

CHAPTER 12



Summer Programming



Overview

“School’s out for summer” does not mean that all thoughts of quality programming for youth get swept aside by endless afternoons of board games, free play, and movies. Creating a quality summer program for your participants is just as important as creating a quality afterschool program and takes just as much intentionality and planning.

It may be helpful for you to begin thinking about summer programming by taking a look at what some of the typical differences are between afterschool time and summer time:

Afterschool	Summer
3 hours per day	Up to 8+ hours a day
Homework time	No homework (except for summer school participants)
8-month program	6-8 week program

In addition, you may see an increase in enrollment during the summer, new participants, and may have to hire and train new staff in what is often a very small window of time between the end of school and the start of your program.

The San Francisco Expanded Learning Collaborative initiative developed a set of quality indicators for summer programs, that, in many ways, mirrors the Quality Self Assessment Tool (see <http://sfelc.org/publications-and-tools/as-qsa/> or the Appendix for the complete QSA tool). The complete summer quality indicators are included below.

While many of the indicators are covered in chapters throughout this guide, this chapter contains several How To’s that focus specifically on summer programming. These include:

- **How to Plan a Summer Program**
- **How to Link Summer Learning to School Learning**
- **How to Create a Positive Summer Program Culture**

What is the Summer Learning Network?

The Summer Learning Network is a citywide network facilitated by the San Francisco’s Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF), which includes the San Francisco Unified School District, and more than 60 providers of summer learning programs.

The Summer Learning Network facilitates connecting summer youth programs with enrichments that help young people’s minds grow and thrive, as well as promoting reading, exercise and healthy eating. “Summer Learning Loss” is a well-known concern for low-income students who are likely to have less active summers, while their more privileged peers benefit from travel, summer camps, outings to museums and events, athletic pursuits and more. Socioeconomically advantaged students tend to gain or at least hold steady academically during summer vacation, while low-income students tend to slide back. This summer setback accounts for a significant portion of the achievement gap that limits the horizons of disadvantaged young people. Did you know?

- Students who aren’t engaged in any summer enrichment lose about 2 months worth of academics.
- This summer learning loss accounts for over half the achievement gap between middle class and disadvantaged children.
- Children now gain weight over the summer due to lack of exercise and healthy foods.

The Network was started in the summer of 2010 (by New Day for Learning) in order to expand and improve enriched summer learning opportunities for all children across the City. This is a perfect example of how everyone — not just schools — can contribute to the success and well-being of our students.

For more resources and information, visit: <http://sfsummerlearning.blogspot.com>



Program Assessment and Design

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 1: Program Design and Assessment			
We allocate enough time and resources to promote positive academic and developmental outcomes.	Program has no youth outcome goals.	Program has very broad goals that are not specific, measurable, realistic, or time limited.	Program sets at least two specific, measurable, realistic, time-limited goals for youth outcomes each summer session that align with the mission and the needs of youth served.
	Goals are vague and not useful in evaluation.	Goals reflect general education or developmental progress, but are not clearly linked to the specific needs of the youth served.	Program staff and partners use youth outcome goals as the foundation for activity planning and curriculum development and/or selection. All programming is connected to measurable youth outcome goals.
We use data about the youth we serve to continuously inform our practice.	Director can provide evidence of changes made in the program from one summer to the next but cannot pinpoint the sources of data or information that drive the change.	Director can provide evidence of improvements made in the program from one summer to the next that take into consideration two of the following: youth data, stakeholder perspectives and his or her personal perspective.	Director can provide evidence of improvements made in the program from one summer to the next that take into consideration all three: youth data, stakeholder perspectives, and his or her personal perspective.
	Outcome and process assessment data is not collected.	Outcome and process assessment data are collected and analyzed, but not applied to future program efforts.	Outcome and process assessment data are collected, analyzed, and applied to future program efforts.



