Using performance targets to drive better results

Targets are only useful if they lead to a discussion about two important questions:

Is our community ok with the progress we expect to see? (Is this the story we want to tell?)

If not, how can we do better?

In general, there are two ways to think about getting better results:

1. Do something that works better

2. Serve more children and families

Do something that works better.
(will effect program-level and population-level results)

1. **Make sure your targets are grounded in evidence that supports your continuum of solutions**

    Q: Why did you choose these solutions?

    Q: What is the evidence base for your chosen solutions?
    (consider aligned indicators and target populations)

Do something that works better.
(will effect program-level and population-level results)

2. **Make sure you have a way to take action on the evidence generated by implementing solutions**

    Q: How will you know if solutions are working for those served?

    Q: Are you tracking individual outcomes regularly?

    Q: Are you sharing outcomes with partners?

Do something that works better.
(will effect program-level and population-level results)

3. **Make sure you have a way to know if/how solutions and partners are contributing to performance targets and a way to take action on that evidence**

> Q: Have you identified performance measures for each solutions and partner?
>
> Q: Is performance data entered in a shared system and regularly monitored for discussion and continuous improvement?

Serve more children and families.
(will effect population-level results)

4. Make sure you have plans to scale your most effective solutions in a way that gets results

Q: Is the number of participants served by effective solutions expected to increase?

Q: Could you consider new partners to provide the most effective solutions to more students?

Q: What portion of the target community do you expect to serve?

How do you want to tell the story of your Promise Neighborhood?

What population-level results do you/the community expect to see?

and in the meantime….

What program-level results do you/the community expect to see?

If you're not seeing the results you want, what are your strategies?

Doing something that works better?

- Selecting more evidence-based programs?

- Development of a case management system to generate new evidence on what works?

- Regular collection of individual outcome data?

- Ability to track partner and program performance and make adjustments based on what is working?

Serving more children and families?

- Increasing the share of the target population served by programs?

- Finding new partners who can implement the most effective programs?

Targets are only useful if they lead to a conversation about getting better results.

sgillespie@urban.org