The Robert Bowne Foundation

Evaluation of the Participatory Evaluation Institute

INTRODUCTION:
RBF's Philosophy of Ongoing Learning

- The two traditional arenas in which children are educated - school and family - are increasingly experiencing pressures that limit the basic developmental and educational supports children need, particularly in low-income inner-city and rural areas. Funding cuts in the public schools have eliminated most enrichments, and low-income working parents are finding themselves unable to provide the experiences that children require to become well-rounded, literate adults.

- As a result, community-based organizations (CBOs) have come under increasing pressure to fulfill the educational needs of our children.

- The Robert Bowne Foundation (RBF) understands that in order for CBOs to respond to these pressures they need both financial and technical assistance. Thus, RBF's grantmaking is entirely devoted to building supports for CBOs to become quality educational providers. To this end, RBF provides four types of support:

    - financial support
    - technical assistance in curriculum and literacy program development
    - leadership development
    - evaluation support

- This report focuses on evaluation findings regarding RBF's evaluation supports provided over a three-year period from Winter 2003 to Spring 2006.

INTRODUCTION:
RBF's History with Participatory Evaluation

■ RBF choose Participatory Evaluation (PE) as their primary method for building their grantees' evaluation capacities because it seemed like an ideal fit with RBFs overall philosophy of ongoing organizational learning and improvement. PE is a form of assessment that brings together seasoned evaluators with program staff to design, conduct and use the results of program evaluation. It is a highly useful approach because it:

  • reflects practitioners' underlying assumptions and questions about their programs
  • contributes to practitioners' knowledge about and pleasure in their work
  • supports evaluation strategies to become integrated into everyday practice
  • promotes ongoing learning

INTRODUCTION:
The RBF Participatory Evaluation Group

RBF's History With Evaluation Capacity Building

In the summer of 1998, RBF initiated the Participatory Evaluation Group (PEG), which provided training workshops and professional development for seventeen professionals working in the field of participatory evaluation and one-on-one evaluation support for twelve different out-of-school time programs. As the professionals honed their skills in participatory evaluation, they were partnered with RBF grantees in need of evaluation support. The purpose of these partnerships was to build the evaluation capacities of each program by deeply engaging stakeholders in the process of evaluating their own programs.

However, ongoing evaluations of the PE Project indicated that there were several challenges impacting the success of this model. These included:

- A diminishing interest by PE Coaches in ongoing professional development
- Difficulties in communicating between the out-of-school time programs and RBF in terms of the purposes and expectations of the project. Some programs felt it was mandatory and linked to funding, therefore there was limited buy-in, particularly in the beginning.
- Challenges with regard to monitoring the quality of assistance provided to each site.
- Major difference across sites in terms of the quantity and quality of service provided.
- Difference across sit in the degree to which the PE coaches were able to build program evaluation capacity.

INTRODUCTION:
The Participatory Evaluation Institute

RBF's History With Evaluation Capacity Building (Continued)

- In order to address these challenges, RBF developed The Participatory Evaluation Institute (PEI). The goals of PEI , were to build the capacity of out-of-school time programs by providing staff members with intensive evaluation training and one-on-one consultations. The objectives of PEI were to support programs to:

    - better understand the uses and practices of evaluation
    - integrate evaluation and reflective practice into their work.
    - use evaluation process and findings to improve programs
    - more accurately articulate their program models

- There were three distinct phases for this training. Phase one of the participatory evaluation institute occurred over eighteen months from Winter 2003 to Spring 2004. Phase two occurred for eighteen months from Winter 2004 to Spring 2005. Phase three, occurred from the Fall of 2005 to the Spring of 2006

DESCRIPTION:
Phase One - RBF participatory Evaluation Institute

- During Phase One of PEI there were two tracts of training, one was an *Intensive Eighteen-Month Training* for staff members and EDs who were in the very early stages of developing evaluations for their programs and the second was an *Advanced Study Group* designed for programs that had a strong understanding of evaluation and/or had participated in the RBF Participatory Evaluation Program. Each tract is described bellow.

