



prioritizing  
needs  
evidence2success

## Assessing the Strengths and Needs in Your Community

Evidence2Success brings key stakeholders to the table with the data they need to set priorities for young people. That requires getting a complete picture of the needs and strengths of children and youth in focus neighborhoods, and measuring progress over time. The Annie E. Casey Foundation offers Evidence2Success communities access to the Youth Experience Survey to get this comprehensive picture. The survey, administered throughout the public school district of a community using Evidence2Success, will help the Evidence2Success partners identify where it makes sense to work together and direct investments to help more children grow up healthy, ready for school and prepared for success in life.

### Insights in Five Key Areas

In contrast to other school-based surveys, the Youth Experience Survey provides a comprehensive picture of how kids are doing, with questions geared to identifying the most effective evidence-based approaches. It generates insights in five key areas – education and skills attainment, emotional well-being, physical health, positive behavior and positive relationships – as well as the strengths and challenges that influence their development. It also helps identify the factors that put children at risk for developing problems in the future, as well as the factors that can protect youth from those risks. Survey results can help communities see the links among risks, protective factors and well-being and highlight areas in which public agencies and communities should focus their investments.

The survey questions are derived from more than 20 years of extensive research. They have been tested on large diverse samples of youth to ensure that they accurately and consistently measure each behavior or factor.

By administering the survey at regular intervals, city and state agencies can benchmark and track trends in child well-being not only to achieve Evidence2Success goals, but also to guide other efforts and generate additional support on behalf of young people. Students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 – who are approximately 11 to 18 years old and attend public schools in the participating communities – will take the survey at school. An additional survey is available to gather information from adults on children ages birth to 8; communities interested in this option can work with the Foundation to determine the best way to administer the survey.

## Administering the Survey

In addition to the survey itself, the Foundation provides a manual to lead districts through survey administration protocols step by step and help them identify students by neighborhoods of focus.

The Foundation and partners will provide support to the school district to prepare for the survey administration and data analysis so that the community builds capacity to re-administer the survey regularly over time and collaborate with local data partners for data analysis. The Foundation support for the initial survey administration will include survey preparation, technical assistance for the data collection process, scanning completed surveys (if paper survey instruments are used) and preparing analysis plans for school and district data reports.

City and state agencies and local communities have access to their aggregated or combined data. Profiles combine data by school, neighborhood or city. Individual responses are not shared; survey administrators take steps to protect children's identities.

The survey can be administered in print or online, and typically takes a 50-minute class period.

## Gathering and Acting on Results

Evidence2Success communities have several options for analyzing data: forming an alliance with a data partner such as a local university, outsourcing the work to an organization with data expertise or engaging school district data experts or other experts in the Evidence2Success partnership. The local Evidence2Success team creates separate reports for the district as well as for each focus neighborhood, along with a written plan for disseminating the reports to the community.

Once the results are in, the local Evidence2Success partners look at them together to decide which priority areas emerge from the data and what they want to tackle together with a new approach. That sets the table for the process of choosing proven programs at the core of Evidence2Success.

Evidence2Success communities also can use the surveys to prevent gaps or doubling up of programs and services; make budget decisions and seek support for additional funding; and direct investments toward proven prevention and early intervention programs to avoid problems before they occur.

## Learn More

To learn more about the Youth Experience Survey and other tools and technical assistance for Evidence2Success communities, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org) or contact the [Evidence-Based Practice team](#).

*Evidence2Success promotes healthy child development by helping communities and public systems work together to use data to understand how children are doing; select proven programs to enhance strengths and address needs; and develop financing and action plans to support the ongoing use of those proven programs. The framework was developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a private charitable organization dedicated to building a brighter future for children and their families, and several partner organizations.*