Doing the right thing: Ethical considerations when conducting program evaluation

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Today’s presenters

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Housekeeping notes

• This webinar will be recorded, and will be available on the Centre’s website as an educational resource
• The slides have been sent to participants
• Log in with a phone whenever possible for optimal audio quality
• We have staff online to assist with any technical difficulties
• There will be a short evaluation survey for all webinar attendees at the completion of the webinar.
Addressing questions:

- This webinar will be followed by a question and answer period, however questions are encouraged throughout the presentation.

- Questions can be submitted electronically or verbally. Specifics around this process will be clarified at the end of the webinar.
Plan for this session

In today’s webinar, we will provide:

• A brief summary of the Centre’s goals and activities
• An overview of some key ethical considerations to keep in mind when evaluating a program
• A description of different ethics review processes
• Views from the field
• Suggestions for additional resources
About the Centre
What is the Centre?

**Vision**

- Optimal mental health and well-being for children and youth.

**Mission**

- We bring people and knowledge together to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of mental health services for children, youth, and their families and caregivers.
What is the Centre?

Learning

Collaboration

Leadership
The Learning Journey

Share your story

Gather information

Use knowledge to grow
Questions to consider as you begin your evaluation

• Why are you doing an evaluation at this time?
  • Internal versus external motivations

• What kind of information do you intend to collect?
Questions to consider as you begin your evaluation

• How will you obtain relevant and useful information?

• How will you encourage evaluation team members to become familiar with and knowledgeable of evaluation methods to ensure credibility?
Research vs. Evaluation

Research
- Idea
- Literature review
- Generate research question(s)
- Develop a methodology
- Collect data
- Analyze and interpret data
- Communicate findings

Evaluation
- Identified need
- *Organize stakeholder communications*
- Literature review
- Finalize evaluation questions
- Develop a methodology
- Collect data
- Analyze and interpret data
- Communicate findings
- *Apply findings*
Ethical questions to consider in evaluation
What do we mean by ethics?

• A system of moral principles
• The rules of conduct organizing the actions of a particular group of people
• The values relating to human conduct re: whether actions are right or wrong, and motivations underlying these actions are good or bad
Why think about ethics?

• Rights of human participants
  • Evaluations should be designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of human participants

• Human Interactions
  • Evaluators should respect human dignity and worth in their interactions with other persons associated with an evaluation, so that participants are not threatened or harmed during the process of the evaluation

http://www.evaluationcanada.ca
Why establish procedures and protocols?

- To ensure processes are in place to support ethical practice in evaluation
  - The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical conduct for research involving humans is a helpful resource (TCPS)
  - The TCPS is linked to an online course on research ethics (Course on Research Ethics—CORE)
What is a conflict of interest?

- “…when activities or situations place an individual or institution in a real, potential, or perceived conflict between the duties or responsibilities related to research…” (TCPS, 2010)

- Addressing conflicts of interest will ensure…
  - High objectivity in evaluation procedures
  - Rights, safety and well being of participants
  - High degree of integrity in your evaluation
What is privacy and confidentiality?

- How will you protect participant’s privacy and confidentiality?
  - What’s the difference between privacy, confidentiality and anonymity?
  - How will confidentiality and anonymity be ensured?
What is privacy and confidentiality?

- How will you protect participant’s privacy and confidentiality?
  - Who will have access to data collected?
  - Where will data be stored?
  - What will be done with data following the study?
  - What does a confidentiality statement look like?
Sample confidentiality statement

“You can be assured that your name will not be disclosed and that the information you share with us will be confidential. Your responses will be summarized along with other responses. No names or identifying information will be used.”
What is free and informed consent?

- If you plan to involve children in the evaluation, provide a statement of consent in which the parent/caregiver will consent on the child’s behalf.
What is free and informed consent?

- You can ensure free and informed consent by providing an information letter which explains:
  - Purpose of evaluation
  - Methods and procedures
  - Benefits
  - Risks
  - What has been done to ensure participant safety and minimize risk and harm
What is free and informed consent?

- Providing a **voluntary participation statement** which explains
  - Participation in evaluation is voluntary
  - Participants may withdraw at anytime
  - Participating or not participating will not affect services received

“*Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Your participation will not affect the services you receive in any way.*”
How will you communicate ethically?

- During the planning stages
- Throughout the evaluation process
- After the evaluation
The ethics review process
What are the processes for ethics review?

• Ethics review committee (ERC)
  • An independent committee that has been formally designated to approve, monitor and review research or evaluation involving humans with the aim to protect their rights and welfare, e.g. an internal committee

• Ethics review board (ERB)
  • An independent board established solely to review research and determine if the rights and welfare of human participants involved in research are adequately protected
Views from the field

Randy Penney
Assistant Director, Mental Health Services
Lutherwood
Community access to ethical review

- There is no:
  - Ethical review process available for research being conducted in most communities, outside learning institutions
  - Ethical support or review board process available to support community or organizational research and/or evaluation
Development of Community Research Ethics Office

- January 2008 – held meeting with 45 local community organizations
- October 2008 – steering committee formed; a needs assessment and feasibility study conducted
- February 2010 – community forum to share findings:
  - An accessible consultation service
  - Formal review process
  - Ongoing training and workshops
  - Online resources
CREO provides...

- Consultation and education
  - A 1:1 consultation, methodology, research ideas and ethical conduct in research
- Review of research proposals (Ethics Board) to promote ethical conduct
  - Ethical guidance and consultation
  - Does not supervisor/monitor research, and does not prevent research from taking place
Community Research Ethics Network
- A forum for discussion and feedback
- Access to resources and ongoing support
- A question and answer forum to keep researchers and participants informed about CREO
Additional resources

• Ethical Issues Checklist (MQP)
• Ethical Guidelines (CES)
• www.communityresearchethics.com
It's QUESTION TIME!!
Questions or comments?

- To submit questions electronically, use the Question box located in your control panel
- To submit questions verbally, use the ‘Raised Hand’ icon also located in the control panel
Upcoming webinars

**Doing a Literature Review: How to search, evaluate, synthesize, and present the evidence**
Charlie Carter
Michelle Gibson, Student-Lynwood-Charlton
November 13th at 1 pm

**Process Evaluation**
Melissa Jennings and Kyle Ferguson
November 27th at 1 pm

**Outcome Evaluation**
Ilana Smyth and Veronica Hoch
Roger Rolfe, Central Toronto Youth Services
Chris Dodd, Lutherwood
December 4th at 1 pm
Register

- [www.excellenceforchildandyouth.com/training/webinars](www.excellenceforchildandyouth.com/training/webinars)

Archived webinars:

- [www.excellenceforchildandyouth.com/training/webinars/archives](www.excellenceforchildandyouth.com/training/webinars/archives)
Finally…

Please don’t forget to complete the survey at the end of this webinar.

Your feedback is very important to us, so we thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us!
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