

ENRICHING VETERANS' LIVES

THROUGH AN EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH

A Case Illustration of
Team Red, White & Blue

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Overview

This paper marks the launch of a new IVMF series focused on the critical topics of program evaluation, performance measurement, and evidence-based practice (EBP). The purpose of the series is to inform the broader community of veteran and military family serving organizations by highlighting examples of veteran and military serving organizations employing various methods of EBP, program evaluation, and assessment. By highlighting leading practices across the U.S., this series aims to promote learning and greater impact in service delivery across our nation's evolving and maturing community of veteran and military organizations.

This case illustration highlights the evaluation efforts of the rising veteran and military serving organization Team, Red, White & Blue (Team RWB). Team RWB is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2010 with the mission of enriching the lives of America's veterans by connecting them to their communities through physical and social activity. Despite its relative youth, in 2014, the George W. Bush Institute's (GWBI) Military Service Initiative and the IVMF both identified Team RWB as a leading organization in building a robust measurement and evaluation program. The paper highlights how Team RWB integrates theory and research to drive its programming as an evidence-based wellness intervention and, in turn, produce data to inform its own organizational practice.

Key Highlights

- Team RWB is an organization that values, at all levels, trust and transparency with its partners, funders, and community. This culture—embodied by the 'Eagle Ethos' of positivity, passion, people, community, camaraderie, and commitment—exists throughout the organization from the senior executive down to the community level.
- Research and evaluation of RWB's programs is and will remain vital to communicating its impact and improving how it targets resources to improve and grow its programs. The Team RWB "Eagle Research Center" is building an evidence base by quantitatively measuring its outcomes and using data to improve its program delivery.
- More than 1,800 veterans surveyed in 2014 and 2,500 surveyed in 2015 self-reported increases in creating authentic relationships with others, increasing their sense of purpose, and improving their health, by participating in Team RWB. Veterans also noted that participating in Team RWB had indirect benefits in their family relationships and work. Improvements on these dimensions contribute to an enriched life, with more program engagement leading to more enrichment.
- Team RWB achieves these results through local, consistent, and inclusive programs. The chapter and community programs provide opportunities for physical, social, and service activities. The Leadership Development Program is comprised of national athletic and leadership camps, and a newly launched tiered leader development program.