



Youth Development  
Resource Center

# QUALITY STANDARDS for Youth Development Programs



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Development  
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Center

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## YDRC'S HISTORY

The Youth Development Resource Center has supported Detroit area youth-serving organizations to track and use data and to engage in continuous quality improvement since its founding in 2013. The organization was launched as a part of the Skillman Foundation's Good Neighborhoods Initiative serving a specific set of afterschool providers and later merged with the Initiative's Youth Development Alliance. Since its founding, YDRC has continued to grow, refine and standardize practices to support a network of afterschool and summer learning providers in and around Detroit.



# QUALITY STANDARDS for Youth Development Programs

The Youth Development Resource Center (YDRC), alongside a network of Detroit youth and youth development professionals, developed common quality standards based on best practices and youth and community voice. Youth-serving organizations in the Detroit area are using these quality standards for continuous program improvement, creating a common language and goals for high-quality youth development programs across the provider network.

Programs of all types and sizes that are committed to quality can strive to improve and better engage youth. This quality standards workbook is designed to help providers, as organizations and individual professionals, reflect on these core elements of a high-quality youth development program, and connect with YDRC on next level program improvements.

**Research is clear that high-quality programs are more likely to engage and retain youth.**

**And, youth who regularly attend youth development programs are:**

- ✓ **More likely to develop key social-emotional skills**
- ✓ **Experience success in school and life**

## Program Quality Practices

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- Positive Relationships
- Safe & Supportive Climate
- Active, Engaged Learning & Skill Building
- Youth Voice, Choice & Leadership

## Management Practices

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- Quality Staff & Support
- Intentional Program Design & Improvement
- Diversity, Access & Inclusion
- Family, School & Community Engagement

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# About YDRC

The Youth Development Resource Center (YDRC) supports a network of Detroit area youth development providers to strengthen their individual and collective impact on youth through shared measurement, continuous quality improvement, professional development, and advocacy.

We accomplish this through efforts to:

## MEASURE

Strengthen the ability of youth development organizations to use standardized data and best practices that allow quality and impact to increase.

## IMPROVE

Offer and connect youth development professionals to learning that strengthens their skills to implement high-quality youth programming that is safe, supportive, engaging, and skill-building.

## CONNECT

Convene networking and peer learning opportunities for professionals to build relationships and partnerships, connect to local resources and national best practices, and share lessons learned.

## ADVOCATE

Champion quality and equity so that more children across the Detroit area can access high-quality youth development opportunities.





# 5 WAYS to Use the Quality Standards to Improve Your Program's Quality

1

Select a quality standard to discuss at a staff meeting. As a team, identify your program's areas of strength and areas for improvement. Identify two to three concrete action steps your program can take to improve quality in this area. See the Program Improvement Plan worksheet on page 25.

2

Seek out staff training opportunities aligned with the quality standards.

3

Check out additional professional opportunities included on page 28 and visit [www.detroitdrc.org](http://www.detroitdrc.org) for more information and to sign-up for our newsletter.

4

Ask for ongoing feedback from youth and families about how the program can improve. Ask for specific feedback related to the quality standards, such as asking youth what they want to learn and what activities interest them. Regular input, reflection circles, and short surveys to rate program activities can be used for quick improvement cycles. Surveys of youth's skills at the beginning-middle-end of the program can also be used to understand the impact of program activities on youth.

5

Use the quality standards in combination with a program quality self-assessment tool, such as the Michigan Department of Education's Model Standards for Out-of-School Time After-School Programs in Michigan Self-Assessment Checklist or the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) developed by the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (training required). See page 28 to learn how YDRC supports continuous quality program improvement.

**Know that achieving the highest quality possible in your program is an ongoing process.**

**Commit to ongoing cycles of assessing, reflecting, planning, and improving.**

# Program Quality Practices



**We identified four essential aspects to quality youth development programming:**

- ✓ Positive Relationships
- ✓ Safe & Supportive Climate
- ✓ Active, Engaged Learning & Skill Building
- ✓ Youth Voice, Choice & Leadership

When program staff and managers focus on these program practices, the program's activities are more likely to help young people stay engaged, learn, and develop skills.

