**Proud Parenting Grant Program**

# **Local Evaluation Plan**

Submitted by (Name of grantee):

Prepared by (Name(s) of author or entity):

Date:

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## Overview of Local Evaluation Plans, Purpose, and Suggestions for Drafting

Every BSCC grant requires the grantee to perform an evaluation of how the funds were utilized and whether the original goals for the funds were met. The evaluation is an opportunity to understand how the project was implemented; how the project evolved from the time that it was proposed to the time that it was completed; and what the outcomes of the project were. We use this information to better understand how scarce grant funds should be spent in the future and to develop more appropriate means to assist grantees in achieving what they set out to do with the funding.

The BSCC approach for evaluation asks the grantee to submit two documents, one close to the start of the grant period (the “Local Evaluation Plan” or LEP) that outlines how each grantee plans to conduct the evaluation, and one near the end of the grant period (the “Local Evaluation Report” or LER) that sums up the results of the evaluation. The LEP, the focus of this template, describes how the implementation and outcomes of the project will be monitored.

This template provides guidance for writing an LEP for your project. The sections that follow (“Project Background,” “Project Logic Model,” “Process Evaluation Method and Design,” and “Outcome Evaluation Method and Design”) will provide considerably more detail about the components, but we’ll summarize them briefly here.

1. Project Background: In this section, you will provide an overview of what you plan to do with the grant funds. This might be something like hiring staff (e.g., social workers, an evaluator, program manager, Nurturing Parent Practitioner); increasing training opportunities for staff; buying, repairing, or improving goods or real property such purchasing a new case management systems or improving an existing case management system; and obtaining or reimbursing costs such as travel, participant incentives, and bus passes for clients transportation to services.
2. Project Logic Model: In this section, you will create a visual depiction of your project. The logic model summarizes how the project operates, including the resources you need (e.g., funding, staff); the core project activities (e.g., “hire Nurturing Parent Practitioner to provide or arrange for parenting workshops and counseling for our clients”); and the intended outcomes of your program (e.g., “increase participants’ positive parenting interactions and bonding with their children”). Developing the logic model will also help form the backbone of your evaluation.
3. Process Evaluation Method and Design: A process evaluation focuses on understanding how the project was implemented. For example, if you set out to hire a Nurturing Parent Practitioner, were you able to? Did anything get in the way? What made it possible? This section will walk you through the steps of developing a process evaluation plan using your logic model as a guide.
4. Outcome Evaluation Method and Design: An outcome evaluation focuses on determining whether your project achieved its goals. For example, did you actually increase participants’ positive parenting interactions and bonding with their children? This section will walk you through the steps of developing an outcome evaluation plan using your logic model as a guide.

Note: BSCC does not prescribe the research design or methodological rigor of your evaluation. Each grantee should design an evaluation that meets their needs and capabilities.

## Project Background

In this section you’ll provide information essential to understanding the nature and motivation for the project (i.e., the programs, services, and activities supported by the grant). Critical components of the project background and questions to address include:

* What information can you provide that is essential to understanding the need for the project and the project itself, including information on:
* The problem(s) that the project is intended to address or the need(s) within the community.
* The history of the grantee in the community.
* The purpose of the project as it relates to the identified problem(s)/need(s) and the grantee.
* What is the scope of the project?
* What activities and/or services will the project provide?
* Are there or have there been similar projects with other community-based organizations or government entities (if known)? If so, describe them and explain how this project is or is not different.
* How will the project’s activities and/or services address the problem(s)/need(s) described?
* Who is the target of the project? Is it aimed at your young mothers and/or fathers? Young people in the child welfare system? At-risk and expectant or those who currently have children? How many participants (parents, partners, children, family members, etc.) is the project expected to serve?
* What are the project’s goals and objectives (these were the ones you outlined in your application and contract for the grant)?
  + Goals are defined by broad statements of what the program intends to accomplish, representing long-term intended outcome of the program.
  + Objectives are defined by statements of specific, measurable aims of program activities. Objectives detail the tasks that must be completed to achieve the goals.
  + Examples:
    - **Goal:** Increase parenting and resiliency skills.
      * **Objectives:** 1) Facilitate sixteen nurturing parenting classes, 2) Facilitate six communication workshops for participants.
    - **Goal:** Increase non-violent discipline techniques and emotional regulation.
      * **Objectives:** 1) Facilitate 4 Anger Replacement Therapy sessions for fathers, 2) Improve problem solving skills.
    - **Goal:** Improve coparenting between mothers and fathers.
      * **Objectives:** 1) Provide workshops on interpersonal skills, 2) Provide staff training on workshop curriculum, 3) Arrange peer mentoring one-on-one sessions for parents.
    - **Goal:** Increase number of participants with stable employment.
      * **Objectives:** 1) Provide participants with linkages to vocation training programs, 2) Increase the number of participants with high school diplomas or GEDs.

