

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

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Update

How do young people learn to thrive? This is the driving question behind SCE's Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Challenge, which aims to decode the art of teaching youth the skills for defining their path in life.

Since the project's launch in May, the SEL Challenge has brought together experts in youth programming, developmental science and performance measurement to explore how five SEL skill sets - emotion management, empathy/teamwork, responsibility, initiative/grit and problem solving - are best cultivated in youth. Together we've built a shared framework, demystified how youth learn social and emotional skills, and launched a performance data study.

During the last phase of the project, the Weikart Center-led research team will create several products: case narratives for each program, a technical report describing methods and findings, the set of standards and performance measures developed during the SEL Challenge, and a guide for promising practices in SEL.

[Read more >>](#)

Weikart Center Gives Thanks for Field Consultants

The field consultant team at the Weikart Center gathered in Ypsilanti, Mich., this month for a retreat where we connected, exchanged new ideas and made plans. Weikart Center relies on its team of talented field consultants to deliver training and technical assistance to YPQI networks across the country. This charismatic team has witnessed "aha moments" with instructional staff, program managers and network leads everywhere from Canada to Palm Beach County, Fla., and Maine to California. Thank you, field consultants!



Presentations

Bridge Conference 2014: Making Learning Personal

Charles Smith, executive director of the Weikart Center, gave two presentations at the Bridge Conference in October. The first was titled *Afterschool Quality Linked to School Success Outcomes* and introduced a model for how skills are developed in afterschool programs and how these skills might transfer to other settings. He then presented replicated findings that confirm the importance of program quality in



demonstrating school outcomes - and discussed why social and emotional skills are a likely unmeasured link in this chain. The second was titled *Building Social Emotional Skills in Afterschool: Early findings from SCE's SEL Challenge* and described a study of eight exemplary programs that build social emotional learning (SEL) skills in teens.

[See the slides here>>](#)

United Way & YPQI: Connecting Communities: Webinar #2



Do you work for United Way and lead (or hope to lead) a Quality Improvement System in your area? The Weikart Center recently hosted a second webinar with United Ways from across the country to learn about work that others are doing, tying quality to outcomes, integrating more data into the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) and YPQI 2.0 - the next community impact strategy.

[View a recording>>](#)

Michigan AfterSchool Association Keynote

The Michigan AfterSchool Association Fall Collaborative Conference was held this October for professionals, direct service staff, advocates and supporters of expanded learning opportunities in Michigan. Charles Smith, executive director of the Weikart Center, led the keynote address, *Integrating Innovation and Best Practice: The Message Matters for Afterschool Policy & Funding*. This presentation focused on emerging findings about afterschool impact on school success and how social and emotional skills are the missing link.

[See the slides here>>](#)

Youth-Nex Fourth Annual Conference: Let's Talk After-School

Youth-Nex held its fourth annual conference, Let's Talk After-School on Oct. 16-17, about after school contexts for children and adolescents. Charles Smith, executive director of the Weikart Center, joined scholars, practitioners, educators, policymakers and youth at the University of Virginia to discuss various aspects of afterschool programming.

[Read more here>>](#)

Reports and Guides

Using Brain Science in Youth Programs

The Kristin Anderson Moore Annual Lecture is an opportunity for Child Trends to raise an important issue related to children's well-being and to encourage thoughtful public discussion of that issue. This year's lecture, held earlier this month, presented research on the developing brain and how programs can use this in their work with children and youth. Presenters spoke about the importance of environment to changing the structure of the brain, especially to repair after physically or emotionally traumatic experiences.



[View the recording here>>](#)

Calendar of Events



Webinar: Summer Learning PQI

TODAY

Want to bring your quality work into the summer? The Weikart Center has been working with the National Summer Learning Association to bring everything you love about the YPQI into a format that is made for summer programs. This webinar will introduce you to the Summer Learning Program Quality Intervention (Summer Learning PQI). The Summer Learning PQI is meant to support summer programs in data collection and quality improvement processes that can connect to larger, year-long efforts. On the webinar, we'll look at the Summer Learning PQA and the training supports that are a part of the process.

When: Nov. 24, 1 p.m. ET

[Register now>>](#)

Ready by 21 National Meeting 2015

New Orleans is known for many things: Music. Food. Culture. Architecture.

And you'll get to experience them all at the fourth annual [Ready by 21 National Meeting](#).

Join hundreds of other leaders on March 31 - April 2 to share research, strategies and stories about efforts to improve the lives of kids in communities and states across the nation.



View the recently released [Meeting At-a-Glance](#) and [register today](#) for big early bird savings.

Additionally, Ready by 21 is encouraging both past and active clients/partners of the Forum for Youth Investment and its divisions (including the Weikart Center) to apply to present a workshop. [Find out more](#). (Deadline is Dec. 5.)

Webinar: Scaling and Sustaining Quality Improvement Systems

What strategies can a network use to take the quality improvement system to scale? What are some lessons networks have learned in transitioning from a small pilot to a large scale intervention? How can a system build partnerships to sustain quality work in the long term? Join this webinar to hear from networks that have scaled up their quality improvement work, and to share goals and strategies for going to scale and maintaining long term sustainability.

When: Dec. 9, 2 p.m. ET

[Register now>>](#)

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