

Tips and Tools for Visualizing Community Engagement Data

Data visualization can provide meaningful, visual information about findings, tailored for specific audiences. The guidance below offers considerations for visualizing findings from community engagement data and provides example visualizations along with some tools you can use to create them.

Use consistent visualizations over time

Consistency helps audiences interpret information. Maintain consistency in your data visualizations by using uniform branding such as fonts, colors, and style. Ensure colors and fonts are easy to read and reproduce, use plain language with minimal jargon, and adhere to federal Section 508 accessibility guidelines.

Focus on the core message

Highlight the main takeaway for your audience and avoid cluttered graphics. Display only essential information. Solicit feedback to confirm your message is clear and adjust visuals as needed.

Provide all necessary information

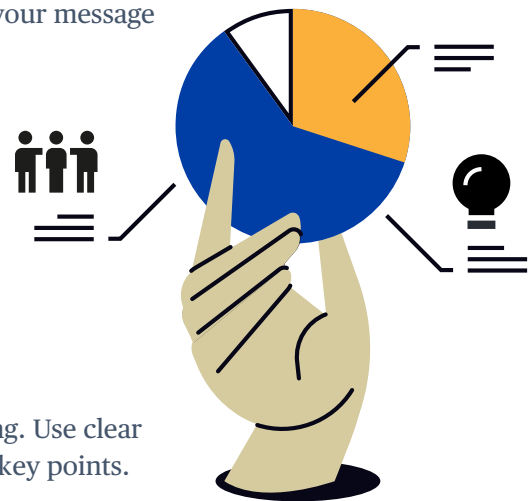
Include meaningful titles, data values, definitions, and sources so viewers can fully understand your graphics. Present this information carefully to provide clarity but avoid distraction.

Integrate text and images

Ensure images and text work together to enhance understanding. Use clear titles, variable names, captions, and call-out boxes to reinforce key points.

Portray data accurately and ethically

Present data honestly, avoiding misleading graphics or selective data presentation. Ensure language and conclusions are supported by the data and reflect participants' experiences. Reviewing visualizations with participants before wider distribution helps ensure accuracy and community representation.



Example data visualizations and tools

Type	Definition	Example tools	Example
Word clouds	Show the frequency of words from data; larger words indicate greater frequency.	Web search 'free word clouds'	<p>Family Engagement Strategies around Literacy Frequency of words used by respondents</p>
Graphs	Combine words with quantitative metrics (frequency, sentiment, etc.).	Excel, R, Google Sheets	<p>Family Engagement Strategies and Considerations for Literacy Number of respondents mentioning each</p>
Heat maps	Show the intensity of data in geographic space using colors and saturation.	Tableau, PowerBI, R, ArcGIS	<p>Number of Respondents by County n = 10 respondents</p>
Quotes	Direct quotes illustrate key concepts and add richness to analysis.	Tableau, PowerBI, R, ArcGIS	<p>For us, the monthly book list is great. Our teacher sends home suggested books, and there's always a wide variety. Sometimes we even get a copy to keep, which my kids love.</p>
Combined	Use multiple types of visualizations to increase impact and effectiveness.	Canva, Adobe Illustrator, PowerPoint	<p>Interactive and Routine Family Activities Around Literacy 7 out of 10 families noted specific interactive, routine activities they engaged in with their children</p> <p>"Every night we read together before bed. Sometimes we alternate who reads, and sometimes we make up silly voices."</p> <p>"We use labels—my kids help label items around the house."</p> <p>"We read recipes together. Cooking is a fun way to practice reading, especially following instructions step by step."</p>

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