DCYF CBO-BASED OUT OF SCHOOL TIME SITE VISIT TOOL
MAY 2013

Purpose of the Site Visit Tool

This site visit tool was developed by a working group of DCYF staff, grantees, and evaluation consultants to provide a robust, *point-of-service oriented* snapshot of program quality.

Drawing from research that shows that the most important indicator of youth participation and positive outcomes are their daily experiences in youth development programs, this site visit tool is primarily concerned with *what can be observed on site*. Other important sources of data about program quality include youth surveys, CMS reports, programs' own evaluations, and staff and youth interviews.

The tool includes elements common to all youth development programs, as well as grant-specific service quality indicators. Elements have been cross-walked with DCYF Quality Standards and Request for Funding announcements to assure that this tool assesses quality elements already expected of DCYF grantees.

How the Tool will be used

This site visit tool will be used in three ways:

1. To inform individual program's ongoing quality improvement efforts by providing an observationally-based assessment of program quality.

2. To help DCYF Program Officers to support their grantees by providing a common rubric with which to visit youth development programs.

3. To inform ongoing training and technical assistance efforts supported by DCYF.

This tool should not be used to evaluate individual staff members.

→ → What's Inside the Site Visit Tool ← ←

Point-of-Service Quality Domains[1]

- **Program Environment & Safety** – The program space is safe, clean, and can be adapted for a variety of activities. Youth and staff interact in a friendly, respectful way.

- **Promoting Diversity** - The program space, activities, and norms encourage inclusive attitudes and behaviors among staff and youth.

- **Youth Development** – Activities are designed and implemented with youth engagement in mind. Youth have meaningful input into activities and have multiple opportunities to play leadership roles within the program.

- **Intentional Skill Building** – Most program activities promote youth-skill building by intentionally focusing on a specific skill, promoting successively higher levels of mastery, and allowing youth to present their work or perform for others.

- **School Day Alignment** – Academic enrichment activities support and complement youths' school day learning.

Definitions

- **Activity** – A group, class, or club that is organized by theme and takes place over multiple sessions. Examples may include a Poetry Club within a comprehensive after school program, the Outreach Team for a teen cultural program, or a Job Search workshop in a workforce development program.

- **Session** – An individual meeting or workshop.

- **Component** – An identifiable part of a session, such as check-ins/icebreakers, direct instruction, independent work, team consultations.

If you don't see enough to rate a specific item

Many of the items in the Core Site Visit Tool should be observable during a 90-120 minute visit. Visitors may not see some important elements while on site, however, and should follow up with staff members to gather sufficient information.

Some items may be more difficult to observe while on site. If you don't see the item to be rated refer to instructions located by the item rating box or in the User's Manual.

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[1] These domains are aligned with the *California After-School Program Quality Self Assessment Tool*, available from the California Afterschool Network (www.afterschoolnetwork.org).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Name	
Agency Name	
Site Coordinator	
Visitor	
Visit Date	

INTERVIEWS

I. SITE COORDINATOR INTERVIEW

1. a. What do you consider to be the greatest strengths of this program?
   b. What are your main areas for growth?

2. [Depending on items identified in pre-visit review, visitor asks for clarification on two-three items from site's Minimum Quality Assessment or other submitted documentation.]

3. For the activities taking place today, can you tell me more about how they link to both previous and future sessions? How does what we'll see fit in with the goals of the program?

4. How does your program support youth in successively higher levels of leadership?[2]

5. How are you aligning activities to California state education standards?

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[2] Response from this interview question can be used as evidence to rate item 5 in the Youth Development section, "All youth have structured opportunities to be in charge of something the group needs or to help others,"

6. What type of training have staff had to support youth's school day/academic success?

7. How do youths' interests and preferences influence the activities offered?		
1	**3**	**5**
Youth do not have the opportunity to express their preferences and interests OR staff members do not listen to youths' suggestions.	*Youth have informal opportunities to share their preferences and interests; staff listen to youths' suggestions.*	*Youth have structured opportunities to share their preferences and interests; youth input is the primary guide when developing activities.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

8. In what ways do you provide academic support tailored to the academic need of youth?

1	3	5
No academic support is provided to youth.	*Youth who need academic assistance receive some help. For example, staff may attempt to help them but do not connect them to tutors, small groups, or other resources.*	*Youth who need academic help receive intensive help, work in small groups, and/or are encouraged by staff to seek extra help from teachers (e.g. tailored academic software).*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

9. In what ways do youth have the opportunity to present their work, perform for others, or share their successes over the course of the activity?

