PROGRAM EVALUATION BASICS

Camille Barnes, Ph.D.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM EVALUATION

SOME IMPORTANT TOPICS THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THIS SECTION INCLUDE:

- WHAT IS EVALUATION?
- WHY IS EVALUATION IMPORTANT?
- WHAT ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EVALUATIONS?

Evaluation can be a really useful and informative process for programs, because it provides data-based information on how a program or service is doing and how it might improve. Because of this, evaluation is an essential activity in ensuring optimal programs and services. Evaluation can be designed to address numerous research questions, such as:

- Can a program be designed to fix a particular problem?
- Are programs/services being implemented as expected?
- Are programs/services helping clients?
- Are clients satisfied with programs/services?
- Are programs/services leading to expected outcomes?
- Are funds being used efficiently?
- Can operations/policies be improved, and how?
- Are programs/services cost effective?

Evaluation in a real world setting can be challenging, especially with so many components not under the evaluator's control. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that evaluation is considered successful when it "provides the best information possible on key policy questions within the given set of real-world constraints," such as time, budget, and political restrictions (Berk & Rossi, 1990, p.9).

This evaluation primer is intended to serve as an introduction to the basics of program evaluation and to aid in planning program evaluations. An outline for conducting program evaluations will be presented, followed by a more detailed look at evaluation components. Further evaluation resources, such as samples of forms and suggested areas of further study, are included in relevant tables and appendices.

What is Evaluation & Why Evaluate?

"Program evaluation or evaluation research refers to research procedures and techniques used to examine the effectiveness of social programs" (Krause, 1995, p. 1). Depending on the program itself, opportunities and options for evaluation are very diverse. As you can see in figure 1, evaluations can be focused in four key areas: program design, functioning, impact, and cost and benefit analysis (Berk & Rossi, 1990, p.8).

Figure 1. Domains of evaluation research

Program stakeholders decide to evaluate for a variety of reasons. An important reason to consider conducting an evaluation is because funders, policy makers, and service providers prefer to judge program effectiveness on evidence rather than on testimonials (Harrell, Burt, Hatry, et al., 1996).

In addition, service providers want to know if programs/services are designed well, functioning properly, impacting clients positively, show improvement, are a good value, and are an efficient use of funds (Berk & Rossi, 1990; Davidson, 2005; Gajda, & Jewiss, 2004). These focus areas can be further broken down into the following objectives (Krause, 1995; NREPP, 2012):

TIP:

FUNDERS AND POLICY MAKERS PREFER TO SEE EVIDENCE OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVNESS RATHER THAN TESTIMONIALS ALONE.

- To clarify program objectives
- To monitor/ensure program fidelity
- To secure funding/grant money
- To determine if programs/services are appropriate and effective
- To find if there are unanticipated or unintended program effects
- To test pilot projects or innovations
- To energize supporters
- To determine if outcomes are worth the cost (cost-benefit analysis)
- To provide support for continued financial investment
- To identify procedures/practices that are exceptional and those that need improvement
- To inspire new ideas
- To improve policy and programming
- To contribute to the larger field of information

Types of Evaluation

Sometimes it can be helpful to collect some data before even beginning to implement programs. Before a problem can be solved, it needs to be identified. That's where a needs assessment comes in; a needs assessment "assesses what the specific needs are within a particular group or community" (Krause, 1995, p. 11). It describes the scope of a problem, and illustrates the extent and distribution of that problem (Berk & Rossi, 1990; Chen, 2005; Davidson, 2005). In addition, needs assessments can aid programs in defining goals and selecting target populations (Chen, 2005).

Although needs assessments are conducted before the program is implemented and are not typically very elaborate, they share some of the same methodologies as evaluations that are conducted during and after implementation. For instance, a few interviews, focus groups, or simple surveys may be conducted to acquire scope information. Information for needs assessments can also be obtained through analysis of data from existing data sources (Berk & Rossi, 1990; Chen, 2005). Needs assessments are helpful because they divulge what the need is in the community, and this information is necessary before designing programs to address that need. (Krause, 1995).

TIP:

COMPLETE AN EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE IF AN EVALUATION IS FEASIBLE GIVEN THE AGENCY, PROGRAM TO BE EVALUATED, AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

Once an agency is ready to evaluate a program or intervention, stakeholders should select a type of evaluation according to the nature of the evaluation questions and what the agency hopes to gain from the evaluation. Different types of evaluations vary in their goals and types of questions they can answer. Evaluability Assessments determine whether an evaluation is possible and practical given the available resources. Formative or Process Evaluations focus on whether an intervention or program was implemented as expected, which can aid in understanding how to improve its effectiveness. Summative or Outcomes Evaluations focus on if an intervention or program leads to changes in participants. Impact evaluations address wider ranging and long term results of an intervention, such as how an intervention is affecting a community as a whole.

The following table displays characteristics of different types of evaluations. While table 1 below provides basic information on the types of evaluation, please see Appendix A for a more detailed explanation of types of evaluation.

Table 1. Types of Evaluations

Type of Evaluation	Main Goal of Evaluation	Primary Question Addressed
Evaluability Assessment	This type of evaluation is used to decide if an evaluation is feasible.	Do we have the resources, time, and skills to evaluate; are we able to evaluate this program?
Formative (Process) Evaluation	This type of evaluation helps to determine if processes were implemented as anticipated.	Was program or intervention administered as intended?
Summative (Outcomes) Evaluation	This type of evaluation measures if a program or intervention influence outcomes.	Did the program or intervention improve client outcomes & functioning?
Impact Evaluation	This type of evaluation measures long term, wide reaching changes that occur from a program or service.	Is the program/service effecting change in the populations in which the problem was initially documented?

NREPP, 2012; BERK & ROSSI, 1990; CHEN, 2005

In addition to selecting a research type based on research questions, it is also important to consider the program design, the program stage, and what is feasible with the resources, data, and time available. In general, the further down table 1, the more challenging (and resource intensive) the evaluation. It is important to carefully consider program resources and goals when deciding which types of evaluation are feasible. One may have the desire to conduct an outcome or impact evaluation but not have the means to collect the data needed for this type of evaluation.

PLANNING EVALUATION

SOME IMPORTANT TOPICS THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THIS SECTION INCLUDE:

- IDENTIFYING PROGRAM TARGET POPULATIONS, ACTIVITIES, GOALS, AND OUTCOMES
- CREATING A PLANNING OUTLINE
- SELECTING AN EVALUATION TEAM
- SELECTING MEASUREMENTS
- OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IN EVALUATION PLANNING

Careful planning and consideration are important aspects of successful evaluations. Planning and preparation periods can be used to design efficient evaluations and carefully select appropriate goals and measures. Evaluators are the most prepared when they are able to finalize evaluation plans before evaluations are initiated, and ideally even before programs are initiated (Krause, 1995). This helps evaluations run more smoothly and helps staff understand their duties in advance. Planning can also ensure more efficient

evaluations by making decisions that help to minimize the burden on the evaluators and the evaluation participants. In addition, taking plenty of time to properly plan an evaluation by carefully selecting the proper outcomes, measures, and methods will save a lot of time and frustration later on.

It's easy to become overwhelmed with deciding where to begin with an evaluation. An evaluation plan will be much easier and less stressful if it is focused on a select program, service, or a component of a program or service. A good place to start is with evaluating the implementation of any NEW programs, components, or services. If programs/services are already operational, it is best to select a particular service or program component to evaluate, rather than attempt to evaluate a diverse set of programs. One strategy is to prioritize evaluating components/services that are the most concerning first (OPRE, 2010).

TIP:

THINK ABOUT EVALUATION AND/OR CONSULT EVALUATORS FROM THE BEGINNING STAGES OF PROGRAM DESIGN.

The following outline describes planning and implementation steps for program evaluations (Krause, 1995; OPRE, 2010).

1. **Plan Evaluation:** Groundwork includes selecting an evaluation team and ensuring the team has information on the program to be evaluated, the participants involved in the program, and the practices/services the program provides. An evaluation plan is a written guide to the evaluation. It specifies what will be done, who will do it, when it will be done, and how it will be done.
   a. **Complete the Groundwork for Evaluation**
   b. **Draft an Evaluation Plan**
2. **Collect Data:** Using the tools and methods explicated in the evaluation plan, evaluators will collect data on the programs/services.
   a. **Select a Data Collection Method**
   b. **Choose Data Collection Tools**
   c. **Collect Data**
3. **Analyze Data:** Evaluators will analyze the data to address evaluation goals.
   a. **Complete Qualitative Data Analysis**
   b. **Complete Quantitative Data Analysis**
4. **Interpret Data and Present Findings:** Once data are analyzed, it is important to package the results in a way that makes it easy for others to understand. It is important to share results with stakeholders and participants, as well as with interested community members.
   a. **Interpret Data**
   b. **Present Data and Creating Reports**
   c. **Disseminate Findings**

Complete the Groundwork for Evaluation

Before developing an evaluation plan, quite a bit of preparation is necessary. First, an evaluation team needs to be created. Successful evaluation teams typically include diverse membership and a skilled lead evaluator.

Assemble an Evaluation Team

Evaluation requires a team effort. Often evaluations have a lead evaluator, along with others available for assistance and decision making. It is best if members represent a diverse array of perspectives and skills (including program participants, if possible). All members should have an interest in being involved in the evaluation and should be aware of the time, commitment, and effort level necessary for their team membership. Shifting of membership can be disruptive to the evaluation process, so having a firm commitment from all members at the onset is ideal.

Internal vs. External Evaluators. Organizations can select either internal or external evaluators to be in charge of conducting the research. An internal evaluator is someone who is already on the payroll and an employee of the organization, whereas an external evaluator is someone hired who is external to the organization, and is an independent contractor (Davidson, 2005).

Prior to deciding on type of evaluator, the program needs to have a general understanding of their goals, the types of skills needed to accomplish goals, and available budget for evaluation, as all of these aspects will contribute to the evaluator decision. It is important to carefully consider preferences and tradeoffs when choosing type of evaluator, because there are advantages and disadvantages to both types. Table 2 displays some of these.

