Nevada Child Seekers

Evaluation Plan for 2007

Prepared by:
Nori Evans, Raymond Keeler, and Lisa Pletz

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Updated December 8, 2006

Christopher Stream, PhD
Pua 725
Fall 2006
INTRODUCTION

As part of a graduate class at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, we have been assigned a task of evaluating an existing program in an organization. We have chosen the Nevada Child Seekers (NCS) nonprofit organization to evaluate. The NCS works to reunify families after a child has become missing or abducted, and is involved with community education and outreach efforts concerning missing children. A former student researched some groundwork in a previous semester that we will use as a starting point.

After meeting with the director of the NCS, she has identified a specific area that she would like the evaluation to focus on; volunteer recruitment efforts. The major program activities include education outreach, emergency volunteer search force, and case management. There is one program activity that we will concentrate on, education outreach. Collectively, we will evaluate the total system of volunteer recruitment.

Evaluation Goal

The evaluation will strive to help the Nevada Child Seekers organize, recruit, and retain a large pool of volunteers. Currently the program does not have a concrete method of enlisting volunteers that has been identified as a success. Currently, they recruit at community events. The plan will provide structure that will allow the NCS an efficient manner in which a small-staffed department can optimize when needed. Through various methods, we will identify the most successful techniques to attract volunteers, keep a simple data system for easy access, and identify ways to satisfy the volunteer’s experience. Upon completion, the evaluation will be presented to the organization with a goal of implementation.

Evaluation Team

Nori Evans
Raymond Keeler
Lisa Pletz
I. STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT

Primary Stakeholders

Primary stakeholders include Nevada Child Seekers staff, its board of directors, custodial parents, over 100 citizen volunteers, and missing children. The program director and her staff will be the primary customers for the evaluation. They have agreed to allow us access to all pertinent information, data, and clientele that are currently engaged with the NCS. We will begin by gathering data on the current volunteer workforce, including demographic, educational background; socioeconomic, and past and present volunteer experience. This information, along with other forms of record keeping that the organization has kept, will provide us with a history of the recruitment maneuvers, organizational activities, and potential trends that can be utilized in an efficient manner.

Since the focus of the evaluation is on the volunteer program, we anticipate the current volunteer workforce to be another key audience for this evaluation. A volunteer survey will be sent out to all current volunteers that will provide us with feedback on the past experiences with NCS.

Secondary stakeholders include the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, North Las Vegas Police, Henderson Police, the Clark County District Attorney's Office, The Nevada Attorney General, and the Clark County Family Court System. These organizations can provide us with information detailing the usage of volunteers they rely on to help find a missing child. Though we may not contact each organization, we will focus on the ones that are most critical in the child recovery process.
BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION OF THE NEVADA CHILD SEEKERS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

LOGIC MODEL

Need

The citizen volunteers make up over 95% of the NCS’s available workforce. Without volunteers, the program will not be able to achieve their goals of child recovery and education of missing and abducted children issues.

Target Population

Citizens of Nevada

Objectives

The objectives of the program are to increase the volunteer workforce, and to organize an efficient system to engage the volunteers when a crisis develops, along with the daily activities of the organization.

Stage of Program Development

The NCS has been operating for approximately 20 years, however the current director has only been in the position for 1 year.

Resources/Inputs

NCS will provide all current data, including information on volunteers, past and present, and will facilitate and coordinate access to agency partners. They have an education and volunteer coordinator who will be assisting us in retrieving this information. They will also provide access to their current educational programs that they sponsor, in addition to other tools that are utilized in reaching their
goals. They have kept a list of current and past volunteers in the form of hard copies and excel. There are separate lists for each type of volunteer work that the volunteers are willing to perform, with the exception of case management. Case management is a new project for the NCS.

Activities
We will be issuing surveys city-wide, through various establishments, such as churches, school organizations, professional organizations, and a host of other businesses, spreading the word about this important organization and the benefits that it provides the city. We will also participate with the NCS volunteers with an activity, such as fingerprinting, and work closely to see their duties and responsibilities as volunteers.

Outputs
New volunteers attend a function.

Outcomes
Initial Outcomes- Increased recruitment of volunteers

Intermediate Outcomes- Retention of new volunteers

Long-term Outcomes- A volunteer program that can sustain with the growing population of Nevada, per capita.

III. FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

Stakeholder Needs
The findings will be given to the director of NCS, and presented to the board of directors for approval. Upon approval, the evaluation can be implemented immediately for recruitment of volunteers and restructuring of existing methods.
Evaluation Design

We will be using a survey method for collecting data. Our current known sample size of volunteers is approximately 100. We will be using a qualitative approach, focusing on why citizens choose to volunteer for the NCS, and other reasons that influence how they spend their time, what might influence them to volunteer, or reasons that may resist them from volunteering.

We will also look at any existing data that NCS may have collected on volunteers.

Resource Considerations

Our resources will be limited based on the availability of the agencies and volunteers. We will be conducting future meetings with the director to begin discussions of data collection and coordination of contact groups.

Plan Timeline

The evaluation will be presented to the NCS on April 13, 2007. The next scheduled meeting with the director is November 16, 2006, to follow. Under the guidance of our professor, we will make adjustments as needed to tailor and satisfy the expectations of the Nevada Child Seekers.