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ALARA WORLD CONGRESS 2010

Theme: Practice/Praxis

Stream: Health, Wellbeing, Community and Welfare Services

Research and Evaluation

HEAT

**Workshop Presentation
Notes**

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Slide 2

Introduction

Good morning to everyone,

My name is Brenda McSorley and I am employed with the Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network as the Research and Evaluation Officer. I am currently undertaking research on several different programs, one of which will be discussed here today, “HEAT” (Hospitality, Employment and Training).

A brief description of the IELLEN, there are 31 LLEN’s in Victoria and most cover 3 LGA’s, the IELLEN covers City of Port Phillip, Stonnington and Boroondara. The LLEN’s operate within local priority areas that are relevant to the State and Commonwealth Governments’ agendas and to local needs:

- ❖ Retention and Engagement
- ❖ Transition and Career development
- ❖ Vulnerable Young people

These priority areas aim to improve educational, social, and economic outcomes for young people through the implementation of strategies that cultivate a whole of community approach. The LLEN’s build networks and supports within the LGA’s for organizations/agencies, education providers and alternative education providers.

Slide 3

Introduction

During this workshop we will be taking a look at the following categories attached to research and evaluation.

Firstly, we will watch a brief DVD on HEAT to give a background of the program, its’ values, aims and objectives.

We will then take a look at the following:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ❖ Practice/Praxis | ❖ Individual and Social Context |
| ❖ Pragmatics of Process | ❖ Welfare Institutional Context |
| ❖ Living Theories for Wellbeing | ❖ Movement to Business Model |
| ❖ Innovative Theories | ❖ Reflection on Methodology |
| ❖ Operational model | ❖ Human Potential & Development |
| ❖ Contradictions in Practice | ❖ Ethical Considerations |
| ❖ Politics and Policies | |

Slide 4

The research question posed is:

HOW CAN “HEAT” INCREASE OUTCOMES AND SUSTAINABILITY?

Now we will take a look at the DVD which is available on the website.

<http://www.heat.org.au/>

As the DVD indicates, there is quite a cross section between Health/Wellbeing Community/Welfare as well as Education and Learning.

In this workshop we will be looking at HEAT from a wellbeing perspective as much as possible.

Slide 5

Practice/Praxis

When thinking about Practice/Praxis, the one that comes to mind is which is appropriate for HEAT is:

Learning Style Inventory (LSI) (Kolb 1984)

active experimentation-reflective observation
abstract conceptualization-concrete experience

Increase knowledge to further human wellbeing - increase life skills and quality of life by

Developing team work skills
Developing people skills
Developing problem solving skills
Dealing with/overcoming personal barriers
Empowerment through knowledge

HEAT provide the participants with many and varied skills, vocational skills such as RSA responsible service of alcohol, food handling certificates.

As stated in the HEAT brochure:

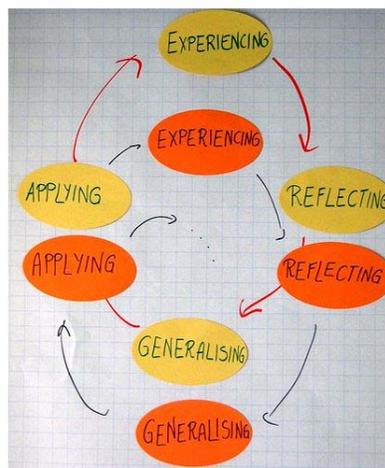
HEAT is for disengaged or vulnerable youth 16-20yrs old. Since its inception, 45 graduates (31.9%) have moved into either apprenticeships or employment. A further 68 graduates (39.1%) have pursued further education or training. A total of 142 (up to 2010) students have already participated in the program which has a graduation rate of 80%.

HEAT believes that it differs from other Melbourne based youth and hospitality programs in the following ways:

- ❖ It provides intensive youth support
- ❖ It's closely linked to a generalist youth service (SKYS St Kilda Youth Services) so trainees can get additional support if they need it.
- ❖ The industry training is relevant and specific
- ❖ Bone a fide work experience is provided in the hospitality industry
- ❖ The program promotes mutual respect and trust
- ❖ The HEAT chef holds teaching qualifications as well as extensive industry experience.

Slide 6

(Brookfield 1983) Diagram



Slide 7

Pragmatics of Process

“All realities influence our practice and that influence is their meaning for us. I am accustomed to put questions to my classes in this way. In what respects would the world be different if this alternative or that be true? If I could find nothing that would become different then the alternative has no sense”
(Ostwald-Leipzig Chemist, year unknown)

The pragmatics of process for the research is to get a few examples of many different components from the one case.

To consider the question and what methods are appropriate

To consider the factors influencing the situation internally and externally for HEAT

By asking the following questions:

What is the context?

Who are the people?

What things are involved?

What events are occurring?

What relationships are involved?

