Module 4

Communities That Care

Evaluating Participant Outcomes

Phase Five: Implementing and Evaluating the Community Action Plan

Communities That Care

Module 1 Overview

Module 2 Funding the Community Action Plan

Milestone: Implementers of new programs, policies and practices have the necessary skills, expertise and resources to implement with fidelity.

Module 3 Ensuring High-Fidelity Implementation

Milestone: Implementers of new programs, policies and practices have the necessary skills, expertise and resources to implement with fidelity.
Milestone: Implement new programs, policies and practices with fidelity.

Module 4 Evaluating Participant Outcomes

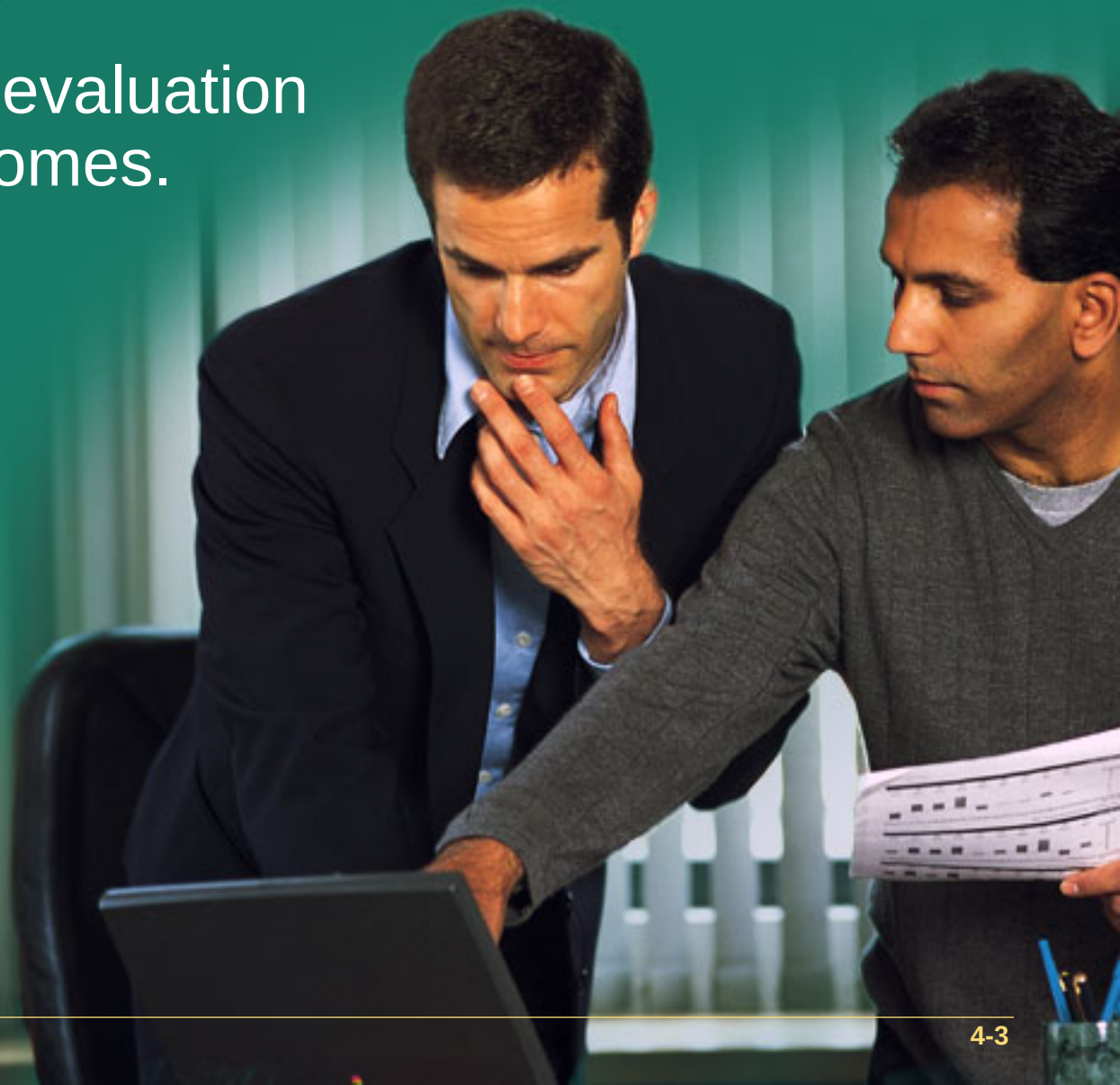
WE ARE HERE.

Milestone: Conduct program-level evaluations at least annually.
Milestone: Conduct community-level assessments at least every two years.

Module 5 Next Steps

Module 4 goal

To ensure annual evaluation of participant outcomes.



Objectives

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Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the purposes of evaluating participant outcomes.
2. Develop an evaluation plan.
3. Implement the evaluation plan and use the evaluation results.
4. Prepare for community-level assessments.

