



**Needs Assessments Processess, Methods and Examples**

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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**Introduction**

One of the first priorities for a new Extension educator or agent is to conduct a needs assessment to inform their programming (Caravella, 2006). Needs assessment involves ascertaining the current circumstances and understanding what is desired in the future, and comparing the two (Altschuld & Watkins, 2014). Altschuld and Watkins (2014) further state that needs assessment also includes judgments related to prioritizing the identified needs to guide programming and planning decisions. Angima, Etuk, and King (2014) state that a solid needs assessment is the foundation of a successful Extension program. Needs assessment is an essential step in the program planning, development, and evaluation cycle (Etling & Thomas, 1995). Needs assessment also has been identified as one of the key educational competencies for Extension educators (Ghimire, 2010; Koundinya, 2010). The value of needs assessment for Extension programming relies on its ability to succesfully identify stakeholder needs, and be empowered with the necessary information to design programs, products and services to meet those needs (Garst & McCawley, 2015).

Many state Extension systems require Extension faculty to conduct a systematic and thorough needs assessment, and document the results in their reviews. In this context, it is important to have an annotated bibiliography focused on needs assessment processes and methods with relevant examples for Extension professionals. This annotated bibliography is Extension-centric with examples from other state Extension systems and community-based needs assessments related to Extension programming.The first section has studies related to processes, methods, and types of needs assessments. The second section contains examples of needs assessments of various types, scopes, and focuses. This bibliography is part of a larger set of educational and training resources on Needs Assessment, Program Development, Program Evaluation, and Impact Writing and Story Telling developed by the Western Regional Evaluation Network (WREN).

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**Section 1**

**Needs Assessment Processes and Methods**

**Batsche, C., Hernandez, M., Montenegro, M. C. (1999). Community needs assessment with Hispanic, Spanish-monolingual residents. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, *22*(1), 13-20.** [**https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-7189(98)00036-6**](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-7189%2898%2900036-6)

The authors argue for the importance of needs assessment to ensure representation of the diverse population that live in the community. The authors describe methods to increase participation of Hispanic residents in community needs assessment activities, based on their experience with needs assessment activites in Tampa, FL. These suggestions are in regards to: 1. Defining the population, 2. Estimating the population size, 3. Selecting the sample, 4. Translating the survey, 5. Gaining access to respondents, 6. Designing and administering the survey, 7. Timing of interviews, 8. Location of interviews, 9. Interpreting the results, 10. Summary of findings, 11. Disseminating the findings, and 12. Strength based assessment.

**Bridges, C. (2008). Identifying agriculture and forestry educational needs using spatial analysis techniques. *Journal of Extension*, *46*(3), 3TOT6.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2008june/tt6.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2008june/tt6.php)

The author argues for the use of spatial analysis techniques to identify agriculture and forestry educational needs. The author argues that needs assessments are important to prioritize educational programs towards producers, and that given the need for onsite instruction in agricultural education, understanding spatial variation in agriculture is key. Thi article presents a simple method to combine needs assessments with spatial analysis techniques like Geographic Information Systems. The author argues that this method has potential to understand changes in agricultural practices and to prioritize where Extension efforts should be targeted.

**Caravella, J. (2006). A needs assessment method for Extension educators. *Journal of Extension*, *44*(1), 1TOT2.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2006february/tt2.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2006february/tt2.php)

This article presents various needs assessment methods used by the Family Living Extension agent in rural Wisconsin. Needs assessments or situational analysis are presented as the first step in an ongoing plan to evaluate the local environment in which Extension functions to identify priority program focus. The article describes the methods used in this needs assessment, which include: census data, existing local needs surveys, and conducting interviews with key informants (*n*= 25). The key informants included people from county government departments, law enforcement, the court system, not-for-profit agencies, and religious organizations.

**Donaldson. J., & Franck, K. (2016). Needs assessment guidebook for Extension professionals. *The University of Tennessee Extension Publications*. PB 1839.** [**https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1839.pdf**](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB1839.pdf)

This publication is a guidebook on how to organize needs assessments. It provides details of the three phases of conducting an effective needs assessment: exploration, assessment, and utilization. Different methods for each phase are provided, such as document reviews, individual and group methods (such as key informants, personal interviews, questions for interview, or committees, focus groups, surveys, open listing sessions, brainstorming, concept mapping, among others), interpretation of results and communicating the results of the needs assessment. Each section contains useful tools to design, conduct and interpret effective needs assessments.

