside consultants and providing ideas about how such contracts can be managed. It should be clear to all of the project staff that the person who has the responsibility for managing the evaluation has the authority to ask for the accomplishment of scheduled tasks from other members of the staff.

In summary, a final caution would seem to be in order. Evaluations of HCEEP programs should be within the scope of what is of most interest and importance and what is most feasible for the staff within the limits of available resources. It is very easy for the program staff and even evaluators to be carried away with plans for providing information in great depth about every aspect of the program. Evaluation should be a helping supplement to a program. It should not end up being an effort that is almost as great as the effort to operate the program itself. One of the more interesting and sometimes difficult tasks for the evaluation consultant

is, then, restraining evaluation so that it addresses the most important topics in a manner which can be accomplished well.

Figure 4

PLANNING GUIDE FOR THE EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

by

Tanya M. Suarez
Associate Director for Evaluation

Introduction

The "Planning Guide" is designed to provide a framework for planning evaluations for programs for young children and their families. It does this by posing a series of questions in four areas: (1) focusing the evaluation, (2) determining the specific evaluation design, (3) communicating and using evaluation results and (4) implementing the evaluation. Answering the questions should provide a clear portrait of the evaluation for the program staff and other interested individuals. It should also enhance the user's capability to conduct evaluations and use their results.

Using the Guide

There are a variety of ways in which the "Guide" can be used. First, it can provide a structure for systematically planning an entire evaluation. Individual plans need not be in the format suggested in the next four pages; however, they should, whenever possible, reflect consideration of the questions in all sections. Second, parts of the Guide can be used to plan supplements to an existing plan, e.g., developing a management plan to accompany an existing evaluation design. Finally, the Guide can be used as a checklist against which an existing plan can be compared for completeness.

Included with the "Guide" is a list of references categorized by the major topical areas presented. They are included to provide the reader with sources of additional information which may be referred to in making decisions regarding evaluation plans.

Technical Assistance Development System
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
August, 1980

Major Concern I. EVALUATION FOCUS: What should the evaluation accomplish?

Purpose	Audiences	Audience Information Needs	Key Program Components	Statement of Intent
Why is the evaluation being conducted? e.g., to meet funding requirements, to monitor/administer the project, to identify and improve weaker components, to strengthen the information available for dissemination/ competition for funds, etc. a. _____ _____ b. _____ _____ c. _____ _____ d. _____ _____	Who are the audiences for the evaluation? e.g., project staff, funding agency, administrative agency community agencies/leaders, professionals, parents, etc. a. _____ _____ b. _____ _____ c. _____ _____ d. _____ _____	What do the audiences need to know? e.g., progress of children, quantity and/or quality of services to children and families, attitudes of children and/or families, program costs, etc. a. _____ _____ b. _____ _____ c. _____ _____ d. _____ _____	What are the key components of the program? e.g., services designed to increase the cognitive social and motor development of children, services designed to increase parents' skill in teaching their children, a curriculum designed to increase cognitive development of children, a service which links children and families with assistance available in the community, etc. a. _____ _____ b. _____ _____ c. _____ _____	It is the purpose of this evaluation to _____ (why it is being done) _____ _____ by providing information regarding _____ (key components and audience needs) _____ _____ to _____ (audiences) _____ _____

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1 Suarez, TADS, UNC-Chapel Hill, NC 1980.

Major Concern II. EVALUATION PLAN: What should be the major components of the evaluation?

