Presenting Evaluation Results: Creating an Evaluation Report

Why write an evaluation report?
Evaluation reports can serve many purposes. First, they provide a way to document the successes and challenges of a project in a cohesive way that can be shared with stakeholders. Second, reviewing an evaluation report is a great way to begin a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. Finally, evaluation reports can be critical for sustainability because they can help to demonstrate effectiveness to current and potential funders and other supportive stakeholders.

Different formats for different purposes
Before preparing an evaluation report, think about how the report will be used and who will read it. If you have several different purposes and audiences you may need to prepare separate versions of reports. Examples of evaluation report formats include:
- Comprehensive evaluation report: covers a year or longer period of time; includes all activities evaluated within a comprehensive prevention strategy; provides detailed description of evaluation methods, results, and recommendations; typically 20 pages or longer
- Executive summary of a comprehensive report: Short version of the comprehensive report that presents the key findings in a concise manner; typically 1-4 pages long
- Activity-specific report: brief report that presents the results of an evaluation of one activity
- Report generated from an online survey service, such as Survey Monkey: displays all survey results but does not include program description, methods, or recommendations
- "Empowerment Scrapbook" report: eclectic compilation of evaluation reports that may have been generated by different sources (such as results of a post-training survey provided by the trainer's organization, online survey reports, reports prepared by an evaluation consultant, and actual outcomes inserted into a logic model)
- PowerPoint presentation: Slides presenting key findings; good format for presenting charts and graphs
- Dashboard report: Brief, visually appealing report on key outputs and outcomes
- Press release: Brief summary of key "take-home" points or "headlines" followed by short description of how the data were collected and where to go for additional information about the program and evaluation results

Getting Started
Once you have collected lots of data, it can seem overwhelming to begin to make sense of it. Before getting lost in a forest of data, look to the following guideposts to see if they can provide you with some structure for your evaluation report:
- Logic model and ABCDE outcome statements (What outputs and outcomes do you need to report on?)
- Evaluation plan (What evaluation questions do you need to answer?)
- Funder requirements for evaluation reporting (Is there specific content or a particular format you need to use to meet funder evaluation requirements?)
- Examples of evaluation reports from other organizations (What aspects of these reports would you like to replicate or avoid? What was helpful or not helpful about the way they presented results?)

The tip sheets, templates, and examples in this section provide ideas for how to organize, present, and use your results.