Demonstrating Value and Impact: Program Outcomes and Evaluation, Toronto Public Library’s Journey

Ontario Library Association Super Conference
January 29, 2016, 10:30 a.m.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, ICTC Ballroom A
Goals of the Session

• To share our journey in developing program outcomes

• To provide example of a logic model and program development outcomes and evaluation

• To describe how outcomes will be developed for our new strategic plan

• To share resources we have used and learn from your experience
Program evaluation is the systematic collection and **analysis of information** about program activities, characteristics, and **outcomes** to make judgements about the program, improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming.

Program Outcomes and Evaluation

Introduction

An Outcome is a clear statement of the targeted change
An indicator is a measurement of the outcome

Outcome-based approach to program and service planning addresses the need for:

- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Standards and quality
- Continuous monitoring and improvement
Clear and Measurable Outcomes:

- Are required by government and private funders
- Help to ensure relevance and responsiveness of programs and services
- Promote shared understanding among stakeholders
- Demonstrate the value and impact of programs and services
Clear and Measurable Outcomes:

Align with Ontario and City of Toronto strategic priorities, for example:

- Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Stepping Up, A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario’s Youth Succeed
- City of Toronto
  - Youth Equity Strategy
  - Poverty Reduction Strategy
  - Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020
Partnership approach to social change aligns with Collective Impact model’s five conditions of collective success:

- Common agenda
- Shared Measurement Systems
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Backbone Support Organization
- Funding

http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact
To provide “a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community’s unique needs” (Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990)

- Leverage ongoing and emerging work in the public library and non-profit sector
- Link to TPL’s strategic plans
- New roles for professional librarians
- Learn by doing
- Theoretical and pragmatic
Program Evaluation Initiative

Background

Started in fall 2012

Aligned with TPL’s Strategic Plan 2012-2015

- Priority 4: Deliver Excellent Library Service to Torontonians Efficiently and Effectively
  
  - Goal 15: Adopt accepted benchmarks, targets and performance measures to support continuous improvements to service excellence and operational efficiency
Program Evaluation Initiative

Goals

- To apply evidence-based and cost-effective practices consistently in program and service delivery
- To make evaluation an integral part of program and service planning, implementation and delivery
- To build capacity within TPL staff to engage in program evaluation
- To share experiences with libraries across the province
Program Evaluation Initiative

Challenges

- Cultural shift for staff and public
- No existing standard set of library outcomes e.g. EQAO
- Broad service mandate
- Limited ongoing relationships with customers
To raise awareness and understanding of program evaluation through staff training workshops

To provide opportunities for staff to gain practical knowledge and skills through active participation in TPL case studies

To engage key stakeholders in selecting potential TPL programs for case studies

To engage staff champions at the system and branch levels in program evaluation
Engaged external experts to develop training courses and materials

• York University Program Evaluation Unit
• Independent evaluation consultants
• Courses offered by the Canadian Evaluation Society
Program Evaluation Initiative

Staff Training & Development

Core courses:

• Overview workshop

• Introduction to Program Evaluation

• Program Logic Model

• Survey Design & Analysis

• Qualitative Methods in Program Evaluation
Approach:

• Guided by external experts

• Learn by doing

• Staff team included program managers, program administrators, program staff and Planning Department staff
Leading To Reading Program

High School Outreach Program

Through a series of workshops and workgroup sessions, project team:

• Developed
  ▪ A Program Logic Model
  ▪ An evaluation framework
  ▪ A toolkit
• Implemented the evaluation plan
• Shared findings and lessons learned
Program Evaluation Initiative

Large Scale Projects

Projects in partnership with external consultants:

• So Much More: The Economic Impact of the Toronto Public Library on the City of Toronto
  [http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2013/dec09/10_1.pdf](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2013/dec09/10_1.pdf)

• Toronto Public Library Settlement Partnerships Program (LSP) Evaluation
Program Evaluation Initiative

Next Steps

A review of the Goals of the Program Evaluation Initiative:

• To apply evidence-based and cost-effective practices consistently in program and service delivery

• To make evaluation an integral part of program and service planning, implementation and delivery