The evaluation process

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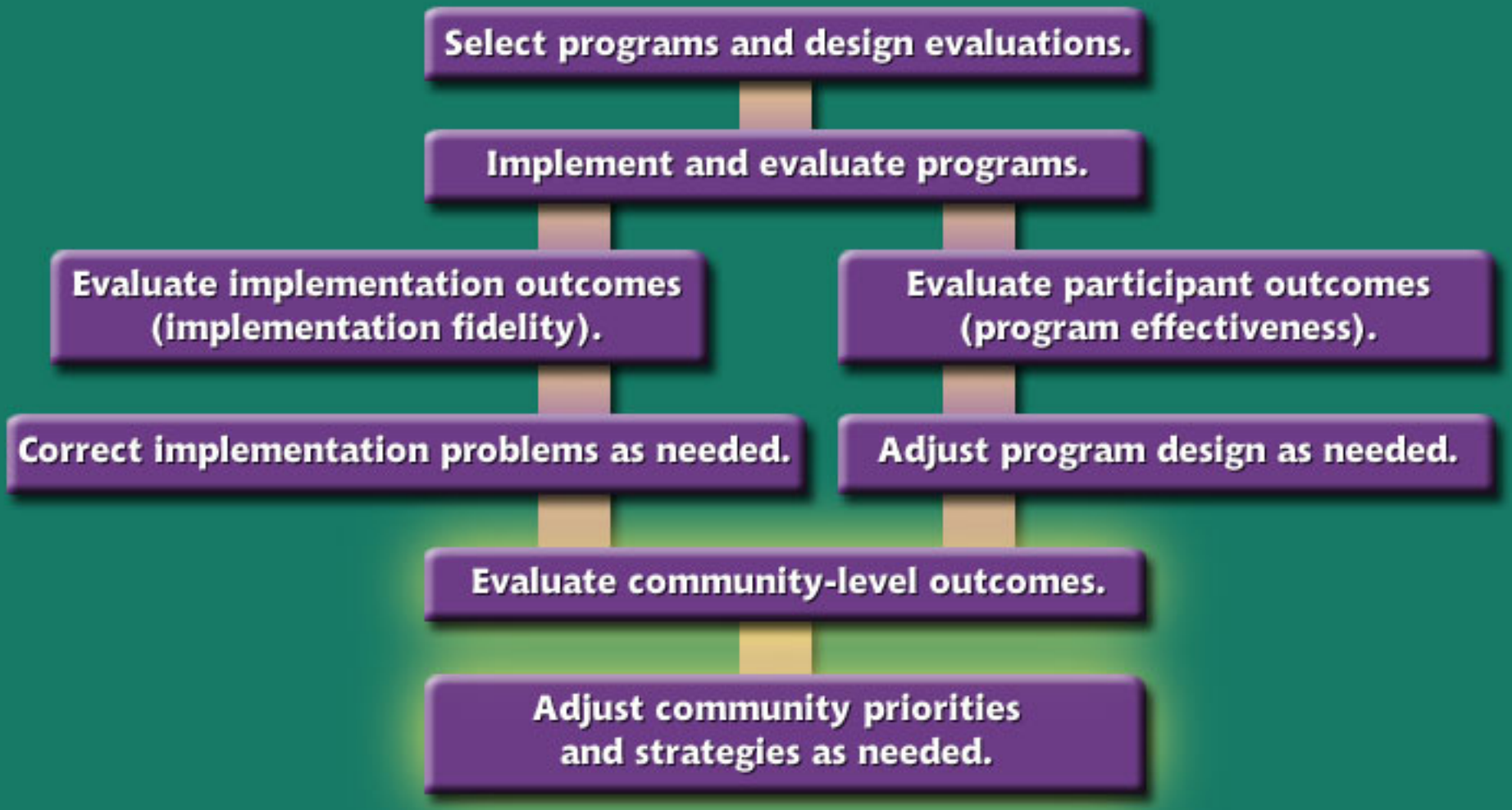

Why evaluate participant outcomes?

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Assess a program's effectiveness by monitoring changes in participants':

- knowledge
- attitudes
- skills
- behavior.

Evaluation steps

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1. Engage stakeholders.
2. Define what will be evaluated.
3. Select an evaluation design.
4. Decide how you will collect and measure data.
5. Gather, analyze and interpret data.
6. Report your findings and use the results.