Table 2. Evaluator Characteristics

Internal Evaluators		External Evaluators	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Implicit knowledge: Prior knowledge of program, process, and people involved going into evaluation process	**Limited skill set:** Less knowledge of evaluation and statistics	**Objective:** Less bias because they do not have prior involvement in program and no conflict of interest	**Cost:** External evaluators require payment
Cheaper: Already on payroll, so may be less cost to program	**Distraction from other duties:** Adding evaluation responsibilities will detract from other job duties	**Expertise:** Have greater knowledge and skills in evaluation	**Less implicit knowledge of program:** External evaluators have to learn about programs before conducting evaluations
	Bias: Since internal evaluators have an incentive to show the program in a positive light; there is potential for bias		

BASED ON KRAUSE, 1995; NREPP, 2012

Although many organizations may prefer the more objective and expert voice of an external evaluator, they may have little budget to devote to evaluation. However, using an internal evaluator may not always be less expensive, depending on the complexity and time requirements of an evaluation. Leading an evaluation will leave the employee less available for other job duties. One possibility that is potentially more cost effective is to hire an external evaluator to develop the design and instruments, and complete data collection and analysis within the organization.

Also, it is important to be aware of your organization's skill set. In instances where the evaluation you want or need is beyond that skill set, it will be necessary to outsource to someone who has the knowledge and resources to complete the evaluation. If this option is unavailable, the evaluation plan and goals must be simplified to be within the organization's skill set.

Here are some tips for locating external evaluators. One lower cost option is to look at local universities for graduate students, who may be able to aid with this work for experience/resume building, and little cost to the organization. Some other possible sources are: references from other agencies who have used external evaluators, evaluation divisions of state or local agencies, technical assistance providers, the public library, research institutes and consulting firms, national advocacy groups and local foundations, and professional associations (OPRE, 2010).

TIP:

IF YOUR PROGRAM OR ORGANIZATION DOES NOT HAVE A LOT OF FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR EVALUATION, LOOK TO LOCAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS AND INTERNS TO LEAD THE EVALUATION.

Conduct Background Research

In preparing for an evaluation, the research team should have a full understanding of the program that is being evaluated. For instance, everyone should be aware of the population served by the program or service and what the program or service does. Having a period for comprehensive information gathering is especially important in cases where the evaluator is external or the evaluator or team members are relatively unknowledgeable about the program. This ensures that everyone is on the same page before starting the planning and implementation process. Often, programs will develop logic models, which map out the programs actions and results, during the information gathering stage as well.

The background research process may include gaining information from current and former employees, reviewing official records and documents, understanding demographics using census information, and reviewing grant applications and local media. The following questions should be considered in the information gathering stage (Krause, 1995).

- Was a needs assessment completed (and what did it find)?
- How do those involved define the target population?
- When did the program start and why?
- What are the organizational dynamics (e.g. who reports to who)?
- What was the initial intent of the program?
- How are key relevant concepts defined?

Program Description. Background research will provide all the information necessary to write a complete program description. The program description includes a summary of program activities and goals, as well as a description of the target population. It is important to identify the target population, which includes individuals receiving the service or intervention. Identifying the proper target population is important because, in order for an evaluation to be successful, it must effectively reach and gather information from the target population. Another aspect to the program description is identifying program activities. Program activities include what the program "does," for example, does the program provide training, support groups, recreational activities, counseling, etc. (Krause, 1995; Chen, 2005).

A program description also describes the goals of the program. Program goals are the desired outcomes of the program, or what the program is trying to accomplish (Gajda, & Jewiss, 2004). Effective program goals need to be defined in specific terms. Two specific aspects of goals that need to be clearly defined are the amount of change required and the time period during which the change is expected (Berk & Rossi, 1990; Krause, 1996). For instance, a program may define

success as a 10% reduction in anxiety symptoms according to a specific checklist after a 1 year period of program involvement.

Programs often run into issues because their goals are far too vague. For instance, a program may have a goal to "improve well-being," without really describing what well-being consists of or what an improvement in well-being would look like. Having vague goals severely limits the ability to evaluate programs, because vague goals often are not easily measureable. Goals must be "clear and consistent" in order to be evaluated (Berk & Rossi, 1990; Chen, 2005). If a program's goals are stated in vague terms, they can be refined into specific goals and still reflect the intentions of program designers (Krause, 1995).

When considering program goals, it is also important to identify goals that "exhibit plausibility and practicability in terms of available resources, proposed interventions, and the nature of the community problem" (Chen, 2005, p., 82). In other words, goals should be a realistic outcome from the program activities. For example, if a group starts a social media campaign about children's mental health awareness, ending stigma is not an appropriate goal as one campaign is not a sufficient action to end all stigma. A more appropriate goal may be to increase awareness of children's mental health issues (specific to the campaign's focus area) for those who have access to the campaign.

Logic Models. Evaluators will often develop a logic model, which drafts out program activities and outcomes/outputs of those activities, and the pathways that lead from activities to outcomes/outputs (Davidson, 2005). Logic models are tools that show how a program proposes to solve a problem or achieve a goal. Creating a logic model can be a helpful step to remain organized and purposeful. It will also verify that all activities actually lead to desired outcomes, and that outcomes are reasonable considering program activities. There are many blank logic model templates available online, by searching "logic model template." Other terms for logic models include program models, program theories, and theories of change (OPRE, 2010). Table 3 describes the components of logic models, along with examples.

Table 3. Logic Model Components

	Inputs	Services/Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Description	Resources that go into the program/service	What programs are doing to try to accomplish goals, such as providing services or information	What is produced through activities	Indicates whether or not a program is making a difference in the lives of its recipients	More long term, wide reaching changes
Example	Staff resources, time, money	Provide an empowerment training for youth	20 youth trained with 3 sessions	Youth demonstrate better knowledge of how to share their voice and gain confidence	Youth use voice to be more engaged in treatment planning and advocacy

GAJDA, & JEWISS, 2004; CHEN, 2005

Research Questions. All of the groundwork and the creation of the logic model prepares the research team for crafting the research question/s. The research question/s should be based upon the specific goals of the intervention or program. Some examples of research questions are:

- Did staff gain knowledge about trauma informed care after attending a training session?
- Do youth participating in a youth group program feel more empowered?
- Does wraparound care reduce emergency ER visits for mental health?

In addition, questions need to be answerable, which may depend somewhat on the data and resources available for evaluation. For instance, the team may seek to know if an intervention impacts school performance through its impact on client social skills, however they may not have the statistical tools or skill set to answer this question. More challenging research questions may require bringing in an outside evaluator to complete statistical analyses.

Draft an Evaluation Plan

All of the background research and preparation in the previous section lays the groundwork for developing an evaluation plan. An evaluation plan is "a written document describing the overall approach or design you anticipate using to guide your evaluation. It includes what you plan to do, how you plan to do it, who will do it, when it will be done, and why the evaluation is being conducted. The evaluation plan serves as a guide for the evaluation" (OPRE, 2010, p. 97). It is suggested that the evaluation plan be completed at least 2 to 3 months before you plan to begin the evaluation, so that there is adequate time to review and make changes to the plan and test out procedures and measures (OPRE, 2010). An evaluation plan outline is included in Appendix B, which can serve as a guide when drafting an evaluation plan.

The evaluation plan can include 4 major sections: A description of the overall evaluation framework, a section focused on the nuts and bolts of implementation, a section focused on outcome objectives, and how to monitor and manage the evaluation. These sections are described in more detail below.

Overall evaluation framework

This should include information about the program and evaluation, timeline, and context of the evaluation. Included in the program information is the logic model, program objectives, and evaluation questions. In essence, all the information that is gathered in the background/information gathering stage should be summarized in this section. This section should also include the timeline for the project. The team will also want to describe the context of the evaluation, focusing on how aspects of the agency, program, and people involved could impact the evaluation.

Evaluation implementation objectives, procedures, and methods (for process studies)

Implementation objectives are the objectives in a process evaluation that include things like the operation of trainings and services and reaching the population of interest. The team will describe each of the evaluation objectives in great detail, including a description of each objective in measurable terms and how to measure each objective. The "how" should include the types of information needed, the sources of information, how the sources of information were selected, timeframe for data collection, methods of data collection, and methods of analysis. This information will need to be described for each evaluation objective.

Outcome objectives (for outcome studies)

Each outcome objective should be described in detail, including a description of each objective in measurable terms and how to measure each objective. This includes describing how to collect data, data sources, when data will be collected, and the analysis plan. Similar to the last section, this information will be repeated for each objective.

Evaluation monitoring and management

Information should be included on how and when the staff will be trained on collecting evaluation related information.

The following sections will aid in deciding on various aspects of the evaluation plan, including selecting a research design, sample, measures, and data sources. Additional factors, including budgets, timelines, and ethical considerations are also presented.

Research Design

"A research design is a schematic outline that lays out the timing of the data-gathering procedures" (Krause, 1995). Research designs vary by who will be included, selection of conditions, and how measurement is administered (Berk & Rossi, 1990). Research designs can be experimental, quasi experimental, or pre-experimental (Fraserhealth, 2009). These designs vary in their use of control or comparison groups; use of pre, post, and follow up data collection; and use of randomization. Table 4 displays characteristics of different research designs. The research designs are ordered from the least complex/methodologically rigorous to the most complex/methodologically rigorous.

