

This is an example of a site visit of a highly functioning program. The entire three and a half hour program was observed, during which many indicators of a quality program were observed. It was recommended that the district allow other local programs to come observe their program as there were no visible areas in need of improvement at that time.

Site “B” Visit - Executive Summary

Date & Time of Visit:

December 1, 2009 2:00pm-5:30pm

Activities Observed:

- Entire Program
 - Homework Help
 - Snack
 - Various clubs

Observation Highlights:

- Program well structured
- Youth knew and followed routine
- Relationships between youth and staff were positive
- Wide variety of engaging activities for youth

Recommendations:

- Consider allowing staff from the other site or other programs to come observe the program, as this program is a good example of an efficiently running program.

How to read & understand this report:

Each activity is observed for about 5 to 15 minutes. Site visitors begin their observations by orienting themselves to the activity setting, scanning the activity space, and completing the items on the coversheet. However, only the introductory items (e.g., location, observer, date, time) should be completed at the onset of the observation.

After sufficient orientation, the site visitor begins to take notes on what he or she observes within five broad quality domains. On the ‘Observation Notes’ page, site visitors describe the types of interactions, strategies, etc., that are observed for each domain. These descriptions include specific examples of activities, quotes of youth and staff comments, and descriptions of the general affect in the setting. Comments are brief, but in sufficient detail so that they support the item ratings.

It is important to note that in some observations, not all items within the domains will occur. Therefore not all items will be marked. This does not mean it is bad or good, rather it was just not observed.

The individual(s) conducting observations for activities from the project schedule are mindful to:

- 1) Ensure that the broadest scope of activities is observed by selecting activities across five activity types: Homework Help/Tutoring/Test Prep, Academic Enrichment, Arts Activities, Fitness, and Other Enrichment (e.g., Girls Group). *Please note that while snack can be an important part of an after-school project, observations are geared toward more substantive activities.*
- 2) Observe across grade levels as well as activities.
- 3) Verify with the program coordinator that each scheduled activity will be occurring in the location stated.
- 4) Verify the staff that will be present in each activity, noting level of education or special skills (e.g., high school student, certified teacher, arts specialist).

Symbol Key & Notes:

- ✓+ = This means the activity was observed and is above standard.
- ✓ = This means the activity was observed and is at standard.
- ✓- = This means the activity was observed and is below standard.

1. The observation instrument consists of basic demographic information about the activities and events being observed. It is a checklist for capturing basic facts about the observed activity, such as activity type, staff roles, number of participants, and grouping patterns. Each activity is represented by the label “Act 1”, “Act 2”, and “Act 3” which is in the order of being observed on a visit.
2. **Relationship Building:** This area indicates, if observed, that youth are friendly and relaxed with one another, respect one another, show positive affect to staff, assist one another, and are collaborative.

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- 3. Participation:** This area indicates, if observed, that youth are on-task, listen actively and attentively to peers and staff, contribute opinions, ideas and/or concerns to discussions, have opportunities to make meaningful choices, and take leadership responsibility/roles.
 - 4. Relationship building:** This area indicates, if observed, that most or all youth staff use positive behavior management techniques that are equitable and inclusive, show positive affect toward youth, attentively listen to and/or observe youth, encourage youth to share their ideas, opinions and concerns, engage personally with youth, and guide for positive peer interactions.
 - 5. Instructional Strategies:** This area indicates, if observed, that staff communicates goals, purpose, expectations, verbally recognize youth’s efforts and accomplishments, assist youth without taking control, ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas, challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency, employ varied teaching strategies, plan for/ask youth to work together.
 - 6. Content and structure:** This area indicates, if observed, that activities are well organized, challenge students intellectually, creatively, developmentally and/or physically, or involves the practice/a progression of skills and requires analytic thinking.
 - 7. Observation Notes:** for recording observation notes within five youth-development domains, such as youth-directed relationships and participation and staff-directed relationships.

Observation Instrument					Co- observed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
					Co- observer’s Initials 1. _____ 2. _____	
Program ID/Location: “B” Site	Observer Initials: EH	Observation Number: 1	Room Number: Various	Date (mm/dd/yr) 12/01/09	Start Time: 2:00pm	End Time: 5:30pm
Activity Name:		Various- Entire program observed				
Activity Overview: (1-2 sentence description):		Students complete 1 hour of homework help, and then participated in two sessions of various activities.				
Activity Type		Type of space		Total participants		80
Homework Help/Test Prep	✓	Classroom	✓	Total Number of Girls		--
Tutoring		Gym		Total Number of Boys		--
Academics Activities (not homework)		Computer Lab		Grade Levels (circle all that apply)		
Story reading/listening		Library		K	1	2
Visual Arts		Cafeteria	✓	3	4	5
Dance		Auditorium		6	7	8
Music		Art Room		9	10	11
Drama		Music Room		12	other	
Crafts	✓	Hallway		Participation type		
Sports – practicing/learning a skill	✓	Outside Playground		By age or grade		✓
Sports – playing competitive or non-competitive physical games		Other:		By interest (child’s choice)		✓
Open, unstructured time (e.g., table games, internet, free play)				All attendees (in the program)		✓
Staff-assigned learning games (dominos, chess, etc.)				At the end of the observation, please indicate that type of skill development, if any, took place in this activity.		
Community service				Skill development		
College/Career Preparation				Total Staff		#
Cultural awareness clubs/projects				Skill-building		✓
Other ____sign language____	✓	Other Adult		Skill practice/reinforcement		✓
Primary Skill targeted in skill-building						
Physical/athletic	✓	Decision-making/problem solving				
Artistic		Interpersonal communication		✓		
Math		Other _____				