**Ekins, J. (2018). Extension involvement in collaborative groups: An alternative for gathering stakeholder input. *Journal of Extension*, *56*(2). 2IAW5.** [**https://joe.org/joe/2018april/iw5.php**](https://joe.org/joe/2018april/iw5.php)

The author proposed an alternative for community educational needs assessment to focus group research, which consists of participant observation research with collaborative stakeholder groups. The author compares focus group research with collaborative stakeholder group observation in different dimensions, provides different examples of published work with this method, and concludes that the method provides a robust assessment, and in addition, offers great networking opportunities and collaborative sources of information.

**Ennis, G., & West, D. (2010). Exploring the potential of social network analysis in asset-based community development practice and research. *Australian Social Work*, *63*:4, 404-417.** [**https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233254553\_Exploring\_the\_Potential\_of\_Social\_Network\_Analysis\_in\_Asset-Based\_Community\_Development\_Practice\_and\_Research**](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233254553_Exploring_the_Potential_of_Social_Network_Analysis_in_Asset-Based_Community_Development_Practice_and_Research)

This article makes the case for the incorporation of key concepts from social network theory on asset-based community development practice. The authors propose that the focus should be on community “assets” instead of “needs” and that social network analysis is a methodology for understanding the efficacy of asset-based community development (ABCD) projects. The authors also argue that currently, although the asset-based community development model is widely used, it is criticized for its lack of an evidence base, theoretical depth and consideration of macro level causes of disempowerment. Social network concepts have been rarely used in a comprehensive manner in asset-based community development practice or research. This paper proposes to address these challenges through: 1. Exploring the strengths and limitations of ABCD, 2. Broadly overviewing social network theory analysis, and 3. Considering its potential to be integrated into ABCD practice and research. The paper concludes by arguing for the potential of social network analysis as a framework to study ABCD interventions and to understand how ABCD interventions impact the different elements of a community.

**Folinsbee, S., Jurmo, P. (1994). Collaborative needs assessment: A handbook for workplace development planners. *ABC Canada*.** [**https://pauljurmo.info/pauljurmo/Writings\_(US\_&\_Canada)\_files/Collab%20Needs%20Assessment%201994.pdf**](https://pauljurmo.info/pauljurmo/Writings_%28US_%26_Canada%29_files/Collab%20Needs%20Assessment%201994.pdf)

This handbook outlines a four-phase collaborative approach to assessing a work organization’s education needs and specifying a range of activities to meet the identified needs. Such phases are: laying the groundwork for a workplace needs assessment (get all interested groups committed, organize a planning committee, plan and hold initial committee meetings, design the workplace needs assessment); carrying out the needs assessment (prepare to gather information, collect information in personal interviews and focus groups, gather information from other sources, organize the information, analyze selected workplace documents); interpreting and reporting (interpret the information, write the final report, report the findings); and deciding what happens next (develop and get commitment for an action plan and evaluate the workplace needs assessment).

**Garst, B., & McCawley, P. (2015). Solving problems, ensuring relevance, and facilitating change: The evolution of needs assessment within Cooperative Extension. *Journal of Human Sciences and Extension*, *3*(2), 26-47.** [**https://bit.ly/38gD8Ez**](https://bit.ly/38gD8Ez)

The authors trace the history and evolution of needs assessments within Cooperative Extension. They first define the goal of needs assessments as twofold: 1) to understand stakeholders’ problems, and/or concerns, and 2) to understand how to respond with program, products, and services. The authors also present some reasons for conducting needs assessments (adapted from Etling & Maloney, 1995), which include: program planning, principle of democracy, motivation, accountability, support, anticipation of conflicts, needs change, complex society.

The authors also describe the historic evolution of needs assessments, where they highlight how needs assessments have been used over the decades in Extension. Before the 1960s, needs assessments were conducted to identify and prioritize programs for clientele. Local groups helped plan how to meet objectives rather than identifying priorities. Between the 60s and 70s, Extension services adopted more sophisticated protocols to evaluate if programs were meeting the needs of beneficiaries. During the 80s, there was a significant growth in the use of needs assessment practices, but given budget cuts, more cost-effective methods emerged. During the 90s, a more integrated approach was adopted for needs assessments, incorporating analysis of secondary data and conversations with key informants. Kaufman’s Organizational Elements Model (OEM) was solidified and asset mapping was introduced in this decade, which helped with capacity assessment. Finally, during the 2000s to the present, new technologies were introduced for needs assessments, such as new information technology platforms, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), real time data collection, visual display, data storage in an interactive setting. Participatory research approaches to needs assessments were disseminated. Photo-voice techniques also emerged.

