

Online resources for identifying evidence-based, out-of-school time programs: A user's guide

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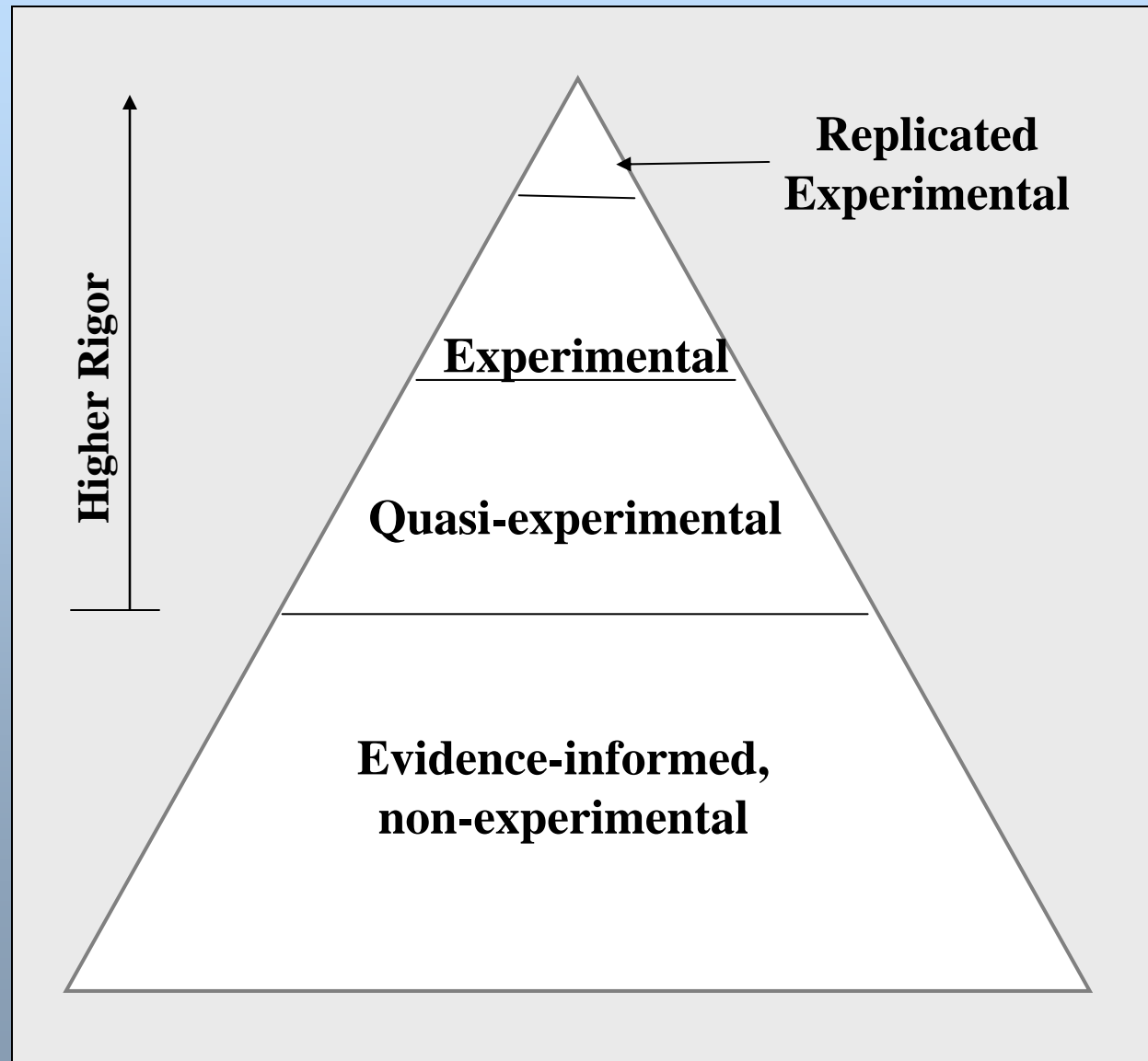
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Purpose

To introduce a research brief that helps organizations seeking to:

- identify evidence-based programs for their community and/or
- broaden or improve their program offerings

What are Evidence-based Programs?



Levels of Evaluation Rigor

Higher Rigor – Experimental designs – evaluation designs with random assignment to a treatment or control group. A program classified ***replicated experimental*** has at least two random assignment studies and has a higher level of rigor than a program classified as ***experimental*** that has only one random assignment study.

