



Demonstrating Soft Outcomes...

**and the impact voluntary
organisations have on reducing
health inequalities**

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Defining Soft Outcomes

- An **aim** is the change you are trying to bring about in an individual or target group
- An **outcome** is the change, benefit, learning or other effects that actually do occur as a result of your activities



Soft and Hard Outcomes – the difference

Hard outcomes are seen to be those that are more tangible or easily measured: reduced drug use, reduced rates of reconviction or offending

Soft outcomes are the outcomes from your training, support or other services which can not usually be measured directly or tangibly

Examples of “core” soft outcomes

Types of soft outcomes	
Key work skills	Team working, problem solving, numeracy skills and information technology
Attitudinal skills	Increased levels of motivation, confidence and improved behaviour
Personal skills	Improved personal appearance and presentability, improved timekeeping and personal hygiene
Practical skills	Ability to complete forms Ability to write CV

The determinants of health and well-being



Measuring soft outcomes

- When you have set your outcomes you need to think about how to measure them.
- Outcome indicators are a type of performance indicator and is the way in which we can assess whether the expected outcome is occurring.
- Outcome indicators can be both qualitative or quantitative.

Example of how to set soft outcome indicators

- **Target group:** Disaffected young people
- **Aim:** To increase the young people's self-esteem

Outcome	Possible indicators
The young person has increased self-esteem	How often a young person turns up to a training session
	Improved personal appearance
	Improved behaviour

Collecting information about soft outcomes

- To assess whether a change in an individual has occurred, you need to collect information both before and after the intervention and preferably at regular intervals during the project
- You need to establish a baseline in order to measure distance travelled

Examples of different types of collection methods to assess distance travelled

- Individual action planning
- Daily/weekly diary
- Observation
- Questionnaire

The Outcomes Star

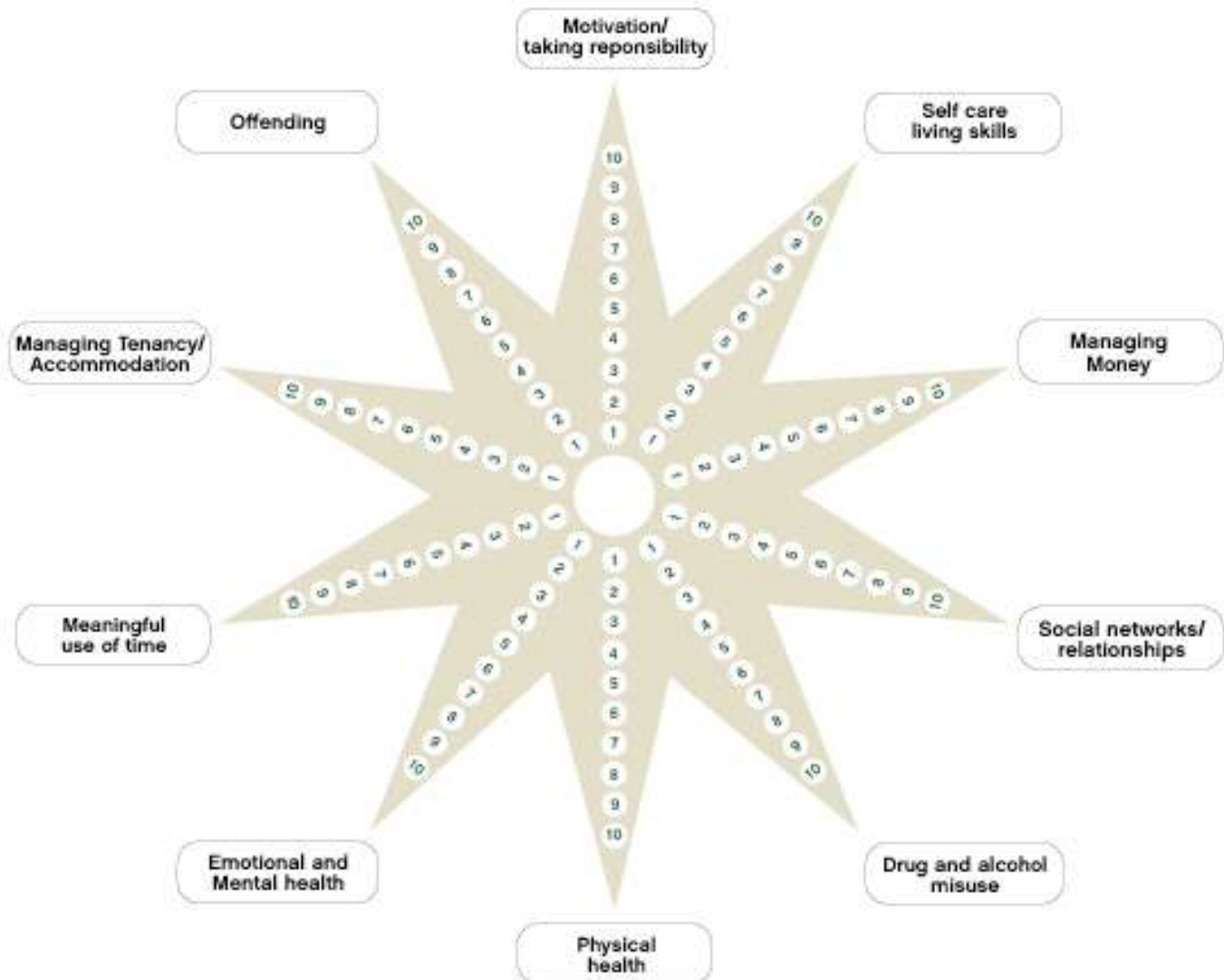


Table illustrating process of setting and measuring outcome indicators

Target group	Outcome	Outcome indicators	Break indicators down (targets)	Collection method	Presenting findings to funders
Young people with mental health issues	Increased self-esteem	<p>Increased levels of motivation</p> <p>Increased levels of confidence</p> <p>Increased feelings of responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young person speaks and contributes to training session • Attends training session more regularly <p>Cares more about appearance</p> <p>Completes coursework more often</p>	<p>Observation by tutor and peers</p> <p>Register</p> <p>Questionnaire</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>Work handed in</p>	<p>Written reports might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case study Photos Film User presentations Timeline

Resources

- Measuring Soft Outcomes - A Basic Guide
www.employabilityinscotland.com/FileAccess.aspx?Id=862
- Altogether Better -
<http://www.yhpho.org.uk/resource/browse.aspx?RID=9928>
- The Institute for Employment Studies -
Guide to Measuring Soft Outcomes and
Distance Travelled
http://www.esf.gov.uk/_docs/distance1.pdf