

Improving Youth Voice in Evaluations: Strategies for Collecting Better Survey Data from Youth

Dana Linnell Wanzer
Tiffany Berry

CLAREMONT EVALUATION CENTER
 Claremont Graduate University

Do you agree that your community curfew and loitering laws are fair?

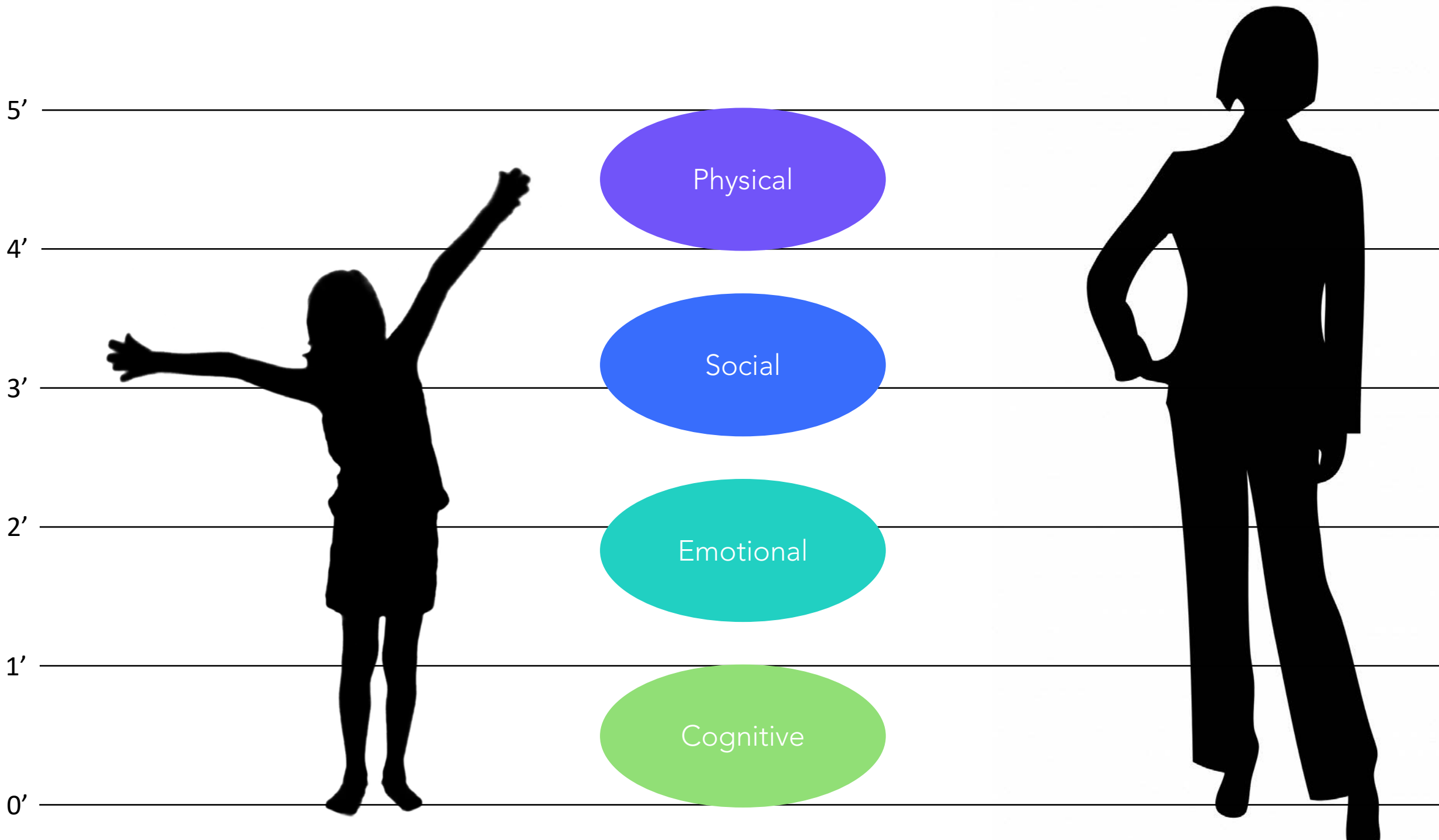
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Slightly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

Do you agree that your community curfew and loitering laws are fair?

