



KANSAS AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM



Quality Guidelines

AND

Self-Assessment Tools



Administration & Staff

Activities / Programming / Curriculum

Professional Development

Relationships

Parental Involvement



AFTERSCHOOL: *a powerful tool for kids, families, and communities*

When the bell rings at the end of the school day, thousands of Kansas kids head to empty homes. They are alone for the rest of the afternoon, and their safety and well-being are at risk.

Nationwide, more than seven in 10 school-aged children live in households where a single parent or both parents work. Although many children of working parents in Kansas are supervised after school, about 35 percent, or 168,100, are not.

Safe havens for children do exist. Across Kansas, high-quality afterschool programs offer academic support and a wealth of enrichment activities aimed at helping kids live healthy, productive, and happy lives. These programs keep youth not only safe but also mentally stimulated and socially engaged.

“Parents of kids in afterschool programs have a sense of peace, knowing their kids are being supervised in structured, educational, and fun activities, as opposed to worrying about where their kids are and what they are doing,” says Nathan Eberline, chairman of the Kansas Enrichment Network Executive Committee.

Unfortunately, not all Kansas communities offer such programs. Often, existing afterschool programs struggle with limited resources and the inability to accommodate all of the children in need of care. In Kansas, only 13 percent of children in grades K-12 participate in afterschool programs, while over 30 percent of youth not currently in afterschool programs would likely participate if programs were available.

Young people of all ages need a place to go after school where they are safe and supervised, where they cultivate their talents and interests, and where they forge bonds with caring adults. Afterschool programs are a key component to developing Kansas’ most valuable resource – its youth.



The afterschool advantage

Researchers, parents, and educators agree that afterschool programs are a win-win proposition for everyone involved. Among the benefits:

- Afterschool programs keep kids safe. For younger children, the risks of staying home alone range from loneliness to serious physical injury.
- Afterschool programs offer a secure environment where kids are supervised by qualified adults. The hours from 3 to 6 p.m. are the peak time for teens to commit crimes; for children to become crime victims; for teen drivers to be involved in car crashes; and for kids to smoke, drink, and use drugs.



- Afterschool programs give teens a place to explore healthy and educational alternatives to high-risk, unhealthy and illegal behaviors. Teens who are busy in afterschool programs are off the streets, making afterschool programs “the most powerful weapons in America’s anti-crime arsenal,” according to the organization Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. When polled on how best to reduce youth violence, America’s police chiefs chose – by a 4-to-1 margin – “providing more afterschool programs and educational child care” over increasing prosecution and/or police staffing.
- Afterschool programs strengthen academics. Afterschool programs offer homework help and tutoring for students. The results are measurable: A 2007 study found that regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs is linked to significant gains in standardized test scores. Teachers report that work habits improve and behavior problems decline. Students have better attendance and fewer tardies, and graduation rates improve as youth gain confidence and feel less alienated from their schools.

“I don’t know how many times I’ve had kids come up and tell me they’re pulling A’s on tests now because of help they’ve received at afterschool,” says Steve Lehmann, activities director at Reno Valley Middle School in Hutchinson.

- Afterschool programs help working families. It is estimated the average parent misses eight days of work each year because of a lack of afterschool care. When working parents know their children are safe and with caring adults after school, they can be more reliable and productive workers. As child-care pressures ease, parents become less stressed. An added bonus: When life at home is more relaxed, children come to school happier and more prepared to learn.
- Afterschool programs build workforce skills. Nearly nine out of 10 afterschool programs offer math, science, and technology activities that help fuel youth interest in these critical fields. Students are introduced to careers and learn the behaviors that ultimately lead to job success. Business and industry leaders, working with programs such as Junior Achievement, give students the opportunity to experience the world of management, production and sales.

Quality afterschool programs are important

Our educational responsibility is not simply to provide academic opportunities but also to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities. Second, in the U.S., we need to publicly campaign for the importance of out-of-school time on adolescent development and make adults aware of the potentials and possibilities of youth. Third, We need to recognize that not all participation leads to the same learning. Different types of activities can lead to different types of learning. Research suggests that equal partnerships between youth and adults, working side by side are most effective in promoting engagement with larger social issues.

David Hansen, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology and Research, University of Kansas.

Before-school, afterschool and summer programs present young people with an unmatched arena for academic, social, emotional and physical development. However, children's development only goes as far as the quality of their afterschool opportunities allows. Those in the field of afterschool understand that quality matters and that extra time alone is not enough for success. The afterschool hours are a time when kids can grow, and making the best use of that time is essential to achieving positive outcomes. For afterschool to reach its full potential as a catalyst for holistic youth development, quality must be a priority.

Chris D'Agostino

Afterschool Alliance

Time and time again, research shows that the most important factor leading to positive results for youth who participate in out-of-school programs is quality – quality of the program staff, quality of the relationships staff establish with young participants and quality of parental involvement. Though strong curriculum and safe facilities are important, it's the quality of the people who work and sustain the program for the good of families and communities that matters the most.

Elaine Johannes, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist/Youth Development,
School of Family Studies and Human Services, Kansas State University

With these thoughts in mind, the Kansas Quality Afterschool Leadership Team developed a framework, guidelines, and self-assessment tools to aid program staff in providing high quality services for youth.

Define quality:

Quality begins with safety.

Quality can be described in terms of physical environment, program structure (design), developmentally appropriate practices, learning environment, point of service (interactions with youth), and desired outcomes for youth.

Quality looks different depending on age level; must be defined by diversity; needs to honor what all groups bring to the table.

Quality is supported by accountability, sustainability, infrastructure, and continuous learning.

Possible outcomes that occur through quality programs involve emotion regulation; teamwork; social/life skills; initiative; a sense of belonging; community connection; staying in school; leadership; diversity; positive peer relationships; youth voice and empowerment; safety; positive parental experiences; academic; high expectations; improved health, nutrition, physical development, and wellness.

The Kansas quality afterschool guidelines will:

- Support programs.
- Serve as a guide for continuous improvement.
- Allow program staff and administrators to engage parents, key stakeholders, community members and funders in a process that identifies strengths and weaknesses of five different components of afterschool care.

