Running Head: SPYDER

SPYDER: Supporting Positive Youth Development with Elementary Recreation

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KIN 857 Fall 2013

Abstract

This paper describes the implementation of an after-school program named SPYDER which stands for Supporting Positive Youth Development with Elementary Recreation. The paper reviews the pertinent literature and discusses the logistics surrounding successful implementation. It examines the participants, costs, staffing, and programming details as well as discusses ways to properly evaluate the organization and its impact on the students and society.

Introduction

      SPYDER is an acronym for an after school program which is designed to help under-served and under-privileged public elementary school children. SPYDER stands for Supporting Positive Youth Development with Elementary Recreation. The program focuses on fostering positive youth development while exposing the children to a wide variety of sports while allowing them time to complete homework. In its first year the program will operate in one underserved elementary school with the hope of expanding into other schools. All children in the school are eligible to enroll in SPYDER which will be held for two hours after school. Each day the students will spend one hour either doing homework or having opportunities to learn about positive development as people and athletes. Three days a week, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, the organization will focus on creating positive youth development. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the students will use the first hour to complete home work with the help of the organizers. The second hour will focus on introducing the students to the fundamentals of all sports throughout the year. Each year the students will go over the basics of a wide variety of sports, more time is spent developing these skills with the younger students, and competition is designed stay friendly and infrequent. The focus of the program is to develop well rounded individuals who enjoy playing a wide variety of sports.

      The program will operate through a variety of funding sources; local, national, and private donations. Creating awareness in the community will help to encourage donors to become involved with the program. Realistically, the staff will consist of volunteers who will go through extensive training. Eventually, SPYDER hopes to team up with middle and high school coaches and athletic directors to encourage coaches to get involved during their off season. Every staff member will go through training on how to foster positive youth development. There

are programs already in place designed to educate coaches including the American Coach/Sport

Program, Coach Effectiveness Training, the National Youth Sport Coaches Association program,

Athletic Coaches Education, and the Penn State Coach Training Program (Coatsworth & Conroy,

2007, p. 66). There are other factors that are required for the volunteers which will be discussed

later in the paper.

Costs are another factor to understand when developing an afterschool program. In

estimating expenses for this program, the paper will examine the cost benefit analysis of similar

programs to create a reasonable budget. Additionally, other factors such as start-up, operating,

capital, and infrastructure costs will be evaluated. This paper provides a broad analysis of

multiple pertinent literatures. The majority of the literature analyzes programs in high schools

and middle schools. However, the ideas in the paper can translate to the elementary level and this

program specifically.

Reasoning/Background

In developing this program, the primary focus was to offer an educational and sport based

opportunity for under-served and under-privileged youth to participate in. Specialization in

sports at an early age is more prevalent now and both athletes and professional organizations are

losing interest and talents early on. In his book, *Game On: How the Pressure to Win At All Costs

Endangers Youth Sports and What Parents Can Do About It* (2008), Farrey outlines America's

obsession with success in youth sports and in attempting to only keep the strongest children at a

young age while ignoring the weak, both national teams and the children suffer. The literature

on the subject matter discusses the benefits of creating youth sport programs and offers

suggestions for implementation.

Many after school programs focus solely on academia or serve as a childcare. However, "the practical lessons learned and empirical evidence from a variety of disciplines suggest that integrating sport and after-school activities could produce enhanced program effects on youth physical, sociomotional, and academic well-being" (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007, p. 57). Based on this evidence, SPYDER is designed to promote positive youth development in conjunction with a wide variety of sports. Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, and Jones caution that "organizations or programs that attempt to use sport as a vehicle to enhance the psychosocial or educational development of youth must plan carefully and consider a large number of factors" (2005, p. 63). Taking that recommendation into consideration, this program is well developed and well thought out.