**Guion, L. (2010). A 10-step process for environmental scanning. *Journal of Extension*, *48*(4), v48-4iw2.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2010august/iw2.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2010august/iw2.php)

This article describes a 10 steps process for conducting environmental scanning in North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE). The author defines environmental scanning as a study of emerging forces within an organization (as cited by Boone, 1992; Boone, Safrit, & Jones, 2002), and highlights it as an opportunity to explore diverse sources of information and viewpoints to accomplish Extension goals and find educational solutions. The 10 steps are: 1. The county team conduct situational analysis using secondary data, 2. List issues that are important, based on secondary data, 3. Conduct situational analysis using primary data from major stakeholder groups, 4. Map county to obtain primary data from a cross section of the population, 5. Collect primary data in each of the mapped areas, 6. List issues that consistently surfaced as important in step 2 and 3, 7. Conduct external asset assessments, 8. Prioritize issues, 9. Examine the complexity and interdisciplinary nature of priority issues, and 10. Each county enter priority issues, internal and external assets, and the integrated programming strategies to address the issues into the web-based NCCE county priority issues database. The article describes each of these 10 steps and provides a practical guide for conducting environmental guides at the county level.

**Havercamp, M., Christiansen, E., Mitchell, D. (2003). Assessing Extension internal organizational needs through an action research and learning process. *Journal of Extension*, *41*(5), 5FEA2.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2003october/a2.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2003october/a2.php)

This article describes how a participatory action research and learning process were used for a needs assessment of an Extension organization. The article describes the methods used, which included focus groups, questionnaire and employee feedback sessions. The goal was to identify the internal needs of University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE) over a 5-year period for strategic planning. The authors argue that the results of this study have been used by UNCE, and recommend the use of participatory action research and learning process for conducting internal organizational needs assessments. The authors highlight the importance of engaging different personnel (Extension leaders, faculty and staff) when implementing the assessment.

**Hillier, A. (2007). Why social work needs mapping. *Journal of Science Work Education*, *43*(2), 205-222.** [**https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1088&context=spp\_papers**](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1088&context=spp_papers)

The author presents several reasons why social work would benefit from the use of GIS. Among such reasons, the author argues that GIS is critical to identify the community needs and assets. Mapping allows understanding of how the environment impacts individuals and provides evidence of disparity. The author provides examples of social work using GIS that has shown high levels of spatial inequality among recipients who tended to live in areas with poor service, providing evidence of a spatial mismatch. The author argues that mapping allows information about individuals and households to be integrated with information about their communities, so that funders, service providers and researchers can understand individuals in the context of their communities. The author makes the case that documenting needs is not enough, but that needs have to be spatially located. For the author, the integration of GIS in social work will improve delivery of social services and empower communities and traditionally disenfranchised groups.

**Kaplan, M., Shih-Tsen, L., & Radhakrishna, R. (2003) Intergenerational programming in Extension: Needs assessment as planning tool. *Journal of Extension*, *41*(4), 4FEA5.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2003august/a5.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2003august/a5.php)

Kaplan et al. (2003) present the findings of their needs assessment study conducted to plan and develop a statewide intergenerational program. The authors conducted a mail survey, directed to Extension educators in Pennsylvania. Respondents noted their preferences on program content and delivery format. The results were used to make decisions about curricular directions and program delivery strategies. These results and their incorporation in planning strategies showcase the value that needs assessments provide for setting program priorities and the importance of assessing the perceptions of staff delivering programs.

**Kenneth, L. C. (1993). Needs assessment for group work with people of color. *Social Work with Groups*, *15*:2-3, 53-66.** [**https://doi.org/10.1300/J009v15n02\_05**](https://doi.org/10.1300/J009v15n02_05)

The author claims that cultural sensitivity in needs assessment is necessary for effective group work practice with ethnically diverse population. The author introduces a conceptual framework to assess the nature of psychological needs borne out of cultural differences. This method uses “sociocultural dissonance” as an orienting concept, which is based on three major categories of psychological needs: life change events, role-status change, and social-structural adjustment. The author discusses how each of these dimensions is manifested at the individual, intragroup, intergroup and systems level. Finally, the paper considers implications for group practice.