• To build capacity within TPL staff to engage in program evaluation

• To share experiences with libraries across the province
Library Youth Hubs

• Program design informed by researching needs and best practices

• Applied outcome-based evaluation practices from the program planning stage

• Developed a logic model to clarify the program goals and expected outcomes so that there is shared understanding among stakeholders

• Designed an evaluation plan and an evaluation framework when developing the program implementation plan
Stepping Up: A Strategic Framework to Help Ontario’s Youth Succeed

Priority Outcomes:
- 5: Ontario youth have at least one consistent, caring adult in their lives
- 7: Ontario youth achieve academic success
- 13: Ontario youth experience social inclusion and value diversity
- 19: Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation
- 20: Ontario youth know about and easily navigate resources in their communities
Theory of change:

Participation in supervised, constructive activities during after-school hours contributes to improvements in a youth’s social competence and school engagement, which will lead to better education and career outcomes.
Library Youth Hubs support Toronto’s Poverty Reduction Strategy and Youth Equity Strategy by providing high quality, out-of-school time program for youth.

The Hubs contribute to City of Toronto’s Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 equity domains of economic development, social development and physical surroundings by providing:

- Homework help
- Technology support
- Nutritional support
- Mentors and a welcoming space to youth
Library Youth Hubs

Program Development

Program Description

Library Youth Hubs provide youth ages 13-19 with quality after-school homework help in math, science, English, French, and other subjects. Youth also have access to enriching complementary programs that help to develop social and leadership skills. Access to safe space, technology, volunteer tutors and curriculum resources contributes to positive outcomes for youth.
Using a Program Logic Model to clearly demonstrate the relationships between:

• Resources needed

• Core program activities

• Expected outcomes for key stakeholders: youth, caring adults and volunteers

• Outcomes aligned with program goals
Program Logic Model: Library Youth Hubs

Theory of Change: Participation in supervised, constructive activities during after-school hours contributes to improvements in a youth’s social competence and school engagement, which will lead to better education and career outcomes.

Context: Library Youth Hubs contribute to City of Toronto’s Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 (TSNS2020) equity domains of economic development, social development and physical surroundings by providing homework help, technology and nutritional support, mentors and a welcoming space to youth in neighbourhood improvement areas. The Hubs further support the City’s poverty reduction initiatives by addressing the following needs: access to services, access to technology, access to nutrition.
Participated in external outcome projects for libraries:


Strategic Plan 2016-2019. Outcome

Expanding **Access**, Increasing **Opportunity**, Building **Connections**

2016-2019

Toronto Public Library empowers Torontonians to thrive in the digital age and global knowledge economy.

With **expanded access** to technology, lifelong learning, and diverse cultural and leisure experiences, Torontonians have **increased opportunities for growth and success**, and **stronger connections**.

Partnerships and private sector funding will be key to the success of this plan.
Public Consultation

More than 2,200 Toronto residents participated in the consultation process, sharing ideas about the future of library service in branches, online and in the community.

Consultation process:

- Focus groups – Targeted user groups, Toronto residents, Library staff
- Stakeholder Roundtables – Community partners
- “Tell Us What You Think” survey for use at community events
- Strategic Plan Consultation Website
Toronto Public Library Survey of Toronto Residents 2015

• To gather demographic and market data about the Library’s users and non-users

• To measure awareness of, and attitudes toward, Library services by users, infrequent users, and non-users

• To determine the percentage of Torontonians who use the Library through any channel

• To assess users’ satisfaction with Library services

• To increase the understanding of users’ and non-users’ perception of the Library brand and preferences for Library services in the future
Toronto Public Library Survey of Toronto Residents 2015

- Forum Research Inc. was hired through a Request for Proposal process
- Mixed method methodology, consisting of telephone interviews and online surveys
- Three similar public surveys were conducted in 2001, 2006 and 2012

http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2015/dec14/10b-results-of-survey-of-torontonians-presentation.pdf
Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Expanding Access, Increasing Opportunity, Building Connections
2016-2019

The Priorities

1. Advancing Our Digital Platforms
2. Breaking Down Barriers to Access, Driving Inclusion
3. Expanding Access to Technology and Training
4. Establishing TPL as Toronto’s Centre for Continuous and Self-Directed Learning
5. Creating Community Connections through Cultural Experiences
6. Transforming for 21st Century Service Excellence
Expanding **Access**, Increasing **Opportunity**, Building **Connections**