Research indicates that there are currently only a few programs that teach both life and sport skills concurrently. These programs promote "academic, social, and personal development as their primary focus and not only teach sport and life skills directly, but also engage participants in non-sport roles or other activities through which they can test out their skills in different domains" (Petitpas et al., 2005, p. 66). Coatsworth and Conroy agree stating that "programs should offer both academic and nonacademic activities and that they should also aim to alter broad indicators of positive youth development other than academic achievement alone" (2007, p. 59). As a result of the literature, SPYDER was designed with this goal in mind, to promote positive youth development in children both on and off the field.

There is also another unintended consequence as a result of this after school program. It is more common that both parents are entering the workforce, and as a result children have more unsupervised time. The most dangerous time for youths occurs after school where there is an increase in juvenile crime, students are averaging 20-25 unsupervised hours a week (Coatsworth

& Conroy, 2007, pp. 57-58). This is further proof of the necessity of an after school program, especially for at risk students. Not only will SPYDER serve as a safe place for these students to go after school but also to help them make better choices when faced with tough decisions.

The goal of the program is to foster positive youth development and as such this term must be defined. In general, it focuses on the promotion of desirable competencies or outcomes in young people (Gould, 2013a). In addition to exposing the students to a variety of sports, the goal is also to introduce other benefits as well such as leadership, character development, resiliency, nutrition and substance abuse. Petitpas et al. describe the difference between different programs: "Developmental activities focus on growth and skill acquisition. Intervention programs are designed to stop or reduce negative behaviors. Prevention programs introduce participants to activities that strive to keep them from experimenting with negative behaviors" (2005, p. 65). The goal for SPYDER is to strive to fulfill all three of these needs.

In order to remain effective, it is essential that this program operates continuously throughout the school year and is also "dependent on their ability to teach a broad range of social, planning, and problem solving competencies over a time period of enough duration to allow participants to internalize these skills as their normal approach to life situations" (Petitpas et al., 2005, p. 70). Many factors are taken into consideration in the planning and implementation of an after school program that is designed to focus on academics and develop life skills. Accordingly, "several program developers have argued that the best way to foster skill acquisition is to integrate sport and life skill instruction seamlessly rather than attempt to teach these topics separately" (Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Petlichkoff, 2004 as cited in Petitpas et al., 2005, p. 70). Due to these findings, SPYDER believes it is important to incorporate the two simultaneously through the entire program.

There are many positive health outcomes as a result of physical activity and participation in sports; antidepressant, anxiolytic effects, increased self-esteem, enhanced occupational outcomes and reduced social isolate, better social skills, gaining confidence, and learning to handle positive and negative emotions (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007, pp.59-60). With childhood obesity on the rise, sports and athletic activity are necessary to maintain physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health. Coatsworth and Conroy (2007) stress the importance of early intervention of physical activity because it is helpful in both the short and long term (p. 60). It is essential to ensure that the students understand how to translate their knowledge of sports to real life situations. Petitpas et al. claim that "young people rarely understand that the skills they are acquiring through sport have value in other domains" (2005, p. 71).This program aims to help children develop at a younger age so that they are prepared for the challenges they will face both on and off the field at the present time and in the future.

It is necessary to formulate a well-rounded program that covers all of the needs of an after school program.   According to Coatsworth and Conroy (2007), there are nine factors associated with quality after school programs- 1. Setting a clear mission, 2. High expectations, 3. Safe and healthy environment, 4. Supportive emotional climate, 5. Small total enrollment, 6. Stable, trained personnel, 7. Appropriate content and pedagogy relative to the children's needs and the program's mission, with opportunities to engage, 8. Integrated family and community partners, and 9. Frequent assessments (p. 61). SPYDER strives to fulfill these factors to ensure that everything is being done to help the students.

Mission Statement

To provide under-privileged youth with the opportunity to foster their positive development through sports and lessons in a safe and caring environment. To learn to deal with challenging situations and people. To develop athletic, social, and emotional skills to succeed in further schooling and careers.

