

SOBC Validation Process

The Science Of Behavior Change (SOBC) program seeks to promote basic research on the initiation, personalization and maintenance of behavior change. By integrating work across disciplines, this effort will lead to an improved understanding of the underlying principles of behavior change. The SOBC program aims to implement a mechanisms-focused, experimental medicine approach to behavior change research and to develop the tools required to implement such an approach. The experimental medicine approach involves: identifying an intervention target, developing measures to permit verification of the target, engaging the target through experimentation or intervention, and testing the degree to which target engagement produces the desired behavior change.

Within the SOBC Measures Repository, researchers have access to measures of mechanistic targets that have been (or are in the process of being) validated by SOBC Research Network Members and other experts in the field. The SOBC Validation Process includes three important stages of evaluation for each proposed measure: **Identification**, **Measurement**, and **Influence**.

The first stage of validation requires a measure to be **Identified** within the field; there must be theoretical support for the specific measure of the proposed mechanistic target as a potential mechanism of behavior change. This evidence may include references for the proposed measure, or theoretical support for the construct that the proposed measure is intended to assess. The second stage of validation requires demonstration that the chosen mechanistic target is **Measured reliably and validly** with the proposed measure; **for example**, if the proposed measure is a questionnaire, it must have strong psychometric properties. The third stage of validation requires demonstration that the measure can be **Influenced**; there must be evidence that the measure is malleable and responsive to manipulation. Evidence relating to each stage includes at least one peer-reviewed publication or original data presentation (if no peer-reviewed research is available to support the claim) and is evaluated by SOBC Research Network Members and experts in the field.

Once a measure has gone through these three stages, it will then either be **Validated** or **Not validated** according to SOBC Research Network standards. If a measure is **Validated**, then change in the measure was reliably associated with **Behavior Change**. If a measure is **Not validated**, then change in the measure was not reliably associated with **Behavior Change**. Why would we share measures that are not validated? The SOBC Research Network values open, rigorous, and transparent research. Our goal is to make meaningful progress and develop replicable and effective interventions in behavior change science. Therefore, the SOBC sees value in providing other researchers in the field with information regarding measures that work and measures that fall short. Further, a measure that is not validated in one population may be validated in another.

Want to learn more? For any questions regarding the SOBC Validation Process or Measures Repository, please email info@sobc.org.