Reading/writing/literacy			
Relationship Building: All or most youth			
✓ +	Are friendly and relaxed with one another. Youth socialize informally. They are relaxed in their interactions with each other. They appear to enjoy one another's company.		
✓	Respect one another. Youth refrain from causing disruptions that interfere with others accomplishing their own tasks. When working together, they consider one another's viewpoints. They refrain from derogatory comments or actions about the individual person and the work s/he is doing; if disagreements occur, they are handled constructively.		
✓ +	Show positive affect to staff. Youth interact with the staff, and these interactions are generally friendly interactions. For example, they may smile at staff, laugh with them, and/or share good-natured jokes.		
✓	Assist one another. One or more youth formally or informally reach out to help/mentor peers and help them think about and figure out how to complete a task. This item refers to assistance that is intentional and prolonged, going beyond answering an incidental question.		
✓	Are collaborative. Youth work together/share materials to accomplish tasks. This item is different from item D (above), as in collaboration, youth are equal partners in the work (rather than one student assisting/mentoring/tutoring another). This item can include working together on assigned teams, if youth are working together to get a better result.		
Participation: All or most youth			
✓	Are on-task. Youth are focused, attentive, and not easily distracted from the task/project. They follow along with the staff and/or follow directions to carry-on an individual or group task.		
✓	Listen actively and attentively to peers and staff. Youth listen and respond to each other and staff. They appear interested in what others have to say. They look at peers and/or staff when they speak, and they provide concrete and constructive feedback about ideas or actions.		
H	Contribute opinions, ideas and/or concerns to discussions. Youth discuss/express their ideas and respond to staff questions and/or spontaneously share connections they've made. This item goes beyond basic Q&A and refers to sharing that is part of the activity and within the class norms. Calling out – or disruptively talking out of turn – is not part of this item.		
I	Have opportunities to make meaningful choices. Within this activity, youth choose what they do, how they do it, and/or with whom they collaborate, and they experience the consequences of their choices. This item refers to genuine options, not simple choices such as choosing between two types of games, or two sets of homework pages.		
✓	Take leadership responsibility/roles. Youth have meaningful responsibility for directing, mentoring or assisting one another to achieve an outcome; they lead some part of the activity by organizing a task or a whole activity, or by leading a group of youth within the activity.		
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: with all youth, STAFF...			
✓	Use positive behavior management techniques that allow for youth to accomplish the activity's objectives. They set consistent limits and communicate clear expectations for behavioral standards, and these are appropriate to the age of the youth and the activity type. When disciplining youth, they do so in a firm manner, without unnecessary accusations, threats, or anger.		
✓	Are equitable and inclusive. Youth are provided equal opportunity to participate in an activity and are rewarded/disciplined similarly for like actions. Staff encourage the participation of all youth, regardless of gender, race, language ability, or other evident differences among students. They try to engage students who appear isolated; they do not appear to favor a particular student or small cluster of students.		
✓	Show positive affect toward youth. Staff interact with youth, and these interactions are generally friendly. For example, their tone is caring, and/or they use positive language, smile, laugh, or share good-natured jokes.		
✓	Attentively listen to and/or observe youth. Staff look at youth when they speak and acknowledge what youth have said by responding and/or reacting. They pay attention to youth as they complete a task and appear interested in what they are saying/doing.		
O	Encourage youth to share their ideas, opinions and concerns. Staff actively elicit youth ideas, opinions and concerns through discussion and/or writing. This item goes beyond basic Q&A.		
✓	Engage personally with youth. Staff show interest in youth as individuals, ask about youth's interests, and engage about events in their lives.		
✓	Guide for positive peer interactions. Staff intentionally encourage positive interactions and/or directly teach interpersonal skills. They teach these skills through planned activity content or through intervening constructively and calmly to address bullying or teasing behavior, redirecting youth and/or explaining or discussing why negative behavior is unacceptable. This item does not refer to behavior management, as described above (see item K).		
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES: STAFF...			
✓	Communicate goals, purpose, expectations. Staff make clear the value and purpose of what youth are doing and/or what they expect them to accomplish. This item goes beyond how youth are expected to behave (which would be captured in item K).		
✓	Verbally recognize youth's efforts and accomplishments. Staff acknowledge participation and progress in order to encourage youth.		