Goals and Objectives

The main goal of SPYDER, is to promote positive youth development through lessons and athletics as the name suggests. Roth (2004) puts it well: "the *goal* of youth development programs is to promote positive development, even when seeking to prevent problem behaviors. Youth development programs help youth navigate adolescence in healthy ways and prepare them for their future by fostering their positive development" (p. 4). The focus is on character development, resiliency, nutrition and substance abuse, and leadership through sport diversification.

Involving the community is another objective of the program. Gambone and Connell (2004) discuss the importance of youth staying involved and contributing to the community (p. 17). The goal is to help foster independence so that the students are willing to continue to contribute, not necessarily monetarily, to their school and community. On the other hand, Petitpas et al. state the importance of a "community environment that encourages activities in which athletes can give back to their own neighborhoods. Planned and structured community service activities, particularly those that enable athletes to assume leadership roles with other youth, foster a sense of pride in one's community and enable participants to become external assets for others" (2005, p. 70). A relationship with the community is a necessity to developing a sound program. Guest speakers from the community, including athletic figures, coaches, and

non-athletic related fields will make appearances during the school year to teach the students about what they will need in life to succeed. In addition to the community outreach, the program encourages parental involvement whenever scheduled. The students need to understand that what they are learning after school will be supported and further developed at home.

Another way to look at the goals of SPYDER is through the 5 Cs; competence, confidence, connections, character, and caring and compassion (Roth, 2004, p. 4). Roth says that competence is achieved through enhancing the student's social, academic, cognitive, and vocational competencies, confidence will improve the students' self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, identity, and belief in future both fulfilled by the program's first hour of learning and then strengthened during the athletic hour (2004, p. 4). The students will create connections and relationships with other people and the school, they will develop character by increasing self-control, decreasing health compromising behaviors, developing respect for all rules and standards, and have a sense of morality (Roth, 2004, p. 4). Lastly, the program will help improve empathy with others. SPYDER aims to develop the 5 Cs throughout each student's time in the program in hopes of them applying them in the future.

Program Details

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, the average number of students in public elementary schools in the United States is 470 (Public elementary, 2008-9). The program will be available to all grades from kindergarten through fifth grade. The sessions will be divided into two groups, kindergarten through second grade and third through fifth grade. Assuming there is 33 percent enrollment of the entire school for the first year of the program, there will be approximately 78 children in each section. The program will hopefully continue to

grow after the first year and when needed, changes will be made. If there is a total enrollment of 156 students, seven volunteers and one salaried director will organize and run the programming. There will be one team leader each for the upper and lower grades, and the other staff members will provide support and aide whenever needed.

The program will operate five days a week during the school year after school for two hours. The first hour on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays will focus on promoting positive youth development and on Tuesdays and Thursdays will focus on academics. The program will not be lecture format, rather it will take a more egalitarian approach. Gould and Voelker discuss the importance of challenging the athletes to come up with answers themselves, encouraging them to ask for help, and allowing them to collaborate with their peers to solve problems (2010, p. 8). Additionally they suggest that "The program facilitators guide, assist, and mentor the athletes by introducing them to basic leadership content, outlining the structure of each session, and providing examples, including those from their own sport-leadership experiences" (Gould and Voelker, 2010, p. 9). Although their suggestions are based on high school studies, these suggestions are useful in the elementary school setting as well.

The second hour of the program will be designed to introduce the students to a variety of sports while incorporating the lessons they learned in the development hour. The sports will include baseball, softball, soccer, basketball, football, floor hockey, lacrosse, volleyball, badminton, hop scotch, jump rope, and any other sports or games the students are interested in.

Competition will not exist in the lower age group and minimal competition in the older age group. According to Dr. Istvan Balyi, a former Hungarian sports scientist, there are five age-appropriate stages in place to help develop children into athletes (as cited in Farrey, 2008, p. 90). Since SPYDER is for elementary school, the students in terms of age fall into two categories.

