

SECTION

4

**Program
Evaluation**

School Counseling Program Evaluation

There are a **number of reasons for conducting a systematic program evaluation** of one's school counseling program:

- Determining impact of services on students
- Monitoring the ongoing progress of one's programs and interventions
- Informing stakeholders of the value of the school counseling program
- Collecting data to assess success
- Instructing potential stakeholders of the scope of one's program
- Building support for one's program objectives
- Communicating research-based data at system's level
- Modifying program in subsequent year
- Obtaining information for identifying areas of need for additional professional development for oneself or one's department
- Inviting feedback from students, parents, and teachers.

Effective program evaluation is an ongoing process. Evaluation needs to occur at *all* points within the course of a program's implementation. Figure A, *The Assessment Loop*, identifies this process as an ongoing loop beginning with the mission of the institution, essential educational questions appropriate to the mission, gathering of evidence and data to reach the educational goals, interpretation of the data, and use of the data to return to the essential educational questions. The second step of this process involves gathering evidence, or needs assessments (Figures B and C).

- *Needs Assessments* act as the beginning point for program planning. Needs assessments serve to identify of the scope or goals of the school counseling program, determine the degree to which these goals are being met, and target priorities to be addressed through the plan in conjunction with the regular cycle of school counseling services provided.
- *Interim (Formative) Assessments:*
 - *Implementation* – The way a given strategy or program component was introduced, explained, and supported.
 - Was the program put in place correctly?
 - Was the program advertised and explained to all audiences?
 - Was the setting effective?
 - Was everyone informed?
 - *Progress* – The procedures employed to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies or programs in attaining targeted outcomes, meeting milestones or benchmarks, and making mid-course adjustments as needed. Often assessments used at the conclusion of a classroom guidance lesson that is part of a larger unit fall into this category.
 - Is the program on course in accomplishing what it set out to do?
 - Is the process working well so far?
 - Are there mid-course corrections or modifications I need to make?
 - Did a strategy develop the targeted student skill?

- **Outcome (Summative) Assessments:**
 - *Impact Evaluation* –The evaluation used at the end of a school year to determine the impact of the program on students’ attainment of targeted skills, learnings, attitudes, and behaviors.
 - Were the goals/indicators attained? To what end and for whom?
 - What happened to the participants as a result of the program?
 - Did the participants develop the skills they needed?
 - Can the growth or change be measured?
 - *Outcomes as Needs Assessments* – The data from the impact evaluation becomes the starting point for information the counselor uses in the formation of next school year’s program.
 - What goals/indicators do I need to address next year?
 - What modifications to the program are needed?

There are a **number of ways to gather program evaluation data:**

- In general there are two types:
 - **Formal** – Those that lend themselves to structured data collection, written pre/post answers to set questions, questionnaires, surveys, and stakeholder responses to quality of services.
 - *Data from student records* – Student performance data such as grades, attendance, behavior, academic achievement, and testing results. School performance data such as mobility, demographics, etc.
 - *Data for targeted outcomes* –Data which reflects improved numbers of students taking AP tests, better performance on AP tests, increased numbers of minority students taking gifted and talented classes, numbers of students completing *Career Planning Profiles*, number of students seeking peer mediations, number of parents attending evening workshops.
 - *Responses to Targeted Learnings from Counselor Presentations* – Pre and post-test assessments, written feedback from children, teachers, parents, and administrators, formal and informal summative assessments.
 - *Counselor logs, weekly schedules, group designs*
 - **Informal** – Responses that seek more impressionistic or qualitative data. Some informal assessments may include:
 - *Questioning teachers or parents* about their “take” on students’ needs or on the effects of a program on students.
 - *Observations*
 - *Performance-based assessments such as role-play, cooperative group problem solving*
 - *Student self-reports*
 - *Staff development feedback*
 - *Letters from parents, teachers, or students*

There are a **number of system questions** which are addressed by program evaluation:

- How has the counselor aligned the school counseling program and the services provided through it with the vision, beliefs, and mission of the Baltimore County Public Schools as reflected in *The Blueprint for Progress*?
- What evidence can be provided to demonstrate that the strategies employed in the program develop student indicators related to school success?
- How is the school counseling program supporting the School Improvement Plan?
- What evidence can be provided which demonstrates outreach to under-represented minority groups and children identified in the *No Child Left Behind Legislation*?

