APPEAL

ASIAN PACIFIC PARTNERS FOR EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Integrating Evaluation into Tobacco Programs for Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities

This evaluation kit is designed to help people who are developing or implementing tobacco control programs for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities.

The goals of this kit are:

- to help program planners understand the value of evaluation for their program
- to identify ways to plan and incorporate evaluations
- to provide different methods for conducting evaluations
- to provide case studies of how evaluations can be planned for specific AAPI tobacco control programs.

This kit is divided into:

the following sections: 1) a question and answer section that provides basic evaluation information, 2) case studies of specific evaluation planning and implementation examples, 3) a checklist of steps to plan your own evaluation, 4) a worksheet and 5) a list of resources for further information.

Questions and Answers

❍ What is evaluation and why is it important ?

Evaluation helps you to determine the effects of your activity or program on the participants and on the community and to document the successes and challenges. The goal of evaluation is to help you (and others) to understand what your program is actually accomplishing. For example, is your program being implemented the way you planned? Is it reaching the kinds of people you wanted? Is it achieving the kinds of short-term changes (like increased knowledge about the harm of tobacco use, or increased skills in refusing to start using tobacco) and long-term changes (such as tobacco use prevention or cessation) that you expected? Is it making a difference in the long run? Evaluation can help you to answer these kinds of questions and more.

Evaluation is also important because it can help you to make changes to your program during implementation, as well as areas for improvement in the future. For instance, evaluation of a youth tobacco use prevention program could identify that the current program participants were not those who are at high risk for smoking. If you found this out midway through your program implementation, you could change your program outreach to reach the kinds of youth you originally intended.

Finally, evaluations are important for Asian American and Pacific Islander tobacco control programs because they help us to identify and document what works for our communities. There are very few AAPI tobacco control programs that have had adequate time and resources to plan and conduct extensive evaluations. While this is a reality of community-based programs, the lack of evaluation has resulted in the lack of proven models that work. We must conduct evaluations of our own programs in order to document efforts and measure change.

❍ How do you overcome fear of evaluations ?

Most often, people are intimidated by evaluation either because they don't know what it is for, or they do not know how to do it. The reasons for doing evaluation are to benefit the program and document the successes and challenges. Program evaluations are less concerned about whether an individual did a "good" or "poor" job (in fact, evaluations that assess job performance are different from program evaluations). However, many people do not understand this difference, and thus believe that the purpose of evaluation is to find fault with how they did their job.

Since people may be intimidated by evaluations, they believe that it takes a lot of training and expertise to execute. Many people, however, are already doing evaluation-type activities as part of their program! For instance, do you keep documents like sign-in sheets, meeting notes, photographs of events in the community, or newspaper clippings of articles on your program? These documents can all be used to evaluate your program! A review of sign-in sheets of youth who attended your tobacco prevention education sessions, for example, could help you to understand the types of people who were involved — how many, what ethnicity, what gender, what age, etc. If your original program goal was to reach middle school Cambodian students, a review of your sign-in sheets could help you to determine whether you actually reached those types of students.

It is important to de-mystify evaluation for everyone, in order to show them that evaluation can be based on common-sense approaches to answering basic questions about the process or outcomes of a program.

❍ What are the different types of evaluations ?

There are three basic types of evaluation: process, outcome, and impact.

- Process evaluation tells you about how your program was implemented. Process evaluation looks at what your program did, what was distributed to the community, who and how many people were involved, when the event took place, and what they were involved in. For instance, the example of reviewing sign-in sheets (in the previous sec-

Hypothetical Case Study Examples of How Evaluation Can Help!

