

The Assessment of Afterschool Program Practices Tool (APT)

A component of the Afterschool Program Assessment System (APAS)*

How is APT different from other assessment tools?

- * APT measures quality that research suggests promotes positive youth outcomes
- * Allows programs to focus on assessing specific, observable practices rather than reflecting upon more general quality characteristics
- * Allows programs to examine how youth are experiencing and participating in the program
- * Results from the Massachusetts Afterschool Research Study found links between APT quality and youth outcomes as measured by the SAYO Staff survey

What are the benefits of APT?

- * Helps afterschool programs align program improvement efforts with desired youth outcomes, yet flexible in that the tools can be used together or separately
- * Designed specifically for afterschool programs
- * Research-based, scientifically field-tested tools
- * Based on a menu approach
- * User-friendly format
- * Multiple internal and external uses for tracking, monitoring and measuring improvements in program quality



About APAS

The Afterschool Program Assessment System (APAS) helps afterschool programs improve their program quality and reach their desired outcomes for children and youth. APAS is one of the only assessment systems available that helps afterschool programs link quality and youth outcomes together in a comprehensive, flexible and integrated fashion.

APAS includes several measurement tools:

- * the Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (**SAYO**) completed by staff and teachers,
- * the new SAYO Youth survey, and
- * the **APT-Observation tool & Questionnaire.**

For more information on APT
www.niost.org

Phone: **781-283-2546**
E-Mail: NIOST@wellesley.edu.

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The **APT** is a quality assessment tool designed to help programs strengthen practices that research suggests are linked to youth outcome areas. The APT includes two tools: The **APT Observation Tool (APT O)**, which focuses on observable program practices; and the **APT Program Questionnaire (APT Q)**, a self-assessment tool which examines those aspects of program quality that occur “behind the scenes,” such as program planning and connections with schools and parents. The **APT** is designed for programs serving children from kindergarten through middle school.

What does the APT Measure?

Learning and Skill Building

- Staff/Programming Stimulates Engagement and Thinking
- Quality of Activities
- Targeted Academic Skill Building
- Youth are Positively Engaged in Program/Skill Building
- Staff/Program Supports Individualized Needs & Interests
- Opportunities for Responsibility, Autonomy & Leadership

Program Organization and Structure

- Positive Behavior Guidance
- Space is Conducive to Learning
- Varied/Flexible Approaches/Programming
- High Program and Activity Organization
- Connections with Schools
- Program Supports Staff

Supportive Social Environment:

- Welcoming & Inclusive Environment
- Supportive Staff-Youth Relationships
- Positive Peer Relations
- Connections with Families

Sample Items - APT Observation Tool

B. Staff Promote Youth Engagement & Stimulate Thinking	How true?
Staff are energetic, enthusiastic, and/or upbeat. <i>I=Staff appear distant, bored or “flat” in their demeanor.</i>	1 2 3 4
Staff are actively engaged in activities with youth (e.g. interacting with groups, or individual youth; providing ongoing facilitation, participating with youth). <i>I=Staff do not engage with youth (e.g. chatting with other staff or engaged in own activity).</i>	1 2 3 4
Staff encourage youth to share control/responsibility for activity (e.g. Youth help set out materials for art project, youth are encouraged to take the lead in selecting and initiating activities). <i>I=Staff maintain control throughout activity period, resist input from youth, do not seek youth involvement.</i>	1 2 3 4

Sample Items - APT Questionnaire Tool

When planning & designing activities we...	Rarely/ Never	Once in a while/ Sometimes	Often/A lot of the time	Almost always/ Always
Actively involve youth in the planning & design process (<i>Example: Seek input directly from youth regarding their interests and ideas, encourage youth to take a role in planning?</i>).	1	2	3	4
Identify clear expected learning goals or outcomes (<i>i.e. an idea of how you think youth will benefit or what they will learn from the activity</i>).	1	2	3	4
Determine how the activity will build upon youth’s interests and/or what youth already know or can do.	1	2	3	4