1	3	5
Youth do not have the opportunity to express their preferences and interests OR staff members do not listen to youths' suggestions.	*Youth have informal opportunities to share their preferences and interests; staff listen to youths' suggestions.*	*Youth have structured opportunities to share their preferences and interests; youth input is the primary guide when developing activities.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

10. Are there any unusual circumstances today that I should be aware of during my visit? (e.g. staff absences, recent events, and venue changes)

OBSERVATION

II. PROGRAM OPERATIONS

1. Number of youth present:

2. Number of staff present:

3. What activities are rated on this form?

  a)

  b)

  c)

4. Do the activities observed include the following programmatic elements?[3]		
All Grades	Skill Building Activities	☐ Observed on site. ☐ Not observed, included in program schedule. ☐ No evidence of this element
Elementary School Youth	Physical and recreation activities.	☐ Observed on site. ☐ Not observed, included in program schedule. ☐ No evidence of this element.
Middle School Youth	Leadership development activities.	☐ Observed on site. ☐ Not observed, included in program schedule. ☐ No evidence of this element.
Middle School Youth	Activities related to preparing for transition to high school an/or exploration of postsecondary pathways.	☐ Observed on site. ☐ Not observed, included in program schedule. ☐ No evidence of this element.

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[3] Source: DCYF 2013-2016 Request for Proposals, Out of School Time Comprehensive K-8 Community-Based Afterschool Service Area.

III. PROGRAM ENVIRONMENT & SAFETY

The program space is safe, clean, and can be adapted for a variety of activities. Youth and staff interact in a friendly, respectful way.

1. There is enough space for the activities offered during the observation.		
1	**3**	**5**
The program space is crowded. There is not room to move around comfortably.	*Some program spaces are crowded, while others are not.*	*None of the program spaces are crowded. Youth and staff can move around comfortably.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	**1**
	☐	**2**
	☐	**3**
	☐	**4**
	☐	**5**

2. The program space is free of physical hazards. *(Space(s) include any areas that youth access regularly when participating in program activities)*		
1	**3**	**5**
There are major hazards such as wet floors or exposed electrical wires or unlit entrance/exit.	*There are minor safety hazards such as paper or other program materials on the floor, broken furniture, or other minor environmental concerns.*	*There are no safety issues or hazards.*

Evidence	Rating *(Note: if you identify a physical hazard that you believe puts a youth at risk of injury, rate a 1 and elevate to grants director immediately.)*	
	☐	**1**
	☐	**2**
	☐	**3**
	☐	**4**
	☐	**5**

3. Youth are supervised.

1	3	5
Program spaces are inadequately supervised. There are not enough adults present in the session space(s).	*Some program spaces are well supervised while others are not.*	*Youth are adequately supervised at all times.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

4. Staff use effective strategies to focus youths' attention.
(e.g. hands up, call and response chants, Quiet Coyote)

1	3	5
Staff does not use group focus strategies OR strategies used are not effective.	*Staff use group focus strategies with mixed success at getting youths' attention.*	*Staff use effective group focus strategies.*

Evidence	Rating *If youth are engaged during session, rate 5*	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

5. Interactions between staff and youth are predominately positive.

1	3	5
Staff and youth are predominately negative with one another, using dismissive or sarcastic tones of voice, rolling their eyes, sighing loudly, etc.	*Staff and youth interact with one another in a generally positive fashion, (e.g. speaking in warm tones, making eye contact, smiling) but sometimes interact negatively.*	*Nearly all interactions among staff and youth are positive, characterized by warm tones of voice, frequent eye contact, and smiles. Few to no negative interactions are observed.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

