ASK THEM! THE ROLE OF FEEDBACK IN EVALUATING WITH AND FOR YOUTH
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PRESENTATION PLAN

• Context and challenges of evaluation in open access youth services
• Integrating feedback into an evaluation framework
• How feedback overcomes (some of) the challenges
• The remaining challenges of our feedback approach
CONTEXT OF EVALUATION – OPEN ACCESS YOUTH SERVICES

- Open access - no referral, universal, unstructured e.g. local youth clubs
- Move to more structured, targeted, programmatic delivery
- Outcomes-based funding
- Advancement of the impact agenda
- Dominant paradigm based on academic standards of evidence
CHALLENGES OF EVALUATION – OPEN ACCESS YOUTH SETTINGS

• Perpetual challenges of outcome measurement
  – Broad outcomes
  – Individualised outcomes
  – Difficult to measure outcomes e.g. SEL
  – Long term outcomes/ impacts

• Time burden

• Skills in collection and analysis

• Dislocation from practice and experience
THE YOUTH INVESTMENT FUND

- £40m grant fund from UK government and Big Lottery
- "Investment in VCSE organisations that provide front line open access youth services"
- 86 organisations across England (working with 10-18 year olds)
- Three years’ funding (2017-2020)
- Aims to:
  - Build knowledge base
  - Co-develop shared approach to evaluation
  - Leave the sector with what they need to self-evaluate
INTEGRATING FEEDBACK INTO AN EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
TYPES OF DATA

Counterfactual data

Pre- and post-measures of outcomes

Outputs, user feedback, quality of provision
FEEDBACK

THE FEEDBACK LOOP

01 DESIGN
02 COLLECT
03 ANALYZE
04 DIALOGUE
05 COURSE CORRECT

based on the Constituent Voice Methodology™

NPC
The Centre for Youth Impact
HOW IS FEEDBACK DATA GATHERED IN THE YIF?

• Continuous (regular) light-touch data collection
• Three to five questions, drawn from a wider standardised bank
• Consistent and systematic
• Guiding principles (anonymity, accessibility)
• Flexible methods - SMS, micro-surveys and tablets, good old paper and pen
• Occasional in-depth ‘investigative’ dialogue
• Equal emphasis on analysis and course correction
Activities

High quality, open access youth services
Including: youth clubs, sports, arts, social action, informal learning, counselling / therapy, employability and health and wellbeing.
Most often regular and sustained engagement from YP but can be one-off provision.
Mostly universal rather than targeting a specific group
Some issue-based provision
YP engage positively and through choice

Activities

Mechanisms of change

Environment & relationships
Young people trust and feel trusted (both initially & more deeply over time)
Young people feel respected
Young people feel safe & secure

Experience
Young people feel positively challenged
Young people feel a sense of enjoyment (including fun & a deeper satisfaction)
Young people feel a sense of purpose & achievement

Community
Young people feel included & a greater sense of connection with their community
Young people feel empowered to create change in their lives and in the world around them

Intermediate outcomes

Behaviours
Increased engagement in positive activities
Improved decision-making
Developed more positive relationships

Increased self-awareness

Knowledge / skills
Improved leadership
Improved social & communication skills
Improved emotional intelligence
Acquisition of service specific knowledge / skills
Increased awareness of rights & responsibilities

Increased positive social values

Attitudes
Increased aspirations
Increased confidence
Increased resilience
Increased independence
Increased willingness to address issues

Impacts

Increased wellbeing including:
- Improved mental health
- Improved physical health
- More stable and secure personal finances and housing
- Educational attainment
- Sustainable employment
- Positive relationships
- Personal safety

Accountability line
YIF PROVISION TOC + 5 TYPES OF DATA

- **Activities**
- **Mechanisms of change**
- **Intermediate outcomes**
- **Goal**

**Footfall data** measures who are you reaching and how are they engaging?

**Quality data** measures the quality of your activities and then environment they’re delivered in – do you create the context to allow the mechanisms of change to flourish?

**Context**

**Outcome data** measures changes in attitudes, behaviours and knowledge that your services generate.

**Feedback data** measures how young people experience your service – it can capture information on whether the MoC are at play.

**Impact data** measures the long-term difference achieved for young people and their communities.
HOW FEEDBACK OVERCOMES (SOME OF) THE CHALLENGES
OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

• Linking feedback data to outcomes data means…
  – Don’t have to collect outcomes data on all young people
  – Can focus on high quality outcomes data
  – Helps answer the why question

• Grounds evaluation in experience and practice

• Enables a shared approach

• Recognises young people as experts in their own experience

• Equal emphasis on analysis and course correction
  (integrates practice improvement into evaluation)
REMAINING CHALLENGES OF OUR FEEDBACK APPROACH
• Is the world ready for it?
  • Seen as contradicting the impact agenda of funders/policymakers
  • Seen as diminishing the importance of outcomes
• Are organisations ‘feedback’ ready?
• Methodological
  • Standardisation across different users
  • Comparability of collection methods
• Feedback is about more than evaluation (empowerment and course correction)
THANK YOU
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