



First Update on Preparing a Methodology for Assessing the Effectiveness of  
RCAB Programs for Child Protection and Abuse Prevention

Submitted by:

The Implementation and Oversight Advisory Committee (IOAC),  
Archdiocese of Boston  
M J Doherty, PhD, Chair

The IOAC Effectiveness Subcommittee, Archdiocese of Boston  
and

The Office of Child Advocacy, Implementation and Oversight  
Deacon Anthony P. Rizzuto, PhD, Director

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The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston

**Committee Membership:**

Suzin Bartley, LICSW, Executive Director, MA Children's Trust Fund  
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Joan Cole Duffell, Director of Partnership Development, Committee for Children  
Deacon Anthony P. Rizzuto, PhD, Director, Office of Child Advocacy, Implementation and Oversight

**Staff Support:**

Robert Kelley, LICSW, Special Assistant to Deacon Rizzuto

**New Members:**

Ted Cross, PhD, Consultant, RTI International  
Robert Consalvo, PhD, Program Evaluation and Planning Consultant

**Affiliates:**

Sheila Kelly; Deputy Director, Office of Child and Youth Protection, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Teresa Kettelkamp, Director, Office of Child and Youth Protection, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

(Note: Donald Wertlieb, PhD, Professor of Child Development, Tufts University was unable to continue as a member)

The Effectiveness Assessment Subcommittee of the Implementation and Oversight Committee (IOAC) for the Office of Child Advocacy, Implementation and Oversight was established in December 2005 and has met monthly (with the exception of July) since March 2006.

**Specific dates of the meetings to date are as follows:**

March 23, 2006  
April 25, 2006  
May 23, 2006  
June 20, 2006  
August 15, 2006  
September 12, 2006

The focus of the group has been to develop the approach the Archdiocese will take to create a methodology that will enable an assessment of the effects and outcomes of the “safe environment” programs, policies and procedures it has put in place for the protection of children and the prevention of their abuse and neglect.

**Accomplishments to date:**

Initial Analysis Design: The committee proposed that the methodology we are seeking to create derives from the questions we want answered. The group’s first task, therefore, was to help refine and focus the questions the Archdiocese wants to answer and to define the outcomes to be measured by the analysis effort. A sample of the potential questions and areas of analysis discussed over several meetings follows:

- 1) How did the parishes implement the program? What did parishes need to do to make this program work? What organizational and personal strengths facilitated implementation? What obstacles did they encounter? How did they overcome the obstacles? What specific ways did they implement the training and curriculum and why?
- 2) How well trained are the adults in the parish? What are the details on training (who, what, when, how)? How were decisions made about training? What is the average adult’s current level of knowledge—what to look for, how to respond etc.?
- 3) What is the children’s level of knowledge and skills? What level did they begin with (pre-test)? How were they taught (specifics about instructional method, teachers, duration etc.)? What level did they end with (post-test)? How much did they vary in knowledge?
- 4) Did children experience abuse? Inside the parish? In the community? Current or past?
- 5) What was the response to any disclosed abuse? Report to authorities? Services for child? Response to the parish community?

**Pilot Assessment:** The committee recommended that it should begin with a pilot assessment that will provide initial data and added focus to the larger effectiveness analysis. A draft research design was created (see below) that provided a good starting point and contained a reasonable approach. Additional questions will need to be developed as planning progresses and the analysis design is refined.

Component	Specifics on methods	To learn
Parish cases studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> <li>▪ Review parish documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specifics on implementation</li> <li>▪ Parish attitudes and beliefs</li> <li>▪ Perceived costs and benefits</li> </ul>
Adult survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Questionnaire administered to adults in parish (both trained and also untrained adults)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adult knowledge</li> <li>▪ Adult attitudes</li> <li>▪ Adult responses (e.g., reports)</li> </ul>
Child assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pre and post assessment – brief verbal test of children as in previous TAT evaluation</li> <li>▪ Opinion questionnaire?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did children learn new knowledge and skills?</li> <li>▪ What was their experience like?</li> </ul>

**Implementation of Pilot Analysis:** It was decided that the Lynch School of Education at Boston College take the role of providing a principal investigator (part-time faculty) and 2-3 graduate students to accomplish the pilot analysis. The current plan, subject to refinement, is to conduct the pilot analysis (plan refinement, data collection, analysis and reporting) between November 2006 and August 2007.

**New Affiliates:**

Deacon Rizzuto and a representative from the committee met on June 26 with Professor Lorraine Klerman, PhD, and staff from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. The meeting discussed the possibility of the Heller School joining the analysis effort, and explored options of how that could be accomplished. Dr Klerman talked about several Massachusetts-area children’s mental health initiatives with which the Heller School is involved, examples of the types of collaborative relationships they have built for similar projects, and their efforts at measuring organizational and attitudinal change. She has access to both faculty and graduate students with interest in child abuse prevention through Brandeis’ Schneider Health Policy Institute.

It was agreed that the Heller School would provide periodic “auditing” of the pilot evaluation – i.e., they will provide a senior consultant to the effort who will not be a member of the effectiveness committee, but who will provide an independent assessment of the plan, data collection, analysis and conclusions – both for technical integrity and

accuracy – before, during, and at the end of the project. The Heller school will provide such reports to the committee and to the IOAC on a quarterly basis in order to help keep the evaluation on track and ensure its success. It is also hoped that this collaboration will strengthen the opportunity for a more comprehensive follow-up study where there might be a role for two separate but well-known institutions.

**Meetings scheduled for the rest of CY2006:**

October 10, 2006

November 7, 2006

December 5, 2006