

# Frequently Asked Questions

## SRAE Performance Measures

### General Questions

**1. Do all Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program grantees/subgrantees need to collect performance measures data?**

Yes. Performance measures data collection is a grant requirement for all SRAE grantees. This includes grantees conducting local evaluations.

**2. Has the federal government received Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approvals for the performance measures entry and exit surveys?**

The federal government has received OMB approval for performance measures and surveys. A national IRB does not exist. IRB approval must be obtained at the local level by SRAE grantees for data collection (if required by schools and other partners).

IRB and OMB approvals have different purposes. The purpose of the IRB process is to review research at the local level involving human subjects to ensure data are collected ethically and to minimize any potential harm. The purpose of the federal OMB process is to review and approve federal data collection and to minimize data collection burden on the public. Although OMB has approved the SRAE performance measures for grantee data collection and submission, local IRB reviews may be necessary to approve local data collection from program participants.

**3. Will there be a website for SRAE performance measures information?**

Yes. The website that will host the SRAE performance measures and related information is under development. Grantees will be notified when the website is available.

**4. How is ACF using these data?**

The performance measurement data will be used in the following ways:

- a) Monitoring → To monitor program implementation and progress at the provider level, the program level, the grantee level, and the funding stream level;
- b) Improvement → To provide timely feedback to grantees for ongoing program improvement;
- c) Reporting → To report selected performance measures to FYSB, ACF, and HHS leadership on an annual basis, and respond to inquiries from stakeholders that are internal and external to the federal government;

- d) Comparison to National Data and Surveys → To compare data from the population the SRAE program serves to data from other national youth surveys, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent and Adult Health; and
- e) Partnerships → To establish and maintain partnerships, working groups, and collaborations with other federal and non-federal partners working on issues related to youth.

**Questions About Data Collection Start Date and Submission Periods**

**1. What are the data collection and data submission periods?**

Beginning in 2020, SRAE performance measures data will be submitted to the Administration for Children & Families (ACF) through the web-based SRAE Performance Measures Portal twice each year.

Measures to be Collected	Data Collection Period	Data Submission Period
Attendance, reach, and dosage	January 1 – June 30, 2020	July/August 2020
Structure, cost, and support for program implementation	October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020	July/August 2020
Attendance, reach, and dosage Participant characteristics, perceptions of program effects, and program experiences (entry and exit surveys)	July 1 – December 31, 2020	January/February 2021

**2. When should the entry and exit surveys be administered?**

The entry and exit survey data collection start date has been changed from January 1, 2020 to July 1, 2020. Therefore, grantees will administer entry and exit surveys beginning July 1, 2020. Entry and exit survey data collected from July 1 through December 31, 2020 will be submitted in January/February 2021.

**3. Should grantees survey youth who begin programming before July 1, 2020, but complete programming on or after July 1, 2020?**

The performance measures entry survey should not be administered to youth who have already begun programming before July 1, 2020. However, for that same cohort, the exit survey should be administered when youth complete the program on or after July 1, 2020.

**4. Should grantees delay their other data collection plans and/or program delivery until July 1, 2020?**

Data collection of surveys related to participant characteristics, perceptions of program effects, and program experiences (entry and exit surveys) are delayed until July 1, 2020. Grantees should continue with their planned schedule for program delivery and begin collecting other performance measures data according to the schedule provided. Any plans that grantees have for collecting other data are internal grantee decisions, and those data should not be submitted as part of the federal data collection.

**5. Why does performance measures data collection run on a calendar year when grantees' funding runs on a federal fiscal year?**

Since most programs are administered in schools, data collection is aligned with school semesters in order to identify if midyear technical assistance may be needed. The start date for participant survey data collection will be July 1, 2020.

**6. How will the reporting submission timeline affect grantees whose projects will end in September 2020?**

Grantees whose projects end in September 2020 should be following the same data collection period as others. These grantees will submit implementation measures in July/August 2020 including: (1) measures of structure, cost, and support for program implementation corresponding to the data collection period from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020; and (2) measures of attendance, reach, and dosage for January 1 – June 30, 2020.

**Questions About Performance Measures Related to Evaluation**

**1. What is the purpose of performance measures?**

The purpose of the SRAE performance measures is for the federal government and grantees to monitor implementation and report on the progress of the SRAE program. The primary goal of performance management is to apply methods to monitor and improve program efficiency and effectiveness.

**2. What is the relationship between SRAE performance measures and the SRAE National Evaluation?**

Performance measures data collection is separate and distinct from the National Evaluation. The SRAE National Evaluation does not include performance measures data collection. The purpose of the SRAE National Evaluation is to yield information on the design and implementation of SRAE programs, the effectiveness of program components, and the ways federal grantees can use data and evidence to improve SRAE programming. Information from the National Evaluation will also be used to inform technical assistance to grantees on research, evaluation, and data collection. To learn more, visit <https://sraene.com/>.

