



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 is a major public health issue on college campuses as more than 1 in 8 college students experience sexual assault.¹ Additionally, 90% of campus sexual assaults are committed by perpetrators that the survivor knows, yet only about 10% of these assaults are reported to law enforcement or any campus office.² 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, behaviors, policies, or environments do you want to change?*
 - How are you measuring that change? How will you know that change has taken place?*

Knowledge Change and Awareness-raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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
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¹ [Report on the AAU Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. \(2020\) Association of American Universities.](#)

² The Sexual Victimization of College Women. (2000). U.S. Department of Justice.

Attitude Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased acceptance of rape-supportive attitudes and rape myths <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased victim-blaming attitudes
Behavior Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Perpetration behaviors among students ³ <input type="checkbox"/> Increased use of engaged bystander behaviors to prevent sexual assault
Skill-building	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased self-efficacy of bystander intervention skills <input type="checkbox"/> Increased consent communication skills
Policy Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved anti-harassment policies that increase support for survivors <input type="checkbox"/> Survivor involvement in the development of restorative justice responses for Title IX cases
Environmental Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved campus social norms that do not tolerate sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/> Redesigned physical spaces that support healthy social interactions

Process vs. Outcome Evaluation

- Process evaluation** addresses whether your program and/or strategy is being implemented as intended.⁴ This type of evaluation will assess the components of your program and ensure that you are reaching your target audience, completing activities as planned, and following through on logistical goals and objectives. For example, you are running a ten-week bystander intervention program for first-year students in a leadership program. To assess the process, you could collect data from your facilitators about the number of attendees, the running time of the program each week, and personalized questions about facilitation styles and overall engagement of participants. Process evaluation encourages you to evaluate the program implementation and track program information.
- Outcome evaluation** addresses the progress in the outcomes or outcome objectives that the program is to achieve.⁴ Outcome evaluation utilizes feedback from participants to measure both short-term and long-term impacts of the program. To measure the short-term impact of a bystander intervention program, you could ask students ‘What bystander intervention skills did you learn throughout the program and ‘Do you feel confident you could utilize one or more of the skills you learned to intervene in a situation?’ and measure the responses. In the long-term, you could follow up with participants and ask ‘Have you intervened in a situation utilizing bystander intervention skills since the program?’ You could also look at wider campus culture by researching if you are seeing higher rates of students saying they have intervened in a high-risk situation in campus climate surveys. In this document, we will focus on outcome evaluation.

³ 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 perpetration that has happened to them.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention. ‘Types of Evaluation.’

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. Sometimes it can be hard to translate the abstract goals of evaluation into concrete strategies for incorporating evaluations into sexual assault prevention programming. Here, we define key components of the evaluation process and offer suggestions for how to administer prevention program evaluations. These are by no means the only methods for evaluation, and we encourage you to explore different evaluation strategies that will meet your campuses specific needs.

Types of Data

It is important to know what types of data can be collected in an evaluation.

- Quantitative data consists of numbers and numerical data that can be tallied and totaled. Quantitative data is often easier to measure and interpret, since the data is calculated and quantified into digestible figures like rates, fractions, and percentages. For example, 35% of students were able to provide a definition of consent after attending the program. Quantitative data is typically collected using surveys.
- Qualitative data consists of other information, usually words or ideas, that is descriptive and can be summarized and categorized by themes. For example, some participants expressed feelings of confusion around setting boundaries with their intimate partner and difficulty communicating their emotions. Qualitative data is typically collected using interviews and focus groups.

Data Collection Best Practices

- Before conducting any evaluation, make sure that you outline specific evaluation questions that you want to ask to guide the evaluation process. Make sure you'll be able to act on what you learn whether through modifications to existing programming or by exploring new programming avenues.
- It is essential to address human subject's considerations when people are participating in an evaluation. This means having participants consent to being included in this evaluation through a written consent form. It is also important to de-identify the data (meaning, taking out personal, identifying information, such as student names and student ID numbers). Keeping the collected data in a safe and secure location is critical (for example, in a password-protected file is ideal).
- It is also ethical to inform the respondents how you're using their responses. This could be a disclosure statement in a survey or focus group or contacting a focus group after the fact and letting them know how you plan to incorporate specific guidance that came up.
- As a general rule, it is important that any data you collect is useful data. It is respectful of people's time to collect data that will serve a purpose and contribute to your research in a meaningful way. A good rule of thumb: if you're asking a question "just because" or "out of curiosity," without a particular reason or plan for using the data, it is not worth asking that question.

