



Sexual Assault Prevention Evaluation Guide for Colleges and Universities

The purpose of the *Sexual Assault Prevention Evaluation Guide for Colleges and Universities* is to provide a comprehensive overview of evaluating prevention programs for effectiveness. This user-friendly guide serves as a tool for colleges and universities to assess their needs for prevention programming and develop strategies to evaluate their programming. For additional technical assistance on program evaluation strategies, please contact us at info@mcasa.org or 301-328-7023.

Sexual assault in the college-aged population is a major public health issue. 1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men will experience sexual assault while attending college¹ These statistics highlight the need for providing comprehensive sexual violence prevention programming on college and university campuses. An important part of implementing these prevention programs is to incorporate program evaluation. We want to ensure that our prevention strategies with students are effective in changing knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in order to prevent sexual assault on campus.

What is program evaluation?

- Program evaluation is a set of practices and approaches that help us to gauge the efficacy of our prevention programs and report results to others.
- When doing program evaluation, it is important to identify specific outcomes as they relate to the program’s goals and objectives and how you will determine if your outcomes were achieved. Below are some questions to consider and examples of outcomes you can think about relating to sexual assault prevention on campus:

- What knowledge and skills do you want students to gain from this program?*
- What attitudes and behaviors do you want the program to change?*

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|---|---|
| Knowledge Change and Awareness-raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased student knowledge about sexual assault <input type="checkbox"/> Increased awareness among students about the problem and prevalence of sexual assault on campus |
| Attitude Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased acceptance of rape-supportive attitudes and rape myths <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased victim-blaming attitudes |

¹ Krebs, C. P., Lindquist, C., Warner, T., Fisher, B., & Martin, S. (2007). The campus sexual assault (CSA) study: Final report. Retrieved from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/221153.pdf>

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|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Behavior Change</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Perpetration behaviors among students* <input type="checkbox"/> Increased use of engaged bystander behaviors to prevent sexual assault |
| <i>Skill-building</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased self-efficacy of bystander intervention skills <input type="checkbox"/> Increased consent communication skills |

Why is it important to evaluate sexual assault prevention programs at the campus-level?

- There are many benefits to evaluating your prevention program on campus, including:
 - Evaluation helps us make decisions about our prevention programs. It can guide the direction of the program by determining what is working and what should be changed or improved upon.
 - Evaluation helps us to see where progress is being made on campus and find opportunities to scale up sexual assault prevention programs.
 - Evaluation can help us determine whether to invest resources into a program.
 - Evaluation prevents us from making assumptions about our campus communities' readiness, receptiveness, and response to sexual assault prevention programs.

How do we do program evaluation?

- Evaluation can seem like a daunting task to take on. However, with the right tools and plan in place, it can be easy.
- Below, you will find some of the different strategies for evaluating your sexual assault prevention program. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and we encourage you to explore different evaluation strategies that will meet your campuses specific needs:

Pre- and Post-Tests

- *Pre-and post-testing* measures students' knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and/or beliefs both before and after sexual assault prevention activities. By measuring the difference between the "starting" and "ending" scores, we can see where the program has helped our students to grow—and what areas of our campus prevention program might need some adjustments in the future.
- There are several different methods of conducting pre-and post-testing evaluation, including surveys, focus groups, and interviews, but for the purpose of this guide, we will be discussing how to use surveys and focus groups for pre-and post-testing.
- There are both benefits and drawbacks to utilizing a pre-and post-test method for evaluating sexual assault prevention programs for the college student population. Below, we have summarized these benefits and drawbacks, along with the benefits and drawbacks of using surveys and focus groups for pre- and post-test data collection:

*Perpetration behaviors can be difficult to measure due to several factors, such as students not accurately reporting their own behaviors related to perpetration, or that students are not reporting on perpetration that has happened to them.

| <i>Benefits of Pre-and Post-tests</i> | <i>Drawbacks of Pre-and Post-tests</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allows for increased insight into students' baseline knowledge when starting a program <input type="checkbox"/> Is appropriate for assessing programs that focus on knowledge and attitude change <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible evaluation strategy when working with college students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Less helpful for assessing behavior change or acquirement of skills (e.g. bystander intervention behaviors) <input type="checkbox"/> Not the most rigorous form of evaluation |

