

## Distinguishing Between Evaluation and Research

Program evaluation and research are similar, but they have different objectives and data standards. They are also different in size and scope. The following table shows important differences between them.

	Evaluation	Research
Objectives	Change and action oriented, aimed at determining impact	Aimed at causality, testing theory
Data	Evidentiary data	Very precise measurements
Numbers of Subjects	Program target groups or samples of target groups (sometimes very small)	Usually study of samples from fairly large populations
Standards	Usefulness, practicality, accuracy, ethicalness	Truth, causality, generalizability, theory
Costs	Range from minimal to fairly substantial	Usually, high costs
Stakes/Scope	Fairly low stakes, fairly narrow scope (the program)	Very high stakes (e.g., human life or health,
Focus	Whether something is being done well, not necessarily better. Should focus on context, activities, outcomes of participants	Determining the best treatments, solutions, etc. Can include community indicators where appropriate.
Use	Should not be conducted unless there is real opportunity to use the results	Sometimes conducted when the use is uncertain.