



Creating Meaningful and Measurable Early Childhood Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Goals



Essential Elements, Checklists and Forms

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Essential Elements of Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Key Question: What is the child able to do?

Purpose: To describe the current level of functioning in the general curriculum (for preschoolers defined as “appropriate activities”) and the unique needs of the child that will be addressed by special education and related services. To establish a baseline of measurable information that serves as the starting point for developing goals.

Definition: The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance specifies:

- ❖ the strengths of the child
- ❖ the unique needs of the child
- ❖ parental concerns
- ❖ how the child’s disability affects his/her involvement and progress in age appropriate activities

Key Characteristics:

- ❖ measurable
- ❖ meaningful
- ❖ objective
- ❖ functional
- ❖ current
- ❖ identifies any special factors
- ❖ describes both academic and non-academic areas
- ❖ summarizes evaluation results in understandable language
- ❖ establishes a baseline of information used in writing goals, short term objectives and benchmarks

Writing Strategy

Describe the behavior the child is doing in objective, measurable terms. Describe how the developmental delay is keeping the child from participating and progressing in the same activities that other children of the same age are doing.

Adapted from O’Donnell, D. (1999, November 29). *Examples and tips of making annual goals measurable. Memorandum from Nissan B. Bar-Lev, Cooperative Education Service Agency No. 7, Department of Special Education. Retrieved January 18, 2003 from <http://www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/issues-IEPissues/writingiep/GoalsMeasurable.html>*

Essential Elements of Measurable Annual Goals

Key Question: What should the child be doing a year from now?

Purpose: To describe what a child can reasonably be expected to accomplish within 12 months with specially designed instruction and related services. Measurable annual goals enable the child to be involved in and progress in age appropriate activities.

Definition: A measurable annual goal

- ❖ is directly related to the needs identified in the PLAAFP
- ❖ sets the direction for working with the child
- ❖ uses the baseline established in the PLAAFP as a starting point to monitor progress
- ❖ is stated in clear terms
- ❖ has four parts: time frame, conditions, behavior, and criterion

Key Characteristics:

- ❖ describes what the child will do
- ❖ measurable
- ❖ meaningful
- ❖ functional
- ❖ objective
- ❖ comprehensive

Writing Strategy

Describe the behavior the child will be doing when the goal is reached. Include the time frame, the conditions in which the behavior will be seen, the specific behavior to be achieved, and what level/degree will be used to identify if the goal has been achieved.

Adapted from O'Donnell, D. (1999, November 29). *Examples and tips of making annual goals measurable. Memorandum from Nissan B. Bar-Lev, Cooperative Education Service Agency No. 7, Department of Special Education. Retrieved January 18, 2003 from <http://www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/issues-IEPissues/writingiep/GoalsMeasurable.html>*

Essential Elements of Short Term Objectives & Benchmarks

Note: While not required, short-term objectives/benchmarks continue to be a useful component of an IEP by providing intermediate gauges of progress toward the overall goal.

Key Question: What are the intermediate steps or major milestones needed to achieve the goal?

Purpose: To outline measurable, intermediate steps between the child's baseline data established in the PLAAFP and the annual goal.

Definitions: Short term objectives: intermediate steps to a goal
Benchmarks: major milestones to a goal

Key Characteristic: Short Term Objectives

- ❖ measurable
- ❖ minimum of 2 per goal
- ❖ a logical breakdown of the major components of the annual goal
- ❖ general indicators of progress, not a detailed instructional plan
- ❖ include time frame, conditions, behavior, criteria
- ❖ may be sequential or parallel
- ❖ comprehensive

Key Characteristic: Benchmarks

- ❖ measurable
- ❖ minimum of 2 per goal
- ❖ expected performance level
- ❖ major milestones or precursor steps
- ❖ sequential
- ❖ include time frame, condition, behavior

Writing Strategy

Describe the behavior the child will be doing when the short-term objective or benchmark is achieved.

