BusiBees Consulting

123 Program Boul, Open City, Case Country • 1-800-EVAL-911 • evaluate@bbc.ca

National Eating Disorder Information Centre
ES 7-421, 200 Elizabeth Street,
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2C4

February 7, 2009

Re: Request for Proposals: Evaluation of the Real Me Experience Program

Dear Merryl Bear,

We are pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the request of the National Eating Disorder Information Centre and present our proposal for evaluating the Real Me Experience Program.

You will find enclosed a detailed description of the proposed evaluation approach and key considerations. We have identified what we consider to be the most pertinent evaluation issues that should be addressed in order to ensure that it meets your information and decision-making needs. As requested by you, we developed a program logic model and also identified the major assumptions and risks related to the evaluation methodology.

We propose to undertake the evaluation in a consultative and consensus-building manner, working *with* you, not simply *for* you. Three members of our consulting team, who have a strong academic background and expertise in evaluating various educational programs, will be regularly consulting the Real Me Experience program team and other identified key program stakeholders.   Our emphasis is on the following:
- Stakeholder understanding and analysis;
- Practical and realistic evaluation plan;
- Application of proven evaluation and research methodologies; and
- Cost effective use of resources (e.g., existing data collection tools, program staff's time, other approaches).

Using different lines of evidence or data collection methods is central to the proposed evaluation. This will allow us to corroborate the data and thus ensure a well rounded assessment of the program, its processes and outcomes. Data quality is our priority. We will pilot test all data collection instruments and, where appropriate, use already validated measurement tools.

We pride ourselves in delivering client-centered services and generating credible, actionable knowledge about the program under evaluation. We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss the proposed evaluation, its implementation and subsequent use of evaluation findings.

We thank you in advance for this opportunity. We look forward to the possibility of working with you and your colleagues in the near future.

Sincerely,

BusiBees Consulting

Preliminary Round

February 7, 2009

Real Me Experience

**Evaluation of a Body Image E-Learning Module
For**

Student Case Competition

Submitted by:

Busibee Consulting

1. Context and Purpose of the Evaluation

The *Real Me Experience* is an online program which was developed by the National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC). It uses quizzes, stories, illustrations and journals to shed light on the complex issue of self-esteem. The *Real Me Experience* is designed as a fun and interactive learning experience. The program was funded through the Dove Canada Self-Esteem Fund. The mandate of the program is to:

- Help young women understand the factors that affect self-esteem and body image;
- Give these young women personalized was to improve their self-esteem;
- Help these individuals gain a better understanding of their own self-esteem; and
- Help them to see how their actions can affect the self-esteem of others.

The program has been in existence for three years. NEDIC has requested an evaluation of the *Real Me Experience* which should accomplish the following:

1. An assessment of the impact that the *Real Me Experience* is having on users' awareness, understanding, thinking and beliefs.
2. Establish what, if any, improvements to the *Real Me Experience* and its reach are needed to improve on the learning experience and the impacts on users.

BusiBee Consulting will conduct a formative evaluation based on twelve evaluation questions. These evaluation questions will address the following evaluation issues:

1. *Relevance* - to determine if the *Real Me Program* continues to be consistent with community needs and stakeholder priorities.
2. *Success* –to determine if the *Real Me Program* is effective in meeting its objectives, within budget, without unwanted consequences, and to examine the progress made towards the achievement of its intended outcomes.
3. *Design* and Delivery- to determine if the design of the *Real Me Program* is conducive to achieving the intended outcomes.

Recommendations from this evaluation strategy will be used to produce information that NEDIC may use to make strategic decisions regarding the *Real Me Program.*

2. 1. Program Profile

NEDIC developed the *Real Me Experience* to give young women private access to insight and guidance they might not otherwise have. The pressures to fit in are high for young women and many of young women want to learn how to take greater control of the actions they can take to deal with those pressures. NEDIC developed the program specifically for young women aged 15 through 18, but anyone with access to the internet can participate in the *Real Me Experience.* The Program Logic Model provides detailed account of the program structure (Figure 1).

