

Measuring Outcomes in your Organisation

What does it mean to have an outcomes culture?

Having an outcomes culture in your organisation is becoming increasingly more important to funders and also to the sustainability of your organisation. An outcomes culture in an organisation is evidenced when you are collecting data across the organisation that relates to identified outcomes that are to be achieved by the services, programs and activities of your organisation. Outcome focused organisations also participate in quality improvement activities that have a focus on improving the outcomes achieved by the services, programs or activities that they offer.

How do you set outcomes across a whole organisation?

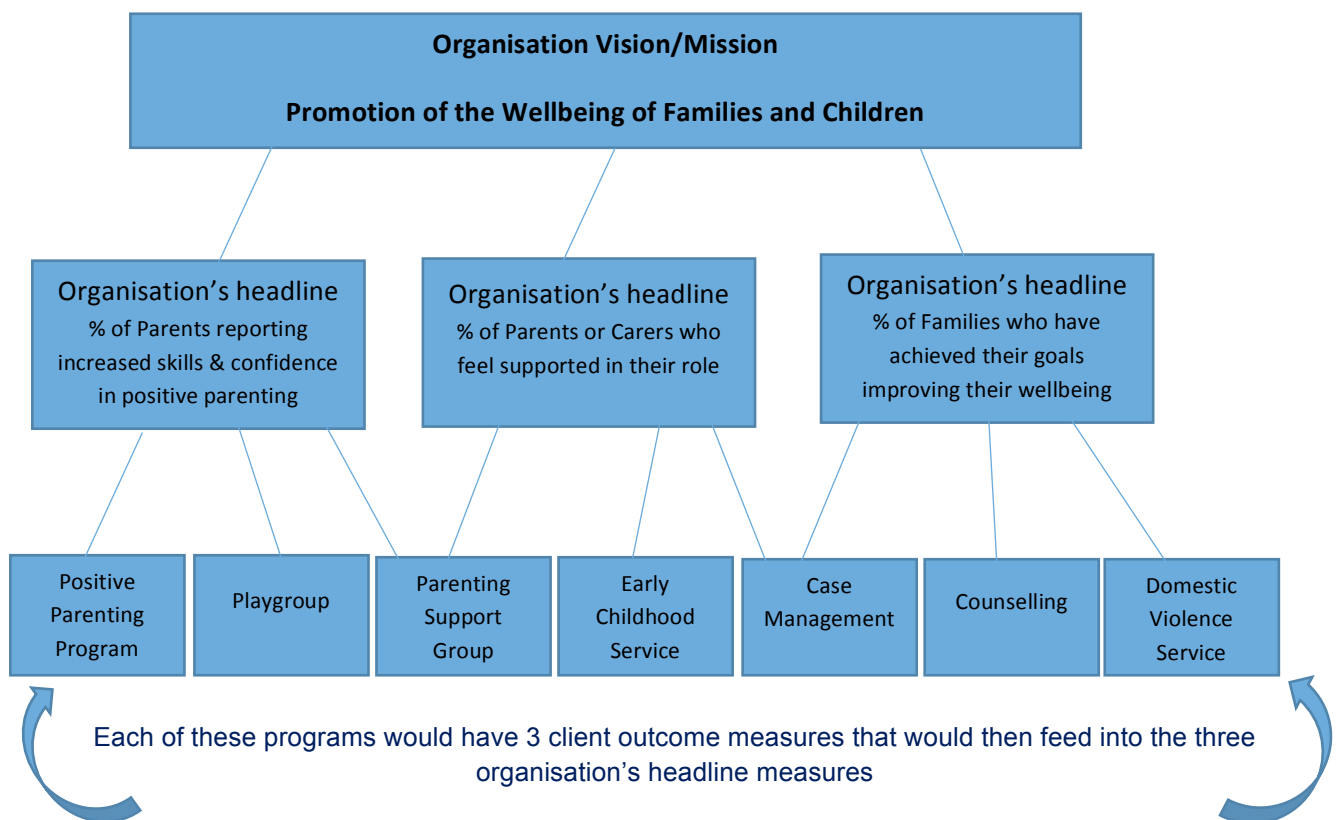
Often organisations have a strategic plan that clearly articulates the focus of the organisation for a period of time, this focus/vision/objective often relates to an overall outcome that the organisation would like to achieve. The organisations services and programs that they offer should all contribute to the organisations vision/objective and therefore demonstrate how the organisation is achieving this vision and objective. The following steps will assist organisations to begin this process:

1. Determine what is the overall objective of why your organisation exists? This might be 'to provide services that keep children safe' - this is a very broad outcome and one at a community level but the work that your organisation does might contribute to keeping children safe.
2. Then ask who our customers/clients/service users are? Once you are clear about who your clients/customers are, then you are able to determine what might tell you that the service/program they are engaged in or are participating in has made an impact.
3. It is very important that you are clear about the purpose of the service/activity/event etc in order to then determine the outcomes that you want to achieve by the program. Your organisation might have a number of programs and services all of which have a different purpose but all fit within the overall organisational outcome of 'to provide services that keep children safe'. *NB. This is not about how the program/service is to be delivered, it is about why the program is there in the first place – what is the outcome that is to be achieved. For example: If you have a parenting program the purpose might be: to assist parents to have a greater knowledge and skills in parenting and confidence in using parenting skills. This does not state how you will deliver the program.*
4. Once you have determined who your clients are, and the purpose of the service/program, it is now time to think about how you would know if there has been an impact as a result of the service/program. This relates directly to the purpose of the program and the client group and in many cases is also related to evidence based research and practice. In the parenting program example this might be: participants feel more confident in using positive parenting skills at the end of the program than they did at the beginning. It might also be an increase in skills/knowledge in relation to positive parenting. You might also determine that it is important to find out if there has been a change in attitude in relation to parenting within the

group, so this could be another outcome that could be measured by this program. This then gives us a list of client outcomes for these programs (see Fact Sheet 2).

5. You should now have 3-5 specific client outcomes that you are wanting to achieve for each of the programs and services that you offer. You have probably found that you have some common outcomes across all programs? These common outcomes form the 3-5 outcomes that the organisation will report on as their 'proxy' outcomes, meaning they say something of central importance about what the organisations does and strongly relate to the organisations overall vision/objective.

What might this look like?



How can we find out more about how to do this work?

If you would like to find out more about how to do this work, our team at RLG Australia would be very happy to discuss this with you and assist you in this work, please contact us at info@resultsleadership.org.au