- While implementing programs related to sexual violence prevention, it is important to be aware of potentially triggering questions and include relevant support resources. Discussing sexual violence in your program and evaluation can trigger trauma responses in survivors and those connected to survivors. It is important to recognize this throughout the entire process, and ensure participants are provided with resources they can utilize at any time before, during, and after the program.
- Finally, educate yourselves on any Institutional Review Boards that may oversee research in your population (particularly relevant on college and university campuses) to be clear on any needed approval processes before collecting data.

Collection Methods

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.
- This can be done through surveys, which are relatively quick and inexpensive to create and distribute, easy to administer, and easy to interpret results.
- 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:

<i>Benefits of Pre-and Post-tests</i>	<i>Drawbacks of Pre-and Post-tests</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Allows for increased insight into students’ baseline knowledge when starting a program □ Feasible evaluation strategy when working with college students □ Helps avoid making assumptions about students’ backgrounds, progress, or engagement with prevention activities. □ Appropriate for assessing programs that focus on knowledge and attitude change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Less helpful for assessing behavior change or acquirement of skills (e.g., bystander intervention behaviors) □ Difficulty guaranteeing future participation to conduct long term follow-up assessments with students after a program to measure for lasting impacts □ Difficultly accurately gauging students learning developments and growth due to participant over-estimation of their knowledge, skills, and beliefs in pre-tests

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.

Activity-based Assessment Methods

Voting and rubrics are two examples of activity-based assessment methods that can help to integrate evaluation into regular sexual assault prevention program activities.

Voting

- There are many ways to make evaluations of prevention programs more interactive to the participants. One way of doing this would be to use “voting”.
 - For example, you can present students with a scenario. Ask them to write responses on post-it notes, and then place the post-it notes on a poster (or in another location) based on categories.
 - Example: When teaching a bystander intervention workshop, ask participants to write down a strategy for intervening, and then put that sticky in a location that corresponds to the type of strategy it is (such as the direct, delegate, or distract categories). Instructors can then collect and record responses for quantitative data and state that participants were able to produce x number of ways to intervene in situations.
 - This can also be done virtually, as so many trainings, programs, and events are happening in online spaces. You could also poll participants in a Zoom session and have recorded data available to review after a webinar or training session. You can also utilize other anonymous polling and participation platforms, such as Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere, to ask students questions throughout a session and measure those responses.

Rubrics

- Sexual assault prevention activities and projects can also become a valuable tool for evaluation when they are paired with a rubric. Simply put, a rubric is an outline for how to determine if participants’ work (whether in the form of a skit, a poster campaign, a role-play, a writing assignment, or another creative project) reflects the key messages and goals of the prevention program.
- Figure out what components are important, as either things to include (e.g. positive bystander participation, healthy masculinity) or things to avoid (e.g. actions that condone victim-blaming, toxic masculinity). Then, assign point values to these in a checklist that can be used to score the activity.
 - Example: Team activities can be utilized as part of a program to evaluate change. One goal of a program might be to decrease tolerance of sexual violence within a community. For example, you can instruct groups of participants to brainstorm a slogan and social media posts for a public awareness campaign with the goals of increasing community discussions around sexual violence and reducing acceptance of sexual violence on campus. Utilizing a rubric with a scoring system will help with the evaluation process. The table below shows an example of a rubric that could be used to assess if this particular goal has been achieved:

Sample Evaluation Rubric:

Score	Description
“2” (Goal Met)	<p>The public awareness campaign must include 3 or more of the following messaging elements to receive a score of “2”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop messaging to engage and appeal to various groups and identities on campus• Highlighting community responsibility to create safe physical and social environments• Rejection of community tolerance and acceptance of sexual violence on campus• Provide action steps for community members to get involved in prevention work

