

EVALUATING YOUR PILOT: SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

Stacey McDonald



NOVEMBER 2018



WHAT ARE WE COVERING TODAY?

- Ensuring organizations are well-positioned to learn and advance their work
 - Role of evidence
- Evaluation overview
 - What is it, and why it's an important tool
 - Tips on evaluating pilots
- Common pitfalls



WHAT SHOULD YOU KEEP IN
MIND WHEN **PLANNING** FOR
THE **FUTURE** OF YOUR PILOT?

CONTEXT: EVIDENCE-BASED INVESTMENTS

Larger investments build on the success of a model or program that has **demonstrated effectiveness**



➤ **How do you know it works?**

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EVIDENCE

1

You can **describe what you do and why it matters**, logically, coherently and convincingly

2

You capture **data that shows positive change**, but you cannot confirm you caused this

3

You can **demonstrate causality** using a control or comparison group

4

You have one or more independent replication evaluations that confirm your conclusions

5

You have manuals, systems & procedures to ensure consistent replication & positive impact



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT **EVALUATING PILOTS?**



EVALUATION IS...

...the **systematic** gathering
and interpretation of
information about a program
to help **decision-making**

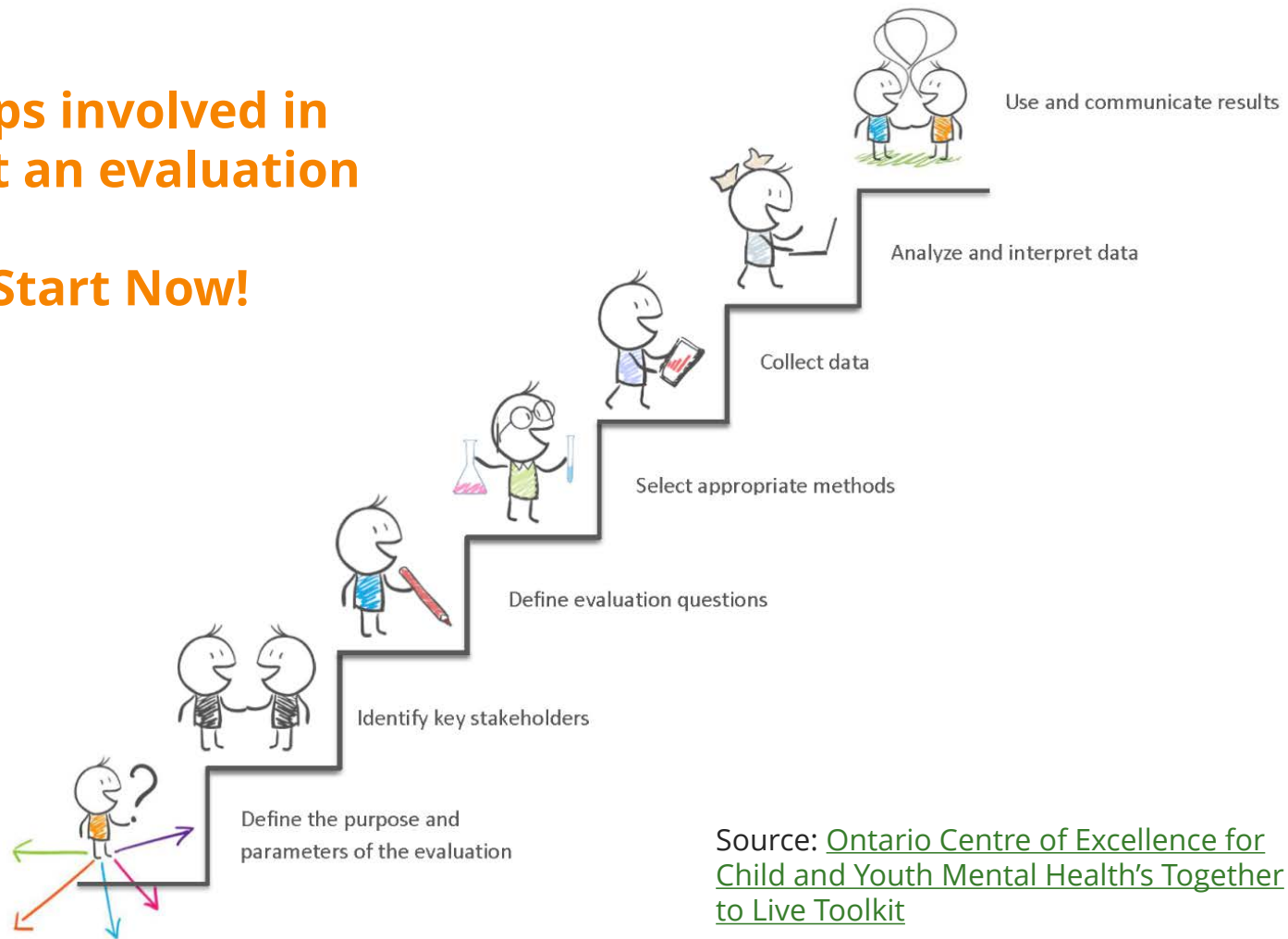
... all about asking
questions and using
what you have learned
to move forward

Results from evaluating your pilot can help you:

- Learn about what's working and what isn't
- Inform how you can improve
- Understand if you're getting the results you expect
- Gather evidence to help build a stronger case for expansion
- Demonstrate impact – tell a better story and build support

General steps involved in carrying out an evaluation

Don't wait! Start Now!