The e-learning modules were developed and implemented by NEDIC with expertise drawn from leaders in the field of instructional design and learning technology. The information is intended to be delivered in an accessible, interesting and interactive fashion which will allow the user to determine her degree of interactivity and her path to information and knowledge. Throughout their time in the module, the user will:
- Be introduced to clear and usable definitions of concepts related to self-esteem;

- Learn about the interaction of intra-personal, cultural, social and familial influences and specific life events on the above concepts
- Have the opportunity to engage in self-evaluations of self-esteem, body image and related issues
- Be provided with a range of tools that may be implemented to enhance self esteem and body image in the learner and/or other individuals
- Have linked access to over 80 feature articles, a glossary, frequently asked questions, and related materials written by experts in the field on NEDIC's website and have links to relevant credible resources outside of NEDIC's mandate.

2.2. Program Logic Model

To succinctly describe NEDIC's Real Me Experience Program and, most importantly, to illustrate the connection between planned program activities and the sequence of intended results that flow from these activities, we developed a program logic model[1] (Figure 1 on pg 4). The logic model identifies the program inputs, activities, reach, outputs and short and long-term outcomes, as well as the relationships between these components. In addition to focusing on the program results expected at different levels, Figure 1 also lays out the assumptions behind the program design and functioning, as well as some of the risks that might affect the effective achievement of stated results. The logic model draws on the analysis of stakeholder needs presented below and provides a solid starting point for evaluation planning.
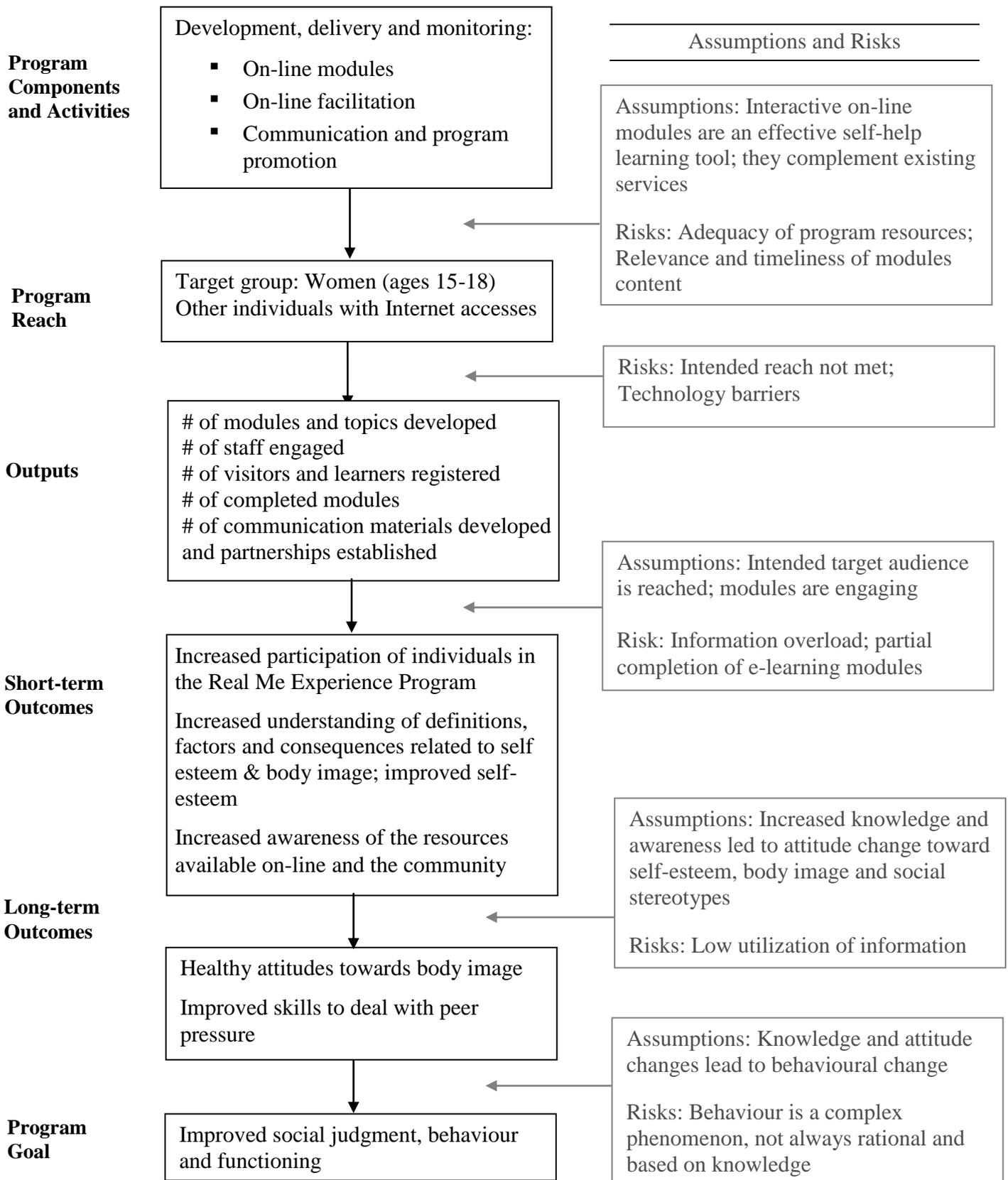
2.3 Stakeholder Profile
In order to strengthen the usefulness and relevance of the evaluation, we have identified different groups of stakeholders based on their vested interest and role in the program (Table 1).   A Primary User has a *direct* interest/stake in the program because they are responsible - Program staff. A Secondary Stakeholder engages in the program in some manner- online learners, subject matter experts, peers and family of online learners.

