Implementing a Research and Evaluation Agenda:
Is Your State Ready?

Center for CCDBG Implementation Research

Office of Child Care

Early Childhood National Centers

Background

- Center for CCDBG Implementation Research

- Funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE)

- Urban Institute supports CCDF Lead Agencies and research partners

  - This includes11 lead agencies with CCDBG planning grants and 4 lead agencies with implementation grants

Session Objectives

- Understand how research and evaluation can help CCDF Lead Agencies

- Learn about key dimensions of research/evaluation capacity

- Learn about a tool to help you assess your agency's research/evaluation capacity

- Hear about the experience of other agencies in building their research/evaluation agendas

- Learn from each other by sharing your experiences

Role of Research and Evaluation for Lead Agencies

Initiative Stage	Research Questions to Ask	Research Approach
Planning	What is the problem? How might this initiative help?	Exploratory research
Launching	Is it feasible and appropriate?	Formative evaluation
Implementing	How well is it operating?	Process evaluation
Assessing	What was the effect of the initiative? Do the benefits outweigh the costs?	Summative/impact evaluation Benefit-cost analysis
Refining	Is it sustainable? How can it be improved?	Applying research to decision-making

Dimensions of Organizational Evaluation Capacity

CAPACITY TO DO EVALUATION

HUMAN RESOURCES

Staffing

Technical Skills

Communication Skills

Professional Development

Leadership

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

Budget

Ongoing Data Collection

Infrastructure

EVALUATION PLANNING

Evaluation Plan

Use of Consultants

Information Sharing

Organizational Linkages

External Supports

CAPACITY TO USE EVALUATION

EVALUATION LITERACY

Results-Management Orientation

Involvement/Participation

ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

Management Processes

Decision Support

LEARNING BENEFITS

Instrumental/ Conceptual Use

Process Use

Source: Bourgeois, Isabelle and Bradley J. Cousins, 2013. "Understanding dimensions of organizational evaluation capacity." *American Journal of Evaluation, 34*(3), 299–319.
Graphic from : Simmons, Louise. 2015. *Building Evaluation Capacity in Ontario's Public Health Units*.

Office of Child Care

Early Childhood National Centers

Assess your Agency's Capacity in Seven Areas

Domain	Domain Total		Number of Items	Average
1. Does our organization value research use?		÷	5	
2. Have we made an organizational commitment to research and evaluation?		÷	5	
3. Do our decisionmaking processes have a place for research?		÷	5	
4. Do program managers participate in research and evaluation activities?		÷	6	
5. Have we defined key indicators and data sources for performance measurement?		÷	6	
6. Do we have the necessary research knowledge and technical skills?		÷	7	
7. Do we have mechanisms in place to effectively communicate our research?		÷	5	
Total		÷	39	

*Office of Child Care

Early Childhood National Centers

How You Can Find the Self-Assessment Tool

- www.urban.org/ccdbg-center

  - Landing page for Center for Supporting Research on CCDBG Implementation

Suggestions for Using the Tool in Your State

- Draw on a multidisciplinary team including executive leadership and program, policy, research, and data staff.

- Use the tool however it works best for you.
    - Quick pass to identify key gaps and priorities
    - Deep dive to reach shared understanding on a range of concepts

- Focus on the discussion and reflection prompted by the tool rather than the total score.

- The scores are most useful for looking at relative capacity between the seven domains.

- **What steps have you taken to develop a research and evaluation agenda to support your CCDBG programs and policy?**
  - What challenges did you encounter or are you encountering in developing and implementing your research and evaluation agenda?
  - How has your agency benefitted from developing and implementing a research and evaluation agenda? Is there an example of how it has supported programs and policies?

Discussion

- Questions, reactions, reflections?

- What steps have you taken to build research and evaluation capacity in your agency?

- What are some of the key barriers to doing or using research in your state?

- What kinds of external supports would you find helpful?

- If you were to do a self-assessment, who would you involve in that process?

Thank you!

- Teresa Derrick-Mills, Principal Research Associate, Center for Supporting CCDBG Implementation, Urban Institute, tderrick-mills@urban.org

- Randy Hudgins, Georgia Dept. of Early Care and Learning, Randy.Hudgins@decal.ga.gov

- Jocelyn Bowne, Massachusetts Dept. of Early Education and Care, jocelyn.bowne@mass.gov