



Disseminating Evaluation Results

July 2014

OVERVIEW

Dissemination involves making information about your project available to and usable by others (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). This tip sheet is designed to help adolescent pregnancy prevention projects disseminate the results of their evaluation activities. It guides projects through the various decisions that need to be made, including what information to disseminate, the audience and format for these communications, and what partners and processes will support success.

WHY DISSEMINATE EVALUATION FINDINGS?

There are a number of reasons why adolescent pregnancy prevention projects might wish to share their evaluation results:

- **Advance the field.** If your project was implemented successfully, and if it benefited your target population, then others will want to hear about it! Other organizations may want to know how to achieve comparable results in their own communities. Policy-makers may want to create laws, regulations, or guidelines to encourage others to implement similar interventions.
- **Build credibility with potential funders.** Documentation of your intervention's feasibility and effectiveness may suggest to funders that your future work is a sound investment.
- **Publicize your project.** If your project is successful, publicizing it can build demand among your target population as well awareness among potential partners, funders, and other supporters. This can ultimately promote the sustainability of your project.

CREATING A DISSEMINATION PLAN

The remainder of this tip sheet is designed to guide you through creating a plan to disseminate your evaluation findings.

1) Which findings will you disseminate?

Effective dissemination strategies reflect a goal, such as informing or motivating an audience. There are several general types of evaluation information that can be disseminated, depending on the nature and stage of a project.

Type of evaluation information	When to disseminate
Formative evaluation, pilot test results Description of how a new or adapted strategy was tested and refined in your target population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy is new or significantly adapted• Strategy was tested with a small sample prior to full implementation
Process evaluation results Description of intervention strategy and how it was implemented; characteristics of intervention participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program or approach is new, innovative, or not previously well-documented• Project is in its early stages, before outcome evaluation findings are available
Outcome evaluation results Whether, how, and for whom intervention changed knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outcome evaluation data have been collected and analyzed
Innovations in evaluation methodology Information about new tools (e.g., survey questions) or techniques (e.g., consent procedures) developed for your evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unique research procedures or new data collection instruments have been used
Prevalence and etiologic data Information on the rates or average levels of behaviors, attitudes, or other characteristics in your target population, as well as the associations between them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recent prevalence or etiology data are not otherwise available for the target population• Data are available for individuals who were not exposed to the intervention (i.e., baseline or comparison group data)

2) Who is your audience?

Diverse audiences may benefit from learning about evaluation results. These audiences could include current and potential funders, adolescents and families, program administrators and implementers, researchers, policy-makers, and the general public.

Effective dissemination strategies should be focused on audiences' needs. Strategies should also link the audience to resources that allow them to act. For example, if you want to promote the use of your new, effective curriculum, you may facilitate its use by providing a link to electronic versions of curriculum materials in dissemination products. In another example, if your project hopes to persuade parents to sign up for your effective parent program, you may facilitate sign-ups by including contact information for the recruitment coordinator in any dissemination products targeting parents.

Dissemination should also allow for some dialogue with the audience. In particular, in-person and social media-based dissemination strategies offer opportunities for two-way communication with an audience.

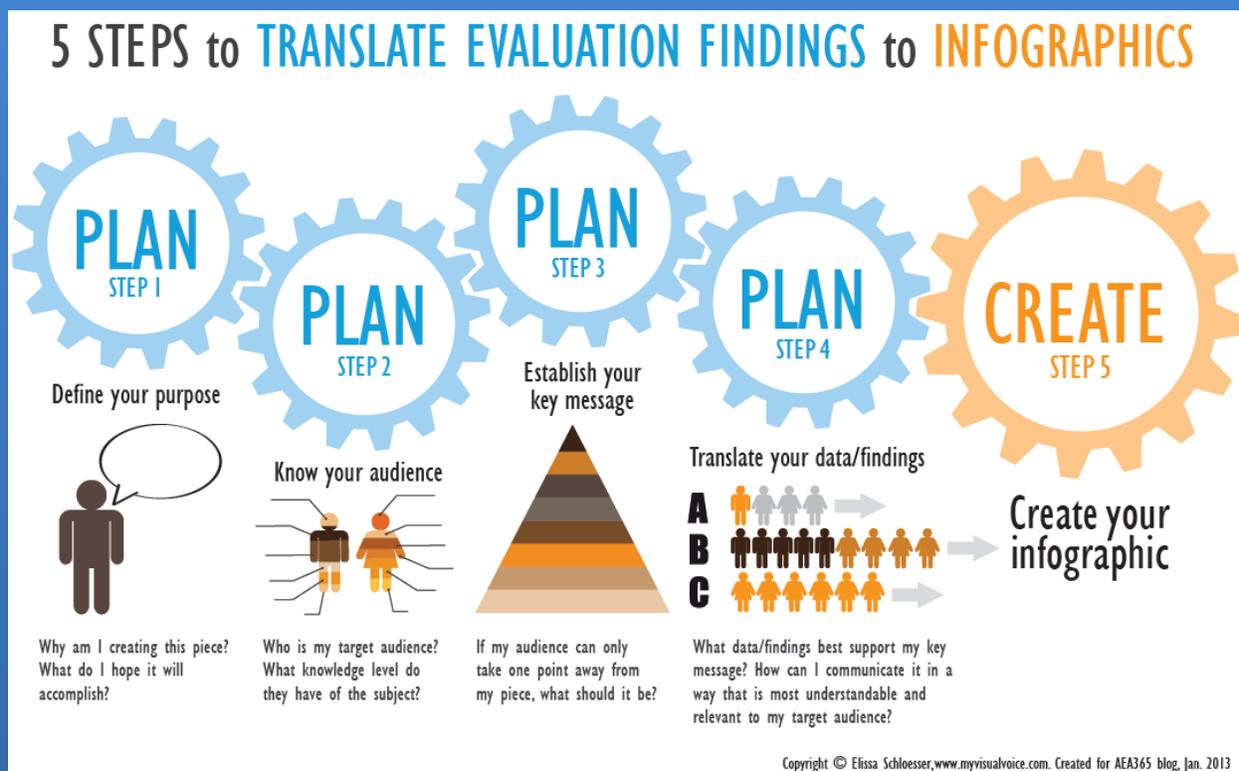
3) How will you share your results?

