

# How to Start the Evaluation Process

---

**Updated:** 6.14.07

Why is it important to evaluate the results of your campaign? Evaluation will allow you to:

## **Measure the results of your efforts**

You, your staff and members of your organization will expend time, energy and funds to plan and execute activities designed to increase awareness among eligible, uninsured adults and families with eligible, uninsured children about available health care coverage programs. These activities will generate measurable results. Being able to explain the results in your community is a significant component of raising awareness about this important issue.

## **Demonstrate your success**

Positive results will demonstrate to your team, the organization and the community that the campaign has been a success. Success is a strong motivator for further involvement.

## **Adjust future communications strategies**

By collecting information from hotline data, media coverage and other evaluation measures, your coalition can learn important lessons that will enhance and inform future efforts. You will be able to determine which aspects of your plan worked well and which might be improved for the next time around.

## **Seek additional media coverage**

You may choose to announce the success of your efforts to the public, businesses, opinion leaders and policy-makers to seek additional media coverage. This is an opportunity to broadcast the positive effect that your organization and organizations across America are having on the lives of uninsured, including the 9 million uninsured children, in America.

## **How Do I Get Started?**

It is important to plan campaign tracking as part of your overall communications planning.

### **Create an evaluation team**

- As you begin planning your communications activities, discuss evaluation too. Identify realistic outcomes.

- Talk with others on your team. Get their ideas about measuring the success of your campaign and determine the data that you can realistically track.
- Consider inviting an evaluation expert to join your team to assist in planning.

### **Determine what you want to measure**

- Assess your available resources and list the results you anticipate. Changes in the number of calls to the hotline may help you track the number of people moved by your efforts to get more information about children and family health coverage programs and apply for coverage.
- You might consider collecting information about how the callers learned about the hotline phone number.
- Counting the number and type of news stories will help determine whether your media outreach has been successful.

### **Contact those who will provide the data**

- Ask contacts such as the hotline manager what they can provide and within what period of time.
- To collect information on news stories, consider using a clipping service (e.g., Burrelle's for print and Video Monitoring Service (VMS) for TV and radio).
- If your media budget does not include monitoring, ask members of your organization (or coalition if you are working in one) evaluation committee to monitor the media, including clipping articles from the newspaper and taping news broadcasts.
- Conduct an Internet search. For example, [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) is an excellent resource.
- You may consider approaching the communications department of a local university to determine whether faculty and graduate students would assist you in collecting and analyzing local media coverage free of charge. They may find the effort worth studying.
- Your local newspapers and television stations will likely post their coverage on their Web sites. If you do not know their addresses, try a search engine or go to [www.usnpl.com](http://www.usnpl.com) for links to newspapers nationwide.

### **Review samples of the data collected in your state**

- Actually seeing the data that is available will help you set realistic goals.

### **Begin collecting the data**

- Make arrangements with the data person or media monitoring service to send you the data on a regular basis.
- Establish a beginning date, an end date, and the frequency of collection or reporting (e.g., weekly, monthly).

### **Create a database**

- Set up your own database and regularly enter the data.