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RESEARCH-TO-POLICY
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THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE IN AFTER-SCHOOL SETTINGS

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The Research-to-Policy Connections series summarizes current research on key topics in child care and early education and discusses implications for policymakers. This brief identifies current measures of quality in school-age settings as well as highlights indicators linked to high-quality after-school programs and positive child outcomes.

For more information on school-age care see the Research-to-Policy Connections brief on *School-Age Care Arrangements* that defines and examines a range of school-age care arrangements, including: parental, relative, nonrelative, center- or school-based, sports and other activities, and self-care.

Overview

Emerging research indicates that regular attendance in quality after-school programs can yield a range of positive developmental outcomes for school-age children, but many after-school programs struggle with understanding and improving the quality of their programs. While only a handful of developmental research and program evaluations have rigorously tested the relations between after-school program quality and child outcomes, there are dozens of program quality assessment tools to help after-school programs improve the quality of their programs. Most of the research on quality of school-age care settings, as well as most of the federal investments in school-age quality improvements, have been confined to school-based and center-based care. Thus this brief will discuss care in those settings.¹

This brief identifies the features of high-quality after-school settings that have emerged from the research and are reflected in program quality tools. It also examines key research linking program quality to positive developmental outcomes; it reviews current practice in program quality assessment; and it offers considerations for policymakers regarding future school-age care decisions in order to promote high-quality programs. Finally, it includes a listing of program quality assessment tools.

Examples of some of the critical features emerging include: (1) appropriate supervision and program structure; an environment that fosters positive youth-adult relationships; (2) programming with opportunities for autonomy and choice; and (3) good relationships among the various settings in which program participants spend their day—schools, after-school programs, and families. Moving forward, these emerging critical features should help shape future programming and professional development efforts and investments, as well as the development of appropriate program quality assessment tools.

Why are High Quality After-School Programs Important?

There is growing recognition that participation in high-quality after-school programs can complement in-school learning and development. Regular attendance in high-quality after-school programs is associated with a range of positive developmental outcomes including: improved academic performance, task persistence, improved work habits and study skills, and improved feelings and attitudes.²

Moreover, the numbers of children between the ages of 5 and 18 years of age participating in after-school programs is growing, and the need is rising. In 2003, polling data indicated that approximately 6.5 million children participated in after-school programs, but an additional 15.3 million would participate if a program were available.³

Federal investments in after-school programs are at an all-time high. A range of funding streams, including the Child Care and Development Fund, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, and Workforce Development funds, as well as more targeted funds, such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants, are being used to support the development and implementation of a diverse set of after-school programs serving a diverse population of youth.

Finally, recent research identifies a phenomenon called “parental after-school stress” (PASS, the degree to which parents are worried about the well-being of their children during the after-school hours) that affects the psychological well-being of a large proportion of the workforce, with PASS positively correlated with unsupervised after-school arrangements.⁴

The growing public awareness that after-school program participation can benefit all youth in their communities, as well as relieve parental concerns about safety, coupled with the increasing realization that schools alone are insufficient to close our nation’s achievement gaps, shines the spotlight on after-school as a place to support and complement learning and development.⁵ However, many programs struggle with understanding and improving the quality of their programs, and a growing body of evidence suggests that participation alone is insufficient to yield positive results.⁶

In fact, program quality is a key determinant of getting youth in the door and sufficiently engaged in order to reap the maximum benefits of participation.⁷ Increasingly, evaluators are trying to tease out the key features of program quality that contribute to program outcomes. Understanding low quality as a potential barrier to participation in programs and the powerful influence that high quality has on determining good outcomes for youth who do participate, the time is ripe to better understand the challenges of developing and implementing high quality after-school programs.

How is Quality Defined in School-Age Care Programs?

Overall, the only school-age care settings in which program quality has been studied are the set of programs that loosely fall under the rubric of after-school programs. These settings include: center-based, school-based, and other formal before- and after-school arrangements for children, as well as summer programming.

