

FUNCTIONAL OUTCOMES

What is a functional outcome?

A high quality functional outcome is a goal that:

- Is developmentally appropriate for the next 6 months for the child,
- Is written in parent-friendly language and contains no clinical terms or jargon,
- Builds upon the child's strengths and is discipline free (not specific for one discipline),
- Describes a measurable and observable skill that everyone on the team including the parents will know when the goal has been achieved,
- Guides the focus of the service provision,
- Reflects how the family would like their child to function within the routine activities that they consider priorities and that reflect real-life settings, and
- Reflects the integrated functional skills and abilities across developmental domains such as motor, cognition, communication, adaptive, and social-emotional.

Every functional outcome should contain the following components:

- **The Who:** This is usually the child but can also be the parent.
- **Will Do What:** This is what the child will learn to do. This should be a reasonable goal for the child to achieve in the next 6 months.
- **The Measure of Success:** This is how everyone on the team including the parents/caregivers will know that the outcome has been met and it should be observable. Examples of measurement include how often, how much, how long or how well. Don't use percentages.
- **Routine Activity:** These are events that occur typically during the child's day and are individualized by the family's culture and environment. Routine activities are identified by the family and reflect their priorities. Examples include activities of daily living, family errands, and social, play, hygiene, meal, medical, and dressing activities.
- **Under What Condition:** This is any specific situation or adaptation that is reasonable to help the child achieve the outcome. This is an **optional** component depending on whether the child may require some adaptation or assistance to achieve the outcome. An example may include using a particular spoon or with the parent's help. If a condition is not specified, it's assumed that the child demonstrates 100% independence and does not require assistance.

- **The “So That”:** This is the reason why the family would like to achieve this outcome and why it is important. It should be written in the parent’s words and will reflect the family’s context, values, and priorities.

Sample Functional Outcome

Samira will feed herself using her hands and a spoon during dinner time every night so that her family can eat together. Let’s break down Samira’s goal:

Goal Components	Example
Who	Samira
Will Do What	Feed herself using her hands and a spoon
Measure of Success	Feed herself using her hands and a spoon every night
Under What Condition (optional)	Using a spoon helping with her grip Using a verbal or physical prompt from her parents
So That	So that, her family can eat together

Each functional outcome may have a few objectives:

- Are the **related** steps that help achieve the functional outcome,
- Are the checkpoints that let everyone know that they are on the right track toward achieving the functional outcome,
- Measures progress made and what needs to still be worked on to meet the outcome, or
- Describes the different competencies that make up the functional outcome or the levels of decrease in support needed to meet the outcome.

Review your child’s functional outcomes on their IFSP to ensure that each one includes the required components and the objectives listed above. Please speak to your service coordinator and/or Early Intervention Official Designee (EIOD) if you have any questions or concerns.