(Case #1)
Using Interviews of Youth Leaders to Evaluate Program Outcomes in the Pacific

On an island in the Pacific, local governmental leaders have developed a successful youth for youth leadership program. The long-term goal of the program is to prevent youth from using tobacco, including not smoking or chewing. The program recruits middle school and high school students, and requires them to sign a pledge to not use tobacco during the month of their training. During training, teen leaders train other teens in tobacco control, including health effects and policies, as well as in skills to stay tobacco free. The program is so successful that it has become a model for other like programs across the Pacific and on the U.S. The major evaluation question was whether the training program "worked" to help prevent more teens from not smoking than other types of educational programs. In order to answer this, staff decided to interview six randomly identified teen participants each year at the beginning of their training and one year later. Each interview took about half an hour to complete, and asked each participant three questions: 1) why they believe they are at risk for tobacco use, 2) what they have learned to help prevent them from using tobacco, and 3) how they think they may or may not be able to stay tobacco-free. From these interviews, the staff learned that the more at-risk a teen feels he or she is, the more things they learned from the program, and the more they believed they could stay away from tobacco. These interviews are continuing to be conducted, sometimes modified to include other questions of importance for that specific year. The "findings" from these interviews have been included in the yearly reports of progress to the Department of Health Services, which continues to give money each year to sustain the program.

tion) is a form of process evaluation. Process evaluation is often the most frequently used type of evaluation that is conducted for a program.

- Outcome evaluation looks at the immediate effects of your program, such as changes in program participants' tobacco use knowledge, attitudes and behavior. For example, post-test surveys of youth who attended a prevention education session is a form of outcome evaluation. Photographs of vendors who change the placement of tobacco advertisements and promotional items could be another way to document the effects of a business education program. This type of evaluation is very important because it allows you to understand whether your program made the kind of difference you expected.
- Impact evaluation looks at the long-term effects of our program, usually on the reduction in disease and/or deaths due to tobacco use in your community. This type of evaluation is often the hardest to do because it often takes years for someone who uses tobacco to get sick or die. Most likely, your program will have ended long before we know whether it saved anyone's life. However, many researchers are interested in this type of evaluation, and can commit the time needed to track long-term changes.

For the purposes of this tool kit, we will primarily focus on process and outcome evaluation.

❍ How do I start to plan an evaluation of my program ?

To start to plan a program evaluation, you should first look at your program's goals and objectives, and answer the following questions:

❍ Who is my program trying to reach?

Prevention education programs focusing on youth are very different from cessation programs focusing on adults, or business education programs focusing on vendors. The answer to this question will help you to eventually determine if your program reached the intended audience.

❍ What kinds of change is my program trying to accomplish?

If you program is successful, what would your results look like? The answers to these questions will help you to define how to assess the outcomes of your program.

❍ What are the main ways that my program tried to change the community?

Understanding where your program priorities are will help you to tailor the evaluation to focus on the most important aspects, rather than on your entire program.

Evaluation Methods, Advantages/Challenges and Resources Needed

Table 1

Method	Purpose	Advantages and Challenges	Resources Needed
Document review	To gather information from pre-existing written materials, such as meeting minutes, reports, budgets, newspaper articles, etc.	+ Most common method for process evaluation + Good method for reviewing materials on how a program was implemented + Uses information that is already available	+ Can be done by program staff themselves – Takes a lot of time to review existing files, especially if program is complex and of long duration
Observation	To gather information on how the program operates, or on visual changes that have resulted	+ Good for process evaluation, because you can get an immediate impression about how the program is progressing – Information can be difficult to interpret – May be biased by how staff interpret the information – Events that are seen can be time-dependent, and not representative of what is really going on – If people know they are being observed, they may act differently than usual	+ Can be done by program staff themselves – Takes a lot of time to review existing files, especially if program is complex and of long duration
Interviews	To obtain information from individuals about their experiences, or to learn more about their answers to surveys	+ Excellent for both process and outcome evaluation, because you can get in-depth information from participants + Can ask sensitive questions that require confidentiality – Data can be difficult and complex to analyze – Interviewer can bias the responses	– Can take a lot of time to conduct – May require data inputting and analysis programs – May require assistance from a consultant to design the interview protocol and develop the database program

KEY: + advantages
– disadvantages

Table 1: Evaluation method, advantages/challenges and resources needed, continued

