

Kansas City Quality Matters

In November 2009, United Way launched Quality Matters by engaging ten agencies and 24 of their sites throughout the five-county region to participate in a pilot project, using the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI). Quality Matters is a multi-year effort to champion quality out-of-school time opportunities that strengthen child and youth achievement, to help today's youth overcome barriers to success and to maximize long-lasting benefits for this region's children and youth.

The 24 sites involved in the pilot demonstrate the diversity of out-of-school time programs across the region ? from large multi-site afterschool or community-based organizations to small, single-site community or faith-based organizations. Serving over 3,000 children and youth grades 5-12 in the five-county metropolitan area, the majority served by these sites qualify for the federal Free and Reduced Price School Lunch program, demonstrating the potential to address the risk factors associated with growing up in poverty or low-income households.

To expand the project for the 2010-11 school year, United Way plans to at least double the number of sites participating in the Weikart Center's Youth Program Quality Improvement process ? a key underlying tool to build continuous quality improvement. In addition, the expansion will include sites that serve young school age children, grades kindergarten through fourth.

Moving forward, United Way is committed to making Quality Matters a multi-year effort that champions quality out-of-school time experiences and develops strong community leadership on youth development. By working in partnership with stakeholders, United Way expects to build upon the current evidenced-based approaches in place, learn from working in partnership, and integrate new strategies that will leverage even greater results for this region's children and youth into the future.

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