

NJ Quality Standards for Afterschool

Glossary

active versus passive involvement with [technology and electronics](#) – In an “active involvement” setting, youth are producing examples of technology rather than just acting as consumers of technology. Examples are creating a website, producing a news program, or finding new uses for existing items. Examples of “passive involvement” include using the internet to research a report or using a web-based learning program.

activities requiring an increased attention to safety – These are activities that are safe enough to offer during an afterschool program but may be hazardous if not conducted properly. Examples may include woodworking, art or science projects with toxic materials, skate boarding, or swimming.

adequate supervision – This is supervision that is adequate to meet the standards in the rest of this document, especially in the Safety and Environmental Health and Human Relationships categories.

administrative staff – This refers to program staff that are responsible for fiscal management, human resources, facilities management, organizational development, evaluation, and program implementation.

buses – This refers to buses with a capacity for at least 10 passengers. See NJ Licensing 10:122-9.2 for more information about the definition of Type I and Type II School Buses.

community [stakeholders](#) – These are program [stakeholders](#) that are not program staff, parents, or youth. For example, “community stakeholders” includes staff from the schools that serve the afterschool program and other people who live or work in the community where the program is located.

Child Study Team – The Child Study Team consists of a school psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher/consultant, and a school social worker. They are the employees of the school district who are responsible for conducting evaluations to determine eligibility for special education and related services for students with disabilities. This definition is from SPAN, the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (www.spannj.org).

consequences -- (as in “behavioral consequences”) Consequences are the result of youth breaking a program rule. See the resources section for more guidance on this topic.

critical thinking – This refers to processing new knowledge through analysis, synthesis, interpretation, evaluation, illustration, and comparison. It is through this type of processing that youth are able to further develop their skills, worldviews and values. This definition is from the National Afterschool Association Platform (www.naaweb.org).

decision-making skills -- These are skills that help youth through the process of making decisions, including considering options, considering consequences, weighing options, and choosing a course of action. If the decision is in the context of a challenge or problem, these can be called problem-solving skills. If the challenge or problem is related to a social situation or conflict, these can be called social problem-solving skills or conflict-resolution skills.

developmentally appropriate – When determining if a rule, expectation, practice, or activity is developmentally appropriate, staff should consider the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development level of the youth.

emergency preparedness plan – This is a written plan of action for coordinating the response of program staff in the event of a disaster within the afterschool program or the surrounding community.

emotional regulation – This is the process of coping effectively with stress, anxiety, distress, anger, and other difficult emotions.

evidence-based – An evidence-based curriculum or practice has been tested using rigorous research methods and found to be effective at achieving the desired outcomes. If it’s not possible or practical to use an evidence-based curriculum or practice, providers should use the best available research to guide practice. Providers should combine use of research and evidence-based curricula or practice together with professional experience and attention to the values of the people served.

global learning – The end goal of global learning is to develop globally competent youth. Globally competent youth are those who investigate their world, including their immediate environment and beyond; recognize their own and others’ perspectives; communicate and collaborate with diverse audiences; and translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions. This definition is from the Asia Society (www.asiasociety.org).

harsh discipline methods – These include the following: corporal punishment; aversive stimuli; withholding nutrition or hydration; inflicting physical or psychological pain; demeaning, shaming, or degrading language or activities; unnecessarily punitive restrictions; forced physical exercise to eliminate behaviors; punitive work assignments/assignments exclusively for punishment; punishment by peers; and group punishment or discipline for individual behavior. This definition is from the Council on Accreditation (www.coaafterschool.org).

host agency – This is the agency where the program is sited, for example the school or the church where the program is located. If the program has its own building, it may not have a host agency.