Program Administration and Finance

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 2: Administration and Finance			
We plan in advance.	Activities are not designed to make connections for youth between regular program activities and field trips or other special events.	Program is designed to make clear connections for youth between some regular program activities and some field trips and special events	Program is designed to make clear connections for youth among all regular program activities, field trips and special events through projects or thematic units.



Community Partnerships and Collaboration

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 3: Community Partnerships and Collaboration			
We plan collaboratively with partners around shared goals.	Program staff and partners plan activities with no connection to shared youth outcome goals.	Some programming may be connected to broad goals but not to measurable youth outcomes.	All programming is connected to measurable youth outcome goals.



Alignment and Linkages with the School Day

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 4: Alignment and Linkages with the School Day			
We encourage linking summer learning to school learning	No activities are designed to expose youth to something new.	Some activities are designed to expose youth to something new- a place, idea, material, skill or talent.	Most activities are designed to expose youth to something new- a place, idea, material, skill or talent.
	Activities do not use a forward-thinking approach- content and methods are used that the young people experienced during the previous school year.	Some activities reflect a forward-thinking approach, but some materials and lessons are repetitive of what youth experienced during the previous school year.	Activities reflect a forward-thinking approach and expand on the previous school-year's content and activities. If remediation is necessary, program uses materials and lessons that are different from the school year.
We encourage 21st Century skills	No activities promote collaborative learning and interdependence among youth.	Some of the activities promote collaboration	Most activities promote collaborative learning and interdependence among youth.



Program Environment and Safety

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 5: Program Environment and Safety			
We cultivate a unique, unifying culture among youth and staff.	Youth have no structured opportunities to learn about each other and staff and develop relationships as a group.	Youth have some structured opportunities to get to know other youth and staff and develop relationships among themselves.	Youth are involved in structured group activities that encourage positive, healthy relationship building with each other and their teacher.
	Free time is unstructured and no rules or policies are in place for how youth are supposed to treat each other.	Free time has some structure and rules and policies are established for how youth are supposed to treat each other but youth do not appear to follow them.	Free time has stations or structured activities that prevent bullying and rules and policies are established for how youth are supposed to treat each other. Youth appear to follow rules and policies.

San Francisco Expanded Learning Collaborative Summer Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool



Youth Development

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 6: Youth Development			
We encourage experiential and activity-based learning.	No activities involve a hands-on, kinesthetic or project-based component that allows youth to engage in in-depth investigations with objects, materials, phenomena and ideas and draw meaning and understanding from those experiences.	Some activities involve a hands-on, kinesthetic or project based component but may not be age-appropriate or focused enough for youth to draw meaning and understanding from those experiences.	Most activities involve a hands-on, kinesthetic or project-based component that allows youth to engage in in-depth investigations with objects, materials, phenomena and ideas and draw meaning and understanding from those experiences.
	Staff spends little time interacting with the youth (ie, interacting with staff most of the time).	Staff spends some of their time interacting with youth in a supportive and encouraging manner, and some of their time interacting with others (ie, staff).	Staff spends most of their time interacting with youth in a supportive and encouraging manner.
We cultivate a unique, unifying culture among youth and staff.	Interactions with youth are primarily directives and project oriented.	Interactions with youth include some personal one on one adult/youth interactions.	Interactions with youth include multiple opportunities for personal one on one adult- youth interactions.
	Few staff model healthy behaviors of self-care and social interactions for youth.	Some staff model healthy behaviors of self-care and social interactions for youth.	Most staff consistently model healthy behaviors of self-care and social interactions for youth.
	Staff yell or shame youth to eliminate conflicts.	Staff sometimes acknowledge and approach conflicts and negative behavior calmly.	Staff acknowledge and approach conflicts and negative behavior calmly and engage youth in a discussion of the cause of the conflict and help youth generate a solution to the problem.
	No rules or policies are in place to promote inclusive behavior among all youth.	Strategies are in place to promote inclusive behavior among all youth but youth do not know and/or follow rules and policies.	Strategies are in place to promote inclusive behavior among all youth and youth know and follow rules and policies.
	Staff apply inconsistent consequences for negative behavior.	Staff sometimes apply consistent consequences for negative behavior.	Staff always apply consistent consequences for negative behavior.



