

# Developing Measurable Outcomes

Outcomes are benefits or changes for individuals or populations during or after participating in program activities. Outcomes may relate to behavior, skills, knowledge, attitude, values, condition, or other attributes. Developing strong, measurable outcomes not only helps individual organizations to assess the impact that they are having on those they serve, but allow for a better understanding of the community change based upon the work we do.

## Definition of SMART Goals

When developing your measurable outcomes make sure that they are “S.M.A.R.T.” by including each of the following characteristics:

**Specific** – The goal is well defined and clear to anyone with basic knowledge of the project. To set a specific goal you must answer the six “W” questions: 1) Who is involved? 2) What do I want to accomplish? 3) Where: identify a location. 4) When: establish a time frame. 5) Which: identify requirements and constraints. 6) Why: specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing goal.

**Measurable** – Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as: How much? How many? How will I know when it’s accomplished? Also consider what your evaluation plan will be. How will you measure your progress? What tools or resources will you use to demonstrate the attainment of your goals?

**Achievable** – An achievable goal has an outcome that is realistic given your current situation, resources and time available. To be realistic a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. Determine if you have accomplished anything similar in the past or ask yourself what conditions would need to exist to accomplish this goal.

**Relevant** – Goals must be an important tool in reaching your organization’s mission. In addition, goals must be relevant to everyone they affect, including employees, customers, clients, and other stakeholders. Make sure that your goals are a strategic part of reaching your organization’s mission and compliment other activities with which you are involved.

**Time-Framed** – Goals should include a time frame for accomplishment. This period should provide ample time to achieve the goal, but not too much time, which can affect project performance.

## Sample Outcomes

By June 2010, there will be a 5% increase in the number of parents who participate in regular physical activity with their children as measured by pre-post tests that include behavior questions at workshops and other events.

By June 2010, there will be a 10% increase in the number of healthcare providers who actively promote healthy eating and regular physical activity as measured by provider surveys.