**3. Do the entry and exit surveys replace surveys specific to grantees' curriculum delivery?**

Any plans that grantees have for collecting other data are internal grantee decisions and do not relate to the SRAE performance measures data collection.

**4. If SRAE grantees are all using the same entry and exit surveys, shouldn't grantees also use the same curriculum?**

No. Grantees and their sub-awardees are not required to use the same curriculum. Performance measures allow the government to track whether the SRAE program is meeting its targets and whether those targets change in the desired direction from year to year, regardless of the curricula grantees are using.

**5. Can grantees report performance measures data using their existing pre- and post-surveys?**

No. Existing pre- and post-survey data that grantees have collected are separate from the OMB-approved performance measures and should not be submitted to ACF. Only the OMB-approved performance measures data should be submitted. All grantees must collect and submit the same measures to allow for comparison across funding streams.

### **Questions About Which Youth Should Complete Surveys**

**1. Do survey data need to be collected for all programs and participants?**

Performance measures survey data must be collected for all SRAE participants in grades 6-12. FYSB will release surveys for middle school youth in January 2020. Select items related to sexual behaviors will be excluded from middle school surveys.

**2. What should grantees do if they serve some youth who are in grades 6-12 and some who are older or younger?**

Grantees should plan to collect performance measures entry and exit survey data from all youth participating in SRAE programs. Grantees may request guidance to address a situation like this on a case-by-case basis to determine how best to proceed.

**3. How can grantees ensure confidentiality related to the surveys?**

Required data privacy and security protocols will be presented during an upcoming webinar.

**4. Why does the survey ask about grades outside this grade range?**

Identifying youth who are outside of the grade range for SRAE performance measures data collection will help ACF in eliminating data that should not be included in analyses.

## **Questions About the Entry and Exit Survey Items**

### **1. Did youth have an opportunity to give feedback about the surveys?**

Yes. ACF conducted cognitive pretesting with youth ages 12 to 20 for the Participant Entry and Exit Surveys. The cognitive pretest sample included male and female adolescents, as well as youth from a mix of racial and ethnic backgrounds. ACF revised the survey questions based on the results of the pretests. The current instruments reflect those revisions. ACF also conducted listening sessions with nine Departmental SRAE grantees and eight Title V SRAE grantees to obtain their input on draft performance measures, including survey-based measures.

### **2. Do the performance measures have adequate reliability and meaningful predictive validity?**

The performance measures surveys were not tested for reliability and predictive validity because the performance measures are not being used for research purposes. Some of the performance measures were based on existing measures with published psychometric information. A document that includes the sources of the SRAE performance measures will be available via the website, which is forthcoming. Grantees will be notified when the website and document are available.

### **3. What is the time frame for Item 14 “abstain from sexual intercourse” on the exit survey (until graduation, marriage, etc.)?**

There is no time frame for the response to this survey item..

### **4. What should grantees do if they have concerns about one or more survey questions in relation to their specific target population?**

If grantees have concerns about one or more survey questions, those concerns will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Grantees should contact their FYSB federal project officer to discuss the specific situation and can request a waiver, if applicable. If it is determined that a waiver is needed, your project officer will provide you with the request form and a decision within two weeks.

### **5. What should grantees do if they believe schools might refuse to allow the implementation of one or more survey items?**

Grantees should share the performance measures with schools and discuss benefits of performance measures data for the community. If the schools then refuse to allow implementation of one or more survey items, grantees should work with their FYSB federal project officer to discuss the need for a waiver.

### **6. Can grantees edit survey items or omit items from the surveys?**

Entry and exit surveys must be administered in their entirety, with no omissions or modifications. Grantees should not change the wording of questions, the response categories, or the skip patterns on the approved survey.

## **7. Can grantees add items to the surveys?**

Grantees may choose to add other items to the entry or exit surveys, but all OMB-approved items must be administered first, in the order presented in the approved survey, before any additional items. Grantees will not submit the additional measures to ACF; only the OMB-approved performance measures should be submitted.

## **Questions About IRB Approval**

### **1. Does ACF expect grantees to obtain IRB approval to administer the participant entry and exit surveys?**

Grantees are expected to contact schools or other partner organizations to determine whether local IRB approvals are necessary. Because many local IRBs do not consider performance measures to be related to research, IRB approval may not be required. Documentation from the school or organization is needed to ensure a mutual understanding of requirements and continuation of approval should there be a change in the school or organizational administration. Grantees must determine which IRB has jurisdiction over data collection and whether the IRB requires the grantee to initiate an approval process for performance measures. If IRB approval is necessary, grantees are expected to follow all IRB review requirements.

