Canberra Foundations Collaborative

Outcomes Measurement Toolkit

Practical Example

This document presents a fictional project (the Youth Mental Health Circles) and how it measured its impact using the Outcomes Measurement Toolkit.

Practical example

Youth Mental Health Circles Project

The Youth Mental Health Circles Project offers a safe space for young people facing mental health challenges, promoting wellbeing, resilience, and community.

The project includes workshops on mental health and coping strategies, providing participants with the opportunity to learn, share, and build relationships.

Choosing types of change, measures, and tools

To choose the types of change for the project, the Youth Mental Health Circles team first identifies the two areas they will have an impact on are Health and Wellbeing and Belonging. They then decide to focus 'overall change', 'increased/improved skills' and 'increased/improved knowledge' in both the Health and Wellbeing and Belonging categories.

Types of change	Health and Wellbeing	Education and Employment	Housing	Belonging
Overall change	☐	☐	☐	☐
Increased/ improved skills	☑	☐	☐	☑
Increased/improved knowledge	☑	☐	☐	☑
Increased/improved relationships	☑	☐	☐	☑
Increased/improved access to resources	☐	☐	☐	☐
Changed mindsets and behaviours	☐	☐	☐	☐

The Youth Mental Health Circles team then goes through the measures list in Appendix A (separate document) for Health and Wellbeing and Belonging, and they identify and customise their measures. Next, they go through the tools to learn more about how they might collect data on their measures. With that information, they fill out the measurement plan below with their measures and tools.

Measures	How to measure	Tools to use
Health and Wellbeing		
Proportion of participants who self-report an improvement in their mental health following participation in the project	Ask participants to self-report whether there was an improvement in their mental health on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 5 is 'strongly agree'	Survey
Stories of change for participants relating to their mental health	Collect stories of positive change in mental health that the project contributed to	Most Significant Change interview
Proportion of participants who self-report increased wellbeing as a result of the project	Ask participants to self-report whether there was increased wellbeing as a result of the project on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 5 is 'strongly agree'	Survey
Number of workshops delivered	Count workshops delivered	Activity log
Number of participants in mental health workshops	Count participants at workshops	Activity log

Measures	How to measure	Tools to use
Belonging		
Stories of change for participants relating to their sense of community	Ask participants about stories of positive change relating to their sense of community or belonging to the group	Most Significant Change interview
Proportion of participants who self-report an improvement in their sense of belonging to the participant group as a result of the project	Survey participants on any improvement in their sense of belonging to the participant group as a result of the project on a scale of 1 to 5	Survey

Reporting on the change

After collecting the data they need, the Youth Mental Health Circles team reports on each of their measures in the table below. They also include Most Significant Change Stories in their reporting.

Measures	Result
Health and Wellbeing	
Proportion of participants who self-report an improvement in their mental health following participation in the project	80% of participants agreed that there was an improvement in their mental health as a result of the project.
Stories of change for participants relating to their mental health	We collected three participant stories of positive change relating to mental health. One participant began practicing mindfulness regularly, significantly improving their mental health. Another participant felt empowered to seek additional mental health support, while another reported feeling more resilient in managing stress. The full stories are attached as Most Significant Change stories.
Proportion of participants who self-report increased wellbeing as a result of the project	85% of participants agreed that there was an improvement in their wellbeing as a result of the project.
Number of mental health workshops delivered	Three workshops delivered.
Number of participants at mental health workshops	84 participants.
Proportion of participants who self-report an increase in their knowledge relating to mental health coping strategies	90% of workshop participants agreed that they had increased their knowledge of mental health coping strategies, such as managing anxiety, stress, and emotional regulation techniques.

Measures	Results
Belonging	
Stories of change for participants relating to their sense of community	We collected two participant stories of positive change about sense of community. One participant had made friends they were still seeing outside of the project workshops and the second felt more understood, heard and part of a community as a result of the project. The full stories are attached as Most Significant Change stories.
Proportion of participants who self-report an improvement in their sense of belonging to the participant group as a result of the project	60% of participants agreed that there was an improvement in their sense of belonging to the participant group as a result of the project.

Most significant change story

This story illustrates the change that one of our participants experienced from participating in our program.

Situation before the change

Before the change, I was feeling really isolated and overwhelmed. I didn't really know how to cope with anxiety, and it felt like I was the only one going through it. That's when I decided to join the Youth Mental Health Circles workshops. I hoped to find support and learn better ways to cope.

What happened

During the workshops, I learned lots of new ways to handle my anxiety, like breathing exercises and mindfulness. But more than that, I connected with others who were going through the same things, and we helped each other out. It was the first time I felt like people actually understood me and didn't judge me. I started going to the sessions regularly and even got involved in organizing them. It made me feel like I was actually doing something good and that I was capable.and so it felt like the right thing to do for me.

Situation after the change

After getting involved with the Youth Mental Health Circles, my anxiety started to feel way more manageable. I felt more confident dealing with stress and like I wasn't alone anymore. I now have a group of people I can connect with who get me, and I feel a lot more hopeful about dealing with my mental health and anxiety going forward.

Why this was significant

This change was a big deal for me. I went from feeling alone and overwhelmed by my anxiety to feeling like I had people who got me and learning ways to handle my stress. I learned practical skills that I actually use, and I made friends who've got my back. Now, I feel more in control of my mental health and a lot more positive about what's ahead.