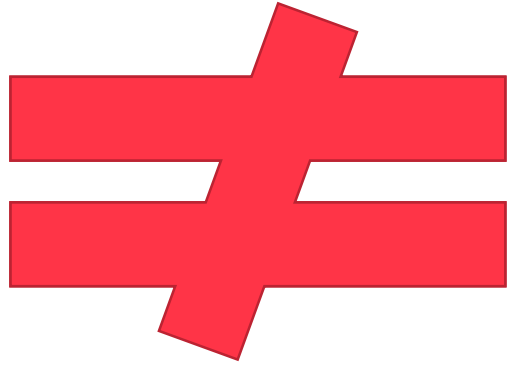
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“Evaluators have the responsibility to understand and respect differences among participants, such as differences in their... **age**, and to account for potential implications of these differences when planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting evaluations”



age



developmental
level





Public Statement on
CULTURAL
COMPETENCE IN
EVALUATION

Adopted April 2011

- Acknowledge the complexity of cultural **identity**
- Recognize the dynamics of status and **power**
- Recognize and eliminate **bias** in language
- Employ **culturally** appropriate methods
- Include **cultural expertise** on the evaluation team

WRITING
QUESTIONS

ADMINISTRATION

QUESTIONS





WRITING QUESTIONS



1. Is the construct developmentally appropriate?
2. Is the question worded appropriately for participants' developmental levels?



WRITING QUESTIONS



Is the construct developmentally appropriate?

Is the construct ***operationalized*** to be developmentally appropriate?



WRITING QUESTIONS



Is the question worded appropriately for participants' developmental levels?

Dillman's Principles

Adapted for Children and Adolescents!



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words

How many occupants does your household have?



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words

~~How many occupants does your household have?~~
How many people live in your household?



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words

~~How many occupants does your household have?~~

~~How many people live in your household?~~

How many people live in your house?



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!
 - c. Use complete and not complex sentences

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Date: ____/____/____



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!
 - c. Use complete and not complex sentences

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Date: ____/____/____

How old are you? _____



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!
 - c. Use complete and not complex sentences



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!
 - c. Use complete and not complex sentences
 - d. No double-barreled questions

New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!
 - c. Use complete and not complex sentences
 - d. No double-barreled questions

I often set a goal but later choose to pursue (follow) a different one.



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. Simple > specialized words
 - b. Fewer words = better!
 - c. Use complete sentences
 - d. No complex sentences
 - e. No double-barreled questions
 - f. No negatively worded questions



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. ...
 - f. No negatively worded questions

Do you favor or oppose not having to take naps?

☐ Favor

☐ Oppose



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
 - a. ...
 - f. No negatively worded questions

Do you favor or oppose ~~not~~ having to take naps?

☐ Favor

☐ Oppose



Dillman's Principles



1. Simple questions!
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Written at or below reading level!

Dillman's Principles

Written at or below reading level!

Text To Score

✎ Text

💾 Save

↺ Load

🕒 History

❓ Help

🎓 Measure Readability

New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.

Setbacks (delays and obstacles) don't discourage me. I bounce back from disappointments faster than most people.

I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.

I am a hard worker.

I often set a goal but later choose to pursue (follow) a different one.

I have difficulty keeping my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.

I finish whatever I begin.

I am diligent (hard working and careful).

Readability Rating ⓘ

RATING: **A**

💡 You are using too many long words. Try replacing some of them with shorter alternatives.

📄 Download Results as PDF

<https://readable.io/text/>

Dillman's Principles

Written at or below reading level!

Text To Score

TextSaveLoadHistoryHelp

Measure Readability

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Readability Grade Levels	
Readability Formula	Grade
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	5.9
Gunning Fog Index	8.4
Coleman-Liau Index	7.6
SMOG Index	9.2
Automated Readability Index	4.8
Average Grade Level	7.2

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Dillman's Principles

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Text Quality		
Sentences > 30 Syllables	0	0%
<u>Sentences > 20 Syllables</u>	2	22%
Words > 4 Syllables	0	0%
<u>Words > 12 Letters</u>	1	1%
<u>Passive Voice Count</u>	1	2%
<u>Adverb Count</u>	5	5%
Cliché Count	0	0%

<https://readable.io/text/>



Dillman's Principles



Written at or below reading level!

Other resources:

- https://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp
- Microsoft Word:
 - File → Options → Proofing → "Check grammar with spelling" & "Show readability statistics"



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers

New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers

New ideas and projects ~~sometimes~~ distract me from previous ones.



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers
 - b. Avoid respondents having to make calculations



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers
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What percentage of days last year did you read?



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers
 - b. Avoid respondents having to make calculations

~~What percentage of days last year did you read?~~

About how many books did you read last month?



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers
 - b. Avoid respondents having to make calculations
 - c. Avoid open-ended questions when close-ended questions can be used

About how many books did you read last month?