**Kerka, S. (2003). Community asset mapping. Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). *Trends and Issues Alert*, *47*.** [**https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED481324**](https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED481324)

The author describes asset mapping as a method for documenting the tangible and intangible resources of a community, where assets may be persons, physical structures, natural resources, institutions, businesses, or informal organizations (as cited by Berkowitz & Wadud, 2003). The asset mapping approach draws on appreciative inquiry, recognition of social capital, participatory approaches to development, collaborative economic development models, and efforts to strengthen civil society (as cited by Mathie & Cunningham, 2002). In this note, the author lists and describes resources that can help community educators use asset mapping approaches for program planning.

**Kramer, S., Amos, T., Lazarus, S., & Seedat, M. (2012). The philosophical assumptions, utility and challenges of asset mapping approaches to community engagement. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, *22*:4, 537-544.** [**https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236985770\_The\_Philosophical\_Assumptions\_Utility\_and\_Challenges\_of\_Asset\_Mapping\_Approaches\_to\_Community\_Engagement**](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236985770_The_Philosophical_Assumptions_Utility_and_Challenges_of_Asset_Mapping_Approaches_to_Community_Engagement)

This article presents a literature review and discussion of different asset-based mapping approaches, such as: Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD); Participatory Inquiry into Religious Health Assets, Networks and Agency (PIRHANA); Community Health Assets Mapping for Partnerships (CHAMP); the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA); Planning for Real®; and approaches using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The review describes and examines these approaches to show ways in which asset-focused approaches as interventions could be used to promote community development through engagement. The authors conclude that these methods of asset-based mapping are valuable because of their key capacities for partnership building, consensus creation, and community agency and control. The authors suggest that when applied, these methods should ensure context-specificity, facilitate co-learning, encourage resource sharing and promote community empowerment.

**Lightfoot, E., Simmelink, J., & Lum, T. (2014). Asset mapping as a research tool for community-based participatory research in social work. *National Association of Social Workers*.** [**https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270814072\_Asset\_Mapping\_as\_a\_Research\_Tool\_for\_Community-Based\_Participatory\_Research\_in\_Social\_Work**](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270814072_Asset_Mapping_as_a_Research_Tool_for_Community-Based_Participatory_Research_in_Social_Work)

This research note describes the asset mapping approach as a community-based participatory research (CBPR) method for social work. The article describes its origins, provides an overview of asset mapping, presents it as a research technique and as a method of asset mapping in CBPR and in social work research. The authors conclude that asset mapping is well suited for social work practice and as a research method for use in social work CBPR research partnerships that explore social issues. It can help tease out the strengths of communities, fits well with social work’s strengths-based approach to conducting research in low-resource communities, it is a fairly straightforward approach and the evidence base for Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) projects is robust.

**Lien, A., Ruyle, G., & López-Hoffman L. (2018). Q methodology: A method for understanding complex viewpoints in communities served by Extension. *Journal of Extension*, *56*(2), V56-2iw4.** [**https://joe.org/joe/2018april/iw4.php**](https://joe.org/joe/2018april/iw4.php)

This article introduces Q methodology by explaining what it is, how it works, and provides an example of its use. Q methodology is an activity to understand individual’s viewpoints, and sort ideas. The method uses a card-sorting exercise for researchers to analyze individuals’ subjective viewpoints on different issues and groupings of different viewpoints within a community. The difference of Q methodology to focus groups, surveys or interviews, the authors claim, is that Q methodology focuses on the participant, not the participant’s answers. It provides an understanding of how respondents think about the questions themselves, rather than how respondents answer the questions about different aspects of an issue. The article explains the methodology and provides a didactive example of how the method works, as well as recommendations for further readings. This method provides an in-depth understanding of an issue and of the context that informs the subject’s thinking around the issue. It is of use for Extension as it could help for conflict mediation or resource management.

**North Carolina Cooperative Extension. 2017-2018 Needs assessment community statewide summary. *NC State Extension*.** [**https://evaluation.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NA-Community-Statewide-Report.pdf?fwd=no**](https://evaluation.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NA-Community-Statewide-Report.pdf?fwd=no)

North Carolina Cooperative Extension provides several resources for County Needs Assessments, such as: how to summarize county data, statewide report examples and methods for data collection, such as: secondary data, different instructions to conduct interviews, county commission surveys, stakeholder focus groups, employee surveys, and citizen surveys. On the examples they provide they use multi-methods approaches to collect county data and stakeholder inputs. They also provide on their reports detailed examples for the data analysis and how to visualize most important community issues for relevant questions.

