



# What to Look for in a Quality Afterschool Program



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## Goals

Quality afterschool programs understand that children and youth in different age groups have different academic, psychological, and physical activity needs. In this session families will learn what to look for when choosing the right program for their kids.

# Indiana Afterschool Network



**Mission:** We mobilize people, organizations, and communities to connect afterschool and summer programs with the support they need to create positive youth outcomes for inspiring futures.

IAN supports strong afterschool providers and programs by establishing standards and best practices, and offering tools for professional development with ways to measure success.

<https://www.indianaafterschool.org/quality/>

# Afterschool Alliance



**Mission:** The Alliance works to ensure that all youth have access to affordable, quality afterschool programs by engaging public will to increase public and private investment in afterschool program initiatives at the national, state, and local levels.

The Afterschool Alliance can help you learn what to look for in an afterschool providers and how to identify high-quality programs.

<https://www.afterschoolalliance.org/myCommunityLook.cfm>

# Types of Afterschool Programs

- Nationally affiliated programs such as Boys and Girls Club and YMCA
- Programs provided by community organizations or an independent non-profit business
- Programs supported with government funds such as 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) and School Age Child Care (SACC)
- Programs operated by school districts
- Ministry and Home-Based programs

# High-Quality Program Characteristics for Ages 5-10

**Wide variety of activities and choices, but offered under a set routine. Examples of opportunities to look for:**

- Frequent individual interaction with adults
- Games with simple rules and physical activities that do not emphasize competition
- Quiet areas as well as noisy areas
- Outside experiences
- Imaginative play opportunities
- Projects that apply school day lessons about the family and community
- Opportunities to read aloud, silently, and to talk about books and ideas
- Matching, ordering and sorting activities
- Opportunities to apply arithmetic problems in real-world ways
- Opportunities to ask questions about science and technology
- Exposure to professionals and experts from various fields
- Small experiments with everyday products
- Opportunities to work with a variety of materials for projects
- Music, dance and drama opportunities
- Opportunities to try experiences from diverse cultures

# High-Quality Program Characteristics for Ages 10-14

**Wide variety of options. Examples of opportunities to look for:**

- Connections to real-world experience
- Opportunities to interact in large and small groups as well as individual recognition
- Experiences that explore ethics and values with respected adults
- Opportunities to serve others
- Physical activity
- Opportunities for decision-making and leadership
- Opportunities to apply school day lessons
- Experiences emphasizing reasoning and problem-solving
- Opportunities to explore subjects in-depth
- Opportunities to meet a diverse group of professionals and career paths
- Project based learning opportunities
- Quiet times for homework with adult help and peer help when needed
- Games that provide opportunities to practice basic skills
- Wide range of reading activities with discussion
- Experiences built on a wide diversity of cultures and ethnic groups

# High-Quality Program Characteristics for Ages 14-18

**Substantial choice. Examples of opportunities for look for:**

- Opportunities to explore a variety of career paths and college firsthand
- Opportunities to serve others, contribute to community or mentor or tutor younger students
- Opportunities to earn or recover credit, or catch up or move ahead with academic interests
- Opportunities to interact in large and small groups as well as individual recognition
- Opportunities for decision-making and leadership
- Experiences emphasizing reasoning and problem-solving
- Opportunities to explore subjects in-depth
- Opportunities to participate in research experiences and internships
- Presentations and projects that involve appearance
- Opportunities to discuss and address physical risk
- Opportunities to show competence in a public setting
- Opportunities to express feelings through projects and activities
- One-on-one opportunities to talk with adults
- Discussions of diverse ideas and opinions with adults and peers, and exploration of ethics and values
- Opportunities to work on school day projects and papers with library and Internet support

# Recognizing Quality Programs



The purpose of the Indiana Afterschool **Top Ten Quality Standards** is to outline the path and steps that lead to high quality youth programs that take place outside the school day. The afterschool standards are based on national research and best practices in the youth development and education fields. You can view our Top Ten and other Quality Standards here:

<https://www.indianaafterschool.org/quality/standards/>

# Recognizing Quality Programs



The Indiana Afterschool Network recognizes afterschool programs with dedication and drive toward continuous program quality with the **Quality Leader Badge**. To earn the badge programs complete the Indiana Program Quality Self Assessment annually. Look for our Quality Badge in program marketing and communications. You can learn more about our Quality Leader Badge here:

<https://www.indianaafterschool.org/quality/assessment/>

## What Are Your Needs?

Please feel free to unmute yourself or type in the chat box and let us know what afterschool needs you have.



# Questions?

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**Thank You!**