



NYSAN

NEW YORK STATE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK

PROGRAM QUALITY
Self-Assessment Tool

2ND EDITION

Welcome!

The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool is an instrument used by out-of-school time program providers to assess the quality of their programs and to assist staff and stakeholders to create an action plan for continuous program improvement. The QSA Tool is a resource that builds upon the experience, knowledge, and research of afterschool practitioners and policymakers from across the country.

QSA Tool Structure

The QSA Tool is organized around ten essential elements of an effective afterschool program, all of which come from evidence-based practice. Under each element, there is a list of quality indicators. An asterisk (*) next to an indicator denotes that it is critical to address prior to program start-up or, for programs currently operating, as soon as possible.

As you address each indicator, you will give the program a performance level from 1 – 4. The results of these ratings should be discussed as a group in order to gain a full perspective on a site's programming, operations, and management. The performance level rating system is as follows:

4 Excellent/Exceeds Standards.

Is prepared to help and work with others in this area.

3 Satisfactory/Meets Standards.

Needs help to prepare staff to work with others in this area.

2 Some Progress Made/Approaching Standard.

Could use additional focused assistance in this area.

1 Must Address and Improve/Standard Not Met.

Needs significant support in this area.

Organizations are expected to strive for a satisfactory performance level (3) on all of the quality indicators within each of the ten elements of program quality. Over time, programs should continue to strive for an excellent performance level (4). At this level of performance, organizations consistently show evidence of promising practices throughout all program elements, serve as a model for other afterschool programs, and develop and support staff such that they could serve as coaches and mentors for other practitioners.

Program Planning and Improvement with the QSA Tool

The self-assessment process offers all of the core components of program planning and improvement, including identifying areas in need of improvement, setting goals and timelines, finding resources, and assigning responsibility for strategies. For programs that already have a process for program improvement, such as annual meetings, the use of or findings from the QSA Tool can be integrated into the process and can help guide your conversations. Embedded in the QSA Tool are places to prioritize improvement efforts by marking them as in need of improvement “right now,” “this year,” or “next year.” Every program should create an action plan for improvement after the self-assessment is conducted.

ELEMENT 2

ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION

A quality program has well-developed systems and sound fiscal management to support and enhance worthwhile programming and activities for all participants.

A quality program:

1. *Establishes clear attendance and participation expectations.
2. Has a system for the collection and monitoring of participant attendance data.
3. *Maintains all required documents (e.g., health certificate, security clearance, insurance, etc.) where applicable.
4. *Creates and uses an employee handbook that clarifies internal policies and procedures.
5. *Has complete and current enrollment/registration documents for all participants.
6. Maintains accurate and accessible medical records on participants.
7. *Has a clear salary structure for program staff.
8. *Has well-defined methods of communication with program stakeholders.
9. Has approved budget; reviews and adjusts budget periodically.
10. Establishes and maintains a centralized database of participant and program information that is regularly updated and usable by staff.
11. Completes all required reports and submits them in a timely manner.
12. Ensures that supplies are organized, maintained, and accessible.
13. Records and tracks expenses.
14. Complies with government mandates.+
Date of last licensing if applicable: _____
15. Maintains current and accurate activity schedule with room assignments.
16. *Develops, reviews, and updates plan for family involvement.
17. Negotiates optimal use of school, CBO, and community resources to best meet the needs of participants and their families.
18. *Documents where participants are during program hours.

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

+For a list of applicable government mandates, see www.nysan.org/usersguide.