Medium Rigor – ***Quasi-experimental designs with comparison group*** but no random assignment

Lower Rigor – ***Quasi-experimental designs with no comparison group*** and no random assignment.

What types of online resources exist?

- Searchable databases
- Interactive program summaries
- Online documents



How do searchable databases vary?

- **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**
 - Databases use different criteria for the programs that they include (only random assignment; only substance use; etc).
- **Sponsors**
 - Sponsors are most often federal agencies or nonprofit research organizations.
- **Breadth and depth**
 - Databases vary in terms of how much information they provide about a program.



How do searchable databases vary? (continued)

- **Flexibility of search methods**
 - The most flexible search methods are those that allow users to enter their own keywords and those that allow users to select multiple criteria at once to narrow a search.
- **Search terms**
 - Databases vary according to which keywords or criteria users can apply to narrow their search.
- **Definition of evidence level**
 - What one database designates as a *model* or highly effective program may be listed a *promising* program in another database.



How do searchable databases vary? (continued)

- **Live versus archived**
 - Some databases include information on evidence-based programs up to a certain year and not beyond that time.



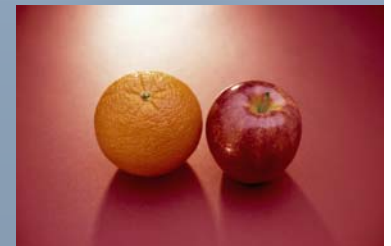
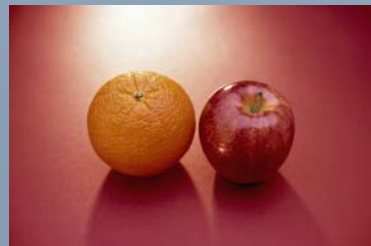
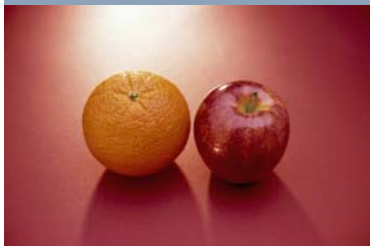
While searching for a program... some issues to consider

- Plan programming with **key stakeholders**.
- Identify **short-term and long-term** outcomes.
- Identify online resources that **address targeted outcomes**.
- Recognize that evidence-based programs for many outcomes **may not currently exist**.
- **Search multiple databases** (if possible).
- **Keep searching** – evidence-based ratings may change over time and new programs may be added.



Questions to consider while searching for an evidence-based program

- Has the program been evaluated with your target population?
- Does the program address risk factors that are relevant to your target population or community or both?
- For the types of interventions you seek, what level of evaluation evidence or rigor is available?
- Do desired outcomes match the achieved outcomes?



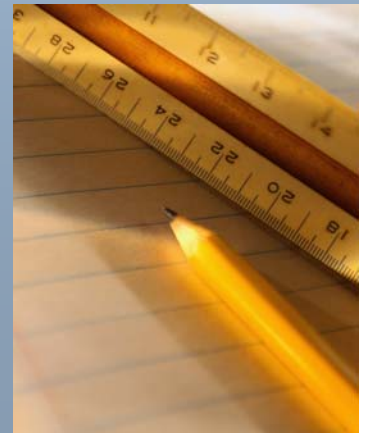
Questions to consider, continued

- How long does it take to implement the program?
- Does the program have a manual or curriculum?
- Is the program active or is it no longer being implemented?
- What resources are necessary to implement and sustain the program?



Three follow-up steps

1. Assess requirements for implementing the program with fidelity.
2. Determine whether implementation is feasible and sustainable.
3. Develop an organized system for collecting data on program quality, implementation, and outcomes.



Conclusions

- This research brief may be considered one piece of a larger *toolkit* necessary for understanding how to select, implement, and evaluate evidence-based programs and practices. The choice of the most useful database will vary depending upon the goals and circumstances of the user.
- Given the need for higher-quality programs and the current economic and political climate, knowing how to identify and select evidence-based programs adds value to any organization seeking to improve outcomes for children and youth.

Brief Research-to-Results

Child
TRENDS

...Information about types of evidence-based programs and online resources for out-of-school time funders, administrators, and practitioners.