The first is Stage 1, FUNdamentals which targets males between the age of six and nine and females between six and eight years old. This stage develops the student's overall motor skills with fun games and encourages as much sport diversification as possible (Balyi as cited in Farrey, 2008, p. 90). The most important thing to understand is that Balyi at no point discusses competition in this early stage. It is necessary for the students to have fun and enjoy themselves which will enhance their quality of life.

Stage 2 is designed for males between nine and twelve and females between eight and eleven years old. Learning to Train focuses on "building overall sports skills…during this time children are developmentally ready to acquire general sports skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development" (Balyi as cited in Farrey, 2008, p. 91). In this stage Balyi suggests a 70 percent practice to a 30 percent competition ratio. These suggestions helped create the two age groups in the SPYDER program because the student's needs are vastly different in each age group.

The younger group is designed with fun and excitement while developing basic skills and the older age group introduces minimal competition with focus on building sport specific skills. Lubbers and Gould (2003) believe that there are three phases to develop a world class athlete, Introduction/Foundation, Refinement/Transitional, and finally World Class Performance. SPYDER focuses on the first stage where "Having fun and developing a love of the game characterize this phase. In addition, the individual is free to explore multiple sports, experiences success but little pressure to perform, and receives encouragement from coaches and parents" (p. 2). Ensuring that the program is focused on enjoyment and exposure is a priority.

SPYDER is geared toward exposing the students to as many sports and sport skills as possible. Gould (2007) warns about the threats to these values noting that sports are becoming

more professionalized and specialized with an over emphasis on outcome goals and pressure on

the young athletes (p. 6). The elementary years provide the the best time to develop the student's

skills and give them a chance to diversify their options. Gould and Fifer argue that multi-sport

participation prevents stress, burnout, and injuries while providing a well-rounded athlete (as

cited in Gould, 2013b). Research also suggests that the "participation in a variety of sports and

activities through which a young athlete develops multilateral physical, social, and psychological

skills" is beneficial to the athlete (Wiersma as cited in Gould, 2013b). This is one of the main

reasons SPYDER focuses on using a variety of sports in the program as well as to give the

students an opportunity to participate in sports they otherwise would not have the opportunity to.

In examining costs, there are many factors to take into consideration. There are start-up,

operating, capital, and infrastructure expenditures. The initial start-up costs should be minimal

due to the fact that the planning is already complete. The operating costs which include wages,

facilities costs, supplies, food, transportation, insurance, and administrative or overhead outlays

are manageable. This program is located in the elementary school, whether it is the gym or

multi-purpose room which eliminates some overhead costs including rent, utilities, and

maintenance. Since seven of the employees are volunteers, there will only be one salary between

$20,000 and $25,000 based on experience. Supplies, food, transportation, and insurance will

already be covered by the school.

The administrative costs will fall into the salaried employee's job description. Capital costs,

which includes improvements to the facility will not be a factor since it is in the schools building.

Lastly, the infrastructure costs which includes planning, evaluation, training and licensing, and

transportation if needed will account for a large part of the budget. Training and licensing the

staff is an important aspect of the entire program and without educated staff, positive youth

development will not occur. Each staff member will complete the Coach Effectiveness Training program for $195. There may be some additional training expenses added throughout the duration of the program based on the needs of the staff and students.

According to the estimated annual reported expenditures of after-school programs, in looking at the most comparable program, the estimated cost per child is $700-$800 (Halpern, Deich, & Cohen, 2000). They assume that the "estimated costs are for core activities, including staffing, supplies, and administration. Insurance, food service, special projects, transportation for field trips, as well as facilities, are donated or provided in-kind" (Halpern et al., 2000). If we look at all of the expenses listed as well as taking into account the unknown, the program will operate on approximately $109,000-$125,000 per year. Through government funding and donations, these costs should be manageable for the 156 estimated participating students.

