

Understanding the impact of services: choosing & using outcome measures

What Works Data Seminar



For Policy.
For Practice.
For Impact.



Aim of this presentation

- To share **practical learning & resources** from the experience of **evaluating the outcomes for children & parents** from the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme
- To present the **Index of Measures** which is a new resource for identifying a suitable standardised measure for service planning and evaluation

About CES



- Not-for-profit all-island organisation
- Work with government departments & agencies, not-for-profit & community organisations
- Work in sectors including health & social care, education, children & families, public sector innovation
- Aim to improve services and the lives of people in Ireland and Northern Ireland



Part 1

Choosing & using standardised outcome measures to evaluate the Area Based Childhood Programme

Anne-Marie O'Riordan



>90 interventions supported by the ABC Programme

- Prevention & early intervention initiative in 13 areas of disadvantage
- Targets investment in evidence-based / informed interventions to improve outcomes for children & families
- Implemented in a diverse policy environment, aligned to *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*
- CES evaluated the outcomes, implementation & costs between 2015 and 2017
- Purpose was to evaluate changes in outcomes for parents & children, method required to look at common outcomes across more than 90 interventions

Shared outcomes measurement framework

- Drew on readily available standardised measures
 - Based on a review of ABC area logic models & inventory of interventions / measures already in use
 - Check alignment to the ABC Programme logic model
 - Review of national studies for comparable measures
 - At least one measure to capture changes in each key outcome
 - **Could pool data at a national level**
- Internationally recognised, reliable & validated
 - A good fit between the measure & the outcome areas and associated outcomes
 - Suitable for use across as wide an age range as possible
 - Easy to use and/or score
 - Non-proprietary
 - Short and succinct
 - Used in other Irish studies

Criteria



Shared outcomes measurement framework

Measure	Info
Child-Parent Relationship Scale	Completed by parents (whose children were aged 3 years or older) who were participating in parenting interventions. Assessed the child-parent relationship as part of the parenting outcome area.
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	Completed by either parents, teachers, or the children themselves. Assessed social and emotional well-being as part of the parenting and the child health and development outcome areas, and, in some ABC areas, as part of the children's learning outcome area.
Santa Barbara School Readiness Scale	Completed by practitioners providing early years interventions to children in their pre-school year. Assessed a child's readiness for school as part of the children's learning outcome area.
Parental Stress Scale	Completed by some parents participating in parenting interventions. Assessed how parents felt in their role as a parent.
Tool to measure Parenting Self-Efficacy	A sub-scale of this measure was completed by some parents participating in parenting interventions. Assessed how parents felt about their ability to discipline and set boundaries for their children
Home Learning Environment Measure	Completed by some parents of children participating in early years and early literacy interventions. Assessed the home learning environment for children as part of the children's learning outcome area.

Developing the capacity of practitioners

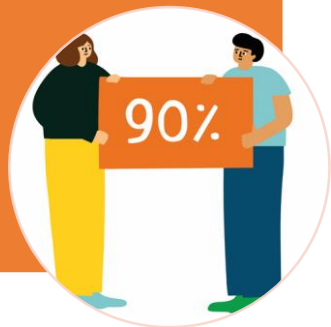
- Practitioners collected outcomes data
- Intended benefit to strengthen capacity around the use of data for planning and service delivery
- Supported areas to collect outcomes data: training, guidance materials
- Data verification checks



Lessons

- Build on existing processes and measures
- Be aware that not all outcomes may be captured
- Importance of ongoing training around the framework

Shared outcomes measurement framework



- Supports are required to build capacity
- Staff time and resources are required
- Data must be useful for practitioners
- Systems and supports should be put in place

Developing the capacity of practitioners



Resources

- Visit www.whatworks.gov.ie
- Resources section: '[Data measurement toolkit](#)'
 - Templates to collect pre- and post-intervention data for all the core measures used in the evaluation
 - Video tutorials to guide the completion of the data templates
 - Information packs & training slides relating to completing each measure
- Evaluation findings on the [DCYA](#) and [What Works](#) websites



Part 2

The Index of Measures: Selecting a standardised measure for service development and evaluation

Ruth Geraghty



Background

- The Atlantic Philanthropies + Government



2004 – 2018
funding period



€127 million*



52+ PEI services and
programmes across
ROI and NI*

- Independent evaluation was a condition of this funding – huge amount of learning for all involved















* Figures from Rochford et al., 2014 – most likely higher by end of AP funding in 2018

