



Afterschool Programs...Keep Kids Safe, Inspire Learning and Help Working Families

What We Deserve: A Statement of Quality in Afterschool

Quality out-of-school time programs inspire and promote learning and positive youth development by providing opportunities for autonomy and leadership, caring relationships, connections to family, community and school, safe environments and engaging activities.

Our *Program Quality Value Statement* is a set of principles and ideals which we believe should guide the actions of afterschool programming, regardless of program purpose or ages served. It does not, however, indicate levels of program quality. The purpose of this statement is to provide a straightforward framework to define quality for Pennsylvania's afterschool programs and all other individuals, organizations, and entities that have a vested interest in the quality of these programs, including public and private funders, parents, and youth. Quality programming requires the following elements:

STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

- Well-trained, consistent staff and volunteers that represent the community being served
- Written policies and procedures that are consistently used, updated and supported by management
- Sustainable funding and sound fiscal management
- Continuous improvement methods including: evaluation, outcomes measurement, participant/family input, strategic planning and professional development

POSITIVE CONNECTIONS

- Positive relationships between and among youth and staff
- Strong partnerships with families, schools, businesses and other community stakeholders
- Opportunities for youth to contribute to the well-being of the community

SAFETY AND HEALTH

- Safe and accessible environment
- Clean and well maintained facilities
- Programming and environments which promotes fitness, good nutrition and healthy choices

ACTIVITIES

- Activities which are intentionally designed, age-appropriate, develop skills, promote learning and foster positive youth development
- Activities which contain varied content, learning strategies and combine different academic, recreational and cultural elements
- Activities which are youth-centered, responsive to youth interests, and actively involve youth in program development, planning and implementation
- Activities which promote understanding and respect for youth's and others' cultures