Start your narrative for the Background section here.

## Project Logic Model

The logic model is a visual representation of the project. It demonstrates how the project functions, including the resources needed to operate the program and the activities that the program offers. It also depicts how these project activities are expected to contribute to the program’s goals or expected outcomes. All of the project goals should be represented in the logic model in some way (typically in the expected outcomes and/or impacts). The goals will likely be reflected in the outcomes columns, as they reflect the outcomes you hope to achieve through your project. The objectives will likely be reflected in the activities/outputs, as they reflect the tasks that must be completed to achieve the goals. It is valuable to develop a logic model for your project because it helps to guide evaluation efforts. In Appendix A, we provide a more comprehensive set of examples of what might go into each logic model category.

Logic models typically include the following categories:

* Inputs/Resources:
  + - What resources are being used to support the project? This should include anything the projects uses to operate grant-funded activities. Common examples: staff, materials, funding, equipment, etc.
* The Proud Parenting Grant funds are one resource. Are you drawing on other in-kind donations or matched funds? Will you be partnering or contracting with another agency, such as a probation department? Will staff time be needed to execute the project?
* Activities:
  + What does the project do with the inputs or services (in alignment with project goals)?
  + For example, for a project that is designed to offer parenting and resiliency skills to participants, you might include “teach parenting and resiliency skills curriculum” as an activity. For a project that is designed to hire a Nurturing Parent Practitioner to increase participants’ level of knowledge of child brain development, the activity might be “teach participants with child brain development curriculum.”
* Outputs:
  + - The outputs section typically quantifies what happens as a result of the activities. For example, if the project accomplishes the activity of teaching parenting and resiliency skills to participants, then the output might be the number of participants (parents) who taught those skills. If the project sets out to hire a Nurturing Parent Practitioner, the output may be to have hired the Nurturing Parent Practitioner.
* Questions you might ask yourself to identify outputs include: How many services is the project expected to deliver throughout the grant? How many mothers and fathers participated in the activities the project offers? How will I know when the activity accomplished what it set out to do (e.g., all participants were taught nurturing parent curriculum; the number of participants with improved knowledge of child brain development increased).
* Outcomes:
* What immediate, specific, and measurable changes are expected to be observed due to the project?
  + - If the outputs are achieved, then this is the change we expect to see.
    - Outcomes can be grouped by:
      * Short-Term: occur during the grant cycle; observable over weeks or a couple of months.
      * Medium-Term: occur during the grant cycle; observable over several months or years.
    - If your project is teaching parenting and resiliency skills curriculum then the outcome might be things like improved parenting knowledge or skills. If your project hired a Nurturing Parent Practitioner with the goal of increasing non-violent discipline techniques and emotional regulation, a short-term goal might be to increase the participants’ coping skills, and the medium-term goal might be to decrease the number of instances of abusive parenting patterns.
* Impacts:
* How is the project expected to affect the community, city, and/or county?
  + - This can include fundamental, intended or unintended, changes that occur in organizations, communities, or systems because of the project activities beyond the grant cycle.
    - Impacts are societal/economic/civic/environmental-focused and may be the same or similar to long-term outcomes (typically occurring beyond the grant cycle). This is where you might think “big picture” about the downstream effects of your program.

**Sample Logic Model:**

**Examples:**

- Case management

- Referral/linkages to physical and mental health services

- Individual/group counseling

- Life skills training

- Participant system navigation-proving access to basic needs

- Anger Replacement Therapy

### Outcomes

Activities

Impacts

Outputs

Inputs

**Examples:**

- Staff time for program development and monitoring

- Financial support (e.g., state, foundation, and/or corporate funding, matching, etc.)

- Organizational tools (e.g., committees, board members, data collection and tracking tools, etc.)