  The Intensive Eighteen-Month Training
  - Three staff members from six out-of-school-time programs attended an eighteen-month training where they learned how to:

    - Create a logic model development
    - Develop an evaluation design
    - Select and design research methods (interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc)
    - Collect data
    - Analyze data
    - Write an evaluation design and final evaluation report
    - Engage others within the agency in evaluation efforts
    - Become a better consumer of evaluation

DESCRIPTION:
Phase One - RBF Participatory Evaluation Institute

- The first 6 months of this course involved ten 3-hour sessions where the basics of evaluation planning, data collection and data analysis methodologies were introduced and practiced, and comprehensive evaluation designs were completed. The final 12 months of training involved regular meetings where trainees discussed their ongoing studies, engage in group problem-solving regarding data collection, practice data analysis and other necessary strategies such as stakeholder meetings, to complete their evaluations.

- In addition to overseeing trainees' individual evaluation projects, up to five hours of consultation on evaluation-related issues was provided to each program.

- In total ten individuals form four different programs completed the *The Intensive Eighteen-Month Training.* These included:

  - Cypress Hills, LDC
  - Warren Street Center
  - Mary Mitchell
  - South Asian Youth Action (SAYA)

DESCRIPTION:
Phase One - RBF participatory Evaluation Institute

Advanced Study Group.

- Those programs that already had a strong understanding of evaluation participated in the *Advanced Study Group.* During monthly workshop, program directors and staff received a review of evaluation training, continued to access evaluation consultation from the evaluation coaches and their peers, undertook new or continued studies, supported ongoing evaluation practice throughout their organizations, and engaged in group projects.

- Three program staff from each program attended the *Advanced Study Group* for 18-months for three hours per month. In addition each program received at least 5 hours of independent consultation.

- Overall ten individuals from five different out-of-school-time programs participated in the advanced study group. These programs included:

    - Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center
    - Riverdale Neighborhood House
    - Pious XII
    - Global Action Project
    - Pam Little (RBF Library Development Consultant)

DESCRIPTION:
Phase Two - RBF participatory Evaluation Institute

Six-Month Basic Evaluation Training

- As the RBF began to observe an increasing need to build the evaluation capacities of out-of-school time programs, it became necessary to expand the scope of the Evaluation Institute's training efforts. Therefore, in the Winter of 2004, the RBF supported a second phase of the Participatory Evaluation Institute. During this phase a large number of grantees were invited to participate in a six month evaluation training that covered topics such as: stakeholder involvement, logic model development, generation of evaluation questions, survey design and administration, interviewing, focus groups, and data analysis (both qualitative and quantitative).

- The goal of the *Six-Month Basic Evaluation* Training was to provide a basic understanding of evaluation methods and approaches.

- At the end of the *Six-Month Basic Evaluation* Training all participants were to complete a full evaluation plan and had the option of continuing their training for another 12 months, in order to implement their plans.

- During the *Six-Month Basic Evaluation Training*, thirty-seven individuals from seventeen different programs participated.

DESCRIPTION:
Phase Two - RBF participatory Evaluation Institute

Programs participating in *Six-Month Basic Evaluation Training*:

- St.Nicks NPC
- Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center
- Union Settlement Association
- The Lower East Side Girls Club of NY
- Girls for Gender Equity in Sports, Inc. (GGES)
- Brooklyn Children's Museum
- South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!)
- W.H. Burns After School Program at PS/IS 176

- The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. CHCF
- Coalition For Hispanic Family Services - Arts & Literacy
- Oasis Community Corporation/PS 178
- Harlem RBI
- Good Shepherd
- Grand Street Settlement
- Trail Blazers
- South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO)
- Girls Inc.

