UPSTREAM INVESTMENTS
It is easier to build strong children than to fix broken lives.

Wednesday, June 19, 2013 Portfolio Review Committee Meeting Minutes
1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
3600 Westwind Blvd., Orville Wright room

Members (listed alphabetically)
Carlos Ayala, Sonoma State University
B.J. Bischoff, Bischoff Performance Improvement Consulting
Dan Blake, SCOE
Katie Greaves, Human Services Department
Rob Halverson, Probation Department
Stephen Jackson, SCOE
Robert Judd, Community Foundation
Serena Lienau, City of Santa Rosa
Jennifer O'Donnell, United Way
Alfredo Perez, First 5 Sonoma County
Julie Sabbag-Maskey, Human Services Department
Carol Simmons, Child Care Planning Council
Leo Tacata, District Attorney's Office

Staff (listed alphabetically)
Oscar Chavez, Human Services Department
Marla Stuart, Human Services Department
Annette Walker, Human Services Department

Public (listed alphabetically)
Jill Royce, LifeWorks
Linda Walsh, LifeWorks

Topic	Discussion	Decision	Next Steps
Welcome, Introductions, Minutes	Introductions. Corrections: Serena's name spelled wrong; should be Lienau. Page 3, Debrief section, first bullet, should state . . . *ladder* for Tier 3, not *latter*. **Motion** to approve the minutes, with corrections.	Motion: Dan Second: Katie Yes: 13 No: 0	None
Updates & Reports	Update on Portfolio activities since last meeting. Larissa has been promoted to probation. Her replacement has been hired and will start July 9, 2013.	None	None
Applications	Tier 2 Application: El Puente, LifeWorks of Sonoma County Issue(s) for discussion: Evaluation Serena Lienau recused herself as she is a funder of El Puente. Marla read the program description. The two reviewers are Leo Tacata and Jennifer O'Donnell.	Motion: Carol Second: Katie Yes: 11 No: 1 Abstain: 1 Denied	

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	Committee Discussion: The following components met criteria and were complimented by the reviewers: literature review, logic model, manual and cohorts. B.J. Bischoff discussed the commendable components of El Puente's program. As a Tier 2 application which is required to "suggest positive outcomes, El Puente has supported the outcomes they claimed in their logic model. They are not being held to the rigor of a Tier 1 evaluation. El Puente suggests that youth behavioral problems decreased with improved family interactions by reporting that more youth felt more safe at home and had increased connections with adults. They also reported that 68% of the program youth reported improved relationships with their family members. Evaluation reports also reflected a reduction in impulsive behavior through decreased verbal conflicts, unhealthy friendships and gang relationships. The reviewers praised El Puente for creating a manual specific to our criteria. Other reviewers commented that outcomes measured in the evaluation do not match the outcomes in the literature review, logic model or program description. While there are likely measure tools for Brief Focused Strategic Therapy, they were not used by El Puente. Their evaluations only included changes reported by Youth. Furthermore, the only measure of improved conflict resolution within the family was youth reports. The committee felt these lacked objectivity and reports from family members would have improved El Puente's evaluation. Self reporting about specific behaviors can be valid; however in this case they lacked specificity and triangulation. Validated self reporting tools are available, however they were not used. There were no measures of substance abuse or school attendance. It appeared that staff and parent surveys had been used; however they were not present in the portfolio application. Additionally, the committee noted that when dealing with family function it is critical to examine not only youth behavior, but also parent behavior. In summary, while El Puente's measures suggest positive results they were not direct enough. **Public Comment:** Linda Walsh from LifeWorks gave a three minute comment discussing El Puente's evaluation and outcomes **Motion to deny.**		

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Discussion Items	**Three Reviewers:** The intent of today's discussion is to discuss the overall Portfolio process and identify areas for improvement. Our goal is to be fair and defensible throughout the review process. Three reviewers per evaluation would shorten meetings, while minimizing discussion of difficult content in front of organizations. Additionally, if reviewers disagreed and one reviewer was unable to make it to the meeting, a decision would not have to be postponed. Alterntely, is great value in transparency through open discussion in front of organizations. Allowing organizations to see our process will give them a better understanding of our requirements, areas where they excelled and areas where they need to improve. While it often involves difficult conversations, convening as a committee is still worth our time. Adding a third reviewer would increase everyone's workload. A two reviewer system has been working fine and we can't justify adding a third reviewer to every application. To prevent postponed decisions when one reviewer is absent, we could ask all reviewers to confirm that they can attend the committee meeting where the program will be discussed when they receive the application. It may also be helpful to have two primary reviewers and one back-up. **Technical Assistance** Technical Assistance is critical to all organizations applying for portfolio. We need to consistently evaluate and improve our technical assistance. The following questions were raised and discussed: Is our Technical Assistance working? Could we have a consistent report of how many clients have received/are receiving Technical Assistance? Could we improve our Technical Assistance by implementing a Technical Assistance Checklist? Could we provide additional instructions and better define our expected outcomes? Are our outcomes realistic? For example, "eliminating substance abuse by teens" is an unrealistic outcome. The logic model should drive the evaluation. Are we offering adequate Technical Assistance to enable clients to do this? Do we need to include additional tools and instructions on the logic model? The Technical Assistance workshops offered in the past were praised and it was suggested that in the future Tier specific workshops be offered. It could also be beneficial to survey clients that have received Technical Assistance regarding their experience. It would also be helpful to know which clients had received what Technical Assistance before		