**Phibbs, E., Relf, D., Hunnings, J. (2005). Implementing a needs assessment for long-term strategic planning in 4-H horticulture programming. *Journal of Extension*, *43*(4), 4RIB7.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2005august/rb7.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2005august/rb7.php)

This article describes a needs assessment implemented for 4-H horticulture programming to be used for strategic planning by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE). The needs assessment focused on the sastisfaction of clientele with VCE 4-H horticulture publications, programs and available resources. The authors interviewed 4-H agents, Agriculture and Natural Resource agents, Master Gardener Coordinators, and 4-H camp directors. The results highlight areas for potential improvement, related to improved communication and resource sharing. The authors argue for the use of needs assessment as an example of strategic planning tool that might be useful for Extension programs.

**Singletary, L., & Powell, P. (2003). Conducting a formal needs assessment: A five-step survey approach. *University of Nevada Reno*.** [**https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238098700\_Conducting\_a\_Formal\_Needs\_Assessment\_A\_Five-Step\_Survey\_Approach**](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238098700_Conducting_a_Formal_Needs_Assessment_A_Five-Step_Survey_Approach)

This document presents a 5-step approach to conducting a formal needs assessment through mail surveys. The five steps are: 1. Develop a broad set of questions and determine protocol, 2. Complete training (IRB) and seek certification to conduct research, 3. Seek IRB approval to conduct survey, 4. Implement needs assessment, record responses and analyze the data (Excel and SPSS and two software programs recommended for the analysis), 5. Publish an Extension fact sheet, special publication or bulletin to share the results of your needs assessment.

**Smith, C., & Freeman, R. (2002). Using continuous system level assessment to build school capacity. *American Journal of Evaluation*, *23*(3), 307-319.** [**https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/109821400202300306**](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/109821400202300306)

In this paper, the authors introduce a conceptual framework for internal assessment called Continuous System Level Assessment (CSLA). This method has three phases: needs assessment and problem identification, designing interventions and building staff capacity, and implementing and evaluating interventions. The method is a holistic approach that allows schools to evaluate all programs implemented, and fosters local program and evaluation expertise. The authors argue that CSLA can contribute to more sophisticated professional development strategies for schools.

**Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education and Behavior*, *24*(3), 369-387.** [**https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/67790/10.1177\_109019819702400309.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y**](https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/67790/10.1177_109019819702400309.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y)

The authors discuss the uses and implications of photovoice methods for needs assessments, based on their experience in Yunnan. First, photo-voice techniques fuel critical consciousness and collective action. Second, photovoice provides a community-based diagnostic tool to strengthen inadequate theories in which programs are based. Third, they provide powerful means to advocate for increased funding and guide the distribution of money. Fourth, photovoice may enable grassroots constituents to participate in the policy-making process.

**Wille, C; Garcia, Z; & Garcia-Pabón, J. (2019). Collaborating across state lines to leverage cultural competency expertise. *Journal of Extension*, 57(3), 3TOT6.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2019june/pdf/JOE\_v57\_3tt6.pdf**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2019june/pdf/JOE_v57_3tt6.pdf)

The authors identified the need for a statewide Latino cultural competency training for Utah State University (USU) Extension personnel. This article explains a collaboration between USU Extension and Washington State University (WSU) Extension on adapting and customizing a WSU needs assessment tool for USU Extension faculty. The authors found that collaborating with professionals across the state produced many benefits, such as: streamlined resources and use of already developed material, capitalization of peer experience, customization of other state’s tools and resources, and mutual beneficial collaborations. They also found that administrative collaboration is key to successful cross-state collaboration work.

