

Monitoring Breakout Session
Director's Training May 25, 2017

In attendance: Rachel Wilson, Orange County Youth Bureau
Tiffany Niles, Orange County Youth Bureau
Joseph King, Syracuse/Onondaga County Youth Bureau
Rebecca Robarge, Saratoga County Youth Bureau
Phyllis Morena, Rockland County Youth Bureau
Nicole Fields, Town of Tonawanda Youth, Parks & Recreation
Janeen Cunningham, Putnam County Youth Bureau
Chris Waring, Office of Children and Family Services
Dawn Kinney, Town of Clarence Youth Bureau
June Ellen Notaro, Dutchess County Youth Services
Bill Caudill, Steuben County Youth Bureau
Anthony Evans, Cattaraugus County
George McDonnell, Schoharie County Youth Bureau

This roundtable discussion focused on many aspects of the monitoring process; who is monitoring: board members, youth bureau staff and/ or youth? How are people engaged in the process. What are the tools being used? What is the frequency? How is the data collected and for what purpose?

The conversation began with an introduction from each person, along with a condensed summary of answers for the questions posed.

Responses included:

Tools:

- Creation of a Youth PQA for youth to use.
- Formal Program Quality Assessment (PQA) - a couple YB's use this
- Youth volunteer programs, and Youth Court programs, use a tool.
- Some county Youth Bureaus are merged with other county depts. and may need to adopt the new depts. monitoring protocols. Often YB's have been at the forefront of monitoring and called upon to train other county departments on how to monitor. Dutchess Co YB was merged with DSS to become Dept of Community & Family Services and the department is in the process of developing a monitoring tool that can be used across divisions and include questions on how funded agencies accommodate people with special needs.
- A new monitoring tool is being rolled out to request agencies to provide how they incorporate meeting special needs
- A pre-existing monitoring tool has been tweaked to include program provisions to include and support youth with disabilities and/or language barriers
- Agency monitoring tool is comprehensive; includes service provisions, personnel records, governance and administration, agency/fiscal procedures -very few use this

- Municipal (recreation programs) tool addresses site, safety and accountability procedures. Each tool is program specific; allows for documenting each performance measure and how the data is being collected.
- Monitoring form addresses safety and staffing, etc.

Who:

- Mostly staff monitor, difficulty in engaging Board members.
- Allocations committee on the Board does all monitoring; they only fund direct services. They have PYD training, with an awareness of the touchstone goals. Must be intentional in matching the Board member to an appropriate monitoring assignment ("old school" mindset vs. positive youth development theories)
- There is only 1 youth bureau staff person with a half time office assistant.
- The Board does the monitoring
- Staff monitor programs; outcomes reviewed as a Board
- Some monitors need better training (to address timeliness, accuracy, etc.)

When:

- Quarterly
- Annual
- Site visits (scheduled and/or unscheduled drop-in)
- All programs are monitoring annually, in addition to bi-annual written reports
- Mandatory quarterly meetings; all programs come to the Youth Bureau. Frequency is questionable, agenda is not often full.

How:

- Forms are given to each program. Information is collected and collated. If time permits conversations can occur about facilitating change. Reflectively, this Director does not feel monitoring in this manner is done well. The process could be improved upon.
- Staff monitor and report back to Board members
- Send forms to agencies in advance, for completion. This makes the time spent during the monitoring visit a review of the information provided, as well as, a provision of technical assistance
- Online tracking system; CAMS
- Joint meetings with fiscal and program personnel

Suggestions:

- Sharing of evidence based evaluation tools at the October conference
- Tap into meetings that already exist; multiple players that are already in the room - invite yourself
- To increase Youth Board members accompanying site visits - publish the monitoring schedule at a meeting and invite them.