



NYSAN PROGRAM QUALITY SELF-ASSESSMENT (QSA) TOOL, 2ND EDITION QUALITY INDICATOR DEFINITIONS

ELEMENT 8: PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 1

Involves families in decision-making and planning.

Performance Level 1

No formal system is in place to communicate with families. Families are unaware of the option to have a role in decision-making or program planning.

Performance Level 2

Families are supposed to be informed that they are welcome to participate in decision-making and program planning, but very few family members participate because they are unaware of how they can become involved or receive no training on the program or decision-making processes. Most planning meetings take place before the program starts or when family members are not able to easily attend.

Performance Level 3

Families are informed that they are welcome and are encouraged to participate in decision-making or program planning by the site director and staff members. Families are informed when all meetings are approaching, and a dedicated group of family members participate. Training in decision-making and program planning is provided prior to the first meeting or little by little at each meeting. Most planning meetings take place after the program ends or on weekends, when family members are able to attend.

Performance Level 4

Families are frequently informed that they are welcome and are encouraged to participate in decision-making or program planning. Families are personally invited to participate multiple times by the site director and staff members and told that their involvement and input is critical in the overall success of the program. Families are informed, encouraged, and reminded to attend several times in-person, via e-mail and letters, and by youth when meetings are approaching. A dedicated group of family members participate. Staff members continuously reach out to families who have not participated in planning meetings. Most planning meetings take place after the program ends or on weekends, when family members are typically able to attend. The program surveys parents regularly to determine the best times for meetings. Meals, transportation, and childcare are provided during meetings to enable family members to easily participate. Sensitivity is given to the languages spoken by families and translators are made available.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 2

Involves families and the community in program events.

Performance Level 1

No formal system is in place to communicate with families and the community. Families and the community are unaware of many program events, not explicitly invited, or feel that program events are only for youth. Families and the community rarely participate in program events, and/or the few participating families are the same ones.

Performance Level 2

Families and the community are sometimes invited to program events (such as, when there is space available for them). Therefore, families and the community participate in events occasionally, but not on a regular basis.

Performance Level 3

Families and the community are generally invited to program events and regularly participate. The site director advertises events several weeks prior to the event date and staff members encourage families and community members to attend. Events are planned for evening and weekend hours to accommodate families' schedules.

Performance Level 4

Families and the community sectors are always invited to program events and regularly participate. The site director advertises events several weeks prior to the event date and staff members and youth encourage families and community members to attend. Each participant is given event invitations to deliver to their family members, and event invitations are created in multiple languages, if necessary. Events are posted in the local newspaper, community bulletins, and sent out to the community via e-mail. Events are planned for evening and weekend hours and are offered on different days of the week in order to accommodate various families' schedules.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 3

Communicates with families on matters concerning the well-being of the child.

Performance Level 1

No formal system is in place to communicate with families, and communication with families is rare. Families are contacted when problems occur and in cases of emergency.

Performance Level 2

Communication with families occurs occasionally at events such as family orientation sessions and year-end events. Families are also contacted when problems occur and in cases of emergency.

Performance Level 3

Communication with families occurs frequently throughout the year, both at events and one-on-one whenever possible. Communication focuses on the child's strengths, growth, and challenges. Families are also contacted in cases of emergency and when there are behavioral, social, emotional, or academic matters to discuss.

Performance Level 4

Communication with families occurs frequently and regularly throughout the year, both at events and one-on-one and via e-mail and phone calls. Each family is contacted at least once a year for an update on their child's development and experience in the program. Communication focuses on the child's strengths, growth, and challenges and staff members make it known that they care about the child and want to work together with the family towards the child's success. Families are also contacted in cases of emergency and when there are behavioral, social, emotional, or academic matters to discuss. Staff members encourage families to contact them whenever they have a question, suggestion, or concern about their child.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 4

Provides opportunities for literacy and related educational experiences for the families of the participants in the program.

Performance Level 1

No formal system is established to provide opportunities for literacy and related educational experiences for families. The program does not offer family literacy and related educational experiences.

Performance Level 2

The program offers limited family literacy or related educational opportunity during the course of the program year. The need for additional adult education is recognized. A family bulletin is created to keep families informed of program events and schedules, but it is not updated with current information.

Performance Level 3

A series of family literacy and related educational workshops is launched. Families receive strategies and resources for creating a rich learning environment at home. A peer network and book-lending library are established as a result of the interactions in the family space. Families often inquire about how to navigate the school system, assist with their child's learning, advocate for their child, and support program goals.

Performance Level 4

The environment is welcoming. Families are seen as assets and treated as critical learning partners. Family literacy and related education series of workshops are developed and offered from family input and a community needs assessment. A peer network and book-lending library are established and families are consistently asked for resource suggestions and reminded to utilize the program's resources. The program partners with a local college to increase families' access to course information. A family newsletter containing family literacy information, resources, offerings, and opportunities is distributed on a monthly basis. All publications are provided in English and other languages commonly spoken in the community.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 5

Provides families with information about community resources to meet their needs.

