



External Assessment Report

SEEDs

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(TACSS)

Kalkaska Middle School- OLDER YOUTH

Grantee: SEEDs
Site: Kalkaska Middle School
External Assessment Date: 3/17/2011
Program Observed: Academic

Youth PQA Score by Domain

Domain	Level 5 Description	Self Assessment	External Assessment
I.SAFE	Safe Environment	4.11	5
II.SUPP	Supportive Environment	4.05	4.9
III.INTER	Interaction	3	2.83
IV.ENGAGE	Engagement	3.5	2.5
TOTAL	Total Average of all Domains- Total Score	3.66	3.80

NC= "Not Comparable" The self assessment was entered as an older youth PQA and external assessment was entered as a younger youth PQA.

Youth PQA Score by Item/Page

Indicator	Variable	Self Assessment	External Assessment
a1	The emotional climate of the session is predominantly positive. Any playful negative behaviors are mediated by staff or youth	5.00	5.00
a2	There is no evidence of bias but rather there is mutual respect for and inclusion of others of a different religion, ethnicity, class, gender, ability, appearance or sexual orientation	3.00	5.00
A	Psychological and emotional safety is promoted.	4.00	5.00
b1	The program is free of health and safety hazards	5.00	5.00
b2	The program space is clean and sanitary	5.00	5.00
b3	Ventilation and lighting are adequate in the program space	3.00	5.00
b4	The temperature is comfortable for all activities in the program space	3.00	5.00
B	The physical environment is safe and free of health hazards.	4.00	5.00
c1	Written emergency procedures are posted in plain view	5.00	5.00
c2	At least one charged fire extinguisher is accessible and visible from the program space	5.00	5.00
c3	At least one complete first aid kit is accessible and visible from the program space	3.00	5.00
c4	Other appropriate safety and emergency equipment is available to the program offering as needed, can be located by staff and is maintained in full-service condition	5.00	x
c5	All entrances to the indoor program space are supervised for security during program hours	5.00	5.00
c6	Access to outdoor program space is supervised during program hours	0.00	x
C	Appropriate emergency procedures and supplies are present	3.83	5.00
d1	Program space allows youth and adults to move freely while carrying out activities	5.00	5.00
d2	Program spaces is suitable for all activities offered	5.00	5.00
d3	Furniture is comfortable and of sufficient quantity for all youth participating in program offering	5.00	5.00
d4	Physical environment can be modified to meet the needs of the program offering	5.00	5.00
D	Program space and furniture accommodate the activities offered.	5.00	5.00
e1	Drinking water is available and easily accessible to all youth	3.00	5.00
e2	Food and drinks are plentiful and available at	5.00	5.00

Indicator	Variable	Self Assessment	External Assessment
	appropriate times for all youth during the session		
e3	Available food and drink is healthy	3.00	5.00
E	Healthy food and drinks are provided.	3.67	5.00
f1	All youth are greeted by staff within the first 15 minutes of the session	5.00	5.00
f2	During activities, staff mainly use warm tone of voice and respectful language	5.00	5.00
f3	During activities, staff generally smile, use friendly gestures, and make eye contact	5.00	5.00
F	Staff provide a welcoming atmosphere.	5.00	5.00
g1	Start and end of session within 10 minutes of scheduled time.	3.00	5.00
g2	Staff have all materials and supplies ready to begin all activities	5.00	5.00
g3	There are enough materials and supplies prepared for all youth to begin activities	5.00	5.00
g4	Staff explain all activities clearly	3.00	5.00
g5	There is an appropriate amount of time for all of the activities	5.00	5.00
G	Session flow is planned, presented, and paced for youth.	4.20	5.00
h1	The bulk of the activities involve youth engaging with materials OR ideas or improving a skill through guided practice	5.00	5.00
h2	The program activities lead to tangible products or performances that reflect ideas or designs of youth	5.00	5.00
h3	The activities provide all youth one or more opportunities to talk about what they are doing and what they are thinking about to others	3.00	5.00
h4	The activities balance concrete experiences involving materials people and projects with abstract concepts	3.00	5.00
H	Activities support active engagement.	4.00	5.00
i1	All youth are encouraged to try out new level or attempt higher levels of performance	3.00	5.00
i2	All youth who try out new skills receive support from staff despite imperfect results, errors or failure; staff allow youth to learn form and correct their own mistakes and encourage youth to keep trying to improve their skills	5.00	5.00
I	Staff support youth in building new skills.	4.00	5.00
j1	During activities, staff are almost always actively involved with youth	5.00	5.00
j2	Staff support at least some contributions or accomplishments of youth by acknowledging what they've said or done with specific nonevaluative language	3.00	3.00