Table 4. Research Designs

Type		Pretest	posttest	Control/Comparison group	Randomization	Description	Tells you…
Pre Experimental						No control group; no random assignment	
	Posttest only		✓			Once participants complete a program data is collected for participants only	Did participants reach a certain level of a particular outcome following a program?
	Pretest Posttest	✓	✓			Participants complete pretest, participate in program, and complete a posttest	Did participants change in an outcome from pretest to posttest?
	Pretest Posttest Follow up	✓	✓			Participants complete pretest, participate in program, complete a posttest, complete follow up data collection later on	Did participants change in an outcome from pretest to posttest? Did effect sustain over time?
Quasi Experimental	Pretest Posttest With a comparison group	✓	✓	✓		Participants complete pretest, participate in program, and complete a posttest. Treatment group is compared to a group who did not receive treatment. (Comparison group is naturally occurring not randomly assigned).	Did participants change in an outcome from pretest to posttest, compared to a control group?
Experimental	Pretest Posttest With a randomized control group	✓	✓	✓	✓	Participants complete pretest, participate in program, and complete a posttest. Treatment group is compared to a control group who did not receive treatment (participants are randomly assigned to a control or treatment group).	Did participants change in an outcome from pretest to posttest, compared to a randomized control group?

BERK & ROSSI, 1990; FRASERHEALTH, 2009 ; KRAUSE, 1995

In designing an evaluation, it is important to think about how to compare the results. A result in and of itself may not have much meaning. The comparison of the results to other people or time points may be what gives them meaning. There are several common ways one can compare the measured results. The results of an experimental group can be compared to results of a group that is similar to the experimental group but did

How to create a simple random sample

To create a simple random sample, there are six steps: (a) defining the population; (b) choosing your sample size; (c) listing the population; (d) assigning numbers to the individuals; (e) finding random numbers; and (f) selecting your sample. One way to select random numbers is to use a resource like a random number generator (e.g. http://www.psychic-science.org/random.aspx, http://graphpad.com/quickcalcs/randomN1.cfm). For more information, see http://dissertation.laerd.com/simple-random-sampling.php.

For example, if there are 100 total program members and you want a sample of 20, you would list all 100 members, assign a number to each one, and then use the random number generator to select 20 random numbers between 1 and 100. The generator selected: 83, 78, 90, 40, 44, 98, 88, 49, 27, 34, 69, 77, 31, 49, 7, 59, 6, 13, 80, and 18. Refer to the original list of members to locate the individuals that correspond to each of the randomly generated numbers; this is your sample.

How to create a comparison group

When creating a comparison group, you want to match participants and non-participants according to key traits that may influence your outcomes of interest (e.g. age, sex or education). Here are some pre-existing groups may be readily available that could possibly act as natural comparison groups.

- Applicants you accepted to your program but who decided not to participate or individuals on program waitlists

- Program participants from previous programs

- Program participants from similar programs offered by other agencies

- People in your county who are similar to your program participants but have not participated in either your or similar programs

For more information, see http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/resources/pdf/agenda.pdf.

not receive an intervention. These results can be compared to see if those who received the intervention had different results than those who did not receive it (OPRE, 2010; Berk & Rossi, 1990; Krause, 1996; Davidson, 2005). Another way to put results in context is to do a pre and posttest. If a baseline measurement is taken of a participant before an intervention, and again after the intervention, an observed result is likely at least partially due to the intervention (Krause, 1996). Context is also provided when already established measures and surveys provide norms or ranges of scores (e.g. low, mid, and high ranges) based on previously collected data. In this case, newly collected data can be compared to the established norms or ranges, to understand the data in context.

Sampling Techniques. "A sample is a proportion or subgroup of the population" (Krause, 1995, p.36). Researchers apply measurements to a sample so that they don't have to measure each member of a population. Data from a sample can be robust and generalizable as long as proper sampling techniques are used. To determine the proper sample size, one can use a sample size calculator. Sample size calculators can be located using online search functions, for example one can be located at: http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm. It is important to ensure that a sample is not only an appropriate size, but also that it is representative of the population being measured. Representativeness can be achieved by using a random sample, in which each member of the population has an equal chance of being measured. Some programs are focused on a small number of participants (e.g. 40 participants), and in these cases the entire group can be included in the evaluation (Krause, 1995).

Experimental & Control/Comparison Groups. There are several different "groups" of individuals that can be included in an experimental design. An experimental group includes those individuals who are in the program being evaluated. Experimental designs also include a group the does not receive the program/service to compare to the experimental group. These groups can be either comparison or control groups. Both control and comparison groups have characteristics similar to those receiving treatment (such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, community residence) but are NOT receiving the treatment themselves. To be a control group, individuals must be randomly assigned to either the treatment or control condition; for example, if every third person who signed up for a class was invited to attend. In a comparison group, individuals are identified who are similar to those in a program who are then used to compare findings (OPRE, 2010). Finding this group with "similar characteristics" can be a challenging task (Krause, 1995).

Control and comparison groups are important because they help determine if observed changes in outcomes are due to the intervention or not. If a change is seen in the treatment but not the comparison or control groups, that change is likely due to the program or intervention. If a similar change is seen in the treatment and the comparison or control group, the change is likely due to some external factor (UWEX, 2002-2005). Comparing outcomes to a control groups is a stronger experimental design than using a comparison group (i.e. you can make stronger conclusions from results). However, it isn't always ethical to use control groups, because it means denying half the participants a service or program.

Pre Post Design. If collecting data from a comparison group is not possible, a pre post design is also an option. A pretest is sometimes referred to as a baseline measurement. In a pre post design, a researcher measures the participants twice, once before an intervention and once following the intervention. The researcher then looks at changes in the participants before and after the intervention. Using this design does not account for changes in outcomes due to maturation of participants, changes over time not due to intervention, and the participants improving testing skills (UWEX, 2002-2005).

Keep in mind, if a program is already operational, one will not be able to conduct a pre post design with the individuals in the program, because the "pre" has already passed. One may still be able to conduct evaluations on future cohorts of the program.

Occasionally, researchers will be interested in longer term effects of an intervention. In this case, they will conduct measurements at more than two time points. Additional measurements are considered follow up tests. In this case, changes are compared across all time points: pretest, posttest, and follow up test.

Selecting Measurements

Operationalizing Variables. One important aspect of planning evaluations is operationalizing the variables, which is clearly defining variables and assigning something that is measurable to an abstract concept. Sometimes the outcome you want to measure is something that can't be measured directly. For instance, if you want to know someone's height you can measure it directly with a tape measure. However measuring most outcomes is not as direct. There is no tape measure for concepts such as functioning or well-being. For these types of concepts, one must decide how to best measure them. For example, one way of operationalizing the outcome of social functioning may be asking the child or parent how many close friendships that child has. So in essence, operationalizing is assigning a concrete measurable item(s) (in this case, number of close friendships) to measure a more abstract concept (in this case, social functioning).

Selecting Valid and Reliable Measures. There are some important considerations when selecting measures.

Validity
Good measures have high validity. Validity means that measures accurately reflect the attribute they seek to measure and lead to credible findings (Krause, 1995; Berk & Rossi, 1990). For instance, if you seek to measure life satisfaction but administered a measure on work satisfaction, this would not be a valid measure of life satisfaction. Satisfaction at the workplace only encompasses a portion of life satisfaction, and leaves out aspects such as satisfaction at home, with family and with friends.

Measurement Error
One goal with designing evaluations and selecting measures is to reduce the amount of measurement error. There are two types of measurement error, random and systematic. Systematic error is the more serious of these types of error. With systematic error, there will be an overall over or underestimate of the "true" attribute, i.e. on average everyone will either score consistently higher or lower than they should on a measure. With random error, the overall average score will be consistent with the true level of an attribute, however individual scores may have some inaccuracies (i.e. noise) (Berk & Rossi, 1990). One should take special care to reduce measurement error, especially systematic measurement error, as it can lead to biased conclusions.

Reliability
Another important aspect of good measures is reliability. Reliability indicates that a measure administered in similar circumstances and to the same person would yield similar results (i.e. consistency and lacking random error) (Krause, 1995). For instance, if a person steps on a scale and weighs 125, and then five minutes later steps on it again and weighs 140, this scale is not reliable.

Finding reliable and valid measures can be a challenge. Typically, it becomes more challenging as the complexity of the research question advances. To find good measures, it is best to look to professional literature. Some reference books are available that list measures that are appropriate to use for some variables, for example, the Mental Health, Social-Emotional, And Behavioral Screening and Evaluation Compendium and the Compendium of Selected Resilience and Related Measures for Children and Youth. In addition, one can look to relevant studies to see the measures other researchers have used to measure a construct of interest (Krause, 1995). Relevant studies can be located at university libraries or using search engines like google scholar. Refer to Appendix E for some measures that assess SOC values. If fully developed and well validated surveys are already available for the construct of interest, it is preferable to use these rather than self-developed measures. Developed measures undergo extensive testing and psychometric validation. Even with the best intentions, self-developed measures often don't work as well as intended.

Consider Existing Data. One does not always have to collect extensive amounts of data to evaluate; sometimes data may already exist that can answer certain research questions. Data may be available from other agencies or public data sources.

Information may exist on a particular participant pool even if the agency doesn't currently collect it. An agency may be able to partner with other agencies/programs that already collect data on the participants (OPRE, 2010). For this reason, it is beneficial to look for available data before embarking on new data collection efforts to avoid duplicating effort. The inconvenience of evaluation for the clients and organizations could be reduced if it is possible to use data that is already being collected (i.e. no increase in burden).

There are several situations where publicly available data sets can be useful to evaluation teams. These sources can be used to answer research questions, provide background information and context, and may be particularly helpful in conducting needs assessments (Chen, 2005). The following chart displays some datasets that provide information on children and various characteristics. The Data Portal is only available to NYS Success counties and is user name and password protected. The remaining sources are publically available.

