

Needs Assessment Guidance & Template Community Management Team

Target & Sub-populations	Risk Factors	Protective Factors	Indicators & Data Sources
<p>The target populations refer to a group of children and youth identified in the grant application as the intended recipients of resources and services. For example, the target population for Head Start services would include preschool-aged (3 to 5 years old) children.</p> <p>Due to the requirements to address behavioral health disparities, the needs assessment must also include a focus on sub-populations within the target populations.</p> <p>The subpopulation refers to racial and ethnic minorities within the target population but may also describe populations based on gender, sexual orientation, geographic location or socio-economic status. In the context of the needs assessment, target populations and sub-populations should be included according to the existing resource or service.</p>	<p>Risk factors are measurable characteristics that can be associated with a negative problematic outcome. Risk factors can occur on multiple levels, including biological, psychological, family, community, and cultural levels.</p> <p>Examples of risk factors primarily linked with children, youth, schools and communities: Bullying, academic failure, aggressive antisocial behavior, school and neighborhood violence and crime, trauma such as child abuse & neglect, living in poverty or living in high poverty neighborhoods, alcohol and drug abuse witnessing of or abusing drugs and alcohol.</p>	<p>Protective factors are resources within the individual, family or community that are associated with a lower likelihood of negative problematic outcomes. They reduce the negative impact of a risk factor. Related to protective factors are assets. An asset is a useful or valuable quality, person, or thing; an advantage or resource. Examples include: Civic and business associations and cultural and faith based organizations are as well as public, private and non-profit organizations in the community such as public schools, libraries, parks and recreation, social service agencies, fire and police departments are notable assets.</p> <p>Examples of protective factors: Positive and supportive relationships with peers, adults, and family, Adequate social supports, access to mentors, access to a quality education, supports for early learning, feel safe in the neighborhood and at school, supportive relationships with family members.</p>	<p>Indicators are also known as performance objectives, performance targets, or objectives. Indicators are powerful tools for monitoring and communicating critical information about state and community populations. Indicators are used to support planning for identified priorities; developing and targeting of resources; identifying benchmarks and tracking progress toward state and community objectives; building awareness of problems and trends; informing policy and policy makers; and promoting accountability among governmental and non-governmental agencies.</p> <p>Data are either quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative data sources are numbers rates, and statistics and include both primary and secondary sources. Qualitative data refer to information gathered through focus groups, interviews, and observations. In conducting the needs assessment, the data source must be tied to the selected indicator. As an example, a good data source tied to indicators on adolescent substance use would be the most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey.</p> <p><i>*See attached examples of data sources</i></p>