

## Menu of Evaluation Methods

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	Situations when it might make sense to use this method	Resources needed: Capacity, Skill, Time, Cost
<b>Surveys/Questionnaires (general)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fairly easy to compare and analyze data</li> <li>▪ Can administer to many people</li> <li>▪ Can get lots of data</li> <li>▪ Can be adapted into many different formats and modules</li> <li>▪ Many high-quality questionnaires already exist to draw from; comparative data may be available</li> <li>▪ Can translate into different languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Question wording can bias respondent's answers</li> <li>▪ May seem impersonal</li> <li>▪ Doesn't get the full story because it may lack context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to quickly and/or easily get a lot of information from people in a non-threatening way</li> <li>▪ Need quantitative data</li> <li>▪ Need standardized tool that can be repeated over time for consistent comparison data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Researching and adapting existing surveys takes time, while developing new surveys takes skill</li> <li>▪ Cost varies depending on volume of surveys and processing method (manual data entry, scanning, online)</li> </ul>
<b>In-person self-administered surveys/questionnaires</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can be anonymous</li> <li>▪ Very convenient when administered to program participants or clients (high response rate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Might not get careful feedback</li> <li>▪ Won't work for young children or adults with limited literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ End of a program or training session</li> <li>▪ In schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can be low-cost compared to other methods</li> <li>▪ Requires document formatting skills</li> </ul>
<b>Face-to-face surveys/interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can conduct longer, more in-depth interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires time and skill of interviewer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Respondents with low literacy levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need skilled interviewer</li> </ul>
<b>Online surveys (such as Survey Monkey or Survey Gizmo)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No need for separate data entry</li> <li>▪ Online sites provide summary reports</li> <li>▪ Easy access for some types of respondents (e.g. workplace)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not appropriate for populations with limited internet access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need quick response from population that is busy and highly computer-literate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Online survey service memberships are fairly low-cost and require minimal skill</li> </ul>

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<b>Mail surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can do random sample or stratified random sample if address list is available</li> <li>▪ Appropriate for older adults and others with limited internet access or discomfort with online data collection</li> </ul>	Low response rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to reach broad population (“general public”) or some other large group for which you can identify mailing addresses</li> <li>▪ Need stratified sample by geographic areas (zip codes, towns, etc.)</li> </ul>	Purchasing address lists can be moderately expensive; postage and supplies costs will vary depending on the volume of surveys
<b>Phone surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can administer longer surveys and clarify responses</li> <li>▪ Can do random sample or stratified random sample if phone list is available or use random-digit-dial method</li> </ul>	Misses people without land-line phones (cell phone survey methods also available, but more costly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have a long and/or complicated questionnaire</li> <li>▪ Need to reach broad population (“general public”) and/or random sample</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expensive if you hire a professional survey firm</li> <li>▪ Requires high level of skill</li> </ul>
<b>Key-informant interviews (semi-structured, open-ended) (by phone or in-person)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can gather in-depth information and quotes</li> <li>▪ Flexible</li> <li>▪ May help to develop relationships with stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can be hard to analyze and compare results</li> <li>▪ Interviewer can bias responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preliminary research to help develop a new survey</li> <li>▪ Need to explore attitudes, opinions, motivations, and stakeholder suggestions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fairly inexpensive to do in-house (assuming low volume)</li> <li>▪ Scheduling can be very time-consuming</li> </ul>
<b>Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can be a good way to get at skills and behaviors that are difficult to assess with a survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observers may bias results (<i>especially if they are program staff</i>)</li> <li>▪ Can be difficult to interpret/categorize</li> <li>▪ Can influence behavior of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When participants are young children</li> <li>▪ When assessing skills or behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must have skill to develop standardized observation protocol and coding scheme</li> <li>▪ Observers must be highly trained to ensure accuracy of data collection</li> <li>▪ Staff time for data collection and coding drives the cost</li> </ul>

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<b>Focus group interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can gather in-depth information and quotes</li> <li>▪ Can be an efficient way to gather rich contextual information in a fairly short time</li> <li>▪ May be empowering for participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Difficult to recruit and schedule</li> <li>▪ Note taking, transcription, and analysis are time-consuming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring attitudes, opinions, motivations, satisfaction, perceived effectiveness, implementation issues, and stakeholder suggestions</li> <li>▪ Setting where it is possible to get a “captive audience” (such as a regularly scheduled group or class)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis requires high level of skill and is vulnerable to the bias of the analyst</li> <li>▪ Requires trained facilitator (can be expensive if hired)</li> <li>▪ Recruitment will benefit from remuneration and other supports (food, transportation, child care), but these can be costly</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative records (school, court, medical, etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data already exists (no new data collection)</li> <li>▪ May be able to compare participants to non-participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Confidentiality and access may be an issue for data with identifiers</li> <li>▪ Data quality may be poor or inconsistent</li> </ul>	Need quantitative data for outcomes related to status and behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free</li> <li>▪ Staff time to analyze will vary depending on the complexity of the records</li> <li>▪ Collecting data from various sources and selecting/coding data can be time-intensive and requires some skill</li> </ul>
<b>Developmental or clinical assessments (e.g., Devereaux Early Childhood Assessment [DECA], Protective Factors Survey, etc.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standardized tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Time-intensive</li> <li>▪ May require training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When participants are young children</li> <li>▪ When assessing skills or behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires skilled staff to administer</li> <li>▪ May have to purchase the instrument, while other tools are free (public domain)</li> </ul>
<b>Document review or content analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information already exists (no new data collection)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited application</li> </ul>	Need to evaluate policies, media campaigns, legislation, curricula, educational materials, or other written material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must have skill to develop standardized content analysis protocol and coding scheme</li> <li>▪ Staff time is only cost</li> </ul>

## References:

*Getting to Outcomes, 2003: Promoting Accountability through Methods and Tools for Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation.* Chinman, Imm, and Wandersman. Pages 105-106. And *GTO IPV/SV Evaluation Step Grantee Draft.* Internal DELTA Empowerment Evaluation Document. 2009. Pages 38-39.