These four essential conditions of program quality align with the Youth Program Quality Assessment, which measures whether the youth development activity is Safe, Supportive, Interactive and Engaging for young people.



**Youth benefit when programs develop, nurture, and maintain positive interactions and communication among staff, volunteers, and participants.**

**Relationships are the “glue” of a youth development program and should be respectful, caring, and uplifting.**

### **YOUTH SAY:**

- “Adults encourage you to better yourself. They have high standards for us.”
- “Adults are trustworthy, considerate, respectful, and caring. They help you do better.”
- “There is chemistry. The relationships between youth and youth and youth and adults should be close enough to ‘vent’ to one another with trust.”
- “You get to use your personality.”
- “People are accepting, relatable, and understanding.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- There is open communication, active listening, mutual respect, trust, and good rapport – peer-to-peer, adult-to-youth, and adult-to-adult.
- Staff, volunteers, and youth know each other’s names, interests and personalities. All participants spend considerable time getting to know each other at the beginning of the program.
- Individuals and the group learn through conflict resolution. Conflicts are addressed as a community, when appropriate.
- Youth and adults have fun together. There is laughter, humor, and smiling faces.
- Staff and volunteers are accessible and interested in youth’s lives, but maintain appropriate boundaries.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

Effective relationships are associated with positive feelings on the part of youth and fewer discipline problems in school (*Marzano & Marzano, 2003*).

When youth have opportunities to experience success in a collaborative setting with peers, their sense of social competence and readiness to learn can increase (*Hromek & Roffey, 2009*).



**Youth benefit when the program provides a safe and nurturing environment that supports the developmental, emotional, physical health, and mental well-being of all students.**

#### **YOUTH SAY:**

- “The program feels welcoming and like family. There’s a positive energy. It should feel like a second home. There are happy faces. It’s a fun place to be and youth enjoy coming back.”
- “There are no bullies and no negative teachers. There are no people cussing, no kids being left out, and no kids or staff being disrespectful or not caring. It is peaceful and safe, with no gang activity, drugs, or violent language.”
- “The program has the proper materials and equipment.”
- “There are no unsafe building hazards or a lack of supervision (physical and emotional).”
- “Youth sign in and out. Youth and adults come and leave as a group, or carpool if someone is going in the same direction as you and needs a lift.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- Safety and security procedures are in place, including a sign-in and sign-out process and personal check-ins with youth. The program starts and ends on time, so that youth are welcomed and supervised as they are arriving at and leaving the program.
- Youth are supervised by adults during indoor and outdoor activities.
- Healthy and balanced meals and/or snacks are served. Foods are youth-friendly and culturally appropriate.
- The physical environment is clean. It has adequate facilities for basic needs (water, restrooms, etc.) and for program activities. Needed equipment and supplies for activities are safe and available.
- Emergency procedures are posted and a fire extinguisher and first aid kit are available.
- The emotional climate of the program is friendly, supportive, positive, collaborative, and non-judgmental.
- There are clear expectations and guidelines so that the program has order. Youth are involved in designing a community conduct agreement with support from staff.
- Staff and program activities are responsive to individual youth's needs. Staff connects youth and families with resources when needed.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

When environments promote basic needs for physical safety and social support, youth's engagement in learning increases (*Deci & Ryan, 1985*). Youth's sense of belonging and collaboration is linked with positive academic and disciplinary outcomes (*Faircloth & Hamm, 2005; Hromek & Roffey, 2009; Marzano & Marzano, 2003*).



## Active, Engaged Learning & Skill-Building



**Youth benefit when the program design and activities reflect active, meaningful, and engaging learning methods that expand student horizons, and serve the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and creative development of all participants. Program offerings respond to youth's interests and build real skills for success in school, work, and life.**