Engaging stakeholders

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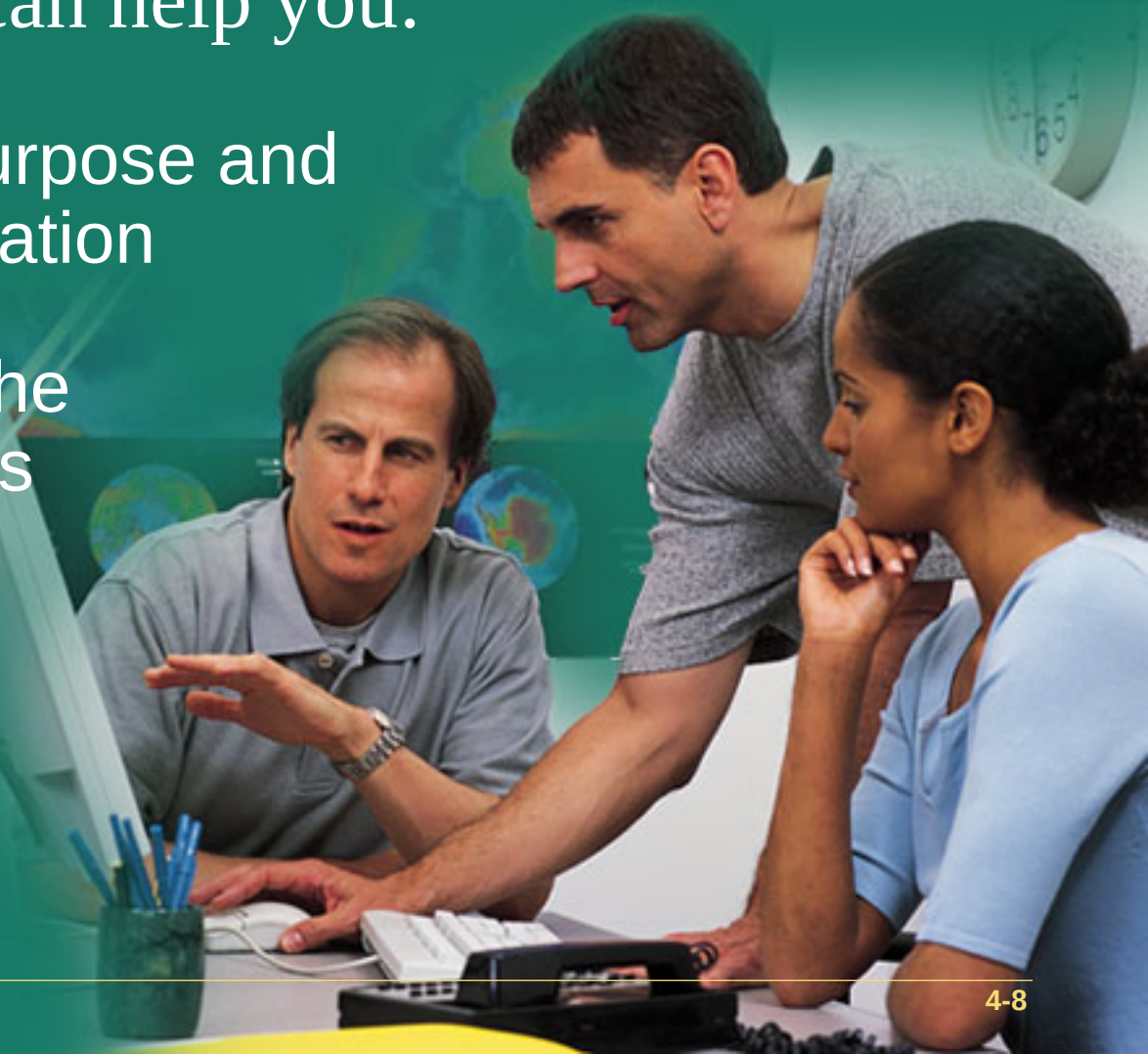
Engaging stakeholders in the evaluation process can help you:

- understand the purpose and focus of the evaluation
- build support for the evaluation process
- prepare to report your findings.



Stakeholder Matrix

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1. Turn to the Stakeholder Matrix worksheet in the Participant's Guide.

2. Brainstorm stakeholders in the evaluation process. List stakeholders in the shaded, left-hand column of the matrix.

3. Brainstorm the ways stakeholders might use evaluation results. List uses in the shaded, top column of the matrix.

4. Put an X in each box that corresponds to a stakeholder's use for evaluation information.

Reviewing participant outcomes

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1. Break into teams and turn to the Outcomes Worksheet in the Participant's Guide.
2. Look up your program, policy or practice in the Community Action Plan and identify the associated participant outcomes.
3. Determine whether the outcomes are realistic and whether any should be revised.
4. Revise outcomes as necessary.
5. Summarize the information you'll need to gather to measure the outcome.
6. Report out.