**Worker, S., Schmitt-McQuitty, L., Ambrose, A., Brian, K., Schoenfelder, E., & Smith, M. (2017). Multiple methods needs assessment of California 4-H science education programming. *Journal of Extension*, *55*(2), 2RIB4.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2017april/rb4.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2017april/rb4.php)

This article describes a needs assessment carried out to evaluate 4-H programs on program development and design, professional development, curricula, evaluation, partnerships, and fund development. The results identified areas for growth and needs for improved communication and resource sharing. Multiple qualitative data sources were used (online open-ended survey, focus group interviews, participatory working groups, data analysis, and data integration). The needs assessment revealed opportunities for more intentional and systematic 4-H science programming. Also the need for national and state efforts that provide practical program models and examples of programs targeting scientific literacy, professional development for staff, and consistency in messaging and branding. The authors highlight that using more than one method to analyze and interpret data improved their understanding of the needs and gaps of the 4-H science programming.

**Section 2**

**Examples of Needs Assessments and Their Use**

**Duncan, S., & Marotz-Baden, R. (1999). Using focus groups to identify rural participant needs in balancing work and family education. *Journal of Extension*, *37*(1), 1RIB1.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/1999february/rb1.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/1999february/rb1.php)

The authors illustrate how they used marketing techniques to understand the target audience for program development. Focus groups were carried out with the objective of learning the needs of rural residents in Montana. The authors claim that this study serves as an example of how Extension personnel can gain information about how a program should be produced, priced, promoted, and where it should be held to attract the largest number of participants and meet the needs of the target population.

**Duttweiler, M. (2008). The value of evaluation in Cooperative Extension. In: Braveman, M. T., Engle, M. Arnold, M. E., & Rannekamp, R. A. (Eds). *Program evaluation in a complex organizational system: Lessons from Cooperative Extension*. New Directions for Evaluation.** [**https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.278**](https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.278)

The author examines how evaluation practices have been of value in Cooperative Extension. The author examines more than 675 evaluations published between 1998 to 2007, through literature reviews, examinations of cases and correspondence with respective authors. The evaluations are characterized by their evaluation purpose and by Jacob’s Levels of Evaluation (Jacobs, 1988). Most evaluations analyzed were related to educational methods improvement or accountability studies or needs assessments. Almost 70% of studies addressed program improvement. The author also finds that most evaluations yielded substantial program modification.

**Fuller, J., Bentley, M., & Shotton, D. (2001). Use of community health needs assessment for regional planning in country South Australia. *The Australian Journal of Rural Health*, *9*, 12-17.** [**https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11703261**](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11703261)

This paper documents how community health needs assessments were used for regional and country health service planning in South Australia between 1995 and 1999. Both local and regional needs assessments were elaborated. Data from needs assessments were translated into health promotion and early intervention program priorities through strategic planning. The authors derive two key lessons of using needs assessments for planning. First, local needs assessments involve local commitment to service change, but are usually slow processes. Second, needs assessments are more likely to be effective if focused rather than broadbrushed.

**Hilton, J., Martin, S., & Evans, W. (2007). Meeting the needs of Nevada’s older adults: The role of University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. *University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. Educational Bulletin,* EB-07-02.** [**https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/27530732/meeting-the-needs-of-nevadas-older-adults-university-of-nevada-**](https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/27530732/meeting-the-needs-of-nevadas-older-adults-university-of-nevada-)

Nevada’s rapid increase of its senior population is associated with different social processes such as: increased longevity, higher education of baby boomer generation who tend to delay retirement, higher standards of living, geographic mobility, greater diversity in family structures, and ethnic composition of the population. A team of University of Nevada Cooperative Extension specialists used several strategies to assess the need for programs for older adults. The team reviewed data, theories, surveyed participants of conferences on aging, assessed services currently provided, and held community forums. These strategies were followed to: 1. Assess the present and future needs of older adults, 2. Investigate the resources available to meet these needs, and 3. Evaluate the gaps between identified needs and resources. This report provides detailed findings of this needs assessment and recommends specific activities related to outreach education, research, and capacity building.

**Kim, Y. (2012). Parenting needs for parents of young children in southern Nevada. *University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*. Special Publication 12-10.** [**https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293833380\_parenting\_education\_needs\_assessment\_for\_parents\_of\_young\_children**](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293833380_parenting_education_needs_assessment_for_parents_of_young_children)

This study describes a needs assessment for parents of 5-year old or younger children in Southern Nevada. The needs assessment was carried out to identify parenting educational needs given the relevance of children’s early years on their development and the limited resources available, specially for vulnerable families. The multi-method assessment included: a review of most critical areas in young children development, examination of wellbeing statistics, interviews with personnel working with young children and their families, and information collected from parents of young children about education needs. The study identified six needs to prioritize related to child learning, parents’ education, early literacy, self-discipline, healthy eating habits and community resources. The study also recommends that parenting information should be delivered through parents’ preferred mediums, to offer more parenting education workshops and collaboration with other agencies in diverse geographical areas.