Assumptions:

- The guidelines blend with, support, supplement, and do not conflict, with the Kansas Child Care Licensing Regulations. Licensing is encouraged where appropriate.
- The guidelines are voluntary and focus on continuous quality improvement.
- The guidelines serve as a baseline and are aimed at 21st century readiness for all students and work toward a range of quality.
- The guidelines target school-age youth through Grade 8 during out of school time.

Guiding values for the guidelines:

- Based and explicitly aligned with research
- Inclusive
- Directed at desired student outcomes
- Easily understood
- Developmentally appropriate
- Informed by the missions of Kansas educational institutions
- Applicable in all settings
- For youth, by youth, and engage youth

Scope of these guidelines encompasses the following types of programs/clubs:

- School-based
- Community-based
- Faith-based
- Licensed childcare facilities

Content with inclusion, parent voice, and youth voice embedded throughout each area

- Programming/Curriculum/Activities (Core Competency 1, 2, 5)
- Administration/Staffing Qualifications (Core Competency 3, 5, 7)
- Professional Development (Core Competency 8)
- Relationships/Nurturing Environment (Core Competency 6)
- Parent Involvement/Engagement, as defined by parents (Core Competency 4)

Outcomes

- Youth (To be developed)
- Staff (All Core Competencies)

Kansas and Missouri Core Competencies for Youth Professional Development:

What youth development professionals need to know and do to provide quality services for youth and their families, Second Edition.

Content

The following categories were used to structure the content of the **KANSAS AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM QUALITY GUIDELINES**. Writing teams addressed guidelines for quality in each of the five program content areas, compared them with the existing Core Competencies for Youth Development Professionals, and identified considerations for older youth where appropriate.

01 Administrative / Staffing Qualifications

CC III: CHILD/ADOLESCENT OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Observation and Assessment

CC V: Health, Safety, and Nutrition

Knowledge of Regulations

Environmental Safety

CC VII: Program Planning and Development

Program Planning and Evaluation

Personnel Management

Financial Management

02 Programming / Curriculum / Activities

CC I: CHILD-ADOLESCENT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Child/Adolescent Growth and Development

CC II: Learning Environment and Curriculum

Creating the Learning Environment & General Curriculum

Promoting Physical Development

Promoting Cognitive Development

Promoting Communications Skills

Promoting Social Development

Promoting Creative Expression

CC V: Health, Safety, and Nutrition

Responding to Health Needs of Youth

Nutrition

03 Professional Development

CC VIII: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Displaying Professionalism in Practice

Ongoing Professional Growth

Leadership and Advocacy

04 Relationships / Nurturing Environment

CC VI: INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN/ YOUTH/OTHERS

Providing Individual Guidance

Enhancing Group Experiences

05 Parent Involvement / Engagement

CC IV: FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Relationships with Families

Use of Community Resources

01

Administrative / Staffing Qualifications

A quality program employs reliable systems that foster responsible fiscal management, address sustainability, and project the need for constant enhancement of the program, safety, staff, and youth through evaluation.

GUIDELINE 1: *The program has a clear, coherent mission statement, and business plan.*

**CREATED WITH THESE CORE
COMPETENCIES IN MIND:**

- Child/Adolescent Observation and Assessment
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Program Planning and Development

- 1.1** A written statement of mission and goals encompassing all aspects of the program (staff, financial, community).
- 1.2** Participant, staff, parent/guardians and board member involvement in long-term decision making and planning efforts.
- 1.3** A marketing strategy to promote and publicize the program.
- 1.4** Compliance with required governmental mandates including licensing standards, if applicable.
- 1.5** Appropriate business and bookkeeping practices, including an approved budget that is reviewed and adjusted on a systematic basis.
- 1.6** Quarterly meetings with partners, board members, and other community supporters.
- 1.7** A long term plan for sustaining and growing the afterschool program.

GUIDELINE 2: *The program is guided by clearly written policies and procedures for staff, volunteers, and the administration.*

- 2.1** A personnel manual and written job description for each job/volunteer position. Staff/volunteers read the manual and agree in writing to comply with the policies/regulations.
- 2.2** A written policy/procedure manual explaining daily practices and health and safety issues.

- 2.3** Orientation for all staff/volunteers within one month of beginning employment or volunteer experiences. Orientation to include: mission and goals; licensing regulations, if applicable; program policies and procedures; supervision; health and safety practices; daily program of activities; confidentiality; crisis management; universal precautions; signs and symptoms of illness; mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect; and critical incidents.
 - 2.4** Regularly scheduled meetings with expected staff attendance, and documented minutes. Volunteers encouraged to attend.
 - 2.5** On-going education requirements developed to address needs of the staff and continuous improvement strategies.
 - 2.6** Critical incidents documented and copies provided to the parent/guardian of the child involved.
 - 2.7** Surveys and feedback from youth, parents, staff, and community members.
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GUIDELINE 3: *Maintain accurate and on-going written documentation.*

- 3.1** Personnel files maintained for staff and volunteers including documentation required by internal policy/state regulation (References, background checks, health assessments that include TB testing, training documentation, signed manual compliance sheet).
 - 3.2** Daily attendance records for participants, a system for checking participants in and out of the program, snack/meal consumption and a record of their activities.
 - 3.3** Program participant files including documentation required by internal policy or state regulation (EMR contacts, medication forms, enrollment forms, health assessments, immunizations, critical incident reports, and persons authorized to pick up the child).
 - 3.4** A systematic process to record and track program expenses.
 - 3.5** Submission of required reports to partners in a timely fashion.
 - 3.6** A system for processing and tracking program-related income (donations and payments).
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GUIDELINE 4: *Qualified staff members are recruited and hired with sensitivity to diversity and culture.*

- 4.1** Staff members hired in compliance with internal policies/state training standards.
 - 4.2** Adequate staff-to-participant ratios that comply with internal policies/state standards.
 - 4.3** A written training plan based upon needs assessment of staff and volunteers.
 - 4.4** Use of multiple recruitment strategies to locate qualified staff.
 - 4.5** A self-assessment and a continuous improvement plan.
 - 4.6** A recognition program for staff and volunteers.
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GUIDELINE 5: *Indoor and outdoor space adequately meet the needs of all youth.*

Indoor Space

- 5.1** Adequately accommodating varying program activities (tutoring, independent study, active play, quiet play, socializing, and eating).
- 5.2** Adequate and convenient storage space for equipment, materials and personal possessions for youth and staff members.
- 5.3** Appropriate youth access to materials.
- 5.4** Restrooms and drinking facilities to meet the needs of youth and staff.
- 5.5** An emotionally and physically welcoming environment for youth that reflects the diversity of the population served.
- 5.6** A safe and separate area for children who become ill while attending the program.
- 5.7** Physical environment modified to meet the needs of special populations.