Evaluation Questions	Evaluation Design	Data Collection Procedures	Data Analysis	Evaluation Criteria
What information will the evaluation seek to provide?	What design or set of procedures will be used to gather the information?	What instruments or forms will be used to gather and/or record the information?	How will the resulting data be analyzed?	How will the results be judged or interpreted?
e.g., Have children made expected progress during their participation in the program? Are parents better able to teach their children? Have interactions among children and primary caregivers improved? Are attitudes of parents, teachers, other related agency personnel toward the program favorable? etc.	e.g., Pre-post assessment of the development of children in experimental and control groups, monthly assessments of children's progress on IEPs, survey of parental attitude at end of program, observation of mother/child interaction before, during, and after training, etc.	e.g., McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities, staff developed attitude scale to measure parental attitude toward the program, Caldwell Home Inventory, staff developed form for recording parental participation, etc.	e.g., Correlated t-test of difference between pre- and post-test means, comparison of expected level of development (determined using a regression analysis) with actual level of development followed by a test of the significance of the difference, computation of percentages of favorable responses, computation of frequencies of participation, etc.	e.g., Statistically significant difference between means (.05 level), 75% of objectives accomplished, participation of 75% of the parents in two or more project activities, etc.
a.	a.	a.	a.	a.
b.	b.	b.	b.	b.
c.	c.	c.	c.	c.
d.	d.	d.	d.	d.

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Major Concern III. COMMUNICATING/UTILIZING PLAN: How will the results of the evaluation be communicated and used?

Purpose	Audiences to be Addressed	Results to be Used	Method of Utilization
Why are the results of the evaluation being communicated and/or used? REFER TO PURPOSES FOR EVALUATION and e.g., reporting to funding/administrative agencies, parents, advisory boards, etc., program planning, staff development, communication, etc.	What audiences will be given and/or use the results? REFER TO AUDIENCES FOR EVALUATION	What information and results will be communicated and/or used? e.g., all results, child progress data, monitoring data, cost information, etc.	In what ways will results be shared and used? e.g., distribution of print materials such as reports, articles, etc.; presentation of non-print media such as slidetape, videotape, TV/radio, etc.; personal contact, training, etc.
COMMUNICATION			
a.	a.	a.	a.
b.	b.	b.	b.
UTILIZATION			
a.	a.	a.	a.
b.	b.	b.	b.

Tanya M. Suarez, TADS, UNC-Chapel Hill, NC 1980.

Major Concern IV. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: How will the evaluation plan be accomplished?

Personnel Role Specification	Resource Allocation	Scheduling	Monitoring
Who will conduct the evaluation?	What other resources are available for the evaluation?	What are the key dates on which tasks need to be accomplished?	How will the evaluation be monitored?
a. Manage/Coordinate: _____	$ Amount or N/A	Date	e.g., regular staff meetings, regular meetings of Manager/Coordinator with persons responsible for specific tasks, review of quarterly submissions of information gathered to date, etc.
b. Design Evaluation: _____	a. Consultant Assistance: _____ _____	a. Evaluation Plan: _____	a. _____
c. Select/Develop Instruments: _____	b. Materials: _____ _____	b. Selection/Development of Instruments: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	b. _____
d. Collect data: _____	c. Facilities/Space: _____ _____	c. Data Collection: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____	c. _____
e. Analyze data: _____	d. Clerical Support: _____ _____	d. Data Analysis: _____	d. _____
f. Write summary reports: _____	e. Supplies: _____ _____	e. Report Writing: _____	
g. Other: _____	f. Computer Time: _____	f. Other: _____	
	g. Other: _____ _____		
	TOTAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES _____		

M. Suarez, TADS, UNC-Chapel Hill, NC 1980.

JDRP - THE JOINT DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW PANEL - AND HCEEP

JDRP - THE JOINT DISSEMINATION AND REVIEW PANEL - AND HCEEP

Introduction

Many HCEEP projects are interested in the Joint Dissemination and Review Panel as an audience for their evaluation results. This section presents information on the nature and purpose of JDRP, and outlines some guidelines for assisting project staffs in deciding if presentation to the Panel is appropriate for them and their program. A description of procedures for submitting information to JDRP through the Office of Special Education also is included.

The Purpose of JDRP

The Joint Dissemination and Review Panel (JDRP) was organized in 1972 by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) and was enlarged in 1975 to include representatives from the National Institute for Education (NIE). It is currently sponsored by the Department of Education. Its purpose is to assess the effectiveness of federally funded programs for the purpose of dissemination of information regarding them by the Department. If the JDRP concludes, on the basis of evidence of effectiveness presented to them, that an educational program is, indeed, effective, the program is said to be "validated." This validation is required before information regarding programs can be disseminated by the federal government.

