

## Research Services

The Weikart Center Research team works closely with field services, to ensure that all Weikart Center training, technical assistance, materials, and services, are rooted in the latest research. Similarly, the research we conduct is informed by direct experiences in the field.

Our research team provides several routine and custom services for clients:

**Standards development** – If your county or network is developing quality standards for youth programs, consider working with us. As we’ve done for several clients, we’ll help you develop standards that are rooted in current research, and that will be designed to be compatible with assessment.

**Customized assessment tool creation** – Over the last decade we have worked with numerous clients to create assessment tools customized to their contexts. Clients for this service include the American Camping Association, Camp Fire USA, 4-H PYD, and numerous county- and state- intermediaries.

**Data planning and collection** – Whether you are undertaking a Youth Program Quality Intervention, or simply looking to collect some baseline information about programs in your network, we can help you optimize your planning and data collection. You can benefit from our extensive experience setting up data collection initiatives. We’ll help you roll out external observational assessment, and plan additional data sources based on your resources and goals.

**Network program quality reports** – A report on the network of youth programs you work with as they conduct a quality improvement initiative can be invaluable for taking stock, motivating change, and sharing key information with stakeholders. Weikart Center staff will work with you to create a network report that is timely, meaningful, and useful. Options range as follows:

- Standard report - Our standard report provides composite scores across the programs in your network, based on Form A of the Youth Program Quality Assessment, our widely used and research validated observation-based tool. Standard reports contain a summary of recommendations, aggregate program quality scores, analyses of program improvement plans, lists of consistently low scoring items, and scores broken down by variables of client interest (e.g., 21<sup>st</sup> Century versus non-21<sup>st</sup> Century).
- Additional Weikart Center data sources – You can enhance your standard report by including additional data sources, including:
  - Youth PQA Form B – Information about administration, policies, and procedures, based on interviews with program directors
  - Staff surveys – Our standard staff survey assesses staff perceptions of program quality as well as information about staff planning time, attitudes about youth voice, etc.
  - Youth surveys – Our standard youth survey assesses items including youth motivation, sense of belonging, feelings about the program, perceptions of learning, and more.

- Additional outside data sources – Your report will be strengthened by using all available relevant data. Whatever additional data you have available, we can work with you to include this in your report.

**Process survey** – Whether you are beginning a pilot intervention or have been implementing a system for several years, a process survey is a great way to gather opinions, satisfaction, and feedback on the quality assessment and improvement process. Our surveys collect information on dosage, satisfaction, and perceived effects/outcomes of the intervention.

**Other services** – We provide consultation on designing program evaluations and research studies focused on program quality. Through partnerships with other OST organizations such as the Search Institute, we can provide you with comprehensive solutions to your OST research needs.