✓	Assist youth without taking control. Staff may coach, demonstrate, or employ scaffolding techniques that help youth to gain a better understanding of a concept or complete an action on their own. Staff refrain from taking over a task or doing something on behalf of the youth. This assistance goes beyond checking that work is completed.		
✓	Ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas. Staff encourage youth to explain their answers, evidence, or conclusions. They may ask youth ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘if’ questions to get them to expand, explore, better clarify, articulate, or concretize their thoughts/ideas. This item goes beyond staff-elicited Q&A.		
✓	Challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency. Staff give constructive feedback that is meant to help youth to gauge their progress. Staff help youth determine ways to push themselves intellectually, creatively, and/or physically.		
✓	Employ varied teaching strategies. In order to engage students and/or reach those with different learning styles, staff diversify instructional strategies, which may include the use of two or more of the following: direct instruction, coaching, modeling, demonstrating, or others. Varied instructional strategies can occur simultaneously and/or sequentially within the observation period. This item does not include coupling a staff-directed instruction with youth working together, as described above.		
✓	Plan for/ask youth to work together. Staff plan for and/or ask youth to work together, solve problems, and/or accomplish tasks. The focus of the activity is youth to youth, rather than youth to staff. This item goes beyond staff assigned teams for competitive games and sports. In the case of staff assigned teams, staff would also need to be directing youth to collaborate, plan, devise, etc., in order for this item to be rated as staff asking youth to work together.		
CONTENT AND STRUCTURE: ACTIVITY			
✓	Is well organized. Activity has clear goals/objectives; there is evidence of a clear lesson plan and process(es), and tasks can be conducted in the timeframe available. If special materials are needed, they are prepared and available.		
✓	Challenges students intellectually, creatively, developmentally, and/or physically. Activity’s level of challenge is not so difficult that youth have trouble participating successfully and not so easy youth master skills quickly and become bored.		
✓	Involves the practice/a progression of skills. Activity involves the progressive development, learning OR practicing of skills needed to complete tasks or to participate.		
✓	Requires analytic thinking. Activity calls on students to think about and solve meaningful problems and/or juggle multiple activities or dimensions to accomplish a task. For example, the activity requires youth to hold two or more ideas constant at the same idea, and/or understand and apply sequencing or patterns.		
ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT			
1	Is the level of adult supervision appropriate to activity and age group?	Yes	No
	If no: → Why not?		
2	Is the work space conducive to the activity type?	Yes	No
	If no: → Why not?		
3	Are necessary materials available and in sufficient supply?	Yes	No
	If no: → Why not?		

OBSERVER’S SYNTHESIS Before leaving the activity setting, please provide a 1-2 sentence description of the overall quality of each domain within this activity.

DOMAIN	OBSERVER’S DESCRIPTION
Youth-directed relationships: youth are supportive and respectful of one another and staff.	Students appeared very supportive and respectful of each other and staff in all activities observed.
Youth participation: youth exhibit engagement in the activity; there are opportunities for their input and leadership. They appear to enjoy the activity content.	Students were engaged and involved. Some students were able to participate in the leading of Karate. Most students observed seem to truly enjoy and were excited about the activities.
Staff-directed relationships: adults provide guidance and emotional support; they take interest in the youth and their ideas.	All staff observed were very supportive of the children, and seemed to take a genuine interest in the children.
Instructional strategies: staff strategies are geared towards encouraging youth to push beyond their present level of competency.	Staff were observed encouraging students to push themselves that extra bit, even when they doubted themselves.
Activity content and structure: activities are planned and well organized; challenge level is appropriate to age; there are opportunities for problem solving.	The entire program was well organized, the activities were appropriate to the age level, and there were many opportunities for problem solving.

OBSERVER’S NOTES

Observer’s Initials: EH	Observation #: 1	Activity Name: Entire Program
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: all or most YOUTH		PARTICIPATION: all or most YOUTH
<p>Students were friendly and relaxed with each other and staff. They were helping each other and respectful to all around them, including the observer.</p>		<p>Youth were on task and followed directions. They were engaged and appeared to enjoy each of the activities observed. They were very cooperative with staff, and knew what they were supposed to do and where they were supposed to go with very little to no reminding.</p>
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: with all youth, STAFF		INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES: STAFF
<p>Staff listened to what children had to say, paying direct attention to the child as they talked. Staff was observed making small talk with the children and appeared to know and genuinely care for the students in the program.</p>		<p>Staff made clear the directions and the expectations of each step along the way. Students with special needs were given individual attention in the way they needed to succeed. Other students who needed direct help were given it. Activities were varied in their delivery and content to appeal to all students.</p>
ACTIVITY CONTENT AND STRUCTURE		
<p>The program began with all students assembling in the cafeteria. Students sat at tables based on their grade, and most students appeared to know the routine and did not need to be told where to go. Once they were seated, attendance was taken, and they were escorted by grade to various classrooms for the homework hour. Some students went to band practice during this time. At the end of the hour of homework, the students all reassembled in the cafeteria for the snack, which consisted of a package of handisnacks and a box of juice. After snack, the students were again escorted to their first activity. Attendance was taken at each step of the process. After the activity was over, they reassembled in the cafeteria again, and then were escorted to the second activity. Some students were in the YMCA program, which stayed in the cafeteria at their own table the entire time. Students were escorted out to the bus at 5pm, and students who were picked up waited in the gym. Some activities observed during the program were: homework help, Karate, sign language, and character education.</p>		