



New Jersey Quality Standards for Afterschool Section II: The Standards



Human Relationships

Staff relationships with youth, families, and other staff are supportive, respectful, and constructive, and youth interactions with each other are generally positive, as well.

1. Staff relate to all youth in positive ways.

- a. Staff treat youth with respect and listen to what they say.
- b. Staff make youth feel welcome and comfortable.
- c. Staff respond to youth with acceptance and appreciation.
- d. Staff are visibly engaged with youth during activities.

2. Staff respond appropriately to individual needs of youth.

- a. Staff know that each youth has special interests and talents.
- b. Staff recognize the range of youths' abilities.
- c. Staff respect youths' cultural style and primary language.
- d. Staff recognize the range of youths' feelings and temperaments and respond appropriately.

3. Staff encourage youth to make choices and to become more responsible.

- a. Staff offer assistance without taking control and in a way that supports a youth's initiative.
- b. Staff encourage youth to take leadership roles.
- c. Staff give youth many chances to choose what they will do, how they will do it, and with whom.
- d. Staff help youth make informed and responsible choices.

4. Staff interact with youth to help them learn.

- a. Staff ask questions that encourage youth to think for themselves.
- b. Staff share skills and resources to help youth gain information and solve problems.
- c. Staff vary the approaches they use to help youth learn.
- d. Staff help youth use language skills through frequent conversations.

5. Staff treat youth as program collaborators and foster in youth a sense of program ownership.

- a. Staff involve youth in creating rules and consequences for the program as a whole and for individual games.
- b. Staff involve youth in creating activity plans.
- c. Staff encourage input and feedback from youth regarding the program.



New Jersey Quality Standards for Afterschool Section II: The Standards



Human Relationships

6. Staff use positive and effective techniques to guide the behavior of youth.

- a. Staff model positive behavior when with the youth.
- b. Staff use positive feedback in response to positive behaviors, such as when youth cooperate, share, or care for materials.
- c. Staff set appropriate limits for youth.
- d. Staff make sure youth understand the behavior expectations, rules, and consequences.
- e. Staff enforce rules fairly and consistently.
- f. When youth break rules, staff use immediate, short-term, developmentally appropriate consequences that are directly related to the broken rule. See the resources section for more guidance about using consequences.
- g. Staff do not use any harsh discipline methods.
- h. Staff seek to help youth replace problematic behavior with new behavior skills. For example, this may include teaching and modeling conflict resolution skills.

(Note: The understanding of “problematic behavior” should be up to the individual program.)

- i. Staff encourage youth to resolve their own conflicts. If needed, staff step in to discuss the issues and work out a solution together with the youth.

7. Staff strive to eliminate negative or unsafe peer interactions.

- a. Staff are observant of youth interactions.
- b. Staff intervene immediately to stop negative or unsafe peer interactions.
- c. Staff follow up to check on the emotional state of all the youth involved and to identify the source of the problem.
- d. Staff seek to educate youth in how to respond to negative or unsafe peer interactions and how to report it to an adult.

8. Staff display sensitivity to the culture and background of the youth.

Staff display sensitivity to youths' ethnicity, language, religion, and family make-up.

9. The program structure supports strong staff-youth relationships.

The program and schedule are structured so that staff and youth have the opportunity to develop close, sustained relationships with each other. For example, youth are able to work with the same staff over extended periods of time.

10. Youth generally interact with one another in positive ways.

- a. Youth appear relaxed and involved with each other.
- b. Youth show respect for each other.
- c. Youth usually cooperate and work well together.
- d. When problems occur, youth often try to discuss their differences and work out a solution.



**New Jersey Quality Standards for Afterschool
Section II: The Standards**



Human Relationships

11. Staff interact with each other in positive ways.

- a. Staff communicate with each other while the program is in session to ensure that the program operates smoothly.
- b. Staff are cooperative with and respectful of each other.
- c. Staff see themselves as professionals and treat each other as professionals.
- d. Staff have opportunities for [self-direction](#) within the program.

12. Staff interact with families in positive ways.

- a. Staff make families feel welcome and comfortable and treat them with respect.
- b. Staff encourage and seek feedback and input from families.

13. Staff communicate with families about key matters concerning the individual child or youth.

- a. Staff communicate with families on matters concerning the well-being of the child or youth. Staff work together with families to make arrivals and departures between home and the program go smoothly.
- b. Staff provide information about community resources or other resources that address the needs of youth and their families.
- c. Staff provide opportunities for families to share strategies that have been successful with the child or youth in the past. For example, families may share strategies that relate to behavior, learning, or health maintenance.
- d. Staff provide opportunities for families to inform them of major changes in the youth's life.

<u>Cross-References</u>		
Subject	Category	Standard Number
Communication with families about special needs, both generally and on an individual basis	Special Needs/The Whole Child	2, 4
Communication with families about program activities	Programming and Activities	8
Communication with school day staff	Programming and Activities	11
Mechanisms for communication and response to input from program stakeholders	Administration	6, 7
Administration approach to staff regarding quality of workplace environment and professional development systems	Administration	3, 4
Volunteers	Administration	5



New Jersey Quality Standards for Afterschool Section II: The Standards



Human Relationships

Respecting the legal rights of program participants and staff	Administration	9
Relationships between the program and community agencies and members	Administration	14
Parents in the life of the program	Administration	8