

## ENVIRONMENT/CLIMATE

A quality program:

- [illegible]

## 13

## ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION

A quality program:

- [illegible]

16

## RELATIONSHIPS

A quality program:

1. \*Has staff that respect and communicate with one another and are role models of positive adult relationships.
2. \*Interacts with families in a comfortable, respectful, welcoming way.
3. **\*Treats participants with respect and listens to what they say.**
4. Teaches participants to interact with one another in positive ways.
5. Teaches participants to make responsible choices and encourages positive outcomes.
6. Is sensitive to the culture and language of participants.
7. Establishes meaningful community collaborations.
8. Builds a sense of community among participants.
9. Is structured to create close, sustained relationships between individual participants and caring adults.
10. Has scheduled meetings with its major stakeholders.
11. Encourages former participants to contribute as volunteers or staff.

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A quality program fosters relationships by developing them intentionally and carefully. Relationships build a positive foundation for healthy social and emotional development. To create quality relationships, staff must model cooperation and respect toward youth and other staff, use positive language that supports young people's growth and potential, interact with youth on a one-on-one basis, and organize activities that promote positive communication. Programs must also build relationships with external stakeholders.



Here a few tips for promoting healthy partnerships with young people:

- o Ensure mutual respect exists. In a quality program, both adults and youth have opportunities to communicate their expertise and knowledge.

- o Share the power. Create rotating schedules of roles; for example, alternate adults and youth as meeting leaders and note-takers.
- o Everyone should contribute. Afterschool programs are a joint endeavor. Youth are not silent partners when working with adults.

A quality program recruits, hires, and develops diverse staff members who understand, value, and promote high-quality practices.

1. \*Has a program director that is committed to his/her own professional development and attends and participates in training.
2. \*Recruits, hires, and develops staff who reflect the diversity and culture(s) of the community.
3. Treats staff as professionals and provides opportunities for advancement.
4. \*Ensures staff members have competence in core academic areas, where appropriate.
5. Provides ongoing staff development in order to engage and retain staff.
6. \*Maintains staff-to-participant ratio as per state regulations when applicable.
7. **Provides positive working conditions for staff and appropriate supervision, support, and feedback.**
8. Assesses professional development needs of staff and provides appropriate supports such as training, coaching, mentoring, and peer learning.
9. Has program director and staff who comply with state training regulations where applicable.
10. Develops and supports staff to plan suitable activities that correspond to the developmental needs of participants.
11. Has regular staff meetings.
12. Works with staff to achieve credentialing and accreditation where available.
13. Where appropriate, develops and supports staff to provide educational opportunities for and work with adult learners.
14. Fosters understanding and appreciation for established program quality standards, evaluation, and program improvement strategies among staff.

[illegible]

## PROGRAMMING/ACTIVITIES

A quality program:

- [illegible]

A quality program provides youth with guidance and emotional support; staff take a genuine interest in youth and their academic, social, physical, and emotional development. Staff use strategies that are geared toward encouraging youth to push beyond their present level of competency. The activities are well-organized and age-appropriate, provide exposure to new ideas, and offer opportunities to learn and build new skills, problem solve, and build community.

# ELEMENT 6

## LINKAGES BETWEEN DAY & AFTER SCHOOL

A quality program has its staff work closely with school staff to ensure that afterschool academic components and activities are aligned with and enrich school standards and curricula.

### A quality program:

1. \*Secures commitment of resources (e.g., classroom space, bulletin boards, storage space, computer facilities, and site coordinator's office) from school principal, when possible.
2. Maintains communication with school principal and administration.
3. **Establishes strong links to the school day.**
4. Incorporates programming that integrates and complements school day activities.
5. Collaborates regularly with school-day personnel regarding use of facilities and resources.
6. Supports state and local performance standards and benchmarks.
7. Communicates with school-day staff to monitor academic and behavioral progress of students.
8. Allocates sufficient program time for homework and homework help.
9. Is represented in local schools' planning efforts.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

### More on Linkages Between Day and After School

A quality program works with the school(s) attended by program participants to share information about young people's needs and progress, to assign staff roles, and to coordinate use of space and other resources. A program that is linked to the school day allows program staff and school leaders to establish regular mechanisms for ongoing communication and coordination. In a true partnership, schools and afterschool programs share the responsibility for young people's educational, social, and emotional development and work collaboratively to improve outcomes for youth. As a result, schools and afterschool programs complement one another.

## ELEMENT 7 YOUTH PARTICIPATION/ENGAGEMENT

A quality program provides opportunities for youth to participate in planning, to exercise choice, and to engage in a rich variety of offerings.

