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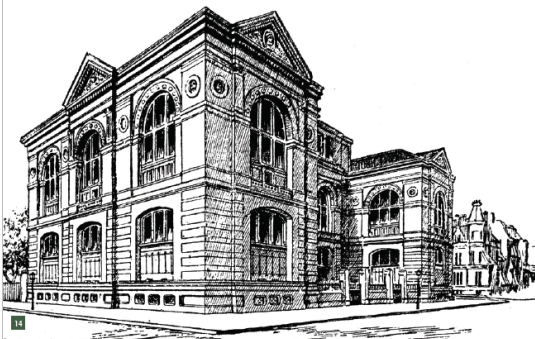


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Case Study Overview: Emerson Community Library

Library and Community Overview

- Emerson Community Library (ECL) is a county library with a legal service area population of 110,000.
- ECL has three outlets and serves multiple communities across the county, which vary in levels of income and library use.
- Community concerns include STEM education, particularly elementary school math performance.
- Low-income families, such as those served by Head Start, are a population the library has historically underserved.
- There are 20 Head Start centers in the county which serve children ages birth to five.



Program

ECL offers a variety of STEM storytimes both in and outside of the library to various age groups, including an outreach program that brings a math-focused 8-session storytime series to the Head Start centers across their county: Infusing Math into Preschool Services. This program was launched a year ago and is funded by operating funds and a starter grant from a local corporate foundation. The starter grant provides 18 months of funding.

Location

The "Infusing Math into Preschool Services" storytime series is offered at ten Head Start centers that are located in the three communities with the lowest levels of library use within the county. The main library is located about 20 miles from these communities.

Key Staff/Volunteers

The children's librarian at the main library is in charge of the "Infusing Math into Preschool Services" storytime series. She developed and tested the content, and recruited, trained, and supervises a team of five volunteers.

The five volunteers are based in the main library and work in pairs to deliver the math storytime series at the Head Start centers.

The evaluation team consists of the children's librarian and the assistant library director.

Program Goals

The program is based on the idea that early engagement with math concepts and activities lays the groundwork for success in elementary school math. Its overarching aim is to support a school district initiative focused on boosting elementary school math performance.

The primary goal is to engage 3 to 5-year-olds in math concepts and activities. A secondary goal is to help Head Start teachers understand the importance of early math engagement, learn how they can support early math engagement with math concepts and activities, and incorporate math concepts and activities in their work.

pp. 14-15



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Case Study: Emerson Community Library



ECL has three outlets and serves multiple communities across the county, which vary in levels of income and library use.



Library has historically under-served low-income families, such as those served by Head Start



Community concerns include STEM education, particularly elementary school math performance.



20 Head Start centers in the county serve children ages birth to five

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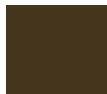
Case Study: Emerson Community Library



ECL provides STEM storytimes both in and outside of the library to various age groups



Infusing Math into Preschool Services focuses on the three communities with the lowest levels of library use



Infusing Math into Preschool Services was launched a year ago and brings a math-focused 8-session storytime series to Head Start centers



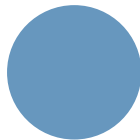
Infusing Math into Preschool Services is funded by operating funds and a starter grant (18 months) from a local foundation



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Case Study: Emerson Community Library

The ECL evaluation team decides to focus the evaluation on:



Storytimes:

- Only math storytimes that are part of the library's 8-session math series
- Only those storytimes delivered at the 10 Head Start centers located in the three focal communities with lowest levels of library use

