# DATA. Relevant. Integrated. Visualized. Useful.

**W**e live in a world overflowing with data. Information is plentiful but not always useful. At Apex, we strive to put the right data in the right hands at the right moment. We work to transform data to knowledge. This requires collecting relevant data from a variety of sources, relating it in an integrated way, and creating reports that answer questions about process, quality, and outcomes – all to drive a cycle of reality testing, learning, and improvement.

The Apex Data Hub is a data ecosystem that brings together multiple technologies and data sources, including our own mobile and web-based tools. We collect big picture and patient-level data, and

link it together to make implementation and evaluation better. This mix of quantitative and qualitative data helps us take broad and multiple perspectives. It builds confidence in our findings and considers the story behind the data. We can ask and answer our initial questions as well as questions we haven't even formed yet. The Data Hub supports the agility and depth that is needed when evaluation is about learning. It offers the functionality to make evaluation support more efficient and effective implementation.

It's the **ONE DATA SOLUTION** when there is no one data solution.



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Here is what it looks like for school-based health centers:

## Just Health
**SURVEY TOOL.** Just Health collects information on a wide range of conditions and health behaviors and produces an instant alert report to promote patient-provider communication that's free of stigma.

## Operational Plan
**INPUTS AND PROCESS.** We created a web-based Operational Plan to collect information on SBHC staffing, hours of operations, services, host school demographics, and quality improvement goals. We collect this data once and integrate it with other parts of the Hub to create reports for funders, evaluators, and other stakeholders at local, state, and national levels.

## Patient Feedback
**QUALITY AND OUTCOMES.** We deploy surveys on mobile devices and the web to collect patient perspectives on engagement, satisfaction, health literacy, and health outcomes.

## Electronic Health Records
**IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES.** We integrate with over 30 EHRs and counting to collect comprehensive and detailed patient-level data: every patient, every visit, every code. We can look for trends over time in relation to needs.

## Other Secondary Sources
**WHEN THERE'S AN API, THERE'S A WAY.** We have yet to find a single data system that meets every need, particularly when multiple sites and organizations are involved. We use Application Program Interfaces (APIs) to connect with other systems to create a seamless data solution.

## Reporting and Data Visualization
**BUILDING KNOWLEDGE TOGETHER**. With the integrated data sets and sources as inputs, the Data Hub supports a powerful output - comprehensive reporting with data visualization that guides evaluators and clients to ask and answer better questions and build knowledge together. It features aggregate reports to inform health promotion, population management, and, of course, evaluation.

# From theory to PRACTICE.

Our data system is designed to be user-friendly and practical to simultaneously support and improve implementation and evaluation. It's built on an architecture of **SYSTEMS THINKING** which was developed by Derek and Laura Cabrera and involves making clear **distinctions** between data elements including breaking them down to their **smallest parts** and understanding **how they fit into the bigger picture**. We look at the **relationships** between data at their part and whole level. We consider **multiple perspectives**. These four patterns of thinking (distinction-making, part-whole systems, relationships, and perspectives) permeate everything we do. **SYSTEMS EVALUATION** is rooted in systems thinking, and appropriately matches evaluation methods to the mental models being tested, giving special attention to the role perspectives play in emergent learning.

There are many definitions of **EQUITABLE EVALUATION**, but our take is simply that equitable evaluation is being mindful of the role perspective plays in learning. In practicing this, we maintain an awareness that evaluation is itself a perspective and must include and account for the diversity of voices involved in or affected by the mental model being evaluated.

We take a **DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION** approach to evaluation to thoughtfully and intentionally allow new learning to change our hypothesis and approach as we implement.

Developmental evaluation, developed by Michael Quinn Patton, is appropriate for innovative initiatives implemented in dynamic and complex environments where participants, conditions, interventions, and contexts are in flux. **PRINCIPLES-FOCUSED EVALUATION**, also developed by Quinn Patton, is an evolution of developmental evaluation and helps navigate the volatile, uncertain, and dynamic complex environments that characterize equity work. It helps shift the perspective from, "Are we doing things right?" to, "Are we doing the right things?"

This is all foundational to effective **DATA VISUALIZATION**. Data visualization is much more than making data look good. It is about understanding the cognition of how humans process information and move from pre-attention to long-term memory to actually building knowledge. These techniques produce user-friendly reports and products to stimulate thinking and understanding.

Finally, in everything we do, we strive for transparency, inclusiveness, and cultural responsiveness. We think evaluation is best when we are all on the same side of the table, looking at data together objectively, asking and answering questions, and figuring out what is working and what to do next.

The Data Hub is one way we **make evaluation work**.

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## Let's talk about making evaluation work for YOU.

Contact us to find out how we can make evaluation work for you.  Check out our website to find out more about our evaluation approach and our work in the field.

**apexeval.org**