

SAMPLE ITEMS – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION



mission.

Form B – Organization Items

Do not copy or dis



Published by

David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

A division of

The Forum for Youth Investment

124 Pearl Street Suite 601

Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Phone: 734.961.6900

Fax: 734.961.6904

Web site: www.cypq.org

Copyright © 2011 the Forum for Youth Investment.

Except as permitted under the Copyright Act of 1976,

no part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any

form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including

photocopy, recording, or any information storage-and-retrieval

system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Based on content originally developed by High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

ISBN 1-57379-256-X

Printed in the United States of America

the
forum
FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

 **HIGHSCOPE**®
INSPIRING EDUCATORS to INSPIRE CHILDREN

Introduction

Purpose

The Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA) is a validated instrument designed to evaluate the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs. The School-Age PQA has been adapted from the Youth PQA and is appropriate for programs that serve children in grades K-6.

The PQA consists of a set of scorable standards for best practices in afterschool programs, community organizations, schools, summer programs, and other places where children have fun, work, and learn with adults. The PQA is designed to empower people and organizations to envision optimal-quality youth programming by providing a shared language for practice and decision making, and by producing scores that can be used for comparison and assessment of progress over time. The PQA measures the quality of child experiences and promotes the creation of environments that tap the most important resource available to any youth-serving organization—a young person’s motivation to engage critically with the world. The PQA is an assessment tool for best practices for any youth-serving program, not just those that use the HighScope participatory learning approach.

Benefits

The PQA offers several important attributes:

- *Experience-tested approach*—The standards for best practices that make up the PQA are grounded in extensive experience working with young people. Together, the items in the instrument represent a youth development approach that works.
- *Research-based rubrics*—The PQA contains proven measurement rubrics that allow observers to differentiate programs in important and meaningful ways.
- *Opportunities to observe practice*—Staff using the PQA must spend time watching what happens in their program.
- *Flexibility*—The PQA was designed to meet a range of accountability and improvement needs, from self assessment to research and evaluation.

Definitions

- *Organization* refers to the agency that operates services for young people. An organization may be a community-based nonprofit agency, a church or temple, a private center, a neighborhood association, or a school.
- *Program offerings* refer to the range of scheduled services available to children and youth at an organization, such as classes, workshops, meetings, special events, homework help, or discussion groups.
- *Session* is one scheduled period of a program offering. For example, a session might be when the photography club meets from 3 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday.
- *Staff* refers to the person or persons facilitating a session. Staff may include paid workers, volunteers, or peer leaders.
- *Activities* are the planned interactions led by staff within a program offering. For example, the activities that occur during a college preparation club might include conducting mock interviews, journaling, or exploring college Web sites.
- *Program hours* are the normal hours that the full range of program offerings are in session.
- *Form* refers to the entire group of scales used for assessment. Both *Form A—Program Offerings* and *Form B—Organization Practices & Policies* are forms.
- *Domain* refers to the group of scales falling under one of the sections I–VII. For example, in *Form A—Program Offerings*, a domain is “I. Safe Environment,” which contains scales A–E that pertain to that domain. *Domain score* is the average of scale scores for each domain I–VII. For example, the domain “I. Safe Environment” contains five scale scores to be averaged for a domain score.
- *Scale score* refers to the average of the scores (one per item) that make up an item. For example, scale “I-B. The physical environment is safe and free of health hazards,” has four items that can be scored as 1, 3, or 5 and then averaged for a scale score.
- *Item or item row* refers to a single descriptive row on the PQA for which you score a 1, 3, or 5. Level 5 is best practice.

SCORING FORM B

Form B focuses on program quality at the organizational level and assesses the quality of organizational supports for the youth program offerings assessed in Form A. For raters using the external assessment method, evidence is gathered through a survey and guided interview with a person responsible for administering the youth program. For raters using the program self assessment method, the evidence is assembled and reviewed by an in-house team of administrators and staff. A review of documents may be necessary. For more information on the external assessment and program self assessment methods, see the Youth PQA Handbook.

Step 1 Pre-interview. Begin the assessment by making contact with the relevant program administrator(s). In your conversation, establish the purpose for using the Youth PQA, the materials needed, and a time for the organizational interview to take place. Forward the administrator a copy of the Administrator Survey, which prepares the administrator for the organizational interview. The survey (in Appendix A of the Youth PQA Form B) can be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to the program and should be completed before the organizational interview. The survey lists the policy and governance documents that pertain to the interview questions. A list of these documents can also be found on the corresponding item pages in Form B.