- Partners (e.g. child welfare services, probation department, school district, etc.)

- Other (e.g., resources that are unique to your program, the region, state, etc.)

Intended Result

Planned Work

**Examples:**

- Improved participant outcomes

> Employment

> Housing situation

> Parenting knowledge

> Health status

- Improved child outcomes

- Reduce recidivism

- Break generational cycles of child abuse

**Examples:**

- Increased linkages to physical and mental health services

- Increase parenting and resiliency skills

- Increase quantity and quality of time spent with children

- Increase linkage to and utilization of basic needs

- Increased access to housing resources

- Participants’ ability to emotionally regulate and use non-violent discipline techniques increases

**Examples:**

- 50 participants given case management services over the course of the grant

- 75 linkages to participant and child Medi-Cal over the course of the grant

- 3 hours/week of individual/group counseling per participant until Individualized Service Plan is completed

- 50 life skills workshops delivered over the course of the grant

- 43 participants enrolled in WIC services over the course of the grant

* 3 participants referred to housing resources over the course of the grant

- 20 clients provided Anger Replacement Therapy curriculum over the course of the grant

**Provide a logic model for your project.**

The template for the logic model is provided below as an option. Use of this template is not required but may help save some time when developing the project’s logic model.

**Sample Logic Model:**

### Outcomes

Activities

Impacts

Outputs

Inputs

Intended Result

Planned Work

## Process Evaluation Method and Design

A process evaluation documents the services and activities that were implemented. It aims to determine if the program was implemented as expected. Process evaluations typically focus on the first three columns of your logic model: inputs/resources, activities, and outputs. Process evaluations often answer questions such as:

* What were the resources that were needed to implement the project?
* What activities were offered during the course of the project? What was the intensity of activities or services (e.g., how many counseling sessions were offered)? Did the activities offer align with the expected activities?
* Who were the target of the activities that were offered (e.g., how many participants were taught parenting and resiliency skills curriculum? How many participants received case management services?)? Did the number of people served by the project align with expectations?
* What were the barriers or challenges to implementing the program? What facilitated implementation of the program?

In this section of the LEP, you should cover the following topics:

* What are the inputs/resources, activities, and outputs that you will be assessing?
* What is the specific data element you’ll be looking for to measure each of those inputs/resources, activities, and outputs? Examples might be number of individualized case management/service plans developed or number of participants engaged in individual/group counseling.
* What data sources will you use for each data element? Some possibilities include document review/checklists or case management information system or service tracking data.
* How often will you collect the data?
* If implementation goes as expected, how will you document project facilitators – that is, the factors that were in place that helped you to be able to execute this project (e.g., presence of certain staff members, availability of funding, collaboration with external partners)? If implementation does not go as expected, how will you document project barriers or challenges?

To create this plan, you might consider creating a table based on the input/resources, activities, and outputs column of your logic model. In this table, there is a single column for you to indicate the inputs/resources, activities, and outputs from your logic model; a column to identify the data element; a column to indicate the data source; and a column to indicate the frequency of data collection.

For example:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Input/Resource/Activity/Output** | **Data Element(s)** | **Data Source(s)** | **Frequency of Data Collection** |
| Provide 50 participants with case management services | # of participants served | Case management system log tracking each meeting offered | Each time a one-on-one case management meeting is offered throughout duration of grant |
| Enroll 75 participants and children into Medi-Cal | # of participants and children enrolled | Case management system log tracking referral and enrollments into Medi-Cal | Each time a participant or child is enrolled throughout duration of grant |
| Offer 3 hours of individual/group counseling per week | # of hours of counseling | Service calendar | Annually throughout duration of grant |
| Hire and train one Nurturing Parent Practitioner | Nurturing Parent Practitioner has been hired | Employment records | Annually throughout duration of grant |
| Extent to which project was successfully implemented | Facilitators to implementation  Barriers to implementation | Discussions with staff during staff meetings | Biannually throughout duration of grant |

Note that sometimes the entries in the activity and output sections of your logic model may seem redundant. For example, if the activity is “hire and train Nurturing Parent Practitioner,” your outputs might be “number of practitioners hired” and “number of practitioners trained.” In this case, you do not necessarily need a separate row for each of those three entries. Instead, as in the example, you might include just the more specific outputs. That is, you don’t need to include a row in your table for “hire one Nurturing Parent Practitioner” and “train one Nurturing Parent Practitioner”. Instead, you could just include rows for “number of practitioners of hired” and “number of practitioners trained” because they are more specific, as shown in the example above.

