

4-H Afterschool Programs



A guide to starting your 4-H
Afterschool program

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Introduction

1. What is an Afterschool Program?

Afterschool programs can be defined broadly as any program that provides child care for elementary and middle school youth when students are not at school, and parents are not at home. They include everything from an afterschool club at the local recreation center to summer camps. School-Age programs take place at schools, community centers, parks, daycare centers, and from family home providers.

A more stringent definition would add that an afterschool program meets the supervision expectations of working parent(s) who want enrichment for their child, or have been recommended by the school for extra academic support. Thus, by definition, afterschool programs run before and after school, and often during non-school days, such as holidays or summer vacation. Some of what we call afterschool programs go by different names such as extended day, out of school time, and latchkey kids. No matter what they are called, they have in common the fact that they are designed to offer safe, secure places that children and youth can go to on a regular basis when schools are not in session.

2. Whom does it Serve?

Afterschool programs are generally designed to serve children and youth in kindergarten through grade eight. Often, a particular program will serve or work in cooperation with a specific school or group of schools. It is important to remember that afterschool programs don't just serve the children, but also the parents of the children, and thus should be designed to meet the needs of both the children and parents.

3. Why Implement an Afterschool Program?

Benefits of an afterschool program are widespread. Quality afterschool programs provide a safe, nurturing place of supervision for school age children where there are opportunities to reinforce learning from school, teach social skills and encourage good citizenship.

Being involved in an afterschool program helps youth avoid unsafe situations and behaviors such as:

- Being home after school without adult supervision
- Experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sexual activity
- Illegal activities such as shoplifting

4. How do Afterschool Programs Operate?

There are many different arrangements for operating an afterschool program. For example, programs can operate as for-profit entities, non-profit organizations, school-based, or government-based provider. During the planning stage of your program, you'll need to carefully choose what will work best for you and the families you serve.

5. Where does an Afterschool Program Operate?

While afterschool programs can operate from a variety of places, and during a variety of hours or days, it is important to remember that programs should try to meet the needs of working parents. Are the hours and location convenient for the parents, as well as the students? Location is often dictated by the operational arrangement of a program. For example, a school-based program will be located at a school, a government-based program might be located at municipal building or recreation center, and a for-profit program may have its own building, or in one's home.

Research and Development

One person can take the lead, but it will take collaboration to develop a quality afterschool program. You'll benefit greatly from tapping into the knowledge and experience of other interested individuals and groups. Start by organizing a task force to conduct a needs assessment survey. If the survey determines that there is demand for additional child care, a planning committee can be organized to develop the program.

1. Assembling a Task Force and Planning Committee

The purpose of the task force is to help develop an initial plan of action, and then assist you in carrying it out. When seeking support, remember to consider both concerned individuals as well as larger organizations. You will want supportive individuals that are able to go out and get things done. Seek out individuals who will have a variety of perspectives on this issue and become champions for the development of the program. You will also want experienced, resourceful organizations. Organizations can often provide everything from initial know-how to eventual funding and supplies, or maybe even a location to house the program. The idea is to create an initial task force, consisting of about three to

five individuals. Then, if you decide to move forward after conducting a needs assessment survey, you should form a larger, more comprehensive planning committee.

Be understanding and mindful of the cultural and ethnic backgrounds and differences of your participants. The task force and planning committee should accurately “mirror” the makeup of the program participants. You may or may not want to include everybody from the original task force. Some possible individuals and groups to approach include parents and parent groups (PTA), local agencies and government, youth serving organizations (4-H, Scouts, YMCA/YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs and religious organizations), schools (teachers, principals, aides, and school board members), universities, Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Junior League, League of Women Voters, Chamber of Commerce, mental health agencies, youth-serving agencies, and social service groups.

2. Conducting a Needs Assessment Survey

Once you have your task force assembled, their first undertaking will be to conduct a needs assessment survey. A needs assessment in its simplest form determines:

- To what extent is there a need for a service?
- What resources currently exist to meet those needs?
- What is the gap, if any, between what is needed and what is currently provided?

As a group, define the goals of the needs assessment, identify what information needs to be collected, and select the methods to be used. Although the task force will oversee the assessment survey, you may want to recruit additional help to carry out the work.

Community groups such as local universities, the United Way, PTAs, school districts, city and county governments, and other community oriented groups may be willing to help conduct the survey.

A needs assessment can be accomplished by distributing surveys, conducting interviews, and holding meetings with interested individuals in the community. You may wish to contact a local university or government agency for assistance in developing a survey or other aspects of determining local needs. Your group will probably want to design its own needs assessment form, tailored to the specific information needed in your community. Be sure to include a cover letter which states the purpose of the survey and who is responsible. Include a name and contact information, along with a deadline for returns. Make it clear that

the survey is an exploration, and in no way will promise that a program will definitely be established. Refer to Appendix A for a sample survey.

3. Making the Decision

After you have successfully conducted a needs assessment, you should have a good idea of whether or not to proceed with the program. As mentioned above, if you and the task force decide to proceed with developing a program, you will want to reform the task force into a planning committee. You will now want to add people, groups, and organizations to your planning committee that can help make your program a success. Keep in mind that although there is no limit to how many people are on the committee, research shows that committees of twelve individuals or less (note: a whole organization can be represented by one individual) are the most efficient and effective. Once you have your planning committee in place, it's time to begin developing your program. The survey results may demonstrate a need to justify the program, but do you have the resources – facilities, support, and money from projected parent fees or subsidies, that will make it possible to run a good program? You may want to first explore if there is an existing program that can be changed or expanded to fill the need for afterschool programming.

Developing the Program

1. Establishing Mission/Objectives

The first step in designing an afterschool program is establishing your program's mission and objectives. A mission statement will convey the philosophy which will serve as the framework for all that follows. A philosophy is your common sense response to the following questions: "What do the children in this program need?" and "What do we want to give them?" Ask yourself, "What exactly do I want the program to accomplish?" The underlying goal of all afterschool programs is to provide quality supervision to children while their parents are at work. Furthermore, a quality afterschool program will focus on promoting social and emotional development of school-age children, along with other areas of skill building.

As you develop your mission and objectives, consider the developmental needs of school-age children for a base of warmth and security, opportunities to develop their initiative and independence, encouragement for their creativity, and clear limits and

expectations of their behavior. Parents are looking for a safe place where their children will receive adequate supervision. They also want a program that is affordable, and one which respects their values and cultural background.

When establishing program goals, keep in mind the children's needs, the resources of the community, and your personal strengths. Afterschool programs should provide a balance of academic, recreational, and social activities. However, depending on the needs of the children, you might want to focus on certain areas. Maybe your priority is to provide a safe haven full of love and respect for children. Perhaps you want to provide a challenging atmosphere exposing children to art, science, and other educational opportunities. What are the greatest needs of the school-age children? What will be the focus of your program?