What are the internal and external factors and processes?

To then cross reference these factors and determine participation and reaction.

Slide 8

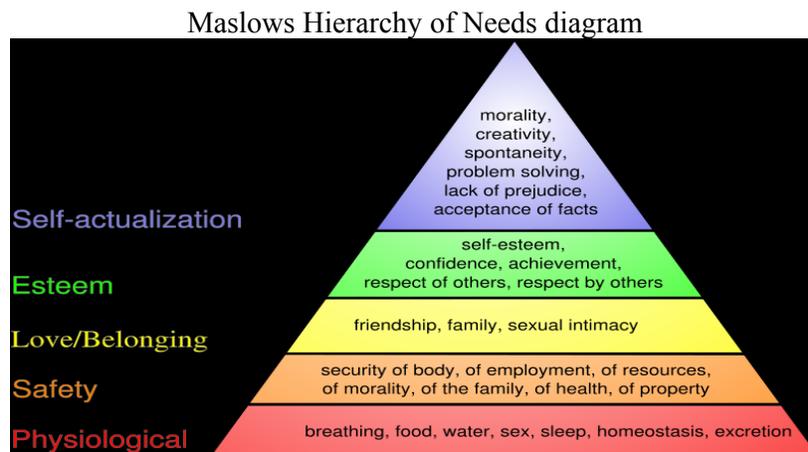
Questions for discussion

When thinking about practice/praxis, how can HEAT be further dissected?

Would the pragmatics of process be any different?

Slide 9

Living Theories for Wellbeing



I am sure we are all aware of Maslows Hierachy of Needs, but it is essential to the wellbeing of the youth and the HEAT program.

Slide 10

Living Theories for Wellbeing cont...

Further to Maslow's theory, we have the relative theory of Social Integration.

Social Integration Theory (Emile Durkheim, 1897)

lack of positive social interaction/acceptance has negative consequences from individual, family, community and societal perspective.

Slide 11

Living Theories for Wellbeing cont

Social Integration studies have demonstrated

Positive impact of interaction on isolated groups of society

Actively engaging in social roles helps people build self-esteem, physical wellness and a sense of commitment to the community around them.

The Social Integration Theory indicates that if positive social interaction does not occur and if there is little acceptance, negative consequences will develop from individuals, families, community and societal perspectives. Studies have shown that positive interactions have a positive impact on disengaged, marginalized and isolated groups within society. It builds self-esteem, confidence, physical and mental wellbeing which affects the community around them. The HEAT program facilitates social integration in several ways:

Youth have common issues and experiences which reduces the chance of peer rejection.

The program provides a common focus which is less intimidating for at risk youth and they can develop relationships readily as well as gain skills.

HEAT offers an increased sense of belonging/social connectedness; increased self esteem/self worth through social validation by their peers; a sense of purpose important for mental wellbeing and a reduced risk of developing disorders due to isolation.

Slide 12

Living Theories for Wellbeing cont..

One of the major reasons for the HEAT program is Social Exclusion.

“Social exclusion is about more than income poverty. It is a short-hand term for what can happen when people or areas face a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime and family breakdown. These problems are linked and mutually reinforcing” (SEU, 2004).

So social exclusion, even if voluntary, should be reduced in the sense that there should be opportunities for inclusion, even when that option will not be chosen, which is what HEAT offers.

Slide 13

Living Theories for Wellbeing cont...

Therefore, we have Social Inclusion which is the theory that came after Social Exclusion. Social Inclusion is a far more positive view than the negative exclusion view, which appears very evident in the past throughout the welfare sector.

Unlike Social Integration Theory which is relating to society/community as a whole, Social Inclusion is relating to the individual.

Social Inclusion refers to

Effective participation, both socially and economically by an individual in all aspects of society

Providing sufficiently for different levels of capabilities

Flexibility in provision for the disengaged

Slide 14

Innovative Theories

System Integration (Lockwood, yr unknown)

Relationship between society and social system designed to provide order

Related to macrosociology, study of long term effects of emotional and mental stresses on social systems when groups experience isolation, disillusionment and illness associated with a lack of social integration.

British sociologist David Lockwood has indicated “a connection between social integration and system integration. System integration refers to the relationship between society and the larger social system designed to provide order. The integration of these two theories would eventually develop into the idea of a collective conscience, a topic and theory related to Macrosociology. This studies the potential long-term effects of emotional and mental stresses on social systems when groups experience isolation, disillusionment and illness associated with a lack of social integration.”