Adapted from O'Donnell, D. (1999, November 29). *Examples and tips of making annual goals measurable. Memorandum from Nissan B. Bar-Lev, Cooperative Education Service Agency No. 7, Department of Special Education. Retrieved January 18, 2003 from <http://www.cesa7.k12.wi.us/sped/issues-IEPissues/writingiep/GoalsMeasurable.html>*

PLAAFP CHECKLIST

- ✓ Sufficient information on what the child is doing with regard to age appropriate activities and early childhood outcomes.
 - strengths identified as they relate to possible interventions or strategies
 - needs stated are clear priorities
 - parent concerns have been addressed
- ✓ A statement has been made regarding how the child's disability or developmental delay is affecting progress in age appropriate activities.
 - clearly states what the delay is keeping the child from doing
- ✓ The PLAAFP establishes a baseline that will be used in the annual goals.
 - behaviors/skills can be seen, heard, or counted (measurable)
 - behaviors/skills are useful across environments (functional)
 - special considerations were considered (i.e. specialized equipment)

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS CHECKLIST

- ✓ Established from the needs identified on the PLAAFP
- ✓ Established related to parent concerns
- ✓ Established related to early childhood outcomes
- ✓ Provide a clear picture of what the child will be able to do in 12 months as a result of intervention
- ✓ Describe behaviors/skills that can reasonably be expected in 12 months as a result of intervention.
- ✓ Describe behaviors/skills that would not have been achieved without special education
- ✓ Achievement will enhance the child's participation in current and future inclusive environments
- ✓ Are meaningful and functional towards the success of the child across environments
- ✓ Establishes the level or degree of mastery for goal accomplishment
- ✓ Includes: (a) time frame, (b) conditions, (c) behavior, and (d) criterion
- ✓ Are written in a way that any person working on the educational plan can easily begin instruction. Jargon is explained or not used
- ✓ Are stated in positive terms

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES / BENCHMARKS CHECKLIST

- ✓ Define intermediate steps towards the goal
- ✓ At least 2 short term objectives / benchmarks have been written per goal
- ✓ Establishes the level or degree of mastery for goal accomplishment
- ✓ Short-term objectives include: (a) time frame, (b) conditions, (c) behavior, (d) criterion
- ✓ Benchmarks identify major milestones towards achieving the goal
- ✓ Benchmarks include: (a) time frame, (b) condition, (c) behavior
- ✓ Specific instructional strategies, materials, and personnel have been listed

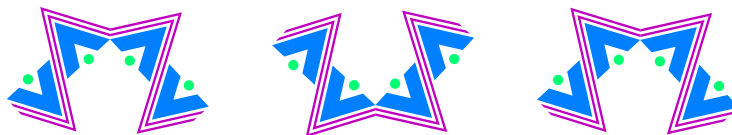
Best Practices in Goal Setting

Individualized	Goals are specifically designed to address child's individual needs as identified on the PLAAFP. They specify antecedents, conditions and mastery criteria appropriate for the child. They are not selected from a canned list of IEP goals.
Comprehensive	Goals address all aspects of the child's current and future environments and are selected by the team as priorities for which special interventions are necessary.
Normalizing	Goals focus on skills that are normalizing, not stigmatizing. The team considers the effect of goal achievement on the child's perceived status in typical settings.
Appropriate Activities	Goals are selected that will specifically improve the child's ability to participate and progress in appropriate activities.
Interdisciplinary	All members of the team, including the family, contribute to the identification and prioritization of goals.
Collaborative	Team members are aware of and involved in implementing goals. If multiple agencies are involved, information is coordinated so all agencies are addressing the same or compatible goals.
Family-Centered Relationship-Supportive	Goals address behaviors/skills that will enhance the child's interactions and relationships with family members and significant others. The family is an important contributor in the process of selecting and prioritizing goals.
Culturally Sensitive	Goals are appropriate to the child's family culture and are written in a style (and language) that is meaningful to the family.

Adapted from McLean, L. (1992, June). *Assessment and Curriculum: Choosing a System That's Right for Your Program*. Presenter at Early Childhood Special Education Summer Institute, Ames, Iowa.

Ten Methods for Collecting Baseline Data

- ❖ Work Sample Analysis
- ❖ Time Sampling
- ❖ Rubrics
- ❖ Checklists
- ❖ Rating Scales
- ❖ Timed Probes
- ❖ Task Analysis
- ❖ Frequency Counts
- ❖ Curriculum Based Assessments
- ❖ Criterion Based Assessments



Revised IEP/IFSP Goals and Objectives Rating Instrument (R-GORI)

