

## **The classic hierarchy of evidence**

What would we create from our experience

## **How anecdotal evidence is often used**

- With an apology “whilst only anecdotal...”
- To add colour
- As a quotable quote
  
- The pinnacle of success: making it as a report title “It’s Easier to See a Vet!”

## But that's just an anecdote!

- The danger of alienation
- Anecdotes are remembered for powerful reasons
- They reveal meaning making
- We need to access the meanings of multiple stakeholders

## The ethics of acknowledgment of anecdotes

- Often the first way we hear the voices of clients/marginalised groups
- We must ensure **equal exploration and visibility** of every perspective; however in the final analysis as evaluators we may not give **equal weight** to every perspective

## The Anecdote to Evidence Model Step 1

- 1/ Staff /stakeholder workshop
  - To surface the collective knowledge and interpretations
  - Bring anecdotes from recent experience or reports, all on individual sheets
  - Build up a thematic categorisation from pairs, to 4s to 8s etc

## Peer learning

- Girl telling another girl “you’re not a slut – you have the right to have sex with who you want, just don’t let him get you pregnant”
- Girls telling a pregnant peer that she should “watch out for grog now” –and explaining how alcohol can affect a baby so that they “look different and their brains are different”

## Anecdote examples

- Young male (13) explaining why he's at the YHC on a different day —“I f\*\*ed up, the soccer coach has kicked me out of the team for 2 weeks”
- Young female (14)—talking about a fight with another girl —“I was just over it and she pushed me too far, but I was over it that day”
- **Owning own behaviour**

## Anecdote

- Group shopping trip to the supermarket for supplies for the cooking class “  
Group comments: 1/ “Yeh we didn't knick anything this time did we!” 2/ X being told by the others “she'd better stay out of trouble because we want to do this cooking stuff”
- **Changing values**

## Anecdote

- Young male school drop-out (15) discussing possible apprenticeships and how to get in without Year 10
- Young female (14) wanting to know who might help her Mum and her drugs use because she might go home if there was someone for her Mum
- Seeing a future

## The Anecdote to Evidence Model Step 2

- Facilitated analytical discussion  
What does each anecdote and category tell us
- 1/ immediately about our work
  - 2/ about indicators of change

## Analytical levels

- Macro: the socio-cultural discourses evident (e.g. gender)
- Meso: individual agency ( how the person makes sense of their own actions/ stories)
- Interactional : revealing the meaning making arising from interactions with peers/staff

## Peer learning: indicator of effect of recent groupwork

- Girl telling another girl “you’re not a slut – you have the right to have sex with who you want, just don’t let him get you pregnant”
- Girls telling a pregnant peer that she should “watch out for grog now” –and explaining how alcohol can affect a baby so that they “look different and their brains are different”

## Anecdote to Analysis

- Young male (13) explaining why he's at the YHC on a different day —“I f\*\*ed up, the soccer coach has kicked me out of the team for 2 weeks”
- **Owning own behaviour-> Analysis: not blaming others, especially those in authority roles**

## Anecdote to Analysis

- Young female (14)—talking about a fight with another girl —“I was just over it and she pushed me too far, but I was over it that day”
- **Owning own behaviour Analysis: not blaming others, taking responsibility for her feelings**
- **Indicators of more mature development**

## Anecdote to Analysis

- Group shopping trip to the supermarket for supplies for the cooking class
- Changing values Analysis: Previously the group thought it was smart to shoplift and would brag to staff of what they had 'knicked'; rules were agreed, but until this time had not been adhered to-> group bonding and mutual responsibility

## Anecdote to Analysis

- Young male school drop-out (15) discussing possible apprenticeships
- Young female (14) wanting to know who might help her Mum and her drugs use
- Seeing a future->linking to high suicide risk due to lack of control over future and sense of hopelessness



## The analysis enables staff to:

- identify the socio-cultural collective dimensions by asking “what are dominant discourses that may be taken up by that young person” and “how do they enable, constrain or affect their ways of seeing their own life and agency”.

## The analysis enables staff to:

- identify individual themes that have been constructed by the person in order to forge some coherency from their lived experience
- collect indicators of growthful change
- Collaboratively reflect and generate a sense of shared practice

## The Anecdote to Evidence Model Step 3

- Work together to decide on a framework for routine collection of anecdotes
- Reflective workshop every 6 months to re-analyse and identify other emerging categories

## The Model

- A process of outcomes monitoring as it seeks to identify early indicators of change and provides a reflection process that enables attributability of emergent change.