### **2. When should the IRB process begin?**

The process for determining whether IRB review and approval will be necessary and for obtaining approval should start immediately so that grantees, their sub-awardees, and their program sites are approved to begin administration of the entry and exit surveys by July 1, 2020.

### **3. Is ACF providing any guidance to help grantees with IRB review?**

The contractor plans to host a webinar about IRB review and approval and provide a related resource document. For specific issues with your IRB, please consult with your federal project officer. Grantees may request technical assistance for obtaining IRB approvals for performance measures data collection by emailing [sraeperformancemeasures@publicstrategies.com](mailto:sraeperformancemeasures@publicstrategies.com).

### **4. Will FYSB provide additional funds to cover IRB approval activities?**

No. Performance measures data collection, including entry and exit surveys and any necessary approvals, is a grant requirement for all SRAE grantees. Budget concerns should be addressed with your federal project officer.

### **5. What should grantees do if they are unable to obtain IRB approval by the start date of data collection?**

The data collection start date has been changed from January 1, 2020 to July 1, 2020. Grantees now have additional time to obtain IRB approvals. If grantees

require more time to obtain approval, they must address this with their federal project officer.

**6. What should grantees do if their IRB does not approve particular survey items?**

Grantees should work with their federal project officer to share IRB issues and to request waivers. This and similar situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine how best to proceed.

**7. How do I request a waiver?**

Waiver request forms are provided as needed by federal project officers. Grantees are to first discuss the challenges they are having with their federal project officer. If the appropriate step is a waiver, the federal project officer will send the form for completion and submission.

**8. What type of information should I gather for the waiver request?**

Grantees must identify the specific item(s) for the waiver request, provide a summary of the activities taken to share and vet the surveys with stakeholders, provide a rationale for why the performance measure(s) need to be waived, and provide documentation to support the rationale for waiving the performance measure(s).

**9. What type of documentation do I need to submit with the waiver?**

The supporting documentation to be submitted with a waiver request may include policies, laws, regulations, etc., and sources of those documents. The documentation should come from the group that requested to waive the particular performance measure(s). This may include, but is not limited to, IRBs, school boards, school principals, and implementation sites.

**10. How soon can I expect to receive a response after I submit the waiver?**

Please allow 2 weeks after submission to FYSB for review and approval of your request. During the review process, your project officer may reach out to the grantee point of contact listed in the waiver form to request additional information if needed.

**Questions About Data Collection**

**1. Are grantees required to develop their own survey tools?**

No. Grantees should use the entry and exit surveys provided by ACF. Copies of the entry and exit surveys have been distributed to grantees electronically. Grantees will also be able to access the surveys via a website, which is forthcoming. Required data privacy and security protocols will be presented during an upcoming webinar.



## **2. Where can grantees access the entry and exit surveys?**

Electronic copies of the entry and exit surveys have been distributed to grantees. Grantees will also be able to access the surveys via a website, which is forthcoming.

## **3. Is there a Word version of the entry and exit surveys?**

Grantees who want a Word file should discuss the need for a Word file with their federal project officer.

## **4. How much time should be allocated for surveys?**

ACF estimates the full version of the participant entry survey will take eight minutes to complete, and the exit survey will take youth sixteen minutes to complete. The abbreviated, middle school versions will take less time.

## **5. What if my IRB, school, or other partner organization requires active or passive parental consent to administer the entry and exit surveys?**

Grantees must comply with any existing requirements to obtain active or passive consent for implementation of the surveys. If parental consent is required, some parents may not allow their child to answer the survey questions. Even if parents do provide consent, youth always have the right to refuse to complete the survey or answer particular questions. Those youth can still receive SRAE programming.

## **6. Are entry and exit surveys voluntary for youth?**

Yes. Although performance measures data collection is a grant requirement for all SRAE grantees and programs, youth should never feel pressured to complete a survey if they do not want to. The introductory statement on the cover of the survey informs youth that their participation in the survey is voluntary, that youth can skip any questions they do not want to answer, and that no one outside of the study will see their responses. Required data privacy and security protocols will be presented during an upcoming webinar.

## **7. What does “responses will remain private to the extent permitted by law” mean, so that grantees can help students understand this language?**

If identifying information is collected by grantees, that information and survey responses will be kept private by grantees. Responses may only be disclosed if a student consents to such disclosure; if a judge rules in a federal, State, or local civil, criminal, administrative, legislative, or other proceeding that responses must be disclosed; or if disclosure is required by federal, State, or local laws (e.g., state laws requiring the reporting of communicable diseases to State and local health departments). No identifying information will be submitted to ACF.

## **8. Does ACF plan to link the entry and exit surveys for analysis?**

No. Entry and exit survey data will be analyzed separately and trends will be monitored across data collection periods and years.



**9. Will the surveys be available in Spanish, or do grantees need to translate them?**

The surveys will be available in Spanish in January 2020.

