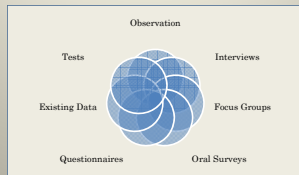


# Conducting Needs Assessments\*



CENY Networking Lunch

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\* This presentation includes work by Jacob Coverstone, The American Academy of Ophthalmology and The Southern Region Planning Leadership Network, Mississippi State University

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## When do you conduct a Needs Assessment?

- Define the problem first!
- Conduct the Needs Assessment BEFORE the activity addressing the problem is designed!
- Then Prioritize and Schedule Activities to Address Needs

• The problem is gas is too expensive  
 • Our solution is that we need a buggy and a horse!  
 • Buggy is small  
 • Horse is very big  
 • Cannot see past a large horse in this buggy  
 • Horse has race horse ankles and the cart is not designed for speed




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## Why should you conduct a Needs Assessment?

- What problem poses an obstacle to our goal?
- We have the following capacities. What do you want us to do?
- Why do you want us to do that?
- If we do that, how do you think you or the community will benefit?
- How do we measure the benefit to you and the community?

- The purpose of a Needs Assessment is to make decisions regarding priorities for the program.
- If you conduct a proper Needs Assessment, the responses will help determine how your resources will effectively address needs that are important to the stakeholders.

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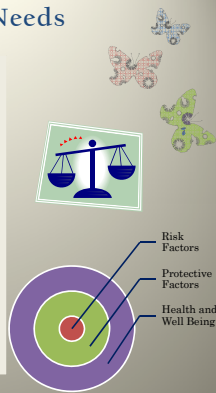
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## Defining and Determining Needs

- **Risk Factors** are individual or environmental characteristics, conditions, or behaviors that increase the likelihood that a negative outcome will occur.
- **Protective Factors** are individual or environmental characteristics, conditions, or behaviors that reduce the effects of stressful life events; increase an individual's ability to avoid risks or hazards; and promote social and emotional competence to thrive in all aspects of life now and in the future.
- (School / Cultural) **Connectivity** is the belief by students that adults and peers in the (school / community) care about their (learning or development) as well as about them as individuals.




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## Types of Needs Assessments

	Description	Pros	Cons
<b>Existing Data</b>	Statistics and reports of community-related data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data already exists</li> <li>• Quick access</li> <li>• Can chart changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Info may be dated</li> <li>• Lacks people's perceptions of needs</li> </ul>
<b>Attitude Survey</b>	Representative sample of population is asked to respond about issues (personal or telephone interviews, questionnaires)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valid data from broad range of people</li> <li>• Can find out behavioral info and opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be costly</li> <li>• Have to build survey which can be tricky</li> </ul>
<b>Key Informant</b>	Community leaders help identify priority needs and concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick &amp; Inexpensive</li> <li>• Questionnaire easy to prepare</li> <li>• Provides valuable contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is likely biased by age, occupation, etc.</li> <li>• Few informants can represent the entire population</li> </ul>
<b>Group Sessions</b>	Use group or public sessions to identify and analyze ideas, issues and opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick &amp; Inexpensive</li> <li>• Input from wide variety of people</li> <li>• Can aid public relations efforts</li> <li>• Can ask more and deeper questions to get clarity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees may not represent population</li> <li>• Attendees may come with negative attitude</li> <li>• May heighten public expectations beyond reasonable limits</li> <li>• Need skilled moderator</li> </ul>

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## Responses to the Needs Assessments are Evidence of:

- What the Target audience needs;
- Solutions that appeal to the target audience; and
- Strategies for addressing needs that the Target Audience perceives as effective

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## Terminology ...

- **Gaps** - The space between what currently exists and what should exist.
- **Needs are contributing factors:**
  - What barriers must be resolved to help close gap(s).
- **Wants are possible solutions**
  - A proposed means to filling the gap.
- **Assessment** is the evaluation of needs, barriers and resources.
- **Needs Assessment** is the process of identifying and *measuring* areas for improvement specific to a target audience, and determining the methods to achieve that improvement.

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## What goes into a Needs Assessment?

- Normative data
- Evaluations
- Objectives
- Opinion
- Timelines
- Barriers
- Resources

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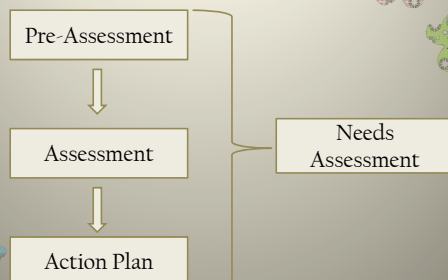
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## Phases of a Needs Assessment



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## Pre-Assessment

### • Pre-Assessment

- \* Data collection. "What do we know?"
  - This is the foundation of Gap Analysis
    - \* What is the current state?
    - \* Where should we be?
    - \* How does our community compare to others?
    - \* What's new?
    - \* What's important?

