

What are Indicators?



Indicators, also known as performance objectives, performance targets, objectives, answer the following question:

What would I see or hear that would tell me that an outcome was being achieved? Indicators are concrete, specific descriptions of what you will measure. An indicator can include the number or percentage of participants projected to achieve it. For example, let us say that one of your outcomes is “Participants make their home child-safe”. What would you see or hear that would tell you that a participant has a child-safe home? Here are a few possible indicators:

- Participants access and install supplies needed to have a child-safe home.
- Participants remove household hazards (including outside hazards) that jeopardize child safety.
- Participants have a list of emergency numbers posted where all family members can find them.

Because indicators can specify a targeted number or percentage of achievement, you could word your indicators accordingly. Examples:

- 85% of participants access and install supplies needed to have a child-safe home.
- 85% of participants remove household hazards (including outside hazards) that jeopardize child safety.
- 100% of participants have a list of emergency numbers posted where all family members can find them.

Indicators do not *have* to spell out a number or percentage. Naturally, you want all of your participants to achieve your outcomes. However, some funders require you to set a target number or percentage. When you first begin providing services you may need to estimate a reasonable, but ambitious target. After you have established a baseline, you will be able to set more precise targets.

Each outcome in the Logic Model Builder has a list of associated indicators. You may find at least one or two that are appropriate for your program, but you will want to edit them so that they are accurate reflections of what you plan to measure. The indicators in the Logic Model Builder do not specify projected numbers or percentages. You will need to add your own projections. Once downloaded into a Microsoft Word file, you will need to edit the indicators and, if needed, add numeric targets. You may also need to add indicators that were not included in the menu.