A quality program:

1. **\*Engages participants with a variety of strategies.**
2. Has participants who take ownership of program selection and development.
3. Enables participants to develop life skills, resiliency, and self-esteem via activities.
4. Affords participants opportunities to express their ideas, concerns, and opinions.
5. Enables participants to explore resources and issues in their community through projects and activities.
6. Promotes consistent and active participation.
7. Promotes teamwork and respect for others.
8. Involves participants in the development of disciplinary practices.
9. Encourages participants to recruit others into the program.
10. Allows participants to be meaningfully involved in program planning, implementation, data collection, and evaluation.

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## More on Participation and Engagement

A quality program uses youth as assets. Bonnie Massey, Program Director at the Henry Street Settlement Boys and Girls Republic, says, “Youth engagement feels like a democracy: everyone has a voice. It sounds like positive language: the tone of voice is pleasant and supportive, and youth voices are heard. Young people are participating and taking on leadership roles, planning and facilitating meetings, workshops, or orientation sessions for their peers. The fundamentals of youth engagement are being warm, open and honest, having lots of energy and smiles, having strong boundaries, listening to youth, being creative and consistent, using youth as resources, and not forgetting to have fun.”

# ELEMENT 8

## PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A quality program establishes a strong partnership with families and communities in order to achieve program goals.

### A quality program:

1. Involves families in decision making and planning.
2. Involves families and the community in program events.
3. \*Communicates with families on matters concerning the well-being of the child.
4. **Provides opportunities for literacy and related educational experiences for the families of the participants in the program.**
5. Provides families with information about community resources to meet their needs.
6. Builds relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings.
7. Coordinates staff development activities with those of school and community partners.
8. Makes intentional connections with early care and education programs and stakeholders in the community.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

### More on Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships

A quality program understands that families and communities play an important role in supporting and fostering the healthy development of young people. Creating effective collaborations with families and communities is approached with the understanding that they are assets and partners in the program's learning environment. Creating partnerships with families and the surrounding community is an ongoing and multi-faceted effort. Specific steps are taken to ensure that information and programs are offered in multiple languages and formats.

# ELEMENT 9

## PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY/GROWTH

A quality program has a coherent vision/mission and a plan for increasing capacity that supports continuing growth.

A quality program:

1. \*Has a written statement of mission and goals.
2. \*Employs staff members who understand and embrace the program's mission and goals.
3. **Involves participants, families, staff, and board members in long-term decision-making and planning efforts.**
4. Develops a long-term plan for sustaining the afterschool program.
5. Accesses resources within the community by seeking support from and building relationships with local businesses and institutions.
6. Forges relationships with advocates for program quality and availability, such as community leaders, businesses, and elected officials.
7. Has an effective marketing strategy that publicizes the program and its achievement within the school and broader community.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

### More on Program Sustainability and Growth

A quality program has a clear vision and goals, and makes time for long-term planning involving all major stakeholders. Sustainable programs use diverse strategies to support their work, including utilizing volunteers, partnerships and in-kind donations, as well as funding from public and private sources. Sustainable programs understand their current strengths, weaknesses, and growth potential, and are deeply engaged in their communities. Sustainable programs monitor changing trends in programming, funding, and other issues in the wider environment and tailor their development strategies accordingly.

# ELEMENT 10

## MEASURING OUTCOMES/EVALUATION

A quality program has a system for measuring outcomes and using that information for ongoing program planning, improvement, and evaluation.

A quality program:

1. **Has measurable program goals and objectives that are aligned with the organizational mission and identified needs.**
2. \*Develops and/or plans for program evaluation that includes gathering both qualitative and quantitative data.
3. Uses objective data to measure progress toward outcomes as defined by programs and individual participants.
4. Identifies and shares promising practices.
5. Makes summaries of evaluations and/or other collected data available to the general public.
6. Creates an internal method for assessing program activities.
7. Creates an internal method for assessing staff performance.
8. Creates an internal method for assessing student engagement levels.
9. Includes feedback from stakeholders in the program evaluation.
10. Uses evaluation findings for continuous program improvement.

Performance Level				Plan To Improve		
1	2	3	4	Right Now	This Year	Next Year

### More on Measuring Outcomes and Evaluation

A quality program has clearly defined goals and has identified specific outcomes to measure progress towards its goals. Goals and outcomes are aligned with the essential elements of a quality program and the program has a plan for regularly gathering data and evaluating performance against its chosen outcomes. Evaluations should include assessment of program activities, staff performance, and student engagement. Evaluations should be based on quantitative data collection as well as qualitative feedback from staff, youth, families, and other key stakeholders. Evaluation findings should be used to shape plans for future program improvement and professional development.