

Hot Topics for Out-of-School Time Directors and Administrators

February 2011

Article: *Assessing Staff Relationships among Out-of-School Time Program Practitioners (2010)*

Overview: This ChildTrends brief identifies promising practices to improve staff relationships and provides survey tools to measure these relationships. Promising practices to strengthen staff relationships include:

- **Keep staff informed of changes, policies, and new directions.** Post a bulletin board, circulate a newsletter, set up an intranet site, or host team meetings.
- **Forming social groups or clubs.** This can help staff get to know each other, and promote positive relationships.
- **Develop feedback mechanisms.** Give staff members an opportunity to express concerns about the organization or other staff members—and responding to these concerns. This can help reduce the likelihood that issues or conflicts will escalate.
- **Implement activities that foster tolerance, such as diversity trainings and cultural awareness workshops.** This effort can help ward off misunderstandings, miscommunication, and uncivil behavior.
- **Foster mentor-mentee relationships.**

Where to Find the Full Article:

http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2010_12_07_RB_AssessRelationships.pdf

Article: *Administrative Management Capacity in Out-of-School Time Organizations: An Exploratory Study (2008)*

Overview: This study of sixteen high quality OST providers indicates that the best performing OST organizations often suffer from administrative and managerial constraints. The report describes the administrative and managerial challenges confronting OST organizations and recommends possible solutions for OST leaders, public and private funders, and other interested parties.

Also Check Out: *Strengthening Out-of-School Time Organizations: Three Views (2008)*. The Wallace Foundation asked several experts in the OST field to identify what they think are the key organizational, administrative and management obstacles impeding OST providers from lifting the quality of their programs and discuss how those might be overcome.

Where to Find the Full Articles:

<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/Out-Of-SchoolLearning>

Featured Article:

Cutting Costs, Keeping Quality: Financing Strategies for Youth-Serving Organizations in a Difficult Economy (2010)

Summary:

This brief from the **Finance Project** highlights financing strategies that successful youth-serving organizations are using to maintain quality services despite difficult economic times. See how organizations have managed costs, creatively generated new revenues, and created partnerships to mitigate the effects of funding cuts.

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