Step 2 Conduct the organizational interview. The organizational interview can be conducted in person or by telephone but assumes that the administrator has already responded to the Administrator Survey. The questions that guide the organizational interview are listed in Form B. The interview questions correspond to the indicators within an item. Ask the questions and record the answers in the space provided. Both the survey (administered before the interview) and the interview questions are designed to elicit information that will allow the rater to fit evidence to the appropriate item rows and score each of the rows in scales V–VII of Form B.

The interview questions are formulated in relatively neutral language to avoid leading the interviewee toward expected responses. The indicators provide examples of the type of information the interview questions are designed to elicit. The interview can usually be completed in less than an hour.

Step 3 Score the items. After recording answers to the interview questions, read the corresponding row of indicators. Based on the evidence you have recorded, score the item row. Circle the number (1, 3, or 5) of the indicator that best matches your notes. Write the score in the box at the end of the item. When using the program self assessment method, a staff team (including the administrator) can simply use Form B and the Administrator Survey to gather evidence and score the items. Scores for each item should be selected through a discussion of the evidence and a consensus decision by the review team.

TRY TO COMPLETE EVERY ITEM.

Step 4 Determine the score for each scale. The scale score is an average of scores (one per item) that fall under each scale. To calculate the scale score, simply add the individual scores (1, 3, or 5) for the items to get the sum and divide by the total number of items that were scored. Round scale scores to two decimal places. If an item is not applicable or cannot be observed or determined by follow-up or interview questions, calculate the scale score based on the number of items scored for that scale. If some items are left unscored, you can still attain reliable and valid composite scores. However, to maintain the validity of Youth PQA results, every effort should be made to collect data for every item.

V. Youth Centered Policies and Practices

V-B. Program offerings tap youth interests and build multiple skills.

Note: (a) This item refers to all program offerings at the organization for the current year. (b) **Major focus** refers to a specific allocation of time, equipment, or activities to a program area.

Items			Record any additional information here.
<p>1 Young people have no opportunities to influence the format or content of program offerings, or staff dismiss input from youth who initiate it.</p>	<p>3 Young people have informal opportunities to influence the format or content of program offerings based on their interests, preferences, and/or satisfaction.</p>	<p>5 Young people have structured opportunities to influence the format or content of program offerings based on their interests, preferences, and/or satisfaction.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>1 Program offerings do not focus on skill building but rather on entertainment or custodial care.</p>	<p>3 Program offerings, on average, have a major and specific programmatic focus (as opposed to a minor or incidental focus) on skill building in 1 or 2 of the program areas listed on the next page.</p>	<p>5 Program offerings, on average, have a major and specific programmatic focus (as opposed to a minor or incidental focus) on skill building in 3 or more of the program areas listed on the next page.</p>	
<p>1 Across all program offerings, the organization has a major and specific programmatic focus (as opposed to a minor or incidental focus) on at least 2 of the developmental domains listed on the next page.</p>	<p>3 Across all program offerings, the organization has a major and specific programmatic focus (as opposed to a minor or incidental focus) on 3–5 of the developmental domains listed on the next page.</p>	<p>5 Across all program offerings, the organization has a major and specific programmatic focus (as opposed to a minor or incidental focus) on 6–7 of the developmental domains listed on the next page.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

$$\text{Sum } \boxed{} \div \boxed{} \text{ number of items scored} = \boxed{} \text{ scale score}$$

Interview Questions

How do you determine the format and content of your program offerings?

Are youth consulted? **Y N** If so, how?

Consider the following program areas and how you focus on them. (Check one box per line.)

	No Focus	Minor Focus	Major Focus		No Focus	Minor Focus	Major Focus		No Focus	Minor Focus	Major Focus		No Focus	Minor Focus	Major Focus
Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poetry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cooking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Building/Shop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Life Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theater	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sewing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Creative Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
								Physical Fitness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tech/ Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Consider how your program addresses the following developmental domains. (Check one box per line.)

	No Focus	Minor Focus	Major Focus		No Focus	Minor Focus	Major Focus
Cognitive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spiritual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Civic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vocational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

VI. High Expectations for Youth and Staff

VI-G. Organization promotes high expectations for young people.