Guiding Questions that serve to help focus the program evaluation may include:

- How well did the program meet its goals?
- Was the precipitating problem reduced or otherwise alleviated by the program? How do I know?
- Who participated in the program? Did I reach every student in the building?
- For which groups was the program most successful? Why?
- For which groups was the program least successful? Why?
- What were the unanticipated outcomes?
- Which program components were effective or ineffective? Why?
- Were there unmet needs revealed that need to be incorporated in future plans?
- Which staff members will be primary users of the findings?
- What modifications or extensions are warranted?
- How did the program benefit the school's educational program?
- How effectively was the program managed?
- What data does this program/evaluation provide for the school as a whole?

The results of effective program evaluation are **shared with all constituents**. The results of program evaluations serve as tools for communicating the success of the school counseling program, the new areas of identified need, and the plans for meeting those needs in the upcoming school year. Sharing the program evaluation results with school administrators, teachers, students, and community members serves as an effective means of communicating information about the scope of the school counseling program. This public relations tool also yields significant data which is useful to the many groups of people interested in school success and school programs. Open and honest communication about the school counseling program successes and needed improvements yielded from program evaluations present an opportunity for advocacy and support of the school counseling program.

Several examples of actual program evaluation models used by school counselors in the Baltimore County Public Schools are included in this section of the guide. These models encompass both formative and summative assessments representing different developmental levels. Also included are samples of compiled program evaluation results and interpretations provided to school community stakeholders.