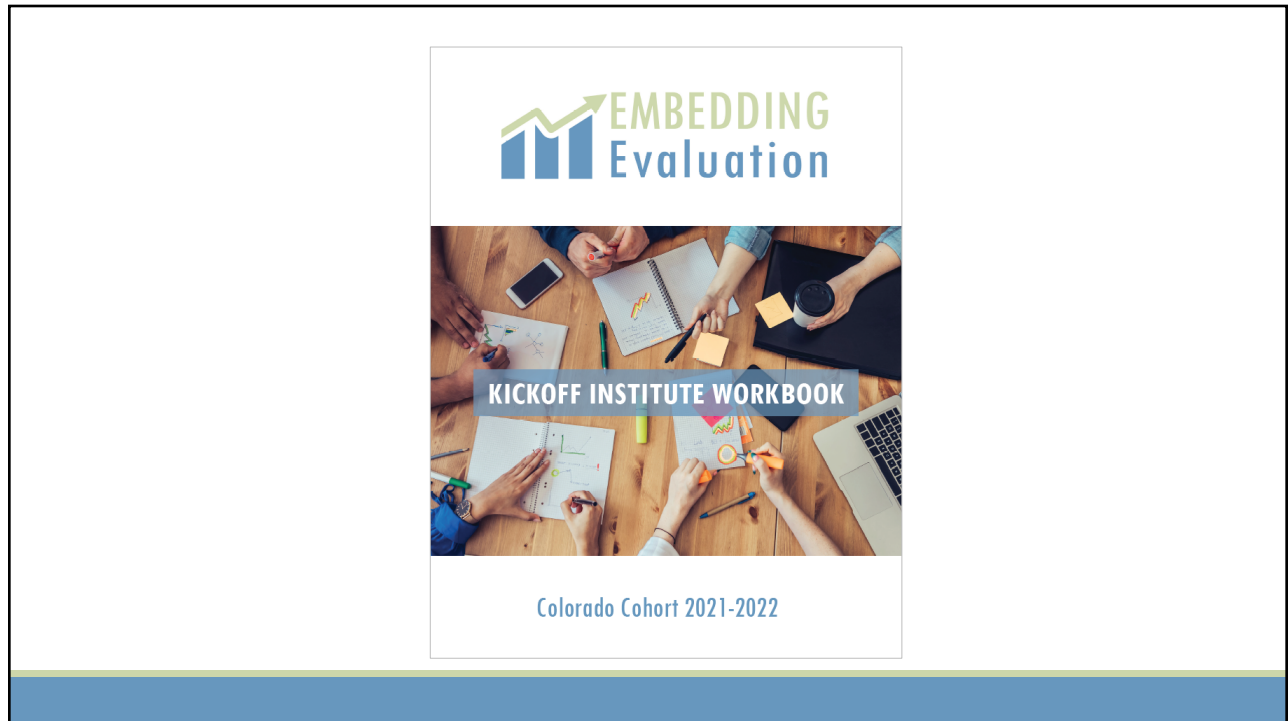


Population:

- 3-5-year-old children (although Head Start centers serve birth to 5 years old and younger children may attend the math storytimes)
- Head Start teachers in the 10 centers



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Step 2: Analyze context

What is the purpose(s) and desired use(s) of the evaluation?

- ☐ Accountability and oversight requirements
- ☐ Program improvements
- ☐ Advocacy

Who are the stakeholders? What is their "stake"?

- ☐ Who are the program stakeholders? What is their "stake"?
- ☐ Who are the evaluation stakeholders? What is their "stake"?
 - Evaluator(s)
 - Primary users of findings
 - Program/service participants and staff
 - Audiences for reporting

What is the political context?

- ☐ Who will be concerned about the evaluation?
- ☐ Who might benefit from positive or negative findings?

Emerson Community Library

Your Library

Step 3: Clarify program theory

What research/evaluation has already been conducted about the topic?

What are the team's ideas about how the program works?

- ☐ Ideas about how and why a program or service will work to accomplish its goals

What are the components of the logic model?

Emerson Community Library

Your Library

pp. 6-7

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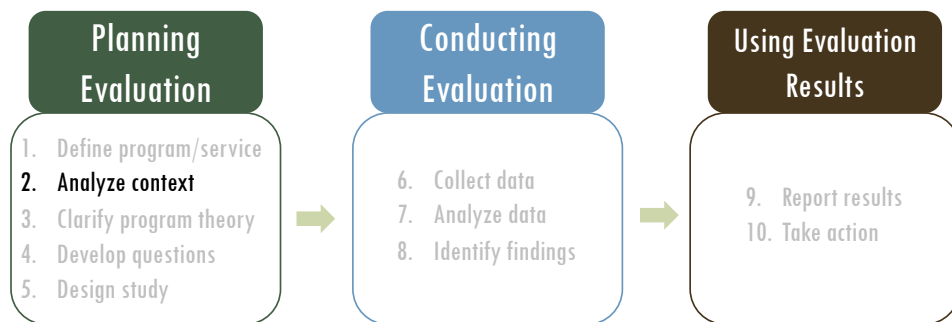
The Evaluation Process, Step 2



ANALYZE CONTEXT

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The Evaluation Process



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Planning the Evaluation — Step 2: Analyze context

What is the purpose(s)
and desired use(s) of
the evaluation?

Key Considerations:

- Accountability and oversight requirements
- Program improvement
- Advocacy

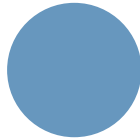
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Emerson Community Library: Purpose and use

The evaluation team identifies multiple aims for the evaluation of the math storytimes (p. 19).



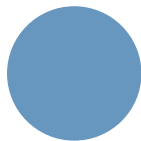
Review the varying purposes and uses that library staff envision. How would you would prioritize and sequence these purposes and uses?



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Emerson Community Library: Purpose and use

The evaluation team decides to begin by focusing on:



Program improvement: Maximizing the benefits for children and teachers by refining the content, volunteer training, and overall focus/approach



Accountability and oversight: Satisfying the corporate foundation's reporting requirements and reporting to library board



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Emerson Community Library: Purpose and use

If the program is found to be successful, the team will then focus on:



Program improvement: Expanding the project by identifying best practices to build on



Advocacy: Building positive public opinion about the library and securing county funding



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Planning the Evaluation — Step 2: Analyze context

Who are the key stakeholders? What is their “stake”?