DESCRIPTION:
Phase Two - RBF participatory Evaluation Institute

Programs Completing One Year Evaluations

- Fourteen of the seventeen programs articulated a desire to continue the training and most continued the training for at least an additional six months and were all able to implement aspects of their evaluation designs. However, only nine programs and twenty individuals completed the full 18-months and finalized their evaluation reports. These programs included:

    - The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. CHCF
    - Coalition For Hispanic Family Services - Arts & Literacy
    - Oasis Community Corporation/PS 178
    - Harlem RBI
    - Good Shepherd
    - Grand Street Settlement
    - Trail Blazers
    - South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO)
    - Girls Inc.

- Most programs that left the training, reported that their attrition was due to a lack of time and resources, staff turnover, and the challenging funding climate.

DESCRIPTION:
Phase Two - RBF Participatory Evaluation Institute

The Funders' Study Group

- During Phase Two a Funders' Study Group (FSG) was also initiated. The goal of the FSG was to build the knowledge and capacity of funders in New York City that supported out-of-school time programs. During these sessions funders were also given the opportunity to discuss key evaluation and accountability issues facing funders in New York City.

- Funders attended a five-month evaluation training. During this training, funders learned more about evaluations. Including how to:

  - Create evaluation questions
  - Develop methods to address these questions
  - Analyze and interpret data
  - Read and understand evaluation reports
  - Understand the costs associated with evaluation.

DESCRIPTION:
Phase Two - The Funders' Study Group

- In total twenty-one individuals representing seven different foundations attended this training. Foundations included:

  - The Paul Rapoport Foundation
  - Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing
  - Department of Youth and Community Development
  - Shape Fund
  - Ms. Foundation for Women
  - The Westchester Community Foundation
  - Episcopal Charities

DESRIPTION
Phase 3: Evaluation Mini Seminars

- In 2005/2006 the RBF wanted to continue their evaluation support to grantees. However, they understood that their grantees were short on both staff time and resources. Thus, they wanted to develop a training model that was less time and labor intensive.

- In order to meet these needs of, RBF designed a set of evaluation mini-seminars. These seminars consisted of four half-day trainings on evaluation basics. During these interactive hands-on trainings, participants learned about the different types of evaluation and the terminology used in the field, evaluation planning including logic modeling, survey design and administration, interviewing, and how to develop a focus group.

- In addition, four topic specific seminars were held for all RBF grantees to attend. The topics covered in these seminars include: Theory of Change, qualitative data analysis, quantitative data analysis and developing e-surveys, and creative methods.

DESRIPTION
Phase 3: Evaluation Mini Seminars

Participants attending the Evaluation Mini Seminars

- In total 26 different individuals from 16 organizations attended the **Four Day Evaluation Basics Seminar.**
- 19 individuals from 18 different programs attended the **Theory of Change Seminar.**
- 35 individuals from 19 program attended the **Quantitative Data Analysis and E Surveying Seminar.**
- 35 individuals from 16 different programs attended the **Qualitative Data Analysis Seminar.**
- 30 individuals from 12 organizations attended the **Creative Methods Seminar**

The Evaluation Design

METHODS

- **Post training assessments** were administered to all participants after the completion of each training cycle. In total 66 different assessments were completed and analyzed for purposes of this evaluation.
- **Attendance records** were reviewed and analyzed to obtain the total number of participants and programs who were involved in PEI training over the three-year period.
- **Follow up interviews** were conducted one year after the completion of PEI. These interviews focused on the degree to which evaluation activities were sustained within programs post PEI training. A total of 12 past PEI participants, representing 12 different programs, agreed to be interviewed, seven from Phase I and five from Phase 2 all had completed the full training cycle and implemented full evaluation projects. Given that a total of 18 programs complete the training, 12 respondents is equivalent to a 67% response rate. The six programs that did not respond all had significant staff turn over and the PEI participants were not longer employed by the programs.
- **Review of products**. In order to analyze the overall quality of the PEI products a total of twelve evaluation plans (4 from phase I and 8 from Phase II) and seven final evaluation reports (3 from Phase I and 4 from Phase II) were reviewed and analyzed from Phase I and Phase II.   Products were rated on a scale of one to five on several key indicators: (1) A clear and concise introduction to program (2) A clear and concise purpose for the evaluation (3) the existence of a program logic model that is "logical"; (4) clear, answerable evaluation questions (5) evaluation findings that correspond to questions and are presented in a comprehensive manner; (5) concussions that are clearly articulated and reasonable given the evaluation findings (6) recommendations that are clear and make sense given the evaluation findings.