Method	Purpose	Advantages and Challenges	Resources Needed
Focus groups	To hold discussions with groups of people (10-12) to understand in-depth what they believe were the effects of the program, or how they saw the program implemented.	+ Good for outcome evaluation, because you can ask people do explain how the program affected them + Can identify a lot of issues and effects + Can give staff better under standing of the program from participants' own words	+ Can be done relatively quickly (1-2 hours per focus group) – Requires a good facilitator – Takes time to analyze and interpret the discussion – May require extra resources for facilitator's time and participant incentives
Case studies	To describe a program or experience in depth, often using some or all of the other evaluation methods to construct a case study.	+ Good for combining process and outcome evaluation + Can be a powerful way to describe the program + Can depict personal experiences, quotes, and unique program processes	– Can take a lot of time to collect information, organize and describe the program
Surveys and questionnaires	To get information from individual people about their changes in tobacco use knowledge, attitudes, and behavior.	+ Excellent for outcome evaluation + Can get information from a lot of people + Can be done confidentially or anonymously, so may be more valid + Can be used as pre/post tests to measure changes from program educational sessions + Can use questions from existing surveys – More effective when using yes/no or true/false type questions – Are more impersonal for participants, and usually not good for getting quotes in participants' own words	– Takes time to develop questionnaire – May require database program to manage and analyze a lot of data – May require extra resources for participant incentives and data analysis

KEY: + advantages
– disadvantages

❍ What evaluation methods work best if I don't have many resources ?

There are many methods that can be used in an evaluation, some require more resources in terms of time and from the perspective of what you want to find out — some methods take less time and money, but may not give you the kind of information you need to answer your evaluation questions. For instance, conducting observations of a teen leadership education program and writing about the outcomes can take much less time than conducting a survey of what the youth participants' believed were their outcomes.

However, the observational method may be criticized as biased (on the part of the person who conducted the observations), while the interviews might be considered more valid. You must balance considerations of resources with what you really need to know. The following table provides an overview of the different kinds of evaluation methods, which are loosely ordered from more simple (and requiring less outside resources) to more complex.

❍ Do all evaluations have to have a "before" and "after" design?

Many evaluators believe that evaluations must be based on measures of what was going on before the program, and what happened after the program. A typical example is the use of pretests and posttests during educational sessions, where session participants are asked to complete a survey at the start of the session, followed by another one at the end of the session. Changes between the beginning (i.e., pretest) and the end (i.e., posttest)are assumed to be due to the effects of the education itself. A more complex example is the use of baseline measures (such as surveys) at the start of your program, and

Hypothetical Case Study Example of How Evaluation Can Help!

(Case #2)
Using Program Documents to Develop Case Studies of an Alternative Sponsorship Education Project

A community-based organization decided to tackle the difficult issue of educating Asian American and Pacific Islander community groups about the importance of refusing money from tobacco companies. The long-term goal was to eliminate all tobacco industry money support for AAPI community groups in three years, and identify alternative non-tobacco resources instead. Their primary evaluation question was "What steps should programs take if they want to conduct tobacco sponsorship efforts in other areas?" Staff started by identifying a list of community groups that sponsored annual AAPI cultural events and fairs, like the Vietnamese Tet festival, Korean fall celebration, and Pacific Islander festival. About one year before each event, the staff also developed an in-depth log file for each community group, in which each staff documented the dates, times, and content of conversations with the group, any barriers and concerns, possible alternative funding sources to approach (such as local foundations that could give $5000 to print a festival program, instead of the program, being printed by a tobacco company), and ultimate outcomes of the effort. These conversations with local groups occurred over the course of the year, and by the end the staff had very large files on how they worked with each community group. Finally, on the day of the community event, staff attended and documented through photographs the presence and the lack of tobacco company advertisement and sponsorship. During the last two months of the program, staff took all the information that they collected and constructed "case studies" of each community group (without using the group's name or any specific ethnic community identifiers in order to maintain confidentiality) — whether or not they were successful in changing the group's sponsorship acceptance. These case studies were then distributed to all agency staff to train them on how to go about doing anti-sponsorship type activities for the future.

then repeating the measures at the end to assess community-wide changes. [If you are interested in how to conduct baseline measures, see APPEAL's publication, "Conducting Needs Assessments for Tobacco Control in Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities."]