### YOUTH SAY:

- “Youth are able to learn new things without feeling like they are in school.”
- “The program helps you grow. It offers opportunities to youth seeking self-mastery and real-life applied skills. Youth will be able to better themselves in a number of areas, whether it's physical, mental, etc.”
- “The activities are hands-on. Not too much lecturing.”
- “The program gives the youth something to look forward to and makes them want to change the community for the better.”
- “Adults ‘keep it real’ by helping us reach our dreams, rather than just selling us dreams. They listen as much as they talk.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- The program uses project-based learning and experiential, real-world activities. Youth can apply what they learn in the program to everyday life. Activities are relevant to their lives.
- The program has knowledgeable instructors who can provide well-designed, age-appropriate activities aimed to meet specific, holistic learning objectives. Staff guide and facilitate learning.
- Youth experience measurable growth in learning and skill development.
- The program accommodates different learning styles and provides challenging but achievable tasks or projects. Youth have opportunities to demonstrate their learning in the program.
- Youth are encouraged to try things out and learn from mistakes.
- Peers and adults are interacting, brainstorming, and sharing in the project or activity.
- Adults create a space for debriefing and self-reflecting on program activities and learning. Adults ask open-ended questions to encourage reflection.
- Youth have opportunities to mentor, lead, or coach other youth in an activity.
- Youth show they are actively engaged by returning to the program and creating word-of-mouth.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

Active learning experiences, which allow youth to practice and explore new skills, promote learning and improve academic achievement (*Durlak, Dymnicki, Taylor, Weissberg, & Schellinger, 2011; Mayer, 2004*).

The use of SAFE – sequenced, active, focused, and explicit – learning activities are more likely to lead to positive youth outcomes (*Durlack, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010*).



**Youth benefit when the program creates intentional opportunities for youth to play a meaningful role in program design and implementation, to exercise choice, and to access authentic leadership roles.**

### **YOUTH SAY:**

- “Adults let youth have a say in how the program is run or what is implemented. They are in the planning process. Youth get to express themselves.”
- “Adults should accept and consider input and critique from youth.”
- “Youth can pick activities and segue into different choices based on their experience and interest, rather than allowing youth to go into situations blindly. There is a list of options.”
- “Adults have youth speak in front of others to bring them out of their shell.”
- “Youth are put in leadership positions.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

### FOR ALL YOUTH:

- Youth are involved in planning and leading activities.
- Staff offer youth choices based on their interests.
- Youth have responsibilities to the program, such as distributing supplies, leading an icebreaker, and collecting supplies.
- Staff survey youth and give them ongoing opportunities for feedback on the program. Staff are receptive to youth's ideas and their opinions are highly regarded. Youth feel comfortable voicing new ideas, as well as what is not working well at the program, and are asked to help come up with solutions.
- Adults mentor youth without limiting their creativity and voice.
- Youth feel ownership of the program, which increases retention.

### FOR YOUTH, 4TH GRADE AND UP:

- Youth are offered leadership roles, as well as leadership development and training opportunities. They become leaders among their peers.
- Youth are engaged in advisory councils, youth-led boards, program/board committees, and have an actual vote on policies and procedures.
- Youth plan and lead youth retreats or summits.
- Youth have a voice in hiring or evaluating staff.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