6. Physical activity[4] is physically safe for youth.

1	3	5
Activity rules are not made clear to youth, physical activity equipment is unsafe, activities are not adjusted for inclement weather, and/or there is a moderate degree of physical risk to youth.	*Activity rules are rarely communicated to youth, some physical activity equipment is worn, broken, or otherwise damaged, some activities are adjusted for inclement weather, while some are not, and/or there is a small degree of physical risk to youth.*	*Activity rules are consistently communicated to youth, activities are adjusted for inclement weather, and/or there is an absence of physical risk to youth.*

Evidence	Rating *Skip if no physical activities observed.*	
	☐	Skip
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

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[4] A physical activity can include active recreation activities such as physical fitness activities, team sports, and organized group games.

7. Physical activity is emotionally safe for youth.

1	3	5
Youth who are struggling are not supported; activities do not take the differences in youths' ability into account and activities are NOT structured to be inclusive.	*Youth who are struggling are sometimes supported; activities attempt to accommodate differences in youths' ability but the attempt is not fully successful, and activities are structured to be inclusive (e.g. youth are grouped into teams in a way that all youth are included).*	*Youth who are struggling are supported to do their best; activities successfully accommodate the full range of youths' ability, and activities are structured to be inclusive (e.g. youth are grouped into teams in a way that all youth are included).*
(Note: If one of these issues is present, the rating should be a 1)		

Evidence	Rating *Skip if no physical activities observed.*	
	☐	Skip
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

Program Environment & Safety: Areas of Strength

Program Environment & Safety: Opportunities for Improvement

IV. PROMOTING DIVERSITY[5]

The program space, activities, and norms encourage inclusive attitudes and behaviors among staff and youth.

1. Activities are designed to deliberately mix youth to encourage youth to interact with peers from a variety of social groups.		
1	**3**	**5**
Youth self-select into groups or activities OR youth are always in the same homogenous group.	*Youth occasionally interact with a variety of peers OR such interactions are unstructured (e.g. talking in line while picking up snacks, sitting in a common space with minimal interaction).*	*Program activities provide intentional opportunities for youth to interact with a variety of peers (e.g. different clique, cross-age groups, partnering with peers of a different race or genders).*

Evidence	Rating
	Rate "3" if not observed.

☐	1
☐	2
☐	3
☐	4
☐	5

2. The program space, materials and content reflect the diversity of youth served.		
1	**3**	**5**
The program space has no decorations/displays and very few materials (e.g. books, posters, CDs) that reflect youth served.	*The program space has some decorations/displays and a limited number of materials (e.g. books, posters, CDs) that reflect youth served.*	*Nearly all of the program decorations and displays reflect a range of people and identity groups. Many materials reflect youth served.*

Evidence	Rating
	Rate only for materials if space cannot be modified.

☐	1
☐	2
☐	3
☐	4
☐	5

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[5] This section contains the observable aspects of the Promoting Diversity, Access, Inclusion program quality domain.

3. Staff members model inclusive, tolerant, attitudes and behaviors.		
1 *Staff members do not counter others' derogatory or prejudicial language in the presence of youth.*	**3** *Staff members sometimes counter others' prejudicial language or behavior.*	**5** *Staff actively encourage tolerance and acceptance of others.*

Evidence	Rating *Skip if no conflict observed.*	
	☐	Skip
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

Promoting Diversity: Areas of Strength

Promoting Diversity: Opportunities for Improvement

V. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Activities are designed and implemented with youth engagement in mind. Youth have meaningful input into activities and have multiple opportunities to play leadership roles within the program.