Three inter-related literatures have informed current definitions of after-school program quality, including how program quality is assessed: the school-age care literature; the youth development literature; and the literature on quality in educational settings.⁸ Together, they converge on a set of program quality indicators. (See Box 1.)

From these three literatures, as from the infant and toddler care literature,⁹ two primary categories of program quality features emerge: structural and process.

- ▶ *Structural* features include: (1) child-to-staff ratios and group sizes; program management; (2) staff qualifications, educational level, and training, and (3) length of time in service. In part, the indicators of these features have been informed by in-school classroom practices.
- ▶ *Process* features examine aspects of the program that directly affect a participant’s experiences, such as youth-adult relationships and interactions, variety in program offerings, availability of activities that promote sustained cognitive engagement, opportunities for autonomy and choice, and the organizational supports necessary to promote effective staff practices. Indicators for these features have been informed by recent research and evaluation in after-school and youth development settings.

Within the realm of after-school, there is growing consensus about the features of positive developmental settings for youth, which are in alignment with the eight features identified by a national Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth.¹⁰ Increasingly, program quality assessment tools are incorporating these concepts into their measures:

- ▶ Physical and psychological **safety**
- ▶ Appropriate **structure**
- ▶ Supportive **relationships**
- ▶ Opportunities for meaningful **youth involvement**
- ▶ Positive social **norms**
- ▶ **Learning-oriented**, with skill-building activities
- ▶ Balance of **autonomy and structure**
- ▶ **Connections** with school, home, and community

These eight features serve as a springboard for current research that examines the link between specific aspects of program quality and youth outcomes and are in concert with many other syntheses of program quality features.¹¹

Box 1. Indicators of Quality After-School Care Programs

Note: Italics indicate strong support in the research literature.

Staff Management Practices

Hiring and retaining educated staff
 Providing attractive compensation
 Training staff

Program Management Practices

Ensuring that programming is flexible
Establishing and maintaining a favorable emotional climate
 Establishing clear goals and evaluating programs accordingly
 Having a mix of younger and older children
 Keeping total enrollment low
 Maintaining a low child-to-staff ratio
 Maintaining continuity and complementarity with regular day school
 Paying adequate attention to safety and health
Providing a sufficient variety of activities
 Providing adequate space
 Providing age-appropriate activities and materials
 Providing enough quality materials

Communications with Other Organizations

Involving families
 Using community-based organizations and facilities
 Using volunteers

Source: Bodilly, S. & Beckett, M. (2005). *Making out-of-school time matter: Evidence for an action agenda*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

What Does Developmental Research and Evaluation Say About the Impact of Program Quality on Outcomes?

Research on after-school program quality is largely descriptive with only a handful of rigorously designed studies. Evidence regarding the characteristics of program quality is largely dependent on correlational¹² studies and expert opinion. However, a small but powerful set of studies provides an emerging picture of some of the key elements of after-school program quality and how they affect a range of developmental outcomes. There is no single research study that examines the full range of quality features and their links to outcomes.

Box 2. Program Quality and Youth Outcomes

Research cited in this brief demonstrates that program quality can impact the following youth outcomes:

- ▶ Feelings and attitudes
- ▶ Behavioral adjustment
- ▶ Academic and school performance
- ▶ Misconduct
- ▶ Task persistence
- ▶ Work habits
- ▶ Peer relations
- ▶ Long-term developmental trajectory

A meta-analysis¹³ of findings from 73 after-school program evaluations reveals that youth of a variety of ages who participated in programs that used intentional, evidence-based skills training approaches (defined as those that are sequenced, active, focused, and explicit) to promote personal and social skills improved significantly in three outcomes areas—feelings and attitudes, indicators of behavioral adjustment, and school performance—compared to youth who were not exposed to these approaches.¹⁴