Evaluation design

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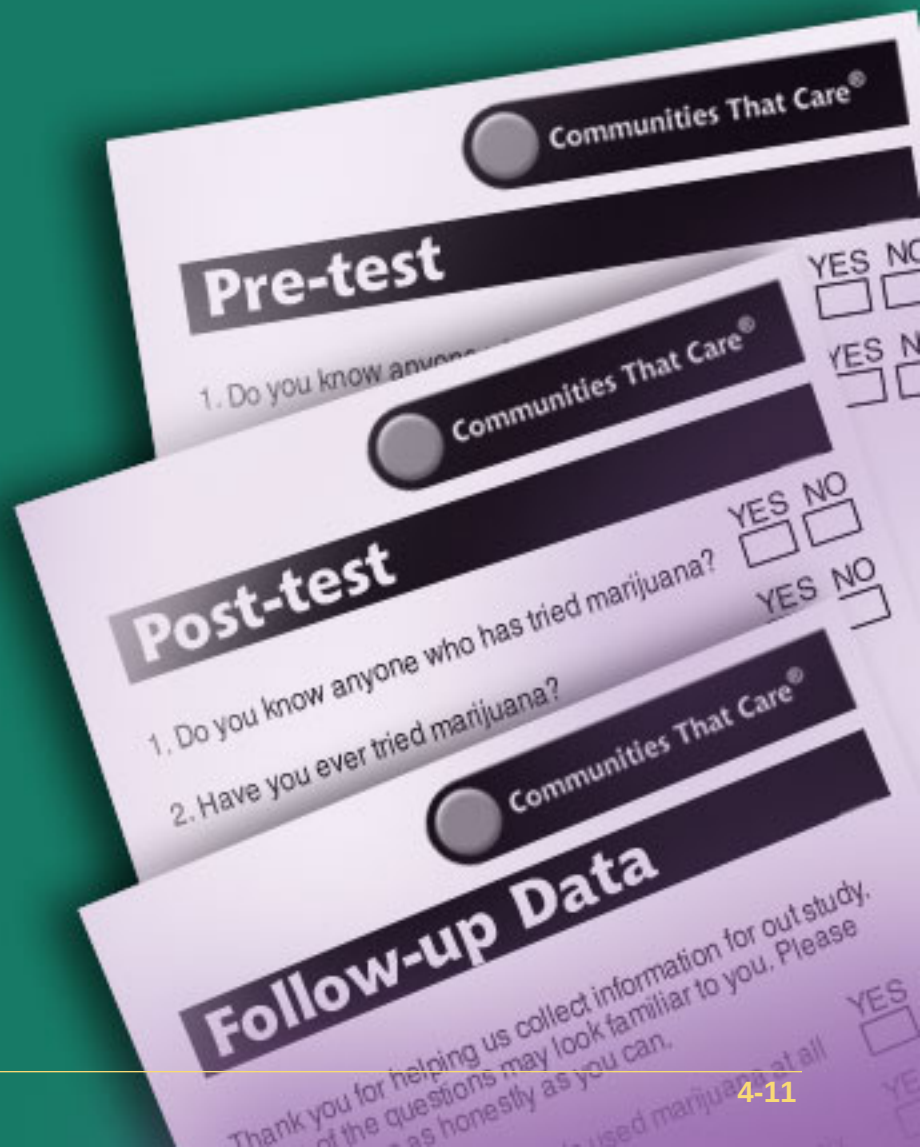
- Pre-test
- Post-test
- Follow-up
- Comparison group



Design decisions

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Consider:

- resources available for the evaluation
- stakeholder expectations and funding standards
- whether it's possible to use comparison groups.

Designing the evaluation

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1. Break into teams (you'll continue to work with the same program).

2. Discuss whether the evaluation of your program should involve the collection of follow-up data or comparison groups.

   Consider available resources, stakeholder expectations and funding standards, and the feasibility of using comparison groups.

3. Report your decisions to the group.

Gathering information

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Observation
- Archival data

Evaluation instruments

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- Use the instrument designed for the program.
- If no instrument is available, seek help from an expert evaluator.