Outdoor Space

- 5.8** Adequately accommodating varying program activities.

- 5.9 Adequate space and equipment that encourages independence and creativity.
 - 5.10 A variety of outdoor equipment and games encouraging both active and quiet activities.
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GUIDELINE 6: *The program provides a physically safe, sanitary, and securely monitored environment to meet the needs of all youth.*

- 6.1 Absence of observable safety hazards in the program space.
 - 6.2 Appropriate background checks for all staff members and volunteers.
 - 6.3 Appropriate medical screenings and physicals for staff and volunteers.
 - 6.4 Adequate hand washing facilities for staff and youth.
 - 6.5 Constant supervision and awareness of youth and their activities; Staff knows where youth are and what they are doing at all times. Staff utilizes check out/sign out procedure.
 - 6.6 At least one staff member with a current first aid certificate, including CPR training present at all times.
 - 6.7 Appropriately controlled climate.
 - 6.8 Secure, safe, clean, and sanitary program space.
 - 6.9 Staff properly trained in safety and emergency procedures; emergency plans are displayed for all to see.
 - 6.10 Emergency drills practiced routinely.
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For staff, learning never stops

“A caring, competent staff is key to quality afterschool care,” says Pam Watkins, Vice President of School Age Services for YMCA of Greater Kansas City. One of the biggest benefits of afterschool care is that kids gain relationships and friendships. We want to have staff working with them who are well-trained in youth development and serve as positive role models.”

The Kansas City YMCA program includes over 70 afterschool sites on both sides of the state line. Each site has a full-time director, and each director at least one part-time assistant.

A regular schedule of training ensures that all staff members are equipped to deal with any crisis, physical or emotional, that might arise with children. All new employees are coached in CPR and first aid. They learn about blood-borne pathogens and how to recognize child abuse and neglect. An entire day is devoted each fall to workshops on methods of youth development, service learning, diversity, program management, curriculum and child behavior.

Through self-assessment and site monitoring, staff training needs are identified. Staff at each site participate in monthly continuing-education sessions that can be tailored to fit the site’s needs – perhaps ideas for dealing with special-needs students, or strategies for gaining youth input.

“Qualified staff is highly important,” Watkins says. “Low turnover is also critical to provide stability for children who may not have much in other parts of their lives. When they come to our program they’re in a safe, nurturing environment focused on providing positive outcomes.”

One of the biggest benefits of afterschool care is that kids gain relationships and friendships.

Pam Watkins,
Vice President of School Age Services
for YMCA of Greater Kansas City



02

Programming / Curriculum / Activities

A quality program provides a safe, healthy, and stimulating learning environment that promotes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development for all youth. Activities allow for choice, exploration, and discovery.

CREATED WITH THESE CORE COMPETENCIES IN MIND:

- Child/Adolescent Observation and Assessment
- Learning Environment and Curriculum
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition

GUIDELINE 1: *Program provides an emotionally safe environment that fosters positive physical, social, and cognitive growth for all participants.*

- 1.1 Nutritious meals and snacks.
 - 1.2 Age-appropriate furniture and equipment that is in good condition and is used appropriately by staff and youth.
 - 1.3 Age-appropriate, aesthetically appealing visual aids.
 - 1.4 Space for showcasing youth work.
 - 1.5 Effective communication of code of conduct to youth, staff, and families.
 - 1.6 Emotionally safe space separate from the main room for youth to “cool off” or talk through conflict resolution.
 - 1.7 Available staff member to offer emotional support and help youth work through conflict if and when it arises.
 - 1.8 At least 30 minutes out of every 3 hour block of time while at the program to play outdoors, weather permitting.
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GUIDELINE 2: *Program offers rich, meaningful and engaging experiences to enhance learning, promote student success, and provide opportunities for human development.*

- 2.1** Activities that reflect the mission and philosophy of the program.
 - 2.2** Project-based activities to encourage creativity and promote self-expression.
 - 2.3** Experiential opportunities to allow youth to be exposed to new pathways for learning.
 - 2.4** Quality academic tutoring for youth requesting help and quality alternative activities for youth not requesting tutoring.
 - 2.5** A well-rounded menu of learning options offering opportunities for choice and pursuing of personal interests.
 - 2.6** Opportunity for discovery through trial and error.
 - 2.7** An emotionally safe environment for youth to succeed and fail.
 - 2.8** Youth ownership and pride.
 - 2.9** Sufficient supplies and materials.
 - 2.10** Activities divided by age or skill level.
 - 2.11** Multi-age groupings where appropriate.
 - 2.12** Opportunities for youth to work individually, in small groups, and whole group; opportunities to lead and follow.
 - 2.13** Chances for older youth mentoring younger youth.
 - 2.14** Inclusion of youth self-reflection.
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GUIDELINE 3: *Program supports learning and diversity through outreach to the schools, community, and volunteers.*

- 3.1** Former participants to give back as volunteers or staff.
- 3.2** Promotional materials that provide details on program offerings, how to join, and how to partner with the program.