As part of a large quasi-experimental¹⁵ study of 19 elementary and 16 middle-school after-school programs located in 14 cities and eight states, researchers examined the extent to which participation in structured after-school activities affected outcomes. They found that in comparison to a low-supervised group, school-age children who frequently attended high-quality after-school programs¹⁶ displayed better work habits, task persistence, social skills, prosocial behaviors, and academic performance, and less aggressive behavior at the end of the school year.¹⁷

A recent case study of two inner-city elementary after-school programs, one assessed to be “high-quality” and one determined to be “low-quality,” aimed to identify the conditions under which an after-school program can support (or inhibit) child development. *The study reaffirmed that key program features—quality of staff-child interactions; continuity of program activities; opportunities for choice; and staff characteristics such as commitment, training, and background—were positively related to child functioning.* In particular, researchers observed an

improvement in peer relations among participants of the high-quality program and a decline in the quality of peer relations among those participating in the low-quality program.¹⁸

A quasi-experimental external evaluation of 96 of the After-school Corporation of New York (TASC) elementary and middle-school after-school programs found that one of the program features associated with greatest gains in school achievement for TASC participants was that the project site coordinator had a license to teach.¹⁹ In a follow-up to this study, evaluators reanalyzed student performance data collected during the multiyear evaluation of the TASC initiative to identify “high-performing” projects where the TASC after-school program was especially likely to have contributed to improvements in students’ academic achievement. High-performing sites share five common features:

- ▶ A broad array of enriching activities.
- ▶ A variety of experiences that promoted skill-building and mastery.
- ▶ A focus on intentional relationship-building.
- ▶ Utilization of strong managers, differentiated staffing, and supports for line staff.
- ▶ Support from partner organizations.

Staff and youth surveys and observations were recently conducted at five of Philadelphia’s Beacon Centers (school-based community centers that include a range of after-school opportunities) to understand three questions: (1) What conditions lead youth to want to attend an activity? (2) What aspects of an after-school activity lead youth to be highly engaged? (3) What conditions lead youngsters to feel that they have learned in an activity?

Based on the responses of 402 youth surveys, 45 staff surveys, and 50 activity observations, two staff practices emerge as critical to youth engagement: effective group management to ensure that youth feel respected by both the adults and the other youth and positive support for youth and their learning process.²⁰

Using two large datasets, researchers examined the relationship between critical youth supports and long-term outcomes. They found that *youth with high-quality supportive relationships early in high school are twice as likely as the average youth to have optimal developmental outcomes at the end of high school*. Further, youth with unsupportive relationships in their early teens are 94 percent more likely to have poor developmental outcomes at the end of high school. This suggests that there are “tipping points” for some critical elements of program quality.²¹

Program quality is both shaped by, and a reflection of, regular program attendance. *Consistent attendance can help programs develop continuity in staffing and program offerings*. This continuity can lead to increased, sustained engagement on the part of program participants. For example, the San Francisco Beacons evaluation reports that the number of supportive adults is the single most significant predictor of sustained participation for middle-school age youth.²²

What is the Current State of Quality Assessment in After-School Programs?

In fall 2005, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) conducted a national scan of program quality assessment tools. (See Appendix 1 of this brief for a list the 44 tools included in the scan.) The scan revealed that the diversity of programming in the nonschool hours is mirrored by the wide variability in how quality is measured in after-school programs.

The tools reviewed by HFRP revealed 12 different categories of standards and over 3,000 indicators to measure those standards. The 12 categories are:

- ▶ Assessment, evaluation, and accountability
- ▶ Equity and diversity
- ▶ Family, school, and community linkages
- ▶ Fiscal management and sustainability
- ▶ Organizational capacity
- ▶ Physical space and the environment
- ▶ Program administration and management
- ▶ Program planning, activities, and structure
- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Safety, health, and nutrition
- ▶ Staffing and supervision
- ▶ Utilizing a youth development approach

Box 3. Definitions of Quality

A **program quality standard** describes the conditions of quality for the program, its participants, and all stakeholders.