IEP – This stands for “Individualized Education Program,” and it is mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that all public school youth with documented special education needs have one. An IEP is different for every youth who has one and is basically a plan for how to make sure that individual youth is able to succeed in school.

inquiry – This is the process of learning through asking questions, especially increasingly deeper questions.

intentional – This refers to activities that are based on careful consideration of the purpose.

job-embedded learning – This refers to staff learning that occurs while staff are performing their jobs or learning that is deeply connected with the day-to-day work of the staff. This is opposed to learning that occurs during a separate session or that is detached from the day-to-day work of the staff.

learning skills – These are skills that will help youth to learn in varied contexts and throughout their lives. Examples are [critical thinking](#) and [inquiry](#), as well as other [personal, social, and emotional skills](#).

peer support – This is the emotional or practical help that youth give to each other.

periodic(ally) – This refers to something that happens at regular or generally predictable intervals of time. Choosing the appropriate amount of time for the interval is up to the individual program.

[personal, social, and emotional skills](#) – These are skills that help youth positively interact with others and be successful reaching various goals throughout their lives.

[professional development](#) – This refers to the process of gaining skills and knowledge that help a person make progress in her/his career. It is broader than the term “staff training,” which is more limited in its scope.

[project-based](#) – Project-based learning generally revolves around answering a question, solving a problem, or meeting a challenge. It reflects the types of learning and work people do in the everyday world outside the classroom. Common characteristics of project-based learning include real-world relevance, complex and long-term tasks, opportunities for youth to look at the task from multiple perspectives, tasks that cross disciplines, multiple possible outcomes, collaboration, opportunities for youth to reflect and incorporate their own values and beliefs, and a polished final product. This definition is based on the perspective of the Buck Institute for Education and its website devoted to project-based learning: pbl-online.org.

[refusal skills](#) – These are skills that help youth resist inappropriate peer pressure.

[relationship skills](#) – These are skills related to interacting with other people. They include cooperation, communication skills, leadership skills, conflict resolution skills, [refusal skills](#), and [social responsibility](#).

[risk assessment](#) – This is the process of deciding the amount and type of risk associated with something potentially dangerous.

[screens](#) – These are electronic devices with a screen. This includes computers, televisions, smart phones, and tablets.

[self-awareness skills](#) – These are skills related to understanding one’s self. They include the ability to identify and cultivate one’s strengths and positive qualities and the ability to recognize one’s emotions.

[self-direction](#) – This is the ability to determine one’s own goals and to pursue the steps to achieve those goals.

self-management skills – These are skills related to managing one’s emotions and actions. They include self-control, goal-setting, perseverance, and [emotional regulation](#).

service learning – Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.
(www.servicelearning.org/what-service-learning)

social awareness skills – These are skills related to understanding other people. They include understanding social and conflict dynamics, understanding the viewpoints and perceptions of others, recognizing others' emotions, and appreciating the value of others and of differences.

social responsibility – This is the ability to act in a way that takes into account the well-being and expectations of others.

soft space – This is space that is physically soft and comfortable for youth. Examples include couches, rugs, and pillows. See the resources section for more guidance on indoor space.

sound financial management – This refers to the policies, procedures, and tools that nonprofits use to plan and effectively allocate resources. It includes accounting, budgeting, and appropriate oversight by the Board of Directors. See the resources section for more guidance on this topic.

staff – This refers to anyone who works at the program on a paid basis. When the standards refer to administrative staff in particular, you’ll see the term “administration.” There is a separate standard about volunteers, and this one explains that standards relating to staff conduct in the Special Needs/The Whole Child and Human Relationships categories should apply to volunteers as well. Some programs refer to staff as “educators” to emphasize the educational role they play; this document does not use that term in order to avoid confusion, but it supports the belief that afterschool staff act as educators to the youth.

staff-directed – Staff-directed activities are those that a staff person, as opposed to the youth, develops and leads.

stakeholders – Stakeholders include anyone who has a stake in the afterschool program. This includes program youth, parents, and staff, as well as **community stakeholders**, such as staff from the schools that serve the afterschool program and other people who live or work in the community where the program is located.

technology – There are many definitions of this term, but this document takes it to be the design and use of tools and machines to solve real-world problems, as well as those tools and machines themselves. It is far broader than the term “electronics” and can include an activity such as hydroponic gardening (gardening with just water and no soil) or finding new uses for existing items.

youth-centered – An environment that is youth-centered is based on the needs and interests of the youth served.

youth-directed – Youth-directed activities are those that the youth, as opposed to a staff member, develop and lead.