

Sustainability Planning for Children's Bureau Discretionary Grantees

Grantees often wish to sustain effective elements of their grant projects. Sustainability planning should begin early and address the following questions:

1. Which kinds of sustainment are desired?
 - Keeping all or part of the project going, e.g., services, staff salaries, training, infrastructure, data collection, evaluation
 - Integrating the project's activities into ongoing practices by institutionalizing necessary program strategies and activities into organizational policy and infrastructure
 - Embedding the key elements of the project in the broader system
 - Expanding, e.g., replicate in other communities, statewide, nationally
 - Leaving a legacy of knowledge that informs the field and can be used by others to replicate your project or implement something similar
 - Other
2. How and when will you know if part or all of your project should be sustained?
 - How will you assess and gather evidence to identify the strategies and activities initiated under this grant that should be sustained after the end of the project period?
 - What are early indicators that program elements should or should not be sustained?
 - When will you know for sure? How will you know?
3. If there are parts of your project that will not be sustained, how will you manage the transition?
 - Which parts will not be sustained? Why?
 - Who needs to know? How will you tell them?
 - How will you manage this transition to minimize the impact on service recipients, your organization and staff, and community partners?
4. Are there other sources of evidence for sustainment (e.g., cross-cluster findings, findings from similar initiatives)?
 - What are they, and how will you gain access to and use this evidence to build your case?
5. How much will it cost to sustain key program elements?
 - Do you know how much it will cost? If not, how can you find out?
 - How will you secure funding and other resources that will be needed to sustain program benefits?
6. What changes will be required in systems, legislation, policies, procedures, training, and funding sources in order to sustain program benefits? What are the barriers to these changes?
7. Can your sustainability plan succeed by your efforts alone, or will you need help?
 - Who are the key individuals and organizations whose support will be required in order to sustain program benefits?
 - What support is needed from them?
 - What evidence will they need in order to provide this support?
 - How will you maintain the involvement of key project partners on an ongoing basis in the planning and operation of your program, during and after the grant project?
8. How can effective dissemination help? Where do your dissemination plan and your sustainability plan overlap?