Supportive Environment

1. Staff address negative behaviors calmly and respectfully.		
1	**3**	**5**
Staff members rarely address negative behaviors OR address behaviors in an authoritarian manner by belittling or humiliating youth.	*Staff members address some, but not all negative behaviors. Staff usually react calmly and respectfully to negative behaviors they do address.*	*Staff members address all negative behaviors in a calm, respectful way. Youth are not belittled or humiliated when they behave negatively.*

Evidence	Rating *Rate "3" if not observed.*	
	☐	**1**
	☐	**2**
	☐	**3**
	☐	**4**
	☐	**5**

2. Staff members encourage and support youth as they build skills.		
1	**3**	**5**
Staff do not challenge youth to take risks, and/or staff critique, or correct students that make mistakes in trying out new skills without explanation (e.g. 'That's wrong').	*Staff challenge some youth to take risks and/or staff critique, correct, or punish students that make mistakes with explanation ('That's incorrect because…').*	*Staff challenge all youth to take risks, and staff support and encourage youth to accept mistakes as opportunities for new learning and encourage youth to continue to improve on their skills.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	**1**
	☐	**2**
	☐	**3**
	☐	**4**
	☐	**5**

3. Staff are attentive to all youth throughout the session.

1	3	5
Staff members are primarily inattentive to the group (e.g. leaving the room frequently for calls or conversations, reading a magazine, etc.).	*Staff members interact with some, but not all youth (e.g. sitting with one group only, talking with just a few kids).*	*Staff members are involved with all youth throughout the session (e.g. circulating among groups, talking with all youth who have a question or comment).*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

4. Youth participate in activities with varying group sizes (e.g. individual, small group, large group) throughout the course of the day.

1	3	5
Activities do not show a blend of large group, small group, and individualized instruction.	*Activities incorporate a few different grouping strategies, though most activities take place in one group size. Groups' purpose may not be clear.*	*Activities incorporate a variety of group sizes, and group size is clearly linked to a purpose.*

Evidence	Rating *Rate 1 if not observed.*	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

5. All youth have structured opportunities to be in charge of something the group needs or to help others.		

1	3	5
Youth have no structured opportunities to practice leadership skills (e.g. being in charge of something the group needs, showing a peer how to do something, leading a simple activity).	*Leadership roles available to youth are primarily oriented toward assisting staff (e.g. passing out materials, leading a line). Youth have limited autonomy in choosing roles.*	*There are a variety of leadership roles available to youth, ranging from assisting staff to helping other students to leading simple activities.*

Evidence	**Rating**	
	☐	**1**
	☐	**2**
	☐	**3**
	☐	**4**
	☐	**5**

6. Staff engage in physical activities[6] with youth.		

1	3	5
Staff do not participate in physical activities with youth	*Staff participate in some physical activities with youth, but mostly observe and watch.*	*Staff participate in most physical activities to model an active lifestyle for youth participants*

Evidence	**Rating** *Skip if no physical activities observed.*	
	☐	**Skip**
	☐	**1**
	☐	**2**
	☐	**3**
	☐	**4**
	☐	**5**

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[6] A physical activity does not need to focus on a single activity type and can include active recreation activities such as physical fitness activities, team sports, and organized group games.

7. Youth are engaged in the program session.

1	3	5
Youth appear unmotivated to participate: they rarely respond to questions and do not engage with the activity or task. Staff frequently remind youth to stay on task OR allow many youth to sit idle.	*More than half of youth appear motivated to participate: most respond to questions and engage with the activity or task. Staff provide occasional reminders to stay focused; the majority of youth participate throughout.*	*Nearly every youth appears motivated to participate. Staff provide few or no reminders to stay on task; nearly every youth participates throughout the session.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

8. Most of youths' time is spent actively while in the program.

1	3	5
Youth spend a quarter or more of their time during the session waiting or watching (e.g. waiting for materials to be prepared, watching others do something, or waiting turns).	*Youth occasionally spend their time waiting or watching (e.g. 5-10 minutes at a time).*	*Youth spend little to none of their time waiting or watching, and nearly all of their time actively (e.g. reading, writing, practicing, playing).*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

| **9. Youth make choices during the session about what they do and how they do it.** |

1	3	5
Youth have few or no opportunities to make choices about what they do or how they do it during the session.	*Youth make some choices about what they do and how they do it during the session; options are usually determined by staff.*	*Youth regularly make choices about what they do and how they do it during the session; options are co-determined by youth and staff.*

Evidence

Rating	
☐	1
☐	2
☐	3
☐	4
☐	5

Youth Development: Areas of Strength

Youth Development: Opportunities for Improvement

VI. INTENTIONAL SKILL BUILDING

Most program activities[7] promote skill building by intentionally focusing on a specific skill, promoting successively higher levels of mastery, and allowing youth to present their work or perform for others.

