



NJSACC, THE NETWORK FOR NJ'S AFTERSCHOOL COMMUNITIES PRESENTS

NJ QUALITY STANDARDS FOR AFTERSCHOOL:

NEW AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM QUALITY CHECKLIST

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NJ Quality Standards for Afterschool: New Afterschool Program Quality Checklist

Focusing on quality as you plan your new afterschool program will build a strong foundation for program success! NJSACC has identified the following Standards as critical to program start-up, and should be prioritized if you are just beginning a new afterschool program. Please use this checklist along with the NJ QSA, Self-Assessment and Rubric which can be found on the NJSACC website: www.njsacc.org

Established afterschool programs should use the complete NJ QSA.

Administration

- The program has and uses a mission statement.
- The administration takes steps to facilitate continuous improvement in program quality.
- The administration takes steps to support effective communication.
- There are policies or procedures in place that involve families in the life of the program.
- The program respects the rights of the youth, family members, and staff.
- The administration maintains and updates program policies and records.
- The administration acts responsibly regarding program finances and financial sustainability.
- The administration maintains sufficient staff:youth ratios and supervision of youth.
- The administration researches and connects to potential community partners in order to facilitate staff, youth, and families taking advantage of community resources.

Human Relationships

- Staff relate to all youth in positive ways.
- Staff respond appropriately to individual needs of youth.
- Staff use positive and effective techniques to guide the behavior of youth.
- Staff strive to eliminate negative or unsafe peer interactions.
- Youth generally interact with one another in positive ways.
- Staff interact with each other in positive ways.
- Staff interact with families in positive ways.
- Staff communicate with families about key matters concerning the individual child or youth.

Safety & Environmental Health

- Staff are aware of the individual health needs of the youth.
- Staff are alert to potential hazards in the environment.
- The program conducts regular inspections using check-lists to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environment is clean and free of hazards that can cause injury or illness in youth.
- The program is prepared for emergencies.
- Transportation in vehicles is safe.
- Staff take special precautions during activities requiring an increased attention to safety.
- The program provides for the basic comforts of the youth.

Indoor & Outdoor Environment

Indoor Environment:

- The indoor space is welcoming and youth-centered
- There is adequate indoor space for activities
- There is adequate space for storage
- There is a written contingency plan

Outdoor Environment:

- Youth spend enough program time outdoors.
- Storage for outdoor equipment and materials is convenient for children and youth.
- Staff are actively engaged with children playing outdoors.

Programming & Activities

- Activities are intentional and are aligned with the program's mission.
- Activities support the development of youths' personal, social, and emotional skills.
- Programming includes, but is not limited by, homework and tutoring activities.
- The daily routine is structured and stable, while flexible enough to meet the changing or individual needs of youth.
- Materials are adequate for programming.

Special Needs & the Whole Child

- The program views a "special need" as any special situation or unique need of a child.
- The program advertises itself as welcoming to youth with special needs.
- The program takes steps to ensure communication with families about youth with special needs is respectful and as effective as possible.
- The program's response to youth with a special need is well-planned and appropriate.

Health Behavior: Nutrition & Physical Activity

Nutrition:

- The program considers nutritional value when selecting food to serve to youth.
- The program considers multi-cultural values when selecting food to serve to youth.
- School-based programs act as partners to host schools with nutrition guidelines.

Physical Activity:

- The program provides enough time for physical activity.
- The program offers a variety of types of physical activity day to day and within in each day.
- The program environment supports a physically active lifestyle for youth.

Additional Resources for New Afterschool Programs

1. NJ Child Care Licensing Manual:
<http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf>
2. Resources from the Afterschool Alliance on how to start an Afterschool Program:
<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/startingaprogram.cfm>
3. Resource Library from the National Center for Afterschool and Summer Enrichment: <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/ncase-resource-library>
4. CACFP Afterschool Snack Guide:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/atriskhandbook.pdf>

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Did you know? NJSACC provides low-cost training and free technical assistance throughout the year. Please reach out to us at: 908-789-0259 or via email sac@njsacc.org