Key Considerations:

- Who are the program stakeholders?
- Who are the evaluation stakeholders?
 - Evaluator(s)
 - Primary users of findings
 - Audiences for reporting

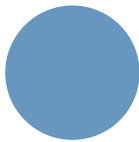
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Emerson Community Library: Stakeholders

The evaluation team develops a list of stakeholders.



Identify the program and evaluation stakeholders.

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Emerson Community Library: Stakeholders

The evaluation team identifies the following stakeholders (p. 20):

Program	Evaluation
Children's librarian	Children's librarian - evaluator, primary user of findings, source of framing information
Assistant library director	Assistant library director — evaluator, primary user of findings, source of framing information
Library director	Library director —primary user of findings, source of framing information
Other library staff	Teen librarian — primary user of findings, source of framing information
Volunteers	Volunteers — source of data, audience for reporting
Corporate foundation	Corporate foundation — audience for reporting
Head Start families	Library board — audience for reporting
Head Start teachers	Head Start families — audience for reporting
Head Start administrators	Head Start teachers — audience for reporting
Corporate foundation	Head Start administrators — audience for reporting

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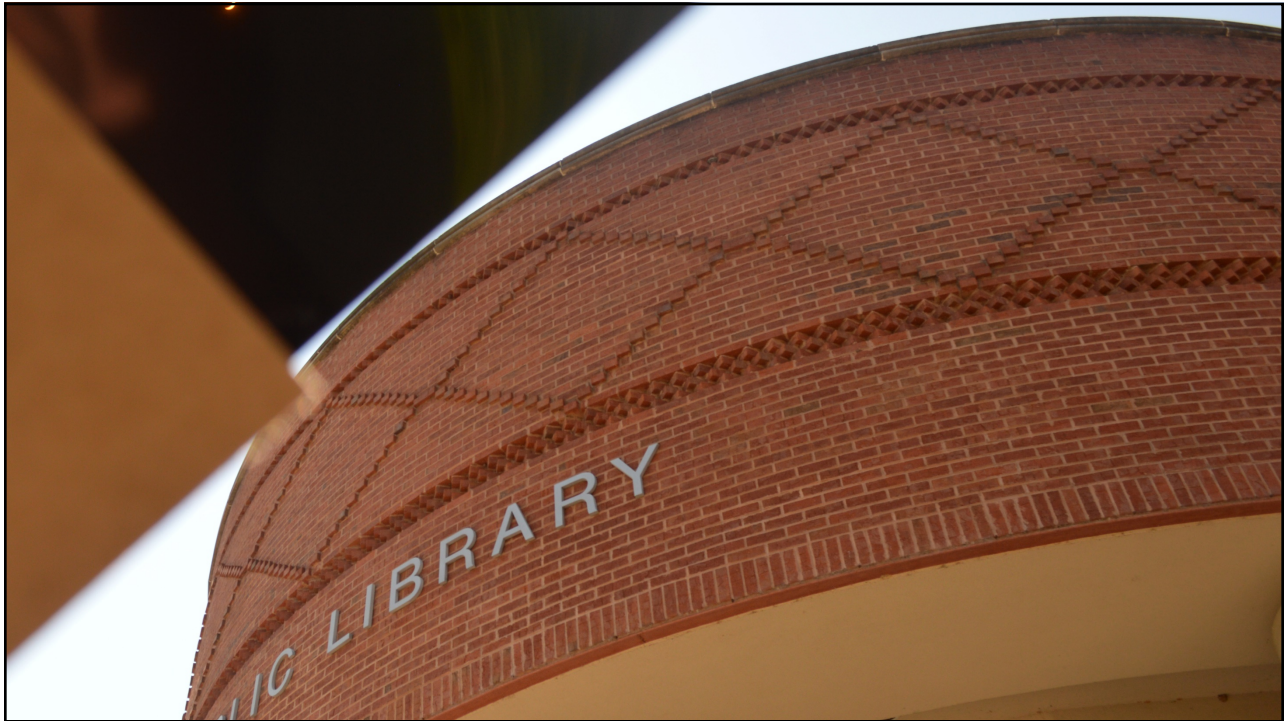
Planning the Evaluation — Step 2: Analyze context

What is the political context?

Key Considerations:

- Who will be concerned about the evaluation?
- Who might benefit from positive or negative findings?

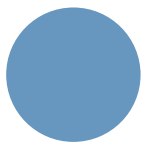
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Emerson Community Library: Political context

The evaluation team examines the political context for the evaluation (p. 21).



Review the information about the political context. What are the implications for the evaluation?

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Your Library: Clarify the evaluation context (pp. 22-23)

What is the purpose(s) and desired use(s) of the evaluation?

- Accountability/oversight
- Program improvement
- Advocacy

Who are the stakeholders?

- Evaluator(s)
- Primary users of findings
- Sources of information for framing the evaluation
- Sources of data
- Audiences for reporting

What is the political context?

- Who will be concerned about the evaluation?
- Who might benefit from positive or negative findings?