Source: [Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health's Together to Live Toolkit](#)

BEFORE YOU START...

- Be clear about what change you want to see
 - Focus on outcomes, not activities
- Ask yourself, “why are you evaluating your work?”
- Determine what you want to learn





WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVALUATING PILOTS

Pilots should tell you if this new approach is worth adopting. To make that decision, you need to know:

- Is this more or less effective than what we've tried before?
 - To answer this, you need to **measure the degree of change** and the reach (consider things like drop-out rate, uptake).
- Is this an efficient use of resources?



HOW TO UNDERSTAND IF A CHANGE OCCURRED

Different options:

- Has someone measured this before? How? (especially if you're adapting a program)
- Measure before, during, and after
- Used mixed methods to triangulate results
 - Capture info from more than one source, in more than one way
 - Options available! So many methods to choose from
 - Look at data you already collect (intake and exit forms)
- Use a comparison group
- Discuss what else is happening that could contribute to changes



WHAT CAN YOU REALISTICALLY CAPTURE IN A PILOT EVALUATION?

Be aware that you'll only be capturing preliminary results

- Evaluation time frame is short
 - Collect data throughout!
- Focus on measuring short-term outcomes
 - Change in skills, awareness, attitude and knowledge



Decide what's next:

1. Ready to grow?
2. Needs more testing/experimenting?

Share what you learn!





COMMON PITFALLS





OUTCOME ALIGNMENT

These two should match!

Your Program's Outcomes

- Customer service and computer skills are developed
- Participants feel prepared to engage in job search

Outcomes Identified by the Funder

- People have the skills and knowledge to achieve greater financial independence

DEMONSTRATING A POSITIVE CHANGE

Example: A parenting program aims to help new parents support their children's emotional development

Data that demonstrates a positive change

- Survey data demonstrating specific positive change
- Interview or focus group data showing positive effects on parent's abilities
- Data collected by staff using a checklist to observe & track interactions & behaviours

Data that does *not* demonstrate a positive change

- Anecdotes
- Comments about satisfaction
- # people that participated
- Non-specific or vague survey data
- Satisfaction data

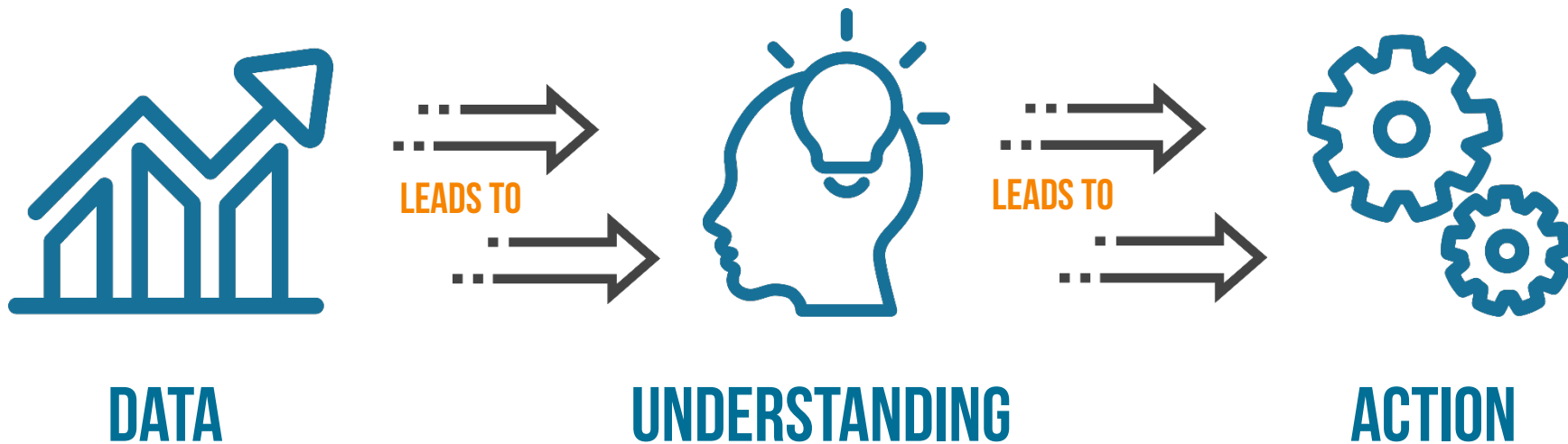
Data that demonstrates need

- # or % of parents that are stressed or struggling
- # children with low skills
- # children at risk
- Community needs assessment



START NOW!

Evaluation doesn't just happen at the end! It's hard to get good insights, if you don't have the right plan in place to collect the data you need





DID YOU KNOW:

**YOU CAN APPLY FOR UP TO 10% OF YOUR
OTF GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET TOWARD
YOUR OWN EVALUATION?**



JOIN TODAY
and build your community!

knowledge.otf.ca



SHARE



resources and ideas
with a growing group of peers,
leaders, and experts.

DISCUSS



a wide range of topics,
issues, and best
practices.

LEARN



from each other
and help make our communities
brighter together.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?



OTF's YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/trilliumfoundation1>



<https://otf.ca/knowledge>

**Still not sure how to proceed?
Call our Support Centre 1 800 263-2887 or 416 963-4927
Email Stacey: smcdonald@otf.ca**

QUESTIONS?