Designing evaluation instruments

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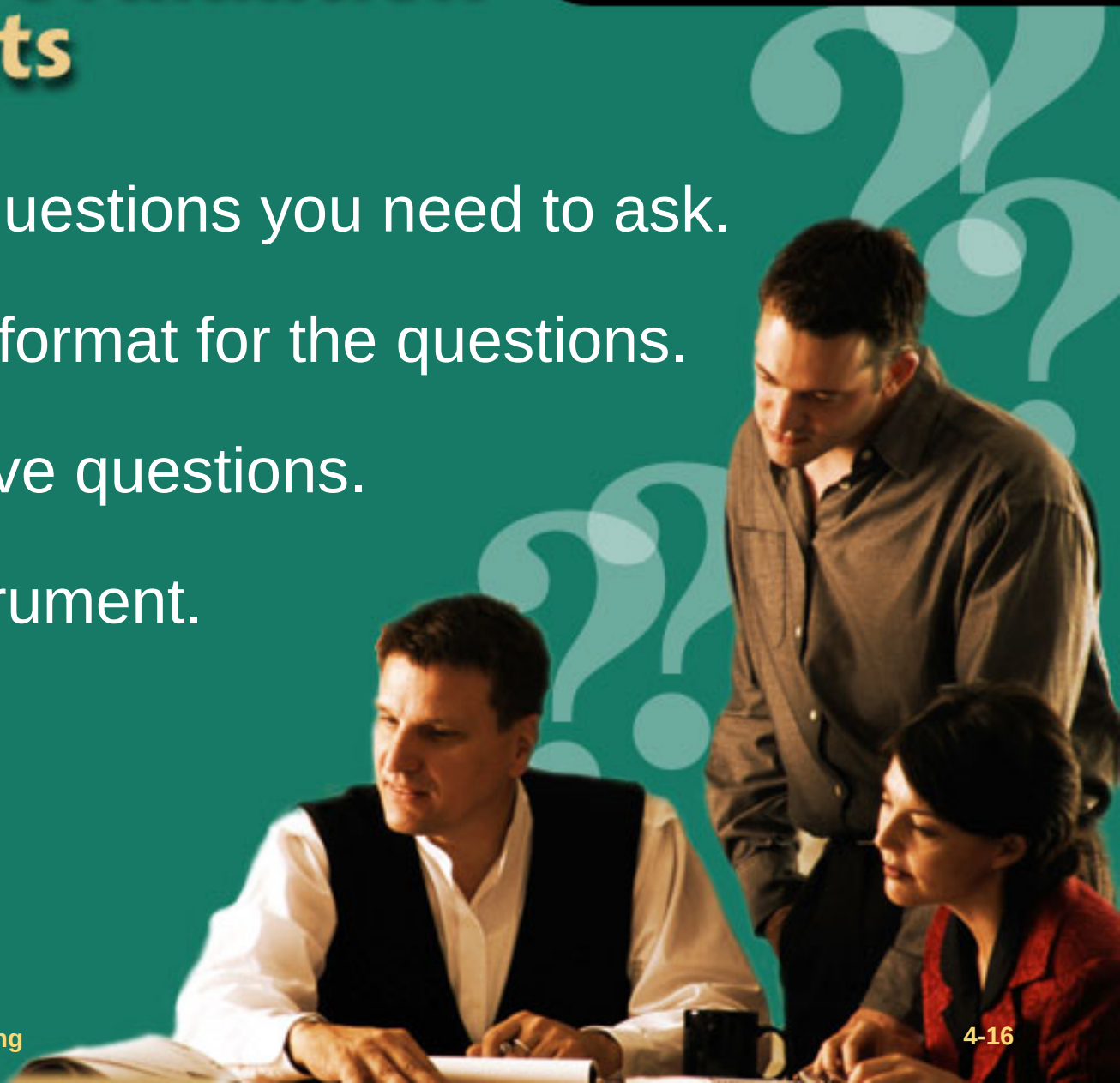
- Identify the questions you need to ask.
- Decide on a format for the questions.
- Write objective questions.
- Test the instrument.



Creating an evaluation instrument

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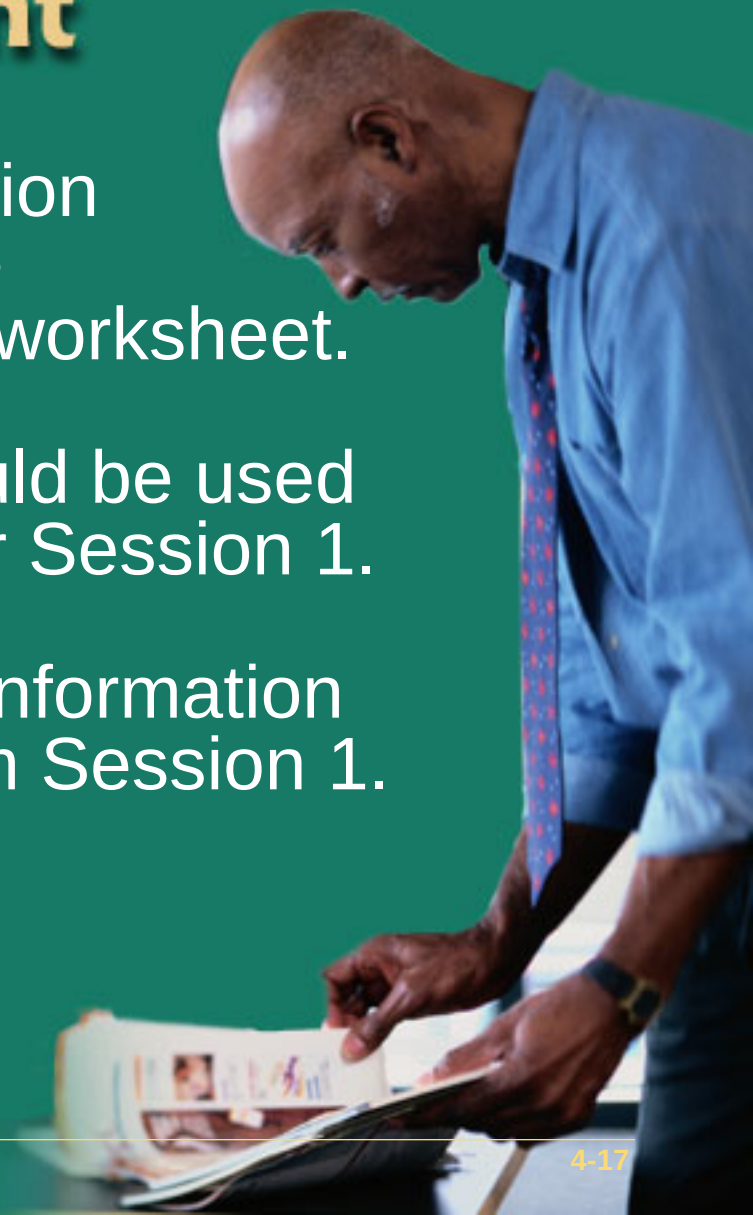
1. Review the program description and sample questions on the Developing a Questionnaire worksheet.

