

Research

The mission of the David Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality is to position point of service quality as a powerful public idea that drives the out-of-school time field toward higher levels of understanding, expectation, and action about the quality of experiences available to children and youth.

The Weikart Center's research and development team executes large-scale field trials, provides custom Quality Improvement System evaluation services, and leverages research findings to create products and services that (a) advance knowledge about youth settings and outcomes; (b) help out-of-school time organizations improve management practices, workforce skills and youth outcomes; and (c) influence national, state, and local youth policies.

The Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) study

The Weikart Center is currently completing a report of technical findings from its YPQI study, a multi-state research project funded by the W.T. Grant Foundation designed to raise the consistency of quality in youth-serving programs. The study, a randomized control trial sited in 100 programs in five states, examines the effects of a targeted intervention focused on managers and direct staff in out-of-school time (OST) organizations serving adolescents.

Our findings indicate that the YPQI has a significant, positive impact on the management practices of site supervisors and direct staff, defined as their 1) participation in program observation and self assessment, 2) participation in program planning; and 3) attendance at trainings focused on youth worker methods. The findings also show that the intervention has a significant, positive impact on the quality of instructional performances of staff, as they interact with youth in afterschool program offerings.

The **High Scope Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI)** is a three-year study designed to explore how setting quality can be improved in youth programs. The study is sited in 100 out-of-school time settings across five networks of providers in four states (with random assignment within each network). Elements of YPQI include: (1) quality assessment systems based on the High/Scope **Youth Program Quality Assessment**; (2) the High/Scope **Youth Work Methods** training modules; and (3) a set of organizational policies that bring youth and staff into quality-related decision-making processes. This study represents the first opportunity to test the elements of YPQI as part of a single comprehensive intervention that integrates system-level needs for quality accountability and opportunities for staff to be intentional about quality improvement. YPQI targets quality improvement within the **professional learning community** (Year 1) and at the **point of service** (Year 2), with an emphasis on sustainability (Year 3).

[Read more about the YPQI study findings here.](#) ^[1]

Research Services

Our research team provides several routine and custom services for clients, including:

- Standards development
- Customized assessment tool formation

- Data planning and collection
- Network program quality reports
- Process surveys
- Other services

For more details [click here](#) [2].

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