1. Each session is focused on a specific skill, concept, or content area.

1	3	5
Sessions are not clearly focused on a specific skill or content area.	*Sessions are focused on a specific skill or content area. Session components are somewhat related toward the learning target, but are not clearly linked (e.g. an icebreaker with no substantive relationship to the learning target).*	*Sessions are focused on a specific skill or content area. Session components are closely linked to the learning target.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

2. Active learning principles are incorporated into activities.

1	3	5
Sessions are lecture only. No materials are provided for a hands-on component that allows youth to engage in in-depth investigations with objects, materials, events, and ideas.	*Materials are provided for hands-on investigation, but there are no clear links to abstract concepts.*	*Sessions are a mix of hands-on investigation with objects, materials, and adult directed instruction, linking hands-on investigation with abstract concepts.*

Evidence	Rating	
	Rate 1 if program does not have enrichment activities.	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

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[7] Does not include purely recreational activities, informal program times, or transition times.

3. Sessions incorporate de-briefs[8] and checks for understanding.

1	3	5
There are no de-briefing opportunities or checks for understanding used in the session.	*Some de-briefing techniques and checks for understanding are used.*	*De-briefing and checks for understanding are used throughout the session.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

4. Youth have the opportunity to build critical thinking skills.

1	3	5
Staff are not observed to encourage critical thinking by asking open-ended questions.	*Staff sometimes ask open-ended questions and encourage youth to extend upon their answers and to draw conclusions.*	*Staff regularly ask open-ended questions and encourage youth to extend upon their answers and to draw conclusions.*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

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[8] Debriefing is any intentional and structured periods during the session where youth are given opportunities to talk about what they have learned or what they have been doing.

Intentional Skill Building: Areas of Strength

Intentional Skill Building: Opportunities for Improvement

VII. SCHOOL DAY ALIGNMENT

Academic enrichment activities support and complement youths' school day learning.[9]

1. Staff regularly take opportunities to encourage youth to make connections between academic enrichment activities and academic skills or standards.

1	3	5
Staff do not ask questions that help youth make connections between academic enrichment activities and academic skills or standards (e.g., making connections between math and cooking, between art and vocabulary, between cooking and science, etc.).	*Staff occasionally ask questions that help youth make connections between academic enrichment activities and academic skills or standards (e.g., making connections between math and cooking, between art and vocabulary between cooking and science, etc.).*	*Staff consistently ask questions that help youth make connections between academic enrichment activities and academic skills or standards (e.g., making connections between math and cooking, between art and vocabulary, between cooking and science, etc.).*

Evidence	Rating	
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

2. Youth have opportunities to practice productivity and efficiency in homework time.

1	3	5
During homework time few youth are on task. Remaining youth are talking, texting, or avoiding getting started.	*During homework time, some youth are on task, while others are not.*	*During homework time, most youth are working on homework and on task.*

Evidence	Rating *Skip if not observed.*	
	☐	Skip
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

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[9] Academic support includes, but is not limited to, homework help, tutoring, academic mentoring, language arts, and math and science activities. Source: DCYF Request for Proposals 2011-13, Out of School Time Service Area.

3. Staff encourages, guides, and supports youth during homework time.

1	3	5
Staff sit in one place and/or spend 50% of their time on behavior management.	*Staff sit in an accessible place near youth who need the most 1:1 help or respond to youth questions when asked.*	*Staff circulate around the room observing each youth's progress or notice when youth make mistakes and walk them through the problem.*

Evidence	Rating	
	*Skip if not observed.*	
	☐	Skip
	☐	1
	☐	2
	☐	3
	☐	4
	☐	5

School Day Alignment: Areas of Strength

School Day Alignment: Opportunities for Improvement

AREAS OF STRENGTH & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT OVERALL

Areas of Strength

Opportunities for Improvement