A **program quality indicator** is a specific measure that quantifies the attainment of quality standards.

For example, a program quality standard is: program activities purposely complement school-day classroom instruction, improving children's ability to meet learning standards.

Indicators of this standard are:

- ▶ Children and youth can select from a variety of activities that are aligned with curricular standards.
- ▶ The program staff intentionally integrates opportunities that support and enrich classroom-based instruction.
- ▶ Students have the opportunity to integrate and apply in-school concepts in the after-school program.

Accreditation is a process to assure consumers that services meet a professionally recognized level of quality.

Many after-school programs do not use any form of quality assessment measures. The National AfterSchool Association's (NAA, formerly the National School-Age Care Association) Standards for Quality School-Age Care, often serves as the basis on which communities develop their own standards, but more often than not, programs report that they do not use any form of quality assessment.

There is wide variation in the categories of standards that programs adopt. As the field has grown, so has the comprehensiveness of the tools, with early assessments having fewer sets of standards than later assessment tools. For example, early standards documents tend to nest standards related to evaluation within a general category of program planning and management. Later tools, such as the *New York State After-School Network* tool have a separate section on "Outcomes and Evaluation."²³ Similarly, standards related to engaging families in after-school programs are nested within a category called "Human Relationships" in the NAA's Standards for School-Age Quality Care.²⁴ Several years after the creation of that tool, and with a greater recognition of the critical role of families in young people's learning and development, many newer standards documents have an entire category of standards related to family-program linkages.

Most program quality tools were developed for the purpose of self-assessment and program improvement, with some having their roots in accreditation or licensing, and the use of some being tied to funding. Very few after-school program quality assessment tools currently being used have been developed using a research process.

Most after school program quality assessment tools were developed to span programming across the elementary, middle, and high school years. The format of quality assessment tools varies widely from checklists, to true/false, to rating scales with specific descriptors. Alignment of state quality rating systems, child care licensing requirements, and local program quality assessments is underway in a few states, but overall, there is little coordination across these three systems for monitoring program quality.²⁵ (For a list of related resources on assessing and improving quality in school-age care settings, see Appendix 2.)

Considerations for Policymakers

The current state of research on program quality in school-age settings has a number of implications for policymakers concerning program standards.

- ▶ **There is a baseline set of quality standards to which all after-school programs should adhere. However, for program quality to impact child outcomes, programs must be intentional about a broader set of standards.** Given the emerging research on after-school program quality and its relationship to outcomes, it is clear that in addition to ensuring adequate physical and psychological safety and effective management practices, high-quality after-school programs also share the following features: appropriate supervision and structure; an environment that fosters positive youth-adult relationships; intentional programming with opportunities for autonomy and choice; and good relationships among the various settings in which program participants spend their day—schools, after-school programs,

and families. These emerging critical features should help shape future programming and professional development efforts and investments, as well as the development of appropriate program quality assessment tools.