2. Designing the Program

Once you've established your mission and objectives, you should have a clear idea of the goals of your program. Now you're ready to design the actual program.

Who will run the program?

- Who will be responsible for the day to day operations of the afterschool program?
- Who will be responsible for training and supervising staff?
- Who will tackle the financial and administrative functions of the program?

As you make these decisions, keep in mind what is best for the overall success of the program. Refer to Appendix B for a sample daily schedule.

Who will the program serve?

Deciding who the program will serve will have many important implications; e.g., licensing requirements, budgets, and staff size to name a few.

- What age groups, schools, and residential areas do you want to serve?
- What is the maximum number of children your program can accommodate?
- Where will the program be housed?

The size of your program will be limited by the availability of affordable space. You also need to consider group size, the total number of children assigned to a staff person in an individual room. Staff-child ratio is the number of staff divided by the group size. Utah licensing standards stipulate a minimum ratio of one staff person for each 20 children who

are age five and up, but quality programs can maintain a lower staff child ratio such as 1:10 or 1:12 for this age group. The trade-offs with both staff-child ratios and group size revolves around issues of cost and quality. Larger groups with higher ratios may certainly be less expensive, but they minimize the individualized attention and the activity choices open to children. Smaller groups with more stringent ratios cost more, but allow for more staff attention to each child and a broader range of activities.

Most programs serve specific schools. More and more programs are making attempts to serve children with physical, emotional, and cognitive disabilities. You might consider how to best serve these children.

When will the program operate?

Afterschool programs can operate before and after school, during school vacations, holidays, and during the summer, in order to meet the needs of working parents. Though year-round care programs might be best for working parents, remember to consider the costs and time commitment associated with such hours. Afterschool programs operate before and after school, or just after school until around 6:00 pm. Working parents and their children benefit when programs operate during school-only holidays, such as teacher in-service days and during the annual Utah Education Association (UEA) Convention.

Where will the program be housed?

Afterschool programs can be housed in a variety of physical spaces. Programs can either use shared space and be completely portable, or have permanent space. Some possible locations are schools, libraries, recreation centers, churches, day care centers, family homes, or commercial sites.

When selecting a location for your program, keep in mind the location of the school. The program should be located close to the school for the convenience of parents and students. Remember, the closer to the school, the less you'll have to worry about transportation and its associated costs.

Another important detail to consider when selecting a location is cost. Programs can often find low cost, or even free space, in which to be housed.

How will the children get there?

Transportation is costly, so as you consider the needs of the children and parents, consider several options. If the program is close, children can walk. If safety is a concern,

you might consider a staff escort. The use of public transportation may also be an option. Sometimes the schools are willing and able to provide transportation. Parents may also organize car pools at the end of the day.

If you feel that the program needs to provide transportation, remember to consider the costs involved.

- Will you purchase or lease vehicles?
- Is there a possibility of sharing vehicles with other similar organizations or agencies?

Perhaps there is another afterschool program in the area willing to team up with you for transportation. After considering your alternatives, needs, and limitations, work with the planning committee to select the option that will best use available resources and meet the needs of program participants.

What administrative model will be selected?

Consider the following when deciding how the program will be administered:

- **Administered by one agency** such as a community agency, independent nonprofit corporation, group of parents, preschool day care center, government agency, or schools (public and private).
- **Administered collaboratively** such as a parent group and public or private school, community agency and public school, parent group and church, or city or town recreation department and school.

Who will staff the program?

- Hire staff that has prior experience, child-related training, and a commitment to school age care.
- Offer the best salary and benefits you can afford, even if it means fundraising.
- Ensure good working conditions, paid time off, and opportunities for meaningful staff input.
- Consider hiring at least one full-time person.
- Supplement paid staff with volunteers, work-study students, foster grandparents, and others that may be available in your community.

3. Funding and Budgeting

Before you actually start your program, you will need to know how much funding you need for both start-up and daily operation of your program. From the results of your needs survey, you can approximate how much the parents can afford to pay for the afterschool programs, then develop a budget.

Start-Up Costs are the one time only expenses such as purchasing equipment, supplies, and staff salaries during the planning period.

- Space cost (buy, rent, or share program space)
- Renovation/repairs
- Planning and training (including materials and manuals)
- Legal and other professional fees
- Licenses and permits
 - equipment
 - administrative
 - activity
 - janitorial
 - general

Operating Expenses are the expenses for running an ongoing program which has achieved some stability. Staff development and training

- Staff Salaries and Benefits
- Supplies
 - administrative
 - activity
 - janitorial
 - general
- Utilities
- Insurance
- Travel/transportation
- Maintenance

Operating Income is the income to run an ongoing program which has achieved some stability.

- Parental fees
- Fundraising activities
- In-kind donations

After you have an estimated budget worked out, you will be better prepared to estimate the funding needed for start-up and operating your program. Most programs will find that generating parent fees provide the majority of funding, but some programs also receive funding from state and federal sources. A successful program will use a diverse funding approach, receiving money from both public and private sources. Developing a long-term financial plan is essential for a successful, sustainable afterschool program. Other sources of funding can include local businesses, individuals, fundraising activities and non-profit organizations.

4. Creating Curriculum

Develop activities that are interesting and appropriate for the various age and skill-levels of the youth being served. A quality afterschool program has a variety of well-planned activities such as art, music, science, academic support, recreation, and free time. To serve the needs of school-age children and youth, the program should provide the opportunity for activities such as creative dramatics, science, art, quiet homework area, small group games, and active large group special events (multicultural festivals, treasure hunts, drama, dance or music performances). The availability of a kitchen area is an asset to any program. If the program is located in a school, access to the library, art room, computer lab, and other areas can expand the horizons of the program. Although structured activities are very important, do not underestimate the importance of daily free-time. Make sure that children have choices.

Another key issue when creating curriculum is considering the cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development stages of the children. Because all children develop in different areas at different rates, the challenge of creating an effective curriculum is to create activities that can adapt to the different development levels of the children. The ability to adapt will help determine the success of the activity. If the activity is too easy, the child is left bored and unchallenged. If it is too difficult, the child might lose self-confidence and become frustrated.

With a little bit of thought and ingenuity, many activities can be altered to accommodate children of varied ages and developmental stages. For example, if you are playing a game of basketball, certain rules can be made to level the playing field. One such rule could be that players taller than a certain height cannot block shots of shorter players. When playing a science trivia game, provide students with questions with varying degrees of difficulty, and allow the students to decide which level of questions they want to answer. Be careful with activities that might put students on the spot. Although some students love the spotlight, other students may feel uncomfortable. Provide an escape for children that feel uncomfortable being put on the spot. Refer to Appendix C for a list of books and other resources to help plan curriculum.