With the rise in obesity in this country, the government is working on attempting to help curb this national issue. There is a serious lack of quality in after-school sports opportunities for children in low-income communities which is made worse given the decline in physical education offered during the school day. Martinek (2003) found that barely one-third of students in public schools attend physical education class daily (p. 109). "With diminished opportunities for exercise both in and out of school, it is no wonder that youth obesity rates among low-income youth are skyrocketing, leaving these children at risk for a host of health complications (Martinek, 2003, p. 109). Coatsworth and Conroy understand these issues and found that federal agencies are more likely to approve programs that fulfill policy issues such as childhood obesity (2007, p. 60). Additionally, Gambone and Connell found that community programs "sought to shift the focus away from directly reducing negative long-term outcomes for at-risk youth, to promoting healthy developmental outcomes for all youth that would subsequently lower the

occurrence of negative long-term outcomes" (2004, p. 17).   As a result SPYDER believes that

since the program is helping to alleviate childhood problems as well as focusing on bettering the

student's overall health and development, federal agencies are willing to fund the program.

As previously stated, the staff will consist of eight individuals; seven volunteers and one

salaried director. The program's effectiveness relies on the capabilities of its staff. Therefore it

is necessary to train the best staff possible. Coatsworth and Conroy (2007) stress the importance

of completing an initial screening for basic skills and experience as well continual training (p.

65). There are many training courses designed to teach effectiveness to coaches. Although these

training classes are designed specifically for coaches, there is sufficient overlap between the

staff's needs of fostering positive youth development through sports and coach's needs. The

Coach Effectiveness Training and the Penn State Coach Training Program are two programs that

have been evaluated to

> Change coach behaviors, primarily increasing coaches' use of rewards and
> reinforcement; increase the positive perceptions the young people have of the
> coaches; change youth perceptions of themselves (for example, increase their self-
> esteem); and change youth motivational outcomes, including their desire to
> continue playing sports and optimize achievement goals. Some of these programs
> could be used to train afterschool staff in effective coaching practices.
> (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007, p. 67)

Each staff member will have to complete an approved training course before they are

allowed to volunteer for the program.

It is important that coaches develop positive relationships with their students. According

to Gould et al. it is important to develop relationships, credibility, trust, one must be consistent,

sincere, communicate effectively and be honest (as cited in Gould, 2013a). Communication

must come from both parties- questions and concerns should be discussed as they arise. The

staff must also provide feedback to the students. Feedback must be given at the appropriate time,

be helpful, be clear and concise, and the way the information is conveyed must align with the

staff's beliefs (Gould, 2013a). Two types of feedback can be given; motivational

(encouragement) or developmental (advice) and both are necessary in SPYDER. Gambone and

Connell (2004) examine the shift in youth development "away from directly reducing negative

long-term outcomes for at-risk youth, to promoting healthy developmental outcomes for all

youth that would subsequently lower the occurrence of negative long-term outcomes" (p. 17).

Properly trained and invested staff are continuing to shift the focus to positive development and

it is SPYDER's goal to develop the students.

The staff understands that the transfer of skills is not automatic for most of these under-

privileged students. Although the program teaches life skills in conjunction with sports, the

transfer of skills "must be reinforced continuously in an explicit manner. Whenever teachable

moments presented themselves, coaches [take] advantage of them to talk to their athletes about

the transferability of life skills and provided athletes concrete examples of situations and

contexts in which life skills can transferred" (Camire, Forneris, Trudel, & Bernard, 2011, p. 97).

The initial training will help the staff develop and continually use these skills.

Additionally, the salaried director is responsible for continuing education and training for

the staff members. Gould and Voelker (2010) provide an outline for ways that the staff can

introduce and run the program smoothly (see Appendix A). Although these guidelines were

originally intended for high school programs, many of these ideas overlap with the elementary

aged students as well. The entire staff will meet once a week to review each week's positives

and negatives. This will allow each staff member to discuss issues or new ideas and report back

to the director.

The role of the program director will be overseer of the after school activities as well as

contact person for questions or concerns. Coatsworth and Conroy suggest that "Program

developers should ensure that the program is comprehensive, uses varied teaching methods, and

provides sufficient programming" (2007, p. 64). This means that this person is in charge of

helping in her age group as well as overseeing the other age group as well. It is also important

that she document all activity including lessons, activities, games, problems, and solutions.

