The Missouri Afterschool Program Standards were drawn from the sources[1] most frequently used by afterschool programs, piloted by nearly 200 afterschool programs throughout Missouri during the 2006-07 school year, and revised in response to stakeholder feedback in the spring and summer of 2007.

The Missouri Afterschool Program Standards were created for any type of program serving children and/or teens whose staff is dedicated to offering the best possible experiences for their youth and families.

These Program Standards can help afterschool programs leverage quality improvement efforts by:

- Providing a common language of quality for program administrators and frontline staff to discuss program strengths and areas for improvement.
- Identifying staff training needs and professional growth.
- Focusing limited human and financial resources for best results.
- Framing financial needs or demonstrating the support necessary to impact and improve program quality.

The Missouri Afterschool Program Standards are dedicated to the frontline staff, administrators and intermediaries who advance the afterschool profession while keeping kids safe, inspiring them to learn and helping their working families.

missouri AFTERSCHOOL network

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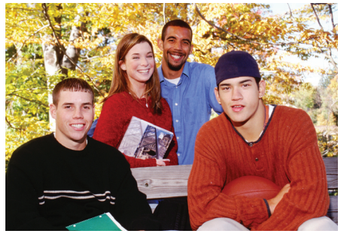
[1]National AfterSchool Association's *Standards for Quality School-Age Care*, St. Louis for Kids' *Quality Standards* and YouthNet of Greater Kansas City's *Teen Standards*.



Missouri Afterschool Program Standards

A resource for afterschool professionals which highlights the elements of quality programming that lead to positive experiences for youth and families.

PROGRAM CONTENT

The elements of afterschool programming that are observable at the point of service.
Consists of the environments, relationships and experiences accessible for youth and families.

Physical Environment

PE 1	The program's space arrangement allows for careful supervision of youth including protection/security from unwanted visitors and unauthorized pick-ups.
PE 2	The program facility must have a smoke detector and meet all building and fire codes in the local jurisdiction.
PE 3	The program has at least thirty-five square feet of indoor space for each program participant.
PE 4	The program space is clean and free of environmental hazards in order to protect the health of youth.
PE 5	The program facility includes access to clean, sanitary restrooms for participants and staff.
PE 6	The program's space meets the planning, activity, and storage needs of staff.
PE 7	The program provides enough supply and variety of materials and equipment to allow youth to take initiative and explore their interests.
PE 8	The program's indoor space meets the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative needs of youth.
PE 9	The program's outdoor space and play area is large enough and equipped appropriately to allow youth to be active, independent and creative.

Interpersonal Relations

IR 1	The program activities, environment, and policies promote individual and small group interactions between staff and youth.
IR 2	Program staff relate to all youth in positive ways and intentionally build individual relationships with youth.
IR 3	The program builds upon the unique strengths and developmental needs of individual youth.
IR 4	Program staff provide opportunities and support for youth to make choices and to become more responsible.
IR 5	The program provides developmentally appropriate opportunities that challenge youth to learn and grow.
IR 6	Program staff use positive techniques to guide the behavior of youth.
IR 7	The program facilitates positive interactions between youth and promotes the development of peer relationships.
IR 8	The program's environment, activities and policies reflect positive regard for the youth, families, and their cultural backgrounds and promote positive interactions between staff and families.
IR 9	Program staff model cooperation, conflict resolution and positive relationships in their work with other adults.

Curriculum and Activities

CA 1	The program offers opportunities in the areas of a) recreation and fitness, b) academic support, c) life skills, and d) personal growth and development.
CA 2	Programs for older youth/teens have a distinct identity which may include alternative space, program name, time and activities.
CA 3	The program structure allows youth the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of activities and formats that meet their interests and help promote their development.
CA 4	The program offers structured, engaging experiences that address the physical, cognitive, social, emotional and creative domains of youth development.
CA 5	The program's academic support component enhances academic success, but does not duplicate or repeat school day instruction.
CA 6	The program's health, fitness and nutritional opportunities promote nutrition and health practices, developmentally appropriate physical skills, and personal safety.
CA 7	The program activities designed to teach essential life skills include decision-making, problem solving, negotiation, communication, and life management skills.
CA 8	The opportunities provided for personal growth and development include emotional awareness, character development, healthy habits, skill mastery and independence.
CA 9	Program activities integrate all curricular areas (e.g., recreation and fitness, academic support, life skills, and personal growth and development), ensuring that the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and creative domains are addressed in a comprehensive manner.
CA 10	The program encourages youth input and participation in the activity planning and implementation.
CA 11	Program activities are intentionally planned to align with the mission and goals of the program and promote the development of all youth.
CA 12	The program schedule is consistent enough to establish a routine, yet offers flexibility to meet the individual or situational needs of all youth.