Table 5. Data Sources

Name of data base	Data Source	Description	Website	Data Timeframe	Data breakdown by…	Output Format	Types of variables included
NYS Success Data Portal	Medicaid claims data for the MH, DD, and OASAS systems	*displays characteristics of youth ages 5-21 who have used Medicaid behavioral health services in the past 5 years.	h https://tableau.ccsi.org/views/NYSSuccess3_1/MAP?:embed=y&:showShareOptions=true&:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no MAP?:embed=y&:showShareOptions=true&:display _count=no&:showVizHome= notions=true&:display_c ount=no&:showVizHome=no	2013	*County *NYS Success Phase	*Tables *Graphs	*Demographics *Service Use
KidsCount/ Kids' Well-being Indicator Clearinghouse (KWIC)	Kids' Well-being Indicator Clearinghouse	project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation *data on child and family well-being	http://datacenter.kidscount.org/	2010-2014	*National *State *County *City *Congressional District	*Tables *Graphs *Maps *Data Export	*Demographics *Economic Well-being *Education *Family & Community *Health *Safety & Risky Behaviors *Other (birth weight, unemployment)
Council on Children & Families Kids' Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse (KWIC)	NYS Touchstones/ KIDS COUNT data	*New York State children's health, education and well-being indicator data	http://www.nyskwic.org/get_data/indicator_data.cfm	1993-2011	*State *County	*Tables *Graphs *Maps *Data Export	*Economic Security *Physical & Emotional Health *Education *Civic Engagement *Family *Community
US Census American Community Survey	US Census	*Includes data on family & child attributes	http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t	2000-2014	*National *State *County *City *Subdivisions *Congressional District *School District	*Tables *Maps *Data Export	*Demographics *Disability Status *School Enrollment *Family Income/Support
Patient Characteristics Survey (PCS)	conducted through OMH; snapshot of data collected over 1 week	*conducted every two years *collects demographic, clinical, and service-related information for each person who receives a public mental health service during a specified one-week period.	https://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/statistics/pcs-message.htm	2007, 2009, 2011, 2013	*State *Region *County *Facility	*Tables *Graphs *Data Export	*Demographics *Physical & Mental health *Housing *Government Assistance *Employment *Services *etc.

Other Evaluation Plan Considerations

Budgeting. Costs often increase with complexity of the study, so sometimes tradeoffs are necessary (Fraserhealth, 2009). In addition, the selection of outcomes can impact budget, with longer term outcomes requiring a longer timeline, and thus a greater budget (NREPPP, 2012). Some things to include in a budget plan are time costs of employees, software costs for data collection and/or analysis, incentives for participants, refreshments for participants (if doing focus groups), printing and mailing costs for paper surveys, and costs associated with evaluation tools or measures selected (Fraserhealth, 2009).

Creating Timelines. In cases of grant funded research, the funder and the duration of the grant generally prescribe the project timeline. In other cases, the evaluation team may determine the timeline. Timelines include start and end dates for data collection, a time period for data analysis, and completion dates for relevant reports and presentation materials. Some factors that affect the timeline include the selected outcomes, the selection of participants, and the budget. Measuring long term outcomes will require a longer timeline than measuring short term impacts/outcomes. Sample size is also a factor in determining timelines. If a program has only a few participants, it may be necessary to evaluate over several rounds of the program (e.g. 2 semesters, 2 years etc.) to have a large enough sample size for analysis. The budget may also be a limiting factor when, for instance, there is funding for only a brief evaluation or the funding is only available during a specific window of time (NREPP, 2012).

Ethical Considerations. The following describes some ethical considerations in research, including keeping data secured and obtaining the proper consent from participants.

Once data is collected, it is important to plan for how data will be stored so that the responses are properly protected. Some possibilities are that data is stored on password protected computers and/or in password protected files. If responses are on paper, they can be stored in locked file cabinets. Only authorized personnel should be able to access data.

Before the team collects data from an individual, they want to make sure to obtain the individual's consent to use his/her data. Consent means that participants agree to participate in the evaluation and agree that their responses can be used in the data analysis of the evaluation.

In some cases, written consent forms are the most ethical choice, or a funder may require their use. Consent forms typically include:

- a description of the evaluation and what the individual's will be asked to do
- any benefits or harms to the participants
- any incentives/compensation for participation
- protection of data/identities
- the voluntary nature of the evaluation (participants can opt out at any point)
- contact information for the evaluators

Please refer to the sample consent form in the Appendix C. Also keep in mind, if data is collected from participants who are under 18 years old, they will need to complete an assent form and the child's parent will need to sign a consent form for each participant.

COLLECTING DATA

SOME IMPORTANT TOPICS THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THIS SECTION INCLUDE:

- SELECTING A DATA COLLECTION METHOD
- TIPS FOR METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION, WHICH DESCRIBES INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS, AND SURVEYS
- ONLINE TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Selecting Data Collection Method

One aspect of designing evaluations is selecting the most ideal method/s of data collection. Some examples of methods of data collection include: ethnography, survey research, randomized experiments, and benefit-

cost analysis (Berk & Rossi, 1990). Data collection methods should be selected to appropriately match the research question(s). For instance, if the team wanted to know if training information was clearly presented to trainees, a survey would be a good choice of data collection method. If you were more interested in

TIP:

CONSIDER BOTH RESEARCH GOALS AND RESOURCES WHEN SELECTING DATA COLLECTION METHODS.

understanding ways the training could be improved, a focus group may be a better means of data collection, because this information would be more effectively gathered from a group conversation.

Data can be collected from a variety of sources in a variety of ways. What will work best for an evaluation is dependent on the type of information sought.

- If you are interested in ratings on many different questions, a survey is best.
- If you are interested in all open ended responses, interviews and focus groups are best.
- If you are interested in group discussion on a topic, focus groups are best.

In addition, time and budget resources may impact data collection method decisions. Some methods, like interviews, take more time and money to complete, while other methods, like surveys, are relatively inexpensive and quick. If you have budget and time constraints, this will need to be taken into account in selecting a method of data collection. The following table provides descriptions of common methods of data collection.

Table 6. Data Collection Methods

Method	Description	Pros	Cons
Document Review	• Researchers review existing materials (no new data collection)	• Low to no cost because documents exist already • Participants not burdened with additional data collection	• No ability to customize what is available • Not always sure of accuracy of information • Pulling and compiling data may take significant resources
Participant Observation	• Qualitative data • Researchers observe/participate in normal activities and record notes	• Observe in a naturalistic way • Obtains unique information that would be difficult to obtain otherwise	• A lot of time is spent getting participants comfortable with researcher's presence when no data is collected and to organize and analyze data • No ability to ask questions or clarification • Difficult to do analysis without bias
Interviews	• Qualitative data • Phone or In-person data collection	• Encourages rich conversations • Can ask respondents to clarify/explain their points • Good to use when questions are more open-ended • Can be completed by phone, which can be more convenient	• Somewhat time consuming: talk to one person at a time, transcribe notes, etc. • Need interviewers who are trained & skilled
Surveys	• Quantitative and Qualitative data • Data collection via e-mail/ online, phone, in person, mail	• Easy to administer • Can collect large amounts of data in short period of time • Data well-suited for statistical analysis • Respondents can be anonymous; some may be more comfortable responding	• No conversations; can't ask for clarification/explanation • Need some statistical understanding or program to interpret results • Depending on the evaluation design, may have trouble ensuring a representative sample
Focus Groups	• Qualitative data • In-person data collection in a group discussion	• Good to use when you are interested in group thoughts on a topic • Efficient way to get input opinions from a particular group of people • Encourages rich conversations • Can ask respondents to clarify/explain their points • Good to use when questions are more open-ended	• Some people may be reluctant to speak up in a group (especially if they have diverging opinions) • Can sometimes be a challenge to recruit and physically get people to location for group
Experiments	• Quantitative data	• Very controlled • Can attribute results to interventions	• Can be time consuming and expensive • May not be ethical to have a control group

Krause, 1995; Chinman, Imm, & Wandersman, 2004; Chen, 2005

Evaluators can also decide to use more than one method of data collection in an evaluation. In some instances, using a multi-method approach can enhance the evaluation (for example, using a survey and focus group). Combining results from multiple data types and sources to gain a more complete picture is referred to as triangulation. Different methods of data collection can focus on different types of data and different perspectives. One can collect both multiple types of data (both quantitative and qualitative) and information from multiple sources (such as input from multiple groups of stakeholders). During analysis, it is important to consider similarities between sources as well as divergences between sources, which may require follow up data collection to resolve (Davidson, 2005; Krause, 1995).

Even if only using one method of data collection, it is important to consider collecting data from different types of sources to obtain perspectives from many angles. For instance, if evaluating a program, interviews, surveys, and/or focus groups can be conducted with staff, family, youth, and/or community members in order to understand the program from many perspectives. It is not unusual for different groups to have very different thoughts and impressions on the same program. In some cases, goals may be related to only one group of people (e.g. did staff enjoy the training; did youth feel empowered); in this case, data collection from one perspective will suffice.

Highlighted Methods of Data Collection

The following section goes into more details on several forms of data collection which would be the most feasible for internal evaluators to conduct. Help and tips for interviews, focus groups, and surveys are also described.

Interviews

In interviews, evaluators talk one on one with participants to get information from them (Krause, 1995). Interviews can be conducted in person or over the phone. Typically interviews are semi-structured, which means they have a prescribed set of questions, but interviewers can deviate or elaborate on these questions as needed. Evaluators can probe interviewees on more complicated issues to better understand the topic (Chen, 2005). Please refer to Appendix D for a sample of interview questions.

Sometimes interviewers prefer to audio tape the interview. This method has pros and cons. The pros are the interviewer has a backup recording to refer to if there is any confusion in their notes and if they want to draw quotes from the interview. The cons are that interviewees may be less open and comfortable if they are being recorded, which could result in a less effective interview. It is important that if you do decide to record the interview that the participant is aware that they are being recorded and that they give their consent to the recording (Krause, 1995).

Interviews can be very time consuming, with interviews taking an hour or more per participant. That does not include the time to transcribe notes and analyze findings. Because of this, interviews may require more time and money to complete, and are best in cases where there is a smaller pool of participants.

Successful interviews require skilled interviewers. The best interviewers express sincerity, empathy, and are good listeners. Interviewers also need to be comfortable handling any sensitive topics that may arise in interviews. It is important that interviewers probe vague and non-committal answers in order to find the needed details and information. Without probing, interviews can yield little or weak data (Krause, 1995).

TIP:
ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT BOTH THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF PROGRAMS TO COLLECT MORE BALANCED DATA AND REDUCE BIAS.