- ▶ **Consider the local context of the program.** Given the diverse nature of the after-school arena, there is no one-size-fits-all tool for assessing program quality. When making recommendations about program quality, local programs must be given the flexibility to respond to specific community needs and adapt tools to their own contexts, while adhering to the baselines described above. Further, the process of adapting quality standards to fit local needs is, in itself, a useful practice to build consensus on the key features of quality in particular communities.
- ▶ **Program quality does not happen overnight.** While programs need to open their doors with a baseline set of quality features, such as adequate supervision and adherence to safety regulations, it takes time to develop adherence to a more comprehensive set of quality features. New and existing programs can use quality assessment tools to engage program stakeholders in a “diagnosis” of where the program needs to improve; to set priorities for what aspects of quality to tackle when; and to develop quality improvement plans based on stakeholder input. Decision makers need to give programs time to mature with regard to program quality, and accountability mechanisms need to take the evolution of program quality into account when establishing benchmarks.
- ▶ **Agencies taking leadership roles in the after-school field need to adopt and advocate for the widespread use of quality standards.** In addition to program improvement, quality assessment has become a significant accountability practice and often helps after-school programs sustain funding and/or licensure. Yet, there are a number of after-school staff, administrators, researchers, funders, and evaluators that are not familiar with any quality assessment tools. Future funding of after-school programs needs to be aligned with program quality efforts to ensure that investments are reaping the largest returns possible.
- ▶ **Policymakers need to insure greater alignment between licensing, quality rating systems (QRS), and program quality assessment.** Currently, many programs are struggling with trying to serve many quality taskmasters. Statewide quality improvement efforts need to facilitate a streamlined quality improvement process to ease the burden on local programs and get common and consistent data to feed into statewide quality improvement efforts.
- ▶ **Linkage to schools and families has emerged as a key feature of program quality.** Research is now demonstrating the power of linking multiple nonschool supports with schools to move the needle on a range of developmental outcomes,²⁶ and a number of recently developed quality assessment tools include standards related to building these connections.²⁷ Quality improvement efforts should include outreach to schools and families to better align these critical supports with after-school programs.
- ▶ **Conduct research on quality in other school-age settings, including parental and nonparental care, nonrelative care, and sports.** Public investments continue to target a range of school-age care settings beyond after-school programs. For example, of the school-aged children (ages 5 to 12) served by the Child Care and Development Fund, 48 percent are in noncenter-based care. Therefore, greater attention should be paid to the quality of these

settings as well as center-based before, after, and summer school settings. Researchers should ask: Are there basic minimum requirements of quality that should transcend all child care settings? Do these cut across the developmental age span as well, so that there is a core set of program quality features that is consistent from birth through adolescence?

- ▶ **Invest in research to identify program features likely to impact specific outcomes, and better disseminate research-based practices to promote program quality.** Finally, there is a need to invest in and conduct research to test and identify the program features that are most likely to impact specific outcomes, coupled with the need for more and better dissemination of the research-based practices that promote program quality.

Endnotes

1. The definition of school-age care used in this brief includes center-based, school-based, and other formal before-school, after-school, and summertime arrangements for children ages 5-12. The brief also draws on research from older-age youth to inform quality for this age group. The definition does not include parental, relative, nonrelative, or self care, or sports and other activities. The author will refer to the subset of school-age care settings under review as after-school.
2. Vandell, D., Reisner, E., Brown, B., Daddsman, K., & Lee, D., et al. (2005). *The study of promising after-school programs: Examination of intermediate outcomes in year 2*. Madison: Wisconsin Center for Education Research. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccrca8077>
- Durlak, J. & Weissberg, R. (2007). *The impact of afterschool programs that seek to promote personal and social skills*. Chicago: Collaborative for the Advancement of Social and Emotional Learning. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccrca11838>
3. Afterschool Alliance. (2003). *America after 3pm: A household survey on afterschool in America*. Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccrca3769>
4. Barnett, R. C. & Gareis, K. C. (2006). Parental after-school stress and psychological well-being. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 68, p. 101-108.
5. See, for example, Harvard Family Research Project. (2006). Building and evaluating out-of-school time connections. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 12(1-2), pp. 1-40. <www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/eval/issue33/fall2006.pdf>
6. Weiss, H., Little, P., & Bouffard, S. (2005). *Participation in youth programs: Enrollment, attendance, and engagement* (New Directions in Youth Development No. 105). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
7. Ibid.
8. Bodilly, S. & Beckett, M. (2005). *Making out-of-school time matter: Evidence for an action agenda*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
9. Kreader, L., Ferguson, D., & Lawrence, S. (2005). *Infant and toddler child care quality* (Research to Policy Connections No. 2). New York: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccrca6872>
10. In 1999, the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine convened the Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Their two-year effort culminated in: Eccles, J., & Gootman, J. A. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
11. Examples include RAND's 2001 review of the features that are associated with high-quality programming. See Bodilly & Beckett in Endnote 8.
12. Correlation is the degree to which two variables are associated. Variables are positively correlated if they both tend to increase at the same time. Variables are negatively correlated if as one increases the other decreases. For

further definition and a complete glossary of research terms see *Child Care and Early Education Research Connections Research Glossary*, on the web at: <www.researchconnections.org/servlet/DiscoverResourceController?displayPage=resources\researchglossary.jsp#M>.