2. Develop 2 questions that could be used on the pre- and post-tests for Session 1.

   Base your questions on the information presented in the excerpt from Session 1.

3. Report out.



Who will collect the data?

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Consider:

- commitment to the project and to the evaluation
- objectivity
- ability to collect complete and accurate data.

Compiling and analyzing the data

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Determine:

- who will oversee the evaluation
- a central storage place for data from each program
- evaluation deadlines
- decision-making processes.

Reporting evaluation results

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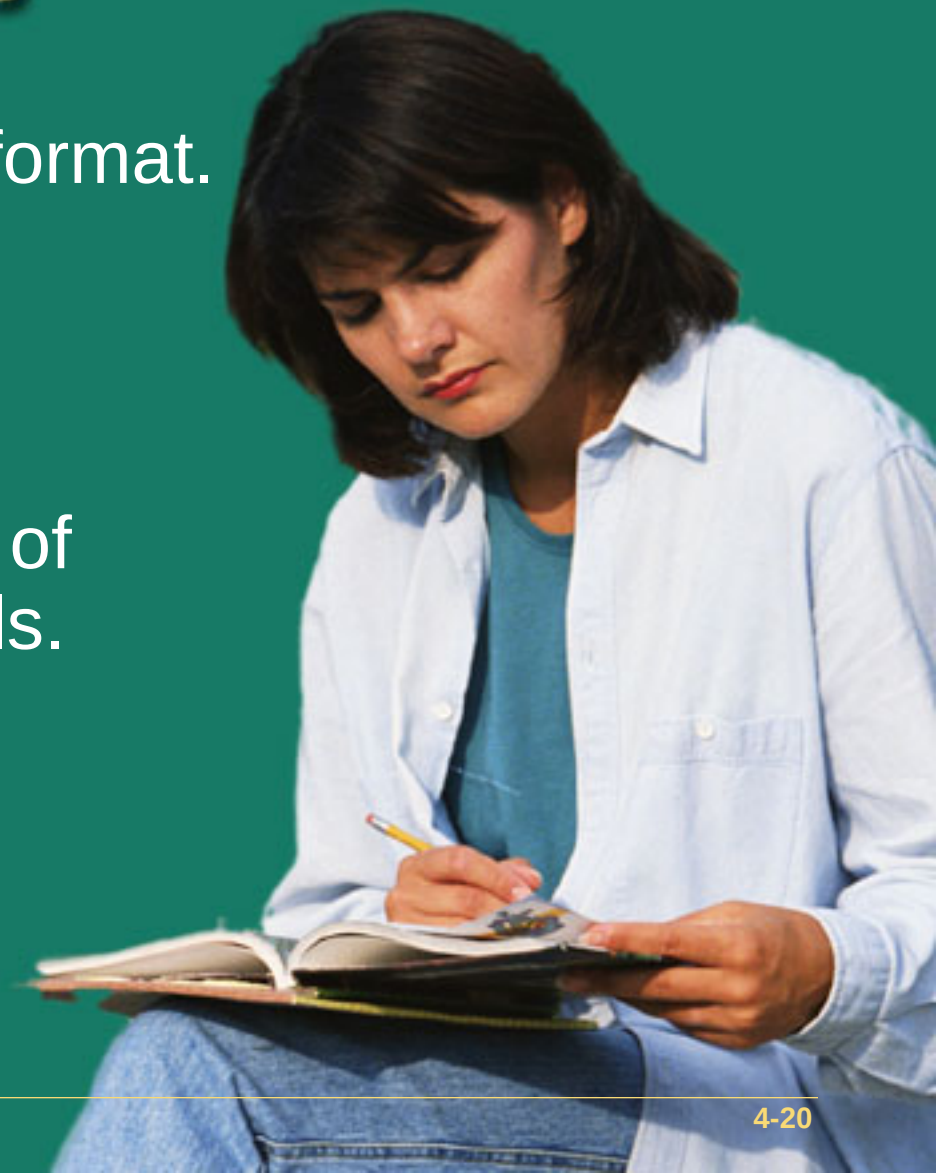
- Choose an appropriate format.
- Write for your most important audience.
- Discuss results in terms of the overall program goals.
- Be honest.



Developing an evaluation plan

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1. Form teams based on the program you worked with in the previous activities.

2. Complete the Evaluation Planning Worksheet

   - Finalize evaluation details.
   - List outstanding issues or questions.