Table 1: Stakeholder Profile Analysis

Stakeholder Groups	Primary Users & Secondary Stakeholders	Role in relation to the Program
Online learner – young women 15-18	Secondary	Recipient of program learning modules
Online learner – all other age groups	Secondary	Recipient of program learning modules
Family members of online learners	Secondary	Indirect through their interaction with the learners, but they may not be aware the learners are engaged in online learning
Program Staff (e.g., coordinator, IT; other NEDIC programs)	Primary	Develop and deliver the program services
Subject Matter Experts	Secondary	Contributed in the development/design and assessment of the program
Peers of the online learners	Secondary	Public education awareness sessions

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[1] It is recommended that the logic model be verified by program management and the evaluation steering committee.

Figure 1. Real Me Experience E-Learning Module Logic Model

		Assumptions and Risks
Program Components and Activities	Development, delivery and monitoring: ▪ On-line modules ▪ On-line facilitation ▪ Communication and program promotion	Assumptions: Interactive on-line modules are an effective self-help learning tool; they complement existing services Risks: Adequacy of program resources; Relevance and timeliness of modules content
Program Reach	Target group: Women (ages 15-18) Other individuals with Internet accesses	Risks: Intended reach not met; Technology barriers
Outputs	# of modules and topics developed # of staff engaged # of visitors and learners registered # of completed modules # of communication materials developed and partnerships established	Assumptions: Intended target audience is reached; modules are engaging Risk: Information overload; partial completion of e-learning modules
Short-term Outcomes	Increased participation of individuals in the Real Me Experience Program Increased understanding of definitions, factors and consequences related to self esteem & body image; improved self-esteem Increased awareness of the resources available on-line and the community	Assumptions: Increased knowledge and awareness led to attitude change toward self-esteem, body image and social stereotypes Risks: Low utilization of information
Long-term Outcomes	Healthy attitudes towards body image Improved skills to deal with peer pressure	Assumptions: Knowledge and attitude changes lead to behavioural change Risks: Behaviour is a complex phenomenon, not always rational and based on knowledge
Program Goal	Improved social judgment, behaviour and functioning	

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3. Evaluation Steering Committee

For the purpose of the proposed evaluation we suggest that the National Eating Disorder Information Centre form an evaluation steering committee (ESC) with the intent of providing support/guidance with respect to the conduct of the evaluation. We propose that the following representatives are included on the ESC: a coordinator from the *Real Me Program*, ethics expert advisor, 2 users of the program who are aged 15-18, and 2 users of the program (other age groups), a professor of distance education from Athabasca University (e-learning), and an individual who is an expert in Information Technology (I.T.) who helped design the program. Other potential members may be identified.

