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Outcome Statement Examples

For Youth-Serving Organizations and Nonprofits

30+ examples across 10 program types • ready to adapt for your surveys and logic model

How to Use This Reference

A strong outcome statement describes what changes for participants because of your program—not what your program does. This reference gives you 30+ examples organized by program type, each framed as a sentence you can adapt directly for your surveys, logic model, and funder reports.

Each example follows the same structure:

Because of our program, participants will... *[specific change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior]*

Substitute your program name and the specific outcome. The sentence structure stays the same.

Why Outcome Statements Matter

They focus your data collection	Without a clear outcome statement, surveys tend to measure what’s easy to ask rather than what actually matters. A specific outcome gives every survey item a job to do—and makes it easy to decide what to cut.
They give funders a claim to evaluate	Vague language like “improve student outcomes” gives funders nothing to hold you accountable to—or to celebrate. A specific outcome statement is a commitment. It shows you know what your program is for.
They make survey design straightforward	Your primary outcome statement is essentially your anchor survey item written in plain language. “Participants will feel more confident applying for jobs” becomes the survey item “Overall, I feel more prepared to apply and interview for jobs.”
They keep your logic model honest	When every component of your logic model traces back to a specific outcome, it’s easy to spot activities that don’t connect. The outcome statement is the spine the whole model is built around.

When to Write Your Outcome Statement

The answer is simple: before you collect any data. Ideally before you design your survey, and if possible, before the program cycle begins.

A survey designed around a specific outcome collects focused, credible evidence. A survey assembled before the outcome is named tends to collect a broad mix of items that are hard to interpret and harder to act on. The data may be interesting—but it won't clearly answer the question that matters: did participants experience the change this program is designed to produce?

When	Why it matters at this stage
Before the program cycle begins	Gives staff a shared, specific picture of what success looks like. Shapes activity design and resource allocation. Prevents the drift that happens when programs grow without a clear outcome.
Before you design your survey	Your outcome statement is the template for your anchor item. Writing the survey first and working backward produces weaker, harder-to-interpret data.
Before you submit a grant application	Funders are looking for specificity. "Improve student outcomes" is a placeholder. "Participants will feel more confident in their ability to read at grade level" is a claim they can evaluate and fund toward.
What if I'm starting mid-cycle?	Name your outcome now and use it for the rest of this cycle. Your data will be more useful than if you don't name it at all. Next cycle, start here first.

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Writing outcome statements after data collection is a common trap. It's tempting to look at what the data shows and work backward to a claim that fits. The problem is that data not designed around a specific outcome tends to produce findings that are true but not useful—interesting to read, hard to act on, and difficult to connect to what the program is actually trying to change.

Can You Have More Than One Outcome Statement?

Yes—most programs have multiple outcomes they care about. The distinction that matters is between your primary outcome and your supporting outcomes.

Type	What it is and how it's used
1 Primary outcome <i>One per program</i>	The single most important change your program is designed to produce. This is what your anchor survey item measures, what your logic model is built around, and what you lead with when reporting to funders. Every program should be able to name exactly one.
3 – 6 Supporting outcomes <i>Several per program</i>	The other changes your program produces that matter and are worth measuring. These become your supporting survey items and your short-term outcomes in the logic model. They give depth and context to your primary outcome finding.

The reason to insist on one primary outcome isn't that the others don't matter—it's that programs without a clear primary outcome tend to treat everything as equally important, which means nothing is actually prioritized. When a funder asks "what does your program change?" and the answer is eight outcomes listed in a bullet, the program hasn't made a decision about what it's for.

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If you could only report one number to your board—one percent favorable score from one survey item—which outcome would it be? That's your primary outcome. Everything else is supporting evidence.

How to Adapt The Examples

<p>“Participants” means your specific population</p>	<p>Replace with “students,” “youth ages 14–17,” “families,” or whoever you serve. Be as specific as your program warrants.</p>
<p>Make it specific to your program’s focus</p>	<p>“Feel more confident” is good. “Feel more confident in their ability to read at grade level” is better. Specificity makes the survey item easier to write and the finding easier to interpret.</p>
<p>Pick one as your primary, several as supporting</p>	<p>Browse the examples for your program type. Choose the one that most honestly reflects what your program is primarily designed to change. Then select 3–5 others as supporting outcomes.</p>
<p>Supporting outcomes become survey items</p>	<p>Each supporting outcome is a candidate survey item. “Participants will feel more confident in science” becomes “This program has helped me feel more confident in science.” Same idea, survey format.</p>
<p>Long-term outcomes need a follow-up plan</p>	<p>If you include a long-term outcome, decide before the program starts how and when you’ll collect that data. If you can’t name a realistic tracking method, leave it as an aspiration rather than a measured outcome.</p>

The Examples

Each example is tagged by outcome type. Use the key below to read the tables.

Knowledge Participants know or understand something new	Skills Participants can do something they couldn't before	Attitudes Participants feel or believe differently	Behavior Participants begin acting differently	Long-term Sustained change over 3–5+ years
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Not every program type will use all five categories. Use the ones that honestly reflect what your program is designed to produce.

