

## USING DATA TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPROVING HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

### Worksheets and Tips:

#### Communicating Data Results

Sharing information from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) and the National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs (NS-CSHCN) can help you launch or strengthen partnerships and efforts to improve services, policies and programs for children, youth and families. Information from these surveys can help create a shared understanding about the health and health care needs of children and youth, which can be used to motivate stakeholders to take action towards improvement.

There are three steps to begin using your NSCH and NS-CSHCN data findings to inform, motivate, and engage partners in improving services, policies or programs for children, youth and families.

**Step 1: WHO?** Identify potential partners important to addressing your goals for improving services, policies or programs.

**Step 2: WHAT?** Determine what information from the NSCH or NS-CSHCN would be of interest to the people or organizations you want to engage.

**Step 3: WHERE? WHEN? HOW?** Decide the best way to present this information. Think about the best format to use and when, where and how you'd like to disseminate your findings.

Exercises, guidelines and tips you or your team can use for each of these steps are suggested below:

#### STEP 1: WHO?

Pick three partners or stakeholders that you think are important to engage in your efforts to improve services or resolve a key problem in your state.

Stakeholder #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Stakeholder #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Stakeholder #3: \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP 2: WHAT?**

Review the “Guide to Topics and Questions Asked” for the survey(s) you are going to use or search the topics of interest using the DRC search feature.

**Step 2.1** What information is available in the NSCH or NS-CSHCN that your key stakeholders would find valuable and why? Consider issues or populations that these stakeholders can influence.

Table 1: Information you have to share with key stakeholders

Stakeholder	Relevant Data	Rationale: Why is this information useful?
Stakeholder #1		
Stakeholder #2		
Stakeholder #3		

**Step 2.2** Partnerships work best when everyone feels they have something important to contribute. What information may each stakeholder have that you would find valuable and why?

Table 2: Information key stakeholders may have to share with you

Stakeholder	Relevant Information For You	Rationale: Why might this information useful to you?
Stakeholder #1		
Stakeholder #2		
Stakeholder #		

**STEP 3: When? Where? How?**

To ensure that your data from the NSCH or NS-CSHCN is relevant and meaningful it must:

- 1) Be clearly communicated and presented in way that is useful to each stakeholder
- 2) Inform and guide actions that can be taken by each stakeholder to address the issues you present.

**Step 3.1 Audience:** Pick a stakeholder or audience that you have identified in Step 1 and the key data findings from Step 2.

**Step 3.2 Design:** Brainstorm the type, format, content and dissemination of a “report” to this stakeholder using this information. You can also consider integrating other data that you have access to using the worksheet on the following page.

## Worksheet for designing reports using your NSCH data findings

Your Audience/Stakeholder: _____	
Individual topics or measures from the NSCH to include	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> </ol>
Relevant subgroup of children and youth and geographic comparison areas for each NSCH topic or measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>6.</li> </ol>
Other data to include and source of this data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>
Background information and key points to make to establish relevance of your NSCH data findings for your audience.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5.</li> <li>6.</li> </ol>
Tone of the communication (e.g. motivate through emphasizing the negative vs. positive; emphasize the gaps/needs vs. what can be done, etc.)	
Format and length (e.g. 1 page summary, powerpoint, etc.)-see Step 3.3 below for more tips.	
Explanation of data source and validity of findings required	
Actions you want them to take and resource you want them to know about (e.g. come to our meeting, go to our website, tell your doctor...)	
Dissemination and follow-up strategy (e-mail with phone follow-up, etc.)-See Step 3.4 below for more tips.	

### Step 3.3 Decide on a Format

How you deliver your message can be as important as what you have to say. Two commonly used formats for reports include the following:

**Written reports/materials.** Written reports can be brief such as a pamphlet or brochure, or lengthier such as booklet or binder. If you choose a written report, consider any logistical requirements that you may have such as reproduction costs, size (does it have to fit a certain size envelope for mailing?), weight (are you limited by weight in terms of postage costs?), number of pages, binding, etc.

