Goal Setting: Action Steps

Lesson Plan

Learning Objective: After completing these activities, staff will:

* Understand how action steps help participants achieve their goals.
* Become more familiar with action steps and with helping participants create their own action steps.
* Know how their typical food intake compares with some of the Dietary Guideline recommendations and identify some areas for improvement.

Methods:

* Handouts, worksheets, games

Materials:

* S.M.A.R.T Goal Worksheet
* Handout- Turning Big Goals into Action Steps Part 1- Writing Action Steps
* Handout- Turning Big Goals into Action Steps Part 2- Helping Participants Create Action Steps
* Handout- Narrowing Big Goals: Sample Open-Ended Questions
* Health History Forms and Pens (Role Play)
* Flags (Red & Green)- Flag game for Dietary Guideline compliance game
* Group activity- 2 additional options

Discussion/Activity:

1. Introduction:

Achieving goals isn’t always easy. It takes more than just deciding what you want to achieve. In order to make real progress toward your goals, you have to determine what steps you’ll need to take to get there. And it’s these small steps that we want to focus on with our participants. We want to know what simple thing they can do today and tomorrow to “eat more fiber” or “lose 5 pounds” etc. By helping participants set small action steps that they can achieve, they will not only gain a sense of accomplishment and be encouraged to keep up the good work, but will be putting their overall goals into action.

In your packet is a S.M.A.R.T Goal Worksheet that provides the guidelines for creating effective goals. It has an area for you to write a goal and an area to list specific action steps you can take to reach it. We aren’t going to have you complete this today, but included it in your packet as a reference or tool you might want to use in your local agency.

1. Activities
2. **Activity 1: Flag Game: Compliance with Dietary Guidelines**

* We’re going to play a game to see how well we’re all following some of the Dietary Guideline recommendations.
* You each have a red & green flag. We’re going to ask some questions based on the dietary guideline recommendations and you’ll raise your green flag if you can answer “yes” to the question and raise your red flag if your answer is “no”.
* Dietary Guideline Questions:
* Do you eat breakfast?
* Eating breakfast is associated with eating less food the rest of the day and is associated with a healthy weight.
* Do you fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at most meals?
* Do you eat a variety of vegetables each day including one dark green or red/orange vegetable?
* Do you eat a *variety* of protein sources in your meals (Including beans, peas, fish, and nuts)?
* Are half of the grains you eat “whole grains”?
* Do you do at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) a week of moderate intensity exercise?
* Do you compare the sodium content of different foods and choose those that are lower in sodium?
* Do you take steps to decrease your sodium intake?
* Do you eat a lot of processed foods that are high in sodium?

How many of you are following all of these Dietary Guidelines or even half of them? How would you feel if I told you that you needed to work on all of these things? You’d want to walk out the door! So our job is really to help participants recognize just one thing they will do to improve their health.

So we’re going to do a few activities to practice turning big goals into specific, measurable action steps and to practice creating probing questions to help participant’s narrow big goals into action steps.

1. **Activity 2: Turning Big Goals into Action Steps- Part 1: Writing Action Steps**

* For the first activity, please take out the handout in your packet that has the clipboard in the upper left corner (Turning Big Goals into Simple, Specific & Measurable Action Steps- Part 1: Writing Action Steps). For each big goal in the left column, list 1-2 action steps that you could take and write them in the column on the right.
* Sharing-
* How do you feel about creating action steps?
* We’d like to hear some of the action steps you came up with (hear from one person from each table).

1. **Activity 3: Turning Big Goals into Action Steps- Part 2: Helping Participants Create Action Steps**

* Okay, now that you’ve listed some action steps you could take to reach each of the goals, we’d like you to repeat the activity (Using Part 2 Handout). This time pretend these are the goals your participants have and think about some probing questions you could ask to *help them* narrow these big goals into specific action steps.
* There’s a handout in your packet titled “Narrowing Big Goals” (it has a target in the upper right corner) that lists some examples of questions you might ask).
* Sharing-
* I’d like someone at each table to share one of the “probing questions” you listed. We’ll start with the 1st Goal.

So now that you’ve gotten some practice writing action steps and thinking of probing questions to help participants narrow big goals, we’d like you to get the pink Health History form out and complete the form (be sure to complete question #8).

1. **Activity 4: Health History Form- Role Play**

* Pair up in groups of two.
* Exchange Health History forms with your partner.
* One of you will play the WIC nutrition counselor and the other will play the WIC participant.
* The WIC nutrition counselor will review the health history form of their “WIC participant” and help them make an action step. Ask open-ended/probing questions as needed to help narrow their “big goal” into an action step that they can do today and tomorrow to reach their overall goal.
* Write down the action step they’ve decided to take.
* Switch roles and repeat.
* Share some action steps.

1. Summary/Evaluation: