Functional Analysis for Cultural Interventions

A UNIQUE APPROACH TO FORMATIVE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

rescuescg.com/FACI
“Without understanding the function of the behavior we wish to change, we are in a poor position to change it.”

[Katz, 1960]

Today, a lack of understanding of youth culture and identity is the greatest obstacle in preventing risk behaviors. While academic research studies consistently conclude that culture, social environments, and peer networks strongly affect decisions to smoke, drink, use drugs, and engage in other high-risk behaviors, studies focused on truly understanding today’s youth cultures and identities are almost non-existent.

The Functional Analysis for Cultural Interventions (FACI™) is a research package that utilizes expertly crafted qualitative and quantitative methodologies to understand how culture, identity, and social environments influence risk behaviors within a specific population. Developed by Rescue Social Change Group (Rescue SCG), the FACI™ package provides practical insights for interventions focusing on on tweens, teens, or young adults. FACI™ studies address the following four research questions:

1. Which socio-cultural peer groups within the population are performing the behavior?
2. Why are these subpopulations performing the behavior?
3. What changes can be made to prevent the behavior?
4. How can these changes be achieved and sustained?

FOUNDATION
FACI™ was designed to understand the interaction between risk behaviors and the socio-cultural peer groups that young people identify with. It utilizes cross-disciplinary principles from psychological, sociological, public health, and communications theories and practices. Some of the theories incorporated into research design include symbolic interactionism, stages of change, the functional approach to attitudes, social cognitive theory, diffusion of innovations, and identity theory. Each theory justifies the relationship between behavior and identity, providing a logic model that explains why some youth make unhealthy and illogical choices. This multi-disciplinary approach contributes to a research strategy that probes deep into what motivates risk behaviors, providing interventionists with critical insights to develop successful prevention efforts.

APPLICATION
The FACI™ process is scientifically engineered to understand how certain behaviors are associated with the identities and cultures of young people between the ages of 12 and 26. The package is particularly useful in understanding the role of risk behaviors that occur within a social context. A FACI™ study could help understand behaviors such as:

- TOBACCO USE
- UNDERAGE DRINKING & BINGE DRINKING
- ILLICIT & PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE
- VIOLENCE, INCLUDING GANG VIOLENCE
- SEXUAL BEHAVIORS
- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
**HOW A FACI™ RESEARCH PACKAGE WORKS**

**SAMPLE POPULATION:**
**TEENS**

**SAMPLE BEHAVIOR:**
**SMOKING**

Researchers use **pictures** and other proprietary tools to reveal the underlying associations between smoking and teen subcultures during **ID-Projection Groups™**.

When compared to Preppy teens, teens who identify with Hip Hop culture watch different TV shows, read different magazines, look up to different role models, respond to different imagery, and use different slang. This makes it impossible to reach both groups with the same campaign. But only one of the two groups is at high-risk of tobacco use. **Which group does your program reach?**

**SAMPLE SUBCULTURE SIZES AND PREVALENCE RATES**

In this example, the **Preppy** and **Mainstream** cultures were the largest, but they had the **lowest tobacco use rates**.

In contrast, **Alternative** and **Country** had significantly **higher tobacco use rates**.

**3** **I-Base Surveys™** use pictures and standard tobacco use questions to quantify tobacco use rates within each identified subculture.

**4** Subcultures are defined to the client in a **FACI™** research report, including each subculture’s media consumption patterns, imagery preferences, language nuances, role models, and cultural interests. Using this information, clients can build campaigns that reach at-risk youth, rather than “preach to the choir.”

**The Language of FACI™**

**I-BASE SURVEYS™** Short for “Identity-Based Segmentation,” these surveys quantify subcultural influence to understand behaviors by subculture in your community.

**ID-PROJECTION GROUPS™** Carefully designed and interactive focus groups that investigate young people’s underlying motivations to perform or avoid risk behaviors.