- 3.3 Exploration of community resources and issues through projects and activities.
 - 3.4 Collaboration with school-day personnel to bridge academic connections and promote service learning.
 - 3.5 Opportunities for community service/service learning and reflection on those experiences.
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GUIDELINE 4: *Schedule reflects offerings conducive to the needs of the youth, parents, and community served.*

- 4.1 Flexibility of hours of operation to meet the needs of the youth and parents.
 - 4.2 A schedule available to staff, youth, and their families.
 - 4.3 Opportunities for youth voice and spontaneous learning to occur. Youth have formal and informal opportunities to express their opinions and concerns about program offerings.
 - 4.4 Adequate, sufficient, and age-appropriate transitions.
 - 4.5 Creative seamless and smooth activity transitions.
 - 4.6 Youth and parent involvement in schedule creation.
 - 4.7 Active program pacing.
 - 4.8 Teacher-directed and student-directed leadership opportunities.
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GUIDELINE 5: *Program provides the platform for active youth voice.*

- 5.1 Youth participation in program development and program selection.
 - 5.2 Formal opportunity for youth to reflect and provide feedback on program and offerings.
 - 5.3 Staff acknowledgement of youth input by utilizing feedback in creation of future program design and offerings.
 - 5.4 Youth opportunities to lead others and experience different levels of self-management.
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A shining star

It's a harsh reality that in today's fractured society, many kids are left trying to figure out where they fit in.

"Parents are going in so many different directions, just trying to make ends meet, and kids are left alone," says Steve Lehmann, activities director of the Leadership, Enrichment and Academic Academy of Reno Valley Middle School in Hutchinson.

"There may be three or four sets of multiple parents because of divorce. Kids are looking for a niche. They're looking for something to feel positive about."

That's why the academy focuses on developing the whole child – helping him or her build self-esteem and become successful in life.

All but one of the school's 170 students utilized the award-winning program in 2008-09. Students who are failing three or more subjects are required to attend for tutoring help; others can drop in as they like.

After homework is completed, students participate in enrichment and community service projects. These have included visits to a retirement center, staging a dinner theater, scrapbooking, construction of a butterfly garden, water aerobics at the YMCA, Frisbee golf at a park, candle-making, tours of the Kansas Cosmosphere, and a career awareness program at Hutchinson Community College. Students with passing grades in all their classes gain admission to the Panther Den, which has games such as foosball and air hockey. "It's an incentive to get homework done," Lehmann says.

For the first time, 7th- and 8th-graders have met goals for reading and math, which school administrators credit in part to the afterschool program. Since its inception in 2001, the academy's success has attracted notice. It was named state and national program of the year in 2005 and has been honored for its use of science and technology.

"There's a need for afterschool programs because of the way the structure of the world has changed. We have some kids who have never seen Wichita. We need to give them opportunities," Lehmann says.

Parents are going in so many different directions, just trying to make ends meet, and kids are left alone.

Steve Lehmann,
Activities director of the Leadership, Enrichment, and
Academic Academy of Reno Valley Middle School in Hutchinson



Making a difference, one child at a time

When Brad Grabs was mugged by two teens in 2002, he didn't get mad and he didn't get even. Instead, he felt inspired to help youth find a better path.

"Most kids will do the right thing and be good kids if they have the right environment," he says. "We try to create an environment that makes it easy for kids to be good. And they are good."

Grabs launched the Learning Club in Kansas City, Kan., which meets two afternoons a week in a former Catholic elementary school. Volunteers offer intensive afterschool tutoring in reading and math to 20 children in grades 1-8.

"We have really high expectations. We set the tone to be serious about academics," Grabs says.

However, the Learning Club isn't only about math and reading. On Wednesdays, community members give programs on topics as varied as yoga, cooking, Braille, gardening, advertising, and health. The Learning Club also takes field trips to area attractions that many of the children have never had a chance to visit, including the Steamboat Arabia Museum, Science City, the Coterie Theatre, and the Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead.

Back in the classroom, students earn points for regular attendance, helpful behavior, and satisfactory test scores. The points can be redeemed for board games, footballs, jewelry, MP3 players, and even bikes.

The prizes stacked against a classroom wall are a big incentive says 15-year-old Dominique Dirks, who has attended the Learning Club since 3rd grade. She especially appreciates the help she gets with math. "Kids come here and stay out of trouble. It helps them improve their grades at school," she says.

Parents also have been impressed. One wrote on her year-end evaluation: "Wow! My daughter has improved so much in reading. That was her main problem when she first started" at the Learning Club.

It's evidence, Grabs says, that "one-on-one help can really make a difference."

Most kids will do the right thing and be good kids if they have the right environment.

Brad Grabs,
Director of the Learning Club of Kansas City



03

Professional Development

A quality program offers on-going training for volunteers/staff members that encompasses advocacy for youth and positive youth development.

CREATED WITH THESE CORE COMPETENCIES IN MIND:

- Professional Development and Leadership

GUIDELINE 1: *Program staff display professionalism in practice.*

- 1.1** Director, staff and volunteers display professionalism.
- 1.2** Exploration of state licensing requirements for school age programs as a tool for enhancing program quality. Licensing is encouraged where appropriate.
- 1.3** Diversity of the program population served is valued and respected when determining program offerings and environment.
- 1.4** Skilled in advocating for positive youth development.

GUIDELINE 2: *The program offers ongoing professional growth.*

- 2.1** Training needs of staff and volunteers assessed at least annually.
- 2.2** A written training plan incorporates findings from assessment.
- 2.3** Encouragement of annual core training for staff including:
 - a. CPR, First Aid, blood borne pathogens, and emergency procedures
 - b. Mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect
 - c. Positive youth development
 - d. Cultural sensitivity and competence
 - e. Diversity and gender equity
 - f. Sexual harassment

2.4 Budget supports staff professional training.

2.5 Policy supports staff credentialing.

GUIDELINE 3: *The program staff exhibit leadership and advocacy.*

3.1 Advocates for youth needs.

3.2 Respects confidentiality of youth and families.

3.3 Advocates for quality youth programs and the impact of high quality afterschool services.



04

Relationships

A quality program develops and nurtures positive reciprocal relationships and interactions (staff ↔ student, staff ↔ staff, student ↔ student, program ↔ facility, program ↔ community, and afterschool administration ↔ school day administration).

