

# NSVRC Evaluation Toolkit Case Studies

## *University Partnership (Mixed Methods)*

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(Madison Jackson, personal communication, August 6, 2015, Updated July 2019)

### **Project Description**

A rape crisis center in Texas, realizing that their evaluation tools were not giving them useful data, reached out to a professor at a local college for help. Together, they developed tools to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Specifically, they used a questionnaire that was administered as a pre- and post-test and then also included open-ended questions on the post-test. For the qualitative sections, the staff were trained and given scoring tools to enable them to carry out the data analysis themselves. A basic score sheet was developed to assess what participants wrote in response to open-ended questions and to help staff code for buzzwords.

### **Lessons Learned**

The staff members felt that the process the professor helped them design not only felt “doable” in terms of implementation but also helped them collect more meaningful data and use it! For example, they were able to see how the young people talked about certain concepts like bystander intervention and work such participant-initiated language into their curriculum. They were also able to learn more about the ways young people were interacting with each other, including learning about social media sites the preventionists were not previously aware of. Additionally, students were able to both express their feelings about the content and reflect on their own problematic behaviors and desires to change those behaviors. All of this helped the preventionists continue to refine their curricula to speak more directly to the young people with whom they were working.

### **A Note about University Partnerships**

As you can see, this process focused not only on building tools but on developing the agency and staff members' capacity to implement, analyze, interpret, and use

#### **Tips**

The preventionist also mentioned that the young people wanted to write more than they were able to write in the final few minutes of a session, so they had to make sure to end early enough for the participants to have ample time to complete their answers. Since it's important for participants not to feel shut down and know that you value their input, the time they have to complete such questionnaires matters. You can consider a few different options to make sure this happens. First, you can let them complete the measures at the beginning of the final session if you aren't covering any critical learning during that session that might be assessed in the evaluation instrument. Second, you can ask the teacher to give the participants time to complete them, preferably at a later date. This option helps determine if any changes from the programming last beyond the time of the program itself.

the data produced. In this case, the professor had previous experience working as an evaluation specialist at a nonprofit organization, so he had some insight into what would and wouldn't work well in that environment. If you're working with an evaluator who doesn't have this kind of experience, feel encouraged to highlight some of your hopes and fears about evaluation and to give them a sense of what nonprofit life is like.

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