---

**SAMPLE SUBCULTURE SIZES AND PREVALENCE RATES**

In this example, the **Preppy** and **Mainstream** cultures were the largest, but they had the **lowest tobacco use rates**.

In contrast, **Alternative** and **Country** had significantly **higher tobacco use rates**.

**KEY:**
- **SUBCULTURE SIZE**
- **SMOKING RATE**
- **CHEW RATE**

Rescue SCG’s estimated national teen tobacco use rates by subculture based on dozens of FACI™ studies.
The FACI™ package is a six-step process that includes the following components:

**STEP 1: PLANNING, SECONDARY RESEARCH, & SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEW**
Rescue SCG works with the client to establish a timeline while concurrently conducting secondary research on the risk behavior(s). The secondary report ensures that the latest evidence-based findings are considered in study design. In addition, Rescue SCG scientists study young people in the local community through social media sites, such as Facebook, to get a general sense of local subcultures and identities.

**STEP 2: CULTURAL SCREENING & RECRUITEMENT SURVEY**
Rescue SCG scientists conduct field research and screen a small sample of the local population using the I-Base Survey™. The I-Base™ is a preliminary step used to uncover the general composition of the local youth culture and the corresponding risk levels. Rescue SCG also recruits subjects for the ID-projection groups using this survey. The survey sites are unique to each study and client, but schools are typical sites for teen studies while bar and nightclubs are used for young adult studies.

**STEP 3: ID-PROJECTION™ GROUPS**
Rescue SCG selects individuals to participate in unique ID-Projection Groups™ (ID-PGs) from the screening survey sample. ID-PGs are carefully designed and interactive focus groups that investigate young people’s motivations to perform or avoid risk behaviors. Groups are structured to contrast those who engage in risk behaviors from those who do not, so at least two ID-PGs need to be conducted. During ID-PGs, Rescue SCG utilizes multiple proprietary methods to expose the often subconscious motivations that drive risk behaviors. Individual and group activities are conducted to avoid group bias and capture as many perspectives as possible. The ID-PGs are also designed to reveal which youth subcultures exist in the local area and which of those subcultures are most associated with risk behaviors.

**STEP 4: OBSERVATION & HYPOTHESIZING**
Informed by the data collected during the ID-PGs, Rescue SCG researchers explore the local cultural environment through social events, observing research participants, and conducting semi-structured interviews that provide rich qualitative and ethnographic data. These observations and interviews are used to design hypotheses that address the four FACI™ research questions based on the findings from the ID-PGs. Rescue SCG continues this phase until hypotheses are finalized and ready for final testing.

**STEP 5: REPRESENTATIVE I-BASE SURVEY™ (OPTIONAL)**
Using a customized I-Base Survey™ instrument, Rescue SCG surveys a representative sample. Customized questions are included to address the client’s specific queries and test the hypotheses. Since FACI™ investigations focus closely on identity and culture, questions are included to determine the estimated size and reach of each subculture identified during the ID-PGs. These data are cross-tabulated with risk behavior data to determine prevalence rates within identified subcultures. The customized I-Base Survey™ may be reused at any time, providing clients with a useful evaluation tool.

**STEP 6: FINAL REPORTING**
The final FACI™ report includes five sections; secondary research, qualitative findings, quantitative findings, implications, and recommendations. Data are statistically analyzed to support or reject hypotheses. Final recommendations consider the resources clients have available to address the risk behavior now and in the future. In addition to the final report, a webinar or in-person presentation can be included.
Rescue SCG has conducted over fifty FACI™ investigations for more than two dozen government, non-profit, and academic clients. Select past investigations and clients are listed below.