Shaded standards represent basic practices that should be established prior to a new program's operation or receive immediate attention if not currently evident in an established program.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The elements of afterschool programming that are observable in organizational structure and planning.
Consists of the design and implementation of policies and practices.

Family Involvement

FI 1	The program publishes a Family Handbook that includes information about the program's policies, procedures and expectations for the youth, families, and staff.
FI 2	The program's policies and procedures are tailored to the unique needs of youth and families in the target community.
FI 3	The program's policies and procedures support families' involvement in the program.
FI 4	The program provides information about community resources to youth and families.
FI 5	Program staff, families, and school-day personnel share important information to support the positive development of participating youth.

Human Resources

HR 1	The program implements a standard hiring process that ensures all staff (paid, volunteer, and substitute) have the personal attributes, ability to learn needed skills, and professional qualifications appropriate for their position.
HR 2	The program provides all staff (paid, volunteer, and substitute) with an orientation that includes a review of the job description, personnel polices, program policies and procedures, and quality standards.
HR 3	Program staff receive regular supervision and support including informal feedback about job performance and at least an annual formal performance review.
HR 4	Program staff develop individual professional development plans based upon the Core Competencies for Youth Development Professionals and receive training and support to meet their professional goals and improve performance.
HR 5	The program supervisor provides ongoing feedback and role models for staff as they work to improve performance.
HR 6	The program provides a compensation package which includes competitive wages, benefits, and other incentives.
HR 7	The program provides wage or salary increases tied to increased education and/or improved performance.
HR 8	The program pays staff for planning time to develop and prepare for activities and to complete required paperwork.
HR 9	The program tracks annual turnover rates and implements strategies to maintain a stable workforce.

Safety and Health

SH 1	Program staff carefully supervise youth to ensure their safety.
SH 2	The program has a system for tracking attendance and knowing where youth are and what they are doing at all times.
SH 3	The program documents that all staff and volunteers working with youth have passed a child abuse and neglect screening and criminal records check for crimes that pose a threat to the well-being of youth and families.
SH 4	The program documents that all staff working with youth have passed an annual tuberculosis test.
SH 5	The program ensures that at least one staff member trained in CPR and First Aid is present at all times.
SH 6	The program has emergency plans in place that are plainly displayed and regularly rehearsed.
SH 7	The program has policies and procedures to protect the health and safety of youth.
SH 8	Program staff ensure that space, equipment and procedures promote the safety and security of youth.
SH 9	Program staff protect and enhance the health of youth.
SH 10	The program serves food and drinks that meet the nutritional, caloric, and health needs of participating youth.

Business Administration

BA 1	The program has a designated site director/supervisor who is at least 21 years old.
BA 2	The program schedules at least two staff members to be present at all times during hours of program operation.
BA 3	The program maintains an overall staff/youth ratio of at least 1:16 (although actual ratios may vary based on the ages/abilities of participants or type of activities).
BA 4	The program ensures consistent scheduling and staffing patterns.
BA 5	The program's site director/supervisor has experience in working with youth, supervising staff, fiscal management, and program planning and oversight.
BA 6	The program develops a clear mission statement and measurable goals and objectives that directly relate to youth development outcomes.
BA 7	The program has clearly defined policies and procedures that are available to staff, youth, families, and community members.
BA 8	The program maintains a budget with accurate records of funds received and dispersed.
BA 9	The program maintains accurate records of youth and staff (paid, volunteer, and substitute).
BA 10	The program's administration provides sound fiscal management and oversight of the program.
BA 11	The program conducts a comprehensive assessment every 2-3 years and establishes a strategic plan that is reviewed annually.