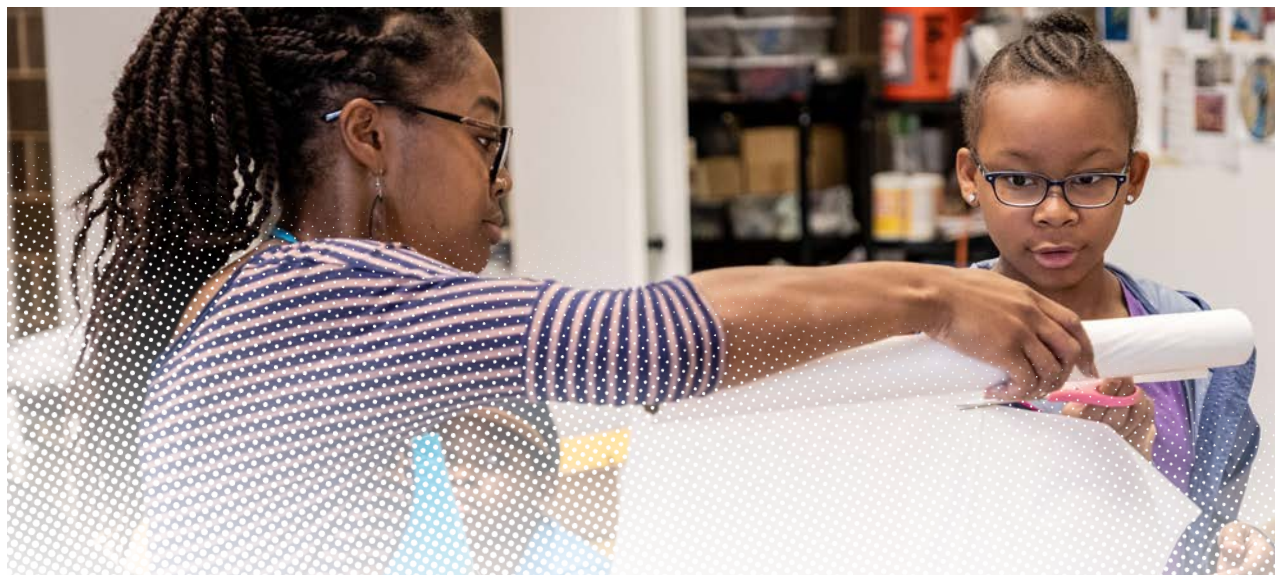
Opportunities for youth leadership and autonomy can contribute to positive gains for youth, including engagement, intrinsic motivation, self-determination, academic competence, and reduction of problem behavior (*Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002; Deschenes et al., 2010; Russell, Mielke, & Reisner, 2009; Reeve & Jang, 2006; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998; Soenens & Vansteenskiste, 2005; Eccles et al., 1997; Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, & Briere, 2001*).

Youth voice has been associated with improvements in youth's strategic thinking (*Larson & Hansen, 2005*).

# REFLECTION

PROGRAM QUALITY PRACTICES	WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR PROGRAM? Our strengths? What improvements are needed?
Positive Relationships	
Safe & Supportive Climate	
Active, Engaged Learning & Skill Building	
Youth Voice, Choice & Leadership	

# Management Practices



**We identified four essential aspects to quality youth development program management:**

- ✓ Quality Staff & Support
- ✓ Intentional Program Design & Improvement
- ✓ Diversity, Access & Inclusion
- ✓ Family, School & Community Engagement

When program managers focus on these management practices, organizations are more likely to sustain high-quality youth development programming.

These essential aspects align with the *Youth Program Quality Assessment Form B*, which measures:

## **YOUTH-CENTERED POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

Are staff trained to support a positive youth development focus?

## **HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUTH AND STAFF**

Does the organization promote staff development?  
Is the organization committed to program improvement?

## **ACCESS**

Are barriers to access addressed?  
Does the organization communicate with families, partner organizations and schools?



**Youth benefit when the program recruits and retains trained staff and volunteers who are focused on creating a positive learning environment and who receive ongoing coaching and professional development.**

### YOUTH SAY:

- “Staff and volunteers should be trained to listen first and not judge. They should know what to say back to the youth. They should be trained in a special way to understand the youth’s frustrations.”
- “Professionalism and trustworthiness are #1.”
- “They need to know that every child doesn’t come from a positive environment or from a negative environment.”
- “They are motivational and know many ways of teaching. They inspire us to become someone like them or better.”
- “Quality staff are focused, organized leaders who know how to stay on track.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- The program hires staff who have the appropriate education, verifiable work experiences, and commitment to inclusivity to support youth's development and learning.
- There is a process to support the orientation, training, and ongoing professional development of staff.
- The program has adequate staff capacity and a low adult-to-youth ratio (maximum of 1-to-15 for grades 4 and up, 1-to-10 for K-3, additional staff to support youth with special needs).
- Staff are paid a living wage that is adequate to retain staff and reduce turnover.
- Staff are appropriately dressed.
- Staff attend to youth's needs.
- Staff have a passion for the mission and vision of the program/organization and can clearly communicate it.
- Supervisors provide effective and consistent staff evaluation, assessment, and feedback.
- Staff have access to affordable, quality professional development and are trained in positive youth development and best practices.
- The program has a culture of ongoing communication among staff for sharing ideas and fostering professional growth and development. Staff meet regularly to plan and improve the program.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

A skilled and stable workforce in youth development programs plays a significant role in quality, stability, youth engagement, and continuity of connection (*Fashola, 2002; Huang & Dieteil, 2011; National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2003*).