**Young Adult Tobacco Use at Bars & Clubs Intervention FACI™**
Funded by University of California, San Francisco – Center for Tobacco Prevention & Education

**Minority Youth Violence Intervention FACI™**
Funded by San Diego District Attorney’s Office

**Teen Tobacco Use and Anti-Tobacco Media FACI™**
Funded by Tobacco-Free Nebraska

**Tulsa & Oklahoma City Young Adult Tobacco Use Intervention FACI™**
Funded by Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust

**Urban Teen Tobacco Use & Violence Intervention FACI™**
Funded by Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth

**Rural Young Adult Tobacco Use Intervention FACI™**
Funded by Utah State Department of Health

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Young Adult Tobacco Intervention FACI™**
Funded by New Mexico State Department of Health

**Teen Alcohol Use Intervention FACI™**
Funded by Drug Free Coalition of Suwannee County, Florida

**Middle School After School Program Participation FACI™**
Funded by Providence After School Alliance

**Older Teen After School Program Participation FACI™**
Funded by Chicago Department of Family & Support Services

**Teen Tobacco Use Intervention FACI™**
Funded by American Lung Association of Alaska

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Young Adult Tobacco Intervention FACI™**
Funded by Breathe California of Sacramento Emigrant Trails

**Middle School & High School After School Program Participation FACI™**
Funded by Los Angeles County Office of Education

**African American Young Adult Tobacco Use Intervention at Denver Bars & Clubs FACI™**
Funded by The BACCHUS Network

**High School After School Program Participation FACI™**
Funded by San Diego Unified School District

**Gallup Underage Drinking Prevention FACI™**
Funded by McKinley County DWI Program

---

**BENEFITING FROM A SCIENTIFIC ARCHIVE**
With over fifty FACI™ investigations conducted, Rescue SCG has amassed a significant scientific archive of studies on youth culture, identity, and risk behaviors. More than 7,000 youth and young adults from Florida to Alaska have participated in Rescue SCG’s ID-Projection Groups™ and over 30,000 have completed I-Base Surveys™. The collected data provide critical insights that build a strong evidence base for future FACI™ investigations. While every community is different, Rescue SCG draws information from previous studies to conduct new investigations with more precision and efficiency. Where traditional market research companies spend valuable time and capital learning strategies to communicate with teenagers or learning about risk behaviors, the Rescue SCG team is able to interact and conduct research with teenagers with unrivaled, “built-in” expertise. Even companies that have conducted teen research in the commercial sector have difficulty accessing the deeply ingrained motivations that drive risk behaviors. The Rescue SCG team can conduct research in your community that both benefits from years of experience and builds upon prevention science in a cost-effective manner.
The price of a **FACI™** package is based on the scale of the study and the client’s ability to assist with the research process. For middle school, high school, and college populations, cost-effective research can be conducted at local schools, though this is not required. Community-based studies can utilize street-based recruitment, such as bars and clubs, rock concerts, and skate parks. The pricing table below calculates cost based on the level of local support and the sample size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL-BASED STUDIES WITH SUPPORT*</th>
<th>2 ID-PROJECTION™ GROUPS/SCHOOL</th>
<th>4 ID-PROJECTION™ GROUPS/SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 School</td>
<td>$43,000</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Schools</td>
<td>$49,000</td>
<td>$59,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Schools</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>$70,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Schools</td>
<td>$61,000</td>
<td>$81,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Schools</td>
<td>$73,000</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Support is defined as client assistance to obtain approval from local schools to conduct research. Rescue SCG has been able to gain school approval with client assistance over 90% of the time. Research can be conducted during lunch and after school, which helps gain approval more easily.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY/COLLEGE-BASED STUDIES</th>
<th>NUMBER OF ID-PROJECTION™ GROUPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based (Teen or Young Adult)</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/University Based (Young Adults Only)</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FACI™ studies typically last 10 to 14 weeks depending on the strategy selected to reach a population. All primary research is conducted in-person within the local community. Researcher travel expenses to most destinations fit within the estimates above. Group supplies, participant compensation, refreshments, meeting space rental, and all other typical expenses are also included. All studies include a custom I-Base Survey™ and a final FACI™ Research Report. An in-person presentation of findings can be included at an additional cost.

**CONTACT**

**MAYO DJAKARIA MPH**  
BEHAVIOR CHANGE OFFICER  
MAYO@RESCUESCG.COM  
619-231-7555 x120