CREATED WITH THESE CORE COMPETENCIES IN MIND:

- Interactions with Children/Youth/Others

GUIDELINE 1: *Program staff members engage youth in positive ways and intentionally build individual relationships.*

- 1.1** Respect for and acceptance of all youth and parents displayed by learning their names, their interests about their families, etc. (Name learning: youth ↔ staff and staff ↔ parent)
 - 1.2** Formal creation of human factors that ensures a sense of belonging (i.e. respect, empathy, sportsmanship, caring, etc.)
 - 1.3** Use of a student/staff generated list of expectations that foster team building, personal interactions and conflict resolution. Revision of list as needed.
 - 1.4** Positive, intentional relationship building from use of conflict resolution techniques.
 - 1.5** Program strategies encourage youth to accept responsibility.
 - 1.6** A warm, supportive and caring manner reflected by clear, non-aggressive language and voice.
 - 1.7** Physical boundaries reflect appropriate age, gender, culture and preferences of youth.
 - 1.8** Staff serve as positive role models.
 - 1.9** Parent handbook shares information about the relationship norms and the positive techniques used to redirect inappropriate choices.
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GUIDELINE 2: *Program staff members engage in positive staff/staff relationships.*

- 2.1** Reciprocal respect between staff members.
 - 2.2** Shared decision-making, planning and evaluation.
 - 2.3** Training in the expectations for staff/staff relationships (i.e. learning each other's names).
 - 2.4** Positive and intentional engagement in building individual working relationships.
 - 2.5** Conflict resolution techniques solve issues among staff members and volunteers while modeling techniques for youth.
 - 2.6** A warm, supportive and caring environment demonstrated through clear, non-aggressive language and voice.
 - 2.7** Staff relationships reflect appropriate age, gender, culture and preferences of staff members.
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GUIDELINE 3: *Program students engage in positive student/student relationships.*

- 3.1** Mutual respect and acceptance displayed by learning each other's names.
 - 3.2** Formal creation of human factors that ensures a sense of belonging (i.e. respect, empathy, sportsmanship, caring, etc.).
 - 3.3** Use of student/staff list of expectations fosters team building, personal interactions and conflict resolution. Revision of list as needed.
 - 3.4** Planning and working together.
 - 3.5** A warm, supportive and caring manner demonstrated through clear, non-aggressive language and voice.
 - 3.6** Interactions appropriate to age, gender, culture and preferences of other program participants.
 - 3.7** Appropriate strategies resolve differences and conflicts.
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GUIDELINE 4: *Program members engage in positive program/facility relationships.*

- 4.1** Proper facility use.
 - 4.2** Respect and acceptance of facility rules and regulations.
 - 4.3** Intentional building of relationships with facility staff.
 - 4.4** A warm, supportive and caring manner demonstrated through using clear, non-aggressive language and voice.
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A flood of change

Even the darkest storm clouds sometimes have a silver lining.

After heavy rains and flooding slammed Coffeyville in 2007, a community-wide rebuilding committee focused on how the “New Coffeyville” could best serve all its residents, from infants to the elderly.

The committee identified one goal in particular: to increase interaction between generations. To that end, a kindergarten class has been permanently relocated to the Windsor Place nursing home. The children share laughter and smiles daily while the surrogate grandparents share their time and stories, to the delight of all.

Out-of-school programs also have benefited from the post-flood push to build community spirit, says Griffin Walker, from Coffeyville. Elementary-aged afterschool kids visit the nursing home every Monday, building their people skills, maturity, and confidence. Meanwhile, the public is invited to afterschool activities, such as a student talent show and a fund-raising golf tournament.

At the middle- and high-school level, the Ladies’ and Gentlemen’s Clubs were designed to hone social skills for at-risk students. In weekly meetings, the teens are coached in etiquette and life lessons. They are required to dress appropriately for all club events. “They like dressing up,” Walker says. “People look at them differently, with more respect, and they like that feeling.”

**Community involvement is a key. Be involved!
It’s going to open up so many different doors!**

Griffin Walker,
Coffeyville

In 2009, Ladies and Gents who completed the course curriculum, improved their behavior in school, and followed the dress code were rewarded with a trip to Oklahoma City that included a pro basketball game and a college tour.

The afterschool programs have been a success, thanks in large part to community buy-in, Walker says. “Community involvement is a key. Be involved! It’s going to open up so many different doors.”

A brush with success

Although Van Go Mobile Arts in Lawrence may look like fun and games, the arts-based job-training program is serious business. Participants are paid to create artworks, gaining recognition, self-confidence, and work skills in the process.

The junior entrepreneurs, who are at-risk students referred by school counselors, get hands-on job experience in a program called Benchmark. The youth design and build custom wooden benches, which means meeting with clients, arriving on time, and honoring deadlines. During the school year, Van Go employees make mosaics, jewelry, magnets, birdhouses, and other works that are sold in the Van Go gallery and at fund-raising art shows.

Van Go has grown by leaps and bounds since 1997, when founder and executive director Lynne Green first loaded a van with paint and brushes and traveled around town with her therapeutic art activities. Today, Van Go occupies a hip 12,000-square-foot space designed by well-known Kansas City architect Dan Rockhill.

Daiyna Vann, 19, has been in the program almost four years and gives it high praise. “Van Go taught me what jobs would be good for me,” she says. “I learned how to go to interviews and have confidence, and how to act in a work setting.” Her Van Go skills have proved invaluable in her new job at a bakery, she says.

It was a proud day in 2006 when the program received the Coming Up Taller Award, which honors excellence in afterschool arts and humanities programs nationwide. Van Go received the award from first lady Laura Bush at a White House ceremony – well-deserved recognition for a program that has extended a lifeline to hundreds of teens in crisis.

**Van Go taught me
what jobs would
be good for me.**

Daiyna Vann,
Student with Van Go Mobile Arts in Lawrence



05

Youth, Family & Community Partnerships

A quality program develops strong partner relationships and interactions for staff ↔ student, staff ↔ staff, student ↔ student, program ↔ facility, program ↔ community, and afterschool administration ↔ school day administration.