Youth Development ...continued

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 6: Youth Development			
We cultivate a unique, unifying culture among youth and staff.	Staff and youth are predominately negative with one another, using dismissive or sarcastic tones of voice, rolling their eyes, sighing loudly, etc.	Some interactions among staff and youth are positive (e.g. speaking in warm tones, making eye contact, smiling).	Nearly all interactions among staff and youth are positive, characterized by warm tones of voice, frequent eye contact, and smiles.
	Youth are frequently negative with one another.	Some negative youth to youth interactions are observed.	Few negative youth-youth interactions are observed.



Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 7: Staff Recruitment and Professional Development			
We provide staff training and development linked to core competencies and other capacity needs.	There are no training opportunities linked to core competencies.	Program uses weekly staff meetings linked to core competencies and other capacity needs.	Program uses multiple methods to deliver staff development related to the core competencies during the program such as staff meetings, online discussions, peer coaching, email, and journaling or study groups.
	Trainings are not linked to other capacity needs of current staff.	Topics for staff development are pre- determined based on the needs of current staff.	Training topics are linked to core competencies and relevant to the needs of current staff.

San Francisco Expanded Learning Collaborative Summer Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool



Family Involvement

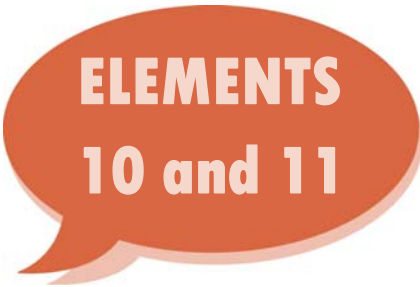
In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 8: Family Involvement			
Staff regularly communicate with families/ caregivers.	Staff do not communicate with parents, and/or parent involvement occurs only when there is a problem between the youth and the program.	Staff check in with caregivers about their youth during pick up times, and/or for major program-wide events.	Staff regularly communicate with parents/caregivers – including constructive feedback about youth in a respectful, confidential way, and/or can refer them to resources they may need.
	No staff member can speak other languages that many parents in the program speak.	At least 1 staff member can speak another language that many parents in the program speak.	Multiple staff members can speak different languages, and staff use a variety of communication systems (phone calls, emails, 1:1 meetings, newsletters, etc.).



Nutrition and Physical Activity

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Element 9: Nutrition and Physical Activity			
We allocate enough time and resources to promote positive academic and developmental outcomes.	Program dedicates little to no time for moderate to vigorous physical activity for all youth.	Program dedicates some time for physical activity every day.	Program dedicates an appropriate amount of programming daily for moderate to vigorous physical activity for all youth.
	Activities do not accommodate skill and ability level of participants.	Activities accommodate skill and ability level of most participants.	Activities accommodate skill and ability level of all participants.
	No food is served by the program.	Program provides food, but not at appropriate times or is sometimes unhealthy.	A healthy meal and/or snack are/ is provided at the appropriate times of the program.

San Francisco Expanded Learning Collaborative Summer Program Quality Self-Assessment (QSA) Tool



Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Effectively Supporting English Language Learners