Benefits and Drawbacks to Different Types of Data Collection Methods:

| <i>Benefits of Surveys</i> | <i>Drawbacks of Surveys</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Easy to administer <input type="checkbox"/> Quick and inexpensive way to collect information from students <input type="checkbox"/> Easy to interpret results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Self-reported data is not always accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Developing good survey questions can be difficult |

| <i>Benefits of Focus Groups</i> | <i>Drawbacks of Focus Groups</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful for gaining insight into how students experience a program <input type="checkbox"/> Useful for examining student attitudes and opinions about the program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Can be time-consuming <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation of findings can be challenging |

Pre-and Post-Tests Follow Up

- Adding on a follow up assessment to pre- and post-tests enables us to look at whether the outcomes of the program have been sustained overtime. This can be especially useful for looking at behavior change and skills acquirement.
- For example, let's say that you are interested in evaluating the results of a bystander intervention workshop on your campus and you want to see if students have engaged in positive bystander behaviors after going through the workshop. It would not be beneficial to measure bystander behaviors exclusively with a post-test immediately after the conclusion of the program, because that would not provide students with enough time and opportunity to practice these behaviors. Instead, by administering a follow-up survey 6-12 months after the program's conclusion, we can measure if students are utilizing bystander intervention skills and gain insight into whether the program has created sustained behavior change.

Additional Considerations When Evaluating College Sexual Assault Prevention Programs

- **Involve students in program planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts on campus:** It's important to involve students in the planning and evaluation process for programs. Students are key players and can provide significant insight into the needs of the community and areas of concern that need to be addressed on campus. This can help better focus your program efforts and help you decide on which outcomes you want to focus in your evaluation.
- **Consider the feasibility of your evaluation strategy, including timing and resources:** It is important to think about whether your evaluation strategy is feasible for your population, in this case, college students. For example, conducting a pre-and post-test survey via email might be more feasible than administering a pencil-and-paper survey and reach more students. Think about the timing of when you are administering your surveys or focus groups. For example, it would not be a good idea to give a post-test survey during finals week, as students are much busier then and most likely will not prioritize the survey over studying. Another important factor to consider is the length of the survey you are giving students. Long surveys can create survey burden in participants, where if the survey is too time-consuming, respondents can get burnt out and not complete the survey.
- **Be mindful of the content about which you are asking:** Sexual violence is a sensitive topic and questions about it can be triggering. Be mindful of the way you ask the questions on a survey or in a focus group to students. It would be good practice to place a disclaimer at the beginning of the survey that states that sensitive topics will be asked about and provide information about on and off campus resources for students at the conclusion of the survey.
- **Get creative:** Recruiting students to participate in a pre- and post-test survey or focus group can be challenging. Consider some creative incentives to get students motivated to take a survey or participate in a focus group. Consider offering a gift card or raffle for a prize. Perhaps make the surveys mandatory for students who participate in a prevention program. An example of this could be not allowing students to register for courses during their freshmen year until they have completed an online sexual assault prevention training.
- **Look at your campus climate surveys:** Campus climate data can be very helpful for focusing program evaluation efforts. Information on students' experiences and perceptions can provide insight into student needs and can help you to better focus your prevention strategies on your campus to reach specific audiences.

What do you do with the evaluation results?

- It is important to know what types of data can be collected in an evaluation and what you can do with that data. Consider the differences between quantitative data and qualitative data, and the varied approaches to using your results:

Qualitative Data versus Quantitative Data:

- **Qualitative data** consists of other information—usually words or ideas, such as information taken from writing assignments, interviews, and focus groups. In order to measure whether a program has met its goals, this data must be converted into numbers. It can also be coded using qualitative analysis software. By analyzing the codes you assign the quotes, you can then uncover overarching themes in the data.
- **Quantitative data** consists of numbers—for example, the number of students who voted for the “correct” response to a scenario. Quantitative data is often easy to work with and

understand, since fractions or percentages are clear information. Quantitative data is typically collected using surveys.

