

# Quality Afterschool Program Checklist

Prepared by the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence

[www.azafterschool.org](http://www.azafterschool.org)

## Afterschool Program Basics

- What is the program's mission and philosophy?
- Is the program licensed? Is it licensed-exempt?
- Does the program have an orientation and policy manual for new families?
- How are families involved in the program?
- What is the program fee? Is there financial assistance available?
- Does the program serve children with special needs?
- What is the procedure for handling emergencies?

## Physical Space Requirements

- Does the facility appear clean, safe and organized?
- Is there adequate space and materials for a variety of activities?
- Are there quiet, soft spaces for reading, homework, quiet games and those times when a child might want to be away from the larger group?
- Is the outdoor space safe and large enough to host a range of recreation and physical activities?

## Social and Emotional Development

- Are the children happy, having fun and actively engaged in the program?
- Do the children have a role in planning program activities, content and schedule?
- Are children encouraged to try new activities and build new skills that may be unfamiliar to them and out of their comfort zone?
- How are children encouraged to resolve differences among themselves?

## Academic Enrichment

- Does the program provide a rich, informal learning atmosphere that expands on and reinforces concepts learned in the classroom?
- Is homework assistance provided?
- Is creativity fostered and encouraged through music, art, dance, theatre?
- Is problem solving and critical thinking fostered and encouraged through hands-on experiments?
- Is technology available and what meaningful role does it play (beyond the playing of video games)?
- Is physical activity an important component of the program?
- Is the programming sufficiently varied or change with some frequency so as not to become boring and repetitive?
- Are the children having FUN!?

## Staff

- Does the staff greet each child's arrival in a warm and friendly manner?
- Is staff actively engaged in activities and conversations with the children and youth?
- Is staff respectful to each other, the children and the parents?
- What is the staff to child/youth ratio?
- Does the staff give meaningful and frequent feedback to parents about their child's growth and development?