Because we are utilization-focused evaluation, as part of the interpretation of the results, we will involve key stakeholders. We believe that multiple perspectives are important and can strengthen stakeholder buy in. As such, it will be important to capture the expertise and opinions of all key stakeholders and equally important to engage in meaningful inquiry and dialogue with stakeholders toward identifying practical and desirable solutions that will ultimately lead to realistic recommendations. We recommend that the committee will meet 2-3 times throughout the course of the evaluation. We suggest that the key evaluation findings be validated with the ESC to ensure accurate interpretation of the results. Once we begin the evaluation, we will draft the terms of reference document to formalize roles and responsibilities of the ESC.

4. Proposed Evaluation Methodology
4.1 Evaluation Design

Given that the program is in its early stages of implementation, operating for 3 years to date we propose a formative evaluation. To address the two purposes stated in your RFP:

1. "To assess the impact of the *Real Me Experience* on users' awareness, understanding, thinking, and beliefs" we propose an outcome evaluation. This evaluation model will address what changes have occurred in learners knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, based on the outcomes identified in the evaluation matrix Table 1.
2. "To determine what, if any, improvements to the *Real Me Experience* module and its reach are needed to improve on the learning experience and the impacts on users" we propose a process evaluation. This evaluation model will address how well the program is being implemented and relates to program design and delivery.

This evaluation will employ a mixed-method design using quantitative and qualitative data based on several possible data collection methods or lines of evidence: literature review, online surveys, webinar focus groups, interviews, test scores, google analytics. This design will also be descriptive based on comparative and emergent analyze, with one specific pre-ordinate assessment of pre-post knowledge testing.

4.2 Evaluation Methodology
Based on a thorough review and assessment of the program logic and its documentation, as well as the preliminary stakeholder needs analysis and consultations with the Evaluation Steering Committee (to be completed), this evaluation will be guided by three overarching issues: relevance, success and program design/delivery.

Relevance:

Given the intent of the program to supplement NEDIC's existing services and to focus specifically on young women ages 15 – 18 on the topic of body image and self-esteem, we propose to assess whether a) there is a continued *need* for such an educational program for this demographic group and b) whether there is a gap in terms of existing services offered and whether the program compliments, duplicates or overlaps with other programs. Examining these two questions will support and provide evidence for NEDIC's strategic planning and resource allocation. The relevance issue will be addressed through a literature review, an environmental scan, an analysis of program documentation and key informant interviews with program staff and stakeholder groups.

Success:
Program success issues deal with several major evaluation questions. First, we need to determine the program's reach (i.e., whether the program is reaching its main target audience - young women ages 15-18) and accessibility (i.e., whether the mode of delivery allows for equitable access). Second, we need to examine the impacts of the program on on-line learners' knowledge/understanding of body image and self-esteem and whether this knowledge is translated into attitudinal and behavioural changes. Third, we will also consider the stakeholders' satisfaction levels that will help us understand the utility and usability of the on-line modules. Consideration of the outputs produced and the intended short and long-term outcomes, as defined in the program's logic model, will also help us validate the results chain. We will devote special attention to eliciting any unintended, positive or negative, outcomes and impacts the program.

Program Design and Delivery:
Assessing the program design and delivery has been identified as of key interest to the program's stakeholders and staff. Determining whether the program in its current format (specifically its content, technical specifications) is effective in meeting the needs of learners will highlight the need and ways to adjust the program's design and delivery. The questions related to identifying the program's optimal resource levels and alternative delivery options will also be addressed in the proposed evaluation. In summary, this evaluation will provide evidence to be used to facilitate and adjust program implementation and document the progress towards achieving its short and long-term outcomes. Table 3 is a detailed overview of the evaluation questions, corresponding indicators, existing and new data sources and methods of data collection, and Table 2 profiles a sample of our specific research questions for evaluation question 8.

