

Data for Program Planning and Evaluation

How do I use data-based information?

Data-based information comes from data others collect, typically public health agencies, researchers, and government agencies working at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels.

When should I use data-based information?

Data-based information is most helpful while planning your intervention program. It may also be helpful when you update your program. Data-based information can help you:

- Decide who to target with your program.
- Understand your population's needs, challenges, strengths, and sources of risk.
- Design your program for optimal effectiveness.
- Identify changes that you hope to facilitate in participants.
- Generate methods to measure this change.
- Tell your story when seeking funding or support.
- Create a plan that addresses racial disproportionality and other factors that impact marginalized communities.

You can often find information that's specific to the setting, population, or geographic area you serve. Examples of information that may be available include:

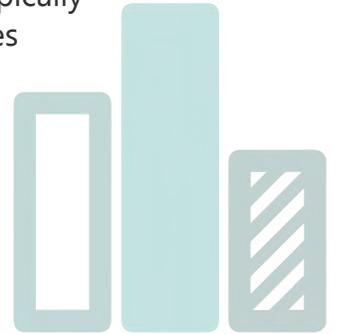
- Rates of sexual assault.
- Factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of sexual assault.
- Programs and program elements that have proven to be effective.

Tips for finding and using data-based information

- Keep track of where you find each piece of information, including page numbers and websites.
- Cite the source — that is, inform readers of the document or website where you obtained the information.

The following table lists common sources for data-based information along with tips for finding and using the information.

Finding relevant data is sometimes difficult, particularly when it pertains to marginalized populations. You may need to map out several data points and connect the dots to tell a fuller story. Remember that lack of data is valuable information and may be noted in your program documents.



Module 10: Data for Program Planning and Evaluation

Where can I find data-based information to use in my program?

Source of Information	Types of Information	How to Find the Information
Summary articles or fact sheets	Summaries created by people who have compiled and summarized information from various sources.	Find this information in a basic Internet search. Use general search terms, such as "sexual assault," or terms more targeted to your population, such as "sexual assault in juvenile detention."
Organizations' websites	Organizations with a specific interest in a topic (such as sexual violence) will often provide data-based information as well as fact sheets or summary articles.	<p>Examples specific to sexual assault:</p> <p>The CDC has an excellent website on a number of topics: www.cdc.gov</p> <p>Office on Women's Health: www.womenshealth.gov</p> <p>National Sexual Violence Resource Center is a helpful website. It also provides an index of other useful sites: www.nsvrc.org/online-resources</p> <p>Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs: www.wcsap.org</p> <p>Washington State Department of Health: www.doh.wa.gov</p> <p>In addition to other resources, DOH has created "The Washington State Data Source Inventory," which lists data sources and what each source has related to sexual assault. Additionally, the site offers access to publicly available data sets that DOH is associated with -- for example, the Healthy Youth Survey.</p>
Research articles	Researchers have completed a vast amount of research on sexual violence and related issues.	<p>Work with a librarian at a public library or university library. You may also conduct an Internet search using www.scholar.google.com</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Some articles are publicly available and can be downloaded, but some are not. 2) Research articles are sometimes technical and challenging to understand.
Publicly available data	Surveys and other data are sometimes publicly available. Many are focused on specific populations, such as youth.	<p>Note: Some of these data sources are like a dashboard that allows you to obtain information directly on their website. Others require you to download an entire dataset and find what you need – a task best done by people who have experience with managing such datasets.</p>

Sexual assaults in juvenile detention

An agency working with the local prison system wanted to reduce sexual assaults among youth in juvenile detention. As a starting point, they searched for data-based information on this topic and found a widely cited report from the U.S. Department of Justice that summarized findings on the topic.¹ According to this document, 9.5% of youth report experiencing one or more incidents of sexual victimization while in detention. It helped the agency to learn that two groups were responsible for this victimization: other youth (2.5%) and staff (7.7%). Additionally, they found that rates varied widely among detention centers, with 30% or more youth reporting sexual victimization in some centers.

Another report summarized research that identified risk factors for sexual victimization.² The research found that youths were more likely to be sexually assaulted if they were younger, easily intimidated, physically small, gay, disliked by staff or other inmates, incarcerated for first-time, non-violent offenses, or had prior experience with sexual assault. Other risk factors were related to the detention centers. For example, risk for sexual assault was higher in centers perceived to have ineffective grievance procedures.

The agency also found research that identified methods to address this problem.² These included targeting motivation to address the issue of sexual assault among detention center administrators, altering the physical space to remove opportunities for assault,

While this is a fictional case study, the data-based information mentioned in it is real. Notice how using data-based information helped the agency:

- Solidify its interest in this under-recognized but at-risk population.
- Understand factors contributing to the problem.
- Plan the focus of its program.

improving the composition of staff and the training they receive, and enhancing reporting and response systems.

Based on this data-based information, the agency decided to create programming to work with detention center administrators to:

- 1) Assess and improve their awareness, concern, and readiness to address the problem.
- 2) Provide input on staffing decisions.
- 3) Strengthen response systems to youth reporting victimization.
- 4) Provide staff training to improve understanding of the problem as well as skills for supervising, communicating with, responding to, and recognizing signs of abuse among youth in detention.

References

- 1) Bureau of Justice Statistics (2012). Sexual victimization in juvenile facilities reported by youth, 2012. U.S. Department of Justice, retrieved on 7/10/2018 from <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svjfry12.pdf>
- 2) English, K., Hell, P., & Dumond, R. (2010). Sexual assault in jail and juvenile facilities: promising practices for prevention and response, final report. Report submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice, retrieved on 7/10/2018 from www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/236738.pdf