CREATED WITH THESE CORE COMPETENCIES IN MIND:

- Families and Communities

GUIDELINE 1: *The program environment reflects respect for families.*

- 1.1** Languages, cultures, family structures and socio-economic backgrounds represent youth.
 - 1.2** Communication is open, friendly, and builds cooperative relationships with families.
 - 1.3** Shared decision-making opportunities strengthen family involvement.
 - 1.4** Recognition of family influence on youth's abilities, interests, and development.
-

GUIDELINE 2: *The program environment reflects community connections for families.*

- 2.1** Recognition of specific needs, values, and community resources to support youth and families.
 - 2.2** Development of appropriate relationships between community partners and families.
 - 2.3** Advancement of public awareness about family and youth development.
 - 2.4** Community collaboration to meet the specific needs of youth and families.
 - 2.5** Analysis and evaluation of on-going changes between youth, families and communities.
 - 2.6** Development and implementation of new strategies with key stakeholders.
-

GUIDELINE 3: *Program policies and procedures are responsive to the needs of the youth and families.*

- 3.1** Philosophy reflects the needs and values of the school and community demographics.
 - 3.2** Open communication between staff, youth, families, schools, and community partners.
 - 3.3** Information relevant to the specific needs of youth and families is communicated through various ways.
 - 3.4** Policies reflect open communication between staff, youth, families, community partners along with day school and after school.
-

A matter of faith

Barb Prier carries the title of executive director for Cherry Street Youth Center in Chanute, but she has no illusions about who is really in charge. “When you’re faith-based, you just have to let God run the program,” she says.

Cherry Street serves nearly 120 children in kindergarten through 5th grade, 81 percent of whom live at poverty level. Prier is passionate about providing them a safe haven and a nurturing environment. “Some of them just want a hug. They are starved for it,” she says.

The curriculum emphasizes homework help, reading skills, and Bible lessons. “Reading scores have gone up in the school system,” Prier says. “I have to believe it’s due in part to us.”

The Chanute community is proud of its afterschool program, which is open daily during the school year and three days a week in summer. “It’s hard to imagine there’s a person in town who’s not been touched by one of the 700 kids who have gone here in the last 14 years, either as a grandchild or a neighbor,” she says.

In 2007, a new 3,500-square-foot facility replaced the tiny building that originally housed the program. Governor Kathleen Sebelius attended the ribbon cutting and read *Where the Wild Things Are* to the students. It was a proud day for Prier, who never expected her original vision for a ministry to go so far.

“It’s planting lots of seeds. That’s why the whole community contributes,” Prier says.



Nurturing the whole person

There are some things schools can't and shouldn't have to worry about. In Ottawa, the Communities in Schools program provides eye exams, bike helmets, shoes, dental care, and weekend meals, in addition to afterschool care, as part of its effort to reduce dropout rates by mobilizing community resources to satisfy children's unmet needs.

In the afterschool program, every afternoon begins with homework and tutoring, followed by enrichment programs with a lot of kid appeal: woodworking, Chinese language instruction, electricity, rocketry, doll making, and photography. Every Monday is 4-H day for all students in grades 2-5. They work on projects, give demonstrations, and conduct business meetings that follow Robert's Rules of Order.

On other days, community partners help with field trips to the library, skating rink, gymnasium, or arts center. "The community needs to understand how important afterschool is. It's huge for the kids to have community faces involved," says Becky Nevergold, executive director of the Communities in Schools program in Ottawa.

In their own way, children give back to the community. The 5th-graders teach computer lessons to senior citizens, and 4th-graders conclude a unit on architecture by building a Christmas village in a downtown window for all to enjoy.

The enrichment activities have had tangible results, Nevergold says. In a poll, 94 percent of parents said homework was being completed because of the program, while 79 percent thought their children were performing better in school.

How to get there

The Kansas success stories included here illustrate that afterschool programs can achieve greatness, regardless of their size or funding. The benefits of the programs are clear: safer, happier, and more successful children.



Self-Assessment Tools

01 Administrative / Staffing
Qualifications

02 Programming /
Curriculum / Activities

03 Professional
Development

04 Relationships / Nurturing
Environment

05 Parent Involvement /
Engagement

06 Additional Program
Considerations

07 Considerations for
Older Youth

08 S.T.E.M. – Rich
Program Considerations

01

Administrative / Staffing Qualifications

A quality program employs reliable systems that foster responsible fiscal management, address sustainability, and project the need for constant enhancement of the program, safety, staff, and youth through evaluation.

A QUALITY PROGRAM:

	<i>Performance Level</i>				<i>Plan to Improve</i>		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
1 Has a written statement of its mission and goals that encompasses all aspects of the program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Involves participants, staff, parents/guardians, and board members in its long-term planning and decision-making efforts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Has a marketing strategy to promote and publicize itself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Is compliant with required governmental mandates, including licensing standards (if applicable)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Uses appropriate business and bookkeeping practices; has an approved budget that is reviewed and adjusted periodically	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Holds quarterly meetings with partners, board members, and other community supporters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Has a long-term plan for sustaining and growing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 Utilizes a personnel manual that staff/volunteers agree to follow and comply with the policies and regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 Writes job descriptions for each job/volunteer position	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 Creates a written policy/procedure manual explaining daily practices and health and safety issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Performance Level

