

## Q & A for “Outcomes in Credible Research Sources”

**Q. What is the “Outcomes in Credible Research Sources” list?**

A. The list is a compilation of outcomes in the fields of early childhood development, youth development and family development. It was created during an 18- month process focused on reviewing the literature describing the key characteristics of effective programs. The Foundation and its evaluation consultant synthesized that research conducted by recognized, credible organizations and the result is this list.

**Q. Why did the Foundation develop an “Outcomes” list?**

A. The Foellinger Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations that strengthen Allen County children and their families, particularly those children and families with the greatest economic need and the least opportunity. This is the Foundation’s strategic intent. Strategic intent is especially important in the categories of early childhood, youth, and family development. In addition, the Foundation’s Board of Directors places an emphasis on organizational effectiveness – as did the Foundation’s founders who valued accountability and results.

With this in mind, the Board is interested in helping organizations focus their grant requests, if appropriate, on outcomes that support the Foundation’s strategic intent. So, the Foundation’s staff and evaluation consultant worked to develop a comprehensive list of outcomes.

As grantees begin to work from the outcomes on the list, the Foundation’s Board will be better able to measure the comprehensive results of their grant approvals.

**Q. Is one outcome or set of outcomes more important than another?**

A. All of the outcomes on the list are based on national research and no one outcome or set of outcomes is more important than any other. What’s important is that organizations submit applications explaining why the outcomes selected are related to the funding requested. After a grant is awarded, it is important that the progress report narrative and measurement framework detail the results achieved based on the outcomes selected.

**Q. How did the Foundation determine what outcomes would be included on the list?**

A. Outcomes included on the list are based on reviews of extensive amounts of literature from national research organizations and all of the currently approved and clarified logic models and measurement frameworks submitted by grantee organizations in the early childhood, youth, and family development categories.

**Q. When does the Foundation expect organizations to start using these outcomes?**

A. Organizations applying for funding in the early childhood, youth and/or family development categories are now required to use at least two outcomes from the “Outcomes in Credible Research Sources” in their logic models and measurement frameworks.

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**Q. How many outcomes should be used in developing the logic model and measurement framework?**

A. The Foundation is requiring that an organization use between two and four of the outcomes from the “Consolidated List.” The outcomes selected should align with the grant funds requested.

**Q. Will the Foundation allow grant applicants to change the wording of the outcomes to match the language already being used in mission statements and program literature?**

A. The Foundation is not asking organizations to change the language already being used in mission statements and program literature. What the Foundation would like is to understand the outcomes used by various grantees and how those outcomes can be tracked to develop a more realistic and comprehensive picture of the results of grant funding. Don’t change your mission – do use the outcomes as they are worded on the “Outcomes” list.

**Q. Why do some of the boxes under “Type” on the Outcomes List include the language “Supports and Opportunities”?**

A. Several boxes on the list represent “supports and opportunities” and are defined on page 1 of the list as “elements (a mix of outcomes and practices) which are not the direct or ultimate outcomes desired for children, youth, and families but which have been shown to enhance the likelihood that direct or ultimate outcomes will occur.”

**Q. Will an application be considered for funding if it only has outcomes that are considered “supports and opportunities”?**

A. Yes, provided those are consistent with the organization’s mission and the types of programs and/or projects it offers. The Foundation has included the “supports and opportunities” information to show how important they are in achieving outcomes for children and families.

**Q. Will the Foundation provide training to organizations to understand how to adapt their existing outcomes to this new list?**

A. Not at this time. All of the outcomes are consolidated from credible research sources. Organizations are much more familiar with their specific mission and programs and the Foundation thinks it’s more appropriate for each organization to choose their outcomes and then make their own case in the grant application.

The Foundation is providing this list to help organizations become more effective in measuring their outcomes. And, the Foundation encourages the Board and staff members of nonprofit organizations to discuss outcomes and implement “lessons learned” from evaluation.

**Q. What if different organizations use the same outcomes from the list?**

A. That’s not a problem! In fact, the Foundation plans to track that information and – from time to time – invite those grantees to the Foundation for informal discussions about how different types of organizations are achieving the same outcomes.