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## When Gathering Data ...

### • Search for objective measures and know when to stop!:

- \* Scope: How many, or what percent, of students are expected to suffer from...
- \* Severity: What are the consequences?
  - Delinquency, High school Drop Out
- \* Are there national/state/tribal standards for measuring the situation?
  - Can we do better?

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## Assessment

### \* Evaluation of the data

#### • What are our barriers?

- \* Both internal and external

#### • What Needs have we identified?

- \* Are some gaps bigger than others?
  - Consider both scope and severity

#### • What are our priorities?

- Addressing the first gap, may change the scope/severity of remaining gaps.
- Do we have the resources to address them?
- Why do anything at all?

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## Action Plan

- \*Which Needs can/should we address?
- \*What Tasks should be accomplished to address the needs?
- \*Who can manage the tasks?
- \*What Resources can we apply?
- \*How do we measure our progress?

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## Four Types of Need

### • Normative

- \* Defined as falling below a standard criterion established by custom, authority, or general consensus.
- \* Strength:
  - Allows planners to use objective targets
- \* Weakness:
  - Need levels change with time and must be re-evaluated

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## Types of Need ...

### • Relative

- \* Measured by the gap between the level of service between similar communities
- \* Strength:
  - Can lead to a priority for distribution of limited resources
- \* Weakness:
  - Limits resource allocation to under-performing areas

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## Types of Need ...

### • Expressed

- \* Defined in terms of the number of people who actually have sought help
- \* Strength:
  - Focuses on situations where people have taken action
  - Helps to determine barriers
- \* Weakness:
  - **Not all people with Needs seek help**
  - Loss of the bigger picture
  - Misses latent Needs



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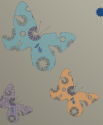
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## Types of Need ...

### • Perceived

- \* Defined in terms of what people think their needs are or feel their needs to be
- \* Strength:
  - Easy to come by
- \* Weakness:
  - Subjective
  - Subject to the Dunning-Kruger effect
    - Kruger and Dunning concluded that "the miscalibration of the incompetent stems from an error about the self, whereas the miscalibration of the highly competent stems from an error about others".



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## Remember!

- Want and Need are not synonyms.
- A Needs Assessment is conducted before the activity is planned.
- Pre-Assessment is not enough.

*"What gets measured gets managed"* –  
Peter Drucker.



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# Online Survey Instrument

## Survey Monkey

*There are many online survey instruments which are may be free to used based upon number of responses to the survey. NIJC uses Survey Monkey and can attest to its user friendly format. We are using this as an example only and not endorsing this instrument over another.*

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# www.SurveyMonkey.com



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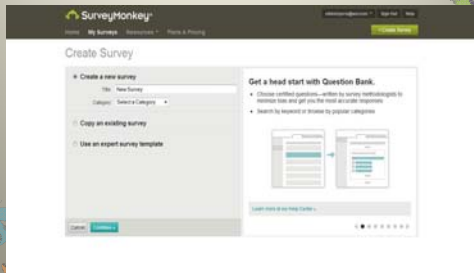
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# Create Surveys



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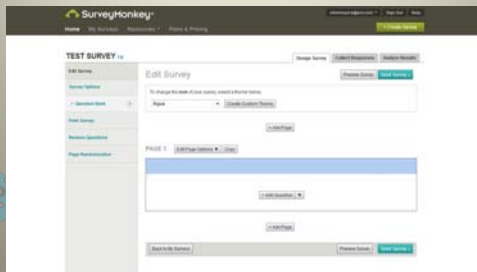
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## Design Surveys



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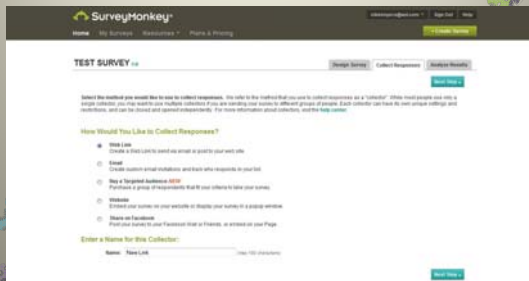
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## Collect Responses



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## Analyze Results



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## Announcements



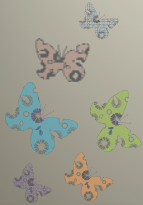
- Cal EMA Native American Children Training Forum Project

- [www.nijc.org/NACTF.html](http://www.nijc.org/NACTF.html)

- For All My Relations, Aug. 2-4, 2012, Los Angeles, CA

- CDC Proposal and Interest in Participation

- Please e-mail [carololiva@nijc.org](mailto:carololiva@nijc.org) if you are interested in serving as a site for NIJC's proposed potential project



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