Slide 15

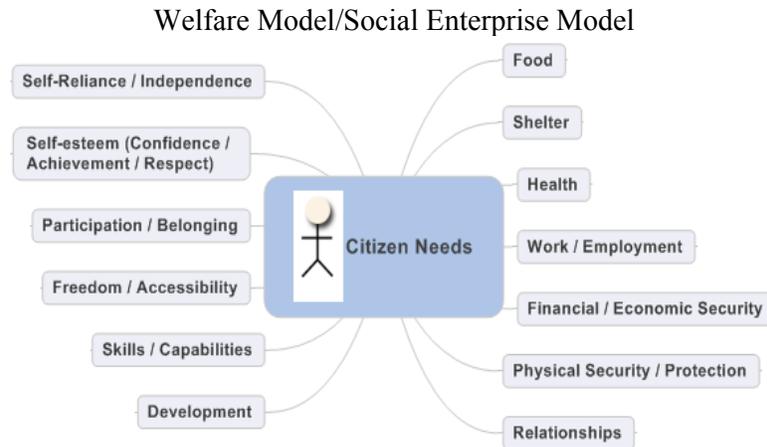
Questions for discussion

The theories mentioned above are the basic grounds for HEAT. What other theories might be relevant?

It seems innovative theories could be an important factor in effectively increasing sustainability of the HEAT program. What other innovative theories do you think could possibly be applied?

Slide 16

Operational Model



Slide 17

Contradictions in Practice

Research and evaluation of HEAT is valuable for many reasons, just to name a few

- funding requirements
- program development
- organizational change
- ascertaining the needs and expectations of the stakeholders

Slide 18

Contradictions in Practice cont...

The contradictions in practice are, just to name a few

- conflict of interest
- organizational uncertainty
- feeling threatened
- obtrusiveness
- feelings of disregard

Slide 19

Contradictions in Practice cont...

How do we deal with them?

- Advisory Group
- Transparency
- Effective communication
- Report and define strategic tasks and actions
- Report and feedback on progress
- Networking and collaborative processes

Slide 20

Questions for discussion

Any questions or comments?

Slide 21

Politics and Policies

Stated in Maintaining the Advantage: Skilled Victorians 2006.

The four key actions are to:

provide greater opportunities for students to participate in vocational education and training while at school – **Starting earlier**

encourage people to aim higher and extend their skills throughout their working life – **Learning longer**

open up employment opportunities that demand higher-level skills – **Getting smarter**

provide better information about career pathways and training opportunities and make the training system more responsive – **Making it easier.**

Slide 22

Individuals and social contexts

Skills reform is creating new inequalities

Socially and economically society is divided

Wellbeing of individuals is not readily recognized

Youth who are disadvantaged due to wellbeing issues such as social exclusion, marginalization and social justice, are pressured

In our socially and economically divided society, pressuring young people into educational institutions that they do not relate to creates further issues for society.

Failure to acknowledge the physical and social wellbeing of disengaged youth who have barriers such as homelessness, drug and alcohol issues, mental health issues, low socioeconomic issues just to name a few.

Slide 23

Welfare Institutional Contexts

Smith et al. reported, 2008:

Role of education in the community to be in a young persons' context

De-institutionalization of relationships between teachers and students necessary

Smith et al. reported that “improvements in school completion were largely focused on the alternative education program Connexions. The key to engaging students in this program was twofold: the explicit acknowledgement of the role of education in community renewal so it was connected to young people’s context, and also the de institutionalization of relationships between students and teachers to give parents and students greater control over learning in order to make it more meaningful”

Focus on the assets rather than the deficits and recognize the issues of social inclusion. It transforms the ideology of education for work to education for life, a wellbeing/welfare context.

Slide 24

Welfare Intervention

HEAT provide intensive youth support for participants in all areas of their wellbeing such as:

mental health
homelessness
substance abuse
domestic violence
all forms of abuse

HEAT gives the disengaged youth a sense of purpose, a reason for being and an enormous sense of value.

Slide 25

Movement towards Business Model

A business model draws on a multitude of business aspects, economics, entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, operations and strategy.

Slide 26

Movement towards Business Model cont...

- ❖ Value propositions
- ❖ Market segment
- ❖ Revenue generation and margins
- ❖ Position in value market
- ❖ Competitive strategy

The value of the program from the community/participant perspective

Market segment – target group recognising different groups have different needs

Revenue generation and margins – how revenue is generated, the cost of the program, and target profit margins

Position of value in market – identifying competitors and network effects to utilize the delivery of more value to the participants/community

Competitive strategy – how the organisation will develop a sustainable competitive strategy eg. Cost differentiation

Slide 27

Questions for discussion

If you were to take an objective perspective, what would be your thoughts on the current climate for HEAT?

How can the research and evaluation effectively address these contradictions in practice?

Slide 28

Reflection on Methodology

- ❖ Perennial issues of methodology
- ❖ Mixed methods – Qualitative and Quantitative
- ❖ Internalization - democratic ideals maintained including
 - Human Rights
 - Self governance
 - Self determination
 - Conscience
 - Autonomy

There are currently issues with methodologies used previously year to year as they have not changed with the current climate. Mixed methods are required although qualitative is a priority. Democratic ideals including

- Human Rights
- Self governance
- Self determination
- Conscience

Slide 29

Reflection on Methodology cont...