## Intentional Program Design & Improvement




**Youth benefit when programs are intentionally designed with clear outcomes that positively impact youth’s knowledge, skills, and behavior. Youth also benefit when staff continuously use a variety of information to assess and improve the quality of the program’s design, activities, and management to ensure positive experiences and outcomes for youth.**

### YOUTH SAY:

- “The program is well planned and well thought out.”
- “There is a blueprint or sketch of the program activities.”
- “There is inspiration and innovations – recreating and compromise to make the program better.”
- “The program uses the design process to see what the end-users want, put it out in the market to test it, and start again.”
- “The program takes surveys of all the students to find out if they are getting what they want out of the program, if they are enjoying it, and if they feel they are getting better at skills used in the program.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- 
- The program has goals and learning objectives.
  - The program uses established and researched curricula and best practices.
  - Youth contribute to the program design. The program is designed with a sequence of activities that work for youth.
  - Though planned and structured, the program is flexible to meet common goals and to change as needed.
  - Youth and staff know what positive results to expect from the program.
  - The organization and program has a clear mission, vision, and business/financial plan.
  - Surveys and ongoing feedback are used to design and improve programs. The program uses assessment and evaluation instruments – both pre/post and ongoing to measure youth’s skill level and growth in behavior, skills, and knowledge.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

#### Program design is intentional when:

- It is developmentally appropriate for the age and stages of youth involved,
- There is fit between the organization’s mission and programming,
- Activities support participant growth and development and are based on a theory of change, and
- Activities are explicitly designed to develop positive youth outcomes.  
(Walker, Marczak, Blyth, & Borden, 2005)



**Youth benefit when the program, policies, procedures, and services create an environment that values and embraces diversity and equity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, income level, national origin, physical or intellectual ability, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity and expression.**

**YOUTH SAY:**

- "The program welcomes ANYBODY. It provides equal treatment."
- "There is dialogue and open conversations."
- "There are multiple races, genders, ages, and cultures interacting and bonding. Inclusion equals youth who are LGBTQA. The program helps youth realize others' beliefs, individuality, and uniqueness."
- "The program gives youth access to technology like new computers."
- "Transportation is available."

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- Adults model inclusive behavior and promote open dialogue with youth about diversity, access, and inclusion.
- Staff and volunteers have cultural knowledge and highlight differences and celebrate them, rather than ignoring race and diversity.
- Youth from different backgrounds are included and their unique needs are served.
- Activities highlight various cultures and experiences, offer diverse presenters, and build knowledge of the multicultural community. Youth have opportunities to go to other communities to experience diverse cultures, races, etc.
- The physical environment is barrier free to provide access to youth with disabilities. Activities are adapted to allow participation by youth with varying physical, intellectual, and social abilities. Staff-to-youth ratios are increased to support youth with special needs.
- There are staff and volunteers who reflect the youth and community being served. Bilingual literature and staff are provided to meet the needs of youth and families. Interpreters are available for staff who are not bilingual/bicultural.
- Free programming with transportation is made available for youth who otherwise could not participate.
- The program has an anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policy. Staff ensure that the program is inviting, safe, and inclusive to all.
- Neighborhood safety issues that present a barrier to attendance are identified and addressed.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

Successful programs are responsive to the different aspects of youth's lives and identities. The programs recognize and respect diverse customs and traditions. Bias or discrimination are not tolerated (*California Tomorrow, Addressing Equity and Diversity: Tools for Change in Afterschool and Youth Programs*).



**Youth benefit when families, schools, and communities are actively engaged in program development and implementation. Youth also benefit when the program intentionally links afterschool curricula and activities to the school day to ensure programming is aligned with and enriches academic standards.**

## YOUTH SAY:

- “Engaging family and community means to gain respect and understanding and to create bonding experiences, like engaging at the park through basketball.”
- “Engaging families means talking to the family to share information and to learn about and from one another.”
- “There is chemistry. Staff smile and communicate with families.”
- “The program should reach students in school to promote programs that youth could go to. That’s where youth are!”
- “The program engages in community communication through fliers and websites, and in community events and meetings.”