In our Program...	Low Quality (1 point)	Approaching Quality (3 points)	Quality Practices (5 points)
QSA Program Quality Elements 10 and 11: Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Effectively Supporting English Language Learners			
We use data about the youth we serve to continuously inform our practice and to accommodate the specific needs of participants.	Program does not plan activities based on youths' skill levels or individual needs.	Information from assessments is not directly used to inform lesson planning and instruction.	The results of the pre- program assessment(s) inform lesson planning and instruction, and activities show differentiation for youth of different abilities or attitudes.
	Program does not actively seek information about special needs of incoming student (i.e., on registration form).	Program actively seeks information about special needs of incoming students but does not follow up with the necessary accommodations.	Program actively seeks information about special needs of incoming students and follows up with necessary accommodations.
	Program does not assess youth progress at the end of the program.	Youth progress is informally assessed.	Youth progress is formally assessed and used to inform and develop the following year's summer programs.
We cultivate a unique, unifying culture among youth and staff.	Program does not have a set of principles.	Program has principles meant to set culture.	Program has principles that are implemented to set culture through continuous communication of key ideals, strengths or talents that describe participants and staff.
	No staff can articulate program principles.	Some staff can articulate program principles.	Most staff can articulate program principles.
	No youth can articulate program principles.	Some youth can articulate program principles.	Most youth can articulate program principles.



Plan Ahead

- Create a schedule that keeps participants busy and having fun
- Plan out what you want youth to be doing for each hour of the day. Limit downtime by planning lots of clubs, themes, and activities
- Take advantage of the longer days to go on field trips
- Plan special days and events that involve everyone in a big project or activity
- Hire staff who meet the specific programming needs of your summer program, and consider hiring teen staff

Make Learning a Priority

- Infuse math, literacy, and other academic areas into projects and activities
- Help participants join the SF public library's summer reading program to earn prizes <http://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=2000341901>
- Play board games that reinforce learning

Create a Positive Summer Culture

- Foster a "camp" atmosphere by emphasizing outdoor activities and fun
- Go on overnights, hikes, and to the beach
- Make sure all participants feel included and have something productive to do all day long



HOW TO

Plan a Summer Program

One of the first things you will find yourself confronted with when being put in charge of a summer program is the vast amount of time and flexibility that a summer program offers. No longer limited to the few hours afterschool, the sky (and your budget) are literally the limit.

In order to keep yourself from getting completely overwhelmed by the possibilities, take a minute to review the options outlined below.

Schedule

Creating your summer program schedule will help you determine what staffing, space, and resources you will need. Several popular options for scheduling are:

- Participants rotate into different activities every hour or two. Each activity is staffed by a “specialist” (e.g. arts and crafts leader, sports coach, music/dance teacher, etc.)
- Participants stay with the same “counselor” for the whole day. This staff person is responsible for leading all of the activities with their group for the day.
- Each day has a special theme or activity in the afternoon. For example, on Mondays everyone goes swimming, Tuesday everyone competes in a sports tournament, Wednesday everyone participates in a “club” of their choosing, etc.

Note: If you are running a “drop-in program,” (meaning, you will have a different group of youth each day) option a) or c) will probably be easiest for you.

See Tools for a sample summer program schedule.

Staffing

Staffing for your summer program is largely dependent on the type of schedule you will be running. If you choose option a), you will want to hire staff who have a specific skill that they are willing to share with participants all summer. If you choose option b), you will want to hire staff who are generalists and know how to run a wide range of activities.

You may also consider running a “Counselor In Training” (CIT) program in the summer, whereby you hire high school students to serve as junior counselors. This can help lower the staff to student ratio, gives older youth a productive way to spend their summer, and provides great role models for your participants. Check out organizations such as MYEEP at <http://sfmyeep.tumblr.com> for potential help with paying youth salaries.

Field Trips

The long hours of a summer program are extremely conducive to field trips. You may choose to go to the same place close by every day (nearby park, library, sports field), go somewhere unique each day (beach on Mondays, library on Tuesdays, etc.), or do a once-a-week all-day field trip. See *Chapter 3: Community Partnerships and Collaboration* for ideas on where to go in San Francisco and how to connect with local venues.

Make efforts to connect field trips to themes or activities you are doing in your program. For example, if your theme for the summer or week is environmental conservation, plan trips to do a beach clean up, visit the zoo, or go to the California Academy of Sciences.

continued on next page...