The Assessment Loop

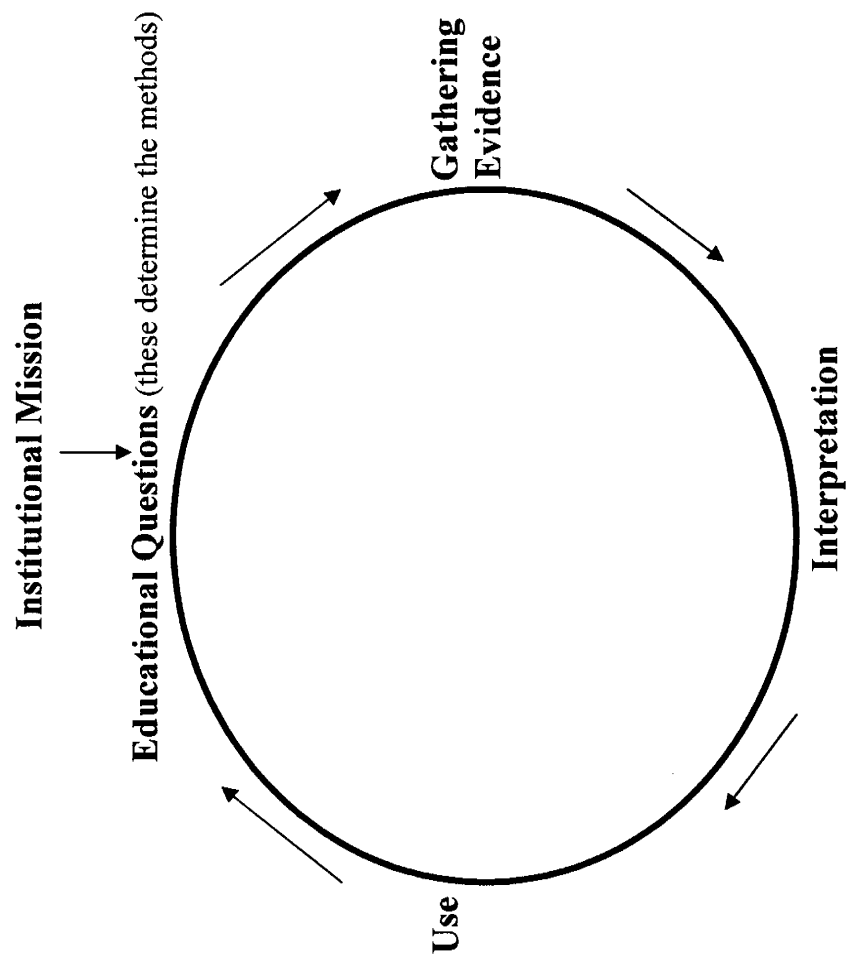


Figure B

Program Evaluation Model