Less than 5

☐

6-10

☐

11-15

☐

16-20

☐

21 or more

☐



Dillman's Principles



2. Easy and clear questions!
 - a. Avoid vague quantifiers
 - b. Avoid too specific questions
 - c. Avoid respondents having to make calculations
 - d. Avoid open-ended questions when close-ended questions can be used

Avoid open-ended questions for children



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative



Dillman's Principles



- 3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative

Do you agree that you should read books?

Disagree

☐

Neutral

☐

Slightly agree

☐

Mostly agree

☐

Strongly agree

☐



Dillman's Principles



- 3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative

Do you agree that you should read books?

Strongly
disagree

☐

Disagree

☐

Neutral

☐

Agree

☐

Strongly
agree

☐



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative
 - b. State both sides of attitude in question stems

Dillman's Principles

3. Response options

- a. Equal number of positive and negative
- b. State both sides of attitude in question stems

Do you agree that you should read books?

Strongly
disagree

☐

Disagree

☐

Neutral

☐

Agree

☐

Strongly
agree

☐



Dillman's Principles



- 3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative
 - b. State both sides of attitude in question stems

Do you disagree or agree that you should read books?

Strongly
disagree

☐

Disagree

☐

Neutral

☐

Agree

☐

Strongly
agree

☐



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative
 - b. State both sides of attitude in question stems
 - c. Mutually exclusive and exhaustive options

What is your age?

10-15

☐

15-20

☐

20-25

☐

25-30

☐

30-35

☐



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options
 - a. Equal number of positive and negative
 - b. State both sides of attitude in question stems
 - c. Mutually exclusive and exhaustive options
 - d. Avoid check-all-that apply question formats



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options

Four or fewer response options for children



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options

Four or fewer response options for children

Completely label response options



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options

Four or fewer response options for children

Completely label response options

Do you disagree or agree that you should read books?

Strongly
disagree

☐☐☐☐

Strongly
agree

☐



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options

Four or fewer response options for children
Completely label response options

Do you disagree or agree that you should read books?

Strongly
disagree

☐

Disagree

☐

Neutral

☐

Agree

☐

Strongly
agree

☐



Dillman's Principles



3. Response options

Four or fewer response options for children

Completely label response options

Visual response options can be useful

How do you feel about reading books?





Dillman's Principles



4. Recall questions

Avoid unless the question can be directly retrieved from memory

- a. Provide appropriate time referents
- b. Use cognitive design techniques to improve recall (e.g., prompts)

QUESTIONS?





DESIGN



- Design of survey: Dillman's Principles!



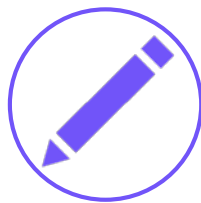
Dillman's Principles













































- Surveys should be easy to visually navigate:
 - Distinguish things by symbols, font, color, space
 - Use consistent formatting



Dillman's Principles



RESPOND TO THESE ITEMS ACCORDING TO A MODERATE AMOUNT OF MARIJUANA – HOWEVER YOU DEFINE MODERATE:

PLEASE USE A BLACK PEN Shade circles like this: ● Not like this:  		1 DISAGREE STRONGLY	2 DISAGREE SOMEWHAT	3 UNCERTAIN	4 AGREE SOMEWHAT	5 AGREE STRONGLY
1 2 3 4 5						
    	imeq71					
    						
    						
    						
    						
    						
    						
    						
	imeq78					



Dillman's Principles



1. What is your race?					
<input type="radio"/> White	<input type="radio"/> Asian/Pacific Islander			<input type="radio"/> Other	
<input type="radio"/> African American	<input type="radio"/> Native American				
<input type="radio"/> Hispanic/Latino	<input type="radio"/> Mixed Origin				
2. Are you...					
<input type="radio"/> Male			<input type="radio"/> Female		
3. How old are you?					
<input type="radio"/> 10	<input type="radio"/> 12	<input type="radio"/> 14	<input type="radio"/> 16	<input type="radio"/> 18	
<input type="radio"/> 11	<input type="radio"/> 13	<input type="radio"/> 15	<input type="radio"/> 17	<input type="radio"/> 19 or older	
4. What grade are you in?					
<input type="radio"/> 6th	<input type="radio"/> 7th	<input type="radio"/> 8th	<input type="radio"/> 9th	<input type="radio"/> 10th	<input type="radio"/> 11th <input type="radio"/> 12th



Dillman's Principles

4. Some of the questions have the following format:

	NO!	no	yes	YES!
EXAMPLE: The Dallas Cowboys are a good football team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

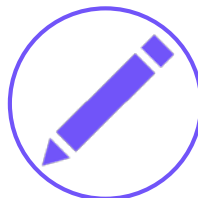
Mark (the BIG) **NO!** if you think the statement is definitely not true for you.

