

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.

Features

Weikart Center Teams Up With Susan Crown Exchange to Find Best Practices for Social and Emotional Learning

We are pleased to announce that the Weikart Center will be the evaluation partner on the Susan Crown Exchange's Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Challenge. This open, national challenge seeks to explore and expand the capacities of afterschool programs skillfully promoting social and emotional competencies that equip youth for life success.

As the evaluators for this project, the Weikart Center will:

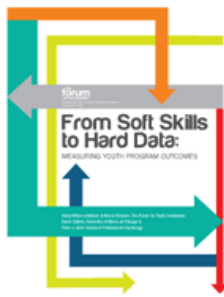
- draw stories of practice from exemplary programs;
- synthesize these practices in terms of a framework for building specific SEL skills developed from the field's leading-edge evidence base with major contributions by [Reed Larson](#);
- provide technical guidance for implementation of a program evaluation of these practices; and
- publish a *Guide for Building Social and Emotional Skills with Vulnerable Youth* that will inventory best practices anchored in case studies of exemplary programs, provide a program evaluation design that is feasible for program providers to implement, present a discussion of cross-site findings from program evaluations and provide a technical appendix of the results of the study.



Letters of inquiry were submitted in January. Requests for proposals will be released in March, and grantees will be announced in April.

[Learn more>>](#)

Reports and Guides



Data to Measure Youth Program Outcomes

Everyone who runs a youth program believes in their hearts that their program helps kids - but in their heads, they know they need data to prove it. This updated guide from the Forum for Youth Investment - From Soft Skills to Hard Data: Measuring Youth Program Outcomes - will help them get it.

From Soft Skills to Hard Data provides an overview of 10 measurement tools reviewed for their accessibility, ability to produce valid and reliable data and how measures previously reviewed have advanced since the last publication of the guide. The new foreword from Charles Smith and Nicole Yohalem offers reflections on how best to use data to produce useful information that guides action, which means considering your purpose of measuring youth outcomes, using theory-driven logic, designing an evaluation that has the power you need and facing the language challenge that exists in the field.

[Read more>>](#)

Presentations

Kansas City Embraces Expanded Learning

The United Way of Greater Kansas City invited Dr. Charles Smith, executive director, to speak with a group of nearly 70 municipal and education leaders and people connected to the out-of-school time field on Jan. 23 on the topic of building a regional collective impact strategy for expanded learning. In his presentation, Dr. Smith included new evaluation findings from Texas, Florida and Tennessee about effects of participation in high-quality afterschool programs on school success outcomes including attendance, behavior and achievement.



Program Quality Presentations at National Afterschool Association Conference

Two Weikart Center staff will be presenting at the National Afterschool Association Conference to be held in New York, N.Y., on Friday, Feb. 28 - Monday, March 3, 2014.

Dr. Charles Smith, executive director, will serve as a commentator on a plenary on professionalism in the afterschool field on Sunday, March 1, as well as lead a special session on evidence-based practices for social emotional learning in afterschool on Monday, March 3.

Ravi Ramaswamy will present a session titled *The Youth Program Quality Assessment and Intervention: Participatory Professional Development for Afterschool*. This workshop will introduce (a) the Youth Program Quality Assessment, a validated measure for high-quality, positive youth development practice, and (b) the Youth Program Quality Intervention, an evidence-based intervention that improves staff skills to deliver developmentally powerful



relationships and learning experiences in afterschool settings.

Calendar of Events

Collective Impact Expert to Speak at Ready by 21 Meeting

It's not often that we can offer you a chance to strengthen your work on behalf of young people and to save money while doing it. So it is with great pleasure that we share this news about the upcoming Ready by 21[®] National Meeting:



John Kania, who helped to launch the national discussion about "collective impact," will share his latest insights about the promise and challenge of implementing collective impact strategies. John is one of several prominent speakers who will join us to talk about efforts around the country to get all young people ready by 21 - for college, work and life.

To find out more about John's work see:

- [the first collective impact article](#) by John and his FSG colleague, Mark Kramer.
- their recent follow-up article, [Embracing Emergence: How Collective Impact Addresses Complexity](#)
- [brief highlights](#) of John's speech at the Ready by 21 National Meeting in 2011 (six minutes, divided by topic)

The National Meeting brings together hundreds of leaders like you who are working to improve the odds for young people through collective impact initiatives, policy alignment and program quality improvement.

We look forward to seeing you at the National Meeting in April!

Where & When: Northern Kentucky, April 22-24

[Learn more >>](#)

[Register now>>](#)

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. Graduates of the Management TOT can facilitate the Planning with Data and Quality Coaching workshops, as well as provide comprehensive logistical and professional development support to staff who are involved in the process. The course consists of three weeks of distance learning, two days of live training, and one week of distance follow-up.



Where & When: Oakland, Calif., April 24-25

[Register Now>>](#)



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 & When: Chicago, Ill., June; Atlanta, Ga., April
Registration opening soon.*

Opportunities

The YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago is Hiring

The YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago is looking for motivated, passionate professionals with expertise in 1) early education, 2) school age and teen development and 3) adult professional development designed for child development practitioners.

These positions would report to the Learning and Evaluation department, a newly developed office within the Association dedicated to integrating and elevating the quality of youth programming.



YMCA of Metro Chicago

[More information>>](#)

Reminder

The Weikart Center has moved!

Our new address is:
The David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality
301 W. Michigan Ave., Ste. 200
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Staff phone numbers and email addresses have remained the same.

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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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