elevate
HOW TO MAKE A SMART GOAL

Developing a goal for your program is an important step in strengthening your organization. But a simple goal alone isn't quite enough. Following the SMART goal framework is an effective way to ensure you are set up for success from the start!

What is a SMART goal?

SMART is an acronym that you can use to guide your goal setting. A SMART goal is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

S	M	A	R	T
specific	measurable	achievable	relevant	time-bound

Specific — Specific goals are clear and well-defined. They include what is going to be achieved, by whom, when, and where.

Measurable — Measurable goals have clear markers of success, both for the end result and for milestones along the way.

Attainable — Attainable goals are reasonable and realistic.

Relevant — Relevant goals support the program's mission and vision.

Time-bound — Time-bound goals have a clearly-defined window for completion.

When developing your SMART goals for Elevate Program Plans, it is important to align with the Elevate Focus Areas. Below are examples of SMART goals and explanations of what makes them SMART.

FOCUS AREA: CONNECT WITH FAMILIES

Goal ❌

Share more daily info about kids in my care with their families.

SMART Goal ✅

Exploring 5 child care communication apps, by 8/1/23, that I may consider using to help me enhance my level of daily communication with parents.

? Why this example is a SMART goal:

Specific: The goal is stated clearly, to improve daily communication with families through technology.

Measurable: By having identified the number of communication apps to be considered, we see that the goal has been completed.

Achievable: There is a sufficient amount of time given to research and to choose communication apps to be considered.

Relevant: There is nothing more important than the communication between a provider and families. This resource will be useful to improve the communication between program staff and families served.

Time-Bound: There is a reasonable and clearly stated date to have this goal accomplished.

FOCUS AREA: SUPPORT CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Goal ❌

Start using a curriculum for my FCC.

SMART Goal ✅

Explore the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), by 12/30/23, to better understand how I can create and align an engaging FCC curriculum that is suited for all the children in my care.

? Why this example is a SMART goal:

Specific: This goal identifies the resource to be used (ELDS) and the intended outcome: to use ELDS to design a curriculum.

Measurable: This goal can be measured by having an understanding of the ELDS by the target date.

Achievable: It is reasonable that a program can explore the ELDS within a 5-month timeframe.

Relevant: This goal is relevant because an engaging curriculum is vital to support children's learning and development.

Time-Bound: The goal has a concrete and reasonable timeframe to follow, by 12/30/23.

FOCUS AREA: BUILD YOUR TEAM

Goal ❌	**SMART Goal** ✅
Hire an assistant for my FCC.	Work with OEC licensing, by 12/1/23, to get my 19-year-old daughter approved to work as my FCC assistant.

? Why this example is a SMART goal:

Specific: There is a specific goal to be completed, with a clear deadline, resource to be used, and a specific person to be approved.

Measurable: We will know that it is completed once the assistant has been approved.

Achievable: There is a timeframe and workload to achieve this by the goal date. Also, a resource and person to be licensed as an assistant have been identified.

Relevant: Support staff can be very important in the family child care environment. This is an outcome that will benefit the program, providers, and families.

Time-Bound: There is a specific end date for this goal to be completed.

FOCUS AREA: ENHANCE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Goal ❌	**SMART Goal** ✅
Make a better environment to accommodate the infants/toddlers in my FCC.	By 7/1/23, create a separate area in my home's living room program space, equipped with developmentally appropriate toys/equipment, that will accommodate and engage the infants/toddlers versus the older children in my care.

? Why this example is a SMART goal:

Specific: This goal outlines exactly what will be done (creating separation/specific toys/equipment) to achieve a dedicated, age-appropriate area in the program's space for infants/toddlers.

Measurable: It is measurable by means of assessing the completion of each space created.

Achievable: It is achievable because the provider has chosen 1 age-group to focus on to enhance a targeted area of her living room vs. multiple spaces at once.

Relevant: Infants and toddlers have unique needs. This goal is relevant to enhancing a program space to better support the learning and development of the infants/toddlers in care.