The Panel, which is comprised of 7 members selected randomly from a group of 22 people representing various disciplines within educational research, meets periodically to review program submissions. Panel members are selected on the basis of their ability to analyze evaluation-based

evidence of effectiveness of products and practices, and on their general experience in education and research.

Guidelines for Decision Making Regarding JDRP

It is critically important for an HCEEP project to determine whether or not the JDRP is a potential evaluation audience early in the evaluation planning process, so that adequate data can be collected during its three-year funding period. A consultant can be very helpful in assisting projects with this decision.

Four major questions must be considered in the decision:

1.) Will JDRP approval benefit the project?

2.) Can the model be replicated?

3.) Is the evaluation design adequate?

4.) Are the available expertise and resources adequate?

Will JDRP Approval Benefit the Project?

As mentioned previously, JDRP approval permits the dissemination of information regarding a project or program by the federal government. The vehicle for this dissemination is the National Diffusion Network (NDN). Programs validated by the JDRP are described in a book, Programs That Work, which is distributed widely around the country. Federally-sponsored "facilitators" in each state have the responsibility of acquainting local school personnel with information regarding JDRP approved programs. Finally, funds are available from NDN through competitive grants, for the dissemination, demonstration and replication of a program by its own staff. JDRP approval provides therefore: 1.) national recognition; 2.) automatic national dissemination of information regarding a program; and 3.) the opportunity to apply for funds to disseminate, demonstrate, and/or replicate the program.

The Office of Special Education also provides special opportunities for JDRP validated projects. While regulations are not finalized, the Office is beginning to consider JDRP approval as a "necessary but not sufficient" criterion for the acquisition of HCEEP Model Outreach (formerly Outreach) funds after the three years of demonstration funding. The purpose of these funds is to stimulate more and better services for young handicapped children and their families. Activities which may be funded are similar to those funded by NDN. They include: a.) increasing awareness; b.) product development and distribution; c.) stimulating replication sites; d.) stimulating state involvement; e.) training, and f.) other specific consultative activities (Swan, 1978). JDRP approval, therefore, may give a project a comptetive edge for acquiring additional funding from HCEEP for dissemination and demonstration activities.

National recognition and the opportunity to apply for funds for dissemination and demonstration are the obvious benefits of JDRP approval. If the project staff are interested in these things, consideration of a submission to JDRP is appropriate. The consultant should explore the real time and effort requirements of a JDRP submission and help the staff reach a decision regarding the appropriateness of a submission for their needs.

Can the Model Be Replicated?

Two major factors should be considered in helping projects assess the replicability of their model--1.) its level of documentation and model description and 2.) its broad replicability. The project must be developed and described clearly and thoroughly, so that others may replicate it with fidelity to the model. It must also be replicable by a different staff at a different location with different clients. The evaluation consultant may help the project staff review these two factors to determine if the

project is appropriate for JDRP.

Is the Evaluation Design Adequate?

The Joint Dissemination and Review Panel IDEABOOK (Tallmadge, 1977) presents a discussion of the use of evaluation designs recommended for JDRP submissions. Since HCEEP projects are seldom, if ever, able to use true experimental designs, the section on quasi-experimental and other designs is of the most interest. Tallmadge lists six methods of estimating "without-intervention" conditions for use in planning the design (listed in descending order of preference and credibility):

- a highly similar but non-equivalent control group
- historical (pre-intervention) data
- a comparison group formed by dichotomizing an originally intact group into treatment and comparison components around some pretest cutoff score (Regression-discontinuity and regression-projection models. See Campbell and Stanley, 1963; Horst, Tallmadge, and Wood, 1975.)
- national, regional, or local normative data
- logic
- expert testimony

Additionally, the use of single subject designs and Goal Attainment Scaling have become alternatives for evaluation designs.