Start narrative for the Process Evaluation Method and Design section here.

## Outcome Evaluation Method and Design

An outcome evaluation examines the project’s results, or outcomes and impacts. It answers the questions such as:

* Did the project achieve its expected changes at the individual, agency, or community level?
* Was there anything you learned during the process evaluation that might explain outcomes? For example, if you hired a Nurturing Parent Practitioner but then had difficulty retaining that practitioner, does it explain why you were able to serve fewer participants and children than expected?

Your outcome evaluation will focus on the short-term and medium-term outcomes identified through your logic model, as you likely will not have the opportunity to observe the long-term impacts during the grant period. If you will not be able to measure the long-term impacts during the grant period, you can simply include it in your description but indicate why it cannot be observed.

In this section of the LEP, you should cover the following topics:

* What are the outcomes that you will be assessing? For example, this might be “increased positive parenting interactions and bonding.”
* What is your definition of the outcome? For example, to define “increased positive parenting interactions and bonding,” you might specifically look for changes in participants level of interactions with their child without abusive parenting instances by comparing levels of interactions with and without abusive parenting instances before the parenting and resiliency skills curriculum was delivered.
* What data source will you use? For example, will you measure increased levels of interaction using a behavior tracking assessment, or ask for perceptions of how much they interacted with their child before and after the curriculum? Are the data sources you describe currently available through existing records or systems, or are they new ones proposed for the study?
* How often will data be collected?
* How will you know that the change was due to the project, and are there any limitations to your approach?
  + For example, the goal of teaching parenting and resiliency skills curriculum might be to increase non-violent discipline techniques and emotional regulation. Will you measure participant knowledge at the end of the prescribed 20 week session only? If so, will you know that their techniques used and level of emotional regulation was due to the curriculum, or is it possible they already had the knowledge and skills? Do you have the resources to measure knowledge and skills before AND after being taught the curriculum, so you can see if there was any change?
  + As another example, if you hired a Nurturing Parent Practitioner, your goal might be to increase knowledge of child brain development. You could measure the level of knowledge after you hire the practitioner, but an even better test of your project would be to measure the level of knowledge before and after you hire the practitioner. This would better demonstrate the change that resulted from your project.
* How will you analyze data, if relevant? Will you simply compare over time? Do you have staff capability or expertise that would allow for any more sophisticated statistical analysis?

To create this plan, you might consider creating a table based on the outcome and impacts columns of your logic model. You may also be able to draw on the program goals and objectives as described above, as the goals might map onto the “outcomes” and the objectives might map onto the “definitions.”

For example

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Definition** | **Data Source(s)** | **Frequency of Data Collection** |
| Increase participants’ ability to emotionally regulate and use non-violent discipline techniques | Increases in participants’ use of non-violent discipline techniques and level of emotional regulation, pre- to post-curriculum | Pre- and post-curriculum test; curriculum will be selected that have a built-in emotional wellness and behaviors check | Before and after each curriculum session, throughout the duration of the grant |
| Increase participants’ parenting and resiliency skills | Increases in participants’ levels of parenting and resiliency skills, pre- to post curriculum | Pre- and post-curriculum test; curriculum will be selected that have a built-in parenting and resiliency skills check | Before and after each curriculum session, throughout the duration of the grant |
| Increase linkage to and utilization of basic needs, and physical and mental health services | Participant linkages and utilization rate reported before case management services are delivered and compared to after case management services were provided | Case management system | Before enrollment and after participant exit, throughout duration of grant for program-wide tracking |
| Increase quantity and quality of time spent with children | Number of cases going to trial in year before hiring social worker and compared to each year after the social worker was hired | Participant self-report on pre- and post-program sessions delivered; Case management system | Before enrollment and after participant exit |

Start narrative for the Outcome Evaluation Method and Design section here.

## Appendix A: Additional Logic Model Guidance

In this section, we provide additional guidance for developing your logic model. If you find that the information above contains too much evaluation jargon, or you are having a hard time articulating the inputs/resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes of your project, some of the applied examples in this section might help.