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL SUGGESTED INDICATORS:

Use this checklist to see how many indicators your organization meets.

- The program hours are flexible to meet the needs of families and accommodate schedules.
- Staff establish rapport with parents and communicate with the home to assist youth. Multiple communication methods are used (i.e. newsletters, phone calls, texts, family dinners, group meetings).
- There are opportunities for parents/family members to engage in volunteering or in interactive activities or workshops that stimulate family learning and growth.
- Families are involved in focus groups and program planning committees.
- Staff work with the school or teachers to identify specific academic standards the program can address. School staff contribute to program planning. There are common goals between school curricula and program activities.
- Staff collaborate with school and community leaders and communicate regularly.
- Staff connect youth to other programs in the community that meet their needs.
- The program hosts public, culminating events where youth share program experiences with families and the community.

### BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH:

Programs that engage families can create partnerships that support youth's afterschool and school experiences (*Bouffard, Little & Weiss, 2006; Harris, Rosenberg, & Wallace, 2012; Little, 2012*).

Participation in afterschool programming, alignment with school day content, and adults working with youth in and out of school who share information about student progress can improve school success outcomes (*Durklack, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010; Farmer-Hinton, Sass & Schroeder, 2009; Lauer et al., 2006; Nafzger, Vinson, Manzeski, & Gibbs, 2011; Nafzger et al., 2013; Pierce, Bolt, & Vandell, 2010*).

Community outreach can support collaboration among service providers and ensure a more comprehensive service delivery system (*Yohalem et al., 2012*).

# REFLECTION

<b>MANAGEMENT PRACTICES</b>	<b>WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR PROGRAM?</b> Our strengths? What improvements are needed?
Quality Staff and Support	
Intentional Program Design and Improvement	
Diversity, Access, and Inclusion	
Family, School, and Community Engagement	

# Program Improvement Plan



**GOALS:** Set three goals for program improvement. What does success look like?

## GOAL ONE:

**What aspect(s) of quality does this goal address?**

*Program Quality Practices*

- Positive Relationships
- Safe and Supportive Climate
- Active, Engaged Learning and Skill-Building
- Youth Voice, Choice, and Leadership

*Management Practices*

- Quality Staff and Support
- Intentional Program Design and Improvement
- Diversity, Access, and Inclusion
- Family, School, and Community Engagement

**Leaders: Who's responsible?**

**Resources: What is needed for success?**

**Timeline: When will this be completed?**



**GOALS:** Set three goals for program improvement. What does success look like?

### GOAL THREE:

#### What aspect(s) of quality does this goal address?

##### *Program Quality Practices*

- Positive Relationships
- Safe and Supportive Climate
- Active, Engaged Learning and Skill-Building
- Youth Voice, Choice, and Leadership

##### *Management Practices*

- Quality Staff and Support
- Intentional Program Design and Improvement
- Diversity, Access, and Inclusion
- Family, School, and Community Engagement

#### Leaders: Who's responsible?

#### Resources: What is needed for success?

#### Timeline: When will this be completed?

*We hope you take the Quality Standards for Youth Development Programs and this initial Program Improvement Plan back to your team and discuss priority improvements for your organization and program.*

*Now gather input and engage youth, parents, teachers, program partners, and other stakeholders in the process. Learn more about our Quality Improvement Approach on the next page.*



# Our Quality Improvement Approach to Detroit Area Youth Development Programs



**Raising Quality & Outcomes Together!**



**Youth development providers and programs of all types and sizes can work to improve quality and increase impact on youth's skills for success. Here is how you can join the quality improvement process!**

## **FIRST:**

### **COMMIT TO QUALITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE**

As a first step, youth-serving organizations and managers can understand and adopt the Quality Standards for Youth Development Programs and use them as a guide for self-assessment and program improvement plans. Afterschool and summer programs that aim to be licensed should also understand the Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards of Quality approved by the Michigan State Board of Education. To learn more, visit: [www.miafterschool.org/standards-of-quality](http://www.miafterschool.org/standards-of-quality)

Additionally, youth development professionals who are committed to professionalism in the out-of-school time field should attend trainings and consider obtaining the Michigan Afterschool Association's Michigan School-Age Youth Development (MiSAYD) Certificate or Credential. To learn more, visit <https://misayd.gennet.us>

YDRC provides trainings to youth development professionals, but also encourages youth development professionals to seek out trainings aligned to the National Afterschool Association Core Knowledge and Competencies.

