Writing SMART Objectives

Created by: Leah Coughlin
Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS
Evaluation Consortium Member
Goals vs. Objectives

Goals:
- Broad statements that explain what the program is ultimately trying to achieve
- Provide the “why” or reasoning behind a task
- Set long-term direction
- Achieved when the objectives are fully met

Objectives:
- Provide specific targets toward goals
- Are measurable and use action verbs to describe what needs to be done
- Provide guidelines for how a goal can be accomplished
Goals vs. Objectives

- **Sample Goal:**
  - There will be no disproportionate disparity in the number of new infections among African American women when compared to those among white women.

- **Sample Objectives:**
  - By December 2010, 100 high-risk African American females will successfully complete the five sessions of the intervention SISTA.
  - By December, 2010, there will be a 10% decrease in the number of African American women completing the SISTA intervention who at post test report using a condom during all sexual activities.
Goals vs. Objectives

- Objectives and action steps are used to bridge the gap between where we are (current situation) and where we want to be (vision and goal).
SMART Objectives

- S – Specific
- M – Measurable
- A – Achievable
- R – Relevant
- T – Time-Bound
Specific

- Is the outcome precise?
  - State what you want to achieve.
  - State your specific audience.
  - Be concrete.
  - Use action words.
  - Use outcomes stated in numbers, percentages, scientific outcome, frequency, etc.
Measurable

- Can we measure it?
  - Describe what is going to be achieved in quantitative terms
    - “We will serve 90% of the affected population.”
- This is one of the most important considerations
  - By making sure that it is measurable, you will know that you met your objective because there is evidence
Attainable

- Can this actually be accomplished?
  - Your objectives must be realistic based on the timeframe, money available, resources etc.
  - Be sure to assess the potential limitations to determine if the objective is attainable
Relevant

- Do the objectives lead to the program goal?
  - The achievements must be meaningful to the organization and related to the goals.
  - Know that the data is being used to reach the set goals.
Time-Bound

- Do you have a specific time in which you want to achieve your objective?
  - It must be stated clearly when the objective will be attained.