

Evaluation and Research Group

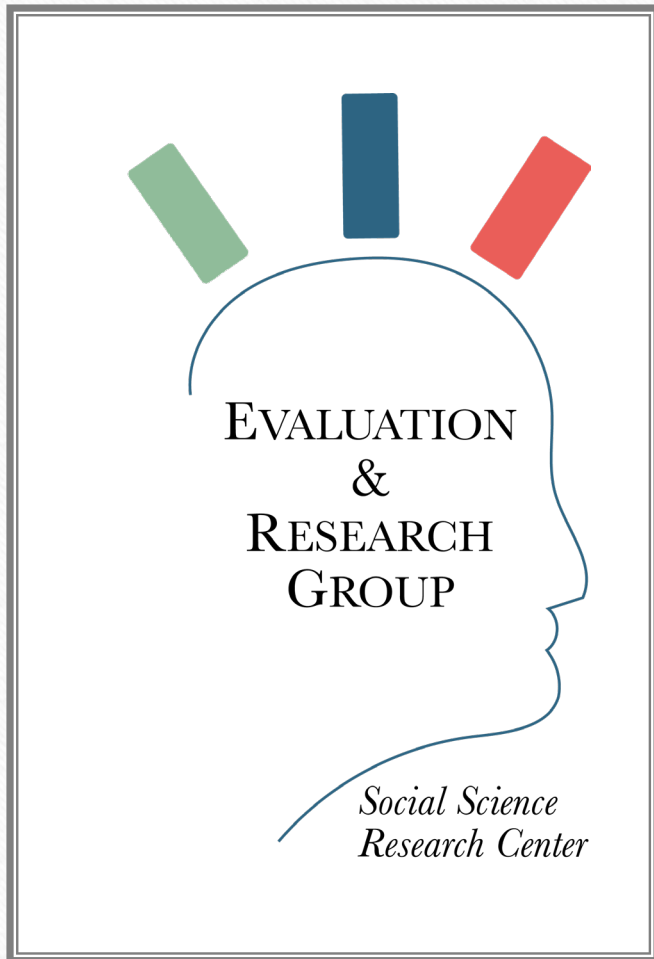
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A Division of the Social Science Research Center, MS State University

Connie Baird Thomas, PhD.

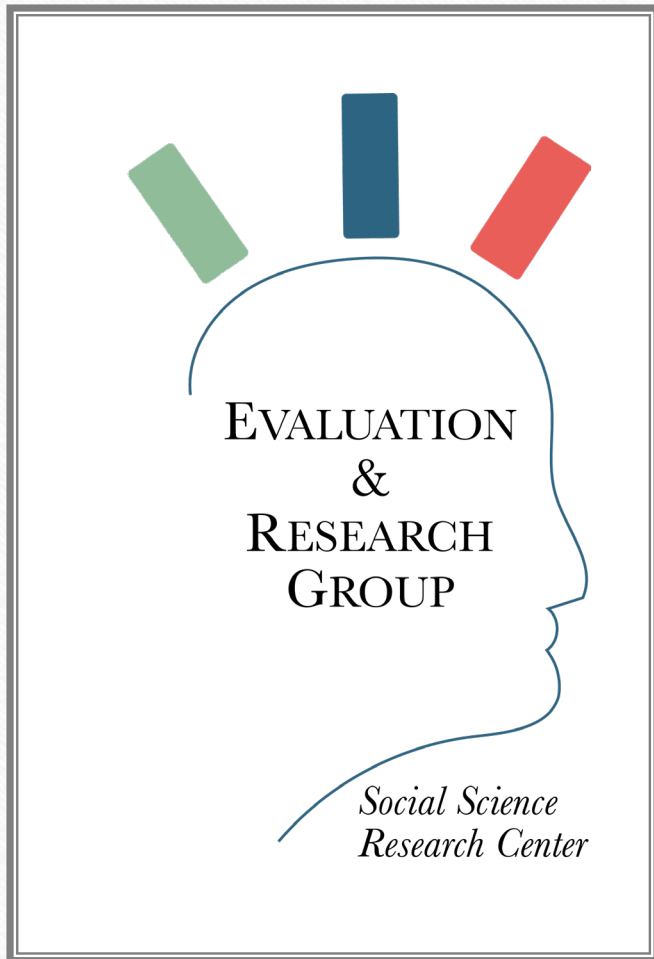
Sheena Gardner, PhD.