REMEMBER

An outcome describes what changes—not what you do. “Participants will attend 12 sessions” is an output. “Participants will feel more confident in science” is an outcome.

Afterschool & Out-of-School Time Programs

General enrichment, homework help, and extended learning

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel more confident in their ability to learn and succeed in school
Attitudes	... feel like they belong in an academic setting
Knowledge	... demonstrate improved understanding of core academic content (reading, math, science)
Skills	... apply study strategies and organizational skills independently
Behavior	... complete homework more consistently and arrive at school more prepared
Long-term	... sustain academic engagement through middle school <i>Requires multi-year tracking</i>

Literacy & Reading Programs

Early literacy, reading intervention, family literacy

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... see themselves as capable readers
Attitudes	... express enjoyment of reading independently
Knowledge	... demonstrate improved phonological awareness and decoding skills
Skills	... read at or approaching grade-level benchmarks
Behavior	... read independently outside of program time
Behavior	... families report reading together at home more regularly
Long-term	... sustain grade-level reading proficiency through elementary school

STEM & Science Enrichment

Science, technology, engineering, and math programs

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... see themselves as people who can do science or engineering
Attitudes	... feel more curious about how things work
Knowledge	... understand key concepts in the program's focus area (coding, biology, physics, etc.)
Skills	... apply a design-thinking or scientific inquiry process to a problem
Skills	... demonstrate basic coding, building, or lab skills
Behavior	... pursue STEM-related activities outside of program time
Long-term	... enroll in advanced STEM coursework in high school

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs

Mental health support, resilience, and social skills

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel more confident managing difficult emotions
Attitudes	... feel a stronger sense of belonging in their school or community
Knowledge	... identify and name emotions in themselves and others
Skills	... use at least one self-regulation strategy when stressed or upset
Skills	... demonstrate positive conflict resolution skills with peers
Behavior	... show fewer behavioral incidents that disrupt learning
Long-term	... sustain healthy peer relationships and coping strategies into adolescence

Workforce Development & Career Readiness

Job skills, internships, career exploration for teens and young adults

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel more prepared to enter and navigate the workforce with confidence
Attitudes	... have greater clarity about their career interests and goals
Knowledge	... understand workplace norms, expectations, and professional culture
Skills	... produce a job-ready resume and demonstrate interview skills
Skills	... complete a paid or unpaid work experience
Behavior	... apply for jobs or postsecondary training following program completion
Long-term	... secure and retain employment for 6+ months <i>Requires follow-up data collection</i>

Family Engagement & Parent Support Programs

Programs that serve families alongside or in place of direct student services

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel more confident supporting their child's learning at home
Attitudes	... feel more connected to and informed about their child's school
Knowledge	... understand age-appropriate developmental expectations for their child
Knowledge	... know how to access school resources and support services
Skills	... use at least one new strategy to support their child's learning at home
Behavior	... attend school events and conferences more consistently
Long-term	... remain actively engaged in their child's education through high school

Mentoring Programs

One-on-one and group mentoring across age groups

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel they have at least one trusted adult outside their immediate family
Attitudes	... feel more hopeful about their future
Attitudes	... feel a stronger sense of personal identity and self-worth
Knowledge	... understand how to set and work toward a personal goal
Skills	... demonstrate improved decision-making in the face of peer pressure or risk
Behavior	... maintain consistent school attendance and engagement
Long-term	... graduate high school and pursue postsecondary education or employment

Arts, Music & Creative Programs

Visual arts, performing arts, music, and creative expression

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel more confident expressing themselves creatively
Attitudes	... feel a stronger sense of pride in their cultural identity or community
Knowledge	... understand foundational techniques in their art form
Skills	... demonstrate growth in their creative craft over the course of the program
Skills	... collaborate effectively with peers on a shared creative project
Behavior	... engage in creative practice outside of program time
Long-term	... continue participation in arts or creative activities into adulthood

Civic Engagement & Leadership Programs

Youth leadership, advocacy, community service, and civic skills

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel empowered to make a difference in their community
Attitudes	... feel a stronger sense of civic responsibility
Knowledge	... understand how local government and civic systems work
Skills	... plan and lead at least one community action or service project
Skills	... communicate effectively with adults and decision-makers
Behavior	... vote or participate in civic processes after program completion <i>For older youth and young adult programs</i>
Long-term	... continue civic engagement and community leadership roles into adulthood

Health & Wellness Programs

Physical health, nutrition, mental wellness, and healthy choices

Type	Because of our program, participants will...
Attitudes	... feel more motivated to make healthy choices
Attitudes	... feel more confident managing stress and anxiety
Knowledge	... understand basic nutrition, physical health, or mental wellness concepts
Skills	... demonstrate at least one new healthy habit (exercise, meal planning, mindfulness)
Behavior	... report healthier eating, sleep, or physical activity patterns
Long-term	... sustain healthy lifestyle behaviors into adulthood

Ready to put these outcomes to work?

The Logic Model Workbook walks you through building a complete theory of change—starting with your primary outcome and connecting it to everything your program does. The Youth Program Evaluation Toolkit gives you ready-to-use surveys to measure what you find here.

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