**Kratsch, H., & Skelly, J. (2012). Situational analysis: Horticultural needs and trends in Nevada. *University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*. Special Publication 12-12.** [**https://issuu.com/uncehort/docs/sp1212\_horticulture\_needs\_and\_trend**](https://issuu.com/uncehort/docs/sp1212_horticulture_needs_and_trend)

This report presents the results of needs assessments, studies, stakeholder interviews, and surveys that were compiled to identify potential horticulture education targets and program efforts in Nevada. The report investigates trends in Nevada demographics, climate, horticulture, consumer horticulture, horticulture industry, Nevada green industry, and horticultural needs at the county level. Upon review of these topics, the report proposes a statewide emphasis on the following horticultural issues: home and small-scale food production, support of community and school garden program efforts, pest diagnosis and management, climate-appropriate gardening, programs to support green industry training.

**Marshall, M., Bush, D., & Hayes, K. (2005). Extension programming for food entrepreneurs: An Indiana needs assessment. *Journal of Extension*, *43*(5), 5RIB9.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2005october/rb9.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2005october/rb9.php)

This study describes a needs assessment for food entrepreneurs in Indiana. Purdue University Cooperative Extension specialists were designing a program to help food entrepreneurs develop value-added food products. This needs assessment was carried out to understand the needs of such food entrepreneurs and plan what services and information would be useful for Extension outreach. Extensionists from 86 counties were surveyed on topics of marketing, new business start-up, food regulations, and food safety. The results of the study were used to develop a statewide workshop for food entrepreneurs.

**Skelly, J., Singletary, L., Angle, J., Sepúlveda-Pulvirenti, E., & Moffitt, M. (2010). Addressing the needs of Nevada’s growing latino population. *University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*. Special Publication SP-10-08.** [**https://studylib.es/doc/4834388/addressing-the-needs-of-nevada-s-growing-latino-population**](https://studylib.es/doc/4834388/addressing-the-needs-of-nevada-s-growing-latino-population)

This report documents that the Latino population in Nevada began growing in the 1960s, in numbers and diversity. Nevada is now one of the top 10 states in the nation in the percentage of Latino population. Although Latinos are economically active, they are underrepresented in professional and technical positions. A large proportion of families did not have health insurance. This needs asessment is the first comprehensive effort to assess the Latino population in Nevada. Researchers reviewed extant literature, contacted numerous organizations interested in Latino issues, and developed a comprehensive list of issues that might interest Latinos. Results indicated that many of the issues participants identified as important to them were outside the purview of Extension, but may serve other organizations. The results of this assessment support the need to develop Extension programs, inclusive curriculum and trainings, and address issues identified within the Extension mission.

**Smith, M., Meehan, C., & Dasher, H. S. (2009). Assessing volunteers' needs and interests to inform curriculum development in 4-H. *Journal of Extension*, *47*(1), 1IAW3.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2009february/iw3.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2009february/iw3.php)

This paper describes a needs assessment of volunteers in 4-H Animal and Veterninary Science. The needs assessment followed a mixed-methods design, which included focus groups and interviews. The results enlightened content areas where volunteers needed the most resources and support. Volunteers also expressed their interest in educational activities to learn about the identified concepts. The results of the study helped UC Davis reserachers develop two curricula on animal care and on biology, physiology and veterinary care to be used in Youth Development Programs.

**Walker, S. (2003). Building a state child care initiative: Applying principles of teamwork and collaboration. *Journal of Extension*, *41*(3), 3FEA2.** [**https://www.joe.org/joe/2003june/a2.php**](https://www.joe.org/joe/2003june/a2.php)

This study is a description of a collaboration in Maryland to provide a coordinated childcare training and build a system of childcare service at the state level. The author describes the 5-year coordination process which consisted of statewide communication, identification of faculty needs, organization of coordinated conferences, developing a curriculum for childcare provider training and its implementation. Based on their experience, the author provides a list of recommendations for the effective development of a statewide team effort, which includes building on the good things that are present (capacities, skills, and assets of people involved), empowering and rewarding individuals, ensuring trusted leadership, being responsive to the needs, and seeking resources.

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