Crittenton Women's Union
live work thrive

OUTCOMES WORKGROUP

meeting notes

September 10, 2015

THIS SESSION

Data Inclusion

Janet Smith—
Edscape Consulting

Ranjani Paradise—
Institute for Community Health

SAVE THE DATE

December 10, 2015

JOB POSTINGS

VP of Research and Evaluation
Crittenton Women's Union
www.liveworkthrive.org

Evaluation Manager
Boston Debate League
www.bostondebate.org

Evaluation Coordinator
St. Francis House
www.stfrancishouse.org

a discussion about... Data Inclusion

The September Outcomes Workgroup focused on Data Inclusion and issues of diversity in data collection. **Janet Smith of Edscape Consulting** led a think tank discussion about working across language and culture. **Ranjani Paradise from Institute for Community Health** discussed collection of demographic data, with special emphasis on race and ethnicity.

JANET SMITH
Principal
Edscape

RANJANI PARADISE
Research and Evaluation Project Manager
INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

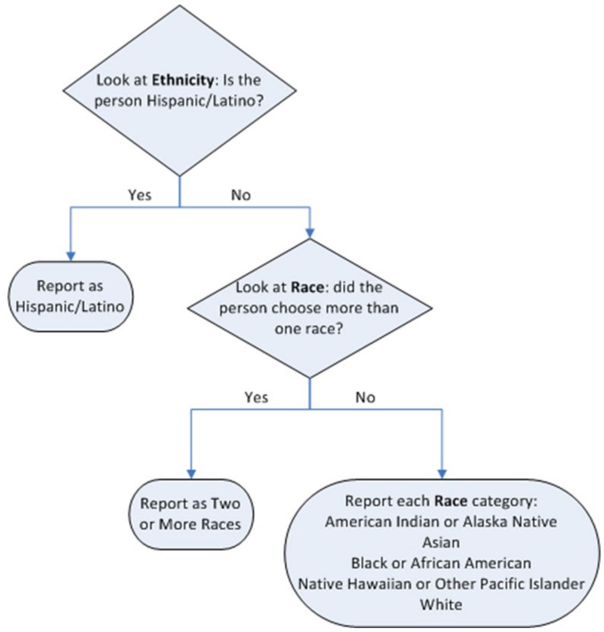
Language & Translation in Data Collection

In the discussion on language and culture, Janet emphasized how connected the two are both philosophically and in practicality. Language issues can be very political in organizations because they surface inherent priorities and values so decisions on what to translate and in what languages should be made carefully and with clear rationale. She discussed the many scenarios that can occur in nonprofits including: no translation options, only informal translators, or professional translation. She offered some solutions for navigating translation needs, especially by establishing parameters for the organization on when translation is required or a threshold of the number of people served to make it necessary. Because getting resources can be a challenge, she discussed ways to stretch them by using informal translators such as bilingual program staff, local contacts, family, or friends, but cautioned against using children or electronic translation from the internet.

Discussion focused on whether a rough translation is better than no translation and, for the most part, it was agreed that making effort is better than excluding people especially because trying alone can help to build trust, which is a critical factor. This is done more easily in oral translation than written, so if formal documents such as consent forms must be created, you should seek professional translation. If this isn't possible, the organization can use community resources or informal translators to get a written translation and then supplement with meetings with your participants to explain. This is especially useful when cultural context needs to be explained as well and again helps to build trust. Additionally, having two or more translators in these kinds of scenarios can help to fill in gaps in meaning and ensure that the message is given as accurately as possible. Janet emphasized that building trust and being honest is most important and once established, working to build mastery of the language skills can follow.

Collecting & Reporting Demographics

For the discussion of race and ethnicity demographic data, Ranjani started with the many reasons people collect this information including for funders, to make program decisions, and to identify disparities between groups. The OMB standards state that race and ethnicity should be asked as two separate self-identified questions whenever possible, and the combined format only used for observer-collected data on race and ethnicity. Ethnicity should be collected separately from race, and should be asked first. By using the minimum standard categories you are able to compare your data to regional, state, and national standards. The drawbacks to using this format is that many people feel disenfranchised by the categories. The broadness of the minimum standard categories does not capture cultural diversity within groups and also loses the nuances of respondents who identify with multiple categories.



The flowchart to the right illustrates how the two question format is translated into the minimum reporting categories. Anyone who responded "yes" to the ethnicity question (Are you Hispanic/Latino?), is reported as Hispanic/Latino, regardless of how the person responded to the race category. Of the remaining respondents, those who selected more than one race are reported as Two or More Races. The remaining respondents are reported by their response to the race category.

Ranjani discussed how CHA collects detailed ethnicity in addition to race and Hispanic/Latino ethnicity in order to mitigate some of the issues identified above. CHA allows participants to select from 150 different ethnicity categories in order to collect more robust information. This allows them to analyze for health disparities within the broader race/ethnicity categories in order to create more targeted interventions. For the CHA data, participants are asked open-ended questions about their race/ethnicity and the intake coordinators back-code their responses. Another option is to use the MA Department of Public Health detailed categories (see link below) which gives respondents approximately 25 ethnicity categories from which to choose. Depending on your organization's analysis and reporting needs, exploring expanded ethnicity categories can enhance your ability to speak about and serve your population.

FEATURED RESOURCES

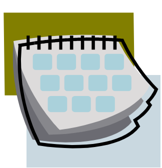
General: Outcomes Workgroup Slides

Language and Translation Resources:

- Edscape Translation and Transcription Resources
- EBTranslations Pricing
- Article on Interpretive Focus Groups

Demographics Resources:

- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) standards for data collection
- MA Dept of Public Health has a data collection tool
- Historical Timeline of Census Categories—Pew Research Center



SAVE THE DATE

Next Workgroup Meeting is scheduled for:
December 11, 2015
CWU Boston Office