Indicator	Variable	Self Assessment	External Assessment
j3	Staff make frequent use of open-ended questions	3.00	5.00
J	Staff support youth with encouragement.	3.67	4.33
k1	Staff predominately approach conflicts and negative behavior in a non-threatening manner	5.00	5.00
k2	Staff seek input from youth in order to determine both the cause and solution to conflicts and negative behavior	3.00	5.00
k3	To help youth understand and resolve conflicts and negative behavior, staff encourage youth to examine the relationship between their actions and consequences	1.00	5.00
k4	Staff acknowledge conflicts and negative behavior and follow up with those involved afterward	5.00	5.00
K	Staff use youth-centered approaches to reframe conflict.	3.50	5.00
l1	Youth have structured opportunities to get to know each other	3.00	1.00
l2	Youth exhibit predominately inclusive relationships with all in the program offering, including newcomers	5.00	5.00
l3	Youth strongly identify with the program offering	3.00	5.00
l4	The activities include structured opportunities to publicly acknowledge the achievements, work or contributions of at least some youth	3.00	1.00
L	Youth have opportunities to develop a sense of belonging.	3.50	3.00
m1	Session consists of activities carried out in at least 3 groupings- full, small ,or individual	5.00	3.00
m2	Staff use 2 or more ways to form small groups	3.00	1.00
m3	Each small group has a purpose and all group members cooperate in accomplishing it	3.00	1.00
M	Youth have opportunities to participate in small groups	3.67	1.67
n1	All youth have multiple opportunities to practice group-process skills	1.00	5.00
n2	During activities, all youth have one or more opportunities to mentor an individual	3.00	1.00
n3	During activities, all youth have one or more opportunities to lead a group	1.00	1.00
N	Youth have opportunities to act as group facilitators and mentors.	1.67	2.33
o1	Staff control most of activities with youth, providing guidance and facilitation while retaining overall responsibility	3.00	5.00
o2	Staff always provide an explanation for expectations, guidelines, or directions given to youth	3.00	5.00

Indicator	Variable	Self Assessment	External Assessment
O	Youth have opportunities to partner with adult.	3.00	5.00
p1	Youth have multiple opportunities to make plans for projects and activities	3.00	1.00
p2	In the course of planning projects or activities, 2 or more planning strategies are used	3.00	1.00
P	Youth have opportunities to set goals and make plans.	3.00	1.00
q1	All youth have the opportunity to make at least one open-ended content choice within the content framework of activities	5.00	1.00
q2	All youth have the opportunities to make at least one open-ended process choice	5.00	5.00
Q	Youth have opportunities to make choice based on their interest.	5.00	3.00
r1	All youth are engaged in an intentional process of reflecting on what they are doing or have done.	3.00	5.00
r2	All youth are given the opportunity to reflect on their activities in 2 or more ways	3.00	3.00
r3	In the course of the program offering all youth have structured opportunities to make presentations to the whole group	1.00	1.00
r4	Staff initiate structured opportunities for youth to give feedback on the activities	5.00	3.00
R	Youth have opportunities to reflect.	3.00	3.00

NC= Not comparable to the External Assessment. Self assessment was entered as an older youth PQA and external assessment was entered as a younger youth

Interpreting your Scores

Your External Assessment scores only provide a snapshot of what is happening at your program. These scores are **not** an evaluation of the program staff that were observed and should **not** be treated as such. Rather, the scores we are providing in this report should promote the discussion of quality among all staff. A low score in any of the following sections does not necessarily mean your programming is poor; a low score should signal a point for which quality improvement measures can be taken.

How can you reduce an experience down to a few numbers?

Human relations are incredibly complex. In every moment of interaction—for example, a staff member talking with a group of youth—there are literally billions of things that could happen. Staff makes on-the-fly decisions about what to say and do, and so do youth. How then is it possible to turn all that untidy stuff into a set of numbers?

The technological advancement of the PQA is that it takes an infinitely complex system of human interactions, and boils it down into meaningful numbers. The instrument does this by focusing only on a key set of items, and making judgments about types of interactions in those items. These judgments become numbers.

The numbers, of course, do not tell the complete story of an interaction, but a PQA score—especially an item score—can provide a reliable indication of the *quality* of interactions. The carefully tested rubrics are designed to be broad enough to capture almost any situation, but specific enough to be functional. You can think of PQA data collection as a process of capturing little stories and then fitting them into important categories that tell us about quality.

But you caught me on a bad day!

Although minor variations occur, youth workers' scores tend to be fairly consistent over time—again, especially at the item level. This is not to say that improvement is not possible, but that a 'bad day' is usually not so different in terms of youth experience. So there's a very good chance that, even though you had a 'bad day', your scores can tell what typically happens when you're working with youth. In fact, your 'bad day' scores may be more valuable because they can point to what can really be improved! Plus, youth are there to experience good days and bad days.

So what do the numbers mean?

A Youth PQA Scores Report gives you item scores and subscale scores. Everything is in a 5-point scale, where 5.0 is the best possible score and 1.0 is the lowest. Scores between 4.0 and 5.0 are excellent in most categories. Scores between 1.0 and 2.0 can generally be cause for concern. In Form A, scores tend to go down as items go up—in other words, Subscale I usually scores the highest, on down to subscale IV, which scores the lowest.

How hard is it to raise scores?

It's much easier to raise scores in some areas than it is in others. But generally, with initiative and focus and a willingness to learn, all scores can and do increase. By working to increase your PQA scores, you are moving toward improving the experience youth have in your program.

Looking to improve your scores?

Ask your TACSS Coach about the Youth Work Method Training Series.

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