

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Fiscal Year (FY) 2011

Updated February 9, 2011



Q1: What is the purpose of the *Indicators*?

A1: *Indicators* provide education agencies with a common set of measures to report annual progress and provide the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) with a common data set to report national program progress.

Q2: What does DASH do with the *Indicators* information?

A2: 1) Generate aggregate reports of program activities across all sites
2) Identify implications from findings for future programs
3) Use findings to influence and inform decision makers on national program progress
4) Showcase significant and unique achievements.

Q3: Is CDC using this information to evaluate us in some way?

A3: Yes. *Indicators* are used to evaluate your performance. However, they are not the sole determinant of how well you are achieving approved program goals and objectives. Other measures include School Level Impact Measures (SLIMs), site visit reports, the continuation application, the annual progress report, the financial status report (FSR), and other reports and documents provided by your organization during a budget period.

Q4: How does my program benefit from completing the *Indicators*?

A4: You can show your stakeholders what you have accomplished during the budget period and you will have a systematic data collection process that you can use for program planning and improvement. Over time you will be able to examine trends in your program efforts and make links to program outcomes.

Q5: Are the *Indicators* required?

A5: *Indicators* are required for program year 4 (March 1, 2011 to February 29, 2012). We anticipate that they will be required for subsequent years.

Q6: Do I have to complete the *Indicators* and the Annual Progress Report for Program Year 4?

A6: Yes. *Indicators* and the Annual Progress Report are required for Program Year 4 (March 1, 2011 to February 29, 2012). You must report on the status of this budget year's goals and objectives as per the Reporting Requirements in your Notice of Cooperative Agreement. Please contact your project officer for the level of detail needed in the annual progress report.

Q7: Will my responses to the *Indicators* be compared to other states' and cities'?

A7: No. Although the *Indicators* provide standardized process measures for states and cities, they will not be used to rank sites, or to make a report card that compares the performance of individual states and cities relative to each other.

Q8: Will I be able to see other state or city answers?

A8: Yes. With projects' permission, site-specific, multiyear reports for each project may be made available on the DASH Web site.

Q9: My agency does not conduct all the activities asked about in the *Indicators*. What should I do?

A9: You might not implement all the activities addressed in the *Indicators* and the *Indicators* may not fully describe your project's efforts to implement school health programs. Your agency may not have measured all of the activities implemented and therefore may not have the data to answer all of the questions. Please answer the questions as best you can and as honestly as possible. Please leave questions blank if they do not apply to your project or if you did not collect the data.

Q10: The *Indicators* do not capture all that my program is doing. Should I be concerned about this?

A10: The *Indicators* may not fully describe your project's school health programs. Please answer the questions the best you can. If you have significant activities you feel were not captured by the *Indicators*, please include a short narrative of those activities in the open-ended questions at the end of the *Indicators*. We also welcome your feedback to improve what we ask on the *Indicators*. Please feel free to contact the Evaluation Research Team at ert@cdc.gov with comments on the *Indicators* content.

Q11: Based on the *Indicators*, it does not look like my program did a lot this budget period. Will this count against me?

A11: Probably not. The *Indicators* are not the sole determinant of how a project is progressing; other measures will include SLIMs, site visit reports, the continuation application, the annual progress report, and other reports and documents provided by your organization during a budget period.

Q12: How do I answer questions about activities that DASH did not fund?

A12: Do not report activities that DASH did not fund. Only report activities for which any amount of DASH funds were used, or in which staff time to develop, implement, or evaluate activities was funded in any amount by DASH.

Q13: I want to provide more information about my program than is in the *Indicators*. How do I do that?

A13: Consult your project officer to discuss what to include in your annual progress report. Additional information you might provide as a supplement includes reports of other evaluations; logic models; major obstacles, solutions, and programmatic changes; success stories; and key documents, materials, and activities.

Q14: I am not sure what you mean by several terms that you use in the *Indicators*. How can I find out what you mean when you use those terms?

A14: There is a glossary included with the *Indicators*. In the print version, it is included after the questions. In the web-based application, you can access it through the link on the upper right-hand corner that says "Click here for Glossary." If you still have questions about the meaning of a term after reading the glossary definition, please contact your project officer.

Q15: What kind of activities should I collect information on to complete the *Indicators*?

A15: You need to collect information on materials distribution, professional development, and technical assistance. Specifically, you need to record the number of

- Schools reached
- Districts reached (if applicable)
- Regional support units reached (if applicable)
- Events and participants attending professional development events.