Effective dissemination strategies involve a combination of different dissemination methods and formats. A strategy's messages should also be accessible to diverse audiences, including non-English speakers, individuals with hearing or visual impairments, and individuals without Internet access. Messages should also be clear, succinct, and jargon-free.

The table on the following page (adapted from Sofaer et al., 2013) includes strengths and weaknesses of selected dissemination formats that projects can consider using.

The 4-1-1 on Infographics

An infographic is a diagram, chart, or other visual aid that presents information in an easily digestible way. Infographics can be used to share evaluation results within a variety of dissemination products, including written reports, blog posts, and posts on social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Tumblr.



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Characteristics and Examples of Selected Dissemination Formats

Dissemination format	Strengths	Weaknesses	Adolescent pregnancy prevention evaluation examples
Peer-reviewed journal article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lends scientific credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a long review process • Reaches a mainly academic audience • Is competitive 	Abel & Greco, 2008 Clarke et al., 2011
Report, brief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be published quickly • Can be easily accessible and free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has less credibility than peer-reviewed journals • May be tough for audience to find 	Llewelyn, Herrndorf, & Curtis, 2007
Conference presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lends scientific credibility • Provides opportunity to receive feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is competitive • Requires resources for travel • Reaches limited audience 	Osborne, 2011
Standalone presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity to receive feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches only a small group of people • Can be difficult to schedule 	
Press release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be distributed widely and reach broad audience • Retains control of message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is competitive • Requires a newsworthy topic • Needs to follow a set format 	http://www.appcnc.org/news-and-publications/press-releases/taking-a-reasoned-approach-the-jemmott-study-and-effective-pregnancy-prevention
E-newsletter, listserv	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches targeted audience • Has a quick turnaround 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can get its message lost • Relies on hosting organization • Relies on audience opening e-mail 	http://www.promisingpractices.net/newsletters/news1302.html
Blog post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers immediate publication • Is easily accessible and free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can lack credibility • Requires ongoing effort to maintain followers 	http://demoiselle2femme.org/d2f-pregnancy-prevention-program-evaluation-findings-from-u-of-c-chapin-hall-first-baseline-survey/
Social media post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers immediate publication • Free • Has a broad reach • Can be shared easily • Appeals to youth audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can lack credibility • Has the potential to lose content control through comments • Requires ongoing effort to maintain followers 	http://instagram.com/p/jHaziFjmHJ/# http://instagram.com/p/kCHzgsJ5ns/ https://twitter.com/Chapin_Hall/status/383261793319002112 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7CTtN81uwo https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALHPVh1au8M

4) Who can help you with creating dissemination products and reaching your audience?

Effective dissemination strategies make use of existing relationships and networks. If you do not have much experience creating a particular type of dissemination product, you may want to partner with individuals who can fill that gap. For example, when writing an article for a peer-reviewed journal, you might involve as a coauthor a researcher who has been the lead author of published articles. If your project wants to disseminate evaluation results using social media platforms, you could consider involving youth who can help you learn how to use Twitter or Instagram.

Your project's social connections might also include gatekeepers to your audience. You should try to capitalize on contacts with individuals or organizations that have newsletters, listservs, or blogs through which you can disseminate evaluation findings.

5) How will you determine whether your dissemination efforts had the desired results?

An important part of a dissemination plan is preparing to evaluate the success of dissemination strategies. The *Partnerships for Environmental Public Health: Evaluation Metrics Manual* (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, 2012) contains an extensive list of possible measures, such as number of copies of print materials distributed; number of Website hits, document downloads, views, shares, and retweets; and comments/feedback from message recipients. If your project is disseminating evaluation results via social media, you can also make use of the analytics available on these platforms (see Bornkessel & Burrell, 2014).

A dissemination strategy should also include a quality control (QC) process that allows for the evaluation of the accuracy, clarity, and utility of the information that is shared. EuropeAid (2006) offers one example of a rating scheme that can be used during this process. You should consider involving different types of individuals in QC. For example, an evaluation researcher might be best able to speak to the reliability and validity of data and conclusions, whereas representatives from your target audience may have the most valuable feedback on whether your products are clear and useful.

6) What are the action items needed to make your plan happen?

Once your project has decided on the message, audience, partners, format, and evaluation for your dissemination strategy, it is time to develop specific action items to execute the strategy. These action items should include the responsible person(s), needed resources, and timeline. When developing a timeline, it is important to keep in mind that information should be released while it is still current and at a time that will be most useful for the target audience. Be sure to allow time for any required review of your materials by project management, funders, or partners.

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