Time-Bound: This goal includes a target date of 7/1/23 for achieving or revisiting the goal.

FOCUS AREA: FIND RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

eLeVaTe

Goal ❌

Help my enrolled families better understand effective behavior management practices.

SMART Goal ✅

By 7/1/23, identify and share with my enrolled families at least 1 specific resource associated with the Pyramid Model, as used to address challenging behavior in my program that will better connect and engage them with the practices and strategies used.

? Why this example is a SMART goal:

Specific: This goal outlines exactly what will be done (identify at least 1 applicable Pyramid resource) to achieve the goal of identifying and sharing behavior management resources with enrolled families.

Measurable: It is measurable by means of assessing the identification of said resource(s) and when/how it is to be shared with all families.

Achievable: It is achievable because the provider has chosen to identify at least 1 specific resource that is relevant to behavior management practices that can be shared with families.

Relevant: This goal is relevant to the program's identified need in the area of challenging behavior. It will make program practices more clear for families, and help families understand and potentially use those practices at home.

Time-Bound: This goal includes a target date of 7/1/23 for achieving or revisiting the goal.

FOCUS AREA: MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS

Goal ❌

Learn how to create a budget for my FCC business.

SMART Goal ✅

Create a new budget template, by 12/30/23, for my FCC, that will help me clearly identify my business income, expenses, and overall profitability.

? Why this example is a SMART goal:

Specific: The goal of creating a budget and identifying business income, expenses, and overall profitability is clearly stated.

Measurable: This goal is measurable by being able to review and use the budget template by the date which has been identified.

Achievable: This goal is realistic and can be accomplished by the target date, 12/30/23.

Relevant: Managing your finances is important for your program. This goal is useful to programs so that they can more clearly track their expenses.

Time-Bound: There is a clearly defined time-frame by which to have this accomplished, 12/30/23.

eLeVaTe

What matters most to you? What do you want to achieve? Develop your SMART goals that are unique to your specific program and will help you get where you want to go.

Need some inspiration? Check out additional examples of SMART goals by Focus Area:

CONNECT WITH FAMILIES

① Survey my enrolled families, by 7/30/23, to determine preferred methods of daily and general program communication about their child

② Designate an area to add a suggestion/question box by 9/1/23 where families can add suggestions for program improvement or questions that they might not feel comfortable asking face-to-face. I can review these once a week and address them as time permits. I will post a sign inviting families to contribute their ideas or ask questions in a confidential manner.

SUPPORT CHILD DEVELOPMENT

① Explore the ELDS standards, by 12/30/23, to better understand how I can create and align an engaging FCC curriculum that is suited for all the children in my care.

② Coordinate a professional development session for all staff on the CTDOTS, by 9/1/23, along with a follow-up summary/strategy session to identify actionable program goals specific to child assessment.

③ Partner with our Ed Consultant by 12/1/23 to create at least 3 revisions to our curriculum so that it better aligns with the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards for mathematics.

BUILD YOUR TEAM

① By November 1, create a new annual staff survey to learn about employees' assessment of their work environment and distribute actionable recommendations based on the survey data by December 30.

② Reach out to 3 community colleges' child development programs for potential candidates as a recruitment strategy by August 1.

ENHANCE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

① Apply for five grants or scholarships to purchase new developmentally appropriate books, games and toys, and other supplies by August 1.

② By November 1, assign each staff a room or a center in which they will be responsible for the theme, design, and use of supplies available to foster continued learning, growth, and development – updating it annually.

FIND RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

① Design a quarterly newsletter, by 9/1/23, to be distributed to families with up-to-date information on school events and community-based programs available to parents/families with young children with a target first issue distributed by 9/15/23.

② Create an email listserv by 12/1/23 of all enrolled families so that I can send links to various family-centered videos, articles, social services, and workshop announcements that might be of interest or assistance to families.

MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS

① Work with a local service provider, by 12/1/23, to install high speed internet and establish email accounts/distribution lists for both enrolled families and program staff.

② By 9/1/23, research available child care management software options to organize family information, track attendance, and automate tuition collection that best fit my program.