Are the Available Expertise and Resources Adequate?

If, after reviewing the previous questions, JDRP seems to be an appropriate evaluation audience, it is crucial to review, again, the project resources. Preparing for JDRP requires a considerable investment in project staff time for such activities as planning the evaluation, administering tests, taking daily or weekly data, keeping careful records, analyzing data, interpreting results, and developing the JDRP submission. In addition, if a control or comparison group is to be used in the evaluation, much

administrative time is required in agency liaison, planning testing schedules, communication, administering tests, travel, and reporting test results back to the cooperating agency.

The project director or another staff member also must possess considerable research and data analysis skill. If these skills are not available within the project, dollars and time must be spent with an external evaluator who can actually conduct the evaluation of program impact and interpret the results. There must be budgetary or in-kind resources for purchasing tests, administering and scoring tests, key-punching, computer time, and typing and reproducing reports. Finally, staff time must be available for writing and preparing to deliver the submission. It is clear that a considerable effort may be required to meet the criteria for JDRP review of evidence of effectiveness.

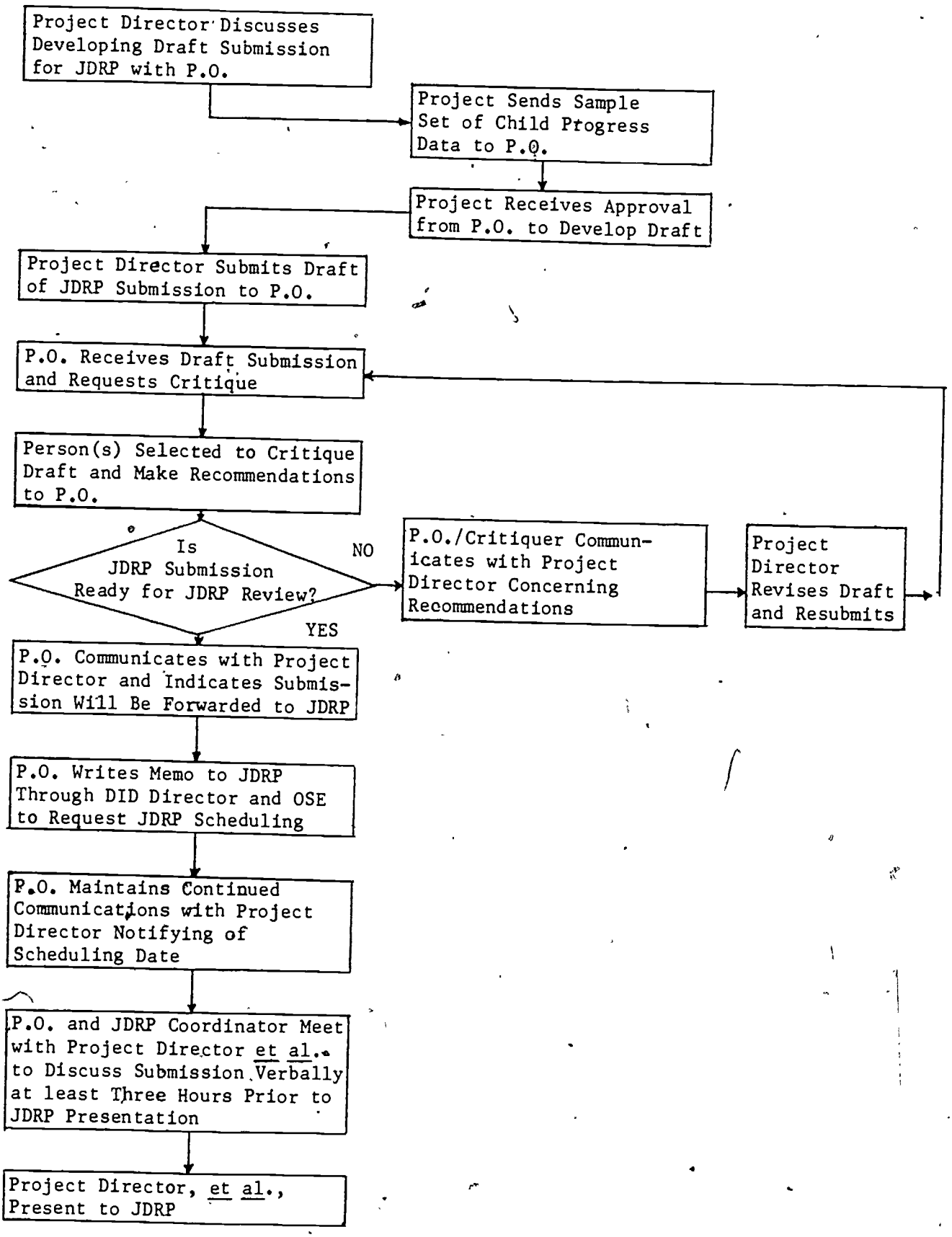
OSE Procedures for Submission Development and Presentation

