

Appendix E



Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Developing Goals and Measurable Objectives

To be able to effectively evaluate your project, it is critical that you develop realistic goals and measurable objectives. The information below will help applicants in developing goals and objectives for use in your Project Narrative. It also provides examples of well-written goals and measurable objectives.

Goals

Definition – a goal is a broad statement about the long-term expectation of what should happen because of your program (the desired result). It serves as the foundation for developing your program objectives. Goals should align with the statement of need that is described. Goals should only be one sentence.

The characteristics of effective goals include:

- Goals address outcomes, not how outcomes will be achieved.
- Goals describe the behavior or condition in the community expected to change.
- Goals describe who will be affected by the project.
- Goals lead clearly to one or more measurable results.
- Goals are concise.

Examples

Unclear Goal	Critique	Improved Goal
Increase the substance use and HIV/AIDS prevention capacity of the local school district.	This goal could be improved by <i>specifying an</i>	Increase the capacity of the local school district to reduce high-risk

	<i>expected program effect in reducing a health problem.</i>	behaviors of students that may contribute to substance use and/or HIV/AIDS.
Decrease the prevalence of marijuana, alcohol, and prescription drug use among youth in the community by increasing the number of schools that implement effective policies, environmental change, intensive training of teachers, and educational approaches to address high-risk behaviors, peer pressure, and tobacco use.	This goal is not concise.	Decrease youth substance use in the community by implementing evidence-based programs within the school district that address behaviors that may lead to the initiation of use.

Objectives

Definition – Objectives describe the results to be achieved and the manner in which they will be achieved. Multiple objectives are generally needed to address a single goal. Well-written objectives help set program priorities and targets for progress and accountability. It is recommended that you avoid verbs that may have vague meanings to describe the intended outcomes, like “understand” or “know” because it may prove difficult to measure them. Instead, use verbs that document action, such as: “By the end of 2020, 75% of program participants will be placed in permanent housing. To be effective, objectives should be clear and leave no room for interpretation.

SMART is a helpful acronym for developing objectives that are ***specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound***:

Specific – Includes the “who” and “what” of program activities. Use only one action verb to avoid issues with measuring success. For example, “Outreach workers will administer the HIV risk assessment tool to at least 100 injection drug users in the

population of focus” is a more specific objective than “Outreach workers will use their skills to reach out to drug users on the street.”

Measurable – How much change is expected. It must be possible to count or otherwise quantify an activity or its results. It also means that the source of and mechanism for collecting measurement data can be identified and that collection of the data is feasible for your program. A baseline measurement is required to document change (e.g., to measure the percentage of increase or decrease). If you plan to use a specific measurement instrument, it is recommended that you incorporate its use into the objective. Example: By 9/20 increase by 10% the number of 8th, 9th, and 10th grade students who disapprove of marijuana use as measured by the annual school youth survey.

Achievable – Objectives should be attainable within a given time frame and with available program resources. For example, “The new part-time nutritionist will meet with seven teenage mothers each week to design a complete dietary plan” is a more achievable objective than “Teenage mothers will learn about proper nutrition.”

Realistic – Objectives should be within the scope of the project and propose reasonable programmatic steps that can be implemented within a specific time frame. For example, “Two ex-gang members will make one school presentation each week for two months to raise community awareness about the presence of gangs” is a more realistic objective than “Gang-related violence in the community will be eliminated.”

Time-bound – Provide a time frame indicating when the objective will be measured or a time by when the objective will be met. For example, “Five new peer educators will be recruited by the second quarter of the first funding year” is a better objective than “New peer educators will be hired.”

Examples

Non-SMART Objective	Critique	SMART Objective
Teachers will be trained on the	The objective is not SMART because it is not specific,	By June 1, 2022, LEA supervisory staff will have

selected evidence-based substance use prevention curriculum.	measurable, or time-bound. It can be made SMART by specifically indicating who is responsible for training the teachers, how many will be trained, who they are, and by when the trainings will be conducted.	trained 75% of health education teachers in the local school district on the selected, evidence-based substance use prevention curriculum.
90% of youth will participate in classes on assertive communication skills.	This objective is not SMART because it is not specific or time-bound. It can be made SMART by indicating who will conduct the activity, by when, and who will participate in the lessons on assertive communication skills.	By the end of the 2022 school year, district health educators will have conducted classes on assertive communication skills for 90% of youth in the middle school receiving the substance use and HIV prevention curriculum .
Train individuals in the community on the prevention of prescription drug/opioid overdose-related deaths.	This objective is not SMART as it is not specific, measurable or time-bound. It can be made SMART by specifically indicating who is responsible for the training, how many people will be trained, who they are, and by when the training will be conducted.	By the end of year two of the project, the Health Department will have trained 75% of EMS staff in the County Government on the selected curriculum addressing the prevention of prescription drug/opioid overdose-related deaths.

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Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov/grants/how-to-apply/writing-completing-application/goals-measurable-objectives>