

# PROGRAMMING



*A quality program provides a safe, healthy, and stimulating learning environment that promotes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development for all youth. Activities allow for choice, exploration, and discovery.*

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## CORE COMPETENCIES

Child/Adolescent Observation and Assessment

Learning Environment and Curriculum

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

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**GUIDELINE 1:** *Program provides an emotionally safe environment that fosters positive physical, social, emotional and cognitive growth and development for all participants.*

- 1.1** Nutritious meals and snacks.
  - 1.2** Age-appropriate furniture and equipment that is in good condition and is used appropriately by staff and youth.
  - 1.3** Age-appropriate, aesthetically appealing visual aids.
  - 1.4** Space for showcasing youth work.
  - 1.5** Effective communication of code of conduct to youth, staff, and families.
  - 1.6** Emotionally safe space separate from the main room for youth to “cool off” or talk through conflict resolution.
  - 1.7** Available staff member to offer emotional support and help youth work through conflict if and when it arises.
  - 1.8** At least 30 minutes out of every 3 hour block of time while at the program to play outdoors, weather permitting.
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**GUIDELINE 2:** *Program offers rich, meaningful, and engaging experiences to enhance learning, promote student success, and provide opportunities for human development.*

- 2.1 Activities that reflect the mission and philosophy of the program.
- 2.2 Project-based activities to encourage creativity and promote self-expression.
- 2.3 Experiential opportunities to allow youth to be exposed to new pathways for learning.
- 2.4 Quality academic tutoring for youth requesting help and quality alternative activities for youth not requesting tutoring.
- 2.5 A well-rounded menu of learning options offering opportunities for choosing and pursuing of personal interests.
- 2.6 Opportunity for discovery through trial and error.
- 2.7 An emotionally safe environment for youth to succeed and fail.
- 2.8 Youth ownership and pride.
- 2.9 Sufficient supplies and materials.
- 2.10 Activities divided by age or skill level.
- 2.11 Multi-age groupings where appropriate.
- 2.12 Opportunities for youth to work individually, in small groups, and whole group; opportunities to lead and follow.
- 2.13 Chances for older youth to mentor younger youth.
- 2.14 Inclusion of youth self-reflection.

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**GUIDELINE 3:** *Program supports learning and diversity through outreach to the schools, community, and volunteers.*

- 3.1 Former participants to give back as volunteers or staff.
- 3.2 Promotional materials that provide details on program offerings, how to join, and how to partner with the program.
- 3.3 Exploration of community resources and issues through projects and activities.
- 3.4 Collaboration with school-day personnel to bridge academic connections and promote service learning.
- 3.5 Opportunities for community service/service learning and reflection on those experiences.

**GUIDELINE 4:** *Schedule reflects offerings conducive to the needs of the youth, parents, and community served.*

- 4.1 Flexibility of hours of operation to meet the needs of the youth and parents.
- 4.2 A schedule available to staff, youth, and their families.
- 4.3 Opportunities for youth voice and spontaneous learning to occur. Youth have formal and informal opportunities to express their opinions and concerns about program offerings.
- 4.4 Adequate, sufficient, and age-appropriate transitions.
- 4.5 Creative, seamless, and smooth activity transitions.
- 4.6 Youth and parent involvement in schedule creation.
- 4.7 Active program pacing.
- 4.8 Teacher-directed and student-directed leadership opportunities.

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**GUIDELINE 5:** *Program provides the platform for active youth voice.*

- 5.1 Youth participation in program development and program selection.
- 5.2 Formal opportunity for youth to reflect and provide feedback on program and offerings.
- 5.3 Staff acknowledgement of youth input by utilizing feedback in creation of future program design and offerings.
- 5.4 Youth opportunities to lead others and experience different levels of self-management.