Table 2: Sample Webinar Focus Group Questions

To what extent is the program design and delivery effective in meeting the needs of learners in terms of: (a) Facilitating and providing support to the online learners; and (b) Application of proven/sound e-learning principles and approaches
1.   Did you complete the Program? Why/why not?
2.   Did you have concerns regarding anonymity?
3.   Discuss the length of the program.
4.   Do you identify with any of the program content? Which content? Why?
5. Compare this program with other online learning programs you have seen. Consider the following: • Overall, did you enjoy the *Real Me Experience* more or less than these programs? • Did you find the *Real Me Experience* user-friendly compared to these other programs? • Did you find the content easy to understand compared to these other programs? • Did you find the *Real Me Experience* interactive compared to other programs?

Table 3   Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Focus and Question	Indicators	Data Collection Methodology		
		Data Source	*Data Collection Techniques and Cross-checking (Triangulation)*	*Data Type and Basis for Analysis*
Relevance				
1. Is there a need for the Real Me Experience program?	Stakeholder perspectives and opinions Environmental trends	All stakeholders Literature review	Webinar focus group Primary user interviews Online surveys Trend analysis of other programs with same focus	Qualitative Emergent themes Evidenced based profile of other programs
2. Does the program complement, duplicate or overlap or work at cross-purposes with other programs	Description of existing alternative programs/ services in the country	Environmental Scan Program documentation Program Staff	Directories and listings from City, hospitals, government Interviews	Qualitative Evidenced based profile Gap analysis
Success				
3. Is the Real Me Experience program: a) attracting the main targeted learners (women 15-18), b) equitable access.	Registration profiles Secondary Opinion	Program Records, registration profile Secondary Opinion	Archival analysis Online Survey Webinar Focus Group Google analytics	Trend analysis of registrations, demographic analysis Other programs
4. To what extent do online learners demonstrate a change in knowledge and understanding pertaining to self-esteem and body image?	Learner scores on modules Learners scores	Scale validated assessment tools	Literature search for valid tool to be used for Pre – post assessment on knowledge and awareness content	Pre-post test
5. To what extent do online learners demonstrate a change in attitudes pertaining to self-esteem and body image?	Self-assessment scores Self-reporting	Validated assessment tool Online learner journals	Scale responses of awareness, motivation and readiness for change	Self-reported score rating
6. Extent to which online learners have been able to apply their new knowledge/awareness/attitudes to their interactions with others in ways that affect the self-esteems of others.	Self-assessment scores Self-reporting	Validated assessment tool Online learner journals	Validated assessment tool Voluntary submission with randomized request	Self-reported score rating Content analysis synthesis report

7. How satisfied are the primary users and secondary stakeholders?	Satisfaction levels	All stakeholders	Online survey End of session module evaluation form	Quantatitive, Qualitative Content analysis
8. What unexpected impacts or consequences has the online program had, either positive or negative on: a) online learners, b) program staff.	Perceived levels of impact in terms of benefits and gains Determined by stakeholder perceptions and opinions	All stakeholders	Online survey Webinar focus group Program Staff interviews Administrative IT archival data	Other programs
Design and Delivery				
9.To what extent is the program design and delivery effective in meeting the needs of learners in terms of: a) facilitating and providing support to the online learners; (b) Application of proven/sound elearning principles and approaches.	Satisfaction levels Content alignment; Correspondence with subject matter experts	Secondary online users Subject Matter Expert panel	Webinar focus groups Online survey Document analysis Panel discussion	Qualitative Quantative, Content analysis Other online programs targeted to this age group
10. To what extent does the program technology used in Real Me Experience hindering or enhancing delivery?	Satisfaction levels Percent of web IT functional access time; % problems	Online secondary users Technology stats on processing/ web down time/debugging etc	Online survey Program Staff interviews Administrative IT archival data	Benchmark based on literature review on strengths and weaknesses of technology used
11 . Are alternative delivery options or programs that could achieve this for less cost, better gain?	Resource and program efficiency measures	Program administrative data Literature Review	Administrative resource analysis Extract budget and resource profiles of existing/similar programs/services	Other programs
12. Are the resources (FTEs, $$, Technology) appropriate to meet the program needs and the yearly work plan.	Planned vs. actual workload measures and budget	Program administrative data	Administrative resource analysis	Variance analysis

