



# Rocking Your Next Needs Assessment: How to Use Publicly Available Data to Save Time and Keep Sane

Presented by Public Profit & California AfterSchool Network (CAN)  
November 2, 2016

## HOT TIPS

### BEFORE

**DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL:** Check around for whether this type of work has already been done in your organization or by others in the community. Certain types of data, like the Census, tend to change very slowly over time and re-purposing data is OK, so long as you are clear where the data is from.

**MAKE A LIST, CHECK IT TWICE:** Prepare for your data adventures by making a list of the data, categorized by priority. Go after the highest priority data first, and then build around it. Don't meander too far from your list... trust us, some of these sites are like data candy stores - don't end up with peach rings when you went in for sour gummies.

**OUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK, REALLY!:** In recent years, government transparency has led to an increased number of cities, counties, and states having open data sites. In addition to the resources we share, your city might also have its own open data site. Go to <https://www.data.gov/open-gov/> to see if your city has data available.

### DURING

**REMEMBER THAT LIST?** Use that list you made of the data you wanted to find to keep track of source citations. Most data websites will have source text at-the-ready; if it does not appear, just make sure you jot down the biggies: *who published the data, who/what is the data about, when was this data published, when did you pull it down, and what is the URL where you got it.*

### AFTER

**LEAVE THE MASH-UPS TO THE DJ:** Generally, stick to one paragraph per data source when you are writing up the data. Make sure you don't accidentally mix up data by implying they are alike - things like talking about two different types of data in the same sentence might lead readers to believe it's from the same place or about the exact same thing.

**DOES IT MAKE SENSE?** Make sure the data you are pulling down makes sense at face value. It's easy to get swept up in the process and forget the meaning.



# RESOURCES

		Population Counts & Demographics	Health	Economic	Education	Survey
United States Census Bureau, American Fact Finder <a href="https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml">https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml</a>	National = U.S. (Multiple geographic options) Comprehensive List of Topics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
United States Services Administration, Data.gov <a href="https://www.data.gov/">https://www.data.gov/</a>	National = U.S. (State, County, City) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Comprehensive List of Topics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diversitydatakids.org <a href="http://www.diversitydatakids.org/">http://www.diversitydatakids.org/</a>	National = US (Large metro areas) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Children & Youth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kids Count Data Center <a href="http://datacenter.kidscount.org/">http://datacenter.kidscount.org/</a>	National = US (State, County, School District) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Children & Youth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health <a href="http://www.childhealthdata.org/about/DRC">http://www.childhealthdata.org/about/DRC</a>	National = US (State, Region) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Child & Adolescent Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Equity Atlas <a href="http://nationalequityatlas.org/">http://nationalequityatlas.org/</a>	National = US (State, Region, City) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Economic Indicators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Social Survey <a href="http://gss.norc.org/Get-The-Data">http://gss.norc.org/Get-The-Data</a>	National = US Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Comprehensive List of Topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Food Research and Action Center <a href="http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/">http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/</a>	National = US (State) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Hunger, Food, Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Self-Sufficiency Standard <a href="http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/">http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/</a>	National = US (Most States) Single Topic: Alternative to Federal Poverty Measure; budget-based cost of living	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Center for Disease Control and Prevention <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/datastatistics/">http://www.cdc.gov/datastatistics/</a>	National = US Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Public Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Out-of-School Time Cost Calculator <a href="http://www.wallacefoundation.org/cost-of-quality/pages/default.aspx">http://www.wallacefoundation.org/cost-of-quality/pages/default.aspx</a>	National = US (Large metro areas) Single Topic: Online cost calculator to determine OST program costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kidsdata.org <a href="http://www.kidsdata.org/">http://www.kidsdata.org/</a>	Regional = California (County, District) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Children & Youth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California Dept. of Education DataQuest <a href="http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/">http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/</a>	Regional = California (County, District) Single Topic: Education Statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California Department of Public Health <a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/pages/healthycommunityindicators.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/pages/healthycommunityindicators.aspx</a>	Regional = California (County, District) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Public Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California Health Interview Survey <a href="http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/Pages/default.aspx">http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/Pages/default.aspx</a>	Regional = California (County, Region) Data Bank / Multiple Data Topics Focused on Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Lists, lists, and more lists:

- <https://www.ciser.cornell.edu/ASPs/datasource.asp>
- <https://www.opressrc.org/use-data/data-sets-and-data-sources>
- <https://visage.co/103-best-free-data-sources-next-infographic/>



Need more help in this area? Be in touch!  
[www.publicprofit.net](http://www.publicprofit.net)

