

INSIGHT BOARDS

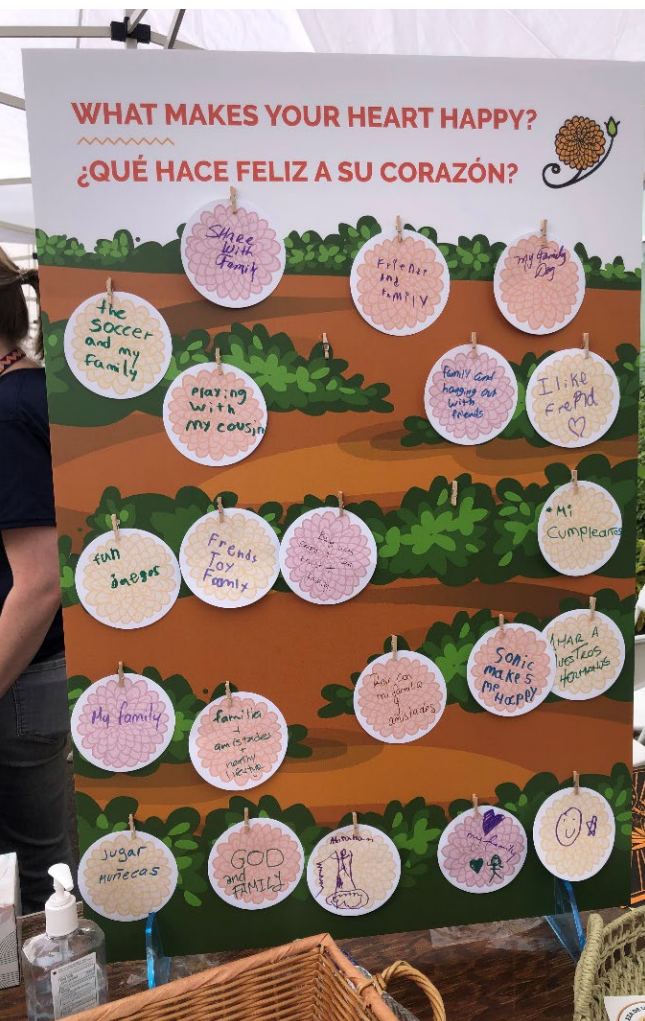
What it is: Insight boards are a quick way to gather community feedback by asking individuals to write or draw responses to a question on a sticky note and then pin the response to a board for others to see. This method is flexible and accessible, and can be used in many different settings (e.g., resource fairs, farmers markets, trainings/workshops, community meetings, or even in a lobby or waiting area). The question prompt and overall look of the board and sticky notes can be adapted for a variety of topics, languages, cultures, ages, and abilities. Insight boards can also pair well with other methods, such as bead voting or intercept surveys, as another point of engagement with community members (perhaps as an activity for children to do while their parents participate in a short survey).

Why we use it: Using insight boards in evaluation and research uplifts community voice by engaging a large group of people around a specific issue or question, all at one time. People don't always have the time or interest to participate in a focus group or a longer data collection activity, but may be interested in responding to a single question. Especially when boards are created to reflect the community or topic at hand, insight boards draw people in and can be more inviting (and fun!) than talking to a person with a clipboard.

In addition, the results of insight boards can be powerful. Gathering community ideas and experiences through their own words and images—and in their own handwriting—helps us to gain community-defined responses around a topic. While not a representative way to gather data (information gathered through insight boards should not be used to make generalizations about an entire community or population), insight boards can illuminate broader findings from other evaluation methods.

Vision: What would your community look like if this program is successful? What does it look like for families/students/community members to thrive? What would you like to see through programming moving forward?

- When it is vital that evaluation products reflect the culture(s) and context of the communities engaged in a program (we'd argue this is always the case)
- When looking for a quick, fun way to hear from a large number of participants or community members around a given topic
- When you want open-ended, descriptive information around a topic (vs. bead voting, which works well when you have set, defined response options)



At Fiesta Latina 2023, CLUES Behavioral Health and Wilder Research partnered to gather information about Latino communities' ideas around wellness. Learning how Latino communities think about their wellness will help CLUES better understand how to support people in their overall health and wellness goals. While adults participated in dot board polling around dimensions of wellness that are important to them, children and youth contributed their thoughts on an insight board. We asked them "What makes your heart happy/qué hace feliz a su corazón?" They could either draw or write their answer on a marigold that was then pinned up on a poster so they could see their work and get a sticker. Most responses (from 100 participants) fell into three categories: family (family unit, parents, siblings, grandparents); fun activities (sports, games); and friends/peers.