Tips for conducting interviews.

Be upfront
Interviewees should be told upfront whether their names will be included in any reports or documentation and whether or not they may be quoted. This way participants can make an informed decision on whether or not they want to participate, or ask not to be identified or quoted.

Be balanced
Make sure to ask about both the advantages/ disadvantages or strengths/weaknesses. It is best to look at a question from a more holistic perspective.

Include open-ended questions
Always ask if there is anything else the interviewee wants to add or comment on. It is unlikely that your prescribed questions will be all inclusive, so this is a good catch-all for things you weren't able to ask.

Follow up
The advantage to interviews is that you can ask the interviewees to elaborate on points that are confusing or when you need more info. Make sure to use this feature.

Record or take notes
Since semi-structured interviews often contain open-ended questions and discussions may diverge from the interview guide, it is generally best to record or take detailed notes during the interview. If taking notes, be sure to review your notes after the interview to fill in any gaps while the information is still fresh in your mind.

Focus Groups

Focus Groups are semi structured small group interviews, with the added dynamic of the back and forth of group discussion. The discussion helps create a richer understanding of participants' experiences than one-on-one interviews. In a focus group, a moderator will bring up topics for the group to discuss. They are an effective way to gather data if the goal is to hear from a particular group (e.g. youth in your program). Focus groups typically consist of 6-12 participants with a common experience (e.g. all attending a particular group or training, or receiving a similar service) as well as a moderator who is presenting the discussion topics/ questions. When conducted successfully, group dynamics can foster deeper responses than you would get in a survey or interview (Chinman, Imm, & Wandersman, 2004). Once focus groups are complete, one can review their notes and/or audio files to identify common and interesting themes in responses. The following describes some tips for focus groups.

Tips for focus groups.

Use existing groups

One way to save time and energy on logistics is to use existing groups for focus groups. For instance, parent groups, youth groups, and meetings of service providers may be good options.

Have a note taker

If possible, have someone who can just listen and take notes on the group. It can be challenging for a moderator to moderate the group and take notes at the same time.

Audio tape focus groups

It can be helpful to audio record focus groups so that you can listen back to verify your notes, and see if you missed anything.

Consider using an icebreaker

In some cases it can put participants at ease to start the group with an icebreaker.

Compensate if possible

It is best to compensate participants for their time and travel. In addition, it is helpful to provide light snacks and/or beverages during focus groups.

Surveys

Surveys (or questionnaires) can be a useful tool. They are typically easy to administer and tend to require less hands-on work than interviews or focus groups. They are particularly handy when one wants to collect data from a large sample (Krause, 1995). Surveys are most beneficial when the questions to be answered are primarily close-ended. If you are looking for more open-ended responses, another method of data collection, like focus groups or interviews, often works better.

There are some negative aspects of using surveys for data collection. One challenge that occurs with surveys is that good surveys do require a lot of work and preparation and careful consideration of all items (Krause, 1995). Another challenge is that it can be hard to convince people to complete a survey, especially if it is long or asks questions about sensitive topics. This can result in a low response rate. Low response rates are a concern because the results may not be representative of the population. Evaluation teams can encourage participants to respond by sending follow up reminders by phone call, e-mail, text, or mail (Krause, 1995). Providing an incentive for completion of a survey is also a good strategy to increase response rates.

Tips for designing surveys.

Include demographic questions
Some findings may vary by age, gender, ethnicity, or other groupings. Understanding responses by different groupings can be helpful for finding solutions to problems and/or improving practices.

Keep surveys short
Ideally survey length is around 5 minutes. SurveyMonkey research (along with Gallup and others) has shown that for optimal response, the survey should take 5 minutes or less to complete. 6 – 10 minutes is okay, and people tend to drop out the most on surveys lasting 11 or more minutes.

Keep questions as simple as possible
Avoid 2-part (aka double barreled) questions, as they can be challenging for respondents to answer. For example, instead of: "did you enjoy the training and materials", ask one question about training and a different question about materials. Using negative wording can also be confusing and should be avoided, e.g. avoid items like: "To what extent did you not enjoy the training."

Use mostly closed-ended items
Surveys are ideal to collect data using response scales. However, it is also beneficial to include at least 1 open-ended question for participants' additional feedback.

Response scales should have 3-5 response options
Response scales with 3-5 response options are ideal. It is best to avoid Yes/No response scales if possible.

If possible, use same response scale throughout survey
It can be confusing for respondents when response scales switch often; this can lead to errors. If switching response scale is necessary, clearly define the sections with different response scales (e.g. put on a new page) and provide a new set of instructions when scales change.

If using a reference period, shorter is better
People are more accurate at responding to "in the past month" than "in the past year."

Order of items
It is best to order items from more general to more specific, and place any demographic items at the end of the survey.

Make survey items optional
Allowing participants to skip items can make participants more comfortable completing the survey.

Test your survey
It is always best to test the survey, checking for item confusion, length, errors, etc. If possible, test with a similar group of people to the sample you intend to survey to get their reactions.

Tips for survey administration.

Consider the participants
Use an administration method that makes sense for the participants, e.g. don't administer an online survey to the elderly or a landline phone survey to youth.

Provide incentives
In cases where you don't have resources to provide incentives for everyone, a completed survey could count as an entry into a lottery.

Send reminders
Reminders can be sent online, through the mail, or by phone.

Keep surveys anonymous when possible
Anonymous surveys protect the participants and may lead to increased response rates, as individuals who are concerned about revealing their identity would be more inclined to respond.

Data Collection Tools

The following chart includes tools that aid in the collection and organization of data (see also Appendices F through I for examples). With these sites, one can design and administer online surveys. The sites displayed were specifically selected because they offer low and/or no cost plans (many additional programs are available but may be more expensive). Typically these websites allow you to design the survey on their website and then distribute it via e-mail or a web link for online completion. Using a tool like this can save time on data entry, as it collects all the data for participants who complete the survey online. If you use paper surveys, personnel will have to manually enter the paper surveys into these programs. Once data is entered, these sites typically organize the data, create some graphics, and provide some simple statistics and summary information.

Table 7. Selection of Data Collection Websites

Name	Address	Cost
Google Forms	https://docs.google.com/forms/	Free
Survey Monkey	www.surveymonkey.com	Free & pay plans
Typeform	http://www.typeform.com/	Free & pay plans
Esurv	http://esurv.org/	Free

ANALYZING DATA

SOME IMPORTANT TOPICS THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THIS SECTION INCLUDE:

- QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS
- QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS
- TYPES OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The analysis stage of evaluation involves organization of the data to examine the program's outcomes (Krause, 1995). Data analysis differs depending on the type of data collection conducted. When dealing with qualitative data, one will primarily review the data for common or interesting themes, whereas when dealing with quantitative data, one will typically employ statistical analyses to understand the data.

Qualitative Data Analysis

When you analyze qualitative data you are essentially organizing responses into categories to find common themes and/or unique responses. The following describes steps to take to analyze qualitative data (UWEX, 2002-2005).

Assign IDs

To protect participant confidentiality, give each respondent a code and attach that code to each of their responses (this allows the responses to be connected to an individual without identifying the specific participant).

Organize responses by major topics

The first step is to organize responses by the major questions and/or topic areas. These typically align closely to the questions asked. For instance, participant responses may fall into broad categories such as what they liked, didn't like, and suggestions for improvement.

Organize responses by subcategories

Think about the possible subcategories. Now organize responses under applicable subcategories, keeping a subcategory of "other" for any responses that can't be otherwise classified.

Decide if additional subcategories are needed

Review "other" responses to see if additional subcategories are needed. If so, re-review all responses to see if any belong in new categories.

Review for trends

Review categories and subcategories to identify trends in responses. Pay attention to trends like: What subcategories emerged? What responses were repeated by many participants (e.g. 4/10 respondents said the meeting was too long, etc.)?

Select informative quotes

Select some representative quotes. Having some aggregate information is good to show how expansive certain responses were, but quotes are also important because they give more richness to the data.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Statistics can be a scary word to some people, but analysis of quantitative data is going to require the calculation of at least some statistics. The good news is that statistics don't have to be scary, and there are some tools that can help. Essentially, statistics are useful because they, "organize and summarize the data so that they tell a story" (Krause, 1995, p. 76). Statistics help to take all the data collected and package it in a way that others can understand.

Statistics can be descriptive or inferential. Whereas descriptive statistics are fairly straightforward to calculate, calculating inferential statistics is more complex and requires more knowledge of statistics. Calculating inferential statistics can be a challenge for some organizations. Not everyone has access to costly statistical programs, or the knowledge to conduct advanced statistical analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics provide information (such as averages) for summarizing and conveying the characteristics of groups of information and people (Krause, 1995). For instance, if you were interested in the overall satisfaction average after a training, you would likely calculate the average (i.e. mean) satisfaction; this is a descriptive statistic.

Using Excel. Analyzing data that is descriptive of the program often can be easily conducted in programs such as Microsoft Excel. If you are collecting survey data using paper surveys only, and are using Excel as a data organization program, be sure to organize data so that each row is a participant and each column is a survey question or item. If you are using an online program for data collection and entry, you can still do analysis in Excel if you want to, you just have to export the data into Excel first. During the export process, these programs should automatically organize the data so that each row is a participant and each column is a question or item.

One can also use several functions by simply highlighting the data with the cursor and right clicking to access the "quick analysis" and selecting totals (Image A). In quick analysis, sums, averages, counts, percent totals, and cumulative sums can be calculated. Other simple statistics can be calculated using the appropriate formula function while selecting the appropriate data (e.g. medians, modes, standard deviations). If you need additional resources and help, there are many online tutorials and YouTube videos available for conducting descriptive analyses in Excel.

Data Checks

Before starting quantitative data analysis, it is important to check data to make sure data was entered and organized correctly. Make sure to check for errors in data entry and random responding.