Mark (the little) no if you think the statement is mostly not true for you.

Mark (the little) yes if you think the statement is mostly true for you.

Mark (the BIG) **YES!** if you think the statement is definitely true for you.

	NO!	no	yes	YES!
49. I'd like to get out of my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
50. If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood I now live in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
51. I like my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
52. I feel safe in my neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Dillman's Principles

Full Name: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Gender:

☐

Male

☐

Female

☐

Other

Have you been in _____ before this year? Yes ☐ No ☐

**Please be truthful and honest when answering all questions.
There are no right or wrong answers!**

Your answers will help improve _____!

1. Please tell us the #1 reason why you joined in _____. (Check only ONE answer.)

☐

My parents wanted me to attend.

☐

My friends wanted me to attend.

☐

My teacher/principal wanted me to attend.

☐

I wanted to attend because I enjoy _____

☐

I wanted to attend because I enjoy the activities.

☐

I wanted to attend because I need more academic support.

☐

There was nothing else better to do.

☐

Other: _____

2. Think about a typical day afterschool. What would you normally do after school if you were not in _____?



Dillman's Principles



How much do you disagree or agree with these statements?

11.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a.	I am confident I will graduate from high school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	What I learn in school will help me prepare for college.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	I set goals that will help me get to college.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	I believe I can successfully transition to college after high school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	I am confident that I will go to college.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	I am taking courses now that are needed to go to college.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	I understand how to apply to college.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	What I learn in school will help me get the job I want.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	I am confident that I will get the job I want.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	I am aware of careers that match my interests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	I am confident I will reach my career goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Dillman's Principles



12. For the questions below, please check Yes, No, or Don't Know.							
a.	I am on-track academically to graduate high school.	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	I am on-track academically to enter a 4-year university.	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	I am taking courses that fulfill the A-G course requirements to enter a 4-year university.	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. What is your GPA? <i>If you do not know, please estimate to the best of your abilities.</i>				
0.0-0.5 <i>Mostly Fs</i>	0.5-1.5 <i>Mostly Ds</i>	1.5-2.5 <i>Mostly Cs</i>	2.5-3.5 <i>Mostly Bs</i>	3.5-4.0 <i>Mostly As</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. The following questions are for <u>JUNIORS AND SENIORS ONLY</u>.						
For the questions below, please check Yes, No, or Don't Know.						
Taken the practice SAT or ACT	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taken the SAT or ACT	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visited a college	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applied to a college	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Filled out the FAFSA	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>



DESIGN



- Design of survey: Dillman's Principles!
- Introductions and instructions
 - Should be placed exactly where the information is needed
 - If special instructions are essential, write them as part of the question



DESIGN



- Design of survey: Dillman's Principles!
- Introductions and instructions
 - Should be placed exactly where the information is needed
 - If special instructions are essential, write them as part of the question
- Length
 - As short as possible! Consider attention spans.

QUESTIONS?





ADMINISTRATION



- Consent and assent
 - Parents *and* youth



ADMINISTRATION



- Consent and assent
 - Parents *and* youth

Parents

Required

- Passive or
- Active

Youth

Recommended

Check with your IRB!



ADMINISTRATION



- Consent and assent
 - Parents *and* youth
- Paper vs online surveys
 - Computer literacy and access



ADMINISTRATION



- Consent and assent
 - Parents *and* youth
- Paper vs online surveys
 - Computer literacy and access
- Administration guides



ADMINISTRATION



- Consent and assent
 - Parents *and* youth
- Paper vs online surveys
 - Computer literacy and access
- Administration guides
- Pretesting
 - Panel of experts, pilot testing, cognitive interviews

QUESTIONS?





ANALYSIS



- Cronbach's alpha
 - Tend to increase as age/grade increases



CRONBACH'S ALPHA





ANALYSIS



- Cronbach's alpha
 - Tend to increase as age/grade increases
- Item statistics
 - Difficulty: % who got item "correct"
 - Discrimination: item-total correlation



DIFFICULTY





DISCRIMINATION





ANALYSIS



- Cronbach's alpha
 - Tend to increase as age/grade increases
- Item statistics
 - Difficulty: % who got item "correct"
 - Discrimination: item-total correlation
- Factor analysis
 - Determine if factor structure is relevant
 - Multigroup CFA to determine if younger children interpret the same as older

Main Takeaways

1. Think about your audience!
2. Age is not the same thing as developmental level!
3. Pretest your surveys!

QUESTIONS?



@DanaWanzer



Dana@DanaWanzer.com