
A Resource Review:
***Reflect and Improve: A Tool Kit for Engaging Youth
and Adults as Partners in Program Evaluation***

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Abstract: Highlights of a new evaluation resource "*Reflect and Improve: A Tool Kit for Engaging Youth and Adults as Partners in Program Evaluation*" are shared by the author. The *Tool Kit* is designed to help youth serving agencies strengthen program planning and evaluation through youth/adult partnerships.

Introduction

Engaging youth as research and evaluation partners is a somewhat new but growing practice in the youth development field. Multiple benefits of this approach have increasingly been documented for youth, programs and communities. *Reflect and Improve*, a new Tool Kit developed by the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development is now available to help youth serving agencies strengthen their program planning and evaluation through youth/adult partnerships.

Resource Design

This resource presents strategies, tools, and activities in a user-friendly format that guides groups of youth and adults through the process of planning, designing, implementing, analyzing and sharing the results of an evaluation.

The Tool Kit begins by laying out the rationale for including young people in the evaluation process, and then provides specific methods to get them involved and build youth/adult partnerships. Subsequent sections focus on the "how to basics" of planning and carrying out the evaluation process. Clear steps are laid out for developing the evaluation design including:

- constructing logic models and theories of change,
- selecting assessment methods,
- identifying measures,
- analyzing the results, and
- using the findings.

Discussion

The strength of the Tool Kit lies in its ability to make program evaluation accessible to audiences who are not researchers: it breaks the process down into a set of small, manageable steps without minimizing its complexity. The sections on developing logic models and theories of change are particularly valuable for training practitioners and helping organizations develop and implement evaluation plans. There are numerous creative activities and tools to facilitate training.

Although each section contains tips for involving youth as partners, more attention to potential barriers to engaging young people and strategies on how to overcome them would have been useful.

The Tool Kit is available from the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development for \$39.99 (plus shipping and handling) at www.theinnovationcenter.org or call 301-270-1700.