Errors in data entry. Make sure all responses are in the possible range of responses, e.g. did anyone answer 7 to a scale that has a 1-5 range, or in a program of teens, check to make sure all ages listed are in the appropriate range (no 6 yr olds or 60 yr olds) (UWEX, tip sheet 22). If errors are found, one should fix them by finding and entering the correct data, or if not possible, marking the value as missing.

Check for random responders. Did anyone just pick the same response to all items (even when the scales changed)? A trick to identify random responders is to add a couple of random responder questions into the survey, which if the respondent reads the question he/she will always answer correctly (e.g. select option 2 for this question, or I am the president of the United States of America- yes/no). When someone answers these items incorrectly, they likely responded randomly for other portions of the survey as well. The data of random responders should not be included in analyses.

Image A: Simple Analyses in Excel
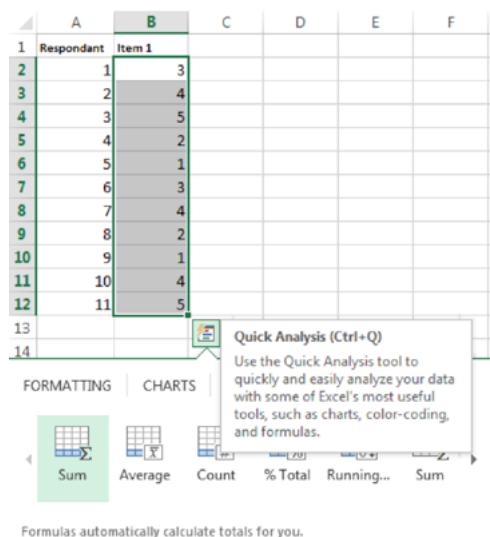
1. Select Data

2. Right click & select Quick Analysis (or use CTRL+Q shortcut)

3. Click on the analysis you want

Using Online Programs.
Another way to review descriptive information is with a data collection program such as SurveyMonkey. These programs automatically calculate some statistics and summary information. Once data are entered, summary statistics are available in charts showing counts and percentages, as well as graphics. One can use these graphics and charts by cutting and pasting them from the programs into documents (some programs also allow you to export graphs/charts). Image B shows the average response on this item for all respondents (i.e. 1.6), and the percent that chose each response choice.

Programs and stakeholders may be interested in looking at responses divided out by subgroups (e.g. gender, ethnicity, age groups, diagnoses, etc.) Most of the data collection websites also have functionality to look at responses by group. Another way to do this is to export your data in an Excel sheet format, and use pivot charts to view differences between groups (Image C). Alternatively you can import a spreadsheet into one of the data collection/presentation programs, and drag and drop variables to create desired graphics (Image D & E).

Image B: Simple Analyses & Graphics in Survey Monkey

NOTE: You can export images or data charts directly from surveymonkey

	1 Very dissatisfied	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Very satisfied	Total	Weighted Average
Overall satisfaction	70.00% 7	20.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10	1.60
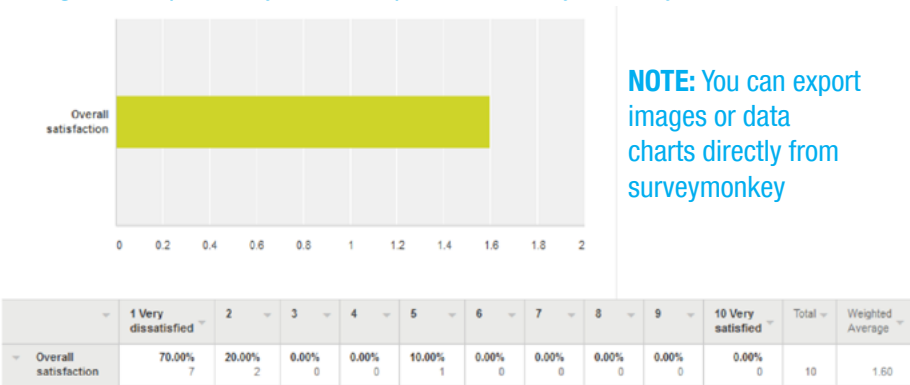
Image C: Analyses by Group Using Pivot Tables in Excel
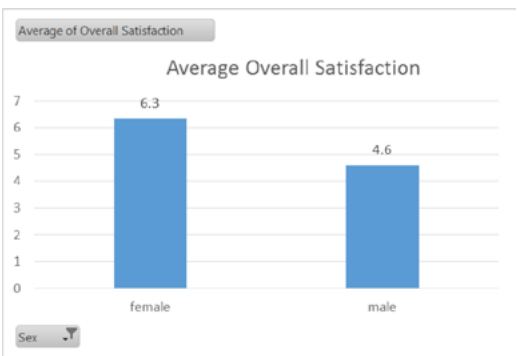
Image D: Analyses by Group in Survey Monkey
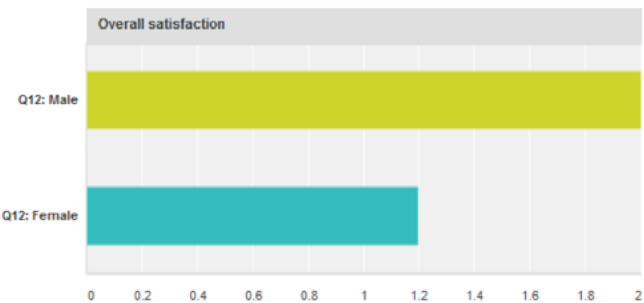
Image E: Analyses by Group in GoogleDocs
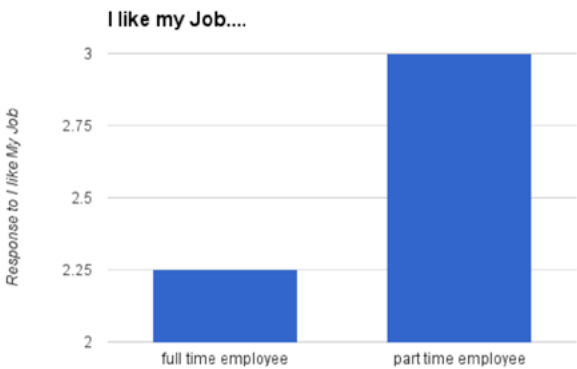
Inferential Statistics

Inferential Statistics are used by researchers to understand the implications of data (Krause, 1995). Inferential statistics can be used to determine if effects are statistically significant or if they are likely due to chance. Statistically significant means that "a results tells us only that an observed difference (or statistical relationship) is unlikely to be due to chance (Davidson, 2005, p. 247). For instance, if there was a statistically significant increase in satisfaction among those who attended training in March rather than February, that suggests a "real" difference in satisfaction rather than a fluke sample yielding unusual data. Analysis of inferential statistics is more challenging than descriptive statistics, so it is best to have a strong knowledge of statistics when conducting these calculations. If an internal evaluator doesn't have this background, it is best to hire an external evaluator or have someone on hand who is knowledgeable to help.

INTERPRETING DATA AND PRESENTING FINDINGS

SOME IMPORTANT TOPICS THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THIS SECTION INCLUDE:
- DATA INTERPRETATION
- CREATING REPORTS
- DISSEMINATING FINDINGS

Interpreting Data

In cases where all results point to program success, little interpretation is needed. Often times the results of an evaluation are not so clear cut. Some results may appear to be positive while others may appear to be negative. This tends to be the more common situation, and interpreting mixed findings can be challenging for evaluators. Even consistent results can sometimes be challenging to interpret and must be considered in context. For instance, an apparent failure could be due to either improper goals, poor programming, inadequate measures, or a combination of these issues. When interpreting data, it is important to consider the data as a whole along with the context of both the program and the evaluation (Krause, 1995).

Presenting Data and Creating Reports

Once all the data is analyzed and interpreted, it is time to create a report to disseminate the information. In the report, the team should integrate and describe everything that they learned during the evaluation. It is important to describe all the major components of the evaluation, including the planning process, data collection and analysis, and implications learned from the data. It is important to make clear connections between data findings and suggestions for improvement, if possible (NREPP, 2012). Keep in mind that results should be presented in a way that is both thorough and easy to understand (Krause, 1995).

Typical reports include the following sections: (NREPP, 2012):

Executive summary
The Executive Summary should include key evaluation methods and results and should provide a succinct overview, so that those who don't read the whole report gain an understanding of it (OPRE, 2010). The Executive Summary should be one to two pages (NREPP, 2012).

Introduction
The Introduction should provide background and context of the evaluation project. This is where you can summarize the background research completed in preparation for evaluation, including any relevant literature on the topic.

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Program description
In this section provide a detailed description of the program including program activities, goals, and target populations.

Evaluation focus
This section narrows in on the focus of the evaluation, describing relevant goals and rationale.

Procedures
In this section, the methodology of the evaluation is described including, number of participants, data collection methods, and data analysis methods.

Results
This section involves describing and interpreting results.

Conclusion and Recommendations
In this section, you tie up all the loose ends and present the take away messages, including the implications of the results you found and the recommendations for future practice. If applicable, present both the strengths and weakness of the program in this section.

Tips to consider when creating reports for your evaluations.

Keep the language clear and simple
This way, a wide audience can understand the report.

Start early
Some aspects of the report can be completed even before data collection (and may already be in your evaluation plan), such as the program description, evaluation focus, and procedures.

Don't only report what worked
It is important to report both negative, positive, and ambiguous results. The report should have as little bias as possible and accurately reflect the results (OPRE, 2010). It is rare that every result works out the way you want it too, and the less desirable results may be important teaching tools on what needs to be improved or explored further.

Be realistic/honest with your language
Don't try to oversell it. Avoid using words like "very" or "extremely" when describing results (UWEX, 2002-2005). Rather than saying A leads to B, it may be more accurate to say A may have contributed to B.

Use visuals
Make sure to supplement your text with visual aids when appropriate. Using graphs and charts makes the data easier to understand.

Seek feedback
Have others read or listen to your report and give feedback before creating the final version (UWEX, 2002-2005). You can elicit feedback from both people on the evaluation team and in the intended audience of the report.