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	making a decision. **Tier 2 Expectations for Evaluation** It is necessary to establish what evaluations will be acceptable for Tier 2 evaluations and Tier 3 plans. As we review applications we need to be realistic regarding the data actually available to the organizations. For example, if an out of school program claims that involvement in their program will improve school performance, is it realistic for us to expect them to show improved academic performance since they don't have easy access to students' academic records?. It was suggested that if they are making the claim that they can improve academic performance then the onus is on them to get the records. Should triangulation be a requirement for Tier 2 approval? Validity can be a gray issue, what is our measure for determining if there is significant triangulation? Self-reporting should exist in relationship with validity and triangulation. It is critical that outcomes which are clearly observable behavior change will require greater authentication than self report. For example, alcohol dependency could not self-evaluate. The use of self-reporting depends largely on the program and their outcomes. If the outcome is, for instance personal efficacy, then pre and post reports are a valid form of meausurement. Outcomes and evaluation need to convince us that they are actually achieving the coutcomes they claim. The outcomes need to show consistent progress and fundamental behavior change. However, there may not always be evidence for long term outcomes at which point we would feel comfortable with intermediary measures. If the research claims that youth engagement with adults will improve grades, we would feel comfortable measuring engagement with adults. Pre and post self-reports can be considered validated instruments, however the degree to which they can be effectively used will vary for each organization. If we are not going to allow self-evaluation, the organization needs to know before they submit their application. We also need to keep in mind that many organizations only have self-report. Funds and other factors may limit their access to validated tools. While we are not able to offer a list of specific validated tools to Tier 2 applicants we could point them to Social Solution performance sites. However, many of the tools listed there could be too costly for our organizations. Ultimately, we don't need to make a decision to eliminate or accept self-report; it depends on how effectively the organization can use self-evaluation to show a link between their stated purpose and their evaluation. CHOICE evaluations are used by some of our clients. Our decision about the acceptiability of the CHOICE evaluation is dependent on the applicants understanding of their results.		

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	Relationship and Purpose What is our purpose related to capacity building and how can we show respect to organizations? Could we give the organization more time to discuss and present their program here? Decisions should be made based on portfolio applications not on discussion with the organization at the committee meeting. Discussion on our role also needs to include an evaluation of if it's our job to offer technical assistance and training or only to make an objective decision. If our intent is to educate organizations, not allowing discussion would miss a critical opportunity to educate and strengthen the local field. Additionally, it was noted that in listening to a critique of their program, without the ability to discuss it, clients may feel rejected when they leave. We need to be mindful of the language we use so that clients know our goal is to help them improve the quality of their programs. In the future the vote will be framed as "ready" or "not ready" instead of "approved" or "denied". Could we improve the way we wrap-up the discussion with organizations? It could be beneficial to offer them parting words that would encourage and offer suggestions for improvement. We require rigorous standards, however it is critical that we are realistic and maintain a balance between our community's readiness for evidence-informed practice and our expectations for rigor. **Delivery of Applications to Reviewer** It was very helpful to be told exactly what issues to look at before discussion. Since standards are evolving, it's helpful to receive the instructions that the program received when they began their evaluation. **Manual** The manual is a critical part of a portfolio. How do we know if an organization is using the manual or if they only created it for portfolio application? It should be evident from their outcomes and evaluation if the manual is in use.		
Next Meeting	The location of the next three meetings has been changed to 2550 Paulin Drive, Santa Rosa, Sequoia Room. **INSTRUCTION FOR ENTERING THE BUILDING:** This building is the Human Services Department public assistance intake office and access to the meeting room is employee only. There is an employee entrance on the north side. You can park there. If you arrive a bit before 1:00, there will be someone to meet you and bring you in. If no one is at the		

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	door, please go to the west client entrance and introduce yourself to the receptionist. They will have a list of committee members and will let you in.		
Adjourn	Adjourned at 3:30 pm.	None	None