Preserving the legacy of this investment

- The PEI-RI was established in 2016 as a legacy project to preserve the knowledge built up this investment
- Evaluation data archived and available in ISSDA and IQDA*
- Also a critical mass of expertise in evaluation
 - Evaluators used 'standardised measures' i.e. tests used to assess developmental, psychological and environmental characteristics of research participants. Have been tested internationally for their 'reliability' in assessing these characteristics.
 - Approx. 200 standardised measures counted so far across all of these Irish evaluations



Sweep of 36 PEI evaluations to list what standardised measures were used

Area Based Childhood;	Incredible Years IYBP IYTCM and IYADHD	Ready, Steady, Grow;
BELONG;	Lifestart;	 Ready To Learn;
Big Brothers Big Sisters;	 Mate Tricks;	Restorative Practice;
Brook Sexual Health Clinic;	Mayo Children's Initiative;	Real U;
 Children's Profile at School Entry;	Media Initiative for Children;	 Time to Read;
Colin Early Intervention;	NEYAI;	Triple P;
 Doodle Den;	 Nurture;	Tus Maith
 Eager and Able to Learn;	 Out of School Time;	Wizard of Words;
 Early Childhood Care and Education;	Parenting Your Teen;	Write Minded;
 Functional Family Therapy;	 PATHS NI;	Youth Community Leaders Pilot;
 Growing Up in Ireland;	 Preparing for Life;	Youth Leadership;
Healthy Schools;		Volunteer-led Youth Clubs;
		3,4,5 Learning Years
 = data publicly available in ISSDA		

Finding the right tool for the job

- **Commonly used** – sign of a very ‘usable’ measure e.g. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
- **Unique** – probably good for capturing information on very specific things e.g. Parental Cognitions and Conduct Towards Infant Scale (PACOTIS)



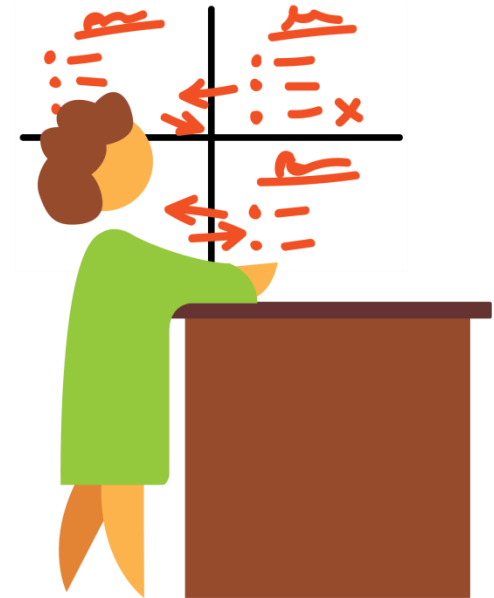
Q. How do you decide which measure you need?

Q. How do you know if this the right measure for you, or if there's something better?

Q. How do you know if this measure is going to work in an Irish context?

Index of Measures

- Searchable database of 200+ standardised measures
- Provides a detailed description of each measure allowing user to find and assess the suitability of a measure for their research needs
- Will list the Irish studies that have used each measure – link to report
- Will list the Irish studies where data are publicly available – link to data in archive



Descriptive information for each measure

OVERVIEW / QUICK VIEW

Title, acronym, creator

Description, domain(s) captured by measure

Respondent, number of items

Permission, training requirements to use it

Irish programmes that have used for evaluation / comparable data in archive

ABOUT THIS MEASURE

Subject(s) addressed by measure

Publication date, publications describing this measure

Coverage/age range

Related measures

HOW TO USE THIS MEASURE

How to administer the measure

Versions of measure available

Reliability, validity

ACCESS THIS MEASURE

Publisher

Copyright

Web-link to access the measure

Search features for end users

- Search by title / acronym / author
- Search by subject (listed)
- Search by target population
 - ☐ 0 - 3 years of age (pre-school)
 - ☐ 4 - 12 years of age (primary school aged)
 - ☐ 13 - 17 years of age (adolescent)
 - ☐ 18 years or older (adult)
 - ☐ Parent
 - ☐ Teacher
 - ☐ Staff
- Refine by permission – only show measures that are free to use



Other planned outputs from PEI-RI in 2020

- Research Data Management guidance for practitioners
- Library of reports preserved in national public repository – we need your help!





Thank you!

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