HOW TO

Plan a Summer Program ...continued

Themes

Creating themes for each group or your entire program will help your staff and participants feel focused during the long summer program hours. Consider changing the theme each week or two, and producing a culminating event such as a performance, field trip, or final project at the end of each theme. Letting participants choose the theme or aspects of the theme will help keep them motivated to work on the projects and activities related to the them. See Chapter 6: Youth Development, for ideas on how to implement Project-Based Learning in your summer program.

That Campy Feeling

There are many things you can do during your summer program that will help participants feel like they are truly at camp. These may include:

- Overnight camping trips offsite or onsite, complete with camp fire, roasted marshmallows, sleeping bags, tents, and ghost stories. Visit www.presidio.gov/visit/teachers/Pages/camping-at-the-presidio-program.aspx to learn about camping right here in the Presidio!
- Spirit Days, where groups of participants compete against each other in sports, relay races, and “spirit” activities such as costumes, art contests, and group cheer creation.
- Special activities that just say “summer”, such as a beach day with volleyball, sandcastle building contests, and a BBQ; picnics in the park or a lookout spot reached via a hike; swimming (see www.sfrecpark.org/Rec-Aquatics.aspx for a list of local pools), etc.

What Should I Have in My Toolbox?

- A program schedule
- A staffing plan
- Ideas for Trips, Themes, and Super Fun Activities



I have a tight budget, what is this going to cost me?

Running a summer program can be pricey. Increased staff hours and field trip and materials for activity costs can really add up. If you take the ELC Financing Workgroup’s cost estimate and use it for summer you will find you will need to budget \$5.68 (estimated cost per youth per hour for a program serving K-5 youth) x 8 hours = **\$45.44 per youth per day**. Costs will likely be higher if you are serving older age youth.



Sample Summer Program Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8am	Breakfast and board games				
9am	Morning Announcements				
9:30am During this period, groups rotate through the same activity each week . One instructor is hired to teach each club.	Group A – Arts and Crafts Group B – Messy Science Group C – Video Club	Group A – Messy Science Group B – Video Club Group C – Gardening	Group A – Video Club Group B – Gardening Group C – Arts and Crafts	Group A – Gardening Group B – Arts and Crafts Group C – Messy Science	Field Trip Fridays!
10:30am	Recess				
11am Same rotation as above.	Group A – Swimming Group B – Running Club Group C – Circus Arts	Group A – Running Club Group B – Circus Arts Group C – Swimming	Group A – Circus Arts Group B – Swimming Group C – Running Club	Field Trip preparation activity	
12pm	LUNCH and Recess				
1pm In the following three periods, each group rotates through the same activity each day . One counselor takes their group to all three activities.	Group A – Library Group B – Park Group C – Cooking Club	Program – wide neighborhood clean up	Group A – Library Group B – Park Group C – Cooking Club		
2pm	Snack and Recess				
2:30pm	Group A – Cooking Club Group B – Library Group C - Park	Board Game Tournaments	Group A – Cooking Club Group B – Library Group C - Park	Community Food Pantry	
3:30pm	Group A – Park Group B – Cooking Club Group C - Library	Participants’ Choice (vote on this each Thursday for the following week during morning announcements)	Group A – Park Group B – Cooking Club Group C - Library		
4:30-5pm	Closing Announcements				



HOW TO

Link Summer Learning to School Learning

Research has shown that summer learning loss (also known as "summer slide") is a key contributor to the achievement gap, as low-income youth are more likely to experience learning loss over the summer months and fall behind their more affluent peers. Access to a high-quality summer program, complete with meals, structured activities that support learning, and dedicated staff, can therefore make a tremendous difference in a child's overall academic performance.

Summer Matters 2 You, (a partnership dedicated to expanding access to quality summer learning experiences for low-income children across California lead by Partnership for Children and Youth), offers these suggestions for how to help prevent summer learning loss:

1. Read to participants, or encourage participants to read books recommended by their teachers, your local library and online summer reading lists. Help participants sign up for your local library's Summer Reading Program, which offers incentives for summer reading.

