So what? Measuring impact in services for children and families

Commissioning for outcomes: a funder’s perspective

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- £50m Working for Families
- £5m+ Partnership Drugs Initiative
- £45m Inspiring Scotland
  (EYEA £10.2m)
Critical Mission

Professional & personal

• Every £ best spent for every child
Scale vs humanity

With funding to services:

• How can one child, one person, one family, one community get the best from this pound?

• How can every child, every person, every family, every community get the best from this pound?
Tests

Credible, competent:
- organisation
- people
- idea
- plan for delivery
- plan for measuring
- plan for thinking

= outcomes
Critical thinking

- Why this constituency?
- Why this geography?
- Which others considered? Why rejected?
- Which intervention?
- Why this one?
- Which others considered? Why rejected?
CT - outcomes

• What outcomes sought? Why?
• What is the logic model?
• In what order (probably) are outcomes expected?
• What time scales?
• Reasonable variance vs failing variance
• What are the outliers? Why? And?
CT - outcome delivery

Reflective organisations and reflective practice
CT - outcome delivery

• What outcomes were there?
• What does it tell us?
• How could we do it:
  for more children/families...
  with tougher problems...
  more quickly...
  more efficiently...
Questions to self

• Is it good enough?
• Am I falling for hype?
• Am I colluding?
• Am I being unreasonable?
Questions to self

• What is the balance between accountability and autonomy?
• When do outcome processes outweigh their worth?
• Do I ask enough? Too much?
• How the $%^&* do I aggregate this meaningfully?
Questions to self

- What does it all mean?
- What does it tell me about what we need to do differently?
- What am I missing?
The killer question

If it’s all so good,

why is it all so bad?