Functionality	Instructional Context
<p>1. Will the skill increase the child's ability to interact with people and objects within the daily environment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the child need to demonstrate the skill in all/most situations? • Is the skill crucial (increases independence) for participation in most daily routines (e.g., playing, dressing, eating, participating in family activities such as shopping eating at restaurants, participating in classroom activities such as snack, centers, circle time), <i>OR</i> is it a necessary or precursor component of a skill that is crucial? <p>2. Will the skill have to be performed by someone else if the child cannot do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the skill crucial for the completion of most daily routines? • Is the skill considered a precursor, building block, or necessary element to the acquisition of another skill? 	<p>5. Can the skill be taught in a way that reflects the manner in which the skill will be used in daily environments?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can others provide opportunities or teach the skill in common, everyday situations? <p>6. Can the skill be elicited by the teacher/parent/therapist/caregiver within the classroom/home activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the goal/objective written in clear, jargon free language that can be elicited by any member of the team? • Is the skill written in a way that is not confusing, too clinical, or requires specific knowledge that is not readily available to all team members?
Generality	Measurability
<p>3. Does the skill represent a general concept or class of responses?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the goal represent a generic process? • Does the goal represent a group of related behaviors? • Is the objective a precursor or building block to the goal (i.e., a milestone)? • Is the objective a component or aspect of the goal? <p>4. Can the skill be generalized across a variety of settings, materials, and/or people?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the child use the skill across settings, materials, and/or people? • Can everyday items be used by the child when performing the skill? 	<p>7. Can the skill be seen and/or heard?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can multiple people agree that the same skill has occurred? ▪ Is a specific definition of the skill provided—is it operationally defined? <p>8. Can the skill be directly counted/measured?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the dimension of the skill provided (e.g., frequency, duration, latency, endurance, intensity, accuracy)? ▪ Is the length of time the skill is to be consistently performed indicated (e.g., for 5 days, 2 weeks)? <p>9. Does the skill contain performance criteria?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are the conditions or circumstances under which the skill is to be performed/ demonstrated provided (e.g., when given, during, at)? ▪ Is the level of performance stated (e.g., with assistance, independently) or implied in the target behavior (e.g. copies, initiates)?

Adapted from Notari-Syverson, A.R., & Schuster, S. L. (1995) Putting real life skills into IEP/IFSPs for infants and young children. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 27(2), 29-32.

Early Childhood Outcome and IEP Review Summary Form

Child's Name _____ IEP Review Date _____

Outcome 1: To what extent does the child show age appropriate functioning , across a variety of settings and situations, in the area of social interaction?		
Involves:	Strengths	Areas for growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relating with adults Relating with other children For older children, following rules related to groups or interacting with others <p>Includes areas like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attachment/separation/autonomy Expressing emotions and feelings Learning rules and expectations Social interactions and play 		
Outcome 2: To what extent does the child show age appropriate functioning , across a variety of settings and situations, related to the acquisition and use of knowledge and skills?		
Involves:	Strengths	Areas for growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking Reasoning Remembering Problem solving Using symbols and language Understanding physical and social worlds <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early concepts – symbols, pictures, numbers, classification, spatial relationships Imitation Object permanence Expressive language and communication Early literacy 		
Outcome 3: To what extent does the child take action to meet his/her own needs as appropriate to his/her age across a variety of settings and situations?		
Involves:	Strengths	Areas for growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking care of basic needs Getting from place to place Using tools (e.g. fork, toothbrush, crayon) In older children, contributing to their own health and safety <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating motor skills to complete tasks Self-help skills (e.g. dressing, feeding, grooming, toileting, household responsibility) Acting on the world to get what one wants 		

Adapted from : Nylander, D. (2010). *Nylander Annual Report ECO Worksheet*. Paper presented at the 2010 OSPE Leadership Mega Conference. Retrieved from http://leadershipmega-conf-reg.tadnet.org/uploads/file_assets/attachments/228/original_Nylander_Annual_Report_w-ECO_worksheet.pdf?128016000

INTEGRATING CHILD OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT INTO THE IEP PROCESS

PRACTICES SUMMARY WORKSHEET

Instructions: The group decides for each practice, which is implemented well and which is not. List some barriers for those practices that are not well implemented. If time allows, one person from each table will report to the other IFSP groups on 2 or 3 things going well and 2 or 3 things are hard to implement and why.

A. Referral to the 619 Preschool Program	Check group decision	
	Not implemented	Implemented Well
1. Determine family's initial concerns about their child		
2. Determine next steps in the referral process		
3. Facilitate smooth transitions for children and families who have participated in Part C services		
4. Describe the 619 preschool program as a system of services for helping eligible children develop, learn and successfully participate in home and community life		
Barriers:		
B. Child Evaluation	Check group decision	
	Not implemented	Implemented Well
1. Plan the evaluation		
2. Conduct the evaluation		
Barriers:		
C. Eligibility Determination	Check group decision	
	Not implemented	Implemented Well
1. Collaboratively determine if the child is eligible for the 619 preschool program		
2. If required by state or local policy to do so at this point in the IEP process, summarize the information on the COSF and determine a rating for each outcome area		
Barriers:		

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