**10. Will the surveys be translated to languages other than Spanish?**

No. The federal government will not translate the surveys into languages other than Spanish. However, grantees are free to have the surveys translated into other languages as long as 1) the surveys are translated by a reputable firm, and 2) the surveys include all the information in the English versions, including the OMB control number and Paperwork Reduction Act statement.

**11. Can grantees integrate SRAE performance measures data into a data system they use for other purposes?**

Yes. However, grantees must submit performance measures data to ACF using Excel tools that will be provided in January and May 2020 or a .csv file with columns identified that correspond to the Excel tool format.

**12. Can grantees administer the surveys online using individual cell phone, iPad, or computer?**

Yes. Grantees can use any survey mode to conduct the participant entry and exit surveys, including online survey administration. General testing of any online mode should be done in advance of survey implementation with youth to ensure that respondents will be routed correctly through the survey, and that required data privacy and security protocols are in place.

**13. What should grantees do if they do not have time to add entry and exit surveys to their existing work with youth?**

Performance measures data collection is a grant requirement for all SRAE grantees. Grantees should work with their partners and their federal project officer to explore potential solutions.

**14. We did not understand that grant money needed to be allocated for performance measures data collection. What do we do if these expenses are not in our current budget?**

The requirement to collect performance measures is stated in the funding opportunity announcement, as well as in the terms and conditions of the grant. Grantees should discuss budget issues, including the need for a budget revision, with their federal project officer.

**15. What referral protocols are needed for data collection to address youth distress?**

If a youth appears to be distressed, follow the trauma-informed procedures established by your organization (for example, refer youth to a teacher or counselor). If a youth needs to leave the room because he or she is upset, make sure you take the youth to the appropriate adult (that is, a teacher or counselor)—do not leave the youth alone to find assistance.

**16. If youth struggle with reading, is it okay to read the survey aloud for the class?**

Grantees may request technical assistance with a performance measures data collection protocol for youth who struggle with reading. Reading the survey questions aloud for the class increases the risk that youth will see each others' responses. If possible, determine in advance whether any youth require someone to read the survey aloud to them and prepare to make the necessary accommodations. You may need additional meeting space to ensure privacy and to avoid disturbing other youth taking the survey.

**17. In addition to the entry and exit surveys, are there any follow-up surveys that grantees will be required to administer months after program completion?**

There are no additional follow-up surveys beyond the exit survey.

**Questions About Data Submission**

**1. Do survey data need to be submitted for all programs and participants?**

Yes. Performance measures data collection is a grant requirement for all SRAE grantees. Grantees should plan to submit performance measures entry and exit survey data for all youth in grades 6-12 who are participating in SRAE programs.

**2. Does performance measures data submission replace grantee Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) reports?**

No. The performance measures submission does not replace the Performance Progress Reports (PPRs). Grantees are required to submit both reports.

**3. Will each grantee have unique credentials to enter data?**

Yes. Each grantee may have several users and individual users will be provided a unique username and password to access the web-based SRAE Performance Measures Portal. The login credentials will be linked to the grantee's project.

**4. Will grantee reporting tools be available to help grantees with data submission?**

Yes. Excel tools will be provided in January and May 2020 to help grantees with the submission of performance measures data.

**5. How will data be loaded into the system?**

Data will be submitted using Excel tools that will be provided in January and May 2020 or a .csv file with columns identified that correspond to the Excel tool format. Grantees will not be able to upload Scantrons or other scannable forms to the SRAE Performance Measures Portal.

## **Questions About the SRAE Performance Measures Analyses and Dashboard**

### **1. Will grantee evaluators analyze performance measures data?**

Grantee evaluators will not be required to analyze performance measures data before submitting to ACF. If evaluators would like to analyze the data for continuous quality improvement purposes, they may do so. However, they are not required to submit analysis reports to FYSB.

### **2. If grantee evaluators are not analyzing data, are grantees required to have an evaluator?**

Grantee evaluators are not required to analyze performance measures data. Decisions about whether evaluators are needed for other data collection, data submission, or analyses should be discussed with the grantee's FYSB project officer. As stated in the funding opportunity announcement, FYSB requires grantees to collect and submit data. However, this does not have to be done by an evaluator.

### **3. Will ACF provide individual site or organization reports?**

No. ACF will analyze SRAE performance data across grantees to assess SRAE program performance overall. However, grantees will be able to analyze and view graphical representations of the data using the SRAE Performance Measures Dashboard.

A website with additional information about the SRAE performance measures is under development. Grantees will be notified when it is available. For further support, contact the Public Strategies SRAE Performance Measures technical assistance team at [SRAEperformancemeasures@publicstrategies.com](mailto:SRAEperformancemeasures@publicstrategies.com) or call toll-free (833) 797-0166.