Note: **High expectations** ask youth to excel or perform at a high level in reference to a rubric or a comparison (e.g., a citywide, statewide, or nationwide) group.

Items

1 Organization does not articulate high expectations for young people.

3 Organization articulates high expectations for young people but has not identified steps toward meeting them.

5 Organization articulates high expectations for young people, and steps for meeting those expectations have been identified in all program offerings.

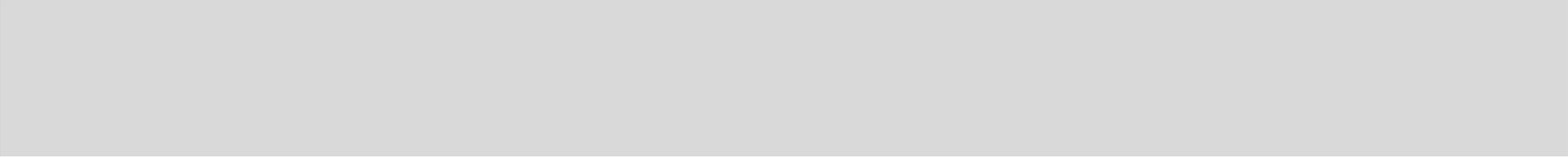
Record any additional information here.

1 Organization does not provide opportunities to acknowledge the achievements, contributions, and responsibilities of young people.

3 Organization provides informal opportunities to acknowledge the achievements, contributions, and responsibilities of young people (e.g., impromptu sharing, recognition, displays of work).

5 Organization provides structured opportunities to acknowledge the achievements, contributions, and responsibilities of young people (e.g., group presentations, reflections, exhibitions, performances, celebrations).

Sum ÷ number of items scored = scale score



Interview Questions

Do you expect your youth to excel in their age group as compared to a larger (e.g., citywide, statewide, or nationwide) peer group? **Y N** If so, how?

How do you support young people in taking steps to meet these high expectations?

How do you recognize the achievements of youth in the program offerings?

Do not copy or distribute without permission.

VII. Access

VII-L. Organization communicates with families, other organizations, and schools.

Items

1 No communication occurs with most families of youth participants.

3 Communication with families of youth participants is informal or irregular.

5 Organization has established mechanisms (e.g., newsletters, e-mail, conferences, group meetings, dinners, picnics) for regular communication with families of youth participants.

Record any additional information here.

1 No communication occurs with other organizations involved with youth.

3 Communication with other organizations involved with youth is limited to coordination of transportation, schedules, or other logistics.

5 Communication with other organizations involved with youth occurs to better coordinate supports and opportunities for youth.

1 No communication with schools occurs.

3 Communication with schools is limited to coordination of transportation, schedules, or other logistics.

5 Communication with schools occurs to better coordinate supports and opportunities for youth.

Sum ÷ number of items scored = scale score



Interview Questions

How do you communicate with families?

How often?

How do you communicate with other organizations involved with youth or children?

How often?

What is the nature of your communication?

How do you communicate with schools?

How often?

What is the nature of your communication?

Youth PQA Summary Sheet

Form B – Organizational Items

Fill out the information on the left. Transfer the Scale Scores (rounded to two decimal places) into the corresponding blank. If a scale was not scored, enter "NS", and in calculating the average score, remember to divide the number by the number of scales actually scored for that domain. Refer to the scoring instructions on page 4 for more information.

To enter your scores into the Online Scores Reporter, visit www.cypq.org.

V. Youth Centered Policies and Practices

- _____ A. Staff qualifications support a positive youth development focus.
- _____ B. Program offerings tap youth interests and build multiple skills.
- _____ C. Youth have an influence on the setting and activities in the organization.
- _____ D. Youth have an influence on the structure and policy of the organization.

Safe Environment Sum

Safe Environment Average Score

VI. High Expectations for youth and Staff

- _____ E. Organization promotes staff development.
- _____ F. Organization promotes supportive social norms.
- _____ G. Organization promotes high expectations for young people.
- _____ H. Organization is committed to ongoing program improvement.

High Expectations Sum

High Expectations Average Score

VII. Access

- _____ I. Staff availability and longevity with the organization support youth-staff relationships.
- _____ J. Schedules are in effect.
- _____ K. Barriers to participation are addressed.
- _____ L. Organization communicates with families, other organizations, and schools.

Access Sum

Access Average Score