2. Visit free local resources that are both entertaining and educational, such as libraries, parks, museums, universities and community centers.

3. Play fun math and word games that turn everyday activities into learning opportunities. For example, have your participants add up prices at the store and see if they can tally up the final bill.

4. Ask your participants' teachers to recommend online educational worksheets and activities that you can download for free.

5. Turn off the TV (or at least limit the amount of screen time) and keep your participants moving with activities that encourage learning as well as physical activity. For example, organize a

scavenger hunt that takes them around a local playground, park or museum.

The same types of activities that you do to enforce participants' school day learning during the school year, can also be done, and expanded upon, during the summer months (See Chapter 4: *Alignment and Linkage to School Day* and Chapter 6; *Youth Development*). These may include choosing games that reinforce math or reading skills (monopoly, scrabble, etc.), doing Project-Based Learning activities; hosting reading, poetry, or 'zine-making clubs; or any number of skills based activities.

For additional ideas and resources for fun summer learning, visit the National Summer Learning Association's website: www.summerlearning.org/?page=activity_resources

Resources are also available on the Summer Learning Network website at:

<http://sfsummerlearning.blogspot.com>

What Should I Have in My Toolbox?

- Chapters 4 and 6 of this Guide
- Summer Matters 2 You website: summermatters2you.net/
- National Summer Learning Association website: www.summerlearning.org
- Summer Learning Network website <http://sfsummerlearning.blogspot.com>



I have a tight budget, what is this going to cost me?

- Including activities in your summer program that address summer learning loss will not cost you any more than if you do not include the activities, although it may require some additional staff time for planning.

Modified from "Top Five Ways to Prevent Summer Learning Loss and Support Your Child's Summertime Learning," by Summer Matters 2 You



Create a Positive Summer Program Culture

Warm weather, long days, and new peers have the potential to create restless, bored, and unhappy participants. On the flip side, warm weather, long days, and new peers have the potential to create energized, engaged, and happy participants. It all hinges on how you run your program.

Summer Matters 2 You offers this list for parents to gauge whether a summer program is meeting their child’s needs. Use the list as a checklist for yourself to make sure you are creating the type of atmosphere that makes a great program.

Top Ten Ways To Know if Your Child is in a Great Summer Learning Program.

1. Kids who are happy and engaged.
2. Kids who feel safe.
3. Kids learning by doing.
4. Kids being creative.
5. Kids moving and playing.
6. Kids showing off their learning.
7. Kids engaged in a wide array of meaningful activities—the arts, sports, science, service learning, etc.—that are purposeful about learning, complement (but don’t repeat) school-day learning, and leverage community, city, and school district resources (nonprofits, parks, libraries, museums, universities, etc.).
8. Staff who are positive and involved.
9. Staff welcoming parents.
10. Summer camp spirit.

What Should I Have in My Toolbox?

If you find that you are missing the mark on any of the items listed above, check out the table below to figure out which Chapters of this Resource Guide can help you!

1. Kids who are happy and engaged.	Chapters 5 and 10
2. Kids who feel safe.	Chapter 5
3. Kids learning by doing.	Chapter 6
4. Kids being creative.	Chapter 6
5. Kids moving and playing.	Chapter 9
6. Kids showing off their learning.	Chapter 6
7. Kids engaged in a wide array of meaningful activities—the arts, sports, science, service learning, etc.—that are purposeful about learning, complement (but don’t repeat) school-day learning, and leverage community, city, and school district resources (nonprofits, parks, libraries, museums, universities, etc.).	Chapters 3, 4, 11 and 6
8. Staff who are positive and involved.	Chapter 7
9. Staff welcoming parents.	Chapter 8
10. Summer camp spirit.	Chapters 5 and 12



I have a tight budget, what is this going to cost me?

- Nothing but your time!