"1" (Goal in Development)	The public awareness campaign must include 1-2 of the messaging elements listed above to receive a score of "1"
"0" (Goal Not Met)	If the public awareness campaign did not include items from the "Goal Met" list, it would receive a score of "0"

You can collect the data from the scoring rubric to assess if the results of the program activity reflect the stated goals. There are benefits and challenges to using activity-based assessments for evaluation:

<i>Benefits of Activity-Based Assessment</i>	<i>Drawbacks of Activity-Based Assessment</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Actively engaging students in learning opportunities and evaluation activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Gathering immediate results on the impact of a program in real time. <input type="checkbox"/> Being able to evaluate the effectiveness of your program activities and adjust based on participant successes and challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating this type of activity is more subjective, particularly when using a rubric, so evaluators must be properly trained to complete the evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> Requiring more time to develop activities, measurements, and complete the assessment.

Interviews and Focus Groups:

Interviews and focus groups are additional collection methods that can be used for evaluation. Interviews are typically conducted one on one with an interviewer and participant, while focus groups are made up of a small group of participants who engage in a discussion led by a moderator. There are benefits and drawbacks to using interviews and focus groups for evaluation:

<i>Benefits of Interviews and Focus Groups</i>	<i>Drawbacks of Interviews Focus Groups</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful for gaining insight and in-depth feedback into how students experience a program <input type="checkbox"/> Useful for examining student attitudes and opinions about the program <input type="checkbox"/> Create an opportunity to ask prepared questions and address new topics that arise in conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Can be time-consuming and require some expertise in quantifying the qualitative data <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation of findings can be challenging <input type="checkbox"/> Individual or small group data can be difficult to generalize for a larger population or community

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 on 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.
- **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?

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. It is important for students and campus community members to know when, how, and where the results of your evaluation will be shared and be included in your evaluation process. Holding an open forum to share the evaluation results with students can be a helpful strategy in seeking feedback from the campus community.

Checklist for Campus Program Evaluation:

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Step 1: Define the goals and objectives of your campus prevention program.</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>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Step 2: Determine the outcomes you are measuring and an evaluation plan to measure the achievement of the program goals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Figure out what you are going to measure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What attitudes, behaviors, policies, and environments 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? <p><input type="checkbox"/> Decide on an evaluation design that is most feasible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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).
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Step 3: Conduct data collection.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Identify your data collection method</p> <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? <p><input type="checkbox"/> 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).</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Step 4: Quantify the knowledge.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Create a plan to analyze the data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can you create a scoring system for whether participants' contributions do or do not meet your expectations? ○ Should you also include narrative assessments to describe outcomes most accurately?
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Step 5: Utilize the data.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Create a plan outlining using your data, who will have access to data, and how results will be shared</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Determine how you will share your results with interested stakeholders on campus Share results with students and other campus community members to receive important feedback</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Determine how you and your evaluation team will use the data to improve your campus program process and outcomes</p>

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.

Program Evaluation Resources

If you would like to learn more about program evaluation for sexual violence prevention programs, check out these resources listed below:

1. **CDC Veto Violence: EvaluACTION - Putting Evaluation to Work** This interactive guide to evaluation walks users through the evaluation process and helps them to build their customized evaluation plan. <https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/evaluation/home>
2. **CDC 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/campusvprevention.pdf>
3. **National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) Technical Assistance Guide and Resource Kit for Primary Prevention and Evaluation.** This manual is intended to support prevention educators in building upon what they are already doing to evaluate their programs. https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/Projects_RPE_PCAR_TA_Guide_for_Evaluation_2009.pdf
4. **National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) Evaluating Sexual Violence Prevention Programs: Steps and Strategies for Preventionists** 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>
5. **PreventConnect Wiki Evaluation Page** This page provides an overview of, and links to resources for, program evaluation. <http://wiki.preventconnect.org/Evaluation>
6. **Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) Technical Assistance Guide and Resource Kit for Primary Prevention and Evaluation** 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](#)



Updates to this checklist were supported by the Maryland Department of Health RSAPP Rape Prevention and Education: Using the Best Available Evidence for Sexual Violence Prevention (CE #19-1902) Grant.

The opinions, findings, and conclusions in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Maryland Department of Health.

Last Updated: November 2022