

## Student Recruitment and Retention

December 2014

### “Tailor Made: Attracting, Engaging, and Retaining Hard-to-Reach Youth”

*by The Youth Development Institute*

**Overview:** This article addresses the challenges in recruiting and retaining youth that may have not been interested in out-of-school time programming. It includes ideas for practitioners to use in their own programs. The article uses examples to teach the lessons of recruitment, engagement, and retention. It focuses on the “Tailor Made” services offered by the Beacon program in California, which uses a group setting to engage youth. The program promotes focusing on youths’ strengths and introducing youth to new experiences. The keys to engagement that they highlight are group cohesion, a sense of belonging, defining roles in the group, providing opportunities for leadership, and being “real” with participants.

#### Where to Find It:

Go to the OSTRC Document Library, then click on the “Program Management and Administration” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Recruiting and Retaining Youth” section.

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### “Why Teens are Not Involved in Out-of-School Time Programs”

*by Mary Terzian, Lindsay Giesen, and Kassim Mbwana*

**Overview:** This article addresses the challenge of getting teenagers involved in out-of-school time programs. Researchers had a roundtable discussion with teens that were not involved in OST programs to gain a deeper understanding of what program qualities are important to increase and maintain participation. The barriers identified ranged from a program being in an unsafe location or unfamiliar neighborhood to participation resulting in negative feedback from parents, guardians, or peers. Improvement strategies included teaching youth practical skills, addressing family issues, and having more variety in activities.

#### Where to Find It:

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### Featured Information:

#### “Non-participation of Children and Adolescents in Out-of-School Time Programs: Child, Family, and Neighborhood Factors”

*by Tawana Bandy and Kristin Anderson Moore*

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#### Summary:

Research has indicated that limited resources, low program availability, and lack of interest can all be barriers to youth involvement in OST programs. Additional research also points to several other factors. These are identified as:

- Child factors: Academic and/or physical difficulties.
- Family/Parenting factors: Families with greater challenges or disadvantages, such as odd work hours, multiple jobs, or chronic illness.
- Neighborhood/Community factors: Programs are not offered in certain neighborhoods or youth do not feel safe.

The authors discuss their research and these identified barriers in great detail.

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#### Where to find the full article:

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