Plan to Improve

1 2 3 4

**RIGHT THIS NEXT
NOW YEAR YEAR**

11	Holds orientation for all staff/volunteers within one month of beginning employment or volunteer experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	The staff/volunteer orientation includes: mission and goals; licensing regulations, if applicable; program policies and procedures; supervision; health and safety practices; daily program of activities; confidentiality; crisis management; universal precautions; signs and symptoms of illness; mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect; and critical incidents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Holds regularly scheduled meetings with expected staff attendance and documented minutes; encourages volunteers to attend meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Develops on-going education requirements to address needs of staff and continuous improvement strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Documents critical incidents and provides copies to the parent/guardian of the child involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	Requests feedback from youth, parents, staff, and community members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Maintains personnel files for staff and volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Keeps daily attendance records for participants through a check-in/out system and tracks snack/meal consumption and activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Maintains program participant files that include documents required by policy or state regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20	Records and tracks program expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21	Submits required reports to partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22	Systematically processes and tracks program-related income	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23	Hires staff in compliance with internal policies and state training standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	<i>Performance Level</i>				<i>Plan to Improve</i>		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
24 Maintains an adequate staff-to-participant ratio that complies with internal policies/state standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25 Creates a written training plan based on a needs assessment of staff/volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26 Uses multiple recruitment strategies to locate qualified staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27 Undergoes self-assessment activities and strives for continuous improvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28 Recognizes staff and volunteers for their efforts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29 Builds indoor spaces that:							
• Accommodate varying program activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Feature adequate storage space for equipment, materials, and personal possessions for youth and staff members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Give youth appropriate access to materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Have restrooms, hand-washing, and drinking facilities to meet the needs of youth and staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Are emotionally and physically welcoming and reflect the diversity of the service population, including those from special populations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Are safe and appropriately supervised	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30 Features outdoor spaces that:							
• Adequately accommodate varying program activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Have equipment that encourages independence and creative play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Provide outdoor equipment and games that encourage various activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Are safe and appropriately supervised	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31 Does not have observable safety hazards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Performance Level

Plan to Improve

1 2 3 4

**RIGHT THIS NEXT
NOW YEAR YEAR**

32 Completes background checks for all staff members and volunteers

33 Conducts medical screenings and physicals for staff and volunteers

34 Constantly supervises youth activities

35 Appropriately controls the climate

36 Trains staff in safety and emergency procedures; displays emergency plans for all to see

37 Practices emergency drills

02

Programming / Curriculum / Activities

A quality program provides a safe, healthy, and stimulating learning environment that promotes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development for all youth. Activities allow for choice, exploration, and discovery.

A QUALITY PROGRAM:

	<i>Performance Level</i>				<i>Plan to Improve</i>		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
1 Serves nutritious meals and snacks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Has age-appropriate furniture and equipment that is in good condition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Utilizes age-appropriate, aesthetically appealing visual aids	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Showcases youth work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Communicates a code of conduct to youth, staff, and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Provides a safe space, with an emotionally-supportive staff member, for youth to talk through conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Hosts activities that reflect its mission and philosophy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 Present youth with adequate outdoor play time (30 minutes for each 3-hour block), weather permitting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 Plans project-based activities to encourage creativity and promote self-expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 Provides experiential opportunities to expose youth to new pathways for learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11 Provides academic tutoring for those in need and alternatives for others not in tutoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Performance Level

Plan to Improve

1 2 3 4

**RIGHT THIS NEXT
NOW YEAR YEAR**

12 Has a well-rounded menu of learning options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13 Gives opportunities for discovery through trial and error	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14 Supports an emotionally safe environment for youth to succeed and fail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15 Has youth ownership and pride	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16 Provides sufficient supplies and materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17 Divides activities by age or skill level and has multi-age groups, when appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18 Allows youth to work individually, in small groups, and whole group; opportunities to lead and follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19 Encourages older youth to mentor younger youth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20 Includes youth self-reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21 Involves former participants as volunteers and staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22 Creates informational materials on program offerings, membership, and partnerships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23 Explores community resources and issues through projects and activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24 Collaborates with school-day personnel to bridge academic connections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25 Provides opportunities for community service/service learning and reflection on those experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26 Maintains flexible hours of operation that meets the needs of the youth and parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27 Creates a schedule for use by staff, youth, and families and encourages their input in its development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	<i>Performance Level</i>				<i>Plan to Improve</i>		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
28 Presents opportunities for youth voice and fosters spontaneous learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29 Has adequate, age-appropriate, and seamless transitions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30 Is actively paced	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31 Encourages teacher-directed and student-directed leadership opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32 Fosters youth participation in program development and selection and gives them the chance for feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33 Acknowledges youth input	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34 Provides youth with formal opportunities to lead others and develop self-management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

03

Professional Development

A quality program offers on-going training for volunteers/staff members that encompasses advocacy for youth and positive youth development.

A QUALITY PROGRAM:

	<i>Performance Level</i>				<i>Plan to Improve</i>		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
1 Displays professionalism from all staff/volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Explores state licensing requirements as a tool for enhancing program quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Values and respects diversity of program population served when determining program offerings and environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Advocates for positive youth development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Assesses training needs of staff and volunteers on an annual basis (minimum)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Writes a training plan that incorporates assessment findings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Encourages core training for staff, including all issues from first aid to positive youth development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 Budgets for staff professional training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 Supports staff credentialing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 Advocates for youth needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11 Respects confidentiality of youth and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12 Advocates for quality youth programs and the impact of high quality afterschool services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

04

Relationships

A quality program develops and nurtures positive reciprocal relationships and interactions (staff ↔ student, staff ↔ staff, student ↔ student, program ↔ facility, program ↔ community, and afterschool administration ↔ school day administration).

A QUALITY PROGRAM:

	<i>Performance Level</i>				<i>Plan to Improve</i>		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
1 Respects and accepts all youth and parents by learning their names, their interests, about their families, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Fosters an environment that embodies a sense of belonging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Implements positive intentional relationship building practices through conflict resolution techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Encourages youth to accept responsibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Promotes a warm, supportive and caring environment by expecting staff to use non-aggressive language and voice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Sets physical boundaries that reflect appropriate age, gender, culture and preferences of youth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Employs staff who serve as positive role models	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 Offers a parent handbook that shares information about the relationship norms and the positive techniques to redirect inappropriate choices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 Fosters respectful reciprocating relationships between staff members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Performance Level

Plan to Improve

1 2 3 4

RIGHT NOW THIS YEAR NEXT YEAR

10	Incorporates shared decision-making, planning, and evaluation practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Offers training in the expectations for staff/staff relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Promotes positive and intentional engagement in building individual working relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Recommends conflict resolution techniques to solve issues among staff members and volunteers while modeling techniques for youth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Fosters a warm, supportive and caring staff environment demonstrated through clear, non-aggressive language and voice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Reflects appropriate age, gender, culture and preferences of staff members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	Encourages proper facility use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Creates and respects facility rules and regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Builds positive relationships with facility staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

05

Youth, Family & Community Partnerships

A quality program develops strong partner relationships and interactions for staff ↔ student, staff ↔ staff, student ↔ student, program ↔ facility, program ↔ community, and afterschool administration ↔ school day administration.

