

This is an example of an abbreviated site visit that was “formally” recorded, due to a lack of appropriate programming being implemented. Instead, some strengths (“highlights”) were mentioned, along with several key recommendations for program change. As a result of this site visit, the program at “A” Site was drastically re-configured to meet funding requirements. A follow-up site visit conducted six weeks later revealed a highly-functioning, effective program that had incorporated most recommendations resulting from this site visit report.

“A” Site Visit - Executive Summary

Date & Time of Visit: December 8, 2009 from 3:45pm to 4:45pm

Observation Highlights:

- In general, students and staff had strong rapport and positive interactions. Staff knew students’ names, family members, and other information, which they used in praising and disciplining students.
- Students in the homework area were actively engaged in homework or other academic activities (reading, completing worksheets). Staff was providing direct assistance to individual students, while being attentive and maintaining order among the other students present.
- Students comprehended the sticker system, and appeared aware of their responsibilities (i.e. attending Power Hour or enrichment).
- Students seemed excited and eager to be at the Site, and enthusiastically explained their favorite activities, indicating a true appreciation for the role the Site plays in their lives.

Recommendations:

- Power Hour attendance must be mandatory and enforced. Students should be receiving one full hour of homework help or academic-focused enrichment instruction every day.
- Create and adhere to a detailed schedule. This schedule should designate times during which ONLY Power Hour or academic-focused enrichment activities are available, so that students must attend one of these programs.
- Diversify academic-focused enrichment options for students without homework. Staff can use online resources to find lesson plans for engaging, challenging activities that build academic skills through unusual or alternative methods. Ideas include: stock market games and fantasy sports teams (math, statistics, economics); poetry/rap classes (ELA, music); forensics investigations (science); or bridge-building competitions (math, science, technology).
- Students should be engaged in one activity per time period, and stay in that activity throughout that time period. This will minimize movement throughout the building, and help track student participation.
- All staff should enforce rules and expectations for students. A program-wide disciplinary system (similar to PBIS) or posted rules and expectations can help. Professional development may be offered to staff, training them in appropriate management techniques and creating a reasonable, enforceable set of program expectations.
- Staff should be engaged with students at all times, either assisting in one-on-one support, or instructing the larger group. They should not simply be overseeing or monitoring a room full of students.

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.
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.

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- 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												
Program ID/Location: “A” Site	Observer Initials: CT	Observation Number:	Room Number: Various	Date 12/8/2009	Start Time: 3:45pm	End Time: 4:45pm						
Activity Name:												
Activity Overview: (1-2 sentence description):												
Activity Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ata*	Type of space	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One	Total participants					#			
Homework Help/Test Prep	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Classroom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Total Number of Girls								
Tutoring		Gym		Total Number of Boys								
Academics Activities (not homework)		Computer Lab	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grade Levels (circle all that apply)								
Story reading/listening		Library		K	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Visual Arts		Cafeteria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7	8	9	10	11	12	other		
Dance		Auditorium		Participation type								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Music		Art Room		By age or grade								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Drama		Music Room		By interest (child’s choice)								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Crafts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hallway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All attendees (in the program)								
Sports – practicing/learning a skill		Outside Playground		At the end of the observation, please indicate that type of skill development, if any, took place in this activity.								
Sports – playing competitive or non-competitive physical games		Other:		Skill development								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One
Open, unstructured time (e.g., table games, internet, free play)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Total Staff	#	Skill-building								
Staff-assigned learning games (dominos, chess, etc.)		High School Student		Skill practice/reinforcement								
Community service		College Student or Young Adult	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
College/Career Preparation		Certified Teacher		Homework Activities								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cultural awareness clubs/projects		Specialist or Other Professional										
Other Free time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other Adult										
Primary Skill targeted in skill-building											<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One	
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.
D	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.
E	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.
J	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...	
K	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.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: with all youth, STAFF...	
✓	Guide for positive peer interactions. Staff intentionally encourages positive interactions and/or directly teaches 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...	
R	Communicate goals, purpose, expectations. Staff makes 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).
S	Verbally recognize youth's efforts and accomplishments. Staff acknowledges participation and progress in order to encourage youth.
T	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 refrains from taking over a task or doing something on behalf of the youth. This assistance goes beyond checking that work is completed.
U	Ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas. Staff encourages 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.
V	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.
W	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.
X	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.
AA	Involves the practice/a progression of skills. Activity involves the progressive development, learning OR practicing of skills needed to complete tasks or to participate.
BB	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 interacted with each other and staff respectfully. In one instance, a student was hit by another student with special needs, but rather than react negatively, the student sought out a staff member to explain the situation which was quickly managed.
Youth participation: youth exhibit engagement in the activity; there are opportunities for their input and leadership. They appear to enjoy the activity content.	Students in the homework room were engaged in their academic work, and the majority of the students in the computer room were playing on appropriate websites. However, there were many students who were not engaged in any directed activity, and the activities offered did not provide opportunity for input, leadership, or intellectual investigation.
Staff-directed relationships: adults provide guidance and emotional support; they take interest in the youth and their ideas.	Staff knew all students, which helped them to manage behavior. However, there was little attempt to direct activity or enforce rules and responsibilities.
Instructional strategies: staff strategies are geared towards encouraging youth to push beyond their present level of competency.	In the homework room, staff worked one-on-one with students needing assistance, but outside of this area, there was little to no instruction occurring. In the computer lab, the staff member was not observed engaging with students at all. In the Enrichment room, the staff member was helping students, but the activity was a craft project, as opposed to an academic-focused enrichment project. No activity observed was designed to build skill or push students beyond current competencies.
Activity content and structure: activities are planned and well organized; challenge level is appropriate to age; there are opportunities for problem solving.	Activities were not well planned or organized. Though there was a schedule, many students did not seem to adhere to the schedule. Several students said that they were aware they were supposed to complete homework, but did not know what to do if they didn’t have any. Others said that the other options were boring. More structure is necessary in order to engage students and promote academic skill-building.