Unfortunately, most programs lack a formal curriculum which is needed to maintain consistency

and to avoid having a good program dissolve if the staff members leave (Coatsworth & Conroy,

2007, p. 63). The director also takes part in the day to day operations of the program, teaching

the students about personal development and what they are learning through playing sports. The

other staff members are focusing on the children and how to enrich their lives encouraging

positive development through sports on and off the field.

Evaluation

Petitpas et al. suggest that "the effectiveness of youth development programs is

likely to be dependent on their ability to teach a broad range of social, planning, and

problem solving competencies over a time period of enough duration to allow

participants to internalize these skills as their normal approach to life situations (2005, p.

70). Additionally, Gould and Carson explain that in order to see if programs are

beneficial one must look at "program goals and structure, how programs are

implemented, the quality and competence of adult leaders, and the context in which the

program is deployed" (2008, p. 299). In order to understand if SPYDER is fulfilling its

goals, the program must be evaluated. Both outcome and process evaluations are needed

to get a full understanding of the effectiveness of the program (Coatsworth & Conroy,

2007, p. 63).

Before the evaluation process begins, it is important to understand the assumptions about evaluation that Martinek says provides the guideposts for interpretation and application (2003, p. 212). These five assumptions are "1. There is no commitment to making a difference. 2. There is no one way of doing an evaluation. 3. Evaluation does not have to be done by outsiders. 4. Findings are useful to stakeholders (kids, youth leaders, coaches, teachers, etc. 5. The program is running smoothly" (Martinek, 2003, p. 212). After accepting these assumptions we can look at the implementation of the program. "Implementation assessments can be conducted qualitatively through focus groups, interviews, and observational studies and/or by quantitative means through questionnaires and surveys" (Petitpas et al., 2004, p. 74). This will be a great way for SPYDER to evaluate itself using both strategies. One questionnaire that can be utilized is found in Appendix B. Students, parents, staff, and teachers in the school will help with the evaluations because they are the people who are most directly involved. It will be important to not only do end of year evaluations, but mid semester as well so that if there are serious issues that need to be addressed, the program director can make appropriate changes.

Martinek believes that there are many 'bumps in the road' that need to be taken into account before a program knows what to evaluate, mainly getting kids to understand the purpose of the club, not using effective teaching strategies, and dealing with a variety of dispositions (2003, p. 215). It is important that "those who are just starting programs need to approach evaluation with a clear understanding of what they are doing (Martinek, 2003, p. 215). As a result, SPYDER will look at the Kellogg Foundations Project Evaluation as the main way to understand the effects of the program. There are three

components of the evaluation, context, implementation, and outcome. There are the

questions that the Kellogg Foundation suggests to ask for all three components:

> Context Evaluation: What about our community and program hinders or helps
> achieve project goals? What contextual factors have the greatest impact on
> project success or stumbling blocks?
> Implementation Evaluation: What are the critical components of this project
> (both explicit and implicit)? How do these components/activities connect to the
> goals and outcomes of the project? What aspects of the implementation process
> are facilitating success or acting as stumbling blocks? Is the program
> implemented as planned?
> Outcome Evaluation: What are the critical outcomes you are trying to achieve?
> What impact is the project having on its clients, its staff, its umbrella
> organization, and its community? What unexpected impact has the project had?
> (Kellogg Foundation, 1998)

At different points during the year, the director and staff will meet to go over these

questions and implement the findings of all three components.

At the end of the year, we will examine the overall effects of our intended results.

"Outcomes are changes in behavior, knowledge, skills or level of functioning. Impact is

the change in organizations, communities or systems as a result of the program. Outputs

are products delivered such as types, levels, size and targets of services" (Gould, 2013c).