Externalization – Deliberate governance

to deliberate, discuss and examine the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not eg. allocation of monies

Slide 30

Reflection on Methodology cont...

Surveys and questionnaires

Observations

Participation in activities

Interviews

Focus groups

Comparative studies

Case studies

Slide 31

Research and Evaluation focus

- ❖ Assets focus
- ❖ Awareness focus
- ❖ Comparative focus
- ❖ Effectiveness focus
- ❖ Outcomes focus
- ❖ Qualitative focus
- ❖ Attitude focus
- ❖ Behaviour focus
- ❖ Descriptive focus
- ❖ Formative focus
- ❖ Quality of life focus

Assets focus – what does HEAT have to offer individuals and the community? What does the individual and the community bring to HEAT?

Attitude focus – What attitudes, opinions and thoughts occur as a result of HEAT?

Awareness focus – Who knows about the program and what do they know?

Behaviour focus – What changes occur with the youth as a result of participating in the program?

Comparative focus – Comparison of other similar programs with HEAT

Descriptive focus - What happens within the program?

Effectiveness focus – To what extent is the program attaining its goals?

Formative focus – How can HEAT be improved?

Outcomes focus – What are the outcomes?

Quality of life focus – How has the participants' quality of life improved because of HEAT?

Qualitative focus – How do the participants, teachers and stakeholders describe the program and its' effects?

Slide 32

Questions for discussion

What other methodologies could be included to further research and evaluate the HEAT program?

Slide 33

Human Potential and Development

“If human beings are perceived as potentials rather than problems, as possessing strengths instead of weaknesses, as unlimited rather than dull and unresponsive, then they thrive and grow to their capabilities” Barbara Bush (American first lady (1989-93), the wife of George Bush, b.1925)

Slide 34

Human Potential and Development cont...

Unlimited human potential
Practical program
Sense of self worth
Sense of value
Increased self esteem
Accredited training qualifications
Life skills
Preparation for further training or employment

Slide 35

Ethical Considerations

Relevant persons such as Advisory Committee and stakeholders are consulted and acceptance received

Participants guide the research and their wishes are respected

The research is visible and open to suggestions

Permission is obtained

Confidentiality

Slide 36

Ethical Considerations cont...

Availability of information generated for all participants

Transparency

Balancing competing interests organizational and individual

Sensitivity surrounding social discourses, cultural and socioeconomic background of the participants

Interagency issues

Conflict of interest

Slide 37

Questions for discussion

What further Ethical Considerations may be encountered during the research?

Slide 38

Discussion

Slide 39

TEN COMMANDMENTS OF EVALUATION

- 1) Thou shalt have no other gods before evaluation – not planning, not policy analysis, not applied social science, *certainly not* basic research or theory or sociology or psychology or any other *ology* or *ism* because the fields of research are confused enough already and if evaluators don't put evaluation first, then who will?
- 2) They shalt not worship any idols or other graven images whether they be rock stars, politicians, TV personalities, big-name academics, or any other stakeholders because stakeholders put their pants or skirts on one leg at a time just like evaluators, so if evaluators start worshipping stakeholders, then stakeholders will get to thinking they're better than evaluators and they won't accord us the proper respect – which, if you have noticed, is already in pretty damn short supply.

Slide 40

Ten Commandments cont...

- 3) Thou shalt not take the name of evaluation in vain. (If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all, unless of course you're writing a final evaluation report – then give 'em hell.)
- 4) Remember the day your report is due, to keep it holy. Six days (metaphorically) you may gather your data, but the seventh day is set aside to report and apply findings. (There is no day of rest for evaluators.)
- 5) Honour your stakeholders and data providers, so that you may continue to find more work to do.
- 6) Thou shalt not kill. (Remind stakeholders often of this commandment-especially as it applies to bearers of bad news.)

Slide 41

Ten Commandments cont...

- 7) Thou shalt not commit adultery with stakeholder spouses. (This tends to threaten validity, reliability, objectivity, and your life. If you fail to heed this commandment, and get caught, refer the offended stakeholder back to commandment 6.)
- 8) Thou shalt not steal other evaluators' contracts-data maybe, but never contracts.
- 9) Thou shalt not bear witness against they neighbour. (In other words, don't fudge the data. It's not nice.)

Slide 42

Ten Commandments cont...

- 10) Thou shalt not covet they stakeholder's house or thy stakeholder's spouse, or servant, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your stakeholders, including especially the stakeholder's stake, which if you coveted it and actually got it would make you the stakeholder rather than the evaluator, which just goes to show you the trouble that can come of this coveting business to begin with-so don't.

(Patton, 1987)

Slide 43

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