

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CLIFF NOTES

Goals: General statements of the eventual outcome you hope to achieve.

- Do not have to be measurable.
- Should not specify an anticipated amount of change.
- Should specify the target population.

Typical goals:

- To reduce drug use among 12-17 year olds in X community
- To increase community involvement in ATOD issues in X community
(If you want to have a goal specific to your parent or law enforcement efforts, that is fine, but realize that the outcome you're looking for from those activities is still reduced drug use).

Process Objectives: Specific statements describing the activities you want to implement.

- Recommended for your coalition's purposes but optional.
- Can measure **how much** of an activity is done (4 parent workshops) or **how many** are reached (45 students get curriculum).
- You can write process objectives on lots of things to help keep yourself accountable to original plans.
- For some environmental strategies, process objectives may be the only things you can measure.
- Should answer Who, What, Where, When, and How Much.
 - **Who** is the target population?
 - **What** are you hoping to do?
 - **Where** do you want to implement these activities (community)?
 - **When** do you want to complete these activities?
 - **How much** are you hoping to do or **how many** are you trying to reach?

Typical process objectives:

- To conduct 8 60-minute sessions of PDFY for 40 parents of 12-17 year olds in X community by June 2003.
- To deliver the All Stars curriculum to 120 7th and 8th graders in the Y After-school Program in X community by December 2003.
- To hold 3 meetings with X community law enforcement on ATOD prevention strategies by August 2003.
- To conduct 20 alcohol compliance checks in X community by May 2003.
- To improve 2 school ATOD policies in X community by August 2003.
- To have 4 new signs about ATOD policies posted in X park by September 2003.

Outcome Objectives: Specific statements describing the change you hope to accomplish.

- Should be related to the goal.
- **MUST be measurable**—have to be linked to measures you are using on your pre-post test (or comparable pre-post measure)
- Outcome objectives should have Who, What, Where, When, and How Much.
 - **Who** is the target population (program participants, etc.)?
 - **What** is being changed?
 - **Where** do you want this change to occur (community)?
 - **When** do you want this change to occur by?
 - **How much** change do you want to see?
- Should generally have more than one outcome objective per intervention or goal so that you have multiple opportunities to succeed. So, don't just write an objective for perceived risk. Consider also doing one for favorable attitudes, perceived peer use, 30-day marijuana use, etc.
- Objectives should be written with the mindset that they will be the primary way you will determine the intervention's success—how much of a change do we want to see in the percentage of tobacco users from pre- to post-test to consider this intervention a success. You will compare your results to your objectives to determine if your intervention was successful.
- Expected change can be written as a percentage of change for the group (10% increase on X measure) or the percentage of the group that improves on the measure, regardless of the degree of change (65% of students will improve on X measure).
- If you are using comparison groups, then your objectives should be written in terms of how much better you want the change to be in your intervention group than in your comparison group.
- If you are using a follow-up survey, you can write objectives for the initial post-test and the follow-up post-test. For example:
 - Objective #1. 15% increase in X by post-test.
 - Objective #2. 10% increase in X by 90-day follow-up.

Typical outcome objectives:

- To decrease perceived peer use scores among Life Skills participants in X community by Y% by April 2003.
- To decrease 30-day use of alcohol among Life Skills participants in X community by Y% by April 2003.
- Y% of Life Skills participants in X community will show decreased use of alcohol in the past 30 days by April 2003.
- To improve attendance at X community coalition meetings by Y% by June 2003.
- To decrease the number of tobacco merchants in X community who sell tobacco to underage buyers by Y% by January 2004.
- To decrease the amount of cigarette butts found outside X school during a litter scan by Y% by December 2003.

- To increase the number of people at X park who are aware of ATOD policies by Y% by June 2003.

Sometimes it is easier to understand proper objectives by looking at some incorrect examples, also.

- “To raise awareness about . . .” USUALLY NOT MEASURABLE
- “To correct misperceptions about ATOD in X community . . .” USUALLY NOT MEASURABLE AND NO AMOUNT OF CHANGE SPECIFIED
- “To decrease perceived peer use among 12- to 17-year-olds in X community by Y% by June 2003.” POTENTIALLY UNCLEAR, IMPLIES ALL YOUTH IN COMMUNITY WILL SHOW CHANGE RATHER THAN PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS ONLY
- “To decrease DUI rates among youth in Community X by 20% by November 2003.” TECHNICALLY CORRECT EXCEPT THAT USING LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA AS AN OUTCOME CAN BE MISLEADING BECAUSE IF THEY ENFORCE MORE, THEY’LL CATCH MORE PEOPLE AND NUMBERS WILL INCREASE.
- “To decrease the amount of alcohol sold to minors . . .” AMOUNT IS PROBABLY NOT MEASURABLE
- “To reduce accessibility to alcohol by minors . . .” UNCLEAR WHAT REDUCE ACCESSIBILITY MEANS; BETTER TO BE SPECIFIC
- “To reduce school drop-outs by 10% . . .” POTENTIALLY TOO GENERAL TO LOOK FOR CHANGES IN AN ENTIRE SCHOOL IF PROGRAM WAS DELIVERED TO A SMALL GROUP AND CAN YOU GET ACCESS TO RECORDS FOR JUST THOSE STUDENTS?
- “To improve area merchants’ knowledge of ATOD laws . . .” NO DEGREE OF CHANGE SPECIFIED, BUT YOU COULD STATE AN EXPECTED CHANGE AND THEN MEASURE IT IF YOU GIVE THEM SOME TYPE OF VALID QUIZ TO ASSESS THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAWS.