

# Guiding Principles for Quality Afterschool Programs



A focus on healthy preteen development and preteen programming



# Serving Preteens in Afterschool Programs

- Quality programs can lead to positive developmental outcomes for youth, such as improved academic achievement and emotional and behavioral health
- Preteens (10-12) go through incredible changes during these years
- Gain independence: increased unsupervised time, decreased parent involvement

# Serving Preteens in Afterschool Programs

- 3-6pm peak hours for youth to engage in risky behavior
- Afterschool programs can be one part of a healthy support system
- Need to provide safe and engaging activities
- Programs must be able to attract and retain youth

# Guiding Principles

- These principles have documented associations with positive emotional and behavioral health outcomes for participants
- Can be implemented at a program level
- Generally applicable to elementary and middle school children

# Guiding Principles

- Focused and Intentional Strategy
- Exposure
- Supportive Relationships
- Family Engagement
- Cultural Competence
- Continuous Program Improvement

# **1 Focused and Intentional Strategy:**

Programs have a clear set of goals, target specific skills and deliberately plan all aspects of the program with a youth development framework in mind.

## **2 Exposure (duration, intensity and breadth):**

Programs are designed to:

- a) provide preteens with a sufficient number of hours per week over an extended period of time to achieve program outcome goals; and
- b) allow preteens to attend a variety of activities.

## **3 Supportive Relationships:**

Programs emphasize positive adult-youth relationships regardless of the curriculum.

## **4 Family Engagement:**

Programs strive to include families through various strategies, such as clear communication and a welcoming environment.

## **5 Cultural Competence:**

Programs have diverse staff whose backgrounds are reflective of participants and who create practices and policies that:

- a) make services available to (and inclusive of) a variety of populations; and
- b) help participants understand and value a broad range of cultures.

## **6 Continuous Program Improvement:**

Programs strengthen quality through an ongoing and integrated process of targeted staff training, coaching and monitoring, and data collection and analysis.

# Professional Development

Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Mini goals	Check ins	Presentations

# Focused and Intentional Strategy

- Programs have a clear set of goals, target specific skills and deliberately plan all aspects of the program with a youth development framework in mind



# Exposure

- Duration, Intensity, and Breadth
- Programs are designed to provide preteens with a sufficient number of hours per week over an extended period of time to achieve program outcome goals, and allow preteens to attend a variety of programs

# Supportive Relationships

- Programs emphasize positive adult-youth relationship regardless of the curriculum

# Family Engagement

- Programs strive to include families through various strategies, such as clear communication and a welcoming environment

# Cultural Competence

- Programs have a diverse staff whose backgrounds are reflective of participants backgrounds and who create practices and policies that make services available to (and inclusive of) a variety of populations, and help participants understand and value a broad range of cultures

# Continuous Program Improvement

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# American Indian Math Project