5. Establishing Policies, Procedures, Rules, and Parent/Staff Handbooks

Policies and procedures are essential guiding principles for afterschool programs. Effective policies will indicate proper procedures to carry out the policy itself. For this reason, policies and procedures should be determined before a program begins operation to ensure the appropriate courses of action for the many issues and situations that might arise. It is good risk management to have policies and procedures in place. For example, how and when do parents pick-up children? What about late or early pick-ups? What if a parent is unable to pick-up a child? Can a relative or friend of the family pick the child up? Policies, procedures, and rules should exist for the program as well as for the program staff, parents, and children.

The following list includes some of the important areas that will require policies:

- Staff
- Enrollment
- Parental Involvement
- Discipline and Behavior Management
- Health and Safety Issues
- Transportation (to and from program as well as during)
- Financial Management
- Setting the days and hours of operation, food, reporting child abuse and neglect

While reviewing policy and procedure handbooks from other afterschool programs may be helpful, you should not simply duplicate them. It is important that you sit down with your

planning committee and determine policies and procedures that will best assist you in accomplishing your program goals and quality standards. Here are some tips for setting policies and procedures:

- Keep policies and procedures clear, concise, and simple.
- Make sure that policies and procedures are meaningful and efficient. Avoid creating unnecessary policies or procedures.
- Keep rules fair and uniform.
- Once in place, practice consistent and strict adherence to policies. Make exceptions only when absolutely necessary.
- Develop an effective mechanism for changing policies when necessary. Evaluate policies regularly and revise as needed.

Once you and your committee have developed a clear set of policies and procedures, the next step is to make sure that they are employed within the program. Handbooks are effective tools for propagating and explaining policies and procedures to both program staff and parents. In order to avoid problems, staff members and parents should be required to sign a statement which they must read stating they understand the policies of the program. Refer to Appendix D for more suggested policies and procedures.

Legal Issues

1. Licensing

Utah law requires afterschool child care programs for children up to and through age 12 to be licensed, unless the program is operated and staffed by a public school, or by a private or parochial school that provides education in lieu of that provided by the public schools. The purpose of licensing is to ensure that basic health and safety issues are addressed. The licensure process requires attention to detail and takes 60-90 days from the time an initial licensing application is received. Currently, many afterschool programs are licensed as hourly child care facilities, and most school-based afterschool programs are license exempt. Check with your local licensing specialist to see if you are required to license your program. For more information about licensing afterschool programs, contact (801) 538-9084, or visit <http://health.utah.gov/licensing/rules.htm>. Some grant opportunities require licensing, while

others do not. In the future, the Utah Department of Health Child Care Licensing plans to develop a new category of rules specific to afterschool programs.

2. Selecting Organizational Structure

Afterschool programs may operate as a government, non-profit, for-profit, or school-based organization. Most often, afterschool programs exist as non-profit entities affiliated with a particular school. You will need to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the four different options, and decide which will be best for you.

If you wish to partner with an existing organization, consider schools, community libraries, community recreation centers, day care centers, YMCA/YWCA, 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, religious organizations, universities and colleges, and city or county government.

3. Risk Management

Well-designed policies and procedures will help manage risk and liability of the day to day operation of the program. Beyond the basics, you may want to consider some of the following:

Liability Insurance: There are insurance policies that cover an entire organization, called “umbrella policies.” There are also policies that specifically cover injuries to staff or children, lawsuits, use of motor vehicles, special events, or any other special needs you may have.

Check with your state’s Child Care Resource and Referral agency, or child care licensing to find out if your state requires you to have a certain type, or amount, of liability insurance in order to operate an afterschool program. You may wish to consult with an insurance agent or broker to determine what kind of insurance is best for your situation. Talk to other programs and organizations to find out what types of policies they have.

Obtaining Insurance: The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), (202) 232-8777 or (800) 424-2460, www.naeyc.org, has a list of insurance companies that have created plans specifically for afterschool programs. When speaking with insurance providers explain your program and your needs, and ask about options and premiums.

The National Network for Child Care recommends considering the following questions when shopping for insurance:

- What are the requirements to be insured? Does my program qualify?
- What is covered by the policy?
- What risks are excluded from the policy?
- How long does the policy last?
- What are the liabilities and medical payment limits?
- How much are the premiums? Are there deductibles?
- How do I file a claim?
- What is the company's financial reputation?
- What is the company's claim and service reputation?
- How knowledgeable and helpful is the insurance agent you speak with?

Coverage for Volunteers: Make sure your insurance policy specifies that volunteers (those not being paid) are covered. Volunteers need to be covered by liability insurance just as paid staff.

Organizations and Contact Information:

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Phone: (202) 232-8777 or (800) 424-2460

Web site: www.naeyc.org

Nonprofit Risk Management Center

Phone: (202) 785-3891

Fax: (202) 296-0349

Web site: www.nonprofitrisk.org

National School Age Care Alliance

Phone: (617) 298-5012

Fax: (617) 298-5022

Web site: www.nsaca.org

Program Staff (Hiring and Keeping Good Employees)

The skills, abilities, and attitudes of the staff will directly affect the quality of the afterschool program. Recruit and hire qualified individuals, because your preparations and hard work depend on those you hire. It will be impossible to have a successful, quality program without training and managing quality staff.

1. Recruiting and Hiring

The first step in recruiting and hiring a quality staff is to analyze your program's needs. The following are some common staff positions in after-school programs:

- *Afterschool director:* responsible for staff supervision and administrative operation of the program.
- *Site coordinator:* responsible to supervise the day to day operations of the programs.
- *Group worker:* supervises children, plans the curriculum, and has certain administrative responsibilities.
- *Staff assistant leader:* works under the group leader in planning and carrying out activities with the children.

Meet with your planning committee and decide what positions need to be filled. Once you have a basic framework for your future staff, develop a selection process. Decide if you will require applications, cover letters or resumes and who will review the submitted information. Next, choose a person to select applicants to interview and another to conduct the interviews. It is helpful to have more than one person involved in the interview process; you will be less likely to overlook key information.

2. Creating Job Descriptions

Creating job descriptions will help define the roles and responsibilities of staff members. Keep in mind that rarely is any one individual perfect for a particular job. Thus, it is important to prioritize the qualifications for the positions. Start with the minimum requirements, and then add the preferred qualifications. Through effective training, on-the-job experience, and managing, an individual who initially meets the minimum requirements can exceed the preferred qualifications. It is also important to allow some flexibility. Once your program is up and running, you might find a need to shuffle or change certain positions, duties, and responsibilities.