Consultants are frequently asked to provide information concerning the process for preparing and presenting JDRP submissions. The submissions are prepared by the project with the appropriate OSE project officer and submitted to the panel by the project officer. Projects should, therefore, be encouraged to contact their OSE project officers for this type of information. At the time this Handbook was prepared, Figure 5 represented the basic process for developing submissions, as developed by OSE.

As Figure 5 demonstrates, the submission development process is one which takes place between the project staff and OSE project officer. It is in the communication between the two that the 10 page submission is developed. Evaluation consultants to projects most often assist in:

Figure 5

JDRP SUBMISSION DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENTATION PROCESS



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a.) helping the staff determine if they will seek JDRP validation; b.) designing and implementing the project's evaluation; and in the case of consultations which are <u>not</u> sponsored by TADS,[7] c.) assist the project director in preparing and presenting the results.

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[7] It is a matter of OSE policy that TADS-sponsored consultations related to JDRP NOT include the development of the submission or presentation of the evaluation results to the Panel.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EVALUATION CONSULTANTS: PROCEDURAL AND PERSONAL

Introduction

In addition to knowing the context in which evaluation takes place and some of the specific evaluation needs of the HCEEP demonstration projects, consultants need to know and use some of the basic principles of effective consultation. These are reviewed here in discussions of the consultation process, the stages in a consultation and helpful hints gathered from the TADS staff and consultants who have worked with these projects.

Providing Evaluation Consultation: The Process

Figure 6 outlines the stages of consultation, as adapted (Suarez and Vandiviere, 1980) from The Consulting Process in Action (Lippitt and Lippitt, 1978). The consultation stages are applicable to short-term consultations of 1 or 2 days; or to more extensive consultations which extend over a period of months or years.

This section should be read while keeping in mind two major principles:

1.) Successful evaluation consultation is oriented to the unique needs of the project, not to the theoretical orientation or biases of the consultant.

2.) Successful evaluation consultation produces evaluation plans which are related to project goals, are realistic and feasible within the resources of the project.

Stages of Consultation

Consultation (assistance) can be viewed as having four major stages which are somewhat similar to the stages in evaluation planning: Focusing, Planning, Providing, and Follow-up.