Angela Robertson, PhD.



Who we are

- Social scientists
- Combined 40 years of evaluation experience
- Expertise in a wide range of research methods
 - Qualitative, e.g., interviews, focus groups, field observations
 - Quantitative, e.g., surveys, secondary data analysis
- Expertise in community engagement



Our Mission

To conduct rigorous evaluations and support capacity building among organizations' program assessment and evaluation skills.

Our goal is to provide the expertise and/or training so clients can make data-driven decisions to improve their programs and maximize their outcomes.

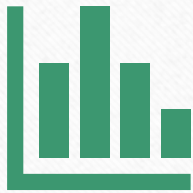
Our Clients

| Topics | Agency | Funder |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Asthma, Cardiovascular Disease, Obesity | MS Department of Health | CDC |
| Mental Health Services in Schools | University of MS Medical Center | SAMHSA |
| Early Childhood | University of MS Medical Center | HRSA |
| Offender Re-entry Services | MS Department of Corrections | DOJ, Bureau of Justice Assistance |
| COVID-related MH & SU service needs | MS Department of Mental Health | SAMHSA |
| Treatment Enhancement | 20 th Circuit Adult Drug Court | SAMHSA |
| Social Justice | Fannie Lou Hamer's America | W. K. Kellogg Foundation |
| Medicaid Access and Sustainability | MS Health Advocacy Program | W. K. Kellogg Foundation |

What We
Do



Why Evaluate



Measure Outcomes



Examine Processes



Continuous quality
improvement

Selecting an Evaluator

- ✓ Assess your needs
- ✓ Identify evaluation activities
- ✓ Identify potential evaluators

(James Bell Associates, 2008)

Assess Your Needs

✓ Reasons why organizations conduct evaluations:

1. Because it is mandated.
2. To know if this program and our staff are doing what we said we would do.
3. To know more about the people we are serving.
4. To know how we can make our program better.
5. To know how and why this program works or does not.
6. To propose a good evaluation plan so that our grant will get funded.
7. To know that we are helping people.
8. To be able to prove to others that our program is effective.



Identify Evaluation Activities

- ✓ Evaluation Planning and Design
- ✓ Needs Assessment
- ✓ Logic Model Development
- ✓ Instrument/Question Development and Selection
- ✓ Data Management System Development
- ✓ New Data Collection
- ✓ Data Management
- ✓ Data Analysis
- ✓ Report Writing
- ✓ Presentations
- ✓ Grant Writing

Identifying Potential Evaluators

- ✓ What is the evaluator's skill set?
- ✓ What is the evaluator's experience with your program's topical area?
- ✓ What is the evaluator's accessibility?
- ✓ What is the evaluator's affordability?
- What is the evaluator's capacity?
- What is the evaluator's published or unpublished track record?
- Does the evaluator have references?
- Do I like the evaluator's attitude?

When do
you talk to
your
Evaluator?

- ✓ As soon as possible!

Examples from the field...

- ✓ Evaluator engaged in proposal stage
- ✓ Evaluator engaged after the program has begun implementation
- ✓ Evaluator engaged near the conclusion of the project

Evaluator engaged
in proposal stage



20th Circuit Adult Drug Court Treatment Enhancement Grant

- Evaluator contacted in December 18, 2018; Application due to SAMHSA January 4, 2019; Grant awarded May 31, 2019 - May 30, 2024
- Immediately after grant award, the evaluator assisted in agency in revising the Program Narrative, writing the Disparity Impact Statement & developing a project timeline.
- Funding agency data collection, performance assessment and reporting
- Program specific goals and objectives
- Challenges

Fannie Lou Hamer's America Grant

- Grant period: September 2017-January 2019
- Evaluation period: January 2019-May 2019
- Proposed project activities
- Proposed program outcomes
- Challenges

References

American Evaluation Association. <https://www.eval.org>.

National Science Foundation. 2010. User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation.

James Bell Associates. (2008). Evaluation Brief: How to Select an Evaluator. Arlington, VA. June 2008.

Contact Us

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