Performance Level 1

No formal system is established to communicate with families about community resources. Staff members are not knowledgeable about the available resources to families in the community. Families sometimes learn of community resources by asking staff members for advice. Staff members may or may not have information.

Performance Level 2

The program becomes aware of and staff members provide families with some information about community resources to help meet perceived needs. The program maintains information on a few of community-based organizations and local resources, and family members can request this information from staff members.

Performance Level 3

The program provides families with information about community resources on a regular basis on general areas and those identified through a needs assessment. The program maintains information on many community-based organizations and local resources. The information is posted at the program site for families to view, and families can also request additional information from staff members. Families receive updated information on a regular basis. Information is regularly updated to include upcoming events, new services, and community news.

Performance Level 4

The program provides families on a regular basis with information about community resources, general information and resource areas and those identified through family and youth needs assessments. The program maintains and updates information on many community-based organizations and local resources. The information is posted at the program site for families to view, brochures are sent to participants' homes, families can request additional information from staff members, and community resource representatives are invited to share their services and resources with families one or more times per year at events or family educational workshops. Staff members are kept up-to-date and trained to refer families to specific types of services and resources based on their needs. Family representatives are provided with training on a regular basis, updated on local resources and provide outreach and assistance to other families involved with the program.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 6

Builds relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings.

Performance Level 1

No formal system is established to build relationships with arts, cultural, and other community institutions to expand and enhance program offerings. The program offers some site-based arts and cultural programs.

Performance Level 2

The program is aware of arts, cultural, and community institutions offering programming and occasionally takes advantage of a community-based opportunity to expand upon on-site programming.

Performance Level 3

The program has built relationships with several arts, cultural, and community institutions and programs and regularly expands and enhances on-site programming with related community opportunities. These opportunities provide youth with new experiences and learning opportunities.

Performance Level 4

The program has built strong partnerships and regularly collaborates with arts, cultural, and community institutions and programs. Staff members and community institution staff work together to develop and enhance programming for youth and their families. Expanded on-site and off-site opportunities are provided. Families, youth and staff are regularly surveyed to assist with program design and activities. Arts and cultural programs educate and promote the strengths of the population being served as well as educate on the strengths and contributions of other populations. Programs are offered in the languages of program participants with translating offered as needed.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 7

Coordinates staff development activities with those of school and community partners.

Performance Level 1

No formal system for staff development and training has been developed. Some staff development activities, workshops, and trainings are offered to program staff.

Performance Level 2

Most staff development, trainings, and workshops are developed for and offered to program staff members only. A few staff development activities are organized for staff from the program as well as staff from school and community partners; staff members from partner organizations are invited on an ad hoc basis. Sometimes, the topics of the activities are only relevant to the program staff members and therefore are not appealing to others.

Performance Level 3

Many staff development activities are organized in collaboration with school and community partners. The staff members from partner organizations are invited on a regular basis. Staff development activities focus on skills needed by staff from all of the participating organizations, such as youth development trainings or positive behavior management techniques workshops.

Performance Level 4

Most staff development is planned, organized, offered, and assessed in collaboration with school and community partners. The staff members from partner organizations are always invited to join staff development activities offered by the program. The staff works collaboratively with the school and partner organizations to plan shared professional development. Staff development focuses on knowledge and skills identified by staff members and other stakeholders, and includes opportunities for shared learning, communication, and collaboration to enhance outcomes for youth and their families. Best practices and strengths are highlighted, recognized, and shared to develop a shared professional learning community. The site director and other program staff work with schools and partner organizations to build their capacity to lead shared professional development activities.

Parent, Family, and Community Partnerships, Indicator 8

Makes intentional connections with early care and education programs and stakeholders in the community.

Performance Level 1

The program has few or no connections to early care and education programs and stakeholders in their community.

Performance Level 2

The program has some connections to early care and education programs and stakeholders, based on the site director's existing relationships. These connections are informal and are generally for information-sharing purposes.

Performance Level 3

The program has several connections to early care and education programs and stakeholders, and the site director intentionally develops and maintains these relationships. These connections are formalized and the afterschool and early care programs work together to support families in the community (e.g. co-sponsor family education opportunities, co-host year-end events, etc.).

Performance Level 4

The program has several connections to early care and education programs and stakeholders, and the site director intentionally develops and maintains these relationships. These connections are formalized and the afterschool and early care programs work together to support families in the community (e.g. co-sponsor family education opportunities, co-host year-end events, etc.). Afterschool and early care programs can give families with children and youth of different ages referrals to one another's services. A plan is implemented by all partners for supporting children as they transition from early care programs to school and afterschool programs.

*Indicator is critical to program start-up.