## **NEXT:**

### **MEASURE AND DEMONSTRATE QUALITY AND IMPACT**

After the introduction to common quality standards and professional development pathways, YDRC partners with youth development programs for data-informed continuous quality improvement through their Acting with Data Learning Community and Summer Learning Program Quality Community.

The YDRC provides training and access to common measurement tools — such as an enrollment and attendance tracker, the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA), and a youth social-emotional skills and outcomes survey. These tools help providers assess how many youth they are serving, how much service they are providing, how well the service is delivered, and what difference they are making in terms of the youth skills and outcomes. Providers then use that data to reflect on practice, make plans for improvement, and participate in targeted professional development and coaching aimed at practice improvement.

To learn more about working with YDRC to measure and demonstrate quality and impact, email [info@detroitydrc.org](mailto:info@detroitydrc.org).

## **FINALLY:**

### **DEEPEN YOUTH AND ADULT SKILLS**

YDRC invites providers that have mastered the measurement and program improvement planning process to deepen social emotional learning (SEL) practices for youth and adults, or improve other areas of youth development practice.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

##### **Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards of Quality**

To be a state-licensed out-of-school time program receiving public funding, providers must meet the Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards (MOST Standards) for Quality. The MOST Standards provide deeper guidance on health and safety standards, program staffing, and indoor and outdoor environments. Providers are encouraged to also familiarize themselves and do a self-assessment with the MOST Standards in order to ensure the health and safety of children and youth in their afterschool and summer programs.

For more information, visit [www.miafterschool.org/standards-of-quality/](http://www.miafterschool.org/standards-of-quality/)

## NEXT STEPS...

How do you and your team currently....

What can you do moving forward to enhance these efforts?

**MEASURE QUALITY?**



**IMPROVE QUALITY?**



**CONNECT TO PARTNERS?**



**ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES?**





## How Were the Quality Standards Developed?



In 2014, the Youth Development Resource Center engaged the network of Detroit area providers working with youth in the Skillman Foundation's Good Neighborhoods to outline elements of quality youth development programs. A scan of quality standards from across the country was completed by the YDRC. Then, over 75 youth and 100 youth development professionals from across six neighborhoods in Detroit shared their ideas for what quality youth programming looked like to them.

The resulting quality standards draw on best practice research, as well as standards from other cities and states across the country, but were ultimately created to reflect the wisdom of Detroit's youth and community youth development providers.

The standard indicators are not meant to be exhaustive, to drive funding decisions, or to help providers comply with state requirements, but rather to outline core elements of quality that matter to our community's youth and to the caring adults who support their development. As a community, we can continuously improve quality together.

# Acknowledgments



## **The Youth Development Resource Center would like to thank:**

The Skillman Foundation, for its leadership and support of youth development programming and capacity-building in Detroit, as well as all of the providers and partners engaged in the Youth Development Alliance during the Good Neighborhoods Initiative.

The YDRC would also like to express gratitude to United Way of Southeastern Michigan and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation for their generous support for the ongoing development of this guide.

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California AfterSchool Network

DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation

Georgia Afterschool Investment Council

Grand Rapids Expanded Learning Opportunities Network

Maryland Out of School Time Network

Michigan Department of Education

Missouri Afterschool Network

National Afterschool Association

Prime Time – Palm Beach County

Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool Youth Development Network

Providence After School Alliance

Sprockets St. Paul

Utah Afterschool Network

School's Out Washington

Those who created the Every Hour Counts' Measurement Framework: How to Measure Success in Expanding Learning Systems and Literature Review, which provided much of the research on best practices outlined in this guide, and the Boston Afterschool & Beyond Achieve, Connect, Thrive Framework.





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