2016-2019

*The Overarching Measure of Success:*

**Increased engagement** with the Library by four key audiences:

- Users
- Advocates
- Partners
- Funders
Business Intelligence and Customer Engagement

- Traditional performance measures do not reflect broad range of library uses
- Increased understanding of our customers to provide customized service options and respond to their needs
- Providing services where, when and how our customers want them
- Demonstrating engagement and equity of access by demographic groups and neighbourhoods
360° View of Customer

- **Identity Information**
  - Name
  - Date of Birth
  - Gender
  - TPL card #

- **Behavior**
  - Donations
  - Feedback/Rating of Library service

- **Electronic Resources**
  - Electronic titles downloaded
  - Blog contribution
  - Third party services availed

- **Circulation**
  - Title borrowed
  - Holds requested
  - Fines

- **Branch**
  - Branch information
  - Number of visits
  - Books browsed
  - Room booking
  - Wi-Fi
  - Computer usage

- **Program & Services**
  - Program attendance
  - Service requested

- **Contact**
  - Address
  - Email
  - Phone

**Legends**
- Core Data
- Ancillary Data to customize experience
Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Expanding **Access**, Increasing **Opportunity**, Building **Connections**

2016-2019

Supporting outcome-based approach for three priority areas:

- Technology
- Lifelong learning
- Cultural Opportunities

With an emphasis on targeted and vulnerable populations.
Ontario Libraries Capacity Fund (OLCF)
Research and Innovation Project:
Technology Benchmarks and Outcomes

While public libraries’ role in providing access to technology is understood by the public, there is no Ontario study that supports benchmarking, continuous improvement and measuring of outcomes and impacts.
Partnership approach to social change aligns with Collective Impact model’s five conditions of collective success:

- Common agenda
- Shared Measurement Systems
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Backbone Support Organization
- Funding

Future State Vision

Providing services where, when, and how people want them
Future State Vision

Understand the outcome and impact of library services in addressing broad social issues
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http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

Edge Initiative. Urban Libraries Council (ULC), with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.  
http://www.libraryedge.org/

https://impactsurvey.org/


So Much More: The Economic Impact of the Toronto Public Library on the City of Toronto. [http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2013/dec09/10_1.pdf](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2013/dec09/10_1.pdf)

University of Wisconsin-Extension. Program Development and Evaluation Unit website. [http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/)
Ontario's Profile of Youth Wellbeing

- 78.9% of youth are a healthy weight.
- 63.9% of youth are physically active.
- 44.9% of youth consume at least five servings of fruit or vegetables daily.
- 33.6% of youth did not visit a doctor in the past year.
- 6.0% of youth are experiencing anxiety and/or depression.
- 33.6% of youth are experiencing elevated psychological distress.
- 10.3% of youth had serious thoughts about suicide in the past year.

- 8.7% of youth smoke cigarettes.
- 22.3% of youth have recently consumed excessive alcohol.
- 22.3% of youth have used illicit drugs.
- 3.9% of youth have had a sexually transmitted infection.

- 4.2% of families live in deep poverty and are struggling to afford housing.
- 8.1% of caregivers can't afford to feed their families balanced meals.
- 13.8% of children and youth live in low-income households.

- 89.4% of youth have at least one parent who usually knows where they are.
- 4.6% of youth do not get along with their mothers.
- 4.6% of youth do not get along with their fathers.

- 19.7% of youth feel lonely.
- 93.5% of youth have someone who they are comfortable talking to about problems.
- 98.7% of youth have family and friends who help them feel safe, secure and happy.

- 84% of English-speaking and 78% of French-speaking students enrolled in academic math meet the provincial standard.
- 44% of English-speaking and French-speaking students enrolled in applied math meet the provincial standard.
- 82% of high school students graduate.

- 7.2% of youth are enrolled in the Specialist High Skills Major program.
- 209,040 students have individual Education Plans.
- 45.9% of high school course credits are available through e-learning.