FINDINGS

■ *Evaluation thinking needs to be incorporated into the way we operate. We needed to get all staff up to speed. The offer from the Robert Bowne Foundation to participate in their Evaluation Institute came at just the right time (Executive Director and PEI participant).*

FINDINGS:
Level of Effort and Participation

- Phase I (see Table 1)
  - During the *Intensive 18-Month Training,* 10 individuals and four programs received a total of 60 hours of training plus individual one-on-one consultation.
  - During the *Advanced Study Group,* 10 individuals from four programs received a total of 60 hours of workshop training plus individual consultation.
- Phase II (see Table 1)
  - During the *Phase II Six-Month Introduction to Evaluation,* a total of 37 individuals from 17 programs received a total of 30 hours of workshop training.
  - During Phase II, 20 individuals and 9 programs completed the full one-year evaluation training that included 30 hours of workshops plus individual consultation. *Note: these individuals and programs also participated in the Six-Month Evaluation Basic Training and thus, were not recounted during Phase II.
  - During the *Funders Study Group,* 21 individuals from 7 foundations received 20 hours of workshop training.
- Phase III (see Table 1)
  - During the Phase III *Four Day Evaluation Basics Seminar*. a total of 26 different individuals from 16 organizations received 12 hours of training
  - During the Phase III *Seminars on Specific Evaluation Topics* an average of 30 individuals from 16 programs received 12 hours of training.

- **In total 70 individuals from 42 different programs were provided with 204 hours of workshop training plus additional one-on-one consultation.**

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FINDINGS:
Level of Effort and Participation

Table 1: Participation and level of effort	Individuals	Programs	Hrs of Service
Phase I			
18-month intensive training	10	4	60 hrs+ consultation
Advanced study group	10	5	60 hrs + consultation
Phase II			
Six month basic evaluation training	37	17	30 hrs
Year long-evaluation implementation	20	9	30 hrs + consultation
Phase III			
Four day evaluation basics seminar	26	16	12 hrs
Four topic specific mini seminars	30 (avg)	16 (avg)	12 hrs
TOTALS	**70***	**42***	**204 hours**

FINDINGS:
Products Created During RBF Evaluation Institute

Table 2: Number of products	Evaluation Plans	Evaluation Reports
Phase I		
○ 18-month intensive training	4	4
○ Advanced study group	5	5
Phase II		
○ Six month basic evaluation training	17	
Year long-evaluation implementation		9
Phase III		
Evaluation Basics	16	

- During Phase I a total of 9 evaluation plans were created and 9 full evaluation reports (see Table 2).

- During Phase II a total of 17 evaluation plans were created and 9 full evaluation reports (see Table 2).

- During Phase II a total of 16 draft evaluation plans were created.

- In total there were a total of 42 evaluation plans and 18 full evaluation reports.

FINDINGS:
Costs/Benefits of PEI

- Phase I Cost = $67,000

- Phase II Cost = $61,000

- Phase III Cost = $10,000

- **Total Cost = 129,000**

The training cost approximately $2,500 per person and $4,961 per program. * *This figure does not include the budget for Phase III as it was never the goal of this phase to produce evaluation plans and reports.*

If you only examine the number of full evaluations as "benefits" (not taking into account individual learning or program capacity) then each full evaluation cost approximately $7,000.

FINDINGS:
Quality Participatory Evaluation Institute Products

In order to analyze the **overall quality of PEI products**, a total of twelve evaluation plans and seven final evaluation reports were reviewed and analyzed from Phase I and Phase II.