13. Meta-Analysis is a statistical technique that combines and analyzes data across multiple studies on a topic.

14. See Durlak & Weissberg in Endnote 2.

15. Quasi-Experimental Research: research in which individuals cannot be assigned randomly to two groups, but some environmental factor influences who belongs to each group. For further definition see *Child Care and Early Education Research Connections Research Glossary*, on the web at: <www.researchconnections.org/servlet/DiscoverResourceController?displayPage=resources\researchglossary.jsp#M>.

16. Programs were rated using the Promising Practices Rating Scale that assesses eight processes: (1) supportive relations with adults; (2) supportive relations with peers; (3) student engagement in activities; (4) opportunities for cognitive growth; (5) mastery orientation; (6) appropriate program structure; (7) setting chaos; and (8) staff overcontrol.

17. Vandell, D., Pierce, K., Brown, B., Lee, D., Bolt, D., et al. (2006). *Developmental outcomes associated with the afterschool contexts of low-income children and adolescents*. Paper presented at the Society for Research on Adolescence Annual Meeting, March 23-26.

18. Vandell, D. L., Shumow, L., & Posner, J. (2004). After-school programs for low-income children: Differences in program quality. In J. Mahoney, J. Eccles, & R. Larson, (Eds.), *Organized Activities as Contexts for Development: Extracurricular Activities, After-School, and Community Programs*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

19. See Reisner, E. R., White, R. N., Russell, C. A., & Birmingham, J. (2004). *Building quality, scale, and effectiveness in after-school programs: Summary report of the TASC evaluation*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc. Prepared for the After School Corporation. <www.policystudies.com/studies/youth/TASC%20Summary%20Report%20Final.pdf>

20. Grossman, J., Campbell, M. & Raley, B. (2007). *Quality time afterschool: What instructors can do to enhance learning*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.

21. Gambone, M., Klem, A., & Connell, J. (2003). *Finding out what matters for youth: Testing key links in a community action framework for youth development*. Philadelphia: Youth Development Strategies, Inc. and Institute for Research and Reform in Education

22. Walker, K. E., & Arbreton, A. J. A. (2004). *After-school pursuits: An examination of outcomes in the San Francisco Beacon Initiative*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccrca3298>

23. Available at: <www.tascorp.org/programs/building>.

24. See Birmingham, J., Pechman, E. M., Russell, C. A., & Mielke, M. (2005). *Shared features of high-performing after-school programs: A follow-up to the TASC evaluation*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, prepared for The After-School Corporation and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. <www.policystudies.com/studies/youth/Revisiting%20Quality%20Report.pdf>

25. For more information on licensing for school-age care programs see: The Finance Project. (2006). *Promoting quality in afterschool programs through state child care regulations*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccrca11434>

26. See Harvard Family Research Project in endnote 5.

27. Westmoreland, H. (2006). Using quality assessment tools to evaluate OST linkages. In Building and evaluating out-of-school time connections. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 12(1-2), pp. 24-26. <www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/eval/issue33/fall2006.pdf>

Appendix 1: Quality Assessment Standards Reviewed

For information on how to obtain these tools, please visit the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) web site at: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/projects/afterschool/conference/summit-2005-breakdown.pdf>