3. Report out.

Activity

Evaluation Planning Worksheet

Consent and confidentiality

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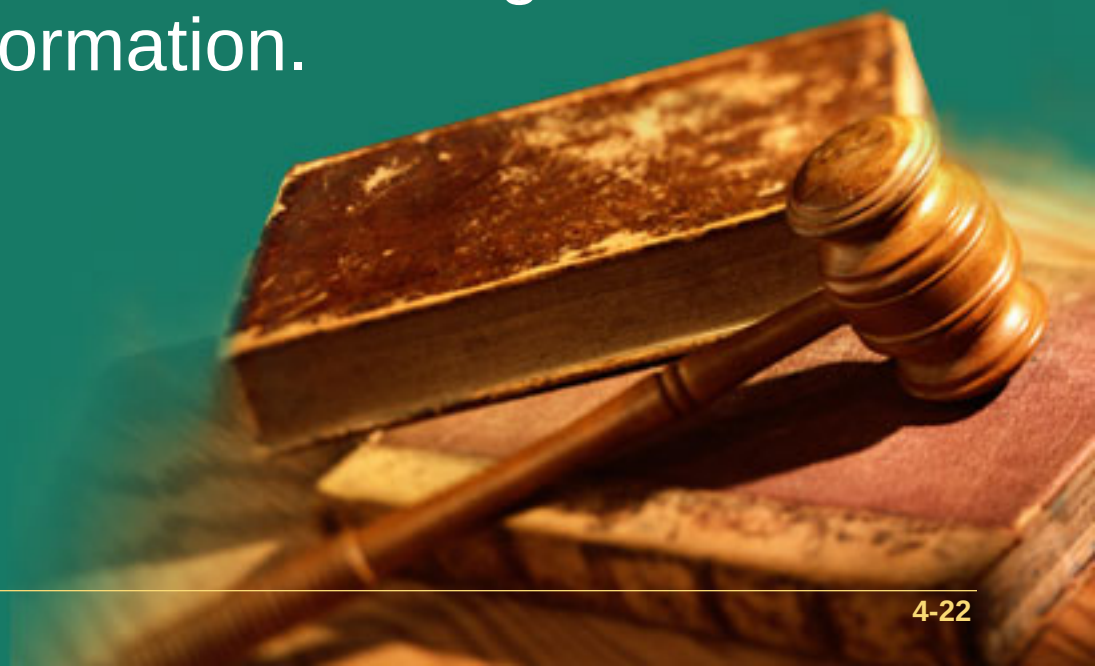
- Follow all laws regarding consent.
- Follow all laws and ethical guidelines to protect the confidentiality of evaluation participants in the collection, storage and reporting of information.



Ensuring compliance with evaluation plans

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- Involve implementers/data collectors in evaluation design.
- Incorporate evaluation into implementation procedures.
- Provide training.
- Outline evaluation procedures and responsibilities.

The Resources Assessment and Evaluation work group

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Identify individuals with:

- skills in designing evaluation instruments
- skills in designing and conducting evaluation studies
- skills in data analysis and presentation
- the ability to objectively assess outcome results and recommend possible solutions
- the ability to credibly communicate results to key stakeholders.

Using the results

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- Celebrate success.
- Write a report detailing the results.
- Fulfill accountability requirements.
- Identify causes of unmet expectations.
- Revise and update the Community Action Plan.

Common causes for failure to achieve outcomes

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- Weak connection between the program and outcomes
- Unrealistic outcomes
- Failure to implement a program with fidelity
- Participant-related reasons
- External factors
- Measurement problems
- Decreases in sample size (attrition)

Identifying the causes of unmet outcomes

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- Assess implementation fidelity. Correct as needed.
- Identify and try to resolve audience-related reasons (skill-level, cultural differences, etc.).
- Check for measurement problems.
- Check for decreases in the sample size.

Evaluation case study

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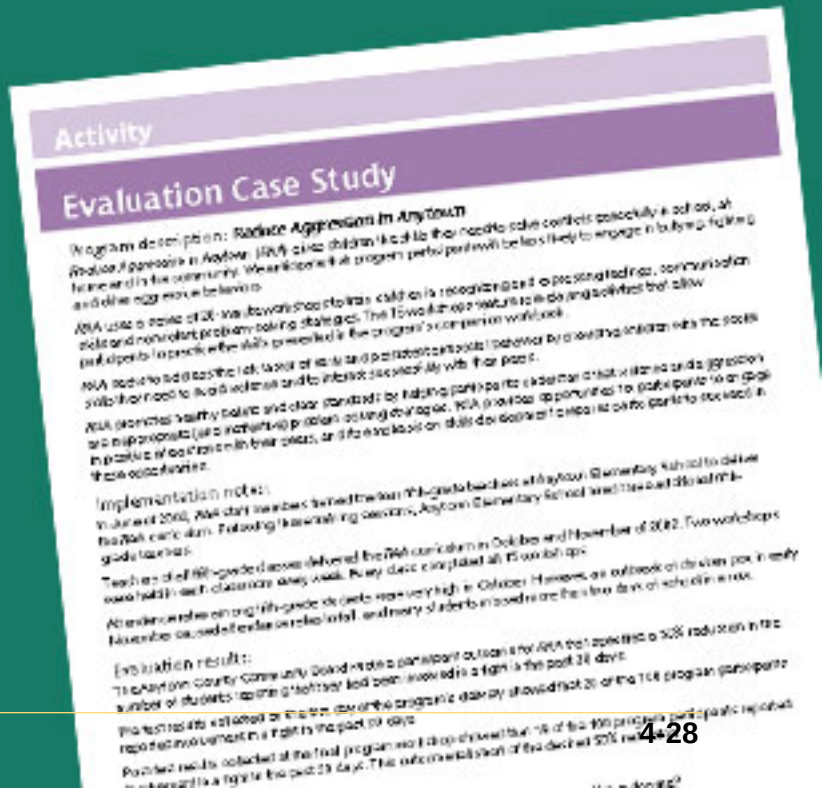
1. Turn to the Evaluation Case Study worksheet in the Participant's Guide. Review the program description, implementation notes and evaluation results.

