

Disclaimer



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Sustainability



- What is it?
- What contributes to it?
- What detracts from it?
- How do you know you have sustained your?

Why Sustain????



Funding providers and the professionals who receive their funds have an obligation to work toward sustaining programs.

The poignancy of this obligation was expressed by a service provider who said:



We have a responsibility to our program recipients; they've had so many losses in their lives and for us to come in for a year or two or three and give them hope, only to have the program go away, we've just caused another loss and a further loss of hope in their lives.

(Akerlund, 2000, p. 353)

Defining Sustainability



- No one definition
- Needs to be determined and defined at the beginning of a project – otherwise, how will you know?
- There are levels of sustainability – not just is or isn't and numerous ways that sustainability looks

Our Definition of Sustainability



Took five years to define!!!

A sustained project is one whose programs and services are maintained continuously over time, and that keeps a focus consonant with its original goals and objectives including the individuals, families, and communities it was originally intended to serve.

Sustainability is the power or the capacity of projects to continuously respond to identified community issues.

Facilitators of Sustainability



- Various frameworks exist with much overlap
- My research points to:
 - Leadership Competence
 - Effective Collaboration
 - Understanding the Community
 - Program Responsivity (was Program Adaptability)
 - Strategic Funding (was Adequate Funding)
 - Staff Involvement and Integration (was Staff Quality and Involvement)
 - Demonstrating Program Results (was Demonstrated program impact)

Which factors are most important?



Leadership, funding, and staffing are likely the primary linchpins in program success and sustainability.

- Could survive short term without:
 - strong collaboration,
 - without demonstrating program results through research,
 - without being responsive to community changes.
- Less likely to be successful, even in the short term, with:
 - poor leadership,
 - inadequate funding, and
 - poorly involved staff.

Two major obstacles



1. Funding

- Need for more funding
- Need for stable funding

2. Staffing

- Not enough staff due to lack of funding or inability to recruit appropriate personnel
- Lack of committed staff
- Staff turnover



**Examples:
Are they sustained?
You decide!**

Example #5



Goals:

1. Enhance academic performance of at risk youth by providing before and after school programs and summer enrichment program
2. Provide family enrichment opportunities
 - Provided tutoring, homework assistance, life skills education, anti-violence curriculum, recreation at two before school and three after school sites
 - Monthly Family Fun Nights – required if child was in program



One year after funding ended:

- Program now run by the coalition and is at one after school site
- Continues same activities
- No longer has summer program
- Before school projects eliminated when schools offered a morning breakfast program
- Coalition meets to provide program direction and search for funding



Other changes made:

- 1. Expanded definition of at-risk to include latchkey children**
- 2. Obtained non-profit tax-exempt 5013c status**
- 3. Cut back in staff and increased reliance on volunteers**

Funding now mostly through:

- 1. Two local school districts**
- 2. Sliding scale user fees**

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