



Evaluation tip sheet

Dipping a toe in the current literature on program evaluation can quickly lead to a sense of overwhelm. The **Partners in Prevention Evaluation Working Group** put this tip sheet together to help guide network members on the evaluation journey.

Look at similar projects both in terms of evaluation and more generally – How does your work fit with what others are doing locally, regionally, state-wide or nationally?

Program theory – Define the theory behind your project, identify exactly what you are trying to change (objectives) and how you are going to change it (activities) - consider the impacts of all aspects of your project (on students, teachers, communities, attitudes, behaviours, policies, responses, etc.)

Build in evaluation from the beginning – include it in your project work plan so you can allocate resources and ensure that you are collecting the right data as you go. Look out for opportunities to use evaluation to develop new skills or reinforce your project objectives. If your project has passed the planning stage, work with what you have, the sooner you can start the better.

Use evaluation guidelines – such as

www.health.vic.gov.au/healthpromotion/steps/evaluation.htm

Be clear about why you are evaluating your program – To see how you are going? To improve what you are doing? To show others that your approach works? To satisfy stakeholders? To produce a publication? Be aware of what you hope to gain from evaluating your project and make sure your evaluation activities will take you there.

External contributors – Once you have defined the change you are trying to create, consider whether there are external factors that might contribute to it. Be prepared to investigate them by asking participants what things outside the program have helped bring about any change.

Take small steps first – start with small and manageable evaluation activities, reflect on what you are already doing and try to capture information as you go e.g. phone logs, facilitator notes, meeting minutes etc. Add one new evaluation activity each program cycle.

Expect the unexpected – Include questions that allow for unintended outcomes and emergent issues.

Gendered analysis – How will your evaluation investigate the impact of gender on participants' responses to your program?

Be realistic – about 10% of project resources in terms of time and money is a reasonable amount to spend on evaluation activities.

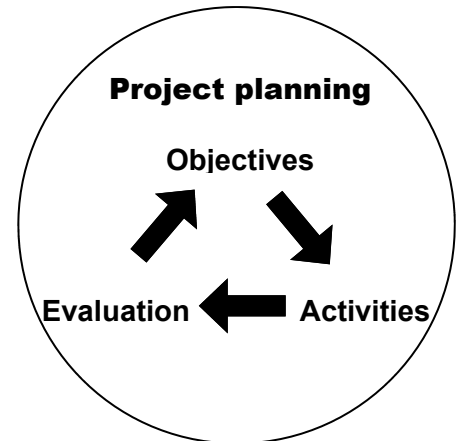
Professional development – Access evaluation training opportunities. Most major universities deliver evaluation short courses or you can contact the Australasian Evaluation Society www.aes.asn.au

Evaluation is a skill – Be prepared for an ongoing process of development, expect to make mistakes and learn from them. Asking questions and consulting with experts are great ways to build your own skills.

Share your learning – we are all interested in finding out what works and what doesn't work. There are a variety of options available for sharing your learning from your agency's newsletter to a published report to an academic paper. The way you plan to share your learning may impact on how you evaluate.

Mentor scheme – The Partners in Prevention (PiP) project runs a mentor scheme to put violence prevention practitioners in touch with experienced evaluators. Contact the PiP coordinator on the number below for details.

For more information visit www.dvrcv.org.au/pip or contact the PiP coordinator at the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria on (03) 9486 9866.



Reflective Exercise

- Imagine that the project you are working on has finished. Write a one-page report or journal entry describing what was achieved.
- What will success look like? What is the least change needed for success?
- Has the project generated any outcomes that can't be measured? Can they be measured indirectly?

Partners in Prevention

A capacity building project for professionals interested in working with young people for the primary prevention of violence against women.

PiP provides:

A website for workers in the youth, health, community and education sectors who are interested in finding and sharing strategies for the primary prevention of violence against women. It includes information on the network and links to useful articles and websites.

www.dvrcv.org.au/pip

Network meetings with guest presenters on issues relevant to violence prevention. These meetings provide opportunities for violence prevention workers to come together and discuss their work.

Regular email bulletins with information and recent news relating to violence prevention in Victoria and announcement of network events—email project coordinator, Kiri Bear kbear@dvrcv.org.au to have your details added to the list.

A prevention library integrated with DVRCV's specialist collection on family violence and sexual assault.

Consultation and referral the PiP project coordinator has access to information on violence prevention projects across the state.

An annual forum on a topic relating to young people and the primary prevention of violence against women.

Evaluation working group developing strategies to support network members' efforts in evaluating their work.

For more information on the Partners in Prevention project contact coordinator, Kiri Bear, at the Domestic Violence Resource Centre (Victoria) on 9486 9866 or kbear@dvrcv.org.au

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