Our goal is to increase positive youth development in youth by teaching character

development, resiliency, nutrition, how to avoid substance abuse, and leadership skills

through sport participation. There will hopefully be a positive effect on the community

and school because at risk students are focusing on personal development and less likely

to participate in negative or illegal behaviors. SPYDER in the first year hopes to target

one third of the schools population and as it gains popularity, to increase it to fifty

percent in the second year.

Sample Day

3:00pm: Sign-in and break into age groups

3:15-4:10pm: Learn about what it takes to be a leader and team player

4:10-4:15pm: Transition from learning to sports

4:15-5:10pm: Begin lesson on volleyball- show students when it is necessary to be the leader and

how the team must work together to get the ball over the net.

5:10-5:15pm: Recap what the students have learned and how they can use the skills on and off

the field.

Conclusion

SPYDER hopes to continuously help students by promoting positive youth development

through sports to all enrolled students. Through the comprehensive program outlined with focus

on integrating the subjects, students will learn how to apply their skills during school, playing

sports, when faced with tough situations, and in the future. By giving these at risk students a

safe, educational, and fun environment, the hope is that crime and negative behavior will

decrease while there is an increase in positive relationships, athletic ability, and classroom

attendance. The program hopes to expand each year to recruit more students ultimately

branching out to other schools and districts as well.

Appendix A

TABLE 4 Presenter Recommendations to Trainees

Include time for questions at the end if possible.

Make sure you plan how you will introduce yourself. Be confident but don't brag. Talk about your experiences and training briefly (less than 30 seconds) (e.g., "My name is Darlene Smith. I am a third-year PhD student in sport psychology at Michigan State University. I was the captain of the women's soccer team at Penn State, as well as the assistant captain of the girls' field hockey team in high school").

Plan out the priorities to cover in each session. Then know what you will cut out if you don't have enough time.

By all means keep it active. Lectures don't work well with this group.

Be enthusiastic. Bring positive energy. Ask questions. Get them engaged. If you bring energy to them, they will give energy back.

Don't be afraid to challenge them subtly and slightly if they are not participating. Do this in a jovial manner, not a frustrated one (e.g., "Don't raise your hands all at once!" ☺).

Have fun. Remember that you are helping the state's youth and if one person gets it, then you have done our youth a great service.

Don't be afraid to adjust during and/or between sessions. Understand that you are not going to reach, please, or entertain everyone, but it is a good idea to pay attention to what is working, what isn't working, and make changes when necessary.

Be enthusiastic and model interest in the material. (Gould & Voelker, 2010).

Appendix B

SAMPLE Quality Checklist for Evaluating School-Age Child Care Programs

The following checklist will help you measure the quality of the programs you are considering. Take it along when you visit, and check (✓) each item.

	Yes	No
• Are the indoor and outdoor areas safe?	☐	☐
• Are children supervised by sight at all times?	☐	☐
• Are bathrooms nearby?	☐	☐
• Are there written health, safety and emergency rules?	☐	☐
• Is the staff qualified in school-age child care?	☐	☐
• Are there enough adults for the number of the children in the program?	☐	☐
• Does the staff talk to the children often and in a friendly, helpful way?	☐	☐
• Does the staff listen to children, answering their questions and requests?	☐	☐
• Does the staff encourage children to be independent?	☐	☐
• Are children of both sexes given equal opportunity to try the same activities?	☐	☐
• Does it appear that the staff does not use physical or other punishment that hurts, frightens, or humiliates children?	☐	☐
• Are children encouraged to solve problems without being forced to do so?	☐	☐
• Are children relaxed and happy while they play?	☐	☐
• Are there fun and exciting activities to choose from each day?	☐	☐
• Is there enough equipment and materials to make the play areas interesting?	☐	☐
• Is there enough space for children to play in groups or individually?	☐	☐
• Is there an area set aside for quiet activities?	☐	☐
• Is there evidence that parents receive reports on their children?	☐	☐
• Are there opportunities for parents to participate from time to time?	☐	☐
• Can parents visit at any time?	☐	☐
• Are questions and comments from parents encouraged?	☐	☐

(Kueneman, 2007)

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