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ONLINE RESOURCES FOR IDENTIFYING EVIDENCE-BASED, OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS: A USER'S GUIDE

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PURPOSE

Child Trends produced this Guide to assist funders, administrators, and practitioners in identifying and navigating online resources to find evidence-based programs that may be appropriate for their target populations and communities. The Guide offers an overview of 22 of these resources—12 searchable online databases, 2 online interactive summaries, and 8 online documents—that offer information on a range of evidence-based, intervention programs. These programs include, but are not limited to, out-of-school time programs. Issues to consider while reviewing these online resources and ways to determine where particular programs lie on a continuum of evidence are discussed.

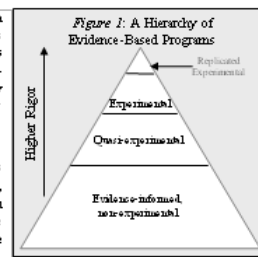
WHAT IS AN EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM?

As the varied criteria described in this Guide make clear, there is no one, firmly established and universally accepted way to define evidence-based programs. The determination of whether a program is evidence-based varies across government agencies, research organizations, and other entities dedicated to promoting evidence-based policy and practice. Some definitions are more stringent than are others.

Although it is generally acknowledged that random assignment experiments provide the strongest evidence of a program's impact, some researchers suggest that, to be deemed effective and highly rigorous, programs not only must be experimentally evaluated, but evaluations must be *replicated* and show evidence of *sustained* impacts. Alternately, some researchers would argue for the inclusion of programs that have been evaluated using well-executed, quasi-experimental designs, and others see the benefits of expanding the definition to include evidence-informed programs.

As illustrated in *Figure 1*, relatively few programs have had a replicated, long-term experimental evaluation; more programs have had one experimental evaluation. Still more programs have had a quasi-experimental evaluation, while evidence-informed programs comprise the largest category. By evidence-informed, we refer to programs that are guided by child development theory, practitioner wisdom, and findings from basic research.

A range of evidence exists within each of these categories as well. For instance, among experimentally-evaluated programs, some programs may be evaluated by an independent research investigator (higher rigor), whereas other programs may be evaluated by the research investigator who developed the program (lower rigor/less independence).



What online resources are included in the brief?

See Table 1: Online Resources

TABLE 1: ONLINE RESOURCES	General Information		
Online Databases (Name, Sponsor, and URL)	Cost Info.	Program Contact Info	Number of Programs
LINKS - Lifecourse Intervention to Nurture Kids Successfully Child Trends http://www.childtrends.org/links <i>Updated regularly. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.</i>	Yes	Yes	364
NREPP - National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/ <i>Updated regularly. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.</i>	Yes	Yes	129
Promising Practices Network Programs that Work Promising Practices Network on Children, Families and Communities, RAND Corporation http://www.promisingpractices.net/programs.asp <i>Updated regularly.</i>	Yes	Yes	68
FindYouthInfo.gov Program Tool FindYouthInfo.gov http://findyouthinfo.gov/DefaultSearch.aspx?sc=ProgramTool <i>Updated regularly.</i>	Yes	Yes	200
Ohio State CLEX Evidence-based Program Database Ohio State Center for Learning Excellence (CLEX) http://cle.osu.edu/evidence-based-programs/ <i>Programs updated until 2008. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.</i>	Yes	No	101

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<p>Western CAPT Best and Promising Programs Center for Substance Abuse Prevention http://casat.unr.edu/bestpractices/search.php <i>Programs updated until 2008. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.</i></p>	Yes	Yes	140
<p>Blueprints Model Programs Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/index.html <i>Updated regularly.</i></p>	Yes	No	31
<p>What Works Clearinghouse U.S. Department of Education http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/intervention/ <i>Updated regularly. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.</i></p>	No	No	93
<p>NDPC/N Model Programs National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) http://www.dropoutprevention.org/model_programs/default.htm <i>Updated regularly.</i></p>	Yes	Yes	121

TABLE 1: ONLINE RESOURCES	General Information		
Online Databases (Name, Sponsor, and URL)	Cost Info	Program Contact Info	Number Of Programs
HFRP Out of School Time Database Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) http://www.hfrp.org/out-of-school-time/ost-database-bibliography/database <i>Updated regularly. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.</i>	Yes	Yes	132
OJJDP Model Programs Guide The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) http://www.dsgOnline.com/mpg2.5/mpg_index.htm Updated regularly. Users may narrow search by selecting multiple criteria at once.	Yes	No	209
Interactive Online Summaries (Name, Sponsor, and URL)			
Best Evidence Encyclopedia John Hopkins University Dept. of Education http://www.bestevidence.org/ <i>Updated regularly.</i>	No	Yes	641
Strengthening America's Families Effective Family Programs for Prevention of Delinquency http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org <i>Programs updated until 1999.</i>	Yes	Yes	35