Sometimes evaluations can be lengthy, and the team may decide to release some updates, information, and findings at regular intervals throughout the evaluation process. Consider whether or not you would like to complete interim reports or presentations throughout the evaluation process (Fraserhealth, 2009).

Graphics can really enhance data presentation. Graphs and charts are often easier to interpret than text, especially for audiences that may be less familiar with the evaluation. Often graphics produced by the data collection/analysis programs (e.g. survey monkey, google forms,) and/or graphic produced in Excel are sufficient for data presentation purposes. However,

data visualization websites can also be used to create graphics, for instance: https://datahero.com/, https://www.silk.co/, and https://plot.ly/. These websites require the user to import or input the data, and then the websites aid the user in creating visual graphs of the data. Similar to the data collection websites, many of these sites also have free trials and paid plans.

Dissemination of Findings

So now that the evaluation is designed and implemented, and data is collected and analyzed, and a fancy report is designed—all done, right? Wrong! Now it is time to share what was learned from the

TIP:

DISSEMINATE FINDINGS USING SEVERAL METHODS TO REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE.

program evaluation. For maximum impact, plan to disseminate findings to all interested stakeholders. In addition to manually disseminating reports, one can provide a link to the report on their websites, distribute via e-mail, and present findings in presentations. Typically, people like to have visual aids for presentations, often using handouts or slide presentations. In addition to Microsoft PowerPoint, other useful (and low/no cost) slide programs include https://prezi.com/ and https://www.google.com/slides/about/. SAMHSA offers Grantee Data Technical Assistance Guides focused on presenting data and communicating messages, for example: https://gallery.mailchimp.com/0bded469cbf442741b96ec26c/files/Year1BHG5_ProgramPerformanceCommunicationPlans_508.pdf

http://sendgrid.center4si.com/newsletters/focus-on/2015-12/files/Y2G2_Data_Utilization_8_02.pdf

Tips for disseminating findings.

Consider your audience
One should tailor one's report or presentation so that it is most effective for the intended audience. Present findings in a relevant way and provide proper explanations so that the audience can understand the evaluation (NREPP, 2012). Some possible audiences for your report include: program staff, agency directors, program funders, potential funders agency boards, community agencies, and national and local agencies that have a similar mission (OPRE, 2010).

Disseminate findings using more than one method
Some manners and venues to disseminate findings include: written reports, oral presentations, website posts, webinars, press releases, short research briefs, e-mail blasts, Q and A statements, op-ed articles in newspapers, and journal articles (NREPP, 2012).

Tips for creating slideshow presentations.

Keep words to a minimum
Slides should serve to aid visuals to a presentation, not be the presentation. It is best to only present key words on slides, and then go into detail when talking about key concepts.

Keep slides clear
In addition to using few words, there are some other tips to keep slides clear and easy to understand. For instance, use high contrast (e.g. black writing on white background), use titles on slides to keep information organized, and keep graphs simple, so that the audience can follow along. Also, slides are unlimited, so don't try to pack each one with as much information as possible, spread the information out over several slides.

Keep slides interesting
Adding graphs is one way to enhance slides, another way is to add pictures that help to illustrate concepts you are explaining. The more visually interesting slides are, the more engaged the audience will be.

CONCLUSION

Evaluation can be a useful and informative process for programs, because it provides concrete information on how a program or service is doing. In addition, funders and policy makers are increasingly more interested in seeing scientific evidence rather than individual testimonials when making program funding decisions. Evaluations can focus on program design, functioning, impact, and costs.

This data primer is an introduction to the basics of program evaluation and is particularly helpful in the early stages of planning program evaluations. The primer guides users through the planning of evaluations, implementation of data collection, data analysis, and presentation of results. Additional resources and templates that are provided are also helpful tools.

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APPENDICIES

The following Appendices include:

Appendix A: Types of Evaluation

The Types of Evaluation are described in more detail below.

Evaluability assessment. Evaluability assessments are an assessment of one's evaluation capacity. They are used to determine if and to what an evaluation can be conducted. In evaluability assessments, the goals and purposes of programs are clarified to determine if they can be evaluated. If goals are sufficiently defined, and program processes are uniform and clear, it can then be determined whether enough resources are available to conduct an evaluation (Berk & Rossi, 1990). Some possible questions for evaluability assessments include:

- Do we have the staff and skills needed to conduct an evaluation?
- Can aspects of our program/service be measured?
- Is data collection feasible?

Process evaluation. In addition to determining if processes were implemented as intended, process evaluations can also provide other critical information. It can also provide information on the implementation process, which can be used to improve program delivery. Process evaluation, which are conducted while the program is being implemented, can also provide context to any outcome changes (Chinman, Imm, & Wandersman, 2004). The following are some questions that may be asked during a process evaluation (NREPP, 2012):

- What are the components of the program?
- What aspects of implementation have been challenging versus beneficial?
- Has training and supervision been sufficient?
- Does program implementation match the initial plan of the program?
- Do program participants understand and participate in the program?
- Are there any dosage effects of the program?
- Were there any areas for improvement or strengths of the implementation?

Outcome evaluation. Outcome evaluations investigate whether or not program participants experience any changes from participating in the program. The following are some questions that one may ask in an outcome evaluation (NREPP, 2012):

- Did the program have effects on the stakeholders and/or participants (this can include changes in attitudes, knowledge, or behavior)?
- Were there any anticipated outcomes of the program?
- Is there evidence that supports continued funding of this program?

In addition, it is important to keep in mind that many outcomes do not occur immediately after an intervention or program. One needs to plan a considerably longer evaluation period if one aims to look at outcomes.

Impact Evaluation. Impact evaluations focus on long term, down the road changes that occur from a program/service. Impact evaluations are different from outcome evaluations because impact evaluations look at changes beyond those directly involved in the program (e.g. the community the participants came from) and more long term changes. Some questions asked in impact evaluations include (NREPP, 2012):

- Is the program impacting long term goals (e.g. a change in rates of the targeted problem)?
- Did the program influence anyone beyond the direct recipients?

Appendix B: Outline of Evaluation Plan

(from OPRE, 2010, p.59-61)

I. Evaluation framework

    A. What you are going to evaluate
        1. Program model (assumptions about target population, interventions, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and final outcomes)
        2. Program implementation objectives (stated in general and then measurable terms)
            a. What you plan to do and how
            b. Who will do it
            c. Participant population and recruitment strategies
        3. Participant outcome objectives (stated in general and then measurable terms)
        4. Context for the evaluation

    B. Questions to be addressed in the evaluation
        1. Are implementation objectives being attained? If not, why (that is, what barriers or problems have been encountered)? What kinds of things facilitated implementation?
        2. Are participant outcome objectives being attained? If not, why (that is, what barriers or problems have been encountered)? What kinds of things facilitated attainment of participant outcomes?
            a. Do participant outcomes vary as a function of program features? (That is, which aspects of the program are most predictive of expected outcomes?)
            b. Do participant outcomes vary as a function of characteristics of the participants or staff?

    C. Timeframe for the evaluation
        1. When data collection will begin and end
        2. How and why timeframe was selected

II.   Evaluating implementation objectives - procedures and methods
    (question 1: Are implementation objectives being attained, and if not, why not?)

    A. Objective 1 (state objective in measurable terms)
        1. Type of information needed to determine if objective 1 is being attained and to assess barriers and facilitators
        2. Sources of information (that is, where you plan to get the information including staff, participants, program documents). Be sure to include your plans for maintaining confidentiality of the information obtained during the evaluation
        3. How sources of information were selected
        4. Time frame for collecting information
        5. Methods for collecting the information (such as interviews, paper and pencil instruments, observations, records reviews)
        6. Methods for analyzing the information to determine whether the objective was attained (that is, tabulation of frequencies, assessment of relationships between or among variables)

    B. Repeat this information for each implementation objective being assessed in the evaluation

III.   Evaluating participant outcome objectives-procedures and methods
    (question 2: Are participant outcome objectives being attained and if not, why not?)

    A. Evaluation design

    B. Objective 1 (state outcome objective in measurable terms)
        1. Types of information needed to determine if objective 1 is being attained (that is, what evidence will you use to demonstrate the change?)
        2. Methods of collecting that information (for example, questionnaires, observations, surveys, interviews) and plans for pilot-testing information collection methods
        3. Sources of information (such as program staff, participants, agency staff, program managers, etc.) and sampling plan, if relevant
        4. Timeframe for collecting information
        5. Methods for analyzing the information to determine whether the objective was attained (i.e., tabulation of frequencies, assessment of relationships between or among variables using statistical tests)

    C. Repeat this information for each participant outcome objective being assessed in the evaluation

IV.   Procedures for managing and monitoring the evaluation

    A. Procedures for training staff to collect evaluation-related information

    B. Procedures for conducting quality control checks of the information collection process

    C. Timelines for collecting, analyzing, and reporting information, including procedures for providing evaluation-related feedback to program managers and staff

Appendix C: Sample Consent Form

Evaluation of *** Program

Description of the research and your participation
You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by ***. The purpose of this research is to understand the *** program's effectiveness and participant satisfaction. Your participation will involve completing a brief survey.

Risks and discomforts and potential benefits
There are no known risks associated with this research. Even though all responses are anonymous (or confidential), it may be possible that you could feel uncomfortable responding to certain items. If this is the case, you can leave these items blank.

Your participation in this research may help to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement in the implementation of this program. This research may help us to improve the program for future participants.

Protection of confidentiality
If anonymous: Data collection will be anonymous, so no one will be able to connect you to your data.
If confidential: All data will be kept confidential to protect your identity. Data will only be accessible to the designated researcher(s). Once data is collected, all identifiers will be removed from data.

All data will be stored in locked file cabinets and/or password protected computers, only accessible by the designated researcher(s). In addition, once data is presented, all data will be presented in the aggregate (i.e. not at the individual level).

Voluntary participation
Your participation in this research study is voluntary, and you may choose to end your participation at any time. You will not be penalized if you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

Incentives
As a thank you for your participation, you will be entered into a drawing for a $25 Walmart gift card. Three winners will be selected.