Recruit applicants

Be clear and concise when writing the actual job announcement. List the title and the major duties, responsibilities, and qualifications desired. Provide instructions regarding how to apply for the position, starting date, schedule of shifts, pay, and the closing date. The most important role of a job announcement is to notify and persuade qualified applicants to apply.

Keep the announcement positive and enticing. Once you have a good job announcement, the next step is to post it.

Posting Job Announcements

There are a variety of places to post job announcements or advertise the job. Try to place your announcements where they are most likely to be seen by your target audience. You want to reach the best potential applicants and avoid those that are not qualified. The most effective method of finding good help is not through posting an announcement, but through referrals and word of mouth. Other resources for finding employees include government employment agencies, universities, vocational schools, flyers and local newspapers.

With well placed announcements, you should soon start receiving inquiries. Review applications with those who have been selected to assist in the hiring process, and decide which applicants to interview, keeping all resumes on file for future reference.

Interviewing

Effective interviewing is essential in recruiting the best possible staff. The first step in making your interview process effective is pre-interview preparation. Checking professional references and consulting with applicants' previous employers can be very useful. Stay open-minded during the review process, and prepare questions you want to ask applicants during the interview. The same interview team should complete all interviews. Prepare a variety of well thought-out questions for the interview, such as questions to determine the applicant's overall interest in the position, and broad questions to test the general knowledge and understanding regarding working with children. You may also include hypothetical scenario questions to measure skills and aptitude regarding the position, and questions related to goals and future plans. Refer to Appendix E for sample interview questions and a form.

Make sure you take notes on their answers so you can compare them later with answers given by other applicants. Encourage the interviewees to ask questions as well; it will benefit them and you allowing you to further assess their interests and ability.

Make final decision

The interview team will make recommendations to the hiring committee and select well-balanced staff that represents a variety of backgrounds, culture, and ethnicity. Consider a trial period in which a potential candidate would work for a day or more, allowing both the employer and applicant to assess the potential position.

3. New Staff Training

There are essentially two categories of training to consider; new staff training and ongoing training. Once you've hired your staff, the first step is to familiarize them to their new positions and the program. Topics you need to include in your new employee orientation include specific job responsibilities and expectations, as well as a general overview of the program. Include the program missions, goals, philosophy and history in the new staff training. Make sure the handbook includes policies and procedures such as safety measures and accident reporting. You may also want to add demonstrations of program equipment. Refer to Appendix F for a sample orientation checklist.

No employee will remember everything right away, and you should allow the employees appropriate time to learn and adjust to their new positions. Having specific job responsibilities written down in a staff handbook will help facilitate quick and effective learning of responsibilities and expectations.

4. Ongoing Training

Your staff will continue to grow and improve on their own as they gain valuable on-the-job experience. However, the extent to which your staff improves over time will be largely affected by ongoing training. In order to develop a quality staff, you need to provide quality training through supervision, staff meetings, and in-service training.

Supervision

The main purpose of supervising staff is to monitor and evaluate performance. Remember to be fair, consistent, and courteous, as you will have a much better response. Make expectations clear, and provide positive, constructive feedback. Your staff needs to know what they do well and where they need improvement. Don't assume that they will know for themselves. Supervising requires special skills, talents, and tact. Don't be afraid to ask for help from knowledgeable professionals and feedback from your staff.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are a crucial element of communication for a quality staff; they provide an opportunity for you and your staff to connect, communicate, and discuss issues. Take the opportunity to inform and be informed regarding problems, ideas, and new items of importance. Effective staff meetings are planned ahead of time with a clear purpose and

written agenda, but should also include the element of free discussion. Always allow time for your staff to discuss ideas and concerns. Be sure to take minutes, assign responsibilities, and follow up, otherwise you'll be more likely to talk about great ideas, but never act on any of them. Adding some food and fun is helpful.

In-Service Training

Staff in-service training is an excellent opportunity to train staff regarding essential skills and knowledge. Through in-service, the staff has the opportunity to learn and practice important techniques and skills with each other. When selecting training material for an in-service session, be sure to ask the staff for topics on which they would like more training. You may want to include topics such as building positive relationships, resolving conflicts among children, teaching about discipline, caring, respecting as well as sharing among children, while making sure you connect with the parents. You may want to dedicate a whole session to one topic at a time. Always consider the needs of your staff and plan accordingly.

Staff Evaluation

Evaluations should be based on expectations which are clearly defined in job descriptions, personnel policies, and individual goal statements, and should take place at regularly scheduled intervals. Your evaluation process will help staff learn where they need to improve and to make those changes. Staff should also have an opportunity to evaluate the program.

Running a Quality Program

1. Quality Standards

A quality program is based upon a well-planned, consistent and organized operation with a safe, friendly and nurturing environment. A caring and well-trained staff, parental involvement and a variety of activities also improves the quality. While this manual provides many resources as a start for achieving strong performance in these areas, it is crucial that you continually rate and evaluate your performance in these areas to ensure program quality. Refer to Appendix G for resources to help with program evaluation.

2. Fulfilling the Diverse Needs of Children

All children have a crucial need to be in a safe, secure environment and to have acceptance by peers and staff. No two children are the same. Children develop socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively at different rates. They also possess unique personalities and dispositions. These facts, combined with the fact that your program will most likely serve children from multiple ages, presents a challenging situation. Make sure to support, encourage and respect the children with whom you work with.

Focus on the developmental needs of the children. Middle childhood years are a crucial time for youth as they learn generally accepted behavior, and their need for acceptance shifts from family to peers. A quality program will provide a safe and friendly environment, as well as activities to facilitate healthy physical, mental, social, and emotional development.

In order to meet the challenges of working with children of varied ages and developmental stages, you and your staff need to have an understanding of the different ages and stages of children. Most programs will divide children into groups based on their age, with the older youth taking more responsibility to plan their own activities. As your understanding of common developmental patterns of children increases, you will be more able to meet the diverse needs of the children in your program. Refer to Appendix H for a chart comparing ages and stages of child development.

3. Connecting with the Parents

Given that parents are the primary teachers in the life of a child, connecting with the parents is an important aspect of operating a successful afterschool program. However, it can be very challenging. While you see the child for several hours a day depending on the set-up of your program, you might not see the parent on a daily basis. You will deal with a diverse group of parents, so be prepared to see and understand a variety of parenting techniques.

If you see the parents on a daily basis, take advantage of this opportunity to build relationships of trust. Always focus on the positive when speaking with parents. Remember, as parents are dropping-off or picking up their children, they are often rushed, stressed, or tired after a long day of work, so be sensitive to their circumstances.