Assessment Tool	Tool Developer
Accountability for After-School Care	RAND (Megan Beckett, Angela Hawken, and Alison Jackowitz)
Accreditation Standards for Camp Programs and Services	American Camping Association
Achieve Boston's Competency Framework	Achieve Boston
Assessing After-school Program Practices Tool Program Questionnaire (APT-Q)	National Institute on Out of School Time and the Massachusetts Department of Education
Assessing School-Age Quality (ASQ)	National Institute on Out-of-School
Assessment of Afterschool Program Practices Tool	Massachusetts After-School Research Study
Beacons Activity Observation Tools	Public/Private Ventures
Chicago Youth Program Standards	Chicago Youth Program and MOST
Community-Based and Alternative Education Program Self-Assessment	National Youth Employment Coalition
Continuous Improvement Process Quality Rubric for Afterschool Programs	National Community Education Association
Core Standards for Philadelphia's Youth	Core Standards for Philadelphia's Youth (Roberta Newman and Diane Barber)
DC Standards for Out-of-School Time	DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation
Desired Results for Children and Families Programmatic Standards	California Department of Education
Established Standards of Excellence Self-Assessment Tool: K-12	North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs
Exemplary Practices in Afterschool Program Development	Center for Collaborative Solutions and Community Network for Youth Development
Model Standards or Out-of-School Time Programs in Michigan	Michigan State Board of Education
Networks for Youth Development Assessment Manual	Fund for the City of New York
NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care	National School-Age Care Association
PlusTime NH Quality Instrument	PlusTime New Hampshire
Program and Activity Assessment Tool (PAAT)	University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension (Sheperd Zeldin)
Program Quality Self-Assessment for Continuous Improvement Planning	District of Columbia 21st Century Community Learning Centers
Program Quality Self-Assessment Tool	New York State After-School Network and The After-School Corporation
Programs for Preteens: Benchmarks of Success	Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health
Promising Practices Rating System (PPRS)	Study of Promising After-School Practices at the Wisconsin Center for After-School Research

Quality Assessment Standards Reviewed (cont.)

Assessment Tool	Tool Developer
Quality Assurance System (QAS)	Foundations, Inc.
Quality Review for the Beyond the Bell Partnerships	Los Angeles Unified School District, Beyond the Bell Branch
Quality Standards	Providence After School Alliance
Quality Standards for Non-School-Hour Programs for the St. Louis Metropolitan Area	St. Louis 4 Kids and St. Louis Metropolitan Agenda for Children and Youth
School-Age Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS)	Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at University of North Carolina
School-Age Standards for Kansas City Youth	YouthNet of Kansas City
South Carolina County 4-H Program Standards and Quality Indicators	4-H Youth Development Programs
Standards for Baltimore After-School Opportunities in Youth Places	Baltimore's Safe and Sound Campaign
Standards for Quality School Age Care - Memphis	Memphis City Schools
Standards for Quality School Age Child Care (After School Programs and the K-8 Principal)	National Association of Elementary School Principals
Standards of Excellence in After School	South Carolina After School Alliance
Task Force Standards (Intervention and Violence Prevention)	The Illinois After-School Initiative (Illinois Center for Violence Prevention)
Teen Standards for Kansas City Youth	YouthNet of Kansas City
Toolkit for Evaluating Positive Youth Development (Program Quality)	The Colorado Trust
Vermont 21st CCLC Standards Site Improvement Process	Vermont 21st Century Community Learning Centers
YMCA Guide to Quality Child Care	YMCA
Youth Development Framework for Practice (Also Boys & Girls Club Program Assessment)	Community Network for Youth Development
Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)	High/Scope Educational Research Foundations

Appendix 2: Related Resources

Eccles, J. & Gootman, J. A. (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Granger, R., Durlak, J., Yohalem, N., & Reisner, E. (2007). *Improving after-school program quality*. New York: William T. Grant Foundation. <www.wtgrantfoundation.org/usr_doc/Improving_After-School_Program_Quality.pdf>

Harvard Family Research Project. (2004). Evaluating out-of-school time program quality. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 10(1), pp. 1-31. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccra3560>

The Finance Project. (2006). *Promoting quality in after-school programs through state child care regulations*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau. <www.researchconnections.org/location/ccra11434>

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