Contact information
If you have any questions or concerns about this evaluation or if any problems arise, please contact ***** at *****.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Participant's signature_____ Date:_____
(You may take a blank copy of this form with you)

Appendix D: Interview Question Template

The following interview questions provide a good template to work from. (Questions from Gajda, & Jewiss, 2004).

Suggested Interview Questions for use with *Program Personnel*

- From your perspective, in what ways has the program been effective or successful? Please share specific examples.

- In what ways has the program made progress toward the desired outcomes and indicators?

- From your perspective, what challenges or concerns have you encountered with this program? Please describe.

- What could be done to improve or enhance the program in the future?

- Is there anything else that you would like to add at this time?

Suggested Interview Questions for use with *Program Participants*

- What did you gain as a result of participation in this program/service/activity?

- How do you anticipate using the knowledge/skills that you gained as a result of your participation in this program/service/activity in the future? Please describe.

- What aspect of this program/service/activity did you find to be most valuable? Least valuable?

- What suggestions do you have for improving this program/service/activity in the future?

- Would you recommend this program/service/activity to others? Please explain your response.

- Is there anything else that you would like to add at this time?

Appendix E: Questionnaires for SOC Values

One area where surveys may be helpful to System of Care (SOC) communities is assessment of SOC Core Values, and if programs are applying these values. There are existing assessment tools for cultural linguistic competence, family driven care, and youth guided care. These would be especially helpful if measured periodically to look at progress on these values.

Cultural and linguistic competence: Cultural linguistic competence assessments are available through the National Center for Cultural Competence (http://nccc.georgetown.edu/resources/assessments.html). This website has numerous self-assessments including those specific for assessing cultural and linguistic competence within a family organization and for those providing behavioral health services to children, youth and families. The Center of Excellence for Cultural Competence provides a guide that describes many assessment tools for cultural competence at the Agency, Provider, and Consumer/Client Level (http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/library/cultural%20and%20linguistic%20competence/language%20access/assessments%20and%20checklists/ny%20center%20for%20excellence%20clc%20assessment%20tools.pdf).

Family driven assessments: One resource for examining family driven care within the SOC is the Family Driven Care Self-Assessment Tool (http://huffosherconsulting.com/) which was developed by Osher and Huff in 2007.

Youth guided: The Youth Efficacy/Empowerment Scale- Mental Health (YES-MH) (http://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/pbCompleteSurveyPacket.pdf) measures how youth feel empowered in regards to managing their mental health conditions, services, and supports. It also can measure if youth feel empowered to use their knowledge for system change. The Youth Participation in Planning scale (YPP) assesses youth perception regarding youth participation within the care team. These short surveys are administered to youth and can be completed via interview, paper, or online methods. The YES-MH can be administered as a whole and analyzed by subscale, or one can choose to administer and collect data on certain subscales. For instance, if you wanted to gauge empowerment towards system change in a youth advocacy group you could administer just the 7-question "System" scale (Walker, & Powers, 2008).

SOC assessments: The Self-Assessment of Strategies for Expanding the System of Care Approach http://gucchdtacenter.georgetown.edu/Activities/TrainingInstitutes/2014/Resources/Sem_1_R3_Self-Assessment%20of%20Expansion%20Strategies%2011-22-13.pdf is not intended for evaluation but can be a good tool for communities to use to gauge their SOC implementation and form strategies to progress in SOC values. Another tool, The Rating Tool for Community Level Implementation of the System of Care Approach for Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults with Mental Health Challenges and their Families, http://gucchdtacenter.georgetown.edu/resources/Webinar%20and%20Audio%20Files/Data0313SOC%20Rating%20Tool%203-3-13.pdf can be used to assess progress in implementing SOCs.

Appendix F: Typeform Examples

Image 1: Image of Sample Survey (with 3 different question types)

*note: Typeform shows multiple items at a time, but bolds the current item (that is why some items are lighter than others).

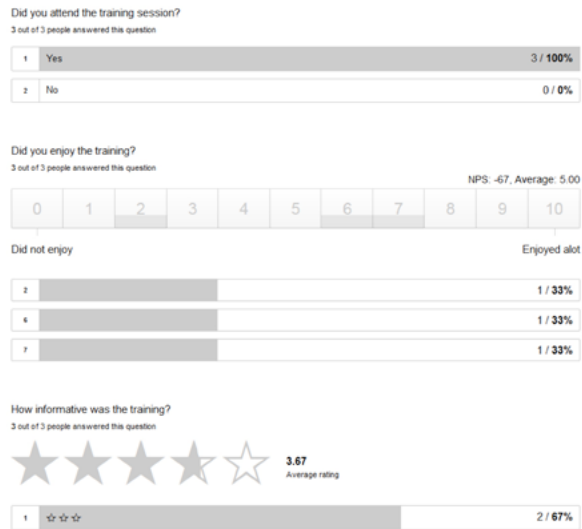**Image 2:** Image of dataset (notice download option as well)

Image 3: Image of Graphics created in Typeform

Appendix G: Google Forms Example

Image 1: Image of Sample Survey

Image 2: Image of dataset

Image 3: Image of Graphics

Appendix H: Survey Monkey Example

Image 1: Image of Sample Survey

Image 2: Image of dataset (paid version required to export & creates an excel file)

Image 3: Image of Graphics (paid version required to export)
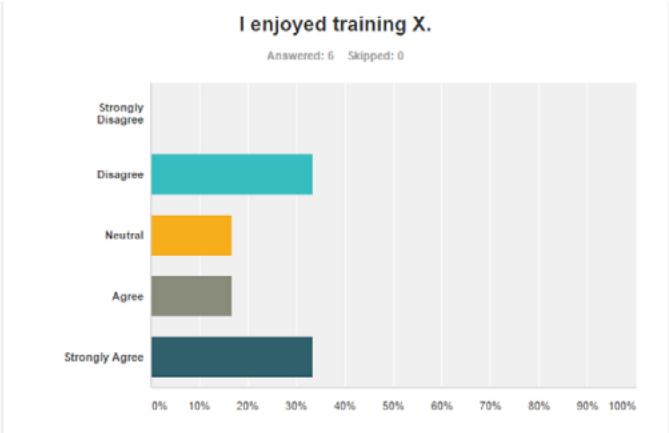
Appendix I: ESurv Examples

Image 1: Image of Sample Survey

My team listened to my opinions.
- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree

I felt respected in my team meeting.
- ○ Strongly Agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly Disagree

< Finish Survey>

Image 2: Image of dataset (can also export into excel)

Survey results

session_ID	Email	First Name	Last Name	Custom	Start Time	End Time	Duration	IP Ad	My team listened to my op	I felt respected in my tean
Question									1	2
12202543 Edit Delete PDF					2016-02-19 1	2016-02-19	00:03:00	169.22	Strongly Agree	Neutral
12202546 Edit Delete PDF					2016-02-19 1	2016-02-19	00:00:00	169.22	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
12202548 Edit Delete PDF					2016-02-19 1	2016-02-19	00:00:00	169.22	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
12202549 Edit Delete PDF					2016-02-19 1	2016-02-19	00:00:00	169.22	Neutral	Neutral
12202550 Edit Delete PDF					2016-02-19 1	2016-02-19	00:00:00	169.22	Agree	Strongly Agree

Image 3: Image of Graphics (unable to export graphics from this program, can either print screen, or export data to excel and create graphics there)

1) My team listened to my opinions.

		Response (%)	Responses
Strongly Agree		40.00	2
Agree		20.00	1
Neutral		20.00	1
Disagree		0.00	0
Strongly Disagree		20.00	1
	Answered Question		5
	Skipped Question		0

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Helpful Websites:

EvalWise: Smart. Actionable. Evaluation
www.evalwise.com
A blog authored by a Social Work PH.D. that posts articles on program evaluation.

Program Development and Evaluation University of Wisconsin- Extension Quick Tips
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/resources/
Program Development and Evaluation Website for University of Wisconsin- Extension that has 30 tip sheets on various topics regarding program evaluation.

Better Evaluation: Sharing Information to Improve Evaluation
http://betterevaluation.org/
An international collaboration to improve evaluation practice and theory by sharing and generating information about options (methods or processes) and approaches.

Mental Health, Social-Emotional, And Behavioral Screening and Evaluation Compendium
https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Other-Resources/School-Safety/Building-Better-Learning-Environments/PBIS-Resources/Tier-II-Tier-III-and-Behavioral-Health/Mental-Health-Social-and-Emotional-Screening-and-Evaluation-Compendium-with-bookmarks.pdf.aspx
Compendium created by Miami University Center for School-based mental health programs and the Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success, that compiles measures used in children's mental health practice or evaluation.

Guidelines for Conducting a Focus Group
https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf
Guide for designing focus groups, implementing them, and analyzing focus group data.

Other Evaluation Guides:

The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation:
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/program_managers_guide_to_eval2010.pdf
A more extensive evaluation primer for the non-researcher. Also includes extensive sections on funding and hiring/managing outside evaluators.

Non-Researcher's Guide to Evidence-Based Program Evaluation
http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/Courses/ProgramEvaluation/resources/NREPP_Evaluation_course.pdf
Another helpful evaluation guide for non-researchers. This one has more of a focus on how to conduct research that would count as evidenced-based.

Cost Analysis in Program Evaluation: A Guide for Child Welfare Researchers and Service Providers
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cost_analysis_guide.pdf
A guide for child welfare researchers and service providers on doing cost analysis in program evaluations.

Basic Guide to Outcomes-Based Evaluation for Nonprofit Organizations with Very Limited Resources
http://managementhelp.org/evaluation/outcomes-evaluation-guide.htm
- A brief step by step guide for outcomes evaluations when few resources are available.
- Includes links to templates for evaluation plans and logic models.

Telling a Meaningful Story with Data: Using Data Visualization to Enhance Impact
https://gdta.samhsa.gov/GDTALinks/DataVisualizationGuide-508.pdf
A guide that leads you through the data dissemination process, with lots of input on data visualization.