

Evaluate Your Prevention Efforts

Monitoring the effectiveness of your programs is essential. Evaluation data can help you determine what worked well and what didn't and what sort of impact your programs have had.

The two common types of evaluation are *process evaluation* and *outcome evaluation*.

1. **Process evaluation** documents all aspects of implementing a program or training and shows what worked well and what didn't.

Process evaluation answers the question: "*Did we do what we said we would do?*"

Process evaluation data can help you determine the following:

- ✓ Were interventions implemented as planned?
- ✓ Who participated and for how long?
- ✓ What adaptations were made?
- ✓ Were the resources sufficient?
- ✓ What obstacles were encountered?

2. **Outcome evaluation** measures the effect of a program or training and whether any change occurred as a result. It documents effects achieved after the intervention is implemented, such as short- and long-term changes in a population group's knowledge, attitudes, skills, or behavior as a result of the intervention.

Outcome evaluation answers the question: "*Did our intervention make a difference—did it impact the risk factors and problem we wanted to address?*"

Outcome evaluation data can help you determine the following:

- ✓ What changes actually occurred?
- ✓ How do these changes compare to what the intervention was expected to achieve?
- ✓ How do these changes compare with results for those who were not exposed to the intervention?

It's usually best to conduct both process and outcome evaluations. Fortunately, since you are on a college campus, you will likely have access to staff and faculty with evaluation experience. If you would like additional guidance or support, staff in your institutional research office or faculty in the psychology or public health departments will be familiar with how to conduct an evaluation and analyze your results.

You can use the following chart to think about what evaluation best aligns with your suicide prevention programs and goals.

Evaluation question	Type of evaluation	Do I need this information?	Ways to collect this information
When/where did the program or training take place?	Process		
Who was the target audience for the program?	Process		
Who and how many people participated?	Process		
What were the demographics of the participants?	Process		
Was the program implemented as intended?	Process		
What obstacles were encountered?	Process		
How did participants rate their satisfaction with the program?	Process		
What changes actually occurred?	Outcome		
How do these changes compare to what the program was expected to achieve?	Outcome		
How do these changes compare with those who were not exposed to the program?	Outcome		
How well did participants retain knowledge and skills learned during the program?	Outcome		
Were more at-risk people identified as a result of the program?	Outcome		
Other:			