

# Outcomes Training

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*September 7, 2011*

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# Today's Training

- Selecting Outcome Indicators
- Using the Data
- Creating a Learning Culture
- Effective Utilization

You've selected your  
outcomes.

How do you know you've  
achieved them?

What data do you use?



# Outcome Indicators

- Specific items of data that are tracked to measure how well a program is achieving an outcome
- Outcome indicators are the observable pieces of information that represent the observable facts

# Outcome Indicators

**S - Specific**

**M - Measureable**

**A - Attainable**

**R - Realistic**

**T - Timebound**

**U - Unambiguous**

# Outcome Indicators:

## *Common Mistakes*

- Vague Indicators
- Not written measurably
- Listing measurement plans or documents
- Listing activities or outputs
- Listing outcomes
- Not associated with outcome

# Outcome Indicators:

## *Data Sources*

- Your program's records
- Other agencies' records
- Specific individuals
- General public
- Trained observers
- Surveys

# Outcome Indicators:

## *Data Collection Considerations*

- Cost
- Amount of training required for data collectors
- Completion time
- Response rate



# *Example: Early Literacy Program*

What are the client OUTCOME INDICATORS for this program?

**Participants have a positive experience with library**

#/% of parents who indicate positive experience with library on survey

**Parents read to children regularly**

#/% of parents who attend storytime regularly who report they read to their children at least 3 times a week

**Children develop necessary pre-literacy skills**

#/% of children who demonstrate pre-literacy skills on standardized measure



# Exercise: Selecting Indicators

# We have the data....*Now what?*

- Where have we done well and why?
- Where are we not doing well and why?
- What can we do to improve the results?
- Are we using the right measurement techniques?
- How can we use to data as a management tool?

# We have the data....*Now what?*

## Internal Uses for Outcome Data

- Provide direction for staff
- identify training and technical assistance needs
- Identify program improvement needs & strategies
- Guide budgets
- Support long-range planning

# We have the data....*Now what?*

## External Uses for Outcome Data

- Explain value of program
- Justify resource allocation
- Enhance public image of program
- Identify collaborative partners

# Create a Learning Culture

- Use data to engage staff in discussions about program improvements
- Frame findings in terms of improvements
- Treat findings as tentative indicators, not final answers
- Keep evaluation on the organization's agenda

# Successful Evaluation

- Work on practical questions
- Address feasible issues
- Avoid data addiction
- Make reports accessible
- Encourage use of evaluation as a learning tool
- Patience

# Effective Utilization

- Are there organizational constraints that could impact implementing outcome measurements?
- How can outcome measurement help strengthen relationships across departments and within departments?
- What additional resources will it take to implement outcome measurement?
- Who needs to be involved to make utilization successful?



# Limitations

- If outcome data shows that participants are not experiencing the desired effect, the data itself does not necessarily tell you where the problem lies
- Outcome findings cannot prove that the program alone caused the outcome
- Data cannot answer a questions that wasn't asked
- Places an additional burden on staff