- All evaluation plans and reports included introductions to the programs that were clear and concise.
- All evaluation plans and reports asked evaluation questions that could be answered through data collection.
- All evaluation plans and reports included multiple methods to address each evaluation question. In addition, these methods choices seemed appropriate for answering the evaluation questions.
- All evaluation reports highlighted evaluation findings clearly, often using tbble, charts and graphs. In addition, these findings directly addressed the evaluation questions.
- All evaluation reports included conclusions and action steps that seemed appropriate given the findings.

The quality of these evaluation plans and reports were at or above the level of graduate students.

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

At the end of every training, individuals were surveyed. Data drawn from these surveys show that the trainings were considered to be of high quality and both individuals and programs were positively impacted by the evaluation institutes and seminars. Specific data will be discussed further in the following sections.

Quality of Training

Almost all (96%) stated that the PEI training was of "high quality". Most (84%) stated that the training was "very worthwhile" and a few (16%) stated that the training was "somewhat worthwhile". For example respondents made the following statements:

It was unbelievably well-facilitated and well-delivered. We loved it!

The training was one of the most well planned and managed that I have ever attended. I am looking forward to the follow up support.

This was the most well planned and executed project I have ever participated in.

The trainer was wonderful, knowledgeable, flexible, accessible and an incredible resource. It was a pleasure and privilege to participate.

The trainers are always accessible, professional, knowledgeable, and personable.

It was both a pleasure and rewarding to be in the Advanced study group.

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Individual Outcomes

- All respondents stated that it was either *very true* (78%) or *somewhat true* (22%) that the PEI **taught them how to look at their program from a different perspective**.

- Most (90%) respondents stated that it was either *very true (21%)* or *somewhat true* (68%) that the PEI training **Internal and External Communication**.

- Most (92%) respondents stated that it was either *very true (44%)* or *somewhat true* (48%) that the PEI training **changed their understanding of their programs** and why they were doing what they were doing.

- Most (88%) respondents stated that it was either *very true (24%)* or *somewhat true* (64%) that the PEI training **strengthened relationships within their agency**.

- Most (88%) respondents stated that it was either *very true (28%)* or *somewhat true* (60%) that the PEI training **changed their perceptions of themselves** as a professional in the field.

- Most (84%) respondents stated that it was either *very true (24%)* or *somewhat true* (60%) that the PEI training helped them **feel better about the work they do**.

- Most (80%) respondents stated that it was either *very true (16%)* or *somewhat true* (64%) that the PEI training **helped them form new relationships with other programs.**

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Individual Outcomes

When asked to give examples of how the PEI workshops supported **individual growth**, respondents were all able to provide at least three examples. Examples included, increased knowledge of evaluation, new perspectives of programs, improved articulation of program, increased communication, decreased fear and increased competence regarding evaluation, and increases in knowledge regarding technology used in evaluation.

- All respondents stated that the PEI workshops increased their knowledge of evaluation. In particular, respondents mentioned learning more about:
    - Evaluation design
    - Evaluation methods
    - Data analysis
    - How to be better consumer of evaluation
- Almost one half (44%) of respondents stated that they changed their understandings of their programs
- Approximately one-third (33%) of all respondents said that the PEI workshops supported them to look at their programs more objectively and systematically.
- Several respondents (22%) stated that t PEI helped them learn how articulate their programs activities and outcomes by using a logic model.
- Several respondents (18%) said they were able to increase their communication with staff and other stakeholders.
- Several respondents (26%) also stated that the workshops decreased their fear of evaluation and increased competence.
- Several respondents (13%) said they learned more about technology such as Excel and PowerPoint and how to use it to analyze and present data.

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Individual Outcomes

Respondents made the following comments about their **personal growth**.