If you do not have daily personal contact with parents, there are still things you can do to facilitate parental involvement. Plan activities such as cooperative learning workshops, game nights, or a special Saturday activity where families bond with one another and with the program staff. Focus on creating a strong open-line of communication, such as establishing a

parent bulletin board, or sending newsletters, memos and reminders for parents. Ask for feedback and establish convenient methods for parents to contact and speak with program staff with such as an answering machine during the night.

Remember that you will deal with all different types of parent backgrounds and cultures. Whatever the situation, always support the family unit and if you find yourself in a difficult situation, do the best you can to encourage and support parents. Involve them in the program as much as possible, and when appropriate, refer them to parenting groups or community resources. Let them know that you are there to help and support their efforts as parents.

As relationships with parents are developed, and parental involvement increases, your program will be more successful and you'll have a more profound effect in the lives of those you serve.

4. Basic Risk Management for Daily Operations of Afterschool Programs

Transportation of Children

Program staff should obtain written permission from a parent/guardian before transporting youth to any activity or event including field trips and activities. Refer to Appendix I for a sample parent/guardian field trip notification form.

Release/Pickup Authorization

Unless you have made special provisions, personal transportation to and from the afterschool program is generally the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Youth in the program who are dropped off and picked up, should leave ONLY with individuals indicated by parent/guardian, as indicated on an appropriate form. Refer to Appendix J for a sample authorization form.

Above Suspicion Policy

One-on-one situations of an adult with a youth should be avoided as reasonably feasible. Avoid potential child abuse issues by having at least three people present at all times. The purpose is to provide a safe and caring environment in all aspects of the afterschool program, and to protect paid and volunteer staff from situations where there is potential for being accused of abuse. It is recognized that there will be occasions where one-on-one situations are unavoidable. ALL staff, both paid and volunteer, should avoid such situations with youth.

Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

As members of a youth serving organization, it is important that adults are aware of their responsibility for child safety. All paid and volunteer staff should report suspected child abuse cases. Usually a program's policy will ask staff to report to the director, and the director will make the decision to report. The Child Abuse Reporting 24 Hour Statewide Hotline number is (800) 678-9399.

We are here to Help

We wish you well in your endeavor to develop an afterschool program in your community. Please contact us at any of the organizations listed on the inside cover page of this guide. Providing quality afterschool care of youth is important to all of us, and we are here to help.

Additional Resources and Help

1. Appendix A – Sample Needs Assessment

A Community Child Care Needs Assessment Survey

SAMPLE

This is an assessment of child care needs of the (locality name) community. If you have parenting responsibilities, we would appreciate your time in helping us assess your needs. Please complete the survey and return no later than (give time frame). Thank you for assisting us with this effort.

1. Would you use child care services if they were available to you?	Yes	No
2. If yes, please complete the remainder of the survey		
3. Are you currently using child care services?	Yes	No
If yes, please identify the type of services you use:		
AGE RANGE	# of Children	\$ COST/CH
Infant (Birth to 11 months)		
Toddler (11 to 36 months)		
Preschool (3 to 5 years)		
After School Care (K-6th grade)		
After School Care (7-9th grade)		
4. Please mark the type of child care needed:		
Full Time		
Half Days (5 days a week)		
Partial Week (2 or 3 times/wk)		
Half Days-Partial wk (2 or 3 times/wk)		
After School Care		
Night Care or Evening Care		
Sick Child Care		
Other:		
5. Please mark the location/type of care you are currently utilizing:		
Type/Location		
# of Children		
Age(s) of Children		
Day Care Center		
Family Care Center		
Provider in my own Home		
Spouse/Partner		
Care by family members		

After School Care		
Care by older sibling		
Other:		
6. Are you satisfied with your current child care arrangements?	Yes	No
If no, please explain:		
7. If you do not utilize child care services, what prevents you from using services?		
Cost		
Availability		
Location		
Vanpool/Carpool		
Hours of Operation		
Happy with current provider		
Other: (please explain)		
8. To help assess funding needs, please indicate your household gross salary range.		
# of people in house:		
Below - \$20,000		
\$20,000 - \$29,000		
\$30,000 - \$39,000		
\$40,000 - \$49,000		
over - \$50,000		
9. Is your household headed by a two-parent household or a single parent household?	Single parent	Two parent
10. How MANY children do you have in each of the following age groups?		
a. 0-4 years old		
b. 5-8 years old		
c. 9-12 years old		
d. 13-15 years old		
11. Please check one in each column for the type of care you USE and the type of care you PREFER.	Type of Care I Mostly use	Type of Care I Would prefer
a. Care by parent in own home		
b. Care in relative's home		
c. Care in own home with relative		
d. Care in your home with non-relative		
e. Care in non-relative's home		
f. Child care for self		
g. Child care center		
h. Combination of care as needed		
i. Currently searching for care		
j. School-based program		
k. Other		

12. Please check the days you need child care. Check all that apply.		
a. Monday-Friday		
b. Snow days, holidays, summer breaks		
c. Other		
13. Please check the times you need school-age childcare. Check all that apply.		
a. Before school only		
b. After school only		
c. Before and after school		
d. Other		
14. Please check the amount you consider reasonable to pay for child care PER MONTH/WEEK/PER CHILD during the regular school year. Check only one.		
a. No pay required		
b. \$1-24		
c. \$25-40		
d. \$41-60		
e. \$61-80		
f. \$81-100		
g. \$101-125		
h. Over \$125		
15. Have you had any of these child care related problems during the past year? Check problem areas.	Yes, I've had this problem	No, haven't had this problem
a. Cost of care		
b. Finding temporary care		
c. Finding care for sick child		
d. Finding care for child with special needs		
e. Location of care		
f. Transportation to/from care		
g. Dependability of care		
h. Quality of care		
i. Scheduling child care to match work schedule		

Thank you very much for your assistance!!

★ Note: The decision to conduct a community assessment of child care needs should be a community decision involving collaborative efforts at various levels. The process involves a systematic approach to data collection, data analysis, and reporting that involves staff time and use of community resources.

Original assessment instrument is available online at:

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/family/350-056/350-056.html>

References:

DeBord, Karen. *Child Care: Organizing At the Community Level*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina State University, 1991.

---. *Comprehensive Community-Based Child Care: Is Your Community Ready?* North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, 1997.

---. *Child Care Needs Assessment 1: Child Care Needs Assessment Considerations*. NNCC, 1998.

Hobbs, Beverly. *Final Report of the Oregon School-Age Child Care Needs Assessment*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Extension, 1995.

National Network for Child Care. NNCC, 1991. (Some sample survey items reprinted with permission from NNCC).