However, it is often difficult to get information from participants or from the entire community before the start of the program. Think about the example of a restaurant education program in the Cambodian community — it would be very difficult to count all of the restaurants that support anti-smoking laws before your program began. But in this example, it would be possible for people to record how many restaurants they spoke to throughout the program, how many were initially resistant to a new law (e.g., believed that anti-smoking laws would harm their business), and how many were willing to change to support a new law after the staff talked to them. This kind of documentation of the program uses both "observation" and "interview" methods of evaluation, which could be used to develop case studies of program successes. In this case, the "power" of evaluation is to document the kinds of things that staff discussed with the restaurant owners, the kinds of barriers to any new laws, and the kinds of information that helped convince owners of the importance of a new law.

Therefore, there is no hard and fast rule about needing "before" and "after" designs for your evaluation.

❍ What resources are available or who can help with our evaluation?

In general, there are also some general rules you may want to follow to maximize the resources you have for an evaluation:

- First, start with an assessment of the capacities of your staff. Someone who is a good listener might make an effective interviewer. Someone who likes to take photos and document events might make a good observer. Someone who knows programs like Microsoft Excel or Access might be able to design a database program for survey data.
- Think about how many resources you have available to evaluate your program. A basic rule is to allocate about 10% of your program's budget to evaluation activities. These resources may be more or less — just like when planning a program, you need to think about who will be responsible for planning, designing, conducting, and compiling the evaluation information.
- Also, good evaluations include incentives for community members to participate. If you are planning to do a focus group or survey, you should include resources for "thank you" incentive items, transportation, etc. If your evaluation will be based upon observations, you can enlist youth to help you take pictures of what they see has changed in their community (such as less tobacco promotional items at their local stores or restaurants). You should also provide participants with the final evaluation report, or at minimum, a summary of the findings.
- Finally, do you have a university nearby from which you can recruit students, faculty or researchers to assist you with your evaluation? Oftentimes they may not understand the complex issues of tobacco control for AAPIs — in other words, they may not have the cultural competence to develop an entire evaluation plan. However, they might have specific skills that can help you conduct your own evaluation — skills like putting questions into a survey format, designing a database program, and analyzing data for presentations or reports.

How to Integrate Evaluation into Tobacco Control for AAPIs

Now that you have a basic background on the value of evaluations for your tobacco control program, here is a checklist of steps that you can take to incorporate evaluation into your program. The evaluation steps you take do not necessarily have to occur in this order, but this checklist should help you to get started in your effort!

The Twelve Steps to Evaluation:

Step 1: Identify and describe the community you are working with.

You probably already have a good understanding of your community, and so may not be used to describing the community to others. But in order for an evaluation to be helpful to people outside of your community, they must understand the unique factors that influence tobacco use. Such factors may include the community's size, ethnicity, geographic location, age, immigration status (if applicable), and general tobacco use characteristics.

Step 2: Identify what your activity or program is trying to achieve.

A good place to start is with your program's goals and objectives — what are you trying to change in the community, with whom, and by when? If you do not have a work plan yet, what do you think are the activities or steps that need to be addressed?

Step 3: Identify what activities your program is, or will be, doing in the community.

In order to decide which evaluation method(s) to use, you need to first understand what activities your program will be implementing. In the example on page 3, the "activities" were staff working closely with members from other community groups to educate them about tobacco sponsorship, identify alternative resources, and assist them in accessing these resources while refusing tobacco sponsorship. Since the activities were tailored to each community group, the evaluation "method" most appropriate was document review, where the "documents" were staff notes about what they did each time they spoke with a community group. You should tailor your methods to your program activities in order to maximize the "fit" between programs and evaluations.

Step 4: Determine what you already know about your program.

Oftentimes, staff already know many things about the process or outcomes of their program. For instance, there are tobacco control staff that regularly outreach to families in their homes and spend time talking with them about issues beyond second hand smoking. For these staff, they can often identify the ways that tobacco use in the community has changed just from observing and discussing issues with these clients. Together, you should identify what evaluation questions still need to be answered.

Step 5: Determine what questions you would like an evaluation to answer.

Your evaluation should focus on the two or three most important questions that you would like to address, although there may be many more that you would like to tackle. These questions should pertain to either process or outcome or both (impact evaluation, if you remember, is difficult and usually requires greater expertise to conduct). You should try to make sure that the questions are the same for other staff and for the community — staff and community members are much more likely to participate in an evaluation if they believe that the questions you are answering are the most important to address.