You also need to record the topic areas addressed by the materials you distribute and your professional development and technical assistance activities.

Q16: What information should I report in questions that include the words “reached directly?”

A16: Some questions ask how many organizations you “reach directly,” including schools, districts, and regional support units. In answering these questions you should **only report contact with the organization once per topic and activity**, regardless of how many times you reach them throughout the budget period. For example, if five teachers from the same school attend a professional development event, you have reached their school once even though multiple teachers attended.

For **professional development questions** where “reached” is not in the question stem, you should report **total number of events and participants** even if the same people attend all your events.

Q17: What kinds of schools can I count as being “reached directly?”

A17: We define schools as a division of the public school system consisting of students in one or more grades or other identifiable groups organized to give instruction of a defined type. One school may share a building with another school or one school may be housed in several buildings. Each school usually has an identification number assigned by the state department of education for tracking purposes. Public schools include charter schools, magnet schools, vocational schools, and alternative schools. If a school is considered to be public in your state, then you should count it as public for the purposes of the *Indicators*.

Q18: What qualifies as Technical Assistance?

A18: Technical Assistance (TA) is tailored assistance to meet site-specific needs with collaborative communication between a specialist and the site. Assistance takes into account site-specific circumstances and culture and can be provided through phone, mail, e-mail, Internet, or in-person meetings. The key is *tailored assistance* to meet *site-specific needs*. Contact with a site alone is not sufficient to meet the TA definition. You must be providing some type of *tailored* or *customized* assistance. Distribution of generic materials does *not* qualify as TA. Materials provided in TA will have been purposefully designed to address the unique circumstances of a specific school district, school, or regional support unit.

Q19: My program does not track professional development events and technical assistance (TA) provided. What should I do?

A19: Materials are available to help you measure *Indicators* information including paper-and-pencil TA and distribution log sheets, registration forms, and electronic logs using an Excel spreadsheet designed for *Indicators*. These tools can be found on the DASH *Indicators* Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/indicators/index.htm>.

Q20: Can I use Training Tracker to record and compile my *Indicators* data?

A20: No. The *Indicators*-aligned version of Training Tracker has been discontinued for FY 2011. Instead, funded partners are encouraged to use the paper-and-pencil logs and/or electronic logs provided on the DASH *Indicators* Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/indicators/index.htm>.

Q21: What does exemplary mean?

A21: “Exemplary” refers to an evaluated curriculum or program with evidence of effectiveness or a curriculum or program that has used research-based or science-based strategies. An exemplary curriculum or program is (1) developmentally and culturally appropriate, (2) medically and scientifically accurate, (3) consistent with scientifically researched evidence of effectiveness, and (4) built on a theoretic approach based on proven principles for prevention.

Q22: In the HIV *Indicators*, you ask if we conducted professional development to district or school staff on any specific HIV prevention education curricula and/or program for youth. What do you mean by “specific HIV prevention education curricula and/or programs delivered to deliver to youth?”

A22: Curricula or programs are delivered directly to youth in the classroom or as part of school activities during or after school hours. Do not include professional development on general instructional strategies or conferences used to promote specific curricula or programs. For example, if the State Department of Education developed a curriculum to be delivered directly to students called *HIV Prevention Education for High School Students* and your organization trained 40 teachers on that specific curriculum, it would be included in this section because (1) it is a specific curriculum (rather than general information that teachers cover in any way they choose); (2) the curriculum is designed for delivery to youth (rather than the curriculum being designed with teachers, parents, etc. as the intended audience); and (3) your program trained district or school staff on that particular curriculum.

Q23: What is a “Regional Support Unit (RSU)?”

A23: A RSU is a state-recognized agency or organization (e.g., universities, regional education support agencies, regional offices of education, regional training centers, teacher centers, county superintendent’s offices, etc.) that provides professional development, technical assistance, and educational materials to school districts and schools within the state.

Q24: Is there a way to submit the *Indicators* electronically?

A24: Yes. The FY 2011 *Indicators* may be submitted electronically through the online survey system. The surveys may be accessed by clicking on the link emailed to you. To update personnel information for your site, contact the Evaluation Research Team at ert@cdc.gov.

Q25: Will there be trainings on how to submit the *Indicators* electronically?

A25: Yes. Individual trainings can be scheduled at any time throughout the year by contacting the Evaluation Research Team at ert@cdc.gov.

Q26: Who can I contact for help?

A27: Contact your project officer first. If you have questions about the content of the *Indicators*, need help with your responses, have technical problems, or need to access to the web application, please contact the Evaluation Research Team at ert@cdc.gov.