2. Work in teams to answer the two questions at the bottom of the worksheet.

3. Report out.


Activity

Evaluation Case Study

Program description: Reduce Aggression in AnyTown

Implementation notes:

Evaluation results:

Community-level assessment

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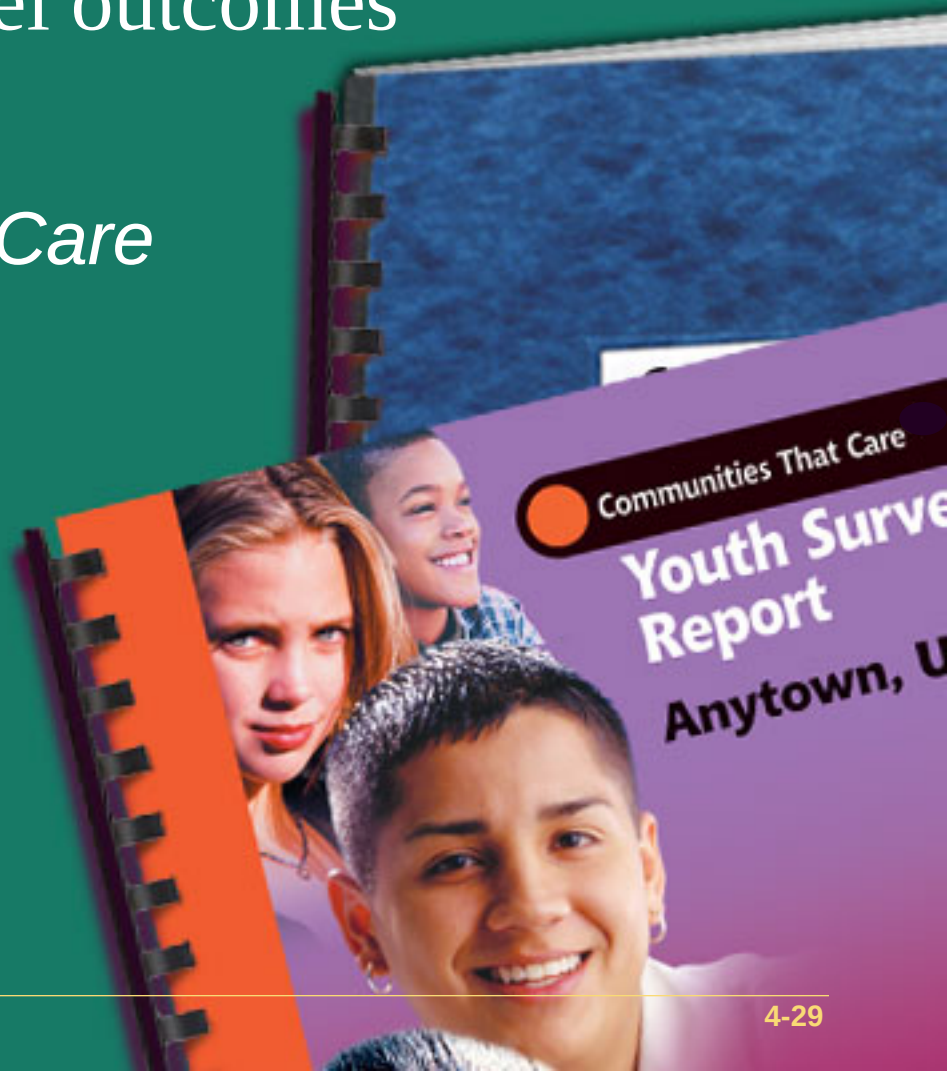
Evaluate community-level outcomes every two years using:

- the *Communities That Care Youth Survey*
- archival data.



Using the assessment results

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- Celebrate success.
- Identify changing priorities.
- Select new tested, effective prevention strategies to address changing priorities.
- Assist resource allocation decisions.
- Evaluate policies and practices.

Discuss the community assessment process

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- What data-collection methods were used?
- What obstacles were encountered?
- How could we improve the process for the next assessment?

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Module 5 Next Steps

NEXT UP