TABLE 1: ONLINE RESOURCES	General Information		
Selective Online Documents (Name, Sponsor, and URL)	Cost Info	Program Contact Info	Number of Programs
Campbell Collaboration Systematic Reviews Campbell Collaboration http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/campbell_library/index.php	No	No	N/A
Compendium of HIV Prevention Interventions with Evidence of Effectiveness Centers for Disease Control and Prevention http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/prev_prog/rep/resources/index.htm#_Identifying_Evidence-Based_Interventions	Yes	No	6
Exemplary and Promising Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free Schools Programs U. S. Department of Education http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01/index.html	Yes	No	42

Note:

Program administrators seeking to improve current programs may also want to consult additional resources.

- [Child Trends](#) has published numerous briefs outlining effective and promising practices in out-of-school time (see Table 2). Two forthcoming briefs entitled “Practices to Avoid in Out-of-School Time Programs” and “Practices to Foster in Out-of-School Time Programs” may also serve as useful guides
- Resources published by other organizations dedicated to out-of-school time, such as the [National Institute for Out-of-School Time](#) and the [Harvard Family Research Project](#) may also be consulted.

Table 3: Selected Child Trends Resources for Aiding Program Improvement

TOPIC	RESOURCES (Available at www.childtrends.org/youthdevelopment)
Program Quality	Kahn, J., Bronte-Tinkew, J., & Theokas, C. (2007). How can I assess the quality of my program? Tools for out-of-school time program practitioners.
Program Planning	Burkhauser, M., Bronte-Tinkew, J., & Kennedy, E. (2008). Building community partnerships: Tips for out-of-school time programs. Hamilton, J., & Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2007). Logic models in out-of-school time programs: What are they and why are they important?
Program Implementation	Kennedy, E., Wilson, B., Valladeres, S., & Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2007). Improving attendance and retention in out-of-school time programs. Metz, A. J., Blase, K., & Bowie, L. (2007). Implementing evidence-based practices: Six “drivers” of success: Part 3 in a series on fostering the adoption of evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs. Metz, A. J., Bandy, T., & Burkhauser, M. (2009). Staff selection: What’s important for out-of-school time programs? Part 1 in a series on implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs: The role of frontline staff. Metz, A. J., Burkhauser, M., & Bowie, L. (2009). Training out-of-school time staff: Part 2 in a series on implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs: The role of frontline staff. Burkhauser, M., & Metz, A. J. (2009). Using coaching to provide ongoing support and supervision to out-of-school-time staff: Part 3 in a series on implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs: The role of frontline staff. Collins, A., & Metz, A. J. (2009). How program administrators can support out-of-school time staff: Part 4 in a series on implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs: The role of organizational context and external influences. Burkhauser, M., & Metz, A. J. (2009). Building systems-level partnerships: Part 5 in a series on implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs: The role of organizational-level activities. Bandy, T., Burkhauser, M., & Metz, A. J. (2009). Data-driven decision making in out-of-school time programs: Part 6 in a series on implementing evidence-based practices in out-of-school time programs: The role of organizational-level activities.

Table 3: Selected Child Trends Resources for Aiding Program Improvement (continued)

TOPIC	RESOURCES (Available at www.childtrends.org/youthdevelopment)
Effective Practices	<p>Collins, A., Bronte-Tinkew, J., & Logan, C. (2008). Strategies for improving out-of-school programs in rural communities.</p> <p>Kennedy, E., Bronte-Tinkew, J., & Matthews, G. (2007). Enhancing cultural competence in out-of-school time programs: What is it, and why is it important?</p> <p>Horowitz, A., & Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2007). Building, engaging, and supporting family and parental involvement in out-of-school time programs.</p>
Process Evaluation	<p>Bowie, L., & Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2008). Process evaluations: A guide for out-of-school time practitioners: Part 3 in a series on practical evaluation methods.</p>
Outcomes Evaluation	<p>Allen, T., & Bronte-Tinkew, J. (2008). Outcome evaluations: A guide for out-of-school time practitioners: Part 4 in a series on practical evaluation methods.</p> <p>Moore, K.A., & Metz, A. (2008). Random assignment evaluation studies: A guide for out-of-school time program practitioners: Part 5 in a series on practical evaluation methods.</p> <p>Moore, K.A., & Metz, A. (2008). Quasi-experimental evaluations: A guide for out-of-school time program practitioners: Part 6 in a series on practical evaluation methods.</p>