- *The training was very useful for me because I was able to create evaluation tools and a report. It was also great for my position and helpful for the program. Personally it was great because I learned something new. A great skills!*

- *The training was very scary for me in the beginning and I was very taken aback by all of this foreign information. At the beginning of this year, when I was lost, I was forced to learn a lot and actually began to enjoy the process. The trainers were great!*

- *As an administrator it helped me to frame the questions that should be answered for all of our programs. I also became a more educated consumer of evaluation.*

- *I learned new skills and also was able to work more efficiently and effectively. Since this was my second experience in the study group, I was more able to formulate and structure my evaluation project.*

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Program Outcomes

- When asked to give examples of how the PEI workshops supported **programmatic growth**, all respondents were able to provide at least three examples. Examples included:

    - Improved evaluation and assessment strategies (100%)
    - Improved quality of program (93%)
    - Integration of evaluation into programming (86%)
    - Improved internal communication with staff members (67%)
    - Improved external communication with stakeholders (53%)

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Impact on program quality

Most respondents (93%) stated that participation in PEI had impacts on their program beyond "increased evaluation knowledge and capacity". For example, respondents reported that they made changes in the program activities, in their collaborations with parents and teachers, and with staff development. For example respondents said:

Activities
- We will continue to use the practices that the students found effective in the evaluation.
- We will integrate activities.
- We will make transportation changes for all of our summer youth.
- The older youth in the program are more equipped to work with the younger youth now.

Communication and collaboration
- The program will now make every effort to communicate with the parents more effectively.
- There will be stronger communication between our staff and the teachers.
- Increased collaboration with parents
- Stakeholders are more aware of what outcomes we can and cannot meet.
- We must add more community involvement trainings.

Staff development
- Evaluation data is informing staff development.
- More reflective practitioners
- We will do more team building workshops.

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Agency Outcomes

- When asked to give examples of how the PEI workshops supported **agency growth**, most respondents (73%) provided at least one example. Others were unsure of the agency impact and stated that it was "too early to tell". Examples of positive agency impact included:

  - Increased ability to use evaluation across all programs (60%)
  - Increase quality of service (18%)
  - Increased evaluation expertise within the agency (58%)
  - Continuity of understanding about evaluation across all programs (32%)
  - Expectations of the program are more clearly articulated (31%)

FINDINGS:
Post training assessments

Using PEI Learnings Post PEI

All participants stated that they would use the evaluation skills, tools and/or methods in their daily work within out-of-school-time programs. Specifically, all stated they would continue to use evaluation methods and strategies in their work, and one-third stated they would continue to create logic models.

Spreading the PEI Learnigns To The Larger Organization

- Most (80%) respondents stated that they would they would **share what they learned during PEI with other staff** in their program by providing them with training.

- Most (93%) stated that they would **give a final evaluation report to the staff in their programs** and share their instruments and reports with them.

- Most (75%) also sated that they would **provide training to staff within their larger agencies/organizations.**

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

Continued Use of Evaluation

- All but one program continued using evaluation strategies in their program after their involvement in PEI. The one that was not using evaluation felt they had no support from upper management for these activities. Respondents who were able to employ evaluation techniques post PEI made the following statements:

We use evaluation quite a lot. It's something we do in the very beginning of starting something new. We have frequent staff meeting that are focused on evaluation. We talk about the needs of the projects and the needs of the staff. Young people are surveyed before, during and after every cycle.

We developed a better way to get parent input. We have evaluation systems in place. We interview parents and kids at the beginning and at the end of every year. I do the Starburst surveys with the children and I observe activities.

We are currently revamping our evaluation with Kim Sabo Consulting, modifying existing tools we developed during PEI and creating new ones.

We do evaluation all of the time, it is part of everything we do now. Our goal is to integrate throughout our programs.