Inputs/Resources: Describe the resources that you will be using for your project. One key resource is grant funding through the Proud Parenting Grant Program. Are there other resources you will be drawing on? For example, is there a specific evidence-based programming curriculum you plan to use? Partnerships for service delivery and/or referrals? Are staff going to be trained on the curriculum? What systems will be used to collect data for evaluation? Any in-kind donations or matched funds? These would all be listed as inputs/resources.

Activity: Put into a sentence, your primary intention (or *activity* in classic evaluation-speak) might be, for example, “hire Nurturing Parent Practitioner to teach parenting and resiliency skill curriculum to participants,” “refer/link our participants to basic needs, and physical and mental health services,” “purchase a replacement case management system for tracking case, client, and scheduling information,” or “providing individual/group counseling sessions to participants discussing abusive parenting patterns and non-violent discipline techniques.”

Outputs: Next, think about what would happen if you performed the activity as intended. In classic evaluation speak those results are known as *outputs*. We are not talking about the ultimate consequences of the activity (such as better outcomes at trial), but instead merely describing what is supposed to take place as a result of the activity. For example, the output might be “hiring 1.0 FTE Nurturing Parent Practitioner starting on 2/1/2022,” “provide 50 participants with case management services,” “link 75 participants and children to Medi-Cal within 1 month of enrollment,” “deliver 50 life skills workshops over the course of the grant” or “provide 3 hours/week of individual/group counseling per participant.” An obvious purpose of the LER will be to inform BSCC of the degree to which these outputs were actually achieved and to describe the reasons for any shortfall.

Outcomes: Then think about the immediate reason for the outputs if they are in fact achieved. You didn’t seek grant funds simply to spend money hiring people, buying things, etc. Instead, you were hoping to achieve some sort of tangible purpose (*outcomes* in evaluation-speak). Such outcomes might be stated as “increasing linkages to and utilization of basic needs, and physical and mental health services by our clients improve their knowledge of community resources and health,” “increase our participants’ ability to emotionally regulate and use non-violent discipline techniques in order to promote a better childhood,” “increase parenting and resiliency skills of clients to allow for better interactions with their child(ren),” or “increase the quantity and quality of time parents spend with their child(ren) in increase bonding and positive parent interactions.”

Identifying outcomes is a very important aspect of a logic model and development of an LEP because they pinpoint areas that might serve as datapoints for measuring progress towards project goals and objectives. For example, one could compare the among of service referral/linkages for participants prior to grant funding with the same metric following the implementation of case management services. An increase in that value would be evidence that the project had moved towards its goals and objectives. Note that a final report that described a stable number or of a decrease would not necessarily be a negative finding. It could have been, for example, that the number of referrals handled by the office had skyrocketed, resulting in the new Nurturing Parent Practitioner hires being insufficient in light of demand on their services. It could also be that various issues delayed the hiring for so long that when the new practitioner actually came on-line, there was little overall change. The important thing, as always, is the grantee will need to document why expectations were not met. In the other examples outputs might be measured by giving the participants a short questionnaire before case management services begin that asks them about their skills, emotions, behaviors and use of non-violent discipline techniques and conducing a similar questionnaire afterwards for comparison (one could also compare the hours each participant spent weekly or monthly before and after the curriculum was delivered), a discussion that describes how case management, participants, and service delivery information was tracked before the new case management system was purchased and how it is done now for better evaluation, or a comparison of the number and types of skills workshops delivered prior to establishing new community partnerships as a result of this grant.

Impacts: Then consider the high-level, wider results (*impacts* in evaluation-speak) of the grant if the outputs are achieved as hoped for and the outcomes evidence progress. These are the potential long term effects of the grant funding, which may involve your organization, your participants, your community, or even the criminal justice system. Unlike outputs and outcomes, your LER won’t be reporting on whether impacts are actually achieved as intended, in part because they might not happen for years, and in part because they can be extremely difficult to measure. Nevertheless, describing potential impacts is a helpful thought exercise and provides policymakers with a long term perspective of what grants like the ones you’ve received might accomplish. Don’t be afraid to consider potential impacts that are not necessarily positive.

Examples of impacts might include decreased recidivism as a result of at-risk participants getting critically needed social services, better overall health status’ of participates and children due to Medi-Cal enrollment, improved childhood outcomes, improved financial stability through additional education and vocation training, and breaking generational cycles of child abuse.