

School's Out, Make It Count:

Quality Standards for Out-of-School Time Programs

Training Series 1 | Trainer Copy

Standard 1: Safe and Healthy Environments



KEY PRINCIPLE | Youth experience physically and emotionally safe, healthy and developmentally appropriate learning environments.



SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Dry Erase Board or Giant Post-It pads
- Markers
- Copies of *Safety Considerations for Children's Programs Worksheet*
- Copies of Agenda
- Any examples trainer might want to bring of the Standard in practice

INTRODUCTIONS | Introduce yourself and the purpose of this training. With small groups, you may wish to have participants introduce themselves as well. No more than 5 minutes.

ICE BREAKER | (5-10 minutes)

TRAINER | "I want everyone to think back to the bedroom you had as a child. What were some things about that space that made it yours? What were some things you liked best about it? What are some things you would have changed about it?" Let the group share some things about their rooms and write them down on the board/ post-its under the heading "Engaging". Now, ask these questions, "Was your bedroom safe? How about your house? Were there things your parents did around your house and room that made them more safe for you when you were younger? What were they?" Again, the group can share and you can write some of these things down under a different heading or new Post-it labeled "Safety". Explain that, while an engaging environment is important and will be discussed during this training, the main focus will be ways we can provide a safe environment for children.

KEYS

TRAINER | Read through each key quickly so the group has an idea of what will be covered in the training.

STAFFING CONSIDERATIONS

- **Staff and volunteers submit to background checks and Fingerprint clearance cards.**

TRAINER | Discuss *briefly* unless there are specific questions about this key.

- **Staff implements policies, procedures and supervision to maintain safety for all youth.**

TRAINER | Discuss reasons why children should be supervised at all times (unless in the bathroom). Also discuss the importance coming up with procedures for ensuring staff get breaks while maintaining supervision of children at all times. Discuss the importance and basics of practicing fire drills. Pass out the *Safety Considerations for Children's Programs worksheet*. Have the participants break up into groups of four or five and discuss how often they think each of the items should be checked. When individual groups are done, have each group share one or two and why they decided on that length of time. Guide the group in discussion.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Youth, families and staff experience a welcoming and supportive environment.**

TRAINER | “Now, let’s think back to our childhood rooms we discussed at the beginning of the training...” Point out some of the favorites under the “engaging” heading from earlier and read them out loud. Ask the group how they think they could incorporate some of these things into their programs. How could these things be used to meet the key?

Ask the group about communication and conversations that are appropriate in a youth setting. Would any of these conversations be appropriate around children, families, or staff: Conversations about partying the night before? Conversations about other families’ situations? Conversations about rumors heard about other staff members? Do these conversations help your program meet this key? What kinds of conversations should be occurring to accomplish this? Guide the group in discussion.

- **The indoor and outdoor space provides an environment of comfort, ownership and respect for youth and their families.**

TRAINER | Go back to the “Engaging” category the group compiled earlier. Point out some things that made their rooms “comfortable” and showed “ownership” and ask the group if some of these things could be incorporated into their or other programs. Ask the group what they think the word “respect” means in this Key. “Why is it there?” “What are some ways we can show respect to children and their families through the physical environment?”

- **The physical space reflects the interests of and displays the work of youth.**

TRAINER | Prompting questions: “Are there pictures of your children up around your program?” “Are there pictures of some of their interests up around your program? For instance, if you are running a soccer program, do you have pictures of some male *and* female soccer stars around for youth to see? Could these pictures be put on the back of clipboards or around the cones of a practice field?” “Are there pictures the youth in your program have colored/ drawn posted around your program? Are there sculptures and other crafts?”

HEALTHY CHOICES

- **Written health and safety policies are provided to families and understood by youth.**

TRAINER | Use the *Safety Considerations for Children’s Programs* worksheet again and let group know this can be used to design a written policy given to parents as to your plan for maintaining their children’s safety. Show examples of other written policies from sample programs. Ask the group “How can we make sure the youth in our care understand these policies?” Discuss making rules easy and understandable for children to remember and follow, possibly using an acronym or song.

- **Healthy lifestyles and behaviors are promoted.**

TRAINER | Ask the group some open-ended questions to get them thinking about how they can promote these healthy lifestyles and behaviors to their children. Some examples are “Are you and all your fellow staff well-groomed and professional-looking each day?” “Do you or your staff ever eat ‘junk’ food in front of the children?” “Do you and your staff promote daily exercise and activity?” Trainer can now open it up to the group for a quick discussion on other ways they feel they can promote healthy living to the children in their programs.

- **Snacks and meals provided are well balanced and nutritious.**

TRAINER | This goes right along with the previous Key, but mention that it is best to have at least two food groups for each snack and that sugars and processed carbs not considered food groups when designing these snacks.

Safety Considerations for Children's Programs | Worksheet

Discuss these items with your group and decide how often each of these items should be checked, cleaned, or completed.

Place an "X" in the box you think best applies to each item.

ITEM TO BE CHECKED	More than once per day	At Least once per day	At Least once per week	At least Once per month	At least once every three months	At least once per semester	At least once per year
Fire Drills							
Tile Floor (wet or not?)							
Rugs/ Carpets (frayed, dirty, unsanitary)							
Tables Free of Chips or Sharp Edges							
Fire Extinguisher							
Chemicals/ Cleaning Supplies Properly Stored							
Toys (broken/ unusable)							
Electrical Equipment Cords (fans, radio/ stereo, computers, lamps, electric pencil sharpeners etc.)							
Tile/ Wood Floor (not chipped or otherwise peeling up)							
Playground Free of Debris (glass, needles, sidewalks free of sand, etc.)							
Toys (Sanitized)							
Bathrooms Checked for cleanliness							
Children's chairs (Checked for cracked/ broken parts, sanitary)							
Food preparation areas							
Mats (frayed, dirty, soiled, etc)							
First Aid Kit (well-stocked and ready)							

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I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. ICE BREAKER

III. KEYS

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- The indoor and outdoor space provides an environment of comfort, ownership and respect for youth and their families.
- The physical space reflects the interests of and displays the work of youth.

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