

How To | Use Data

Evaluation is a valuable tool in prevention.

It shows both outcomes of interventions and helps to improve processes and implementation. However, using data can be challenging and often individuals do not know where to start. Regardless of your comfort level with data, assessment and evaluation are necessary in prevention planning and are cornerstones of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)



Use Data for Strategic Planning

Use data to determine what substance misuse, mental health, and interpersonal violence prevention needs exist on campus. You can answer key questions such as; Who is experiencing concerns? Where are the behaviors occurring? Why are students using alcohol and other drugs, or experiencing mental health concerns? Once you have identified the major concerns on your campus, you can plan evidence-based strategies to target the problems and related behaviors.

Use Data to Track Progress

How do we know if the implemented interventions are working? With data! Trend data is crucial to tracking success, or seeing what areas still need attention. This data can also allow for celebration of successes, re-focusing attention in a new area, or considering different ways to target problems.

Use Data to Improve Interventions

If data is not showing a change in behavior, it may be that the selected intervention is not working. Evaluation of specific programs and their implementation can provide insight into necessary adaptations. It can also show that the selected intervention is not right for the population, and that other interventions need to be explored.

Use Data to Expand Services and Remove Barriers

Data can also help clarify what other needs students have in order to increase or improve

For more information, visit pip.missouri.edu

Funded by the Missouri Department of Mental Health, Division of Behavioral Health

services. Additionally, by understanding why students do not seek help or do not access services, barriers can be reduced or removed.

Use Data to Gain Buy-In

Data is like currency. It can be used to 'purchase' or influence time, budgets, and priorities on campus. By showing what health and well-being issues students face, you can engage stakeholders and direct prevention efforts. While not everyone is motivated by data, data-driven decision making is key to success and provides support for your prevention efforts.

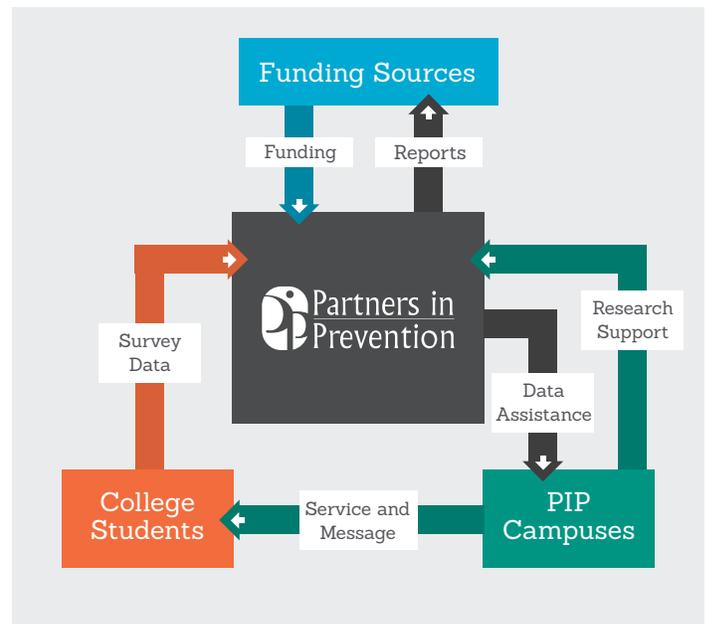
Use Data to Tell a Story

Data can also illustrate the student experience and engage stakeholders and coalition members. It can be used to deliver social norms messages to students. Missouri Assessment of College Health Behavior (MACHB) data can be used to publish campus specific research briefs and 'At a Glance' documents to highlight the key areas of concern for your campus.

How do we Create a Culture of Assessment?

Creating a culture of assessment on campus and within coalitions will increase the knowledge about and familiarity with data. In Partners in Prevention, we have created this culture by regularly using data to drive decisions and creating a feedback loop among our funding sources, our partner institutions and students themselves. The image below illustrates how we use data to report progress to our funders, and in turn receive funds.

We work with our member campuses to collect data and provide support based on the results. The data then helps campuses tailor their services and messages to students. Finally, students supply back the behavioral health data that show outcomes.



Resources for Assessment and Evaluation

- **A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework:** [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)
- **SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework:** [Campus Drug Prevention](#)
- **Prevention with Purpose: A Strategic Planning Guide for Preventing Drug Misuse Among College Students:** [Drug Enforcement Administration](#)
- **Recommended Reading on 'Prevention with Purpose...':** [Missouri Partners in Prevention](#)
- **Community Tool Box:** [The University of Kansas](#)

Written by Margo Leitschuh, Communications Coordinator. Published May 2020.

For more information, visit pip.missouri.edu

Funded by the Missouri Department of Mental Health, Division of Behavioral Health