Fig. 6

PROVIDING AND RECEIVING ASSISTANCE IN EVALUATION:
AN ADAPTATION OF THE LIPPITT/LIPPITT CONSULTATION MODEL

ASSISTANCE STAGES	MAJOR TASKS	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE	
		Consultants	Administrators
I. FOCUSING THE ASSISTANCE			
A. Contact/Entry	Initial contact Orientation Explore need for evaluation assistance Explore readiness for assistance Explore potential for working together Explore manner of communication Explore trust Establish credentials	·Begin to become familiar with the program and its personnel ·Determine client's experience, expertise, resources in evaluation ·Determine client's purpose for evaluation	·Acquaint consultant with program and its personnel ·Determine consultant's appropriateness for the assistance needed ·Determine consultant's compatability with staff and program ·Make personal commitment to involvement in the assistance
B. Problem Identification	Review program Identify general evaluation needs Identify needs requiring assistance	·Obtain clear understanding of the program ·Obtain understanding of evaluation needs ·Identify internal and external resources available for evaluation: human, mechanical, financial	·Develop clear understanding of the program ·Obtain understanding of evaluation needs ·Specify what is needed from the assistance
C. Diagnosis	Determine extent of need Determine priority of needs Determine desired outcomes		
II. PLANNING THE ASSISTANCE			
D. Planning for Action	Confirm appropriateness of working together (communication, trust, credibility) Clarify expectations Develop goals for the assistance Specify tasks Assign roles and responsibilities Schedule assistance Develop contract	·Ask clarifying questions ·Provide organizational framework ·Set parameters of the assistance	·Identify internal and external resources available for evaluation: human, mechanical, financial ·Determine staff responsibilities

Suarez, T.M. and Vandiviere, P. Providing and Receiving Assistance in Evaluation. A paper presented at the North Carolina Association for Research in Education, May, 1980.

ASSISTANCE STAGES	MAJOR TASKS	EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE	
		Consultants	Administrators
III. PROVIDING/RECEIVING THE ASSISTANCE			
E. Preparation	Reassess plans re current needs, modify plans if necessary Prepare for agreed upon activities	·Read all available materials ·Develop potential list of areas of inquiry ·Pull information together ·Prepare materials	·Schedule; i.e., people, facilities ·Orient appropriate staff to purposes and schedule of the consultation ·Gather needed resources, materials, etc.
F. Taking Action	Reassess plans re current needs, modify plans if necessary Provide assistance Solicit and provide feedback Design continuity supports.	·Observe program in action ·Provide a variety of assistance ·Provide assistance focused on the level of staff expertise and experience ·Provide technical and process assistance ·Solicit and provide feedback	·Provide access to entire program ·Take leadership role with staff ·Actively involve staff ·Determine feasibility of evaluation ·Provide and solicit feedback
IV. FOLLOW-UP			
G. Continuity and/or Termination	Clarify future tasks Assess needs for future assistance Plan for additional action or terminate	·Provide details of feedback given during consultation ·Provide specific recommendations for follow-up activities ·Provide promised or supplemental materials ·Provide recommendations that are feasible	·Solicit feedback ·Assume or assign responsibilities for next action steps ·Evaluate level of attainment of goals ·Assess need for additional assistance

Focusing the Assistance. The necessity for focusing the consultation activity itself parallels the need for focusing in planning the evaluation--it forms the core around which the work is developed. Focusing consultation has three major stages: Contact and Entry, Problem Identification, and Diagnosis.

During Contact/Entry the consultant and project work together to become acquainted with one another, to explore the project's actual need and readiness for assistance, and to explore the potential for working together. A communication system is developed, credentials and expertise are established, and the development of mutual trust is begun. The consultant begins to become familiar with the program, begins to learn about the project's resources and experience and expertise in evaluation. He/she begins to determine the project's major purpose for evaluation. The administrator acquaints the consultant with the program and begins to assess the consultant's appropriateness. He/she also makes a commitment to the evaluation at this point. (When the consultation is provided through TADS, the Technical Assistance Agreement between TADS and the project can be used as the planning springboard.)

Problem Identification requires the consultant and project to review the program, identify general evaluation needs, and then highlight those needs where consultation can be most useful and effective. The consultant and the administrator obtain a clearer understanding of the program and its needs during this time.

The final step in focusing the consultation is Diagnosis--the determination of the extent and priority of the needs for assistance, and establishment of desired outcomes for the consultation. The consultant

begins to identify internal and external resources for the evaluation, and the administrator begins to specify what is needed from the evaluation.

Planning Assistance. After the needs for help have been identified, priorities determined, and desired outcomes described, it is time to Plan for Action. The tasks in this phase are very important to a successful consultation.