2. Appendix B – Sample Afterschool Schedules

SAMPLE AFTER-SCHOOL SCHEDULE

3:10 – Sign In

3:15 – Homework / Reading

3:45 – Transition - Meeting

4:00 – Snack

4:10 - Transition

4:15 – Club Time

4:45 – Free Choice

5:15 – Clean Up / Cool Down

5:30 – Sign Out

SAMPLE Early out Day Schedule

1:10 – Sign In - Free Choice

1:45 – Transition

1:55 – Club Time

2:30 – Homework / Reading

3:00 – Transition - Meeting

3:15 – Snack

3:30 – Free Choice

4:00 - Transition

4:10 – Club Time

4:45 – Free Choice - Outside

3. Appendix C – Suggested Resources for Further Information

“ABC’s of Starting School-Age Child Care.” *School-Age Child Care Series Administrative Fact Sheets*. Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project. <<http://www.wccip.org>>

“Afterschool Alliance.” <<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org>> (Information on starting an afterschool program, funding sources, sustainability, and more.)

Bruton, S. (Ed.) *Kids’ time: A School-Age Care Program Guide*. California Department of Education, 1994.

“Caring for Our Children.” *National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*: 2nd Edition. American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, & National Resources Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. <www.redleafpress.org> and <www.schoolagenotes.com> (Nine comprehensive chapters cover program activities for health development; nutrition and food service; safe play facilities, supplies, and equipment; infection diseases; principals for including and caring for children with special needs; and more.)

Foundations, Inc. <www.foundationsinc.org> (Nationally recognized for the services it offers to afterschool programs, schools, districts, and other educational and community organizations.)

“Getting Started.” *Technical Assistance Series*: 2nd Edition. Georgia School-Age Care Association, 1995. <<http://www.gsaca.com>>

Harms, Jacobs & White. “School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale.” <www.schoolagenotes.com> (A 49-item rating scale for assessing levels of quality in school-age programs covering seven major categories: space and furnishings; health and safety; activities; interactions; program structure; staff development; and supplementary items.)

“Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers.” *Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-free Environment Before and After School*.

<<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/index.html>> (NAA Standards for Quality School-Age Care by the National Afterschool Association. Describes the practices that lead to stimulating, safe, and supportive programs for young people ages 5 to 14 in their out-of-school time. Information on standards, accreditation, training, publications, and more. <<http://www.naaweb.org>> or <www.schoolagenotes.com>.)

Koralek, Newman, & Colker. "Caring for Children in School-Age Programs."

<www.schoolagenotes.com> (Competency-based Training materials specific to school-age care.)

"National Institute on Out-of-School Time." <<http://www.niost.org>> (Information and publications regarding best practices, training ideas, and more.)

Newman, Roberta. "Training New After-School Staff: Welcome to the World of School-Age Care!" <www.schoolagenotes.com> (A tool for school-age program directors with limited time and resources to help new staff "get up and running quickly.")

"Resource Guide for Planning and Operating Afterschool Programs." *The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory*. <<http://www.sedl.org/pubs/fam95>>

"School-Age Notes." <www.schoolagenotes.com> (Information on starting an afterschool program, catalog of curriculum and activities, newsletters and email updates. Of special interest is "Before and After School Programs – A Start-up and Administration manual" and "Training New After-school Staff.")

"The After-School Corporation." <www.tascorp.org> (Website contains training, technical assistance, toolkits, and resources for those operating afterschool programs.)

"Utah Child Care Resource and Referral." <<http://jobs.utah.gov/occ/CCRandR>>

4. Appendix D – Suggested Items for Program Policies

Note that some programs have the parent sign and return one copy of the policy to show that they have read them. Some information you may want to include on the policy is your program name, address, phone number with an answering machine for after-hours contact, hours of operation, holidays, payment policy, and policy on vacation and absences.

***Guidance** (Please review the following guidance procedures with your children.)*

Our goal is to establish and maintain a behavior management system which will reinforce the following positive behaviors:

- Respect Others
- Respect Property
- Stay with your Group
- Leave Personal Belongings at Home

If my child's behavior seriously violates the safety of any child or staff, I understand that he/she may be temporarily excluded from the program. In these circumstances, I agree that a parent or authorized adult will pick up my child within 30 minutes of notification.

Discipline

1. Should inappropriate behavior occur, the concern will be discussed with the students, and a written warning will be given.
2. Should inappropriate behavior continue, a second warning will be given and the parents will be notified.
3. Should inappropriate behavior still continue, a third warning will be given, and the student will be suspended for 3 days.
4. Continued behavior problems may result in permanent dismissal. (Refunds will not be given.)

★ Parents may set up a meeting with the program coordinator to discuss individual needs and concerns. We use a consistent, positive approach including redirection, diversion and separation, always promoting self-discipline. Parents will be notified if there is a consistent behavior problem.

Illness

It is in the best interest of your child and the other children if you keep your child at home when he or she is ill. Children with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting will not be admitted to the program. If a child becomes ill while at the program, the parent will be called immediately to pick up the child. Parents will be notified regarding contagious illnesses. Children will be readmitted when they are no longer contagious.

Medication

In accordance with state law, we will not dispense any medication to any child without advance written consent from the parent or guardian. Prescription medication may be given only to the child for whom it is prescribed. Over the counter medication must have the child's name clearly printed on the container. The parent must complete a "Parent Permission to Administer Medication" form, and give the form and the medication directly to the director in charge. All medication must be in its original container. If these steps are not completed, medication will not be administered.

Students who are required to take medication during program hours must have a written consent from the parent and the doctor administering the medication. Forms for this purpose are available from the director. All medication must be in its original container with an accurate pharmacy label intact.

Attendance and Late Pick-Up

Parents must notify staff if their child will be late or absent. This is for the safety of the child. If the child is registered to come and does not appear, we will check first with the school to see if the child was absent, and then we will call the parent and emergency contact numbers to locate the child.

Child Pick-Up and Drop-Off

Children must sign in upon arrival at the program and parents must sign the child and notify a staff member when a child is leaving. Parents are required to come in and pick-up their child and sign the child out. Parents will give the program the names of all persons authorized to pick up their children. Staff will ask for picture ID of anyone they do not know. Persons not listed as authorized to pick up will not be allowed to check out a child.

I understand that my child must be checked out either by computer or manually, both upon arrival and departure, by the person delivering/picking up the child.

Transportation

Public transportation will be used for activities such as field trips. Before your child can participate in these activities, we must have a signed parental consent. We will notify you of such activities.