A QUALITY PROGRAM:

	Performance Level				Plan to Improve		
	1	2	3	4	RIGHT NOW	THIS YEAR	NEXT YEAR
1 Aware of the languages, cultures, family structures and socio-economic backgrounds of the program youth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Offers open and friendly communication while building cooperative relationships with families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Shares decision-making opportunities with families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Recognizes family influence on youth's abilities, interests, and development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Recognizes the specific needs, values, and community resources that support youth and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Develops and cultivates appropriate relationships between community partners and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Advances public awareness about the importance of family and youth development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 Fosters community collaboration to meet the specific needs of youth and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 Analyzes and evaluates the on-going changes between youth, families and communities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 Develops and implements new partnership strategies with key stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Performance Level

Plan to Improve

1 2 3 4

RIGHT NOW THIS YEAR NEXT YEAR

11 Develops philosophies that reflect the needs and values of the school and community demographics

12 Encourages open communication between staff, youth, families, schools, and community partners

13 Actively communicates information relevant to the specific needs of the youth and families through various ways

14 Implements policy that reflects open communication between staff, youth, families, community partners along with day school and after school

06

Additional Program Considerations

Student Outcome Matrix

OUR PROGRAM MONITORS:

	YES	NO	IF NO, EXPLAIN PLAN TO IMPROVE IN THE FUTURE
1 Attendance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
2 Grades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
3 Homework completion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
4 Progress on school assessments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
5 Graduation rate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
6 Student initiative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
7 Youth engagement with learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
8 Civic participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
9 Relationships with adults	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
10 Relationships with peers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
11 Problem-solving skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
12 Communication skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
13 Social skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
14 Changes in student interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____

	YES	NO	IF NO, EXPLAIN PLAN TO IMPROVE IN THE FUTURE
15 New skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
16 Career interests and skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
17 Increased physical activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
18 Positive nutrition choices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
19 Improved self-confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
20 Reductions in misconduct, risky behaviors, and/or juvenile crime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____

07

Considerations for Older Youth

OUR PROGRAM:

YES NO

IF NO, EXPLAIN PLAN TO IMPROVE IN THE FUTURE

1 Youth-led, youth-driven activities with adults serving as guides on the side

2 Youth as responsible citizens

3 Leadership opportunities – planning an activity, a project, a day, a week

4 Opportunities to use their opinions and input

5 Explanation and guidance when youth input is not used

6 Opportunities for youth to design their own program offerings

7 Flexibility within space, which is warm and welcoming

8 Space to display their work or art of their choice

9 A unique place that does not mirror school classrooms

10 Resources for games/recreation

11 A welcoming environment

12 An accepting climate

	YES	NO	IF NO, EXPLAIN PLAN TO IMPROVE IN THE FUTURE
13 Monitoring supervision, not direct supervision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
14 Independence/choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
15 Inclusion of stipends/wages, if available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
16 Access to mentoring, caring adults who know how to listen and want to work with youth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
17 Fun, enjoyable activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
18 Flexible hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
19 Assistance with college preparation, workforce development and life skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____

Youth want their time to count with programs that provide relevancy for today and the future. Connection with peers and flexible hours are important to them.

08

S.T.E.M. – Rich Program Considerations

OUR PROGRAM OFFERS:

	YES	NO	IF NO, EXPLAIN PLAN TO IMPROVE IN THE FUTURE
1 Engaging offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
2 Inquiry-based, problem-solving, and creative offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
3 Use of scientific method	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
4 Exploration and experimentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
5 Programming based upon multiple pathways, not one right answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
6 Plentiful resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
7 Reflection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
8 Discussion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
9 Teams/cooperative learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
10 Real world problem-solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
11 Hands-on activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
12 Programming tied to careers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____
13 Connection to career experts from STEM fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	_____

Definitions

IN RELATIONSHIP TO THESE GUIDELINES

Afterschool:

Youth programming occurring beyond the school day (before or after school, weekends, holidays, summers). Programs can be school-linked/school-based; community-based; faith-based; or youth-led.

Climate:

Subjective experiences in a school/afterschool setting (Cohen, 2006). Examples: safe, caring, participatory, responsive (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Catalano, et. al. 2002; Greenberg, et. al. 2003).

Cultural sensitivity:

Creating an understanding of positive cross-cultural experiences; developing an awareness that cultural differences exist and these differences effect values and learning (Stafford, Bowman, Eking, Hanna, & Lopoos-DeFede, 1997).

Curriculum:

Program content and how it is delivered.

Diversity:

Understanding, acceptance, and respect of individual differences.

Logic model:

A graphic representation of a project or program, activities to be managed, and outcomes and outputs expected. One example: Inputs > Activities or processes > Outputs > Outcomes.

Outcomes:

The change expected. Example: Increased attendance, better test scores, improved behavior.

Outputs:

A product or result of an intervention. Example: science fair or summit.

Positive youth development:

An approach that communities can take to become great places for young people to grow up (http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/).

STEM:

An acronym for science, technology, engineering, and math.

Youth:

Children and adolescents who are school-age through teen-age.

Youth development framework/approach:

A positive youth development approach builds upon the youth's assets and strengths rather than focusing on his/her problems, obstacles, or risk-taking behavior. A positive youth development framework includes opportunities for youth to develop self-confidence, practice leadership skills, and to improve in a variety of ways.

Youth outcomes:

Changes and gains made by youth as they grow and develop into adulthood, including knowledge, skills, attributes, and behaviors that youth must develop to be caring, healthy, and responsive adults.

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This document was prepared by

Michael Lemon, Leah Steinberg, and Marcia Dvorak, Kansas Enrichment Network.

Story Editor | Gail Borelli Designer | Amanda Warren

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