**Web-based reports** are popular and can be easily tailored to specific users. A disadvantage of web based reports is that they will only be available to those with access to the Internet.

### Step 3.4 Determine your Dissemination Strategy

One of the most important factors in the overall success of your ability to “tell the story” from the data can be dissemination. If your audience never receives the data, they cannot use it! “How?” “Where?” and “When?” are all important questions to consider when planning. Here are some different ways you may want to think about dissemination of a data report:

In-Person Meetings – In-person meetings are an extremely valuable way to provide information. They allow you to connect eye to eye with other people and provide a larger context about the value of the report findings.

Mail – Mail can be an effective way to reach each member of your audience as long as you have reliable mailing addresses. Include an introductory letter from someone they trust.

List Serves and Website postings – Increasingly, materials are being disseminated electronically. By distributing information through a list serve or website, you may allow many others to disseminate your information. Be sure that it is posted in a secure format.

Fax – Fax can be an effective way to reach each member of your audience as long as you have reliable fax addresses. Some focus groups and interviews with health care providers have shown that they are more likely to read information when it is faxed as opposed to when it is mailed to their busy offices.

Notification through newsletters, websites, listserves: You can also let audiences know of your materials through notices in newsletters and electronic means of communication. Let people choose how they would like to receive their copy.

Intermediaries – Think about intermediaries that could disseminate this information for you. Are there other family or professional groups or organizations through which you could reach your desired audience? Consider the influence that the intermediary may have on your audience in disseminating the report.

Public availability – Think about making the report publically available in public places such as a local library. This is a good option for providing additional copies after the initial distribution.

No one method is most effective. The key to successfully disseminating your report is to make sure you are reaching your audience at the right place and time. Regardless of the how you disseminate the report, it is important to tell your readers where they can go if they have questions.

### **Additional Tips for Effective Presentation of Data**

Data from the NSCH and the NS-CSHCN is the most useful when it is clearly communicated. Below are some tips and resources to consider.

- Tailor the presentation to the audience and purpose
- Provide background information on the data you use – who is the data about?
- Include pictures, graphics, quotes or stories that connect the findings to real people
- Break out the information in text boxes to make it more digestible
- Keep it brief
- Give an overall picture, and then target specific findings
- Display the data in the most meaningful ways: i.e. 20 % of households or “1 in 5 households”
- Use specific numbers when possible: i.e. 9.8 million children nationally have special health care needs, 12.8 % of the population of children
- Balance positive and negative ways of expressing the findings according to the point you are trying to make: less than a quarter; more than 75%
- Be careful when dealing with very small numbers
- Provide findings in relation to a benchmark, such as state findings compared to national or regional findings
- Explain why the findings presented are important and suggest ways that a specific audience might use the data to improve care
- Credit the source of the data and include when, how and by whom it was collected
- Provide links to additional resources
- Use multiple dissemination strategies to reach as many audiences as possible.  
Provide contact information for questions.

### **Additional Resources**

- 1) Visit [www.nschdata.org](http://www.nschdata.org) for additional tips and resources on communicating data findings to stimulate system change

- 2) Obtain guidelines for **creating health care quality reports** at the TalkingQuality website at [www.talkingquality.gov](http://www.talkingquality.gov)
- 3) For information about focus groups and cognitive interviews the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative has conducted about **reporting quality of care findings**, visit [www.cahmi.org](http://www.cahmi.org)
- 4) The Kansas Health Foundation website <http://www.kansashealth.org> has an **example of an Issue Brief** that can be created for audiences such as the State Medicaid Director
- 5) National Association for State Health Policy (NASHP) works with states to **use health and health care findings** to implement changes in state programs and policies: <http://www.nashp.org/>
- 6) Visit [www.familyvoices.org](http://www.familyvoices.org) for additional family friendly information on using data, links to other data sources and sample reports
- 7) The Center for Children with Special Needs uses a number of successful strategies for **convening various stakeholders**, find out more at <http://www.cshcn.org>
- 8) For information about working with **families of children/adolescents with mental health conditions**, visit the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health at [www.ffcmh.org](http://www.ffcmh.org).