Sharing your evaluation results: How to use your results and who should know about them:

- Now that you have collected your evaluation data, the next step is to figure out how you will use your results and with whom you will share them. Think about how you will use the evaluation results to change your campus programming. Refer back to your program’s initial goals and objectives to see if they were met.
- Sharing your program evaluation results with administrators is an important piece of the dissemination process. Administrators influence campus activities, so you will need their support in investing time and resources into sexual assault prevention programming. It is also important to share your evaluation results with other stakeholders on campus, such as health services staff, faculty members, and students. Holding an open forum to share the evaluation results with students can be a helpful strategy in seeking feedback from the campus community.

Working with Human Subjects/Ethics:

- It is essential to address human subject considerations when people are participating in an evaluation. (This means having participants consent to inclusion in the evaluation through a written consent form.)
- It is also extremely important to de-identify the data to ensure anonymity (meaning, taking out personal, identifying information, such as student names, student ID #'s, etc.).
- Be sure to keep collected data in a safe and secure location on campus (a password-protected file is ideal).
- Only collect data that is relevant to answering your evaluation goals and objectives. It is unethical to collect data for the sake of “collecting data” and not intending to use it.

Checklist for Program Evaluation:

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| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Step 1: What are the goals and objectives of your prevention program on campus?</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly state your goals and objectives. Goals should be general statements of what you want your program to accomplish. Objectives should be more specific and focus on the measurable effects of the program. Some examples of goals and objectives for a sexual violence prevention program include the following:</p> <p>Goal #1: To increase students’ knowledge of sexual violence on college campuses</p> <p>Objective #1: By the end of the program, students will be able to identify at least 3 different forms of sexual violence</p> |
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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Step 2: What kinds of outcomes are you interested in measuring? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Figure out what you are going to measure: What attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, or knowledge are you trying to change, and what is possible to measure? □ Are you interested in finding out if participants have demonstrated a new skill or behavior as a result of the program? □ Are you interested in measuring participants' knowledge and understanding of a new concept? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Step 3: What evaluation design will you choose? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Decide on an evaluation design that is most feasible □ Will you utilize a pre- and post-test design or a different method (e.g. activity-based evaluation) to evaluate your prevention program? □ What type of data do you plan to collect? (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or both). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Step 4: How do you plan to collect data? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Do you plan to use surveys, focus groups, or a different method (e.g. interviews, observations) for collecting evaluation data? □ Ensure that you are collecting data and storing data in an ethical manner (e.g. de-identifying the data, collecting data that answers your evaluation questions). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Step 5: How do you plan to use your data? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Be sure to have a plan in place for how you will use your evaluation results □ Think about who the interested stakeholders are on campus who would need to know these results □ Share results with students and other campus community members to receive important feedback |

Remember: Evaluation is an ongoing process, not a once-and-done task. As we implement sexual assault prevention programming, we must continually evaluate and improve it.

Resources:

To learn more about evaluation for sexual violence prevention programs, check out these resources:

Evaluating Sexual Violence Prevention Programs: Steps and Strategies for Preventionists (An Interactive Online Course Offered by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center): This 60-minute online course provides a basic overview of program evaluation. It includes content from the *Technical Assistance Guide and Resource Kit for Primary Prevention and Evaluation*.
<http://www.nsvrc.org/elearning/20026>

PreventConnect Wiki Evaluation Page: This page provides an overview of, and links to resources for, program evaluation. <http://wiki.preventconnect.org/Evaluation>

Sexual Violence on Campus: Strategies for Prevention: This technical assistance document acts as a starting point for prevention practitioners and campus partners in planning, implementing, and evaluating sexual violence prevention programming on campus.
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/campussvprevention.pdf>

Technical Assistance Guide and Resource Kit for Primary Prevention and Evaluation (Developed by Stephanie Townsend, PhD., for the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR)): This technical assistance guide provides an in-depth look at program evaluation for primary prevention programs.

Volume 1: [Choosing Prevention Strategies](#)

Volume 2: [Evaluating Prevention Strategies](#)

Volume 3: [Analyzing Evaluation Data](#)

Volume 4: [Analyzing Qualitative Data](#)

Veto Violence: EvaluACTION-Putting Evaluation to Work (From the CDC): This interactive guide to evaluation walks users through the evaluation process and helps them to build their customized evaluation plan. <http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/evaluation>



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