4.3 Credibility, Sampling and Ethical Considerations

The representative sample is most crucial to ensure valid interpretation of the findings. Online learners of all ages and program staff will be asked to volunteer their feedback. We recognize we are dealing with underage population. Hence there is a need for ethics expert representation, to address our concerns with the underage participation. Otherwise, we are not required to have formal approval by the Research Ethics Committee, however, the evaluators elect to follow all the formal procedures associated with the ethical conduct of research with human participants. Each stakeholder group will have a customized consent form that outlines the purpose of the evaluation, their rights as participants, the evaluators' responsibilities, and any potential risks to participation. Every measure will be taken to ensure the greatest possible degree of confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Furthermore, to ensure a credible evaluation, we will:
   a. Using multiple lines of evidence we will cross-check our findings;
   b. Ensure data integrity by double checking the data entered, and controlling threats to validity;
   c. Remain objective throughout guided interviews/focus group questions, scaled surveys were possible.
   d. Use validated tools and pilot test our implementation process.

4.4 Data Triangulation and Attribution

We designed the data collection *strategy* to optimizes the chance of telling the program's performance story, by using multiple lines of evidence. Additionally, for the evaluation to be as credible we will cross-check our evidence sources. The evaluation matrix in Table 3 outlines the data triangulation sources that will be included in the analysis of each question. Because the outcome assessment is a matter of judgment, the key to attribution well be cross-checking through triangulation which will facilitate deciphering the causal explanations for what activities/outputs lead to the successful outcomes. Attribution is also affected by internal and external validity. In our evaluation plan we have undertaken steps to overcome threats to validity as outlined in Section 5.

5. Data Sources and Analytical Techniques
5.1 Qualitative Analysis

For the <u>qualitative</u> data source types proposed for the evaluation, such as *literature review, environmental scan, documentation review, webinar focus groups, standard open-ended interviews*, journals, google analytics. The general analysis will entail emergent themes and content analysis, and descriptive statistics.

▪ **Literature Review -** A literature review to identify tools to measure behaviour, attitude, knowledge changes, and to find comparative programs, and information regarding online elearing approaches. For the later, our goal will be to understand good elearning principles and effectiveness technologies and learning models.

<u>Management and Analysis Technique:</u> - based on guiding questions that direct the focus of the review. The review will make use of indexes/ abstracts; consist of an exhaustive bibliographic search; organise the collected information meaningfully; describe, critique and relate each source to the program inquiry; and present a technical report that summarizes major findings.

Benefits - increased knowledge of existing similar programs and an increased understanding of these programs.

Risks - an exhaustive literature review can be very time consuming.

- **Program Document and Records Review -** This will include an examination of relevant Real Me and administration records (resources), considered essential to describe and assess the progress of the program; provide a reference for the perceptions of program staff; and provide an account of resource allocation and utilization.

Management and Analysis Technique: - entails a gap analysis of what was done vs. what was planned; examine how activities are implemented, timeliness of implementation; budget a variance analysis, and compare the data to other benchmarked programs.

Benefits - the ability to determine the number of users registered and the number of these who have completed the program and the ability to achieve a greater understanding of the program.

Risks - certain program documents may no longer be available, due to being misplaced or discarded.

For the staff interviews and webinar focus group sources, we will use a content analysis using emergent categories and quantification of these categories into frequencies and percentages (latter will be summarized in tables and charts and appropriate statistical analyses (e.g., frequency counts, averages, cross tabulations, etc)).

