Afterschool Program Quality: What States are Doing to Drive Quality Forward
Tuesday, May 22, 2018
3:00 PM ET/ 2:00 PM CT/ 1:00 PM MT/ Noon PT
Questions and Resources

Enter questions in the chat box at any time during the webinar

View resources in the media library
LANDSCAPE OF QUALITY

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM QUALITY: WHAT STATES ARE DOING TO DRIVE QUALITY FORWARD

Jaime Singer, Senior Technical Assistance Consultant
AIR’s mission is to conduct and apply the best behavioral and social science research and evaluation towards improving people's lives, with a special emphasis on the disadvantaged.
Quality Afterschool Programming

• Organization-level quality (“behind the scenes”)

• Program-level quality

Quality is important!
Landscape of Quality

• Collected information from networks about:
  – Quality Standards
  – Assessment Tools
  – Core Knowledge and Competencies
  – Credentialing Systems
  – Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)
Landscape of Quality—Quality Standards
Landscape of Quality—Assessment Tools
Landscape of Quality—Core Knowledge and Competencies
Landscape of Quality—Credentialing Systems

[Map showing the states with different colors indicating availability, in process, or not available.]

- Green = Available
- Yellow = In Process
- Red = Not Available
Landscape of Quality—Quality Rating and Improvement Systems
Landscape of Quality

Now What?
Landscape of Quality—State Profiles and Quality Cards

State Profiles

Quality Cards
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THANK YOU
Evidence-Based Afterschool Program Quality in Utah

Study Conducted in Partnership with
Study Goals

• Build on the utility of Utah Afterschool Network’s (UAN) Quality Assessment Tool (QT)
• Expand current UAN and state infrastructure to support high quality afterschool programming
• Build capacity for improving program quality
Afterschool program quality is the presence and robustness of specific program features that are implemented intentionally to maximize specific youth outcomes.
Development of the Quality Improvement Model

• A list of high quality program features is necessary, but not sufficient.
  (Hirsch, Mekinda, & Stawicki, 2010; Mahoney, Parente, & Lord, 2007; Oh, Osgood, & Smith, 2015).

• The point of service between program staff and students is a key leverage point for maximizing program quality.
  (Oh, Osgood, & Smith, 2015; Smith, Peck, Denault, Blazevski, & Akiva, 2010; Vance, 2010)

• Intentional program design and implementation is critical.
  (Cross, Gottfredson, Wilson, Rorie, & Connell, 2010 Hirsch, Mekinda, & Stawicki, 2010).
Continuous Improvement Cycle

- **September - October**
  - Collect data, conduct observations, and review findings
  - Plan and implement improvement strategies

- **Evidence-based Implementation 1**

- **October - December**
  - Conduct observations and review findings
  - Plan and implement improvement strategies

- **Evidence-based Implementation 2**

- **January - May**
  - Conduct observations and review findings
  - Implement improvement strategies
  - Collect outcomes data

- **Evidence-based Implementation 3**
Quality Study: Methods

- Research-practice partnership
- Design-based research
- Data Collection
  - Implementation Logs
  - Focus Groups
  - Staff Surveys
  - Observations

Data Analysis: Mixed methods
- Qualitative: constant comparative and cross-case
- Quantitative: descriptive
# Staff Understandings of Program Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Survey Items about Program Quality</th>
<th>Traditional TA Sites</th>
<th>QI Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the specific quality improvement goals of this afterschool program.</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk with other staff members about how to achieve our quality improvement goals.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have received training that explained how we hope to achieve our program quality goals.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand my role in helping to achieve our program quality goals.</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.15</td>
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Staff Understanding of Program Quality

- Staff members’ understanding of program quality varied.
- To implement high quality programs, staff members focused on:
  - building and maintaining relationships and
  - offering diverse activities.

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Staff Perceptions of Intentional Programming

- There was evidence of staff wanting to achieve specific outcomes, but little evidence of systematic intentional programming.
- Staff members emphasized the importance of student engagement.
## Staff Behaviors

### Staff and Youth Relationships Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators: Staff and youth know, respect, and support each other</th>
<th>Traditional TA Sites</th>
<th>QI Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Obs</td>
<td>Dif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff promote a respectful and welcoming environment for all youth.</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff facilitate and participate in all program activities with youth.</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff promote and demonstrate respect for all cultural backgrounds and ability levels.</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff respect, listen, and appropriately respond to the needs and feelings of youth.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff model and facilitate positive interactions to promote healthy relationships.</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff communicate with each other during program hours about youth and program needs as they arise.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff encourage and guide youth to resolve their own conflicts.</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Youth Outcomes

At least 15 studies have reported positive relationships among program quality features and youth outcomes:

➢ Academic
➢ Social-emotional
➢ Engagement
Implications for Practice: Working with Staff Teams

• Provide multiple opportunities for staff to understand and know program goals.
• Engage staff in the program planning and improvement process.
• Provide training and support for staff to achieve goals.
Implications for Practice: Working with Staff Teams

- Ensure youth are engaged.
- Emphasize building relationships (e.g., staff-student and student-student) and creating inclusive environments.
Implications for Practice: Program Structure

• Be intentional about identifying outcomes; have a theory of change.
• Align program practices with desired outcomes.
• Use multiple sources of evidence for program improvement, including Quality Tool
Implications for Practice: Using the Quality Improvement Model

• Use the QIM as a systems approach to comprehensive program quality improvement.
• Utilize three 90-day improvement cycles that are driven by multiple sources of evidence.
• The QIM was designed for site coordinators to use in conjunction with technical assistance.
UAN Quality Improvement Model

Quality Improvement Resources
- Quality Tool Data
- Program Data (staff surveys, observations, participation records, etc.)
- Needs Assessment Data
- Youth Outcomes Data
- UAN Website Resources
- Parent Organization and Grant Goals and Objectives

Data Driven Improvement Cycle
- 90 Day Improvement Plans
- OST Technical Assistance
- Professional Learning
- Regular Administrator Support

Staff Outcomes
- Increase in staff understanding of quality program standards
- Increase in staff implementing the program in a high quality way (e.g. aligned with QT standards)
- Increase in staff members' understanding of program goals, intentional programming, and youth outcomes
- Increase in staff facilitating activities aligned with program goals and intended youth outcomes

Youth Engagement

Youth Outcomes
- Academic Success
- Improved Non-cognitive Skills
- Improved Health and Well-being
- Increased Protective Factors and Decreased Risk Factors
- Increased Pro-social Relationships

Program implements intentional practices to achieve specific youth outcomes
Questions?
Contact
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