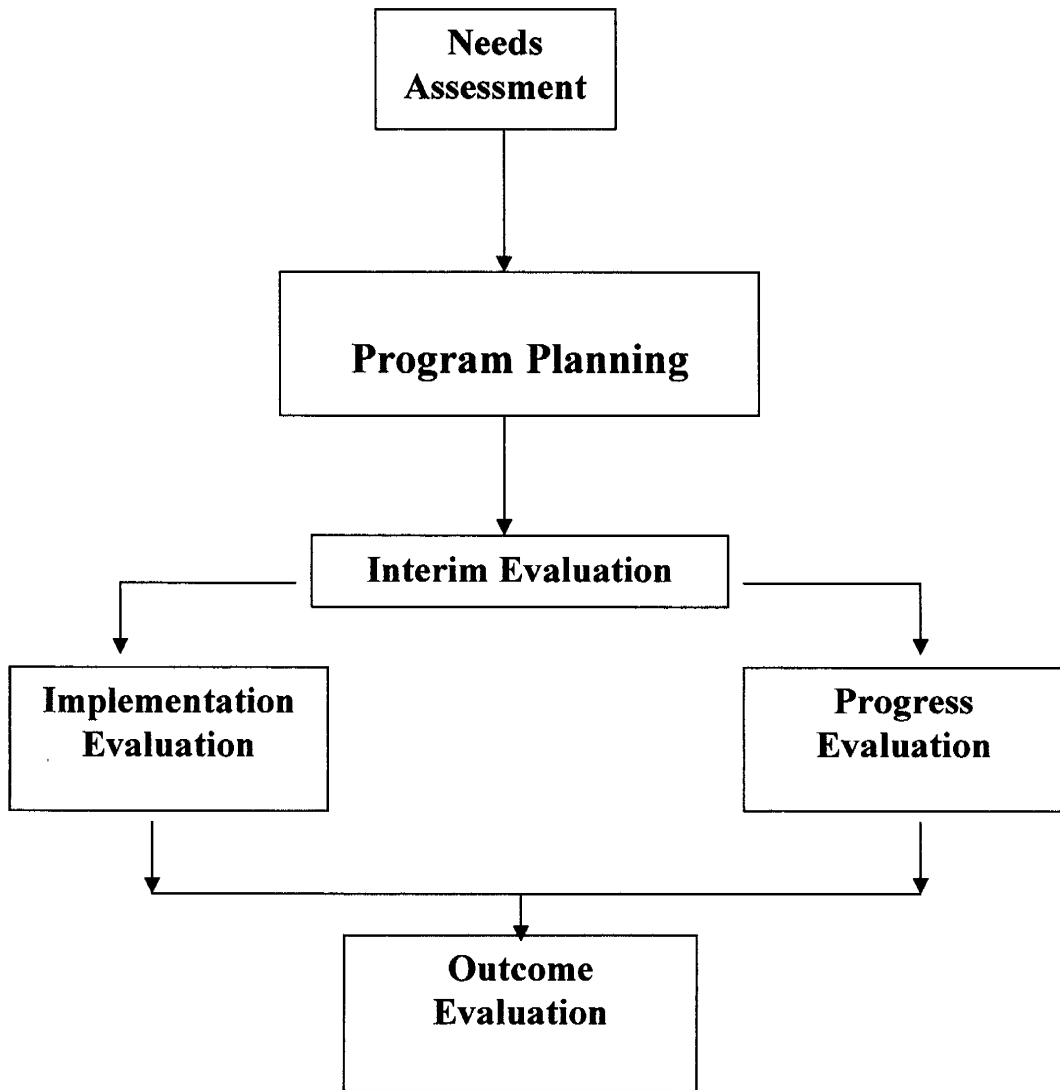
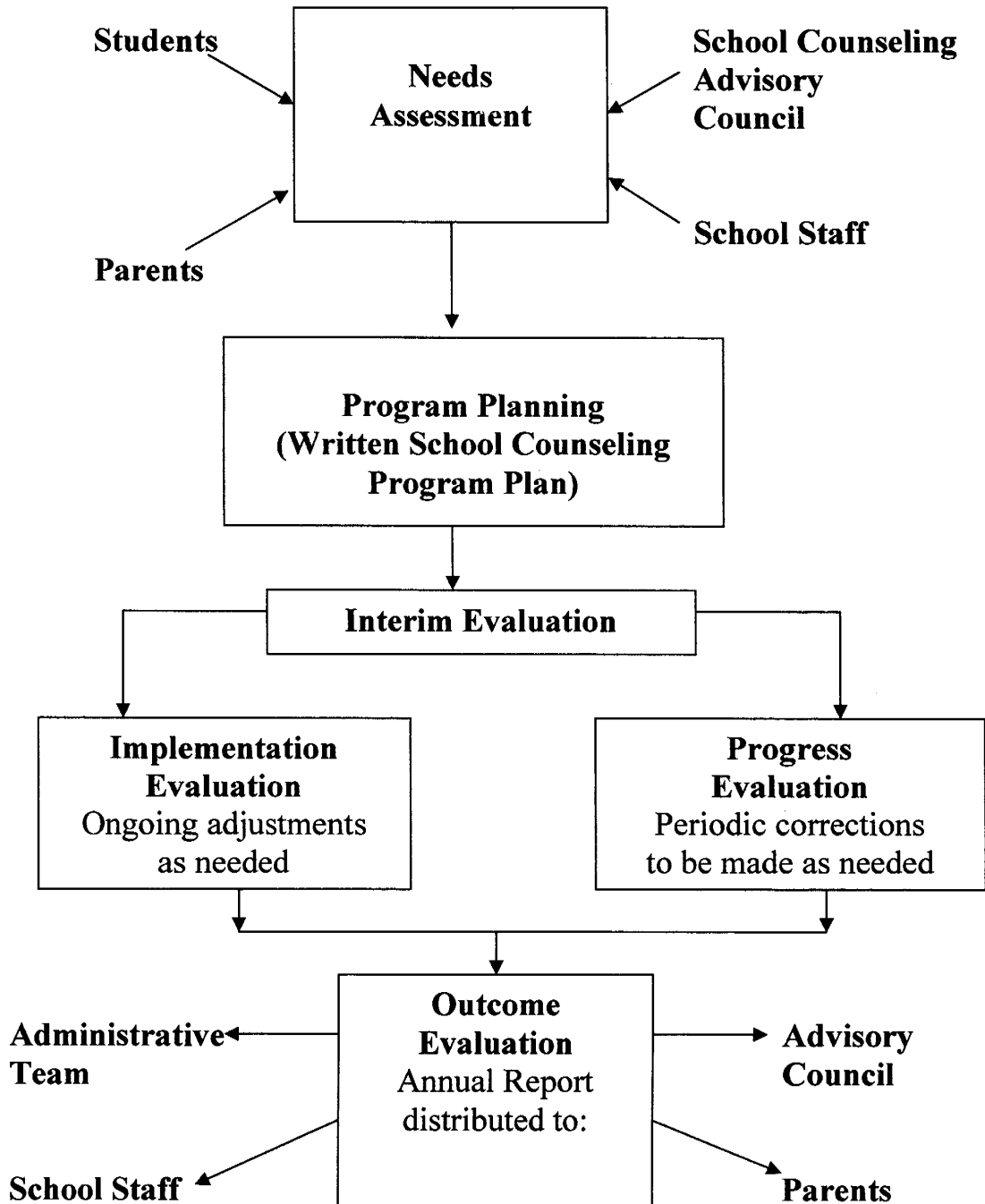