5. Appendix E – Sample Interview Questions/Form

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	
- MENTOR -	
WORK HISTORY	
1	Summarize your education experiences, and background in relation to this position as mentor for an after school program.
2	Give examples and explain your experience in teaching or presenting in front of children or adults. Have you had any experience planning and developing curriculum?
ADAPTABILITY / FLEXIBILITY	
3	What type of people do you like to work with?
4	Give an example of a time when you felt a co-worker was inflexible and not willing to change? How would you handle it?
INITIATIVE	
5	Do you consider yourself an organized person? Explain?
6	Give a short example of a time when you took initiative on the job. What happened?
JUDGEMENT	
7	What kind of activities do you think middle school youth enjoy after school?
STRESS TOLERANCE	
8	What causes stress for you on the job? How do you handle it?
TEAM PLAYER	
9	Give an example of a time when you were part of a group or team. What did you like about it? What did you dislike?
FOCUS / FOLLOW THROUGH	
10	What interests or talents could you bring to the program?
ASSERTIVENESS	
11	Describe your kind of management techniques for discipline and guidance you feel need to be implemented in a school-age program.
MOTIVATION	
12	What motivated you to apply for this job? Why?
13	Where do you see yourself going? What are your work-related goals?
14	What do you like to do for fun?

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- SITE MANAGER -

WORK HISTORY	
1	Summarize your education experience, and background in relation to this position.
2	Summarize your experience with bookkeeping, monthly reporting, data collection, finances related to collection, receipting, and accounting for money.
3	Give examples and explain your experience in: a. teaching / presenting with children and/or adults b. curriculum planning, scheduling activities and any original curriculum development c. experience in managing staff or adults
ADAPTABILITY / FLEXIBILITY	
4	Give an example of a time when you were in a situation with children which changed unexpectedly? What did you do? What was the outcome?
5	Describe a time when you felt a co-worker was inflexible. How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
INITIATIVE	
6	Give an example of a time when you took ownership for, or suggested an idea to improve team performance. What obstacles did you face? What did you do? What was the outcome?
7	Give a short example of a time when you took initiative on the job. What happened?
JUDGEMENT	
8	Have you been responsible for making significant decisions on the job in relation to this position? What was the decision? What was the outcome / consequence of your decision?
9	Describe how you would manage a school age program with 6 staff and 100 children based in a gym and classrooms. How would you set up an environment? How would staff work with the children? What activities would you offer?
STRESS TOLERANCE	
10	What causes stress for you on the job? How do you handle it?
TEAM PLAYER	
11	Give an example of a time when you motivated your co-workers.
12	Describe a time when you were part of a team. What did you like about it? What did you dislike?
13	Give an example of a time when you were part of a group and one person or no one was participating. What did you do? What was the result?

FOCUS / FOLLOW THROUGH	
14	Give an example of a time when you needed to prevent things from falling through the cracks, as related tot his position. What did you do?
15	Have you ever worked on a project over a long period of time? What did you do? What obstacles did you meet? How did you overcome them?
ASSERTIVENESS	
16	Describe your kind of management techniques for discipline and guidance you feel need to be implemented in a school age program.
17	Think of a situation in which you were involved where there was a significant conflict with a child or an adult in relation to this position. What did you do? What was the outcome?
MOTIVATION	
18	What are you looking for in a job? Why do you want this job?
19	Where do you see yourself going? What are your work-related goals?
20	How would your current work peers describe your strengths and weaknesses?
COMMENTS:	

SAMPLE PANEL INTERVIEW FORM

NAME: _____

RATING SCALE:

Low (not standard – 1)

Medium (meets standard – 2)

High (exceeds standard – 3)

AREAS OF FOCUS	COMMENTS	TOTAL
WORK HISTORY		
ADAPTABILITY / FLEXIBILITY		
INITIATIVE		
JUDGEMENT		
STRESS TOLERANCE		
TEAM PLAYER		
FOCUS / FOLLOW THROUGH		
ASSERTIVENESS		
MOTIVATION		
VERBAL COMM. PRESENTATION		
SCENARIOS		
TOTALS / COMMENTS:		

6. Appendix F – Sample Orientation Checklist

SAMPLE New Staff Orientation Checklist

Employee: _____ Supervisor: _____

Date of Employment: _____

I. Job Definition

- _____ Discuss the program mission, philosophy, and unique features of the job.
- _____ Review and discuss the job description.
- _____ Identify and discuss priorities for the next three months.
- _____ Discuss specific standards of performance/ expectations.
- _____ Identify present level of skill and understanding of all phases of job assignments.
- _____ Identify people who might be helpful in learning skills and routines.
- _____ Encourage new staff to read program manuals and resources.
- _____ Review licensing regulations and requirements.
- _____ Review the California Department of Education's *Exemplary Program Standards*.
- _____ Review requirements for necessary certification: first aid, CPR, driver certification, college units.
- _____ Discuss career development opportunities and training.
- _____ Set specific times to meet together.

II. Personnel Policy and Required Practices

- _____ Review the agency's personnel policy.
- _____ Review policies and safety practices related to specific areas.
- _____ Review sign-in / sign-out procedures.
- _____ Review forms and due dates related to payroll, reimbursement for expense, and insurance and retirement forms, if applicable.
- _____ Discuss emergency care and the program's disaster plan.
- _____ Review the program's budget and staff accountability.

III. Staff, Parents, and Volunteers

- _____ Introduce agency staff and discuss their responsibilities and authority.
- _____ Identify key parents, community leaders, and agency volunteers.
- _____ Support attendance at meetings of related groups: parent advisory committee, agency board or committee, and PTA.
- _____ Review dates and format for staff meetings.

IV. Mechanics

Familiarize new staff with:

- _____ Office procedures and capabilities
- _____ Purchase orders
- _____ Petty Cash
- _____ Files
- _____ Telephones
- _____ Xerox Machines
- _____ Office Supplies and the inventory system
- _____ Program Supplies and the inventory system
- _____ Accident forms
- _____ Audit trail requirements

V. Facility

- _____ Acquaint new staff with the building's layout: lights, heating, air conditioning, fire alarm, supply storage.
- _____ Assign keys and review the lock-up procedure.
- _____ Review fire extinguisher usage and location.

VI. Community

- _____ Provide information on geographic, social, and political aspects of the community.
- _____ Provide information about other community programs and services.
- _____ Arrange introductions to staff involved in interagency and school district partnerships.

7. Appendix G – Sample Checklist for Evaluating Quality of the Program

SAMPLE Quality Checklist for Evaluating School-Age Child Care Programs

The following checklist will help you measure the quality of the programs you are considering. Take it along when you visit, and check (✓) each item.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
• Are the indoor and outdoor areas safe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are children supervised by sight at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are bathrooms nearby?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are there written health, safety and emergency rules?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is the staff qualified in school-age child care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are there enough adults for the number of the children in the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the staff talk to the children often and in a friendly, helpful way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the staff listen to children, answering their questions and requests?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the staff encourage children to be independent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are children of both sexes given equal opportunity to try the same activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does it appear that the staff does not use physical or other punishment that hurts, frightens, or humiliates children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are children encouraged to solve problems without being forced to do so?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are children relaxed and happy while they play?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Are there fun and exciting activities to choose from each day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Is there enough equipment and materials to make the play areas interesting?
- Is there enough space for children to play in groups or individually?
- Is there an area set aside for quiet activities?
- Is there evidence that parents receive reports on their children?
- Are there opportunities for parents to participate from time to time?
- Can parents visit at any time?
- Are questions and comments from parents encouraged?