Step 6: Determine what evaluation method you would like to use to answer the question(s).

Look at the evaluation questions you have developed and ask yourself three questions:

1) Who do you need to talk to in order to answer the question? 2) How detailed should the information be that you are collecting? 3) How much time do you have to collect and analyze the information? Based on the answers to these questions, you should be able to identify at least one or two methods from Table 1 that can be adapted to suit your needs. If you have never done an evaluation before, you may want to select a more simple evaluation method (that appears earlier in Table 1) in order to build your skills to conduct more complex evaluation methods in the future.

Step 7: Identify available resources to conduct the evaluation.

The most important resource is your own program staff, because they are the ones who will be most interested and invested in what the evaluation uncovers. Other common resource needs may include incentives for program participants, tape recorders and transcribers (for focus groups or interviews), consultants for facilitation (for focus groups) or database management and analysis (for surveys and interviews), survey printing, and/or disposable cameras and photo development (for observations).

Step 8: Identify tools that can help with the evaluation.

Often there are tools other people have developed to conduct their evaluations. Pre-existing surveys are the most common tool, since many people have conducted pretests or surveys for their populations (such as those developed by the Vietnamese Community Health Promotion Project). You should not be shy about asking others for tools that they have used, especially since this can save you a lot of time and resources.

Step 9: Collect evaluation data.

The best-planned evaluations begin collecting data at the same time that the program itself is beginning. This means that data collection will continue throughout the life of the program, and will be completely integrated into the program's activities. However, it is common for evaluation data to be collected closer to the end of a program, when staff have more time to devote to evaluation planning and collection. In this case, data collection can be done in a few intensive months of work. However, a weakness in waiting to collect data may result in lack of access to the data you need. Either way, allow yourself and your staff enough time to conduct evaluation activities — the "10%" of resources rule means that 10% of staff time should also be devoted to data collection over the entire project time period.

Step 10: Regularly "analyze" the data to determine if your program is "on course" or "needs to make adjustment."

At regular times, plan to analyze the evaluation data to see if the kinds of information you are getting are answering the questions you have. Relatively quicker data analysis should be done to see if the program is "on course," which means that the program is reaching the appropriate people, is being implemented the way planned, and is resulting in the kinds of short-term changes you expected. More in-depth analysis should look at all the data to more definitively answer your evaluation questions.

Step 11: Incorporate evaluation findings into program for improvement and continuation.

The most common mistake in evaluations is to not use the results to improve the program and/or plan for future programs. Too often, evaluation "reports" are written but just sit on a bookshelf gathering dust. Focus your evaluation on getting the most "useable" data possible — and let the academics write the elaborate reports that the typical lay person doesn't read. The most important audience for your evaluation may be your staff and your community, so make sure to share the findings with both audiences to learn how to improve tobacco control for AAPI communities!

Step 12: Disseminate your results to wider audiences.

We also make the mistake of not sharing our successes and challenges with other AAPI tobacco control advocates outside of our own agencies. Take the time to share your results at conferences, and through list serves, or publish the results in newspapers, tobacco control newsletters and journals in order to tell others about the lessons you've learned.

Additional Resources

There are very few evaluations resources that are available and applicable to AAPI tobacco control issues and needs. The following are more general evaluation tools and information that you can also refer to when planning your evaluation. But the most important resource is yourself and your staff — use the "local knowledge" of your community to develop and implement an evaluation that meets your needs and answers your own questions!

The Community Toolbox: Tools for Program Evaluation — this is a website designed by the University of Kansas and offered free to the public. The website is: http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/

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Albright A, Howard-Pitney B, Robert S and Zicarelli J. *Tell Your Story: Guidelines for Preparing an Evaluation Report.* Sacramento, CA, California Department of Health Services, 1988

Notes:

Have questions? Call, write, or e-mail us at:
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APPEAL

Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment and Leadership (APPEAL) is a national network of individuals and organizations committed to working towards a tobacco-free Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. APPEAL's mission is to prevent tobacco use and improve the health status in the AAPI community through network development, capacity building, education, advocacy, and leadership. APPEAL is currently a project of AAPCHO.

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