The consultant and the project staff leadership must first reconfirm that they can work together with good communication, in an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality and with an understanding and acceptance of their mutual expertise. The consultant clarifies the expectations and goals for the consultation, specifies tasks to be done, discusses the assignment of roles and responsibilities, and, if appropriate, develops a consultation contract. It is helpful if the consultant provides the organizational framework for the planning, and facilitates it through asking clarifying questions, re-stating questions and decisions, and setting parameters. As the planning progresses, the administrator begins to identify resources, determines preliminary staff responsibilities, and clarifies the lines of authority and decision making.

Providing the Assistance. Provision of the assistance has two stages: Preparation and Taking Action.

If a significant amount of time has elapsed since the initial contact, the consultant may carry out some Preparation activities. It is important to reassess the current needs for help, and modify plans for the consultation if necessary. The consultant reviews all available materials concerning the project, pulls the information together, and develops a potential list of areas of evaluation inquiry or questions regarding the program. The

administrator sets up schedules, orients staff, and begins to gather needed resources.

The planning and forethought which have been described to this point are then combined into the stage Lippitt and Lippitt call Taking Action. During this stage the consultant again reviews and confirms, with the administrator, the plans for the consultation, and then provides the assistance. He/she sees the program in action (if this has not occurred during planning), and provides assistance in response to the needs of the project staff. The consultation is focused at the appropriate level of project expertise and experience, and includes both process and technical assistance. The entire activity is strengthened if the consultant is careful to provide appropriate feedback to the project staff, and solicits feedback concerning his/her own work in order to keep it on target and useful.

During a consultation the consultant may need to assume a variety of roles in order to accomplish the objectives of the consultation. Druian (no date) in an adaptation of Lippitt's (1973) work lists the following potential consultant roles:

- Advocate: persuades client to proper approach
- Expert: gives expert advice to client
- Trainer: develops training experiences to aid client
- Alternative Finder: provides alternatives to client
- Collaborator: joins in problem solving
- Process Helper: assists client in problem solving process
- Resource Linker: serves to help client collect information
- Catalyst: serves as a catalytic agent for client in solving the problem

These roles are arranged in order from greatest consultant/least client participation to least consultant/greatest client participation. Choice of role is dependent upon the need that is being addressed, the skills, expertise and interests of the client and the nature of the situation in which the consultation takes place.

The final step in Taking Action is the identification of supports for continuity of the evaluation planning--the prelude to Follow-up. Follow-up., During the Follow-up stage the consultant and project clarify future tasks, assess the need for future consultative assistance, and either Plan for Additional Action or Terminate the consultation. The consultant, in either case, provides recommendations for follow-up activities, provides materials for future use as requested, and provides a set of final recommendations resulting from the consultation.

Summary

Utilizing this framework for conceptualizing the consultation process should, we believe, help evaluation consultants make the best use of their expertise, and assure an orderly, well-planned and organized consultation activity. We also are well aware that missed planes, blizzards, illness and other acts of misfortune can and do affect the best laid intents and procedures. These situations are best met with flexibility and imagination to produce a successful consultation.

Finally, a few miscellaneous hints and cautions may be helpful.

... During the consultation process, keep in touch with staff attitudes toward the evaluation--nurture enthusiasm, create/transfer ownership.

... Remember your role--the project director is the final decision-maker concerning the evaluation.

... Keep all information in total confidence--never gossip.

... Be sensitive to situations which are beyond your competence or knowledge--don't hesitate to obtain assistance for yourself!

... If you find yourself in a situation which violates or strains your ethical principles, terminate the consultation as gracefully as possible.

... Refer all questions of federal policy which cannot be answered from the Regulations to the OSE project officer.

... Finally, don't promise more than you can deliver, and keep your promises.

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APPENDIX A

Appendix A

Selected Resources for Evaluators

Following is a list of selected resources which may be of use in planning and providing evaluation consultation. The references were selected because of their applicability to evaluations of demonstration programs for young handicapped children and are, therefore, not intended to be exhaustive. References are included in the areas of: a.) evaluation planning and design; b.) measuring child progress; and c.) consultation.

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II. Planning the Evaluation

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