CLUES' certified community behavioral health clinics evaluation,
designed by Maureen McGovern, Wilder Research



How to use insight boards in practice

Supplies:

- Insight board (or large board) with your question on it
- Sticky notes or paper for people to write or draw their answers on (cardstock paper works best, make it colorful!)
- Writing utensils: pens, markers, crayons, etc.
- Way to pin people's answers on the board: blue tape, thumbtack, clothespin, sticky notes, etc.
- Space to write: ideally a table (tip: bring clipboards if you aren't sure how much space will be available for people to write on)
- Small prizes or tokens of appreciation: stickers, candy, polished stones, something participants would appreciate

Step 1: Plan

- Ensure that insight boards meet the evaluation goals, dissemination needs, and budget/resources of the project.
- Determine what you want to learn and what group of people you want to hear from: Are you wanting to hear some examples from program participants on what they have learned from a class, or do you want the community your program is located within to share what their priorities are? Narrowing what feedback you want and from whom will lead to the design of your insight board.
- Find the right opportunity to use insight boards: based on what you want to learn and who you want to hear from, pick how you will connect and use your insight board. Perhaps this is at the end of a class or workshop, at a large community event, or in a waiting area or lobby. Staff capacity to supervise the board and provide instruction to participants may also be a factor in deciding where and how to implement an insight board.

Step 1: **Plan** (continued)

- **Pick your question/prompt:** The question used for your board should be straight-forward and quick to answer. Depending on who you want to hear from, the question may need to be simplified (for the example above, we asked a more age-appropriate question for children about what made their hearts happy instead of asking what was important to them). A person should be able to think of a response and write a short answer or draw a simple picture.
- **Design your board:** To make it engaging, your board must also be appealing and resonate with the community you are connecting with. Integrating cultural symbols or images that reflect the community or program can make your insight board more inviting. This is meant to be fun, so making it bright and easy to see can help with participation.

Step 2: **Make final** **preparations**

- **Purchase or gather supplies** (see list above).
- **Do a run-through:** Nervous about how this will go? Try it out ahead of time with colleagues or friends. This is especially helpful for potentially busy event locations to ensure that all materials are present and implementation hiccups can be worked through prior to being on-site.
- **Ensure you have enough staff** to match the intended number of people at your chosen location (we recommend at least two people).

Step 3: **Do the thing** (implementation)

- **Take a deep breath—look at all the planning you have done!** Congrats for trying something new!
- **Start setting up early.** Especially at large community events or in outdoor settings, there can be many factors (weather, booth location, etc.) that can impact how you set up your insight board. Make sure there is a space for participants to write on their sticky note and pin up their answers.
- **Insight boards need...insights!** This method requires you and your team to actively engage with others to participate. Be confident that this is a fun activity and people will most likely enjoy and appreciate being asked for their ideas and feedback. Having a fun or meaningful prize or token of appreciation for participants can also help with engagement.
- **Take lots of pictures of the board** to make sure the answers are documented. You will be pinning up responses and taking them down as you collect them (there will be limited space on the board for everyone's responses).

Step 4: Document and analyze

- Type out the answers into a table. This may require some interpretation of drawings (you could also ask for clarification on a drawing that a participant makes and write a note on the back of it for your analysis).
- Once you have recorded all responses, group them into broad categories. For the example above, we created three main categories (family, fun activities, and community) and assigned each response to one of the categories. There might be additional nuances once these major groups are identified.
- Once you have the categories determined, you might start to see patterns or commonalities between the answers. Hopefully the themes that emerge help answer questions about your program or what the community wants. While the answers on the boards cannot speak to everyone's experience, they do provide concrete examples for what people want or think.

Step 5: Celebrate and share

- Yay you did it!
- Share your results back with community or program participants. They may be interested in learning what others had to say and seeing themselves in the information/data.



Do you have questions about how to get started or want to learn more about insight boards? Reach out to Jackie Aman (jackie.aman@wilder.org), Jessica Tokunaga (jessica.tokunaga@wilder.org), or Kyla Goux (kyla.goux@wilder.org).