- 65% of adults have completed post-secondary education.
- 19,660 youth were served through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program.
## Themes & Priority Outcomes

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<th>Themes</th>
<th>Priority Outcomes</th>
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| Health & Wellness                    | 1. Ontario youth are physically healthy.  
2. Ontario youth feel mentally well.  
3. Ontario youth make choices that support healthy and safe development.                      |
| Strong, Supportive                  | 4. Ontario youth have families and guardians equipped to help them thrive.  
5. Ontario youth have at least one consistent, caring adult in their lives.  
6. Ontario youth form and maintain healthy, close relationships.                                  |
8. Ontario youth have educational experiences that respond to their needs and prepare them to lead.  
9. Ontario youth access diverse training and apprenticeship opportunities.                           |
| Education, Training & Apprenticeships| 10. Ontario youth have opportunities for meaningful employment experiences.  
11. Ontario youth have the skills and resources needed to develop a successful career or business.  
12. Ontario youth are safe and supported at work.                                                  |
| Employment & Entrepreneurship       | 13. Ontario youth experience social inclusion and value diversity.  
14. Ontario youth feel safe at home, at school, online and in their communities.  
15. Ontario youth respect, and are respected by, the law and justice system.                       |
| Diversity, Social                  | 16. Ontario youth play a role in informing the decisions that affect them.  
17. Ontario youth are engaged in their communities.  
18. Ontario youth leverage their assets to address social issues.                                   |
| Inclusion & Safety                  | 19. Ontario youth have access to safe spaces that provide quality opportunities for play and recreation.  
20. Ontario youth know about and easily navigate resources in their communities.                  |
| Civic Engagement & Youth Leadership |                                                                                                                                                |
| Coordinated & Youth-Friendly        |                                                                                                                                                |
| Communities                         |                                                                                                                                                |
Desired Future State – A day in the life of the Library customer

Future state vision of the Library will give opportunities to impact all customer touch-points. Library would be able to meet customers needs. An illustration of a day in life of customer from future state perspective, shows opportunities which the Library can leverage.

Activities

- Customer is visiting the Library today to attend a program, for which customer received customized notification a day before.
- Library used BI and Data Analytics to share a customized list of upcoming programs with customer.
- Once in the Library customer uses/swipes his Library card to register for program.
- Library Information Management system is used to confirm customer’s identity and update usage history with program attendance.
- While at the Library, customer is accessing Library free Wi-Fi through smartphone and receives two notifications: 1. Library computers are available for reservation and 2. List of interesting reads.
- Library already knows customer usage pattern and sends notifications accordingly.
- Customer uses Library card to access computer and borrows one of the books from suggested list.
- Library Information Management system captures all these activities to further customize offering to customer.
- End of the day, customer receives email to provide feedback on the program attended and also a list of e-book that customer might be interested to borrow.
Program Logic Model: Library Youth Hubs

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Inputs
- Funding
- Dedicated program area
- Program resources (computers, internet, gaming equipment, software, library collections, phone, office supplies, IT support, snacks)
- Human resources (Site Coordinator, Volunteers, Branch staff, Program Administrator)
- Staff & Volunteer training
- Program outreach & promotion
- Program monitoring & evaluation

Activities
- Staff recruitment & training
- Program promotion to local youth, schools & community partners including universities & colleges
- Volunteer recruitment & training
- Homework Help sessions
- Complementary workshops
- Activities & games to develop social & leadership skills

Outputs
- Reach
- Immediate
- Outputs Intermediate
- Outcomes Long Term

Outputs Immediate
- Received timely homework help
- Improved access to digital technology
- Increased opportunities to develop social & leadership skills
- Increased opportunities for youth and adults to engage and interact in a positive environment
- Learned & developed tutoring & mentoring skills
- Increased partnership opportunities among TPL, City of Toronto, schools, community and funding partners

Outputs Intermediate
- Improved homework & study skills
- Greater proficiency in using technology in self-directed learning
- Improved social & leadership skills
- Youth are better supported by caring adults
- Increased ability to tutor & interact with youth
- Improved understanding and collaboration among stakeholder groups to support youth

Outputs Long Term
- Improved academic success
- Improved career options
- Increased ability to make new friends and maintain positive relationships
- Improved interaction and understanding among community members of different age groups

Goals
- Youth: Better education outcomes
- Better career outcomes

Supports TSNS 2020 Equity Domains:
- Economic development
- Social development
- Physical surroundings

Improved access to services, technology, nutrition and community space for youth