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

- One year later, most program staff (67% or more) reported that they had done the following evaluation activities within their programs at least once:

    - Developing surveys (75%)
    - Administering surveys (75%)
    - Presenting evaluation findings to other staff members (75%)
    - Developed or revised their logic model (67%)
    - Developed interview protocols (67%)
    - Conducted evaluation-related interviews (67%)
    - Developed observation tools (67%)
    - Conducted evaluation-related observations (67%)
    - Written final reports (67%)

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

Continued Use of Evaluation

- Just over half of all respondents reported that sense their involvement in the RBF Evaluation Institute they have done the following evaluation activities within their programs at least once:

    - Analyzed record review data (58%)
    - Analyzed interview data (58%)
    - Analyzed observation data (58%)
    - Analyzed survey data (58%)
    - Run stakeholder meetings (58%)
    - Developed an evaluation design (50%)
    - Used excel to analyze survey data (50%)

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

Integration of Evaluation

All but one respondent stated that due to their work in PEI they had made significant strides toward **integrating evaluation** into their everyday practices. For example, respondents made the following comments:

We are at a good place at this point within our agency. We are in the process of doing a logic model for every program.

The evaluation has now become a central part of the staff development process. We don't tell the staff what they want to look at and learn, rather we ask the staff what they want to know about their program and their teaching practices and then we empower them to study these questions. Because the staff made the tools and were involved in the entire evaluation process, they learned a lot of evaluation concepts that were very new to them.

You have to make evaluation a part of your organization's capacity. We have full staff meetings one day a week to talk about assessments.

Evaluation for programmatic change is happening. We are now able to talk about what is happening in the program. The theory of change that we articulated was right for our after school program and rippled up to the youth program. We got an important piece of the puzzle during PEI and pushed it all the way up through our entire organization. We now talk about everything in terms of Caring, Ability, and Respect (CAR) and that becomes part of everything, from children, to youth, to staff.

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

Internal and External Communication

Many program reported that their new evaluation capacities were helping them to better **articulate their program models** and **communicate both internally and externally**. For example respondents made the following comments:

The staff said that a lot of times they would do assessment and evaluation and it wouldn't go anywhere. However, with the support of the RBF Evaluation Institute, the staff now all work together and the evaluations are more useful. There is now a context and a venue for communicating about our work.

The entire course taught me how to think about evaluation differently and how important it is and how to use it. We can show and tell people what we do now with more clarity.

We now have a solid foundation of evaluation in our after school program. We now have a clearer picture of why we do, what we do.

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

Internal and External Communication (Continued)

We really learned things. We struggled with core questions about our program and what it does. It opened new pathways of communication that didn't happen before. It was intense. We were talking "development" - programmatic, direct service, and child. We spent a lot of time and energy talking. There was that dialogue throughout the whole process. We were also very respectful and strategic about the purpose of the project and how we needed to communicate and when we wanted to communicate.

It is a great way of taking the concept of evaluation to the entire staff. Once we had participatory evaluation processes the staff became very invested in the program. In the beginning, there were such heated arguments on every point. Then we conducted focus groups and collected data that brought out very important topics and helped us come together…. Being involved in evaluation gave the staff a better picture of how their work fits into the bigger picture. Lesson plans have changed because of portfolio reviews. We put the tools of evaluation in their hands and things changed. Just knowing their work was valued came through evaluation.

FINDINGS: One-Year Follow-Up Interviews

Challenges

*Respondents mentioned that there were several **challenges** they faced when trying to incorporate evaluation into their work. The most pressing challenge was time and the energy needed for the work. The second challenge mentioned had to do with mandated evaluation requirements and the third had to do with internal evaluation capacity. Respondents made the following statements:*

Even though we are committed to making evaluation a priority, time is an issue. You have to make it as part of what you do. The challenge is staying on top of it.

Time. It has taken us a whole year to develop the database and systems. It's pricey and takes up a lot of resources – financial and manpower.

It's time consuming. Getting the staff to be comfortable in doing evaluation and to realize that findings do not define fault.

How to track attendance and keep records to report to 21st Century.

Trying to incorporate instruments and standards for all of the programs consistently.

While the management has a strong capacity for evaluation, we have not yet been able to train staff in evaluation because we have failed to hire the appropriate staff to work with and we just haven't been able to instill a sense of excitement about evaluation into the staff.