Figure C

Factors Within a Program Evaluation Model



Formative Assessment for Program Implementation

This checklist may be used when implementing separate components of the school counseling program such as a peer mediation program, a school-wide character education program, a peer helper program, or a group counseling program.

___ Did I clearly identify a need for this component of the program?

___ Did I identify indicators and goals related to *The Essential Guidance Program Model PreK-12*?

___ Did I make connections to the *Blueprint for Progress* and the School Improvement Plan?

___ Did I discuss this component of the program with my principal?

___ Did I communicate with all parties before beginning the program? (newsletter, bulletin, personal discussion with all audiences including parents, teachers, students, and administrators)

___ Did I get the necessary materials ahead of time?

___ Did I plan to implement the program in a timely manner?

___ Did the program begin when I thought it was going to?

___ Did I communicate with all the stakeholders about the start of the program?

___ Did the setting work out well?

___ Did I provide for the needs of ALL children?

What do I need to change now in order for the program to be more effective?

Student Progress Evaluation Group Counseling

What are you learning about yourself so far in group?

What are you learning about how others see you?

What are you learning about others because of this group?

What new ideas or skills have you learned so far?

What do *you* need to do to be sure to have your needs met in this group?

Are you learning in group what you hoped to be learning? If not, what is it you want to learn?

What else do you want to make sure we discuss in group?

Faculty School Counseling Program Survey Summative Impact Evaluation

In our never-ending quest to provide better services, please take a moment to think over the past school year and respond to the following questions.

1. What do you see as the strength(s) of the guidance program?

2. What programs have you seen that have been effective?

3. Are you generally satisfied with the school counseling services?

Yes

No

Comment

4. If you have referred children to the counselor, was it helpful?

Yes

No

Comment

5. Is the referral system effective?

Yes

No

Comment

6. From your contacts with the counselors, how would you rate their overall effectiveness with regard to the following:

a. Knowledge of students with whom they work?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

b. Willingness to work with teachers?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

c. Willingness to work with students?

Good

Fair

Poor

Comments:

Thank You. Results of this survey will be shared with the faculty on _____.

Student Impact Evaluation of School Counseling Services

Note: This is a sample of the impact evaluation completed by students at Perry Hall High School. It is not intended to represent the entire survey.

Use your Scan-Tron form to record your answers to the following questions. All answers will be confidential. Thank you in advance for helping us to evaluate our programs.

- First letter of my last name is: _____

1. Indicate which program best describes your high school course work.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| a. vocational/business | d. special education |
| b. general studies | e. gifted and talented |
| c. college prep/honors | |

2. Indicate which statement best describes your plans immediately following graduation.

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| a. attend college | d. become a homemaker |
| b. join the armed forces | e. join the work force |
| c. attend trade school/business school/apprenticeship school | |

3. When I visit the School Counseling Department my counselor makes me feel accepted, respected, comfortable, and welcome.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| a. always | c. rarely |
| b. sometimes | d. never |

4. Guidance assistants were helpful to me when I came to the Guidance Office.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| a. always | c. rarely |
| b. sometimes | d. never |

5. Over the past years, I have established a rapport (a positive relationship) with my counselor.

- a. yes
- b. no

6. My counselor is interested in my problems and me as an individual.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| a. always | c. rarely |
| b. sometimes | d. never |

7. I feel I can talk openly and freely with my counselor.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| a. always | c. rarely |
| b. sometimes | d. never |

Elementary School Counseling Program Evaluation Form (Teachers)

Summative Impact Evaluation

Please take a few minutes to evaluate the guidance program according to your experience this year, using the following system:

NA-Not Applicable; 1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Agree; 4-Strongly Agree

I. Classroom Lessons

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The lessons were pertinent or our school population. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. The level of instruction was appropriate for my students. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. A 30-45 minute lesson is reasonable | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. The children were given sufficient time to ask questions. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. The lessons appealed to the children's multisensory styles of learning. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I would like the counselor to be able to present more lessons during the year. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

II. Small Group Work

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|
| 1. A 30-45 minute lesson is reasonable. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. The children were given sufficient time to ask questions. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. The lessons appealed to the children's multisensory styles of learning. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I would like the counselor to be able to present more lessons during the year. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

III. Individual Counseling

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I felt comfortable referring students for counseling. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. My students know how to seek the help of the counselor. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I received sufficient information back from the counselor following a referral. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

IV. Other Services

1. When I asked for strategies to work with a child,
the counselor's suggestion were practical. NA 1 2 3 4

2. The counselor served as a good link to other
support services (PPW, psychologist, outside agencies). NA 1 2 3 4

3. One thing I would like to see added to the school counseling program is _____

Additional Comments:

Please return your completed evaluation to my mailbox by _____.
Thank You!