8. Appendix H – Ages and Stages of Child Development

Developmental Characteristics and Programming Implications

Each individual matures at his/her own pace, and the transition from one state of development to the next is gradual. Understanding characteristics and needs at different developmental stages is important in planning learning opportunities. This promotes progressive acquisition of subject matter information and life skills.

Basic needs:

- To experience a positive self-concept
- To experience success
- To become increasingly independent
- To develop and accept ones own identity

K-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Slow steady growth with limited muscle development.	Slow steady growth for most. Puberty starts for some girls usually accompanied by a growth spurt. Extremely active, may overdo, need 10-11 hours sleep. Be sensitive of concern over body changes.	Wide range in physical development, early maturing girls may have appearance of young women, some boys will not have entered puberty. Growth spurts may cause clumsiness. Much concern about changing bodies. Interested in grooming, but probably won't admit it.	Body changes have been accepted by most, some continue to struggle. Individual talents & abilities emerge. Be sensitive to late developers, help them feel they are OK.
Plan activities which require limited small muscle coordination. Expect craft projects to be messy. It is the doing, not the finished product which is important.	Plan action, hands-on doing. Field trips & tours are good if stops are brief. Plan for needed rest. Better at making things, but still don't expect perfection.	Include learning experiences related to understanding self & the changes taking place. Provide opportunities for acquiring good grooming habits.	Provide opportunities to help recognize their special talents & abilities. Individual counsel is good-highlight talents & skills.
Concrete thinkers-deal with here &	Many are still concrete thinkers,	Most have moved from concrete to	Mastering abstract thinking. Can interact on

now. If they can't see, taste, or touch, it isn't real. Short attention span.	some beginning to think logically, & symbolically.	more abstract thinking. They enjoy playing with ideas.	adult level. Beginning to plan for their future.
Give (demonstrate) instructions in small increments. Plan a variety of hands-on, short, learning activities.	When introducing abstract ideas or concepts, relate to something concrete, something they can do, touch, or feel.	Adult should provide supervision without domination. Allow them to discuss ideas & concerns in small groups.	Include career education including opportunities to research careers, setting career goals & planning to accomplish goals.
Curious, eager to try something new. Learn best if physically active.	Easily motivated, eager to try something different. Interest will jump from one thing to another.	Values, justice, & equality important issues- can become very intense. They want to be sure things are judged fairly.	Significant moral growth, difficulty understanding compromise. Often think society is made up of a bunch of hypocrites.
Provide hands-on experiences. Let them do, just don't expect perfection.	Guide to stay with tasks to completion. Work closely to have them record accomplishments as they happen. Help reflect back & set new goals.	Discuss values, justice, & equality as they relate to a variety of issues. Introduce the concept of personal values.	Continue opportunities for understanding how values are acquired & the importance of a set of personal values. Promote discussion & action related to current issues.
Strong desire for affection & approval from adults.	Approval from leaders & parents is important. Want to know how much they have improved & how they can do better next time.	Dependence on the opinions of adults shifts to dependence on the opinions of peers. Now seek peer recognition. Recognize this as healthy growth & help parents understand this.	Opinions of peers remain important but self-recognition of accomplishments is also important. Becoming more independent, acquiring values & setting goals.
One adult for each 3-4 children to give needed individual attention. Sensitive to criticism, don't accept failure well.	Give individual evaluation, suggest ways to improve. Comparison with success of others is difficult for them.	Changes in hormones create mood swings, also a time of fragile self-concept for many.	Adults need to continue to give support & guidance during this period when teens are making serious decisions. Unsettled emotions may cause them to be stormy or withdrawn at times, but

			will usually pride self on increased ability to be responsible.
Emphasize individual accomplishments. Use activities involving cooperation: avoid competition even in games.	Build positive self-concept by comparing past & present performances of the individual & to emphasize positive changes.	Plan self-discovery activities. Support, encourage, but don't dominate. Still important to avoid comparing with other teens.	Consistent treatment from adults is important even though some will act like adults one day & children the next. Provide opportunities to use special talents.
Learning how to be a friend & to make friends. May have several "best" friends at one time.	Joining a "club" is popular, stronger identity with peers. Admire older boys & girls.	Moving toward more independence. Want to plan own activities & explore beyond a community. Better at planning than carrying out the plan.	Many can plan & interact on the adult level. Can initiate & carry out tasks such as researching area of special interest without much adult supervision. Achieving independence, identity & definition of career goals are important for this age.
Allow to form own groups for some activities, others to encourage total group interaction. Introduce characteristics of a friend.	Plan opportunities for club enrollment. Utilize teen teachers & mentors.	Involve youth in planning. Help them develop realistic plans & then provide necessary guidance for completion & evaluation. Plan activities beyond the community.	Become an advisor, let teens plan & assume responsibility for carrying out plans. Time is precious, if programs are filled with "busy work" teens will lose patience & interest.

Original chart may be accessed at www.Utah4-H.org

9. Appendix I – Sample Field Trip/Activity Permission Form

SAMPLE Field Trip Notification Form

This is to notify you that the _____

Afterschool Program

is scheduled to travel to:

LOCATION: _____ (NAME/ADDRESS/CITY)

DATE: _____

DEPART AT (TIME): _____

RETURN AT (TIME): _____

Your child needs to bring the following:

(All drivers on the field trip must have insurance, valid license, and provide seat belts for each child)

In order for your child to participate, please complete and return the permission slip below by _____ (date).

If you have any questions, please call us at _____ (phone#).

Parent/Guardian Field Trip Permission Slip

My child, _____, has my permission to attend the _____ activity scheduled:

LOCATION: _____ (NAME/ADDRESS/CITY)

TRIP DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

Parent or Guardian

Please indicate below a phone number and address where you could be contacted during the Field Trip/activity:

PHONE: _____ ADDRESS: _____

10. Appendix J – Sample Release/Pick up Authorization Form

SAMPLE RELEASE/PICKUP AUTHORIZATION

I understand that participants in this afterschool program will not be permitted to leave with anyone other than the person(s) I have listed below.

Name(s): _____

Relationship to Child: _____

Signature of Person Picking up Child _____

Date _____

I give permission for the following person(s) to pick up my child from the afterschool program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian