

Name of Activity: What are 'Functional' Skills and Outcomes? Activity

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Activity Time: 30 minutes

Preparation:

1. Print the “*Functional Skills Exercise*” and the handout entitled “*What is a Functional Outcome?*” and copy for each participant.
2. Review the contents of “*What is a Functional Outcome?*” prior to the training.
3. Print the “*Functional Skills Exercise: Answers and Explanation*” to have available during the activity.

Activity Instructions:

1. Ask participants to complete the “*Functional Skills Exercise*” independently.
2. As a large group, review each skill listed and discuss the extent to which the skill is functional or isolated. Provide the correct answers along with explanations.
3. Review the handout, “*What is a Functional Outcome?*” and discuss reactions as a whole group. Depending on the needs of the participants, prompts for group discussion may include:
 - What does it mean for skills and behaviors to be observed in children in everyday routines and activities
 - How would you look at the functional use of skills and behaviors across settings and situations?
 - What are the benefits of gathering information about the child’s functioning that goes beyond discrete skills on standardized or domain based tests
 - How are children’s functional skills and abilities and the three child outcomes rated in the COS process connected?

Activity Variations:

- Consider including content in your Power Point slides from the “*What is a Functional Outcome?*” handout to support participants’ understanding of the topic.
- Divide a larger group into 4-5 smaller groups and have them complete the activity together. Begin the large group debriefing with the question, “Were there any items you did not agree upon?” Have each group contribute as appropriate for the size of the group and the time available.
- In programs that are integrating the child outcomes measurement process with the IFSP or IEP process, consider changing the last bullet in the discussion prompts to include the connection of **individual child outcomes or goals on the IFSP/IEP** to children’s skills and abilities as well as the three child outcomes rated in the COS process.

