

Program Quality News

From the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

Program Quality News connects education and human service leaders with research, case studies, tools and training to improve the quality of youth programs.

FEATURE

Outcomes Measurement Framework Development

A new multi-city project is underway to determine youth outcomes in afterschool programs. The project is spearheaded by the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS), a coalition of leading afterschool intermediary organizations representing cities and regions across the country.



CBASS selected the American Institutes for Research and the Weikart Center to develop an outcome measurement framework, then use that framework to develop a multi-year research project to analyze youth, program and system-level outcomes in 13 communities, including Chicago, Baltimore, Nashville, Oakland, Palm Beach County, Providence and the Twin Cities.

REPORTS AND GUIDES

STEM Learning in Afterschool

A recent study has yielded consensus on three major outcomes for youth in afterschool STEM programs: youth develop interest in STEM, youth develop capacities to productively engage in STEM learning activities and youth come to value the goals of STEM. The report from the Afterschool



Alliance, [Defining Youth Outcomes for STEM Learning in Afterschool](#), also provides indicators and sub-indicators that support the outcomes. The Weikart Center's [STEM PQA](#) aligns to each of the outcomes in the report, as well as to the indicators of progress.

The study is part of a multi-year effort to help programs provide high-quality STEM activities and instruction for youth after school and in summer. That effort is being carried out by the Afterschool Alliance, the National Summer Learning Association and the National AfterSchool Association, with generous support from the Noyce Foundation.

Dropout Prevention Strategies for Middle School

Anyone who works with middle school youth will want to see [Keeping Kids on Track in the Middle School Years: Investing in Out-of-School Time Staff and Volunteer Competencies as a Dropout Prevention Strategy](#), a new



publication from The National Human Services Assembly. The brief explains why adults who serve middle schoolers in out-of-school time (OST) programs must have core competencies to be effective, then highlights three leading practices: training and development in working with this age group, aligning talent development with quality improvement, and investing in the competence of OST managers. The Youth Program Quality Intervention, developed by the Weikart Center, is among the models explained.

Expanding Minds and Opportunities: Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summer Learning for Student Success



This new book - authored by more than 100 researchers, educators, community leaders, policy makers, and practitioners - offers examples from across the country of how "non-school hours" are turning into "learning hours" for children and youth. A chapter by Nicole Yohalem of the Forum for Youth Investment and Bob Granger of the William T. Grant Foundation - Improving the Quality and Impact of Afterschool and Summer Programs - discusses the benefits of the Youth Program Quality Intervention. Click [here](#) to read that chapter and peruse others.

PRESENTATIONS

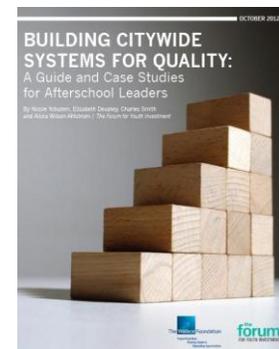
Climbing the Youth Program Quality Pyramid

Ravi Ramaswamy, the Weikart Center's training coordinator, talked to the National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth about how the Youth Program Quality Intervention gives staff the tools to improve young people's experience. Read the interview [here](#).



Better Together: Building Local Systems to Improve Afterschool

The Wallace Foundation - in collaboration with the Forum for Youth Investment, the American Youth Policy Forum, the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems and the National League of Cities - hosts a conference in Baltimore, Md., this week focused on building local systems to strengthen afterschool programming. *Better Together: Building Local Systems to Improve Afterschool*, will share a growing body of ideas, experiences and lessons from cities building local afterschool systems.



Among those facilitating plenary sessions and workshops are Charles Smith, executive director of the Weikart Center, and Joe Bertoletti, director of field services. One key resource will be a guide recently produced by the Forum in partnership with the Wallace Foundation: [Building Citywide Systems for Quality: A Guide and Case Studies for Afterschool Leaders](#) that describes stages of quality improvement systems exemplified in six in-depth case studies.

CALENDAR

Youth Work Management Training of Trainers

This Training of Trainers is targeted at managers and site leaders who wish to support their sites throughout the quality improvement cycle. The course consists of three weeks of distance learning, two days of live training, and one week of distance follow-up. Graduates of the Management TOT can facilitate Planning with Data and Quality Coaching workshops, as well as provide comprehensive logistical and professional development support to staff who are involved in the quality improvement cycle.



Pre-Requisites: Management TOT candidates must have successfully attended PQA Basics and Planning with Data. It is highly recommended, but not required, that candidates have successfully completed the External Assessor Reliability Training and the Quality Coaching workshop.

Where: St. Paul, Minn. April 4-5

[Find out more >>](#)

[Register now for St. Paul>>](#) Registration ends Feb. 22

Youth Work Methods Training of Trainers

Want to learn how to train your afterschool staff to increase the quality of their work? The Weikart Center is offering its Youth Work Methods Training of Trainers course. This session teaches staff how to deliver the Youth Work Methods courses, which empower direct staff with tools to increase the quality of their instruction which can lead to higher youth engagement.



Where: Chicago, Ill. April 17-19; Kansas City, Mo. April 30-May 2

[Register now for Chicago >>](#) Registration ends Feb. 25

[Register now for Kansas City>>](#)Registration ends March 8

The Ready by 21 National Meeting

This annual conference brings together hundreds of leaders from around the country who are working toward the same goal: Getting all young people ready by 21 for college, work and life. The National Meeting will include a variety of session types and formats, from keynote speakers and plenary panels to small group discussions and peer learning circles. You will be able to connect with other leaders from around the country, as well as from similar professions and sectors, to strengthen your networks, apply learning and create solutions.



Where: Atlanta, Ga., March 11-13

[Find out more >>](#)

[Register now >>](#)

What's Next? Series Webinar: From Quality to Outcomes

Afterschool providers have long believed that their programs make a difference in the lives of the young people they serve. Findings from recent research by the American Institutes for Research and the Weikart Center show that these beliefs are well-founded. Learn more about how a high dosage of quality programming leads to positive outcomes for youth, including outcomes that predict school success.

Tuesday, March 26, 1 p.m. ET

[Register now >>](#)

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Policy Setting | Policy enacts standards and supports |
| | Manager engages standards and supports |
| Organization Setting | Manager enacts continuous improvement practices |
| | Staff engages in continuous improvement practices |
| Point of Service Setting | Staff enacts instructional practices |
| | Young engage in instruction and build skills |

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The Forum for Youth Investment is the proud parent company of The Ready by 21 National Partnership, the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, the Children's Cabinet Network and SparkAction.org.



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