

TIP SHEET: COMPARING SURVEY TYPES FOR MEASURING YOUTH SKILLS AND BELIEFS

SURVEY TYPE	WHAT IT IS	PROS	CONS						
End of Program/Post- Only Surveys	<p>Participants are asked questions at the end of a program only</p> <p>Sample item: “Doing well in school is important to me (Not true at all – Somewhat true – Mostly true – Completely true)”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplest to administer • Least intrusive as it is usually anonymous • Can provide an overall snapshot of program participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot capture change unless pre-program status is known • Not considered a rigorous design 						
Pre-/Post- Surveys	<p>Asks about a topic at the beginning of a program (pre-program) and the end (post-program); responses of individual participants are matched</p> <p>Sample item: “Doing well in school is important to me (Not true at all – Somewhat true – Mostly true – Completely true),” asked at the beginning and end of a program or intervention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered most rigorous design • Capable of capturing change in participants’ skills, attitudes, or behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can underestimate program effects due to response shift bias • Matching requires non-anonymous surveying • Can be hard to have enough “matches” due to attrition • Most resource-intensive 						
Retrospective Pre-/Post- Surveys	<p>Asks about a topic “then” (pre-program) and “now” (post-program); administered at the end of a program only</p> <p>Sample item:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Item</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Before this program</th> <th style="width: 40%;">After this program</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>I can handle stress</td> <td> _ Not true at all _ Somewhat true _ Mostly true _ Completely True </td> <td> _ Not true at all _ Somewhat true _ Mostly true _ Completely True </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Item	Before this program	After this program	I can handle stress	_ Not true at all _ Somewhat true _ Mostly true _ Completely True	_ Not true at all _ Somewhat true _ Mostly true _ Completely True	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for participant reflection • Measures participant perceived change due to program attendance • Addresses response-shift bias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can overestimate program effects • Complex; can be hard for younger participants to understand • Not considered as rigorous as matched pre-/post-
Item	Before this program	After this program							
I can handle stress	_ Not true at all _ Somewhat true _ Mostly true _ Completely True	_ Not true at all _ Somewhat true _ Mostly true _ Completely True							
Reflective Post- Program Surveys	<p>Asks participants to reflect on the effect that a program has had on their skills, beliefs or behaviors</p> <p>Sample item: “This program has helped me to do a better job on my homework (Not true at all – Somewhat true – Mostly true – Completely true)”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplest way to get at perceived program impact • May be more appropriate for young people than retrospective pre-/post- designs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not <i>quantify</i> or show the magnitude of changes in skills, beliefs or behaviors • Not considered rigorous (not “hard” data) 						