- **Key Informant Interviews** - conduct standardized, open-ended interviews, where the same questions will be asked of all interviewees. This facilitates emergent theme identification and comparison of focus group and survey responses, while still allowing the participants to speak freely. While all participants will be invited, participation is voluntary, and so a natural self-selection bias may be evident.   We will also interview subject matter experts to assess the quality of program design.

Management and Analysis Technique: - Content analysis and comparison.

Benefits - an ability to capture qualitative information, an ability to capture unexpected or negative impacts, and an ability to understand the complex processes of the program.

Risks - data standardization will be difficult and interviewing all of the program staff may be time consuming. Attrition threat due to drop out rate, which we can not control. History threats to internal validity may occur during the course of the study (e.g., online learners could have had other mentors outside of the program that had influences).

- **Webiner Focus Groups** – using webcams and voice features (e.g., Skype), and guided questions for consistency, hold 3 focus groups of 5-12 participants: 1 group who has completed the program, one group incomplete, 1 group outside the target focus group age range. The purpose of the focus group will be to collect in-depth information from the group on their experiences with the program. Participation is voluntary and, as such participants will self-select.

Management and Analysis Technique: - Content Analysis

Benefits - low cost, as the individuals do not have to leave their homes, an ability to capture qualitative information, the ability to capture unexpected impacts.

Risks - a technological barrier (the computers possessed by certain individuals may not have the requirements to host this technology), and a lower number of opinions captured relative to surveys.

- **The *Real Me Experience* User Journal Review** - online journal input will be randomly selected. Ethical considerations will be addressed.

Management and Analysis Technique: - Content Analysis
Benefits - an ability to capture qualitative information, an ability to capture diversity of perceptions, an ability to determine the usage of the online journaling feature, and the ability to determine a shift in attitudes among participants.
Risks - participants journaling about information that is not truthful and the inability to determine the age of the participant who is journaling.

5.2 Quantitative Analysis
Quantitative data sources will be the *survey, administrative resource data, and google analytics* which will be analyzed with SPSS statistical software.

- **Online survey –** reduces the costs and enhances access to participates. Two survey tools – a validated assessment on knowledge, attitudes and behaviour; the other to address program use and satisfaction. These will be selected based on a benchmarking literature search and also in consultation with Program internal stakeholders. Validated tool overcomes threats to internal validity.

Management and Analysis Technique: - both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive, bi-variate statistical techniques and qualitative data undergo a content analysis.   Validated assessment scale-responses will undergo descriptive statistics and chi square; a t-test for the pre-post test of the evaluation question to assess degree of change in the knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes of primary users (clients and families)?   Regression analysis to compare the extent to which knowledge predicts attitudes and behaviour. The Beta coefficient value shows the relative importance of each predictor variable for pre and post scores (i.e., quality of program design, affects the attitudes about body image and impacts on self-esteem; as determined by the R value of the model, using ANOVA .

Benefits- increased reach and representativeness, ease of data standardization, the ability to isolate and measure non-project causes of change, and a low distribution cost.
Risks- an inability to capture unexpected impacts, a low potential to contribute to stakeholder capacity building, and a low capacity to capture diversity of perceptions. Threat to internal validity relate to the pre-post design; where participants may change based on test experience. Maturation threat to internal validity are natural (rather than experimenter imposed) changes that occur as a result of the normal passage or time

- **Google Analytics** is a free, web-based program that allows website administrators and program staff to learn more about where visitors to a given site are coming from and how they are interacting with this site. Visit www.google.com/analytics for more information.

Management and Analysis Technique – descriptive analysis of frequencies and percentages.
Benefits - the ability to monitor which web -links are being followed directly from the program, an ability to determine the amount of time spent on each website, an ability to determine which web pages within a website were the most popular, and an ability to determine the geographic location of the individual who clicked on the link. For a full list of benefits, please visit: http://www.google.com/analytics/feature_benefits.html
Risks - human error in interpreting the data.